

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: March 23, 2023

Name: Jamie Renea Shields

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Chesapeake Union Exempted Village School District

Position/Title: Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 33

Specific Issue: Fair School Funding

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 2-3 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Fair school funding as it affects school districts from southern Ohio and Appalachia.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

Testimony Before the House Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education

Jamie Shields, Administrator

Chesapeake Union Exempted Village School District

March 23, 2023

Chairwoman Richardson, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education, I appreciate the opportunity to speak before your committee.

I am a proponent of the Fair School Funding Plan which I am speaking to you about today.

My name is Jamie Shields and I hold several positions within the Chesapeake School District. I have been serving in public education for twenty-six years and have been in my current position as District Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator for nine years. I am the acting Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator, Special Education Director, 504 Coordinator, Federal Funds Coordinator, Gifted Coordinator, Preschool Director, Homeless and Foster Care Liaison, District Test Coordinator, EMIS reporter, 21st Century Grant Program Administrator, High School Varsity Volleyball Coach, and I oversee the Chesapeake Buddy Basketball and Chesapeake Youth Volleyball programs. I also have a few more responsibilities.

In many of my roles, I see resources drying up or being spread so thin they lose their effectiveness. I also see enrollment decreasing which may lead to decreased funding, while individual student need is increasing. Districts like ours are trying to compete and help our students to become competitive with fewer resources, smaller staffs, limited opportunities, and often a student population with a much greater need.

In many, if not most districts throughout the state, three, five, or ten people may have my one job. There is no way possible for me to meet all the needs, in all my areas of responsibility, to the level my counterparts can in more affluent districts. Likewise, my colleagues who hold multiple positions are less likely to be as successful as they could be if they were not responsible for so many areas of student service.

When a grant is competitive for example, I am trying to write the grant, while taking care of a student who that very day became homeless, reroute buses for our after school program, input EMIS data, revise Federal Fund grants, make sure a new student in the foster care system is enrolled immediately, upload students for the ACT, attend a preschool special education meeting, request a quote for an industry recognized credential exam, and make sure I am not missing or forgetting anything. To use a March Madness analogy, I am basically a team of one competing against a team with ten players, a coach, assistant coach, athletic director, trainer, bus driver, cheerleaders, and a ball boy. We don't expect this set up when we attend a college basketball game, but this is the setup we are faced with in our district.

Our district could choose to hire more individuals with administrative roles, and I would have help, but this means giving up something somewhere. We have cut music programs or art in the past and recently brought those back, we cut custodian and counselor positions years ago in an

effort to keep from cutting teachers in the classroom. Do we cut electives for students with already limited exposure to the arts, engineering, and health fields? Do we hire individuals only to let them go when grants expire or are not renewed? Do we cut funding for athletics and afterschool programs that help with student engagement and attendance? These are difficult questions we are faced with daily.

We can meet as District Leadership Teams and put together wonderful improvement plans addressing the need for afterschool programs, structures to support the influx of students with severe disabilities within our preschool special education program, the need for mental health services, low-income housing, support for students whose parents suffer from drug addiction, and the importance of academic enrichment for our best and brightest. The unfortunate fact is, without resources, none of these plans will work.

The Fair School Funding Plan with the base cost increased and the plan fully phased in over the next four years would give poorer districts, districts that are struggling, the resources to hire staff and develop long term plans with the confidence that we can sustain much needed services for students. It would allow districts to make long-term hiring decisions and develop plans for the future that provide academic, social emotional, physical, and mental health supports. The Fair School Funding Plan would also allow districts to meet individual needs specific to underserved populations in their communities.

For these reasons, I am a proponent of Fair School Funding and I thank you for your time Chairwoman Richardson, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of this House Finance Subcommittee.