

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: March 23, 2023

Name: Greg Sullivan

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Chesapeake High School

Position/Title: Principal

Address: 10181 County Road 1

City: Chesapeake State: OH Zip: 45619

Best Contact Telephone: 304-972-6374 Email: greg.sullivan@peake.k12.oh.us

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? 3-5 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Fair school funding as it affects high schools 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.

Greg Sullivan, Principal
Chesapeake High School
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 you.

I am currently the principal at Chesapeake High School in Chesapeake, Ohio and I am here as an interested party as it relates to House Bill 33 and the Fair School Funding Plan.

As I was completing the coursework for my superintendent program, one class was centered around a hot topic in the education world: fair is not always equal. The point was illustrated by saying six students in a classroom needed glasses, while the other 24 students did not. It was fair for the six students to wear glasses because they needed them. It was equal because the other 24 students did not have that need.

In Southeast Ohio, we have much larger issues when it comes to fair versus equal. While there are a few outlier districts in the Appalachian region, most districts are in rural areas where the schools are the central hubs to their respected communities. Aside from learning, these schools are places where good times are shared and celebrated, but they are also places where people lean on each other during times of sadness and uncertainty. Our communities are filled with proud, blue-collar workers, who take satisfaction in working hard to reach a specific outcome. While everyone may not agree on particular issues, one thing is certain, if there is a need, it will be overwhelmingly filled by acts of love, compassion, and support.

Most students look forward to attending school. Some make academics and/or extra-curricular activities the priority, while others see it as a way to gain the basic necessities of life: food, shelter, clothing, and safety. The students of these districts are not blessed with the opportunities given to students of higher tax-bracketed areas. Southeast Ohio schools have a difficult time offering more opportunities for academics, extra-curriculars, and mental health. Because of funding, school districts are short staffed. Individuals are forced to wear many different hats. Instead of being great in one or two areas, these individuals can slip into the category of being good or just mediocre in several different areas.

Just like the six students that needed to wear glasses, Appalachian students need the same opportunities afforded to those students in affluent communities. How can people deem what educational opportunities are fair for one group but not the other? Education is a blessing. How people choose to use it is up to them, but that does not mean they should be cheated by the lack of opportunities.