

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide opponent testimony on Senate Bill 1. I am a nurse, a mother, and grandmother with the experience of affording my children both a private and public education. I ran for school board to put the public back in public education within my community where it belongs. This framework is entirely upside down, if you ask me.

I want to start by saying it only takes decreasing the student to teacher ratio in public schools to improve the academic and workforce skills to better accountability and outcomes for kids' education and career readiness. One of the many reasons we decided to place our children in a private school for early education was a strong foundation with smaller class sizes and more one on one attention. Our children DO deserve "strong educations that prepare them for their futures", as Mr. Reineke stated in his sponsor testimony before you. Senator Reineke isn't providing an entirely accurate picture of the remediation rates among Ohioans according to the 2021 Ohio Remediation Report. The remediation rate for students enrolling in a math or English remediation class is 19.3%, what he didn't share is this is down from 23.8% in 2019, 26.8% in 2018, 27.6% in 2017 and 28.1% in 2016. Senator Reineke also stated, "we must also hold government accountable in that mission", so here goes.

I would like to draw your attention to policies closing schools amid the pandemic despite data showing children were largely unaffected by COVID-19. I would like to draw your attention to HB 110 which brought in new learning models which we knew were not best practice for young learners, would create learning gaps, and ultimately lose the audience staring at a screen all day contributing to absenteeism. I would like to draw your attention to safe return/emergency/pandemic masking policies that delayed early learners' letter sound identification, created the highest suicide rate among 10 to 14-year-olds on record in Ohio since 2011, and contributed to negative behaviors and disciplinary issues in our educational system. I would like to draw your attention to the 18 months of lost learning for Ohio's children that it took the Ohio Legislature to create and pass SB22 to rein in our Governor's emergency health powers. Some of the very individuals that worked on the steering committee providing high-level

oversight of the strategic plan development process for the Each Child Our Future: Ohio Strategic Plan 2019-2024 sit among you today. Will they too be subject to these failures sited by the bills sponsor of our educational system? I would like to draw your attention to the BRIGHT New Leaders for Ohio Schools which has been authorized and funded by the Ohio General Assembly as an innovative public-private partnership that should be enabling extraordinary individuals from different walks of life to spend a year as a BRIGHT Fellow and then immediately assume building leadership in a high-poverty public school in our state where we need the best and the brightest leaders the most. Surely a program authorized and funded by the General Assembly as a solution to Ohio's barriers impacting disadvantaged and at-risk pupils wouldn't be satisfied with a 50% absenteeism rate among Ohio's African American students in these very disadvantaged districts with the BRIGHT Leadership? I would like to point out in 1997, in *DeRolph v. State*, the Ohio Supreme Court declared the State's school funding system unconstitutional. In 2003, in *State v. Lewis*, the Ohio Supreme Court denied plaintiffs' final attempt to obtain a remedial order for the violation identified in *DeRolph*, noting that although the system was still unconstitutional, it was the Legislature's duty to enact a remedy. The Ohio General Assembly has known about this problem of unconstitutional school funding yet has been unable to come to a viable solution in twenty-six (26) years. If the Ohio Legislature is pointing fingers at the State Board of Education, then should it also not shoulder some of this responsibility itself for its failures on educational issues, adopting and accepting failed policy that has contributed to Ohio's educational crisis?

In conclusion, we can agree that much needed changes are necessary at the State Board of Education, we fundamentally disagree with how to arrive at those changes. When I asked my district to be a part of a stakeholder committee that reviewed curriculum providing feedback I was simply told, "I could not censor curriculum"; that my district Superintendent alone was tasked with this monumental task for all 1000 students from grades K-12. I see no parent led steering committees, nor any parents listed on any of the school district, Educational Service Centers, or state guidance documents. Parents are the one responsible for their 'Whole Child' and accountable for "Their Future". The school district does

not get my ‘Whole Child’, they get to educate my children.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Respectfully.

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References

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