

Robyn Houze HB11 Testimony for May 4, 2023

Thank you to Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee for allowing me to speak today. I am going to start with a question that has been a topic of discussion in our home for the last several months.

How do my husband Jason and I raise our two boys to be competent young men with a desire to do great things, when the public school they attend fails to motivate them to work to their full potential, places more emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion than academics and fails to respect parent input to their learning? My husband and I have been continually disappointed in our son's public education experience. We chose to live in Powell with the belief that our children would be well prepared for their future with a quality education from Olentangy Local Schools.

The answer for our boys is to enroll them in a school that matches our academic expectations and moral values. But this answer leads to another question. How will we fund the tuition to provide our sons the necessary foundation to become the young men we know they are capable of being?

Every Ohio child deserves a quality education that matches their unique needs, and no one knows better than their parents as to if they are thriving to become the best version of themselves. Standardized testing scores do not tell the whole story. Looking in from the outside Olentangy appears to be performing extremely well, hence their 5-star state report card rating. However, examine the details a bit closer of the Olentangy results and you will see that certain demographics are excelling, and others are not.

The budget proposal from the Ohio House leaves 1 in 4 or more students out from having an opportunity to receive an Ed Choice Voucher. I know Ohio Lawmakers can do better to ensure every student has the opportunity for an education that properly prepares them for a bright future.

I challenge you to stand up for all of Ohio's students and offer every family the opportunity to take advantage of an educational savings account. The state educational dollars need to follow the student. If a parent is satisfied with their public school, then grant the school the money to educate that child. However, if a district is not meeting the needs of a student, then allow parents the ability to determine the best fit for their student.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony today. I'm happy to answer any questions.