

Opponent Testimony for HB 33
Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, May 10, or Thursday, May 11, 2023

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Chair, Malone University Department of Education
Ohio Association of Colleges of Teacher Education

Chairman Brenner, Representative Edwards, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony. My name is Jennifer Webb and I am a former K-12 Intervention Specialist, now serving as Chair of Education at Malone University in Canton. At the university level I prepare teachers for the K-12 classroom, following state and national accreditation requirements that include preparation standards across, and specific to, grade levels including the science of reading, special education, content specific material, and non-academic areas like social-emotional learning.

I am testifying today to oppose the inclusion of changes to grade band licensure that will drop MCE, expand Primary Education (P-5) to grades Preschool through grade 8, and change AYA from 7-12 to 6-12. The proposed changes will impact a wide audience - elementary and middle school students, elementary and middle school teachers, future/pre-service teachers, teacher preparation programs, accrediting bodies such as CAEP and ODHE, and will not resolve the teacher shortage. Requiring a teacher to teach outside their desired developmental level may lead to additional retention issues in addition to the existing shortage.

I understand the request to make these changes is coming from superintendents around the state to fill positions due to a decrease in teacher applicants. The problem is that to meet these changes, a significant amount of work at the university level will need to be done and that work will take a significant amount of time, energy, and resources.

The Ohio Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACTE), a state affiliate of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, represents teacher educators across all of Ohio's public and private institutions. The State University Education Deans (SUED) and the Ohio Association of Private Colleges of Teacher Education (OAPCTE) represent the leadership of all teacher education programs in Ohio. Together, we are submitting our position on HB33. We recognize the reality of the current teacher shortage's difficulties and are grateful to have representatives working on our behalf to solve these problems. While the majority of HB33 is proactive and has the potential to help address our current challenges, there is one component of HB33 that is not in the best interest of teacher candidates, and by extension, Ohio's schoolchildren.

Implementation of new licensure grade bands will be costly and time intensive. This will not be a quick fix for educator shortage issues nor is it in the best interest of children; it will take a

minimum of four years before any teachers will be licensed under the proposed grade bands. Proposed grade-level band changes will necessitate the time to address:

- 1) Development and adoption of new pedagogical standards at the state and national level.
- 2) Modification of nearly all programs through internal approval processes, including newly modified P-5 programs and dual licensure programs for which intervention specialist grade bands aligning to the current regular education grade bands have just been incorporated into code. (* see below for specifics of this process)
- 3) Review and approval by the Ohio Department of Higher Education.
- 4) Development and validation of new licensure exams.

For a small, faith-based university like Malone, these changes will be costly and difficult to meet. The impact could take many years to overcome, and further decrease the interest in entering the profession of teaching due to the extreme number of requirements that will need to be incorporated in preparation. In our current era of standards-based education, there is simply no way to adequately prepare teachers to teach every subject from preschool through eighth grade. Please look at the [Ohio academic standards](#) and familiarize yourself with the amount of content that teachers must cover every year to gain a better understand of what teacher prep programs will have to cover.

*Further, the approval process at Malone University for program changes requires full faculty approval and must be completed by the end of February of each academic year. Upon approval, changes are then implemented in the following academic year catalog. Catalog changes are only in place with the students in that incoming year. This means that even after license band standard changes, university changes will take a minimum of 3 years for candidates to have been taught using the new standards.

I ask that you please consider my testimony and remove the grade band licensure, changes indicated on pg. 1356, lines 41655-41672, reinstating them to P-5, 4-9, and 7-12.