



Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the academic recovery efforts of the Logan-Hocking School District.

My name is Monte Bainter. I am the superintendent of the Logan-Hocking School District, located in southeast Ohio in Hocking County. I have served as the superintendent in Logan for 8 years and prior to that, I was the superintendent of the Maysville Local School District for 12 years. With me today is Trina Barrell, the Logan-Hocking Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Our current enrollment is 3,608 students.

Our spring 2019 state achievement scores, in grades 3-5 were among the highest in our region, with our math scores in third grade coming in at 85.7% passage rate, fourth grade at 79.9%, and fifth grade at 87.7%. Our ELA scores were similar, ranging from 85.7% to 88.8% to 80.1%. In 2021, our spring scores took a dramatic turn downward with all math scores falling to the high 60% range and ELA scores ranging from 50.2% in grade 5 to 73.9% in grade 4 and 80.7% in grade 3. In 2022 we saw improvement and by 2023, we had rebounded back to our 2019 scores and had raised our Early Literacy to its highest ranking of 4 stars and a 54% on track rating.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
3rd Grade ELA	85.7%	No scores	67.1%	78%	83.9%
4th Grade ELA	79.9%		69.7%	84%	77.5%
5th Grade ELA	87.7%		69.1%	73%	84%
3rd Grade Math	85.7%		80.7%	80%	85.7%
4th Grade Math	88.8%		73.9%	88%	91%
5th Grade Math	80.1%		50.2%	60%	71.5%
Early Literacy	48%			45.6%: 3 stars	54%: 4 stars

While the COVID years of 2020-2021 were tough in many ways, it was also eye-opening and a way to relook at our education model. Through our COVID experience, we found that

- Elementary students do need to be in brick and mortar and the digital program just didn't work as well for our students
- Our teachers immersed themselves in the Science of Reading learning. During March-May, multiple elementary teachers took part in national and state-sponsored Science of Reading webinars and courses. They saw this time as an opportunity to grow in their fields.
- Our teachers enjoy speakers "coming to us" versus leaving the district for professional development opportunities. The key was finding experts who were top in their field and could connect with our teachers. We are still using this approach as it has proven beneficial.

ESSER dollars provided us with the funds to purchase new Math and ELA curriculum programs. As is our regular practice, we go first to EdReports to examine the highest-rated curricular programs. We then invite in 3-5 textbook companies and form teacher committees. We spend the majority of a year previewing, scoring, and evaluating programs. While it was daunting to tackle two curriculum

changes in one year, our teacher rose to the occasion and scores have never dropped. We are fortunate to have Title I programs at all five of our elementary schools with teachers given 120 minutes per day to teach ELA and 90 minutes per day to teach math. As you can see from the above chart, scores did rise after 2020 but it is difficult to say how much the new curriculum led to the rise in scores. We believe that it did contribute as it is very unusual to purchase a new curriculum, let alone two curriculum programs and not see a dip in scores for two years. That did not happen but we had so many data points, it's hard to say for sure which led to the success. But, as stated, we believe, after talking with teachers and the rise in scores, the curriculum was one of the factors in raising scores.

ESSER dollars also enabled the district to hold a robust 2021 four-week elementary and middle school summer school program, during the month of June. Logan High School also held a two-week jumpstart program prior to the beginning of the 21/22 school year. We initially were inviting just those students whom teachers thought would benefit the most. However, word got around and we ended up with over 800 students. **Our philosophy became that all students could benefit and since there were funds available, we didn't want to turn anyone away. Our overall main objectives were to close the gaps lost by COVID and to reacclimate students back to brick and mortar. Many of the students, (whose families had chosen digital learning in 20/21), came to summer school. This not only helped them academically but more importantly, helped them socially-emotionally; making the transition back to our buildings much easier.** Over 50 teachers were hired along with bus drivers, aides, attendants, cooks, and custodians to meet the needs of students who attended the all-day optional summer program. Breakfast, lunch, transportation, and incentives were provided along with the option to attend half days as well. All teachers were provided with a proven summer school curriculum in hopes of closing some gaps caused from COVID obstacles. Students took pre and post tests using the SAVVAS Summer Impact materials. Improvement was shown but we cannot say how that translated to the school year. During the afternoon sessions, STEM Science kits/lessons were used but no data was collected.

As mentioned above, we became a Science of Reading district before it was a requirement. Our Region 16 SST along with Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center provided guidance and PD to help us along the way. Our teachers embraced this style of teaching even though many had never received any training as elementary children or as college students. It was a large learning curve for many of our teachers, especially those between the ages of 22-45. Our SOR timeline was:

- March 2020: research and webinar training began
- We were privy to what was currently happening as we had a Striving Readers Grant and later a Comprehensive Literacy Grant at our middle school and we were able to take part in ODE/DEW sponsored literacy academies and thus share that information with all staff PreK-12.
- As mentioned, we had outside experts come into the district to provide professional development.
- We began Heggerty phonics instruction 10 minutes per day in all K-2 classrooms.
- We had an outside audit of our K-5 HMH Into Reading program conducted to ensure it was aligned with the Science of Reading.
- Our teachers have become experts and have held summer train-the-trainer workshops. Last August, 80% of our elementary teachers attended an optional PD session that was planned and presented by Logan-Hocking teachers.

In-district mobility has been a recent concern, especially since 2020. Housing shortage and poverty is rampant in Hocking County with many students switching buildings throughout the year as they move to other residences. To combat this, we use the same curriculum and Tier II and Tier III resources. Pacing charts are in place and all district teachers must stay within two weeks of each other when delivering instruction. We understand that it's unfair and impossible to stay on the same day but the two-week window provides flexibility but also keeps students close enough in case they

move to a new building. We also have a very low staff turnover and we ensure homeless and foster students are able to stay in their home buildings even when their housing location has moved.

Currently, 100% of teachers in grades K-3 have received their Dyslexia training and 75% of those that need to have the training completed by August 2025 have finished. Due to our literacy grants, many teachers have already received the necessary training for the Ohio Science of Reading requirements as they are trained in IMSE Orton Gillingham, LETRS, and Keys to Literacy. Going forward, we are ready to tackle the state requirements of the Science of Reading, ensuring all staff are trained. We are also looking forward to what happens in the area of the Science of Math.

ESSER dollars enabled our district to make purchases and conduct programming that otherwise would have been impossible:

1. We are now a Chromebook 1-1 district. We also purchased document cameras for multiple classrooms. Our concerns now are finding funds to maintain aging devices and other technology purchased with the funds.
2. We have provided after school transportation for middle and high school students experiencing homelessness and transportation to all in-town students. This has enabled students to participate in extra-curricular activities and tutoring sessions. We will now be using district funds in order to continue.
3. While we do have Permanent Improvement dollars that can be used for textbook purchases, we never have the funds to purchase two major textbooks in one year. We used ESSER for those big purchases, along with summer school resources.
4. Our summer school was 100% funded by ESSER. Conducting a summer school of the magnitude of which we had would have been impossible without these funds.

COVID taught us what we already know; children and educators are resilient. Having the funds enabled us to do even more of what was needed in order to provide the best education possible; when combined with outstanding teachers and staff members.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on Logan-Hocking's academic recovery efforts, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.