

Dear Chair Brenner,

My name is Jacqueline Yahn and I am an Associate Professor of Teacher Education at Ohio University. As a former middle grades teacher with 15 years of experience within the Ohio school systems and universities I write to urge your strong support for Senate Bill 219, which reinstates the three educator licensure grade bands.

Young children, early adolescents, and older teenagers have vastly different developmental needs. The three licensure bands, prior to their removal, recognized this crucial reality. Each band equipped educators with specialized knowledge and skills aligned with the specific age groups they serve, ultimately resulting in more effective teaching and learning.

This distinction is essential in the current climate. Our students throughout Ohio are still grappling with the academic and social-emotional ramifications of the COVID 19 pandemic. They deserve educators who are not only subject-matter experts but also possess a deep understanding of their developmental stage.

The decision to collapse the licensure bands was rushed, embedded within a budget bill, and disregarded the best interests of Ohio's students. Senate Bill 219 rectifies this misstep by restoring the three bands and ensuring our educators are equipped to provide the most effective support for each age group within our school systems.

As third generation educator in the state of Ohio deeply invested in the future of Ohio's children, I implore you to pass Senate Bill 219. This legislation is not just about licensure; it is about ensuring our educators have the tools and expertise they need to nurture and guide our students through their most formative years.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

All the best,

-Jacqueline Yahn

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