

Senate Education Committee
Senate Bill 219: Proponent Testimony
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Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and distinguished members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Dr. Melissa Askren Edgehouse, and I am a Professor of Education in the School of Education at the University of Mount Union. I also serve as the President-Elect of the Ohio Association of Private Colleges of Teacher Education (OAPCTE), and I am speaking on behalf of the Ohio Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACTE) and appreciate the opportunity to offer proponent testimony for Senate Bill 219—the bill that would reverse educator grade bands from P-8 and 6-12 back to what they were previous to the passage of HB 33–P-5 Primary, 4-9 Middle Childhood, and 7-12 Adolescence to Young Adult (AYA). I'm pleased to be joined by one of Mount Union's finest students, Miss Bailey Balderson, who will share her perspective momentarily.

OACTE believes that SB 219 helps to ensure confidence in teachers' ability to know their content, and it helps to ensure greater teacher satisfaction.

I'm finishing my 25th year in education. I started my career in education as a 5th and 6th grade teacher, teaching mostly science and some mathematics, and later as a curriculum consultant; for the past several years, I've worked as a professor in higher education, helping to prepare future teachers and school administrators.

We need to prepare confident teachers who know their content. My first teaching certificate—not license—was to teach all subjects in grades 1-8. I opted not to add on a kindergarten endorsement (which consisted of two courses), as teaching very young children was not an interest of mine at the time. My passion back then focused on grades 1-4. I loved young children in elementary school. However, as I mentioned, my first teaching position was for grades 5 and 6. Truthfully, I cried when I first learned I'd be teaching children that old. I was scared. Fortunately, I quickly adapted during the first month of my very first year of teaching. I loved that age group. Admittedly, the content was challenging for me. I taught predominantly science and some mathematics. It took me time to learn the content. I worked hard, studied a lot, and made improvements each year.

Today's youth, however, are significantly different from students 25 years ago. Today's learners are more diverse, and educators have grown savvier in the ways in which they meet their needs. I didn't have rich experiences with social-emotional learning, we didn't talk about dyslexia in my courses, PBIS was quite new and not taught in higher education, I didn't learn about English learners, and literacy education looked vastly different. In other words, if I taught today the way I did back then, I'd be a terrible educator. The eight grade bands that my license covered were simply far too numerous. I know I'm not alone in this thinking. A P-8 grade band will deter some future teachers out of the field entirely.

Further, if you analyze the curriculum in Ohio's Educator Preparation Programs, you'll see that content deepens from P-5 Primary, to grades 4-9 Middle Childhood, to grades 7-12 Adolescence to Young Adult programs. For instance, our candidates in P-5 Primary Education take eight credit hours of mathematics content and pedagogy courses that help them understand how young children use manipulatives to learn numeracy. In grades 4-9 Middle Childhood, they take 24 credit hours of math content and pedagogy. Comparatively, in grades 7-12 Adolescence to Young Adult, candidates more than double the credit hours and take 52 credits of math content and pedagogy. Middle school math candidates take courses in statistics, the history of mathematics, geometry, calculus... This all makes sense when you consider the varying levels of math in grades 6-9 in particular, but do kindergarten or 1st grade math teachers need calculus or geometry? Our curriculum map comparing Primary, Middle, and AYA programs is at the end of this document for you to review. All mathematics content and pedagogy courses are highlighted in light purple for easy comparison.

It would be incredibly challenging to add 24 credit hours to our existing Primary Education programs—and that's just for math. P-8 teachers need to be prepared in science, social studies, and English Language Arts as well. We couldn't possibly add 96 credit hours to their already-busy schedules. What would we compromise? What would candidates miss? We're working so hard to integrate the science of reading, dyslexia standards, social emotional learning, and so many more topics we truly believe are best for children. Would these important subjects be removed so we could add more math, science, social studies, and ELA content to the curriculum to prepare candidates for more in-depth licensure exams and the realities of what they might be teaching in the near future? Or would their content preparation be a mile wide and an inch deep? It will be so very challenging to prepare preservice teachers for early literacy and high school algebra and everything in between in just four years of college. A P-8 license could offer flexibility, but at what cost?

My daughter is in 7th grade, and she's currently taking a high school math course: Algebra I. She recently took her end of course exam, and I hope she did okay. Truthfully, if we have only two grade bands, I'd only want a grades 6-12 licensed educator to serve as her teacher. It would take a very special P-8 educator to be savvy enough to teach Algebra I to advanced 7th graders. In other words, I wouldn't want a P-8 licensed teacher for my daughter, nor would I want to hire a P-8 licensed teacher for this course if I were in the position to do so. Currently, however, I'm comfortable with a middle childhood 4-9 or an AYA 7-12 educator teaching my daughter Algebra I. We could very well be further limiting middle school administrators' ability to hire properly trained teachers for each grade and content in their buildings.

In addition to preparing teachers who feel confident about the content they're teaching, we also need teachers who are satisfied with both their preparation programs and satisfaction in their jobs. While a 6-12 grade band doesn't seem much different from a 7-12 grade band, adding Grade 6 changes programs quite a bit. The integration of Grade 6 standards won't be dramatically challenging to add. However, the current statute requires candidates who wish to teach grades K-6 to take 12 credit hours of reading and literacy. This is important for Primary, Middle Childhood, and Intervention Specialists. Current statute requires three credit hours of literacy for candidates wishing to teach grades 7-12, which is appropriate. Adding just one grade—6th grade—will now add nine credit hours of literacy and reading for those who wish to teach calculus, biology, chemistry, AP history, British literature, and so on. We work hard to ensure our programs include only relevant, meaningful content—and not fluff. These additional credits—nearly one entire semester's worth—could very well increase dissatisfaction, as after our alumni teach for a few years, they'll wonder, "Why did they make me take that class in phonics? I've never used that information."

SB 219 helps to ensure that teachers feel confident in their content knowledge and helps ensure greater satisfaction in their roles as educators. OACTE's mission to support quality teacher education, ensure a seamless learning experience for all P-12 students, and preserve the integrity of the educational system in Ohio is essential. We believe that SB 219 does exactly that.

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and distinguished members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak, and thank you for considering my testimony in support of Senate Bill 219; I urge you to support this bill.

I am happy to answer any questions you might have, but first, I'd like to introduce one of our students, Miss Bailey Balderson. Again, Miss Balderson just completed clinical practice and will begin her first P-5 teaching position in August. She would like to share her story and her perspective on the grade band changes and SB 219.

Please see the curriculum comparisons on the following page from the University of Mount Union.

Sample Curriculum Comparisons of Mathematics Content/Pedagogy

| Primary Education Curriculum (P-5) Must add a Minor, Gen. Ed, World Language | | | Middle Childhood Math Concentration Curriculum (4-9) Must add a Minor, Gen. Ed., & World Language | | | AYA Integrated Mathematics Curriculum (7-12) Includes Math Major and AYA Minor Must add Gen. Ed. & World Language | | |
|---|--|--------------|---|---|--------------|---|---|--------------|
| Course Prefix & Number | Course Title | Credit Hours | Course Prefix & Number | Course Title | Credit Hours | Course Prefix & Number | Course Title | Credit Hours |
| EDU 150 | Introduction to the Teaching Profession | 4 | EDU 150 | Introduction to the Teaching Profession | 4 | EDU 150 | Introduction to the Teaching Profession | 4 |
| EDU 218 | Educational Technology | 4 | EDU 218 | Educational Technology | 4 | EDU 218 | Educational Technology | 4 |
| EDU 234 | Interdisciplinary Planning for Diverse Learners and Families | 4 | EDU 230 | Student Development: Implications for Planning & Teaching | 4 | EDU 230 | Student Development: Implications for Planning & Teaching | 4 |
| PRM 270 | Practicum I: Primary | 1 | EDU 270 | Practicum I: AYA/Multiage | 1 | EDU 270 | Practicum I: AYA/Multiage | 1 |
| ISP 220 | Introduction to the Exceptional Learner | 4 | ISP 220 | Introduction to the Exceptional Learner | 4 | ISP 220 | Introduction to the Exceptional Learner | 4 |
| ISP 270 | Practicum I: Intervention Specialist | 1 | ISP 270 | Practicum I: Intervention Specialist | 1 | ISP 270 | Practicum I: Intervention Specialist | 1 |
| PRM 200 | Foundations and Management of the Primary Classroom | 4 | EDU 250 | Foundations and Management of Middle & High School Classrooms | 4 | EDU 250 | Foundations and Management of Middle & High School Classrooms | 4 |
| EDU 315G | Multicultural Education | 4 | EDU 315G | Multicultural Education | 4 | EDU 315G | Multicultural Education | 4 |
| ENG 210 | Children's Literature | 4 | MCH 345 | Content Area Literacy in the Middle School | 4 | EDU 355 | Content Area Literacy | 4 |
| EDU 340 | Phonics, Process, and the Structures of Language Acquisition | 4 | EDU 340 | Phonics, Process, and the Structures of Language Acquisition | 4 | AYA 320 | The Teaching of Mathematics | 4 |
| PRM 320 | Mathematics Practices & Curriculum for Primary | 4 | MCH 320 | Teaching Mathematics in the Middle School | 4 | EDU 370 | Practicum II: AYA/Multiage | 1 |
| PRM 315 | Social Studies Practices and Curriculum | 4 | MCH XXX | 2nd Concentration Methods | 4 | EDU 440 | Assessment, Instructional Design & Evaluation in Education | 4 |

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| PRM 370 | Practicum II: Primary | 1 | EDU 370 | Practicum II: AYA/Multiage | 1 | EDU 375 | Practicum III: AYA/Multiage | 1 |
| PRM 440 | English Language Arts Assessment: Primary | 4 | MCH 440 | Middle Childhood Assessment and Literacy Practices | 4 | AYA 460 | Preclinical Practice: Adolescence to Young Adult | 4 |
| PRM 325 | English Language Arts Practices and Curriculum | 4 | EDU 375 | Practicum III: AYA/Multiage | 1 | AYA 470 | Clinical Practice: Adolescence to Young Adult | 14 |
| PRM 335 | Scientific Practices and Curriculum | 4 | MCH 460 | Preclinical: Middle Childhood | 4 | CSC 120 | Programming Problem Solving I | 4 |
| PRM 375 | Practicum III: Primary | 1 | MCH 470 | Clinical Practice: Middle Childhood | 14 | MTH 123 | Elementary Statistics | 4 |
| PRM 460 | Preclinical Practice: Primary | 4 | XXX XXX | 2nd Concentration Content Courses (ELA, Social Studies, or Science) | 20 | MTH 223 | Intermediate Statistics | 4 |
| PRM 470 | Clinical Practice: Primary | 14 | MTH 123 | Elementary Statistics | 4 | MTH 141 | Calculus I | 4 |
| MTH 119 | Quantitative Literacy (or higher): General Education Requirement | 4 | MTH 140 | Pre-Calculus | 4 | MTH 142 | Calculus II | 4 |
| | | | MTH 141 | Calculus I | 4 | MTH 241 | Calculus III | 4 |
| | | | MTH 302 | College Geometry and History | 4 | MTH 301 | Intro to Advanced Math & Number Theory | 4 |
| | | | EDU 299 | Mathematics for Educators | 4 | MTH 302 | College Geometry and History | 4 |
| | | | | | | MTH 322 | Linear Algebra | 4 |
| | | | | | | MTH 362 | Discrete Math | 2 |
| | | | | | | MTH 405 | Mathematical Statistics | 2 |
| | | | | | | MTH 411 | Abstract Algebra | 4 |
| | | | | | | MTH 441 | Advanced Calculus | 4 |
| | | | | | | MTH 460 | Senior Culminating Experience | 0 |