

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 293. My name is Greg Klapheke, and I am from Delaware County.

I am a retired Structural Engineer, and for the past 39 years I have taught Sunday School to Elementary School children in my church. And I am currently a Lifewise Teacher for the Shale Meadows Elementary School children in the Olentangy School District.

I am confident that you will receive testimony from others about the need to give parents the opportunity to choose released time religious instruction. But as a Lifewise Teacher, I wanted to give you a little information on what we teach in the classroom.

I firmly believe in the Lifewise Organization, what it stands for, and how we are serving our community in a positive way. We certainly teach a Biblical worldview, but we emphasize that, while it is OK to disagree with someone on matters of faith, we are always called to treat others in a respectful, kind way. We continually emphasize that every person ever born is made in the image of God, and because of that every human being has tremendous worth in the eyes of God, and is worthy of our respect.

The first Bible verse that we teach our students comes from Jesus' words in the Gospel of Mark, where Jesus explains the two greatest commandments: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'. There is no commandment greater than these."*

Thus, we feel that one of the best ways to teach our students to have a positive impact in the community is to emphasize that we are to respect others, no matter what, and to be a positive example in respecting fellow students, Teachers, and Administrators.

As far as picking up and returning our students to the Elementary school, we have the students for one day a week over their lunch time and recess, and we are very sensitive to being on time with our pick-up and return of the students, to make sure we do not cause any disruption to the school day. We strive to always work well with the school staff, so as to never cause any complications or disruption to the students' class schedules.

I would welcome the opportunity to have you or a member of your staff visit my 2nd, 3rd or 5th grade classes to get a clear picture of what we teach and how we conduct our classes at LifeWise Academy. I can be reached on my cell at 740-972-0384.

Thank you!
Greg Klapheke