

November 18, 2024

*Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee,*

I oppose SB 293 and its counterpart HB 455. I believe all decisions about release time for religious instruction should remain a local decision with each school board.

I believe that art, music, library and gym are core classes to the children of Ohio, and should not be treated as less than important than other subjects. Requiring release time suggests that a well-rounded education is not important, or required for the success of the children of Ohio, and Ohio's future.

This bill also does not provide any clarity on safety precautions for the children during religious release time. There are clear concerns not only with diluting our education, but for the basic safety of our children. As the bill stands, there is no requirement for basic safety checks or background checks for personnel removing children from school premises.

As a parent of two elementary aged children, I am completely uncomfortable with both the lack of concern for safety, and the lack of concern with allowing kids to miss important educational opportunities (in addition to the logistical issues it will pose for our public school system).

This is not right for Ohio, or the future of our education system.

Please vote NO on SB 293 and HB 455 to preserve the safety and education of the children of Ohio.

Thank you,  
Christie Kelley