

Proponent Testimony for House Bill 33
Senate
Finance Committee
June 8, 2023

Tamesha Cantrell, Ohio Parent

Chair Matt Dolan, Vice Chair Jerry Cirino, Ranking Member Vernon Sykes, and members of the Finance committee of the Ohio Senate:

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony today. My name is Tamesha Cantrell. I am a parent at East Linden School. I am in support of fully funding the Fair School Funding plan outlined in HB33.

DEFINITION OF FAIR!!!

1. Impartial and just!
2. Without favoritism and or discrimination
3. Just or appropriate in the circumstances
4. Without cheating or trying to achieve unjust advantage

I ask you out of any of these definitions, is the system being Fair? No. We would not be here if it were. When you take funds from the public schools and double budgets for charter and voucher programs, that is not Fair! That is not impartial, that is with favoritism and discrimination. So that is not fair!

If your house bill 11 drains money from public schools to provide double or triple resources to fund Private entities and Charters, then that is not fair! Yes, there are choices. Everyone has a choice, but if funds are regulated equally and fairly, why remove money from already underfunded public schools for one's personal choice and fund private schools with public funds? IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE!

Teachers are supposed to be unlocking a student's potential, inspiring their dreams, and nurturing their ideas. It is hard to do that when your classroom is overcrowded, when your school is too hot and there is no air or too cold and there is no heat! There is no reason why a teacher who already isn't paid enough has to put in her budget to buy a whole class crayons. Especially when there is a multi-billion-dollar surplus! Why is that? Why am I working everyday paying taxes and my kid gets sent home because our school doesn't have heat? Did you not know winter is coming?

Teachers' wages should be raised with that surplus, universal free lunches and breakfasts could be implemented with that money. I am sure considering your age you remember going to school and having adequate tools that gave you real life experience, carpentry classes, and home economics. Things that the older generations preach to the youth about having more responsibilities but how can that be when the playing field is not fair!

I just read an article that says we are living in the K-12 version of The Hunger Games. I ask you, is that fair? Is that a just and appropriate circumstance? The Fair School Funding Plan is not fully funded and was ordered to be implemented in 1997. It is now 2023! Why are we here?

We are no longer playing the waiting game. We should not have to wait decades for our state legislature to do the right thing and pass a school funding formula that lives up to the state's constitutional responsibility to provide a fairly and fully funded public education for our kids. Fund our public schools fully and fairly now!