

Proponent Testimony for House Bill 96
House Education Committee
Tuesday, February 25th, 2025
Written Testimony

Jordan Gerber, Canton City Schools Educator

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony. My name is Jordan Gerber. I am a public school educator for Canton City Schools District. I'm writing to urge the committee to include the 3rd phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget.

[Then tell them why! Make it short and sweet — a few paragraphs is perfect. Tell a personal story. Or explain why your job experience gives you this perspective on this issue. Maybe cite some statistics or case studies to back up your claims]

I've taught in both rural and urban public school districts over the past 11 years. I know how crucial it is for our schools to receive proper funding to adequately educate and care for our youth.

44% of our students in Canton City Schools live below the poverty line, that is 2x the typical amount. Our city is the 4th in the nation for poverty. Students in poverty are likely to experience trauma through loss of physical space (homes), loss of adult relationships (parents working long hours, etc.), loss of resources (healthy food, school supplies, transportation, home items, etc.), and abuse.

The number one factor for building resiliency in our students is a caring relationship with an adult. Our educators are trauma informed and continually growing in their understanding and how to create learning environments with high expectations for learning in a trauma focused setting. The goal for our students daily is to feel safe, known, and valued in order to engage their learning in a meaningful way. This requires our school to be fully staffed and trained, resources that could be cut if the 3rd phase of FSFP is not honored. Our guidance counselor, Tier 1 staff, community support workers, and educators all work together to bring stability, support, and high quality education to our students. These students deserve fully funded schools.

I ask you to consider my testimony and choose to support the 90% of Ohio students who attend public schools. Please include the 3rd phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.