

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Jen Powers Alge. I am a mom, an attorney and I work as Regional Director at the Arc of Ohio. I have two children in public school at Kings Local Schools here in Warren County Ohio. My son, Jack, has autism and is in the 8th grade. My daughter Evie has Down syndrome and is in the 5th grade. I'm sending you this written testimony today to urge the committee to include the 3rd phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget.

My children are thriving in their public school, but we have done the hard work to get here. We worked hard as soon as my son was diagnosed (while I was already pregnant with Evie) to get my son early intervention and private therapies. It isn't easy for children with disabilities to go to school with 25 kids in each class and extreme overcrowding in their buildings. Thankfully, Kings passed a Bond last year to build onto our buildings, but that does not include operating expenses. Now Kings is looking at having to put up a levy to increase our taxes more. People won't vote yes on that here because times are already so tight with inflation. So, we need fair funding from the state to come to Kings. We aren't getting the right amount of funding and it has been this way for years. Our representatives like Adam Matthews and Senator Wilson know the reality- our schools are getting squeezed by unfair (and unconstitutional by the way) funding laws. And kids like mine are going to suffer the most if we don't pass the levy and we can't operate at current levels. Larger class sizes, transportation cuts and less teachers and aides will hurt my kids the most. I also don't want my property value taking a hit when we start losing these things in our schools. We can do better for local communities and it's time for our tax money to go fairly to public 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 and invest in our public schools once and for all. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if you want to meet my family.

Jen Powers Alge | She/Hers/Her

Regional Director | The Arc of Ohio