

**Proponent Testimony for House Bill 96**  
**Senate Education Committee**  
**2/25/25**  
**Carla Blackmar Rice, parent**

Chair Fowler, Vice Chair Odioso and members of the Education committee of the Ohio Senate Education Committee:

I am a parent of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader and a 10<sup>th</sup> grader who attend Talawanda School District, in Butler County. My children have benefitted in so many ways from the excellence of the public education in our district. I am worried, however, that the quality of public education will erode if it is not funded adequately by the State.

I am writing to ask that you fully fund public K-12 education in this year's budget, as per the Fair School Funding Plan commitments.

There's nothing more critical to the future of our state than investing in quality, equitable public education. In my professional work at Miami University, and my volunteer work as the president of our local cooperative grocery store, I experience the myriad ways in which the quality of public education 'shows up' in the lives of Ohio's college students and workforce. Critical thinking, an understanding of basic STEM, professionalism in writing... these skills are a must in today's economy, and by and large, many of today's Ohio public school graduates have those skills.

The excellence of our education can pay dividends in our community long into the future. We are all reliant on others. Imagine who will take care of you in your sickness or old age, or the person who will repair your furnace, or the manager in charge of your local grocery store. Each of these people are critical for your wellbeing. Their ability to do their job well is directly related to the quality of the education they received. If we want a high standard of living, we must demand quality public education for all.

With many voters feeling the squeeze of higher property values and rising costs, half of Ohio's local school levies failed this past cycle. Without the Fair School Funding Plan, districts will have even fewer resources to prepare children to succeed.

I hope you will heed the concerns of Ohio voters and ensure that the Fair School Funding Plan is implemented in this year's budget.

Sincerely,

Carla Blackmar Rice

