

**Testimony to the Ohio House Education Committee**  
**Drew Plantz, Student**  
**Chesapeake High School**  
**March 4, 2025**

Good afternoon Chairwoman Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the Ohio House Education Committee.

My name is Drew Plantz, and I am a senior at Chesapeake High School in Lawrence County, where I play football and basketball. After graduation, I plan to pursue a degree in the medical field. I am here today with Hunger Free Schools Ohio because I have seen firsthand how much school meals matter, not just for me but for my teammates and students across the state.

When you are grinding through football practice, pushing the sleds or running baseline drills in basketball, you cannot do it on an empty stomach. School breakfast and lunch give us the energy to power through tough workouts and stay focused in class. But for a lot of kids, those meals are more than just a boost. They are essential.

I have teammates who rely on school meals because their families are stretched too thin to afford extra groceries. Others do not have time for a real breakfast in the morning because life at home is chaotic. Without these meals, they would be running on fumes, struggling to concentrate and falling behind, not because they are not smart or hardworking, but because they are hungry.

Proper nutrition is not a luxury. It is the foundation for everything - our health, education and future. Governor DeWine's budget takes an important step, but we need to go further. I am asking you to fully fund school meals so every kid in Ohio has the food they need to grow, learn and succeed.

Our future depends on it. Thank you.