



**Vice President Gabe Crenshaw
Cleveland Height -University Heights School District**

**Testimony -Support of Governor DeWine's Budget and Ohio's Fair School
Funding Plan**

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and the members of the Education Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of Governor DeWine's budget to fully fund Ohio's Fair School Funding Plan.

My name is Gabe Crenshaw and I serve on the Cleveland Hts-University Hts School board. I am writing to express my strong support for Governor DeWine's proposed budget and its commitment to advancing Ohio's Fair School Funding Plan. As an education leader and advocate for equitable access to resources, I urge the Ohio Legislature to continue prioritizing this initiative to ensure that every student, regardless of their zip code, receives a high-quality education.

The Ohio Constitution, Article VI, Section 2, mandates that the state provide a "thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state." However, for far too long, disparities in school funding have left many districts, particularly those in economically disadvantaged communities, struggling to meet this constitutional obligation. The Fair School Funding Plan represents a necessary step toward fulfilling this promise, providing a transparent, student-centered approach to funding that accounts for actual costs rather than arbitrary figures.

As a leader in higher education, I see firsthand the impact that an inequitable funding system has on students' educational trajectories. Students who come from underfunded K-12 districts are underprepared for postsecondary success. Ensuring adequate and equitable funding at the foundational levels of education will not only improve student outcomes but will also strengthen Ohio's workforce and economy.

Governor DeWine's budget rightly continues the phase-in of the Fair School Funding Plan, bringing us closer to a sustainable and fair formula that benefits all

Ohio students. I urge you to support this critical investment in our children, our communities, and our state's future.

Key benefits of the Fair School Funding Plan include:

- **Addressing Resource Gaps:** Many schools lack the necessary resources for modernized classrooms, updated technology, and sufficient support staff, putting students at a disadvantage.
- **Improving Teacher Retention:** Equitable funding will allow districts to offer competitive salaries and professional development opportunities, ensuring high-quality educators remain in our schools.
- **Enhancing Student Success:** Increased funding for early childhood education, intervention programs, and mental health services will help students thrive academically and personally.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your leadership and commitment to Ohio's students and look forward to seeing continued progress on this important issue.