

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 Jennifer Haaga. I am a parent who has two high school students in the Solon school district. I'm here to urge the committee to continue phasing the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan into Ohio's budget.

I have been involved in our schools since my oldest was in kindergarten and attended school board meetings. I have heard the way that the funding has changed over the years for our district and others. Lawmakers had cut out the TPP funding years ago, our district lost out on millions of dollars, and we had to pass a levy to maintain operating costs.

The Fair School Funding Plan was developed over the course of five years and to abandon it now would be disastrous for our public schools. 90% of students attend public schools which employ thousands of teachers, support staff, and other professionals. Public schools are the life blood of our state and communities and welcome every student and family and that requires sustained and substantive financial support.

Public dollars should go to public schools. The fact that over a billion dollars has gone to private school "vouchers" which go to people of every income level, have gone to families already involved in private schools, go to schools which not required to admit or provide services to every student, and do not require oversight of that school's performance or spending is what is not sustainable. Ohio ranked 5th in the nation in 2010 and now ranks 27th. How much further are you going to let our schools slide on your watch?

I ask you to consider my testimony and choose to support the 90% of Ohio students who attend public schools. Please continue phasing the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan into Ohio's budget. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jen Haaga

Solon, Ohio