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Testimony for Ohio Fair School Funding Plan

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

My name is Michelle, and I am a resident of Columbus, Ohio. My child is a second-grader enrolled in Columbus City Schools (CCS). I am grateful for the opportunities CCS has provided our child in academics, social and emotional learning, and holistic support as he ages into adolescence. His teachers through CCS have been excellent role models, so much so that he counts them as trusted adults in all aspects of his life.

Columbus City Schools worked hard to receive buy-in from community members to pass a levy in 2023, and the current plan from Governor DeWine threatens to undermine that increase in the budget for resources, lowering their funding by \$45 million over the next two years. As a taxpayer who voted in support of the levy, I am upset that the Governor is trying to take back the additional resources I agreed to fund for all kids in Columbus by cutting CCS's share of state funding. CCS serves every student who walks in their doors, including many students who are economically disadvantaged, whose families cannot afford to supplement their public education with additional resources. CCS must be fully funded so they can continue their important work of offering quality education to all students.

This concern is not limited to Columbus, however: Governor DeWine wants to cut funding for 87% of the state's public schools in the first year of this plan, while increasing funding for voucher programs for private schools by 16.5%. This is an unconscionable erosion to the strength of public schools, increasing opportunities only for students whose families that know to enroll in and can support their student in private or charter schools, which requires more parental availability and financial stability; this is unjust and indefensible.

I believe that a society can be judged by how they treat their children and their vulnerable, and cutting educational opportunities for public K-12 students shows a lack of care, respect, and investment in the future of Ohio's children, including many made vulnerable by economic disparity. I ask you to choose to support the 90% of Ohio students who attend public schools by rejecting Governor DeWine's plan and continuing with the next phase of the Fair School Funding Plan. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michelle

Kasler, K. (2025, February 19). DeWine's budget includes less money for Ohio's public schools, more for vouchers and charters. *The Statehouse News Bureau*.
<https://www.statenews.org/2025-02-19/dewines-budget-includes-less-money-for-ohios-public-schools-more-for-vouchers-and-charters>