

Interested Party Testimony for House Bill 96
House Education Committee
March 4, 2025

Molly Rankin, Columbus City Schools Parent

To Chair Fowler, Vice Chair Odioso, and members of the 2025 Education Committee of the Ohio House of Representatives:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Molly Rankin. I am a parent of two Columbus City Schools students- one at Clinton Elementary and the other at Columbus Gifted Academy. I am invested in the outcome of this bill as both a parent and a member of the Columbus community. I am writing today because I adamantly support the full funding of Ohio's public schools in the upcoming budget bill.

The experiences my children have had while attending Columbus City Schools have been integral to their growth and development. My children are inquisitive, thoughtful, questioners, readers, mathematicians, and listeners. They flex their empathy muscles better than adults, at times, and they are committed to learning and trying their best, even in the face of challenge. They love their schools, their teachers, and the opportunities that school has afforded for them to grow as unique individuals. In addition to the amazing classroom instruction each has received since we moved to the district three years ago, both of my children also receive gifted/enrichment services. I fear that with proposed cuts to our district in the upcoming budget bill, my children and their peers will lose access to these necessary educational services.

In addition, I fear that the proposed educational budget cuts will harm the most vulnerable students and families across Columbus City Schools and the state as a whole. In addition to traditional classroom instruction, public schools provide enhanced educational opportunities, English Language Learning, physical and cognitive therapies, Special Needs services, social-emotional support, reliable meals, transportation, childcare, and information access to both students and their families. These services center the reality that students can only learn and grow intellectually if their basic human needs are met. It is a public responsibility for our public schools to take on the role of providing and connecting all students to the services they need to thrive.

Today, I testify as a parent, on behalf of my children, but also on behalf of the children of all Columbus City Schools and children across Ohio. I ask that you please consider my testimony, and that you vote to fully fund public schools in Ohio.

Thank you.

Molly Rankin