

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

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

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read this letter in concerns to the CCS proposed budget cut over the next 2 years.

Hi, I am Cicily Howell, a mother of two children in fourth and sixth grade at Columbus City Schools district. I am also a Registered Nurse at Riverside Hospital and am dedicated to serving my community. Therefore I think it is important that I let my voice be heard not only for my own family but on behalf of the community I proudly serve. CCS is large district that has the privilege of representing a diverse population of students and families and cutting the budge over the next few years is going to negatively impact the future of Columbus.

So far, I have nothing but positive things to say regarding CCS. The teachers and staff are dedicated to the education of their students. Let's talk about teaching our kids to Read and IEP's. Learning to read is a hot topic not only in Columbus, but at State and National levels. Why are reading scorses continueing to decline? My son was a kindergartener during the dreaded time of Covid. Whether it was from the lack of schooling during covid or his innate ability, Reading has been a challenge for my son. Thankfully, in second grade his teacher brought it to our attention that he needed to be evaluated and indeed had a learning disability or dyslexia. My son is a social young man, full of life and thrives outside of school and on the playground. School is hard for him...in second grade he began having belly aches, crying on the weekend, not wanting to go to school. We took him to the doctor and even got an abdominal X-ray to ensure something physical was not going on with him. All of this was caused by the distress and fear of not being able to read. Once he got his IEP and more individual attetnion things got better. We also have had the privilege of supplemented his education with outside tutoring using the Orton-Gillingham Method. I can confidently say, thank you to all of these interventions my son can now read! He is still behind in his grade level but he is on his own journey.

Taking away funding will not only effect my family but those around me. Also,some other hot topics to me our improving the quality of schools lunches. If budgets are cut how are we going to increase the quality of providing healthy nourishing school lunches with minimally processed food. There are many resources and studies out there linking childhood diseases such as diabetes,mental illness and obesity to what kids are fueling their bodies with. If CCS is going to be a leader in Americas public education, play big and make stances they will impact the worlds future! I would be happy to provided resources and expand more on any of these topics!

Sincerely ,

Cicily Howell RN, NC-BC