

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

Mrs. Gretchen Greenawalt

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 Gretchen Greenawalt Davey, and I am a parent of three children in the Columbus City Schools school district. I am here because I support the full funding of Ohio's public schools in the upcoming budget bill. I fear our children will lose access to these necessary educational services if Ohio public schools are not fully funded in the upcoming budget bill.

It is not only my own children for whom I fear: I am deeply afraid that the proposed educational budget cuts will harm the most vulnerable students and families across the Columbus City Schools school district and across Ohio. In Columbus City Schools, the majority of students are students of color. Many students and families navigate economic hardship daily. The budget cuts will exacerbate the pre-existing struggle.

Public schools across Ohio provide educational opportunities, English Language Learning, physical and cognitive therapies, Special Needs services, social-emotional support, reliable meals, transportation, childcare and information access. *All* students deserve access to the benefits of public schools.

Today, I testify as a parent, on behalf of my children, but also on behalf of the children of 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. As you consider, I ask that you keep front of mind the most vulnerable students and families among us, those who stand to lose most profoundly if public school funding is cut. We live in community, responsible to one another, mutually impacted by one another's thriving *and* one another's pain. Public schools in Ohio are well-positioned to nurture the thriving of students and families across the state. I ask that in your considerations, you prioritize this vital, communal responsibility in which we share.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Greenawalt