

Proponent Testimony for HB62
House Education Committee
03/25/2025

Superintendent Roni Hayes, Fairland Local School District
Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Roni Hayes, I am the Superintendent of Fairland Local School District in Lawrence County and a member of the Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools.

Our Coalition and its member superintendents are in favor of all provisions included in the HB62.

The provisions of SB 62 provides cost savings to districts which will be a welcomed adjustment as our funds will be drastically decreased as proposed in the upcoming budget.

In addition, with more students taking online courses it negatively affects not only students but also the overall school climate and community engagement. Our schools risk losing their strongest student leaders, who often serve as role models and mentors to their peers. Leadership development occurs in classrooms, sports teams, clubs, and student government, all of which contribute to fostering well-rounded individuals ready for higher education and the workforce. Students who are less engaged in their education due to diminished opportunities may struggle with motivation, discipline, and future workforce preparedness. In the long run, this could lead to increased costs in other areas, such as workforce retraining, social services, and even public safety.

Thank you for your time, I would be glad to answer any questions the committee may have.

Roni Hayes