



OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The OEA will lead the way for continuous improvement of public education while advocating for members and the learners they serve.

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Ohio House Education Committee
House Bill 486 – Interested Party Testimony
November 13, 2025

Good morning, Chair Fowler-Arthur, Ranking Member Brennan, and members of the Ohio House Education Committee. My name is Jeff Wensing; I am a 32 year high school math teacher from Parma City Schools currently serving as President of the Ohio Education Association (OEA). On behalf of nearly 120,000 OEA members, thank you for the opportunity to provide Interested Party testimony on House Bill 486.

OEA is an Interested Party on HB 486. It is important to strike the right balance when developing or mandating curriculum. This is especially true when it comes to subject matter that can be controversial, divisive, or easily misinterpreted. To that end, OEA makes the following recommendations regarding HB 486:

- 1) Recommend referring the question on how to develop learning standards around the role of religion in history to the Department of Education and the Workforce (DEW). DEW has existing processes for developing learning standards, which already include many elements around the historic role and impacts of religion. The DEW process also includes opportunities for stakeholder input and feedback that are designed to lead to well-balanced learning standards.
- 2) Recommend amending the bill to drop the unnecessary reference to “positive,” and simply refer to instruction “about” the relevant role of religion in history (whether it be considered “positive,” “negative,” or somewhere in-between). While teaching about the “positive” impacts of religion in history is appropriate, a bill limited to promoting the “positive” impacts of religion is unduly narrow and provides an incomplete picture of history.
- 3) Recommend removing the reference to Charlie Kirk in the bill name as an unnecessary distraction. HB 486 seeks to address a long-standing and generic question with regard to the development of Ohio’s learning standards. It is not in keeping with spirit of PK-12 public education to name the bill after an individual not involved in Ohio’s public education system.

OEA appreciates the committee’s consideration of these amendment recommendations, which will increase the odds of this legislation having any positive impact.

