

Chair, Vice Chair, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your service to Ohio and for the important work you're doing on this committee.

My name is Todd Minniear. I'm a proud graduate of Lakota High School—the seventh-largest public high school in the state. My parents, my wife, and both of our sons also graduated from Lakota. I earned my undergraduate degree from the University of Cincinnati and later went back to school on a General Motors Fellowship and earned my MBA from Indiana University.

Career-wise, I've worked 10 years at GM, 10 at AT&T, 12 at Procter & Gamble, and I'm now with Aramco Oil.

Most relevant to this discussion, my wife—a lifelong educator—and I co-founded Community Montessori School, a non-charter K-8 school in Butler County, 15 years ago. Since then, our amazing teachers, in partnership with parents, have helped students grow into confident, respectful, future world changers.

It is clear to me that nothing is more important to our community than having all schools be healthy and strong.

I'm here today to express my strong support for **House Bill 96**, which I believe is an important continued step forward for Ohio's education system.

As you know, when EdChoice expanded, non-charter school families were wrongly excluded. This was a departure from the backpack bill which did include these families. When asked why they were not included, the common response was that these schools weren't held to the same requirements of charter schools, like testing.

HB96 addresses that. I firmly believe that the parents most invested in their child's education should have the means to choose the school that best meets their needs, HB96 Education Savings Account strengthens that freedom while directly addressing past concerns by, for the first time ever in Ohio, requiring testing for non-charter students and dozens of other new requirements on non-charter schools, effectively turning them into pseudo-charter schools. So, any previous material objections are now addressed.

Speaking more generally to school choice, let me share two simple truths I think we can all agree on.

First: No one school is the right fit for every student.

That includes public schools, private schools—and yes—even ours.

When families come to consider our school, they're trying to solve a problem. Their child isn't

learning in their current school. Or they've had a traumatic experience—bullying, anxiety, or something worse. Or the parents just want a different kind of philosophy or curriculum.

By the time they reach us, they're often in crisis. And here's the hard reality: families with money can make a change. Families without it can't.

Every year, we meet single moms working two or three jobs to support their kids. Their child is struggling in school—but they just can't afford tuition. **Funding that follows the student gives these families options—and hope.**

Second: Competition improves quality—everywhere.

Every industry previously restricted, where consumers are now enabled to choose and move freely, has improved the product—dramatically:

Education should be no exception. When families are provided the means to choose, all schools will get better.

Longer term say over the next decade, the growing school options will fuel innovation in education processes and curriculum and help schools evolve to deliver much more than what we can imagine today.

Let's make sure financial barriers don't prevent kids from getting the education they deserve.

HB96 moves us in that direction. I encourage you to support it—and to continue expanding educational opportunity for all Ohio families.

Thank you for your time.