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**Public Consulting Group**

**Testimony on House Bill 96**  
**Senate Education Committee**

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Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram and members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Dr. Evan Lefsky, and I direct the Education Consulting practice area for Public Consulting Group (PCG). I'm a former school and district administrator and worked for years with Governor Bush in Florida leading educational policy focused on literacy improvement from birth through adulthood. PCG is a multinational management consulting firm focused on supporting state and local government clients in the areas of education, health care, workforce, and technology. PCG was founded nearly 40 years ago and works across all 50 states. Our education practice area partners with more than 5000 school districts and 27 state departments of education, including LEAs across Ohio and the Department of Education and Workforce.

PCG has had the opportunity to partner with many states and school districts as they focus on strategies to improve student outcomes in literacy and mathematics. One emerging strategy that is producing strong results is the creation of state and district localized curriculum for mathematics and literacy, including professional learning for teachers and leaders to support successful implementation. More and more states and school districts are not achieving the student performance results they desire, and one contributing factor has been that off-the-shelf curriculum and instructional materials are not meeting the local needs of teachers and students. This is often due to the fact that many of these materials were developed as national products and then slightly adjusted to meet the basic requirements in individual states. Unfortunately, these instructional materials often don't fully meet state requirements and aren't always responsive to the values and needs of Ohio stakeholders.

One state that has built their own model curriculum is Texas. The Texas Education Agency has partnered with PCG since 2022 to develop a state-owned curriculum and set of instructional materials to support K-12 language arts, K-5 mathematics, and K-5 social studies. Texas's goal was to create a set of high-quality instructional materials that would serve the needs of large urban districts such as Dallas and Houston, while also meeting the needs of the smaller rural districts that are predominant across the state. One of the key

features of the curriculum development process is the infusion of Texas-specific resources, history, and a focus on civic engagement across all subject areas. There has been significant stakeholder input from teachers, leaders, parents, and community members throughout the curriculum development process ensuring that the materials align strongly with Texas statutes, as well as Texas values and indicators of quality. The materials are offered to all Texas school districts at no cost and while their use is not required, they serve as a model of high-quality instructional materials that have been built by and for Texas.

PCG has established similar partnerships in Florida and Illinois where we are seeing significant improvements in student outcomes as a result of the implementation of custom curriculum and instructional materials, especially in K-5 literacy and mathematics. When these materials have been combined with professional learning and implementation supports aligned with the science of reading, we are seeing even greater student outcomes.

The state of Ohio has a significant opportunity to create a model curriculum that will engage stakeholders in its development and serve the needs of both large urban and suburban districts, as well as smaller rural school districts. As an example, the state can leverage the investments already made by LEAs in English language arts and reading and mathematics materials by enhancing them through the strategic infusion of Ohio history, elements of civic engagement, and other priorities elevated by stakeholders. This has the advantage of creating materials that are engaging for both students and teachers, appeal to the local values of Ohio stakeholders, and that achieve results. This can create an extremely high return on investment given the focus on improving early literacy and numeracy.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today and look forward to opportunities to partner with the state of Ohio to ensure successful outcomes for all Ohio students. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.