

To: Ohio Senate Education Committee
From: Dr. Michelle Barrett, SVP Research, Policy & Impact – Edmentum
Re: House Bill 96 Testimony

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Senate Education Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit interested party testimony on House Bill 96 (H.B. 96). My name is Dr. Michelle Barrett, and I serve as the Senior Vice President of Research, Policy & Impact at Edmentum. For nearly 60 years, Edmentum has supported educators and students with research-based digital curriculum, assessments, and intervention solutions. Our programs help students accelerate learning, engage in personalized instruction, and pursue career-connected pathways. Edmentum is proud to partner with over half of Ohio's 611 school districts across all 88 counties.

We appreciate Ohio's commitment to strengthening academic screening and intervention. As a leading educational provider committed to rigorous research, we ensure that our assessment and personalized intervention programs align with the high-quality, evidence-based strategic priorities of Ohio's parents, teachers, and administrators. We respectfully offer the following recommendations to inform the implementation of H.B. 96, particularly regarding the quality and use of assessment tools and the provisions for evidence-based instructional supports in the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's (DEW) budget. Our comments reflect nationally recognized best practices and are grounded in research on how to improve student achievement in reading and math by using assessment-informed instruction.

Academic Screening Standards

We support the use of high-quality academic screeners that are valid, reliable, and aligned with multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). Effective screeners should:

- Demonstrate strong reliability and predictive validity, including evidence that the assessment is free of subgroup bias.
- Offer classification accuracy metrics.
- Be brief, easy to administer, and yield clear, actionable data for instructional planning.
- Integrate with MTSS and be administered multiple times annually to inform tiered intervention strategies.

To maintain local control while promoting quality, we recommend the state adopt minimum standards for approved screeners, drawing on frameworks such as those from the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII).

Data Comparability and Statewide Reporting

Statewide data collection should enable meaningful comparison across different screening tools.

We encourage DEW to consider the following:

- Linking Studies: Partner with assessment providers to establish concordance tables with Ohio State Tests or other recognized benchmarks.
- Lexile® and Quantile® Scores: Require screening providers to report scores using MetaMetrics® scales to ensure consistency across tools.
- National Norms: Ensure screeners use nationally representative samples or valid weighting procedures to report percentile rankings.

This approach maintains district flexibility while supporting transparency and equity in state reporting.

Evidence-Based Math Intervention

We recommend that math interventions adopted under H.B. 96 adhere to key principles and standards supported by nationally recognized research review organizations such as What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Evidence for ESSA, and National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII).

These include:

- Explicit, systematic instruction aligned to Ohio Learning Standards.
- Scaffolded problem-solving and use of visuals and manipulatives.
- Ongoing progress monitoring using validated tools.
- Corrective feedback and frequent student engagement opportunities.
- Data-based individualization for students needing more intensive support.
- Support vocabulary development and strategies that serve diverse learners, including English learners and students with disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on House Bill 96. We commend the committee's focus on high-quality assessments and instructional tools and stand ready to support Ohio's continued efforts to improve outcomes for all students.