

Interested Party Testimony for Sub. H. B. 96
Senate Education Committee
May 13th 2025

Margaret Rahill, Educator
Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Chair Brenner,, Vice Chair Louis W. Blessing, III, and members of the Education Committee of the Ohio Senate:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Margaret Rahill. I am a ninth grade English teacher working within the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. I am writing to urge the committee to fully phase the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan into Ohio's budget, including updated data inputs.

As many of you know, the Fair School Funding Plan has been a laborious task for our representatives. It's taken hard work, well done research and extensive planning to create this bipartisanly supported plan. To get to this point without fully implementing the plan with updated data to account for fiscal changes in the years would be a dishonor to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in the creation of this plan.

As a teacher, I will say even more importantly, it will detrimentally impact all of our Ohio public school students. Without adequate adjustments to the fiscal changes districts are at risk of losing hundreds of thousands of dollars of funding vital to our programming. My district alone will lose just over 6 million dollars of funding in the next two years with just over 2 million dollars in cuts towards special education according to policy matters Ohio.

Those are big numbers, but their impact is even bigger as this would lead to local districts being forced to let go of essential employees like myself, educators trying to do their best for their kids each and every day. It would mean less during and after school programming like fine arts and music, clubs, and even sports which are major motivators for students attendance and success in schools. It would mean a potential loss of an essential para- professional who helps their student with special needs succeed in school each and everyday. The losses will add up, and we will see decreases in student outcomes such as standardized test scores, we'll see an increase in practitioner stress, and ultimately it will create a culture of anxiety, and pain.

Those students who will be most impacted by these cuts are like those I teach. Students who are bright, talented, curious kids who happen to fall below the poverty line. Who happen to have identity markers that fall into groups of people who have been historically marginalized and whose families have faced educational harm after educational harm done to them. They are the kids who were born with one extra chromosome or a make up of brain chemistry which differs from the norm. Who experience the fullness of life like anyone else but may need additional assistance to thrive like their peers.

As a public school teacher I'm scared this failure to implement the Fair School Funding Plan may lead to the loss of my job. But as a citizen of this state I am more concerned about my representatives failing to invest in the education of our people. The kids are our futures. They are who will take care of us when we are older. Who will lead our counties and cities and state to new levels. They are the reason we invest in public schools. Because we are reliant on them as much as they are reliant on us. Public schools shape our society. And when you stop investing in them, you stop investing in your communities.

I ask you to consider my testimony and fully phase the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan into Ohio's budget, including updated data inputs. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Margaret Rahill