

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 68, which would establish the Non-chartered Educational Savings Account Program in Ohio.

My name is Dan Gass and I reside in Columbus. I'm here today to acknowledge that while school choice was expanded in the last state operating budget cycle through the EdChoice Scholarship Program, there are still a significant amount of Ohio families who have been left out. My family is one of them.

Where your child or children attend school and why your family selected this educational option

My oldest son attends Columbus Classical Academy. After homeschooling him through 5th grade, my wife and I were pleased with how much he was learning relative to other students his age in the subjects he was interested in, but we decided that he needed additional structure and rigor for subjects that were less motivating to him. What sold us on CCA was the academic expertise and passion of the faculty, a curriculum that emphasizes physical fitness, as well as the school-wide culture of excellence.

The difference this educational option has made for your family

Our expectations for CCA have been exceeded and met. We are grateful for the important ways in which the school has been shaping our son to develop virtue. He has been exhibiting steady growth in his academic subject areas. He clearly admires his teachers – even of the subjects he doesn't particularly enjoy. He is by nature a bookworm, so CCA's emphasis on regular physical fitness has been very beneficial for his health. Before he started school, he wasn't sleeping well at night. After a couple weeks of school, he was able to go to bed on time and sleep well during the night.

What the Non-chartered Education Savings Account Program would mean for your family

Our ability to send our son to school is premised on a generous scholarship along with some financial assistance from family members. An ESA would allow us as parents to choose educational options that best fit our family's needs. This would free up funds for the school to

help support additional deserving families. Establishing an ESA for non-chartered schools would also give us the ability to send additional kids to CCA should the need arise.

I urge the Committee to favorably report Senate Bill 68 to make school choice truly universal in the Buckeye State. Knowing that the state operating budget cycle is the avenue for advancing bold, transformational public policy, I urge the legislature to bring the Non-chartered Education Savings Account Program to fruition during this decisive and impactful process. It would make a world of difference for a significant amount of Ohio families.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 68. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.