



Van Buren Local Schools
217 South Main Street
Van Buren, Ohio 45889



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The Honorable Jerry C. Cirino
Senator, Ohio's 18th Senate District
1 Capitol Square, Room 127
Columbus, OH 43215

Chairman Cirino -

On behalf of the Van Buren Local School District, we appreciate the opportunity to offer some thoughts regarding House Bill 96 in its current form. While we recognize that the bill includes several positive elements that can benefit Ohio's students and public education system, we have serious concerns about the potential impact on school funding—specifically, the future of the Fair School Funding (FSF) model and the proposed 30% cap on carry-over fund balances.

Ohio's K–12 education system is built upon the foundation of locally-elected school boards—individuals who are deeply rooted in their communities, including farmers, healthcare workers, small business owners, and many others. These community members are uniquely positioned to make informed financial decisions for their districts. Imposing a uniform cap on carry-over balances across all districts undermines this local authority and ignores the diverse financial realities and long-term planning needs of Ohio's schools. If the Senate intends to maintain a policy regarding carry-over balances, we strongly encourage replacing the blanket cap with a requirement for districts to adopt individualized policies that define reasonable minimum and maximum fund balance levels based on their unique circumstances.

Furthermore, we respectfully urge the Senate to uphold the core principles of the Fair School Funding plan, even if full funding of the formula inputs is not immediately feasible. FSF remains the most equitable and accurate approach to determining the true cost of education for students across the state.

Thank you for taking these concerns into account as you continue to shape Ohio's operating budget for the upcoming biennium.

Sincerely,

Jason Inkrott, Superintendent

Cathy M. Schuller, Treasurer