

Written Testimony
Interested Party Testimony for House Bill 96
Senate Finance Committee
Mary 23, 2025

Lindsey Wyckoff, Board of Education member, North Canton City Schools

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, and members of the Finance Committee of the Ohio Senate:

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony.

My name is Lindsey Wyckoff. I'm a 2002 graduate of Hoover High School and current school board member of North Canton City Schools. Today I write you as I am very concerned about the House's proposed budget structure for funding public education in Ohio. It is critical that the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan continue its implementation, with the inclusion of updated input numbers, in the biennial budget proposal.

During my time as a student in North Canton, I had the opportunity to explore my interests, including being part of *The Viking Views* staff. Our student newspaper had a reputation for being an award-winning publication and working on that staff taught me skills that I still use every day as a marketing and communications professional. With one sentence, my journalism teacher, Ms. Pam McCarthy, changed the trajectory of my life. She told us that, "every college has a sports information department." I started working in the sports information department as a sophomore and it helped prepare me for my career, including 10 years working in the NBA and NFL. Without that once piece of knowledge, my future could have been so different.

After transitioning to the nonprofit sector and relocating back to North Canton in 2017, I was elected to the school board in 2023. Our school district is the heart of our community. Whether it's Friday night football games or our Power of the Pen students participating in a competition, our Gay Straight Alliance creating community for LGBTQ+ students and their allies, a production of Freaky Friday, or, a community member catching the video recap created by our award-winning video production department, our neighbors embrace the activities, sports, and events that we host. Not funding our district as proposed could have detrimental impacts for our students, but furthermore, for our community.

As you consider the biennial budget, please know the impact you will have on 90% of students in Ohio – and their families, their neighbors, and entire communities. Without proper funding from the Fair School Funding Act, you are jeopardizing our collective future. An educated population is critical to our workforce locally and beyond.

The budget is about priorities. The current budget tells us that House Republicans want to prioritize other interests above our children, their wellbeing, and their education.

House Republicans want to use your constituents' tax dollars to fund a new stadium for the Browns — but then claim we don't have the funding to support public education.

I ask you to **ONLY support the state budget if it fully phases in the Fair School Funding Plan that includes updated cost inputs**, a bipartisan effort that will show our state and its residents that YOU are choosing to prioritize our collective future.

Thank you,
Lindsey Wyckoff