

**Interested Party Testimony for House Bill [96]  
[Senate / House] [Education/Finance] Committee  
05/29/2025**

**Lisa Nolan**

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Lisa L. Nolan Sylvania, Oh.

I am here as a parent, aunt, and advocate for Sylvania Public Schools and all public schools in Ohio. My work takes me throughout Northwest Ohio, where I meet with small business owners daily. I am advocating for the Fair School Funding Plan (FSFP), it is essential for future of my community and all of Ohio.

I grew up in Toledo in an Irish Catholic family and attended private Catholic school. My education was shaped by the Sisters of Notre Dame, instilling in me the importance of learning. Education equips you with tools for success that can never be taken away. My father understood the costs involved, including the taxes he paid for public schools, because he believed that everyone deserves access to quality education.

When I started my own family, deciding where to send my children to school became a critical issue. Private Catholic schooling was not an option for us. One of my sons has neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1), requiring specialized support through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Private schools are not mandated to provide those extra services, but public schools are. I can attest that Sylvania Schools did an excellent job supporting my son. When my children began middle school, state testing became more important. As test scores started to dictate federal funding to schools and districts, I observed that teachers shifted focus toward “teaching to the test” rather than focusing overall learning. The greater the test scores, the more funding a school would receive.

My daughter was enrolled in a Medical Technology program but realized it wasn’t the right fit for her. When she wanted to opt out, the school informed her that she couldn’t drop out, and insinuated that she wouldn’t achieve much anyway. After contacting the State Board, we discovered that if she left the program, the school would lose funding. Today, I am proud

to share that my daughter is studying to be a lawyer and is married to a U.S. Marine, who also graduated from Sylvania Schools. I attribute the failure of schools shifting focus from children to budget on the criteria established for receiving federal funding and the manner in which the state allocates funds.

I often hear complaints from business owners struggling to find capable employees. Many high school graduates lack basic skills—such as performing simple math or comprehending instructions. They may be able to identify a subject in a sentence, but they may struggle to understand its meaning, largely because it wasn't included on the test.

We have an obligation to ensure that every student receives an education and access to resources necessary for their success. Without a solid educational foundation, who will become our future farmers, business owners, construction workers, nurses, doctors, school board members, and state representatives?

I respectfully urge you to consider my testimony and to vote in support of funding the Fair School Funding Plan.

Thank you,

Lisa L. Nolan