



Great Kids. Great Promise. Great Results.

Interested Party Testimony

House Bill 64: Biennium budget, FY2016-2017

Presented by Julie Billiard School: Lannie Davis, Vice President of Julie Billiard School

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Driehaus and members of the House Finance Committee:

First and foremost, thank you for providing me the opportunity to speak today regarding House Bill 64. My name is Lannie Davis, and I am the Vice President and upcoming President of Julie Billiard School in Lyndhurst, Ohio. In addition, I am a board member of School Choice Ohio. As a board, we advocate for quality education options for parents throughout the State of Ohio. As an administrator of Julie Billiard School, I have done the same, just on a smaller scale. We are a dedicated school that serves students with a variety of special learning needs. We are a provider for the Autism Scholarship, Jon Peterson Scholarship and the EdChoice Scholarship. These funds have provided our students with an opportunity to access our unique environment and child-centered approach to learning.

Our Mission: Julie Billiard School nurtures and empowers students with special learning needs. It is a Catholic K-8 school rooted in the educational principles of the Sisters of Notre Dame and welcomes diverse faith traditions.

Our Vision: Julie Billiard School strives to build self-confidence, inspire Christian values and empower students with skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm for life-long learning.

Our curriculum and one-of-a-kind learning experiences differentiate Julie Billiard School from others. In addition to two licensed teachers in every grade level, Julie Billiard also offers many in house services, including art therapy, a music program, speech and occupational therapy, behavior therapy programing and the Wilson reading method. Julie Billiard School's structured and nurturing holistic program attends to the academic, social, physical and spiritual growth of each child. Our classroom sizes are small and intimate allowing our educators the opportunity to engage students in a nurturing and empowering manner. Educational practices, technology and faculty have changed radically since the school's founding in 1954, but the mission remains the same: empowering students with special learning needs to reach their full potential.

Due to our unique environment that has provided for 60 years of changing the lives of students and families with special learning needs, we have a higher per pupil cost. Our cost per student is \$28,740 annually; however, we only charge our tuition as \$20,000. As you know, the ASP and JPS programs cap at \$20,000, so we have had to make up the difference between actual tuition and scholarships available through a variety of ways to

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sustain our budget. Our families are unable to pay the differential, so we are finding ways to provide financial assistance to 100% of our families.

I come here today to show my support and advocacy for House Bill 64, and the recommended changes that School Choice Ohio has proposed in the subcommittee. Please consider increasing the current funding cap limit on the Autism and Jon Peterson scholarships to \$27,000 annually. Doing so will not cost the state any additional revenue as this funding is already available to students with special needs. The increased funding cap limit would simply insure additional funding is redirected to the student it is intended to benefit.

As a board member of School Choice Ohio and an administrator of a provider school who greatly benefits from these programs, I would like to say thank you. Thank you for your time and consideration of this proposal. I know that our governor is dedicated to quality educational options for all kids and the passing of this bill will ensure that I can continue to offer these quality educational options for Cleveland families who have been touched with special learning needs and differences.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

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