



September 21, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you to express my strong support for Senate Bill 358, which will extend the educational moratoriums put in place to help Ohio schools when COVID-19 affected education this spring.

As we are all aware, the impact of the coronavirus has not dissipated as the months have passed. It is my firm belief that we need to give all school districts, especially urban districts like Toledo Public Schools, as much support, protection and flexibility as we can as they work to educate students during the 2020-2021 school year.

This bill will extend through the current school year all of the educational moratoriums included in House Bills 197 and 164, passed this spring. I am particularly supportive of the following key items from Senate Bill 358:

- Requiring the Ohio Department of Education to request a waiver for federally required state tests
- Continuing the freeze on report cards and steps such as new state takeovers and EdChoice district designations
- Allowing districts flexibility regarding evaluations for educators and administrators, as well as student promotions and graduation requirements

The unprecedented situation in the spring, along with the normal summer slide, has created serious gaps in student learning. Our teachers need to focus on getting all students back on track, so I am supportive of anything we can do to make sure our educators are focused on teaching, instead of tests and evaluations.

Without the extensions outlined in Senate Bill 358, I believe the 2020-2021 school year will be even more stressful for teachers, students and families than is already predicted. Passing Senate Bill 358 will ensure educators can focus on what is most important - the safety and education of our children.

Sincerely,

Chris Varwig  
Vice President  
Toledo Board of Education  
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