



**House Government Oversight Committee
House Bill 298 Testimony
Ohio School Boards Association
Buckeye Association of School Administrators
Ohio Association of School Business Officials
Sept. 28, 2021**

Good morning, Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of House Bill (HB) 298. My name is Jennifer Hogue, director of legislative services for the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA). Joining me today for this testimony and in answering your questions is Katie Johnson, deputy executive director for the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO). Kevin Miller, director of governmental relations for the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA), could not be with us today but shares our support.

Our organizations represent public school district boards of education, superintendents, treasurers/CFOs, business managers, and other school business officials from around the state. On behalf of our members, we support HB 298 and thank Reps. Adam Bird and Joe Miller for sponsoring the legislation.

HB 298 would revise the composition of the State Board of Education by reducing the number of members from 19 to 11 and phasing out the eight gubernatorial appointees who currently serve on the panel.

Under current law, the State Board of Education consists of 19 voting members, 11 of whom are elected and whose territory consists of three contiguous state Senate districts. The remaining eight members are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Two nonvoting ex officio members also sit on the board and consist of the chairs of the House and Senate committees that deal primarily with education.

Ohio's State Board of Education has a constitutional and statutory obligation to set forth the needs of public education in its budget and policy recommendations to the governor and members of the General Assembly. It also has an active role in major policy areas, like setting the state's learning standards, adopting cut scores for state end-of-course exams, establishing grading methodologies for the state report card, and overseeing the state's educator licensure system.

These important functions should be carried out and voted on solely by individuals who are elected by and accountable to their constituents. At the core of our organizations' existence is the belief that education in Ohio is at its best when the interests of the people are served through publicly elected boards, and that includes the State Board of Education. We urge your support of HB 298.

Chair Wilkin and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for your time and attention. We would be happy to address your questions.