

Sunday, October 8, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in response to Bill 200. Currently, my children are both enrolled in Our Shepherd Lutheran School, Painesville, Oh. This also happens to be a part of our congregation that we belong to.

When I was first notified about the possibility of the Ed Choice Scholarship for my children, I was so happy. My daughter was going to begin Kindergarten and my son was going into 4<sup>th</sup> grade. While he had a few friends at his school, he was not challenged academically enough and he was bullied daily due to his size and physical ability. It was heartbreaking to console him when he didn't understand and came home crying. Teachers use the color system for conduct and while I constantly brought this issue to their attention, they felt that moving children to yellow (caution) or red (unacceptable) was enough punishment. We felt we had no options and now our daughter would be starting in the fall as well.

Then the notice came in the mail one day about the Ed Choice Scholarship. My husband and I called Our Shepherd and thankfully we were able to have room for both of our children to enroll there. Without this scholarship, we cannot financially provide this education for our children. Here they are thriving. My son is no longer bullied and has many friends. He is challenged academically and is maturing into a wonderful person. My daughter loves it. She enjoys going to school and loves helping others. We love that it is a safe and Christ-based learning environment. Being a part of our church also makes them feel they are with family daily.

Thank you for considering HB200. I hope to see families continue to be able to choose the education best for their children, regardless of their income.

Nicole and Craig Wilhelm