

Fort Frye Local School District



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Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor, and Members of the Ohio House Education and Career Readiness Committee, I am Stephanie Starcher, Superintendent of the Fort Frye Local School District in Washington County.

I am providing written testimony in support of House Bill 591, which would substantially change Ohio's state report card system for school systems. This report card system is in dire need of significant revisions, and educators across the state have been adamantly lobbying for such changes for years because they understand best practices in assessment and accountability.

The intent of the school report card is to provide feedback to families and communities with regard to the performance of the local school and/or district and to provide data that can inform instruction and educational decision making. In its current form, the state report card does not serve these purposes. For example, the K-3 Literacy measure is so phenomenally complex that it does not capture how a district is helping students meet reading proficiency expectations to move onto the 4th grade, where mastery of basic reading skills is a must.

The Prepared for Success measure narrowly defines "success" on standards that reflect pursuit of a four-year degree, but many high school graduates are "successful" in post-secondary vocational training or jobs which pay a decent wage. Further, serving in the military is an honorable commitment that should be credited towards the measure of success in this formula, but it currently is not.

The performance index measure is not based on an equitable scale for points awarded at each performance level, with higher numerical values being deducted for earning below proficient scores than rewarded for scoring proficient or above. This is just one example where the system is set up to be punitive.

In some measures on the report card, more than 70% of Ohio's schools are earning an "F" or "D", which leads one to question if the components are valid. Further, letter grade ratings are very misleading.

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The proposed amendments in House Bill 591 address many of these items and others in one manner or another. The House Bill relies more heavily on raw data reporting that can more readily be used by school officials to improve instruction and educational services. Representative Duffey has done an excellent job researching the state report card and speaking directly with stakeholders and educational experts to find some solutions to the problems with the current state report card. As a Superintendent in an Ohio public school system, I support House Bill 591.