

House Education and Career Readiness Committee
House Bill 591 Written Proponent Testimony
December 4, 2018

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, and members of the House Education and Career Readiness Committee. Thank you for the opportunity provide input regarding House Bill (HB) 591, a bill to revise Ohio's school district report card.

My name is Thomas Szendrey. I am currently the principal of North Ridgeville High School in Lorain County, Ohio. Originally a math teacher, I have been a school administrator at the middle and high school levels for approximately twenty years. I began teaching under the Ohio Proficiency Test system, have seen the birth and death of the Ohio Graduation Test, and am living with the Ohio State Testing system currently in place.

I would like to thank the sponsors of HB 591 for recognizing that there are flaws in Ohio's School Accountability System. I would like to address multiple concerns of the Report Card that impacts high schools, including the Prepared for Success Component, the treatment and scoring of students with disabilities and my overall concern with Ohio's assessment system in general (which ultimately affects the district report card).

Students with Disabilities

The way Ohio's Accountability System treats students with disabilities is unconscionable. First, students who choose to remain in school beyond four years are counted as non-graduates. Second, students are mandated to take tests over material they have never seen. The number of students allowed to take an alternate assessment is limited to percentages that do not make sense for each school district's population. Finally, students who are allowed to graduate without

meeting the testing requirements due to a disability are counted as non-graduates when the district's graduation rate is calculated.

Prepared for Success Component of the Ohio Report Card

Under the current system, to calculate the Prepared for Success component of the report, a school district earns 1 point for any student who earns one of the following:

1. ACT or SAT remediation-free scores;
2. An Honors Diploma; or
3. Twelve points through an industry-recognized credential or group of credentials in one of 13 high-demand career fields.

Then a district has an opportunity to earn 0.3 bonus points for any of the students who ALSO meets 1 or more of these criteria:

1. Scores 3 points or more on at least one Advanced Placement test;
2. Scores 4 points or more on at least one International Baccalaureate test; or
3. Earns at least 3 credits through the College Credit Plus program.

The numbers are calculated and a percentage score is translated to a letter grade. While HB 591 eliminates the letter grade, this score would remain. I contend that this score is misleading for multiple reasons and I am hopeful that HB 591 can address these reasons.

First, students who take numerous CCP courses and intend to continue at a community college, have no incentive to prepare for the SAT or ACT. Similarly, the Honors Diploma is not a primary factor (nor should it be) when most students are planning the courses they take. Also, unless a student is at a vocational school, it is almost impossible to earn 12 points through an

industry credential. Yet, these students may be earning college credits or scoring well on the AP or IB tests, and there is no recognition for those students.

In addition to the positive changes already contained in HB 591, my recommendation is to change the way this score is calculated so that those who score well on an AP or IB test, or who earn CCP credits are considered college ready regardless of their ACT/SAT Scores, Honors Diploma attainment, and industry credential attainment.

Time

HB 591 does not specifically address Ohio's assessment system, however, I have concerns that I would like to make you aware of related to assessments. I believe the system does have a great deal of influence on report card results. Currently, the testing system at the high school requires that do not have a regular school day on eight days in the second semester. One day we administer the SAT, and on seven days we administer the End of Course Assessments. This doesn't include time taken from students when they are retesting during the school year.

Additionally, the administrative burden of the testing requirements are substantial. North Ridgeville is a growing community and we receive a large number of new students each year. The process of locating and entering test scores provides many opportunities for error, and is time consuming. Finally, determining the testing requirements for those who have moved from another state are extremely confusing.

Most importantly, the testing provides little usable data for a school district to make judgments about the educational needs of each student, and does not provide the data in a timely fashion.