

Dear Chairwoman Lehner, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Sycks and members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Josie Dupler and I am Courtney Vogt. We are early childhood educators in Southeastern Ohio in the Athens City School District. We are here in support of Senate Bill 216. Thank you for this opportunity. After reading thoroughly through this bill we have a few talking points.

First, in regards to the Teacher Evaluation System we are so pleased to see you understand the flaws in the current process. We were happy to see that evaluation frequency would decrease when a teacher has demonstrated s/he is an accomplished teacher. With these proposed changes, educators will be able to focus more on the students in our classroom and on the instruction they need and less time on paperwork for an evaluation.

The Kindergarten Readiness Diagnostic Assessment requires a great deal of time, which teachers could dedicate to social and emotional needs of students. Many of these young children in our area have never been exposed to a structured, academic environment. It is imperative that these teachers are able to spend this time to begin instruction and teach them appropriate social interactions.

We were also pleased to see changes in the college credit plus. In our college town, our district is losing numerous dollars due to students enrolling in college level classes. By putting some of this financial requirement on the families, it will alleviate a large financial burden on our district.

Preschool is a critical foundation for children. Improving the student to teacher ratio will benefit students in multiple ways. For example, our preschools that are integrated with students with learning differences deserve to have an environment that is the least restrictive yet most beneficial for them to grow and learn.

Finally, we are unclear on the grade bands within the licensure changes. Will teachers be grandfathered in or will all teacher licenses change? Also, we noticed preschool is not mentioned in the bands, how will they be affected by this change? We do feel it is necessary to maintain the requirement that preschool teachers hold a teaching license.

We thank you again so much for recognizing that changes are needed in public education in Ohio. This bill offers the possibility of hope for changes to improve the public

education system sooner rather than later. We'd be happy to answer any questions from the committee. Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,  
Josie Dupler  
Courtney Vogt