**Dr. Myrna Loy Corley, Superintendent**

**East Cleveland City School District**

**Senate Education Committee**

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**Introduction**

My name is Dr. Myrna Loy Corley and I am the superintendent of the East Cleveland City School District. Sincerest thanks to Chairman Lehner, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Education Committee for hearing the voices of urban education today. Today I am here to present testimony that will provide a backdrop to the request for a temporary moratorium on Academic Distress Commissions being established. This amendment is necessary to reinforce the overarching goals of increasing academic achievement for all students in East Cleveland and the state of Ohio as a whole. Time, which is the underlying request of this testimony, is needed to study the impact of implementation and the outcome on the students whom this bill ultimately impacts.

**East Cleveland City School District Improvement Plan**:

Increasing student academic performance is imperative and is of paramount importance in the East Cleveland City School District. As depicted on the 2015 local report card, the East Cleveland City School District received an A in Value Added, indicative of the fact that students within the District made progress relative to academic achievement as evidenced on State assessments. This testimony is not intended to make excuses for improving student academic achievement. The testimony is intended to offer insight relative to needed consideration to continue to improve student academic achievement within the East Cleveland City School District amidst a plethora of challenges.

Further, the East Cleveland City School District has responded to the recommendations made as a result of the Onsite Diagnostic Review conducted by the Ohio Department of Education. The recommendations as implemented are reflected in the District’s “Crosswalk Document.”

The district has responded to student and adult implementation data by making multiple changes to increase both achievement and growth of our students. The information listed below is inclusive, but not limited to, some of the changes that have been implemented:

* Replaced the middle and high school principals.
* Replaced curriculum personnel.
* Increased student support staff at the high school and middle school.
* Increased preschool classes.
* Implemented a revised instructional framework.
* Created coherence around curriculum, instruction and student outcomes.
* Implemented intensive professional development in the district’s primary instructional strategies (Differentiated Instruction, Response To Intervention, and Universal Design for Learning).
* Trained Literacy Specialists in research-based, tier three intensive interventions.
* Revised curriculum maps to unpack the standards to reflect the instructional shifts of the Next Generation Assessments and encapsulated 21st century skills.
* Instituted a daily intervention and enrichment period for all students.
* Consistent adherence to the Ohio Improvement Process, inclusive of Building Leadership Teams, Teacher Based Teams and the District Leadership Team.
* Teacher Based Teams meet daily at the middle and high school and weekly at the elementary schools for focused collaboration relative to data analysis and the implementation of rigorous and appropriate instructional strategies.
* Developed electronic monitoring system, which is used for the Ohio Improvement Process and walkthrough data to ensure central office and District Leadership Team oversight and adherence to district initiatives and mandates.
* Continued and enhanced Professional Development Academies reflective of data, both academic and non-academic, for alignment with district strategies (i.e. the introduction of monitoring and evaluation tools include: RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric, School Wide PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory.
* Continuous development of a plethora of academic and nonacademic partnerships to assist in improving student academic achievement and addressing social, emotional, and wellness needs of students and families (Youth Mental Health First Aid, Participation in the HB 410 Multidisciplinary Truancy Team Pilot Program, Community Based Mental Health Service Providers, continued cultivation of community partnerships with a focus on health and wellness, and the development of Trauma-Informed classrooms and schools
* Formative Assessments are administered to provide current information relative to students’ current level of academic performance, thereby informing teachers of the individual academic needs of all students.
* Continued implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) strategies and interventions resulting in a 48% decrease in the number of student suspensions.
* All students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade received home libraries to assist in reducing the summer slide and increase academic achievement.
* Provide extended school year offerings through the Summer Enrichment Academy and the Cultural Arts Program.
* Provide Saturday School as a means of meeting the individual academic needs of students.
* Implemented additional gifted services for middle and high school students.
* Implemented enrichment courses at the elementary level to increase rigorous curricula offerings to more students.
* Provided students with Chromebooks to assist in closing the technology gap, while assisting them in being active participants in 21st century projects, designed to assist them with developing ideas that can be utilized to solve complex, real world problems.
* Obtained a 5 Star Step Up to Quality rating (highest rating) for our preschool program.

**Improvement Results**

The East Cleveland City School District has evidenced improvement from the 2015 -2016 school year to the 2016 - 2017 school year. The increases have been captured in the table below and show that sixteen out of twenty three indicators have shown increased achievement. By implementing the continuous improvement process, we anticipate the data to continue trending upward.

● In English/Language Arts, the district evidenced improvement in student proficiency based on the Ohio State Tests (OSTs) of at least 13.5% for grades 3, 4, 6 and 7. Individual breakdowns can be found in the table below.
● In mathematics, the district evidenced improvement in student proficiency based on the Ohio State Tests (OSTs) of at least 5.9% for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Individual breakdowns can be found in the table below.

● In the area of social studies, the district evidenced improvement at 100% of all tested grade levels with 4th grade social studies improving 6.5%, 6th grade social studies improving 18.6%, U.S. history (an assessment administered to 10th graders) improving 9.7%, and U.S. Government (an assessment administered to 11th graders) improving 38.3%.

● 83% of all schools (5 out of 6) in the district evidenced growth in the performance index. Caledonia Elementary School evidenced 12.1 points from 46.6 to 58.7, thereby increasing their overall component grade from an F to a D. Likewise, Mayfair Elementary School improved their performance index to 59.3 from 46.9, an increase of 12.4 points, increasing the school’s overall component grade from an F to a D. Chambers Elementary School increased their performance index score from 46.6 to 51.8, a 5.2 point increase which also increased their component grade level from an F to D. Superior Elementary School increased their performance index score from 46.2 to 51.9, an increase of 5.7 points increasing their component score from an F to a D. As a district, there was an increase of 4.7 points from 43.4 to 48.1
● 100% of the district’s elementary schools increased their Component Progress grade by one letter grade level. Chambers Elementary School increasing from a D to a C; Caledonia Elementary School increasing from a C to a B; and both Mayfair and Superior increasing from a B to an A. 50% of the district’s elementary schools, Mayfair and Superior, earned all A’s in the evaluated sub-groups of students with disabilities, lowest 20% of achievement, and overall status. Shaw High School increased their subgroup letter grade for Progress for students identified as gifted from a “D” to a “C.” As a district, gains were seen in the Progress section of the report card in fourth grade English/language arts, fourth grade math, fifth grade English/language arts, fifth grade math, sixth grade math, and English II at the high school level.
● Mayfair and Superior Elementary School(s) have received a Momentum Award from the Ohio Department of Education for 2 years, the 2015 and 2017 school years.
● 100% of the district’s elementary schools improved or maintained their grade level designation in the area of K-3 literacy. Caledonia Elementary School evidenced an increase in 13.1% raising their overall grade designation from a “D” to a “C.” Mayfair Elementary School increased their overall grade by 2.9% which moved the overall grade from a “D” to a “C.” Chambers Elementary School maintained a grade of “C” and Superior Elementary School evidenced an improvement of 33.6% which yielded a grade level increase of two designations from “D” to “B.” As a district, gains were made in K-3 literacy increasing from 39.8% to 48.5%, an increase of 8.7% which also yielded an increase in overall grade level designation from a “D” to a “C.”
● 83% of all buildings in the district evidenced improvement in the Gap Closing measure with Mayfair Elementary School evidencing a 29.2% improvement and Caledonia Elementary School evidencing a 43.1% improvement. Heritage Middle School evidenced a 2.2% gain, Chambers Elementary School evidenced a 14% gain, and Superior Elementary School evidenced a 12.7% gain.

● Evidenced a 68% increase in the number of students taking Advanced Placement classes.

● Evidenced an increase in the number of students earning college credit through the College Credit Plus Program by 70 students, resulting in a 337.5% increase.

● As depicted in the chart below, students progressed from lower to higher designations as follows: 342 students moved up from the limited level; 48 students moved up from the basic level; 149 additional students earned proficient status; 65 additional students earned accelerated status; and 35 additional students earned advanced status.

**Ohio State Assessments - 2016-2017 and 2015-2016**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grades** | **Subjects** | **2015-2016** | **2016-2017** | **Gains** |
| **3rd** | **ELA** | 19.3% | 35.7% | 16.4% |
| **Math** | 23.8% | 41.5% | 17.7% |
| **4th** | **ELA** | 21.1% | 35.1% | 14.0% |
| **Math** | 29.3% | 35.3% | 6.0% |
| **Social Studies** | 48.0% | 54.5% | 6.5% |
| **Math** | 22.2% | 28.1% | 5.9% |
| **Science** | 22.4% | 24.4% | 2% |
| **6th** | **ELA** | 20.6% | 34.2% | 14.2% |
| **Math** | 14.9% | 26.4% | 11.5% |
| **Social Studies** | 15.0% | 33.6% | 18.6% |
| **7th** | **ELA** | 13.6% | 27.1% | 13.5% |
| **Math** | 6.8% | 13.2% | 6.4% |
| **High School** | **Algebra I** | 4.7% | 5.2% | .5% |
|  | **English II** | 15.8% | 25.7% | 9.9% |
|  | **Government** | 17.1% | 55.4% | 38.3% |
|  | **History** | 28.9% | 38.6% | 9.7% |
| **Advanced** | 6.5% | 38 students | 73 students | +35 students |
| **Accelerated** | 19.3% | 137 students | 202 students | +65 students |
| **Proficient** | 23.8% | 498 students | 647 students | +149 students |
| **Basic** | 21.1% | 896 students | 848 students | -48 students |
| **Limited** | 29.3% | 1655 students | 1306 students | -342 students |

**East Cleveland Successes**

An example of the success of students who are educated in the East Cleveland City School District can be partially captured from the accomplishments of students in the most recent graduating class; the Class of 2017:

The class of 2017 earned admission to 69 different colleges and universities including the following HBCUs: Alabama A&M, Alabama State University, Alcorn University, Bethune-Cookman University, Central State University, Concordia College, Fisk University, Jackson State University, Kentucky State University, Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, Miles College, Mississippi Valley State University, Morehouse College, Shaw University, Tennessee State University, Tuskegee University, and Xavier University of Louisiana.
● The class of 2017 was collectively awarded $2,350,464.00 in scholarship monies, inclusive of students who earned full academic scholarships.

Members of this graduating class successfully completed the Provost Scholars program through Case Western Reserve University, earning fully paid scholarships to attend the University.

● Students from the class of 2017 took 55 Advanced Placement exams during their four year career in the subject areas of chemistry, environmental sciences, U.S. history, U.S. government, statistics, and English.
● Students from the class of 2017 earned college credit while simultaneously earning high school credit through a College Credit Plus partnership with Wilberforce College in the subject areas of college level algebra, U.S. government, and composition.
● Members of the class of 2017 earned college credits by taking online classes through a partnership with Hiram College and attending live classes at the Cuyahoga Community College downtown campus in the areas of college composition writing, personal health and wellness, American government, sociology, general psychology, collegiate Spanish, women studies, and survey of rock and roll.

● Students in the class of 2017 completed a full training regimen in the JROTC program earning a rank of Let 4, with one student being awarded a fully paid scholarship by the United States Army.
● Members of this graduation class participated in programs offered by the Starfish Foundation for mentoring young women who planned on attending college, with the headline speaker Soledad O’Brien of CNN.
● Members of this graduating class served actively as volunteers with the Ohio Voter Fund in voter registration and get out of the vote campaigns for the presidential election of 2016.​
● Members of this graduating class have received opportunities for summer internships with Parker-Hannifin Corporation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland as a result of completing the Jobs for Ohio Graduates program through Youth Opportunities Unlimited.
● Members of this graduating class participated in the Stop the Hate Youth Sing Out competition at the Maltz Museum. The performance group earned top honors and a $5,000 scholarship for Shaw High School for violence prevention training for the performance of their original rap, “Let’s Talk.”​​
● Students from this graduating class submitted and defended business and marketing plans during the NAACP Afro-Academic Cultural Technological and Scientific Olympics this past April
● Members of this graduating class had their visual art work submitted and shown multiple times in the 13th Congressional District Art Show each of the last four years.
● Members of this graduating class had opportunities to meet and speak with such prominent individuals as Raymond Mabus, former Secretary of the Navy under the President Obama administration; Dr. Steven M. Stack, former president of the American Medical Association; U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown; and Coretta Scott King Book Award winner Sharon Draper.
● Students in this graduating class had the opportunity to travel to China with the Confucius Institute this past summer.

● Students in this graduating class were selected to participate in the Cleveland Clinic Civic Education Summer Science Internship Program.

● Students in the class of 2017 served as members and officers in National Honor Society.

23 students in the 2017 graduating class were continuously enrolled from kindergarten to twelfth grade in the East Cleveland City School District. Of those 23, 19 were graduates (83%).

* 4 of those 19 were in the top 10 of their graduating class; 6 of those 19 were in the top 20.
* This group of 19 graduates earned a possible $1,172,844 in scholarship monies towards a four year college education. This represents 49.8% of the total scholarship dollars earned by the class of 2017 on total.
* 13 of those 19 graduates completed a career-technical education program of their choosing with 3 students completing both their OPOTA and APCO licensures, 2 students completing ASC certifications in light vehicle maintenance, and 2 students completing their licensure from the Ohio State Board of Cosmetology.
* Based on OGT scores taken during the students’ first attempt of their sophomore year, these students amassed 89.05 points towards the performance index out of a possible score of 120. These students’ PI scores were 74.21 which is a grade of C.

**Challenges**

Students with disabilities (SWD) represent 25.7% of the total population of students in the East Cleveland City School District, while only 14% of all students in the state fall into the same designation.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Disability Condition | Student Count | Disability Condition | Student Count | Disability Condition | Student Count |
| Multiple Handicap | 22 | Visual Impairments | 1 | Speech and Language | 51 |
| Orthopedic Impairment | 1 | Emotional Disability | 63 | Intellectual Disability | 70 |
| Specific Learning Disability | 232 | Autism | 13 | Traumatic Brain Injury | 4 |
| Other Health Impairment Major | 1 | Other Health Impairment Minor | 83 | Developmental Delay | 1 |

Contrastingly, of the students enrolled in the district, 112 students are identified as gifted or talented (5.3% of the population).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Gifted/Talented Student Count | # of students in given grade band |
| 40 students | Grades K-6 |
| 29 students | Grades 7-8 |
| 43 students | Grades 9-12 |

There is a disproportionate amount of students identified as students with disabilities when compared to gifted students. This disproportionately results in a negative impact on testing, as more gifted students would likely result in higher test scores.

**Lack of Consistency in Testing Formats**

There have been changes to the Ohio state assessments for three consecutive years. Specifically, in 2013-2014 the State administered the Ohio Achievement Test and the Ohio Graduation Test. The PARCC was administered in 2014-2015. The Ohio State Test was administered in 2015-2016. Further, the transition from paper/pencil test(s) to online testing presented an additional challenge in test preparation for students.

**Mobility**

Transient students are identified and recorded on the district report card under Mobility Rates measure. The mobility percentage is the difference of your students who count for a full academic year (FAY) and your total student population. A student who attends for a full academic year is one who is continuously enrolled in the building/district from the Friday of the first full week of October through spring testing.[1] This is a student that “counts” for you and this information is published under the Where Kids Count (WKC) measure.

Mobility rates have a distinct impact on testing. As much as the WKC measure tries to take into account student mobility, the measure fails to look at the student’s progress longitudinally.

A student who enrolls in the East Cleveland City School District for the first time as a twelfth grader has a significantly lower likelihood of graduation than a student who enrolls for the first time to ECCSD as a ninth grader.

The chart below represents the district’s mobility rate for the past three school years.



These trends are consistent looking back to previous cohorts.

**This table summarizes much of the information discussed above:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | 2017 Cohort | 2016 Cohort | 2015 Cohort |
| # of graduates | 150 | 152 | 188 |
| # of students in cohort | 221 | 224 | 274 |
| Graduation Rate (4 Year) | 68.0% | 69.3% | 71.5% |
| % of graduates enrolled in K-5 | 74% | 73% | 78% |
| % of graduates enrolled in grades 6-8 | 77% | 80% | 71% |
| % of graduates enrolled in grades 9-11 | 68% | 64% | 66% |
| % of graduates enrolled in grade 12 | 59% | 55% | 57% |
| % of graduates enrolled in kindergarten | 83% | 80% | 84% |
| Performance Index based on state assessments required for graduation for students continuously enrolled since kindergarten | 74.21%; grade of C | 71.74%; grade of C | 70.93%; grade of C |

[1] https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Data/Report-Card-Resources/Sections/Report-Card-Resources/WHERE-KIDS-COUNT.pdf.aspx

**Suggested Considerations**

1. Develop alternative and multiple assessment measures reflective of providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of content in multiple ways.
2. The growth measurement is currently reflective of the three year aggregate rating rather than depicting a single year growth rating. This change will accurately communicate the work of the district to the public for the school year that is being evaluated. The 2017-2018 SY Report Card will average the last three years together for an overall component grade with each year worth approximately 33%.
3. A differentiated reporting system that provides tiered levels of reporting based on varying demographics and other factors. This change will compare similar districts to each other instead of comparing all districts in the state.
4. An Improvement measure will communicate all gains toward the state goals on the specified report card indicators. This measure will provide evidence of the impact of district programming as a means to bring about sustained, long-term, systemic academic improvement.
5. A significant change to the Gap Closing Component is needed to account for the individualized district gap closing goals, rather than a one size fits all goal, which in many cases is unrealistic and unattainable in a one year span.
6. Districts should be assessed relative to wraparound services that are offered to students/families designed to meet the needs of students including those services/programs that meet both the academic and nonacademic needs of students. (i.e. wellness, mental health services, parent workshops etc).
7. Consideration relative to the impact of transient students and longevity in the school district.
8. Consideration relative to the ratio of students with disabilities when compared to students identified as gifted.

**Conclusion**

The proposed amendment is for a three year moratorium. While I have highlighted several key areas for consideration, it is important that the work that is evidencing gains is expanded. A three year moratorium will allow for further implementation of the continuous improvement plan while allowing for urgent attention to be paid to impending academic and non-academic barriers. Additionally, this time will provide opportunities for the implementation of the mid-sized urban school districts’ proposal designed to positively impact student academic achievement by utilizing a peer to peer best practices design, inclusive of educational rounds. As we focus on the needs and challenges of educating the whole child, it is imperative that this committee consider the impact of this legislation on the progress of students and communities we serve. I appreciate this opportunity to expound upon this viewpoint. Should you have any questions I am willing to respond to them.