



Ohio Association  
of Secondary School Administrators



**House Primary and Secondary Education Committee  
HB 583 Proponent Testimony  
Buckeye Association of School Administrators  
Ohio Association of School Business Officials  
Ohio School Boards Association  
Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators  
Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators  
Alliance for High Quality Education  
March 8, 2022**

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill (HB) 583. My name is Kevin Miller, the Director of Governmental Relations for the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA). Joining me today are Barbara Shaner, representing the Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA) and the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA); Jennifer Hogue of the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA); Katie Johnson of the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO); and Tony Podojil of the Alliance for High Quality Education.

HB 583 gives local boards of education the right to establish educational requirements for their short-term substitute teachers, parallel to the flexibility that districts have been able to use through the '20-'21 and '21-'22 school years. The bill also provides guardrails around longer-term subs. and includes a provision that allows student teachers to substitute for up to five days during their student teaching experience. All these provisions are permissive, allowing for local control.

We thank Representative Bird and Representative Jones for sponsoring HB 583. The need for this legislation is great. At the beginning of this school year, we asked superintendents and treasurers to respond to a survey regarding the availability of substitute teachers in their districts. 234 different districts responded to the survey.

Over 96% of the respondents noted that they are experiencing substitute teacher shortages.

Over 98% noted that their substitute list has decreased since the '18-'19 school year. The average decrease in districts' list of available substitutes was 32%.

On average, the respondents noted that they would need 22 additional teaching substitutes to address their substitute needs for the 21-22 school year. The additional substitutes needed ranged from a low of 3 to a high of 200 (district responses were not broken down by size).

Over 93% of the respondents said that they would support permanent legislation that provides flexibility for school districts to establish their own educational requirements.

Representative comments on the survey included:

- *There are many days where our district is without a substitute teacher in a classroom and we have to place multiple teaching staff in that open classroom to fill the day. It saddens me to put this extra work on our already overworked staff*
- *We need relief now.*
- *(With the sub. flexibility) we were able to use several students that are in the education field on days they did not have class. It worked out very well! Our principals are exhausted from having to teach in classrooms while at the same time complete their job and monitor student safety in this ever-changing environment.*
- *(It) would be nice to be able to determine at the local level who is capable of subbing for our district since we know the applicants.*

One might think that the substitute shortage is pandemic-related and will improve, but the reality is that districts will continue to struggle with hiring substitutes. The job market has become increasingly competitive, and it is difficult for districts to compete in the market with substitute rates that are generally \$115 to \$125 a day. In addition, districts are struggling with finding teaching candidates, let alone substitutes. A 2019 study by the Center for American Progress shows that nationally, enrollment in teacher prep programs decreased almost 36% from 2010 to 2018. The study also shows that Ohio's decrease in teacher prep programs is closer to 47%. During that same time frame, the percentage of students who enrolled in a teacher prep program but did not complete the program fell 28%.

Though the challenges for school districts will most likely only increase, HB 583 includes a provision that sunsets the bill June 30, 2025. This gives the legislature the ability to review the data on substitute shortages over the next three school years and make an informed decision at that time as to whether substitute flexibility should be

extended.

Other states have successfully provided similar substitute flexibility for many years. Indiana requires substitutes have a high school degree or GED equivalent and meet local district requirements. In Michigan and Illinois, college students who have earned 60 credit hours can substitute. Kentucky provides a substitute certificate to college students who have earned 64 credit hours. This makes it reasonable that Ohio would allow a student teacher to serve as a substitute a certain number of days. In North Carolina, each local board sets its own educational requirements for substitutes. These are all long-standing, pre-pandemic substitute requirements in these states.

It would be appropriate to note in the legislation that student teachers can only substitute in the classroom or classrooms to which their student teaching experience is taking place.

One other thing we would ask the committee to address in HB 583 is the additional regulations required for substitutes for preschools housed in our public schools. These requirements are outlined in Ohio Administrative Code and include:

- A statement signed by a medical professional that documents they are free of communicable disease and fit to work with children;
- Evidence on file that staff listed on an IEP providing services for children with disabilities are qualified personnel as required in rule 3301-51-11 of the Administrative Code;
- Orientation training as prescribed by ODE, completed within thirty days of the individual's start date; and
- A signed non-guilty non-conviction statement on a prescribed form updated annually.

These provisions are already covered through artifacts such as the substitute's BCI/FBI background check and the district's own orientation for substitutes. These requirements create undue barriers for districts to find preschool substitutes, impacting the educational opportunities for our youngest students. We request that these unnecessary requirements be suspended while HB 583 is in effect.

Chair Manning and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of HB 583. We are happy to answer any questions you might have.