



**Interested Party testimony submitted to the  
House Finance Committee  
House Bill 33  
Dorothy Moulthrop, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer  
Open Doors Academy  
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Chair Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and Members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on House Bill 33. My name is Dr. Dorothy Moulthrop, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Open Doors Academy (ODA), an educational nonprofit that provides afterschool programs, summer camps, scholar travel opportunities, and year-round family engagement programming to kids and young adults across Northern and Central Ohio. We are not a school. We do not receive per pupil funding. Our mission is to protect, inspire, nurture, and challenge youth to reach their full potential. ODA is based in Cleveland and serves more than 1,600 kids and families each year.

In the last budget, ODA was awarded \$2.3 million in TANF funds each fiscal year to support and grow our programming. As a result of this investment, five afterschool programs were added or expanded at Firelands Local Schools, Lima City Schools, Mansfield City Schools, and Sandusky City Schools. Today, ODA has 20 programs in eight school districts, and we continue to receive requests to open additional programs at schools in the districts we serve, as well as schools that would like to open new programs in other areas of the state. **We ask for your support of an amendment to provide TANF funding for ODA, with an increase to \$2.8 million each fiscal year to sustain this growth.**

The majority of our scholars are African American and come from low income families. In fact, over 90% of our kids and families live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Our model is research-based and built on the belief that providing youth with a safe environment, caring adult relationships, and strong community partnerships builds a solid foundation to achieve their academic and career goals. We believe our outcomes speak to the success of our model: last year, on average, the more time a scholar spent in the program the greater the increase on his or her math proficiency, and since 2018, 100% of ODA students who spent two years in our high school program graduated high school.

ODA launched the Center for Out-of-School Advancement (COSA) in 2018 to elevate the field of out-of-school time (OST) education and programming as a key to breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty. The Ohio Department of Education has recognized ODA's expertise in OST education, partnering with COSA to provide professional development and regional trainings to over 200 other OST programs across Ohio that serve over 40,000 kids. COSA strengthens the OST field for programs in all corners of the state that are recipients of Ohio's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grants via a three-prong approach: helping OST programs build organizational capacity, conducting high quality research that promotes innovative models, and advocating for the field.

Many of our scholars' parents cannot afford childcare before and after school or during the summer. Our programs allow them to keep their jobs by providing a safe and reliable place for their children to continue learning beyond school hours.

Again, I ask that you support an amendment to continue funding for ODA in the operating budget so that we can continue to work with children across Ohio to reach their full potential. Thank you for allowing the opportunity to submit written testimony today.