

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 10/6/23

Name: Jon C. Detwiler

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Fremont City Schools

Position/Title: Superintendent

Address: 500 W. State St.

City: Fremont State: OH Zip: 43420

Best Contact Telephone: 419-307-9618 Email: detwilerj@fremontschools.net

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 206

Specific Issue: Support for passage

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 5 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

See attached

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

Chairman Bird, Vice-Chair Fowler-Arthur, Ranking Member Lightbody, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 206.

She sprayed pepper spray in another student's face and started swinging. This was in the bathroom close to the cafeteria filled with 200 students. This is the scenario under which I have expelled a student for the longest amount of time during my 11 years as a superintendent. I have never expelled a student for 180 days. Under current law, 180 days is the maximum amount of time I can expel a student that brings a gun to school. After those 180 days, one school year, that student must return to the same building, with the same students and the same staff.

I am here as a proponent of HB 206. This bill would allow me to ask for professional psychological help in determining whether or not a student is fit to return. Anyone in the school business must admit that predicting human behavior with any level of certainty is a challenging, if not impossible, task, however, this bill would allow a superintendent to delay that student's return to school based on a mental health professional's evaluation.

This bill is not perfect. I can see how this power could be abused by a school administrator that is facing a lot of public pressure to keep a child out of school. Instead of the final decision being made by the superintendent alone, a committee could be charged with this recommendation. For example, as of last spring, every public school in the state now has a trained Threat Assessment Team. That team, along with a representative from the governor's Ohio School Safety Center could gather and make an appropriate decision.

I believe HB 206 would give schools a better process to reintroduce students to school while recognizing that school safety is our top priority.

Thank you.