



Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary committee, thank you for allowing us to submit testimony in support of House Bill 171. My name is Beryl Brown Piccolantonio and I have the incredible honor of serving as Board President of the Gahanna-Jefferson school board. We are grateful for this opportunity to submit proponent testimony for this legislation.

In Gahanna-Jefferson city schools, our vision is to “IGNITE a passion for lifelong learning, ENRICH student experiences, and CHAMPION pathways of success for all” and our mission is to “empower students for lifelong success by ensuring that student learning is our top priority, preparing each student to continually thrive in an ever-changing world”. Our district values are: integrity, collaboration, inclusivity, students first, empowerment, and excellence.

We believe this bill represents our district vision, mission, and values in action and we are incredibly proud that one of our recent Gahanna graduates worked with our State Representative to write the legislation.

House Bill 171 would work within the existing standards, revisions and corresponding curriculum development process, providing options and enriching the guidance used by our education experts to continue developing the best curriculum for Ohio’s students. It will update the model curricula to provide a guidepost for Ohio school districts and educators who seek to educate and engage Ohio’s students on the histories of the peoples who already call Ohio home, many of whom immigrated here from countries across the world. We believe it will also encourage the development of resources so they are available for our professional educators to use.

Important to us, this legislation respects local control because it does not mandate or impose anything, including cost, on local school districts and it allows us to retain the ability to make our own choices about which curricula we use.

We believe we were elected to make sure that every single student in our school district receives the best possible education. Research shows that students learn best when they feel like they are part of their community, have relationships with peers and adults, when they feel seen and accepted for who they are - when they feel a sense of belonging. We believe locally elected board members are in the best position to ensure that school district



staff is making sure every student feels a sense of belonging so that they can learn to their fullest potential and become contributing members of our community.

Thank you for allowing me to share my Board's thoughts about this proposed legislation. And, thank you all for your dedication and service. Please reach out to me with any questions you might have.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beryl Brown Piccolantonio".

Beryl Brown Piccolantonio

President, Gahanna-Jefferson school board

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daphne Moehring".

Daphne Moehring

Vice President, Gahanna-Jefferson school board

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara M. Coates".

Kara Coates

Member, Gahanna-Jefferson school board

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Horn".

Sue Horn

Member, Gahanna-Jefferson school board

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dion Manley".

Dion Manley

Member, Gahanna-Jefferson school board