

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 445. My name is Kristie Stollsteimer and I am from Defiance County.

Under the current law my parental choice for my child is dishonored. Currently, school officials can reject a parent's choice, denying students access to time release. This should not be a school official's choice. There certainly are things the school officials should decide, but this law should not be one of them. If the school official wants to have a finance class required for a student to graduate that is their decision. If a school official disallows release time, this is not their decision to make.

Choosing release time for my child should be a simple task. If my child has a passion or area of expertise and is not allowed to pursue it because of another person's view; it infringes on my parental rights. Often, this is a battle because of a lack of knowledge and lack of knowledge shouldn't be the reason this choice is eliminated. Many personal choices and beliefs are currently accommodated (for example if you believe you are cat or different gender and bathroom signs are being updated). Another example would be, if my child chooses to compete in gymnastics at a private club and the school officials deny her that right because it is not a "school sport." This shouldn't be a decision school officials should make for my child. This time release option should be a choice left to me as a parent not school officials. I am hoping you allow parents the freedom to choose time release if they desire. School officials are not parents and time release programs are not a choice they should be allowed to deny parents.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to advocate for House Bill 445.

Kristie Stollsteimer