

The Joint Education Oversight Committee

Testimony regarding Ohio's State Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in developing new regulations for our public schools. I have a son, currently a junior at Little Miami High School and I work in the Wilmington City Schools as an occupational therapist. Besides the fact that my family is involved in public education, I have considered myself an educator since I started working in the schools in 1993. I still am proud to be a public educator, but I am greatly concerned by the attitudes encouraged by some of our government leaders regarding public schools and public school teachers.

According to the Ohio Department of Education, "The Ohio Department of Education thanks the 15,000 Ohioans who have already provided input into the plan. Approximately 3,100 individuals participated in the ESSA webinars and 1,500 people attended the 10 regional meetings. There were more than 11,000 responses to the ESSA online survey. Additionally, the Ohio Department of Education participated in more than 70 meetings and presentations around the state and collected suggestions and recommendations submitted through email to the Department."

No doubt a lot of effort has been made to get input on this rule. I have just two questions:

1. What were the results of all the surveys and inputs regarding the amount of testing schools be required to perform?

My understanding is that almost everyone wants less testing. They feel it has hurt rather than helped. They give examples of the incentives it creates and the focus it shifts to test based education. They say some students wither in such an environment. So tell me why decreasing testing was not considered as an improvement to Ohio's education rule making? This is a question for the Joint Education Oversight Committee. I remember hearing of "boxes of letters" regarding PARCC testing. Don't you remember?

2. Why would you disregard so much resistance to continuing the current level of mandated, required, legislated and unwelcome rule making when decreased regulation and local control has been re-valued for education in America?

I regret I cannot hear responses to these questions because the answers are not obvious to me or I would not ask. I want the answers to be made clear as anyone wishes for such an important set of rules we follow. I also regret I cannot give specific guidance on the right amount of testing. I defer to the educational community to give you that guidance. I just wish the legislative community would do the same and listen.

Thank you again and I wish you clear judgment in you deciding,

Ron Thornbury
5479 Roachester Osceola Rd.
Morrow, Ohio 45152