

Dear Legislator \_\_\_\_\_,

I am \_\_\_\_\_ (your Name), and I am calling on behalf of my school district, Northwest Local Schools, in Hamilton Ohio.

I am very concerned about the ramifications of HB 166 if it continues to be implemented.

I am not in favor of the recent changes concerning the EdChoice Voucher Program identified in House Bill 166. The legislation written in HB 166 will drastically affect the school district's funding and will severely cripple the public school system.

In the past, students who qualified for EdChoice vouchers had to attend local public school in order to meet the requirements for the voucher. The recent changes in HB 166 no longer requires any of the students to have past attendance in Northwest Local schools in order to receive a voucher. As a result, taxpayers are left to fund the public school system in order to pay vouchers for students who never set foot in public schools.

As a taxpayer, I did not vote to pay for students to attend private school. I voted in support of our public school district. Edchoice vouchers should be funded by the State of Ohio. Northwest Local Schools recently passed a 7.5 mill levy that taxpayers funded. The Edchoice vouchers will take an additional \$3.4 million to \$4.4 million from our funding, which will further compound the financial burden on our community. Simply put, Edchoice is leaving taxpayers without a choice.

**Here are the changes in legislation that need to go into effect concerning EdChoice:**

- Any building receiving an overall grade of A, B or C should not become subject to EdChoice eligibility and should be removed from the eligibility list. Overall building grade is already being used to exempt high performing buildings from some EdChoice eligibility triggers.
- Reverse the language in HB 166 to require high school students to attend a public school in the year prior to applying for an EdChoice voucher, as currently required for grades K-8.
- Remove the K-3 Literacy measure from the criteria that makes a building eligible.
- Require that performance be measured by "three consecutive years".
- If building performance improved during the safe harbor years (2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017), ODE must utilize that data to redetermine EdChoice eligibility.
- The default program for students who qualify for both should be the income-based voucher program funded by the state.
- Eligible schools must have two or more components along with D or F grades before qualifying for EdChoice.