

Friday, April 11, 2025

Urging Removal of 30% Reserve Cap & Support for Full Fair School Funding Phase-In

Dear Senator Cirino,

As Treasurer/CFO of the Ottawa Hills Local School District in Northwest Ohio, I am writing to express concern about a key provision in the House version of the state budget that proposes a 30% cap on cash balance reserves for school districts. I strongly urge the Senate to remove this cap and instead focus on the full and continued phase-in of the Fair School Funding Plan using updated, research-based inputs for the cost of educating a child.

Ottawa Hills is a small, high-performing district that, contrary to perception, does not maintain a large cash reserve. We rely heavily on our local taxpayers and have minimal flexibility when unexpected costs arise or state funding is reduced. Capping our reserve balances would hinder our ability to manage cash flow, weather economic fluctuations, and maintain fiscal stability, particularly in a district like ours with very limited state support.

It is essential that the General Assembly continue the bipartisan momentum behind the Fair School Funding Plan. The updated base cost methodology, reflecting the true cost of educating a student in today's environment, must be fully phased in to ensure necessary funding across all Ohio districts. Our students deserve a funding system grounded in reality, not one capped by artificial limits.

On behalf of the students and taxpayers of Ottawa Hills, I respectfully ask for your leadership in:

1. Removing the proposed 30% cap on school district reserve balances
2. Fully phasing in the Fair School Funding Plan with updated cost inputs

Thank you for your service to Ohio and your commitment to public education. Please feel free to reach out if you would like to discuss our district's specific needs in more detail.

Sincerely,

Thomas Siloy

