



Madeira City Schools

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Date: June 23, 2025

To: Members of the Ohio General Assembly

Subject: Urgent Concerns Regarding HB 96 and Education Policy Provisions

Dear Members of the Ohio General Assembly,

On behalf of Madeira City Schools, we respectfully urge you to consider several critical concerns as you finalize the state budget through Amended Substitute House Bill 96. As one of Ohio's top-performing districts, we are deeply committed to student success, responsible financial stewardship, and the values of local control. However, several provisions currently under consideration jeopardize that success—not just for Madeira, but for school districts across the state.

1. Remove the Cash Balance Carryover Cap

Proposals to limit school district cash carryover balances severely undermine local fiscal planning. These balances are not excesses—they are strategic reserves that help districts manage uncertainty, address emergencies, and plan for long-term investments. Madeira has been following a permanent improvement strategy for the past 20 years that helps to maintain and improve our facility needs within our the district.

2. Reject the Elimination of Inside Millage (HB 335)

The proposed elimination of inside millage through HB 335 would devastate public education funding, stripping essential dollars away from schools without voter input. For Madeira alone, this would mean an estimated \$2.5 million annual loss—directly threatening programs, staffing, and services that our community has long supported. Inside millage is a foundational element of public finance for schools, cities, and essential services like police and fire.

3. Support the Fair School Funding Plan

We continue to advocate for the full and equitable implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan. This plan, developed through years of bipartisan collaboration, is grounded in actual student needs and reflects the true cost of educating children in today's world. A stable and adequate funding model is essential to ensure that every student in Ohio—regardless of ZIP code—has access to quality educational opportunities.

4. Preserve Nonpartisan School Board Elections

Ohio's tradition of nonpartisan school board elections ensures that local education leadership is focused on students, not party politics. Requiring partisan declarations would politicize a process that has long served our communities well, limit who can run for office, increase election costs, and erode public trust. Our focus should remain on student achievement—not partisanship.

We respectfully urge you to remove these harmful provisions from the final version of HB 96 and instead support policy that honors local decision-making, protects public education funding, and puts students first.

Sincerely,

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"A school community where learning is personalized and success is ensured."