

House Finance and Appropriations Committee
Testimony on Substitute House Bill 1
Pamela Reisch
April 23, 2009

Good Morning Chairman Sykes, Ranking Member Amstutz and members of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee. My name is Pamela Reisch and I am currently an Early Childhood Coordinator for Columbus City Schools.

I have worked for the district since 1990 and have over 15 years experience as a Public Preschool Teacher and a full-day kindergarten teacher. I am honored to have this opportunity to share my personal experiences with you and be a witness for Early Childhood Educators and Public School Preschool Teachers in Ohio.

Today Columbus City Schools offer 30 classrooms in 28 elementary schools as well as 2 collaborative projects at Franklin County Board of MRDD and The Ohio State University Laboratory School, also known as the Schoenbaum Family Center at Weinland Park.

As we begin our preschool registration for next year, 2009-2010, every day, all day our Early Childhood office fields calls from parents who need full-day preschool for their child. We are both very pleased to be full and sad to have wait lists for many of our classrooms. Parents in the district know about us and want us.

Our programs provide a high quality public school preschool experience. We provide a comprehensive developmentally appropriate program that meets the needs of preschool families and children in our district. We offer health screenings, we do home visits, provide parent involvement opportunities and a wealth of educational opportunities that many of our children so desperately need.

I am 100% certain that there have been at least 100 or more people before me who have shared the importance of a high quality education and that children are "our future" and we must "invest in them." I am here in this time of economic hardship to please ask you to continue taking care of our young children because research by so many organizations all point to the same factors – the kids who have a preschool experience are the future college graduates and are more likely to have higher lifetime earnings than those who do not have an early childhood preschool experience.

In these difficult economic times, it is an easy decision and a safe investment of dollars to continue funding for Public Preschool Education.

Thank you for your time and I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.