



March 2, 2018

Mr. Paolo DeMaria  
Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Ohio Department of Education  
25 South Front Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Mr. DeMaria:

With great respect for the responsibility, I accepted my appointment to the Academic Distress Commission in December of 2015. I value student and family engagement, and I believe I have brought a strong voice to the Commission in this area. However, while I will continue to serve the Youngstown City School District and the entire community through my work with the Raymond John Wean Foundation, at this time I am submitting my resignation from the Commission.

Because educational opportunity for my community is a matter of such importance to me, I would like to offer some observations and recommendations as you seek my successor on the Commission.

- The State would do well to exert itself as a strong partner, not only to empower and communicate in a transparent way with the CEO, but also key stakeholders, including the Commission, the school board, students, parents and the many others who care about the future of the schools.
- Despite the many talents, skills and experiences of members of the Academic Distress Commission, there are times when subject-matter expertise on a wide range of issues facing the schools is needed, including assessment and budgeting. The current structure does not lend itself to access to this support.
- The work of the Commission requires having a solid vision for the district, complete with goals and measurement tools. I believe these goals must be constantly re-evaluated to ensure that they are shared among the many stakeholders of the Youngstown City School District.

I offer these recommendations of the current work and operating practices as aspirational goals that I believe will help ensure that the Commission will best serve the needs of the Youngstown City School District and its many stakeholders.

The strength of public education in the City of Youngstown and beyond remains of great concern for me, personally and in my work. While I am unable to continue serving on the Commission, I hope to remain a resource to this important effort going forward.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Roller  
President