



Ohio House Finance Committee
Testimony of Dennis Franks
Superintendent, Pickaway-Ross Career and Technology Center

HB 166 Testimony / Funding for Career Technical Schools

May 6, 2019

Chair Oelslager, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Cera, and Members of the Ohio House Finance Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Dennis Franks and I am the Superintendent of Pickaway-Ross CTC, as well as a former member of the Governor's Executive Workforce Board. I am here testifying on behalf of the Ohio Association of Career Technical Superintendents (OACTS), the Ohio Association of Career-Technical Education (Ohio ACTE), and the Ohio Association of Compact and Comprehensive Career Technical Schools (Ohio CCS). Collectively, these associations represent the entire career-tech community, including its schools, teachers, administrators, and students.

I testify today to raise a concern with the school funding formula as proposed in HB 166. For some context, over the last year the education community has been primarily focused on discussions surrounding the Cupp / Patterson (new) school funding formula (which our associations and members support) as there was some degree of confidence it would be included in the House version of the budget bill. But it appears the House has postponed the Cupp / Patterson proposal for now, and, as a result, we have been conducting a more in depth review of the Governor's school funding proposal—which, in addition to increasing funds for wraparound services (an increase we applaud), essentially freezes funding for schools over the upcoming biennium at FY 2019 levels.

The primary concern with this approach relates to career-technical education (CTE) tiered or “weighted” funding. As you may know, in addition to the set dollar amount career-technical schools (like all others) currently receive per student, we also receive a separate per-pupil sum of money to operate career-technical programs. The additional funding is a set amount in “tiers” based on the level of funding necessary to operate the particular program. For example, a district providing career technical education (JVSD, compact or comprehensive) receives \$5,192 (subject to state share) extra per student enrolled in agriculture, construction, engineering/science, manufacturing, and health systems programs (the highest tier). Alternatively, these districts receive \$1,308 (subject to state share) extra per student enrolled in family and consumer science programs (the lowest tier). The “tiers” or levels are outlined under RC 3317.014, which I attach to this testimony.

These critical weighted funds are used for supplies, materials and equipment that cost significantly more than those needed for a traditional academic classroom. The Ohio General

Assembly has viewed weighted funding as incredibly important to career-technical education for many years. The five different tiers and associated levels of funding are based on job and workforce data, with the most “in-demand” programs receiving the highest level of funding.

Over the last two budget cycles, the state made a policy decision (which we support) to place this weighted funding outside the traditional “cap and guarantee.” Doing so facilitated our schools’ ability to add new students and start new programs. In other words, we currently receive additional weighted funding if we add more students, but lose the funding if enrollment declines—regardless of whether we are on the cap or guarantee.

If *weighted* funding is frozen and not subject to enrollment increases/decreases, our schools would receive no *supplemental* funding for new career-tech students and will once again struggle to offer any **new** career-tech programming. **As such, we seek to ensure career-tech weighted funding is still subject to enrollment, regardless of the proposed FY 2019 funding freeze.** Indeed, there is still a high demand for skilled workers in Ohio, which has been continuously emphasized in recent months by business and industry. The weighted funding structure is critical for career-technical schools across the state to be more responsive to the workforce needs of their regions. For example, the weighted funds are vital for career-technical schools that seek to continue establishing satellite programs, which have the effect of increasing accessibility of career-tech statewide. It is also vital for schools that seek to establish customized training programs that respond to the unique workforce needs of businesses in their designated area.

To make matters more complicated, our schools are already in the process of buying new equipment and recruiting for next year’s programs based on the reasonable assumption that weighted funds were to be paid based on current enrollment. Hence, if weighted funds are frozen at 2019 levels, districts will have to divert already committed resources and/or prioritize and possibly reduce planned expenditures in other critical areas through no fault of their own.

We are still examining the proposal but the “weighted funding freeze” appears to be the top concern among the career-technical education associations and their member schools / administrators. Our hope is that through the remaining months of the budget process we can work with House and Senate members, and the Administration, to examine and possibly resolve this core funding issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

3317.014 Career-technical education program amount per pupil.

The career-technical education additional amount per pupil for each student enrolled in career-technical education programs approved by the department of education under section 3317.161 of the Revised Code shall be as follows:

(A) An amount of \$5,192 for each student enrolled in career-technical education workforce development programs in agricultural and environmental systems, construction technologies, engineering and science technologies, finance, health science, information technology, and manufacturing technologies, each of which shall be defined by the department in consultation with the governor's office of workforce transformation;

(B) An amount of \$4,921 for each student enrolled in workforce development programs in business and administration, hospitality and tourism, human services, law and public safety, transportation systems, and arts and communications, each of which shall be defined by the department in consultation with the governor's office of workforce transformation;

(C) An amount of \$1,795 for students enrolled in career-based intervention programs, which shall be defined by the department in consultation with the governor's office of workforce transformation;

(D) An amount of \$1,525 for students enrolled in workforce development programs in education and training, marketing, workforce development academics, public administration, and career development, each of which shall be defined by the department of education in consultation with the governor's office of workforce transformation;

(E) An amount of \$1,308 for students enrolled in family and consumer science programs, which shall be defined by the department of education in consultation with the governor's office of workforce transformation.

The amount for career-technical education associated services, as defined by the department, shall be \$245 .

Amended by 132nd General Assembly File No. TBD, HB 49, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2017.

Amended by 131st General Assembly File No. TBD, HB 64, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2015.

Added by 130th General Assembly File No. 25, HB 59, §101.01, eff. 9/29/2013.