



Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee
SB 89 Proponent Testimony

Testimony of Mary Beth Freeman, Superintendent, Delaware Area Career Center

January 21, 2020

Chair Jones, Vice Chair Manchester, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present proponent testimony today on SB 89. My name is Mary Beth Freeman, and I am the Superintendent of Delaware Area Career Center. I am here representing my career center, as well as the Ohio Association of Career and Technical Superintendents (OACTS) and the Ohio Association for Career and Technical Education (Ohio ACTE). My testimony will focus on many of SB 89's diverse provisions, including those related to teacher licensure.

Substitute Teacher Licensure

As is the case with our K-12 colleagues, career-technical schools face difficulties finding substitute teachers to cover classrooms. Our common goal is to identify qualified individuals that will enable instruction to continue in both our academic and career-technical classes. Coverage for career and technical classes is an especially unique challenge due to the technical nature of the skill training involved. Adding to this challenge are the constraints created by current law / policy. It should be noted that the recent elimination of the short term and long term career-tech substitute categories by SB 216 did increase our flexibility to some degree. However, a barrier we have historically faced is that state law / policy has not traditionally allowed individuals with a Career Tech Workforce Development substitute teaching license to sub in a career field outside of that listed on his/her license.

Let me provide a scenario. Under current law, an individual with any bachelor's degree (or higher) can sub for a semester in any classroom. What this means is that someone who has a bachelor's degree in political science is legally able to sub for a semester in a welding, automotive or other career-tech course. However, someone who is licensed as a career-technical workforce development sub in the area Power Sports and Diesel and has had a long successful career in the field, can only sub for Power Sports and Diesel. State law has not permitted this person to sub in the areas of auto tech, welding or other career tech programs. This person is knowledgeable in safety practices and is familiar with instructing students using industrial equipment. In addition, there may also be curriculum crossover; however, this person would only be qualified to substitute teach in Power Sports and Diesel. They could not sub for a welding, automotive, or any other career tech course. SB 89 would eliminate this issue.

Transferability of Adult Teaching Permit

SB 89 would also allow individuals who possess permits to teach adult education classes to instruct in more than one district. Most adult education instructors are part time, teaching one or two nights per week. Currently, an instructor with an Adult Education permit can only instruct for the district listed on his/her permit. All of my adult instructors have permits that list DACC. If the instructor is interested in teaching for both DACC and Tolles Career and Technical Center, for example, he/she would need to apply for and pay for a second permit. In other words, the permit is not transferable.

Our reality is that it is difficult to find adult workforce instructors, especially in the current job market. At the same time, the demand for our focused, skill-based training programs is increasing. Allowing adult permits to be used in any adult program increases the availability of instructors, expands opportunities for adult students, and reduces costs for instructors and school districts. Permitting the transferability of an adult ed teaching license would then align with the Administrative guidelines for secondary teaching licenses.

Adult Teaching Permit / Sub for High School Courses

SB 89 also allows individuals with adult instructor permits—who are employed by a district to teach adult classes—to substitute in career and technical programs at the high school level for up to one semester. This change in law would reduce costs of duplicate credentialing, increase the pool of available subs, and provide more qualified substitutes in emerging / unique career fields.

JVSD Operations

The SB 89 provisions that address JVSD operations represent common sense changes to state law that increase our schools' flexibility to deal with certain routine scenarios:

1. Calamity Days: Currently, all school districts, including JVSDs, must provide a minimum of 1,001 hours of instruction to each student, each year. But JVSDs serve students from multiple home districts and, as a result, face unique challenges with respect to “calamity days.” (JVSDs have no control over the home school’s decision to close for a calamity day). So while career center school calendars always meet the minimum requirement, calamity days reduce allocated time and for some schools, present a significant obstacle to achieving 1,001 hours for each student. At the same time, CTE students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities related to their career field—students/instructors devote significant attention and resources to these (currently uncounted) opportunities. SB 89 provides career centers some flexibility through variances for calamity days, allowing other activities (such as online lessons, student internships, student projects, etc.) to count towards the hours requirement on a case-by-case basis.
2. Annual Organizational Meeting: Ohio law requires school districts to hold an organizational meeting by **January 15** of each year to appoint new board members and elect their president / vice president. (Educational Service Centers are permitted to meet anytime in January). Given

that JVSD boards of education are comprised of representatives from member school districts and ESCs, SB 89 slightly modifies the requirement to allow the JVSD organizational meeting to occur by **January 31** of any given year—allowing ample time for member district and ESC appointments prior to the JVSD meeting.

3. JVSDs / Ohio Enterprise Zone: Ohio’s Enterprise Zone Program provides real and personal property tax exemptions to businesses making significant investments in certain regions across the state. As part of the program, tax obligations are negotiated at the local level between private and public entities through “enterprise zone agreements.” These agreements must be in place before the investment project begins. Under current law, it is possible for businesses and local school district boards of education to execute enterprise zone agreements without including the applicable JVSD—which JVSD then receives zero tax revenue. SB 89 clarifies the Enterprise Zone law to ensure JVSDs are included in any agreement negotiated between businesses and local schools. This clarification would be in line with other statewide economic development initiatives like the tax increment financing (TIF) program, which contains similar JVSD-specific provisions. (See RC 5709.40(D)(2)).

The changes outlined above would increase quality instruction for students, reduce costs, allow for program expansion, and increase schools’ flexibility. Thank you for your time; I would be happy to answer any questions.