



May 10, 2016

Chairman Mike Duffy, Ranking Member Dan Ramos and Members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education, my name is Roy Church, President of Lorain County Community College. I am pleased to be here today along with my colleagues testifying on behalf of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges in support of House Bill 474. My comments today will focus on two specific elements of the Bill. First, section 3365.01 as it relates to College Credit Plus and secondly section 733.30 as it relates to the Chancellor's charge to establish a model for 3+1 baccalaureate degree programs for state universities and Ohio's community colleges.

COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS

Let me begin with College Credit Plus, as Lorain County Community College, like many higher education institutions in Ohio, has been fully implementing the program under the parameters established in House Bill 59. My testimony will include three elements: 1) a bit of the history as to how and why the current program model was established 2) how it is working, specifically in Lorain County and 3) how we are collaborating with our local Superintendents to share the positive impact of this program with tax payers in their districts.

I stood here a year ago with now retired Superintendent Tom Tucker of Lorain City Schools together citing the importance of College Credit Plus for supporting Ohio's economic prosperity, raising educational attainment and addressing the college debt crisis. The potential long-term impact of College Credit Plus on these critical

issues has been well documented by many in Ohio's educational system at the secondary and collegiate levels. I won't use my testimony today to reiterate this importance. Rather, I will first focus on the importance of the program model design and the collective, inclusive process for how it was formed.

Under the leadership of Chancellor John Carey, I had the opportunity to participate in the formulation of the current program model for College Credit Plus. In fact, the process deployed by Chancellor Carey convened representatives from all key stakeholders including the Inter-University Council of Ohio, the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio, the Ohio Association of Community Colleges and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. I was delighted to personally serve on this consultation group.

Furthermore, Chancellor Carey invited representatives of seven additional stakeholder groups representing school administrators, school boards and others to provide input into the process. This group, under Chancellor Carey's leadership, was provided open opportunity to share, discuss and design critical elements of the College Credit Plus initiative including: 1) Criteria for Program Participation, 2) Funding Models, 3) Coursework Design and Delivery, 4) Communication Plans and 5) Metric-based Evaluation Methods.

The language evolving from this process to guide the implementation of College Credit Plus was sound and considered the needs of and potential impact on all stakeholders: school districts, institutions of higher education and most importantly students and their families. The framework provided specific guidance where needed, while allowing for innovation and flexibility at the local level. This is especially evident in the funding model recommendations to ensure consistency, while providing a flexible range to reflect the various cost structures of various higher education partners.

Furthermore, the funding model was innovative and sustainable in that it assumes no new state money would be invested in order to grow the impact of dual enrollment in Ohio. Rather, College Credit Plus identified a school district's assumed

per pupil Foundation Funding of \$5,800 as the primary source of support for delivering the college credit and provided great flexibility based on which partner, school district or college, is providing the delivery of the college curriculum and where the delivery is taking place.

The structure of a floor and ceiling was a creative approach to assure that both secondary schools and higher education institutions have a direct financial stake in the success of delivery, while assuring flexibility enough to best meet local needs and strategies. The \$5,800 of Foundation Funding would provide \$193 per semester credit hour based upon 30 hours as a full-time student load. The secondary school retains a minimum of \$33 per credit hour recognizing its contributions to the delivery. The floor assumes the college returns 25% of the remainder to fulfill its duties and everything in between is negotiable to meet local needs and strategies.

A few key highlights of the design that deserve special commendation include:

- Equal weighting of Advanced Placement Courses and College Credit Courses as to not penalize a student's grade point average for participating in the program.
- Expanded methods for determining student readiness for participating in the program to include performance on standard testing, grade point averages and teacher recommendations as indicators.
- Professional development requirements of high school teachers who teach a course under the college Credit Plus program along with a liaison structure for pairing high school teachers with college professors.

The design of College Credit Plus essentially levels the playing field in order to expand participation and impact. As you will recall, we learned during the process of developing College Credit Plus, the national average for high school graduates earning college credit before they graduate stood at 7.8%, while Ohio was only at 5%. Because of our history in working with our local superintendents around dual enrollment, 20% of Lorain County high school graduates were earning college credit

at that point in time. I can tell you that in the last year, due to College Credit Plus, that number is rising. We are seeing a 55% increase in students participating in the program, resulting in 3,000 area high school students earning over 28,000 college credits, saving families \$4.46 million at community college rates. At the average Ohio public university, that's a savings of over \$14.5 million. And that's only through our community's experience in partnering with local school districts.

This is a message that resonates with tax payers and we are working closely with our school districts to amplify it. We are providing district level reports on the number of students earning college credit and the value of that in college savings. These data are shared at high school commencement ceremonies for parents, grandparents and friends to applaud. We hold award ceremonies, with pizza of course, to celebrate and recognize students who are stepping forward to participate in the program and many other ways to raise the awareness of the program and its impact.

College Credit Plus is a win for Ohio at all levels. If you multiply this impact across the system, you can be certain that College Credit Plus is transformational; it is moving the needle for Ohio in terms of raising educational attainment, lowering college debt and will certainly contribute to an improved economy in our state.

I encourage Ohio's legislature to keep College Credit Plus in place, to maintain the commitment and allow its impact to be fully realized. That is not to say that we don't have aspects of the program to still continue to improve, but the model originally developed is sound and is working. I would instead encourage our delegation to incent secondary schools and higher education institutions to focus on improving aspects of the program that aren't so fully addressed in the original design. Such as fully developing and scaling co-requisite models that can reduce remediation and improve college readiness as well as finding innovative solutions to the rising costs of textbooks.

The cost of textbooks is a financial pain point for both sectors. Efforts are underway at the state level to address textbook affordability. We, in Lorain County, are

working back with our secondary partners on this issue. In fact, we have identified the 17 top College Credit Plus courses and are working toward identifying and/or creating open source materials for these courses. I would encourage the House to consider creating a pool of funds that may be used to encourage faculty to work with teachers to complete this work and significantly address the financial cost of textbooks to both systems, which is proven to rise much faster than the rate of tuition in Ohio.

3+1 Baccalaureate Degree Programs

And now for the other side of the educational continuum: scaling 3+1 baccalaureate degree programs.

Dr. Steve Johnson, President of Sinclair Community College shared during a press conference held by Chancellor John Carey on the campus of Lorain County Community College back in February that 65% of jobs during this decade will require a college education or other recognized credential. Currently, only 35% of Ohioans have an associate's degree or higher. Through our existing efforts, we are on track to get to 45% in this time period. It will take new innovations and approaches to get us to the 65% target and our economy depends on it. College Credit Plus is one such innovation. Three plus one baccalaureate degree programs is yet another innovation opportunity and one our system is already fully prepared to support. It's now just a matter of scaling.

I say this based on our experience partnering with colleges and universities to deliver 3+1 baccalaureate degrees since 1995 with the creation of the University Partnership Program at Lorain County Community College. Recognizing the need to provide affordable and accessible paths to a bachelor's degree in areas of job demand, Lorain County Community College in 1995 created the University Partnership Program whereby colleges and universities would bring specific bachelor's degree programs to our campus. Initially, the program started with five colleges and universities delivering a dozen bachelors and master's degrees. Today, twelve colleges and universities deliver over 40 bachelor's degrees and a dozen

graduate programs to over 3,000 students. Interestingly, because of the state's robust transfer program, over half of the bachelor's degrees by default are three plus one programs. That means a student is able to take three years of courses from Lorain County Community College's catalog at our tuition rates and one year from the partnering college or university and earn the same bachelor's degree as if the student attended all four years at the partnering college or university. That 3+1 design results in tremendous savings, nearly \$50,000 on average.

Granted the University Partnership Program is unique in that students never have to leave the Lorain County Community College campus to seize this opportunity. They can continue to work locally and raise families. But what the University Partnership Program has taught us is that Ohio has a robust and valuable course transfer system that is not fully realized by traditional and non-traditional students alike. In a recent query of the state's Transferology system, we can map 132 three plus one bachelor's degrees for students beginning at Lorain County Community College and finishing at a four-year institution across a wide range of majors. That's 132 programs that exist today without any additional legislation. This is a under realized opportunity for Ohio to again raise educational attainment and reduce college debt.

With over two decades of experience with the University Partnership Program, we can attest, through data, the quality and rigor of three plus one programs because we have tracked the performance of students who start at Lorain County Community College and transfer to a four-year institution. Here's what we have discovered through the National Student Clearinghouse data:

- Lorain County Community College Transfer Students complete their degree at higher rates (68%) than other students of the universities (50%).
- Lorain County Community College Transfer Students earn better grades (3.11 grade point of average) than other students of the Universities (2.78 grade point of average).

This level of success is achievable because Ohio's system is focused on ensuring rigorous and equal course learning outcomes.

Now imagine if Ohio can unite the power of College Credit Plus and 3+1 baccalaureate degrees. What an extraordinary opportunity we have before us. In Lorain County, we are doing just that and have recently created the MyUniversity Guarantee, which provides students a clear pathway starting in high school to earn both an Associate's Degree and High School Diploma simultaneously. And, then students can continue on to earn a bachelor's degree in 25 career pathways by age 20 by taking a third year with Lorain County Community College and one year at a partnering college or university, whether that be through our University Partnership Program or at the campus of the four-year institution. This innovative design results in students having the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree at less than 20% of the cost without sacrificing quality or rigor.

And, we know it's possible through real life examples. Let me share with you the stories of Daniel Truitt and Sonny Dickerson to punctuate the potential impact of this program.

The biology program offered by Lorain County Community College and Bowling Green State University is designed so LCCC students are able to take 90 credits from LCCC's catalog and just 30 credits from Bowling Green's. Students benefit financially while maintaining a high-quality, engaging college experience filled with research opportunities, state and national science conferences and chance to work closely with excellent faculty who care deeply about their success.

Daniel Truitt shared his experience at the Chancellor's press conference a couple months ago. He is currently an LCCC Trustee Scholarship recipient and biology major who earned 17 college credits at no cost to him while attending Firelands High School before he graduated in 2014. He is well on his way to his 3+1 Biology degree with BGSU. He chose biology when he was trying to determine what to major in because he kept coming back to the Anatomy and Physiology courses he took as a College Credit Plus student with Dr. Kathy Durham. Dr. Durham was the lead

instructor for his Anatomy and Physiology courses that she taught with his high school teacher, Mr. Lias. After Daniel graduated from high school Dr. Durham invited him to join her research group studying the effects of algae blooms on the water quality of Lake Erie. This blending of high school and college created the spark Daniel was looking for to guide him into the future. College Credit Plus and the 3+1 partnership with Bowling Green State University ensures that Daniel will start his career strong with little or no college debt.

Sunny Dickerson also enthusiastically shared her experience at the press conference. She works, goes to school and is a 27 year old mother of two young boys, one who will start kindergarten this fall and a new 8 mo. year old. Needless to say, she's a busy lady. She earned college credits while attending Amherst-Steele High School. Earned her bachelor's in biology last year through the LCCC and BGSU 3+1, took a little time off to have her second son and is now ready to begin her master's degree this fall through BGSU through the partnership. She is particularly grateful to have had this in-depth, research-rich learning experience that's been highly affordable and convenient while still allowing her to fulfill her most precious role as mom to her two boys. And she tells us she does not have one penny of debt.

In closing, I want to thank you for your willingness to take bold steps forward to help Ohioans have educational opportunities that ensure economic mobility while reducing or even eliminating college debt. I encourage you to continue moving forward with this agenda as exemplified through College Credit Plus and the scaling of 3+1 Bachelor's Degrees. Thank you.