



**Testimony Regarding College Credit Plus, HB 474  
Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education  
Representative Mike Duffey, Chairman**

**Ronda C. Johnson, Treasurer  
Mason City School District**

**May 16, 2016**

Chairman Duffey, Ranking Member Ramos and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding College Credit Plus. My name is Ronda Johnson and I am the Treasurer of the Mason City School District.

Mason City Schools is located predominantly in Warren County in southwest Ohio, encompassing 25 square miles and home to approximately 50,000 residents. We are the 16<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the state of Ohio, and our nearly 3,500 high school students are served in Ohio's largest public high school. Our students are consistently among the highest performing in Ohio while our spending is less than the state average.

A component of the bill, as written, prohibits school districts from negotiating pricing with local universities. Prior to the implementation of College Credit Plus (CCP), Mason City Schools had 1434 students enrolled in Dual Credit courses, for which they were earning and receiving college credit. Our costs for dual credit ranged from \$40 per class (on the high end) to \$0 through a collaborative partnership with Cincinnati State. Under CCP, we have been able to negotiate some classes at the floor, but overall our costs are significantly higher under the CCP program. **We recommend eliminating the "floor" for school districts and instead allow flexibility at the local level for financial agreements between school districts and the Institution of Higher Education.**

OSBA, OASBO, and BASA have provided joint testimony outlining the overall concerns from the education community. Mason City Schools supports their recommendations, with specific reference to the following:

- Create a textbook policy that reduces the burden for schools districts. This has been particularly difficult to budget and administer. With no control over the selection of books, it is impossible to budget. As we are nearing the end of the school year, we've found ourselves with a large supply of individual texts that may or may not be used again next year.
- Establish a level of financial responsibility for parents (based on a means-tested formula as with other state policies) in order to create accountability for the student and family rather than CCP being an entitlement regardless of performance or outcome in the college course.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding HB 474. On behalf of the Mason community, we thank you for your consideration of greater flexibility for negotiating financial agreements, a less burdensome textbook policy, and establishing a level of financial responsibility for parents.

**About Mason City Schools**

*The Mason City School District is one of Ohio's highest-performing public school districts. Students in every grade level consistently score above the state and national average in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies, and on the SAT, ACT and AP tests. Mason City Schools spend \$9,121 per student - \$107 less per student than the state average.*