

**Testimony in support of restoration of flat funding to  
Educational Technology Sub. H.B. No. 64 Section 253.150  
Ohio Senate Finance Education Subcommittee  
April 30, 2015**

Thank you Chairman Hite, and members of the Senate Finance Committee for the opportunity to testify. My name is Amy Palermo and I am the Chair for the Ohio Educational Technology Centers as well as Executive Director for ITSCO, one of the eight Ed Techs in the state. I oppose the current legislation as it relates to the Ed Techs in Section 253.150 and am here today to respectfully request the originally proposed flat funding be restored. This is the same funding we received in FY15 with no increases in state funding.

The Ohio Educational Technology Centers serve the professional development needs of teachers and administrators as it relates to educational technology. With a focus on pedagogical practices, Ed Techs provide instruction on effective and meaningful applications of technology. Annually, we provide over 45,000 teachers face-to-face and online professional development in use of classroom technology and exceed 120,000 hours of professional development delivered to P-20 educators. We need more funding to reach more teachers, not less.

I began my career as a middle school teacher. I taught seventh grade Language Arts. In my third year of teaching, my school became the first in the district to become an “all inclusion” building. This meant that all students, with all abilities, were taught in the same class. It was terrifying. Along with the rest of the faculty, I thought this was ludicrous and couldn’t imagine how I would meet the needs of a kid that couldn’t read alongside of Advanced Placement

kids. But it is my nature to face challenges head on, with everything I've got. It turned out to be the most profound year of my educational career and an experience that changed the trajectory of my life. Through the use of technology, I was able to create lessons that met the diverse needs of my learners. We used videos to act out vocabulary lessons, cameras to document learning, and voice recorders that doubled as practice for reluctant readers and teaching aids for students with disabilities. And this was quite a few years ago. There is a lot more technology now! Because of the technology, my student that could not read because of a degenerative eye condition, made a 100 on a reading test. He was in tears. He hadn't passed a reading test in three years. And it wasn't just the students with disabilities that were successful. It was all students. Technology played a critical role in the success of my students.

The importance and critical nature of technology in education has only grown since then. The Ed Tech Centers continue to bring new and impactful educational technology experiences to educators.

This current year we have focused on Ohio's new learning standards, online resources for the new graduation options, and developing skills for next generation testing. I have, if you would like, a professional development catalogue that will give you an idea of the kinds of services we offer. This is ITSCO's, because we serve Central Ohio, but the other Ed Techs produce similar types of programming. A few specific examples of the Ed Tech initiatives include:

- Preparing Students for Online Assessments

In this face to face and online course, teachers learn how to use technology to strengthen their everyday curriculum while providing skills that will also strengthen students preparedness for online testing. With an emphasis on student growth (rather than the technology), the Ed Tech professional development teaches how to help districts successfully implement online testing.

- Getting Kids Career Ready

Ed Techs provide professional development that directly impacts thousands of classroom teachers to support career education and job programs. K-12 Teachers must have this support to implement Ohio's New graduation options putting more students into better paying, for meaningful careers.

- Tech Coaching for INFOhio

INFOhio provides valuable resources that would often go unused without meaningful professional development opportunities that build skills sets for integration.

- District Technology Coaching

Many districts do not have the internal resources to support the long term professional development needs of their teachers and rely on Ed Techs to provide long term technology professional development.

- We are also an ongoing Help Center

The favorite thing that I get to say when I teach a class is that we are still here for you.

Even if you are done with us for today, months from now when you need help practicing what you have learned today in the classroom, we are here for you.

Our work is ALWAYS focused on the teacher and district need. Every class and workshop we offer is done so at the request of by Ohio's teachers, ODE, and Principals. Whatever the need, Ohio EdTech's are there to help the classroom teacher. We don't deal with wires - we deal with learning.

A 42% reduction means our classroom visits, and the number of teachers we are able to reach, would be cut almost in half. Programs in jeopardy include

- The 9,000+ hours of professional development provided in past year for Next Generation Testing
- The 12,000+ hours of professional development provided in past year for 21st Century Learning with Google
- The 13,658 hours of professional development provided in past year for STEM

These cuts will result in an increase doe cost for fee-based services, which will, in turn, increase the gap for low-wealth, low-performing districts.

Research shows 80 % of ALL jobs already require the use of technology. If we are to prepare students for their future, we must first prepare teachers. That is what this funding supports,

training to help teachers help their students prepare for a better life, using the tools of technology.

We are asking that Section 263.150 be restored to 'flat funding' level as introduced'

Restore line 85076 EdTech to "\$1,778,879" from \$1,027,176 (House)

Restore line 85066 INFOhio to \$2,500,000 from \$1,443,572 (House)

This requires NO increase in state spending; it is the same as FY15. I have also provided you with some fact sheets on how this will impact our schools, and I welcome your questions.

Thank you!