

Senate Finance Subcommittee: Primary & Secondary Education

HB 166 (Biennial Budget) Testimony

TECH CORPS and the Teaching & Learning Collaborative

May 9, 2019

Chair Terhar, Vice Chair Lehner, Ranking Member Fedor and Members of the Committee, my name is Kelli Shrewsberry and I am the Executive Director of the Teaching & Learning Collaborative. With me today is Lisa Chambers, the National Executive Director of TECH CORPS. Lisa and I are here today to ask for your support of our E4Tech budget proposal, a copy of which is attached for your consideration.

The Teaching & Learning Collaborative (TLC) is a nonprofit organization focused on designing, coordinating, and delivering sustained educator professional development in mathematics and science. TLC works closely with school districts and educators throughout the state to deliver innovative, high-quality professional development and support to PreK-12 educators in mathematics, science and technology.

TECH CORPS is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring K-12 students have equal access to technology programs, skills, and resources that enhance early learning and prepare them for college and career. TECH CORPS develops computer science and information technology programs for students and teachers and works with industry partners to deploy technology resources to schools and nonprofit organizations.

TECH CORPS and TLC teamed up to create the E4Tech Program (Engaging, Exciting and Empowering Educators through the “T” in STEM). Developed with support from Cleveland State University and Franklin University, E4Tech is an evidence-based professional development model and curriculum focused on the integration of computer science and computational thinking into mathematics for grades 3 and 4.

In E4Tech, teachers participate in 120 hours of professional development and support focused on closing student achievement gaps in elementary school mathematics through the lens of computer science so that students have success in higher-level mathematics and computer science experiences in the later years. Why elementary schools? Research shows that early math skills are predictors of later successes, underscoring the importance of thinking about computer science opportunities for all students in all grades.

The proposed expansion of E4Tech will help make Ohio a leader in computer science education beginning in elementary school. We are asking state policymakers to fund a two-year, statewide E4Tech pilot that will impact 500 educators and at least 12,500 3rd and 4th grade students across five regions of our state. Over the course of the upcoming biennium, TECH CORPS and TLC will design, implement and expand E4Tech’s innovate professional development model and computer science curricula for Ohio teachers already teaching in Ohio’s classrooms.

Finding ways to effectively integrate computer science and computational thinking into a content area for elementary grades is an important effort in ensuring that computer science is embedded in Ohio's elementary classrooms as well as middle and high school. Investing in professional development programs, such as E4Tech, for Ohio's teachers ultimately supports our largest collective goal as a state – preparing students for their future.

Thank you for your time today. Lisa and I are happy to answer any questions you may have.