



Ohio House of Representatives
Workforce & Economic Development Committee
SB166 Vocational Schools
Krista Gearhart, Ohio CCS Legislative Chair
Proponent Testimony

Chair Edwards, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Upchurch, and members of the Ohio House Workforce and Economic Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding SB166, Vocational Schools. The Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career-Technical Schools (Ohio CCS) represents Ohio's 40 Compact and Comprehensive career-technical planning districts (CTPDs). Ohio has a three-delivery model system for secondary career-technical education; Comprehensive and Compact districts are two of the delivery models with Joint Vocational School Districts (JVSDs) being the third.

Comprehensive Districts provide an all-inclusive experience to students attending their school with academics and career-technical education (CTE) all delivered within their own facilities. Compact Districts share the costs of CTE through service agreements between multiple school districts; the experience of a student in a Compact can vary widely, but in many cases students take their core academic classes at their home school and CTE at a partner school. Examples of Comprehensive and Compact districts include:

- Akron City (Comprehensive)
- Cincinnati City (Comprehensive)
- Columbus City (Compact; while a major metropolitan, Columbus contracts with surrounding city schools to provide CTE)
- Dayton City (Comprehensive)
- Findlay Millstream (Compact)
- Tri Star Career Compact (Compact)

We ask you to support SB166 sponsored by Sen. Bill Reineke. Career-Technical Education is seeing a resurgence in our country today due to an increased workforce skills gap. Due to these deficits, the importance of career-technical education is at an all-time high and we are excited to say that Ohio is leading the charge not only acknowledging that the deficit exists, but meeting it head on. Following the lead of Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted, Career-Technical Education Associations and the Ohio Department of Education have focused on meeting the skills gap through strategic collaborations between business, education, and government. Aligned and committed to addressing Ohio's workforce gap, organizations have focused on industry recognized credentials and other skill attainments that are not only needed to address the skills gap in Ohio but can help students gain employment in rewarding careers...right here in Ohio.

Student Pathways for Career Success Grant Program

To continue to meet the needs of students and business partners, career-technical planning districts (CTPDs) need to expand and start new programs. The initial start-up cost for this endeavor can be a strong deterrent for some CTPDs (especially Compacts and Comprehensives). Expensive, equipment-heavy programs such as welding, automotive or even cyber security often carry start-up costs that pose an insurmountable barrier to some CTPDs. The Student Pathways for Career Success Grant Program would help CTPDs overcome the financial barrier and increase equitable access to the students of Ohio in the most in-demand career fields.

Work-Based Learning Experiences

Work-based learning is a crucial component of career-technical education, and is a fundamental element embedded in our programs. The Ohio plan for implementing the Federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, commonly referred to as Perkins V has a specific focus on expanding work-based learning opportunities for our students. Providing incentives for business partners to develop new or expand existing work-based learning opportunities is a smart investment which will have a high yield return for building Ohio's workforce.

Driver Education

An impediment for many students to either make the decision to participate in a career-technical education pathway or have the opportunity for a work-based learning experience in an off-site workplace setting is the inability to obtain a valid Ohio Driver's License. Unfortunately, the cost of private driver education is out of reach for many students. SB166 would allow the student who completes a driver education course at their high school to earn one-half elective credit and an industry-recognized credential. SB166 would additionally allow the CTPD to utilize portions of their CTE Supplemental Funding (ORC 3301.17) to fund the drivers education course offered by the school district. Ohio's CTPDs are ready to help overcome this hurdle, maximize the opportunities for our students enrolled in CTE pathways, and increase the number of students joining the workforce while still enrolled in secondary education. This is one step in the right direction

We encourage you to support SB166 and favorably report its passage. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us

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