



Vanguard-Sentinel  
Career & Technology Centers

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

Gregory A. Edinger  
Superintendent

Alex P. Binger  
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**Ohio Senate Education Committee  
Proponent Testimony on SB 178  
Greg Edinger, Vanguard Sentinel Career and Technology Centers  
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Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Sykes, and Members of the Ohio Senate Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Greg Edinger, and I am the superintendent of Vanguard Sentinel Career and Technology Centers. Vanguard-Sentinel CTC is in NW Ohio and we have facilities in Fremont and Tiffin. We serve over 1400+ high school students on campus, another 700+ students through satellite programs, and over 1000+ adult students. At Vanguard-Sentinel CTC we work in collaboration with our local business and industry partners and our 13 local associate schools to develop expanding opportunities for students. Because of these partnerships and innovative programming, over the past year we have seen an increased enrollment of over 400+ students taking advantage of CTE programs in grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>. We have also expanded exploratory options for students in grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

We support Senate Bill 178 and specifically the provisions that place a renewed and heightened emphasis on career-technical education. As our CTE Associations explained in written SB 178 proponent testimony, career-tech is extremely successful in Ohio at both the secondary and post-secondary level. Like my counterpart CTE superintendents and directors, we strive every day to meet the workforce demands of our local businesses and enhance CTE opportunities for all local high school and adult students. Career Centers are indeed one of the most valuable and underused resources in the State of Ohio and SB 178 makes improvements to facilitate expansion in this vital education sector.

To better prepare students for success in this ever-changing world, they need an education that is flexible and meets the demands and expectations of the local and regional economy. In its current structure the Ohio Department of Education is somewhat constrained and at times not able to react quickly to workforce, policy, or other economic changes to truly meet the demands and expectations of the workforce in an all-encompassing manner. If we simply choose to maintain the status quo, Ohio will continue down the same education pathway without recognizing the enormous shifts in workforce demands and without facilitating our sector's expansion.



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Under the current model, Career Technical Education is just another content area like English, Math, Science, Reading, Social Studies. Whereas we all know, career training can and should be infused in one way, shape, or form with all content areas and more highly emphasized. Currently the CTE pathway is looked at as an alternative pathway if you don't meet "regular" academic standards; in practice, this still causes the CTE pathway to be looked at as a "lesser than" option. You have the academic or "College Pathway" and you have the "CTE Pathway." But as we all have learned over the recent years through the success of CTE, College or Career should not be a question; the two should not be seen or treated as separate pathways. Students who choose a career pathway can and do go on to post-secondary education. The career pathway should be paramount with the second issue focused on what a student needs to achieve to advance in that career. Is it college, an apprenticeship, a certificate program, or just additional training? I emphasize that in each case, one is not lesser than the other! To get out of that way of thinking structural changes may need to occur.

I also want to emphasize that in recent years there have been many positive improvements from a policy perspective, where career training has been brought to the forefront. But those changes have in part been driven by Executive action and the state legislature, which require the SBOE and ODE to adapt. There are numerous examples of the recent improvements, including initiatives conceived in the last budget bill (HB 110) such the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program (IWIP), TechCred, and Funding for Short Term Certificates (to name a few). Other recent beneficial pieces of legislation include, but are not limited to, SB 89 (2019-2020), SB 166 (2021), and SB 135 (2022). SB 178 represents another positive proposed legislative change that will allow education to be more flexible, adaptive, and responsive to the constant flow of workforce changes statewide. The proposed new Department of Education and Workforce sets up a system where a Division of Career Technical Education is created in tandem with a Division of Primary and Secondary Education. This model would put these two departments under the same structure and oversight as the ODHE model which would assist in the collaborative process of departments working together and placing a focus on students. It would also put career and technical education as a focal point of importance for students to meet the demands of the real world and not just as another content area or alternative "lesser than" choice in their educational future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions.