



**Senate Bill 1
Interested Party Testimony**

Craig Burford, Executive Director

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Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit interested party testimony on Senate Bill 1.

Ohio's ESCs provided leadership and support for the Department of Education in the implementation of numerous initiatives related to:

- Learning acceleration,
- Literacy, (including dyslexia and the science of reading)
- Chronic absenteeism
- Family and community engagement,
- Content standards and assessments,
- District and school-level data analysis and coaching through RDLs,
- Professional development,
- School safety initiatives,
- Whole child supports,
- School improvement,
- High Quality Instructional Materials,
- Alternative math pathways and math fluency,
- Business Advisory Councils (BACs), and
- Other technical assistance through a comprehensive shared services delivery model.

The regional delivery model for implementing this work, codified in chapter 3312 of the revised code, includes the 51 ESCs and SSTs housed within 16 of the ESCs, the Information Technology Centers (ITCs), public broadcasting stations and other regional providers who have successfully served as key implementation partners with the Administration, General Assembly and ODE over the past several years in addressing many of the issues of concern identified by the bill's sponsor and members of the Ohio General Assembly as it relates to issues like career readiness and workforce development, literacy, learning acceleration, chronic absenteeism and more including the Tutor Ohio Kids initiative.

In fact, through a collaborative co-design process in developing and deploying state initiatives on behalf of the state, the ESC network has improved the quality and responsiveness of services provided on behalf of the state through the regional system.

This includes the deployment of:

- Math pathways and high-quality instructional materials professional development,
- family and community engagement liaisons,

- personalized learning experts,
- literacy specialists (focus on structured literacy as an intervention and early and adolescent reading strategies),
- data coaching models around student readiness and chronic absenteeism through the regional data leads network,
- comprehensive school threat assessment training,
- development and deployment of a student readiness benchmarking credential, and
- a statewide professional learning directory launched in January 2023.

This has been accomplished not only by individual ESCs in their respective regions, but statewide in the collective strength of the ESC network; 51 ESCs with nearly 25,000 personnel providing direct, high-quality technical assistance and support in a cost-efficient and effective manner.

As you deliberate Senate Bill 1, I would encourage you to look at how to sustain and accelerate those successes and ensure that nothing be lost in the transition should the bill advance. The bill focuses intently on governance, organizational structure and policy direction. But it could benefit from more detail as it relates to implementation and alignment of policy and funding to achieve results.

Setting clear priorities, resourcing those priorities, and evaluating those efforts will be the key to success as it relates to implementation and sustainability. What gets measured gets done. Set the policy direction and expectations. Provide targeted support to achieve those results. And measure schools and school districts and those of us that support them against appropriate performance indicators.

As such, I encourage you to be both thoughtful and intentional in the design of any new system and to be clear about the outcomes you are seeking with this transition; to amend 3312 of the Ohio Revised Code to empower and leverage existing systems of support that are often underutilized and under resourced; to provide targeted support to Business Advisory Councils to connect employers with schools and students with career exploration and employment opportunities, to include provisions to ensure transparency and public accountability; and through these changes to provide clear alignment between governance, funding, implementation and outcomes.

These priorities outlined above should include educator input and stakeholder feedback, where appropriate, and utilize a systems design-type approach. This requires a clearer connection between the state, implementation support agencies, and schools. And this should be a primary focus of ODE or of the new Director of the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) should Senate Bill 1 advance. And, this should include direct language to leverage the collective assets of Ohio's robust regional support agency network.

The Ohio ESC Association is committed to support the work of the state, its schools, its educators, and most importantly, its students as we look to emphasize their future opportunities to be educated, to work, and to thrive in the workforce today and into the future.

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to submit interested party testimony. I will be happy to respond to any questions.



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