



**Ohio Senate Education Committee
House Bill 432 Hearing
Testimony of the Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents and
The Ohio Association for Career-Technical Education**

**Jon Graft, Superintendent, Butler Technology and Career Development Schools
November 12, 2024**

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and Senate Education Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Jon Graft. It is my honor to be the Superintendent of Butler Technology and Career Development Schools and the Past President of the Ohio Association for Career and Technical Education (Ohio ACTE). Over the past several years, the Ohio ACTE "Futures Committee"—comprised of JVSDs, Comprehensive, and Compact career-technical schools—have met dozens of times to discuss the ongoing issue of serving the greatest number of students in Ohio through Career Technical Education. As part of our work, we focused on the need to move faster than the speed of business in developing programming in coordination with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. Equally crucial was our commitment to engaging closely with our diverse business partners through our Business Advisory Committees across the State of Ohio.

According to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce website, "The statewide teacher attrition rate (those not returning as a teacher) was slightly elevated in 2021-2022 compared to the previous six years for all teachers, as well as for the subset of teachers early in their careers. The number of newly credentialed teachers steadily declined statewide from 2013-2014 to 2018-2019, then stabilized through 2020-2021 before declining again in 2021-2022. In 2021-2022, there were more than 43,000 individuals with active teaching credentials in Ohio (excluding substitute licenses) who were not employed in a public school as a teacher or other staff member. District-level teacher attrition rates (percent no longer teaching in a specific district) increased recently, generating more hiring and onboarding burdens regardless of supply sufficiency."¹

As Ohio's economy continues to grow and thrive, Career Tech programs across the State have been charged and challenged to meet the needs of the 21st century workforce. This effort will necessitate increased speed at which we are able to hire educators with technical expertise as well as their capacity and flexibility to obtain proper certification. To that end, Ohio ACTE is encouraged HB 432 provides a variety of ways in which educators and school districts can identify pathways for staff members to obtain proper certification, while expanding the candidate pool for future employees.

¹ See <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Research-Evaluation-and-Advanced-Analytics/Data-Insights/Ohio-s-Teacher-Workforce#:~:text=Teacher%20shortages%20must%20be%20examined%20and%20understood%20locally.&text=While%20the%20current%20number%20of,student%20to%20teacher%20ratios.>)

At Butler Tech, we plan to utilize the combination of semester hours along-side the 45 professional development hours of personalized learning guided by our Innovation, Teaching and Learning Department, who will provide real time coaching on instructional practices and pedagogy. With 20-30 new teachers hired each school year at Butler Tech, our professional development infrastructure can handle this hybrid model for a new teacher coming directly from industry to experience a true hands-on learning experience, in real time, through our Instructional Coaches. Ironically, this model of real-world experience is what Career Tech Education is known for with our students, but we will now be able to achieve with our new teachers.

Additionally, we are excited to work with our university partners to see their programs continue to thrive. HB 432 allows us to assist them in identifying candidates currently in high demand fields, who desire to be future educators, by enrolling them in university education programs regardless of employment offers. This will further mitigate the declining enrollment in Ohio's teacher preparation programs which dropped 19 percent in five years, from 14,829 in 2015 to 12,412 in 2020. Similarly, the number of students completing an education program decreased 26 percent from 5,753 to 4,570, according to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce report. These statistics are especially troubling in Career Tech, where it is even more difficult to find good, quality career-experts with the necessary technical skills (i.e., engineering, technology, healthcare, etc.), who also desire to obtain a teaching license. HB 432 can foster a wider and more diverse candidate pool, while creating a greater supply of candidates to become future educators. It also creates choice and flexibility for future educators to obtain a license through the university model, a hybrid model, or a model that is personalized through a school district.

As a lifelong educator of over 30 years, I look forward to continuing the tradition of high expectations of our teachers and administrators. I love Career Tech Education and believe it is the future of how all education should be delivered. I applaud the efforts of all our school districts to meet the needs of our communities and for all communities to have access to high quality programs.

We ask that HB 432 be passed for the choice and voice of educators to be heard, as well as to build our future education workforce. Career Tech programs are depending on it. Ohio businesses are depending on it. Ohio's future workforce is depending on it. I urge you to support House Bill 432.

Thanks again for the opportunity to offer my remarks. I would be happy to answer any questions.