



Ohio Senate Education Committee
House Bill 432 Hearing
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 Kevin Kratzer and I am the Superintendent of Southern Hills Career and Technical Center located in Georgetown, Ohio, serving the five schools districts of Brown County as well as Bright Local School District in Highland County. Like many of the Career and Technical Centers across Ohio, Southern Hills CTC is seeing record enrollment year after year. There was a time when Career Tech was the best kept secret in education, but thankfully that is no longer the case. The current administration and General Assembly have recognized the pivotal role that CTE plays in Ohio's growth, and as a leader in CTE I am eternally thankful for this. As a result of the career tech expansion grant, our Career Center is a few weeks away from undergoing a 10,000 sq. ft. addition and an expansive remodel to open up two additional labs (healthcare and advanced manufacturing) that will serve an additional 100 students each year.

One of the biggest obstacles we face in Career Tech Education is attracting and retaining highly qualified individuals to teach our young people the necessary skills to succeed in the career field they choose. House Bill 432 would make this challenge more manageable, as it would reduce some of the barriers faced when employing new CTE instructors. The passage of this bill would give districts and prospective candidates additional pathways to become a licensed CTE instructor. Currently a new CTE instructor is required to obtain 24 semester hours from one of five Ohio universities. Under HB 432 the opportunity would exist to either go the traditional 24 semester hour route, work through an apprenticeship type program, or a hybrid of the two. In a time of critical shortage, these additional options would give some much-needed relief.

When an individual chooses to leave their career field to enter the world of Career and Technical Education to teach young people how to succeed in the field they have dedicated their life's work to, we do not want to put up any unnecessary roadblocks. In most cases they are taking a significant pay-cut, and are doing so willingly to share their knowledge and expertise with the next generation. HB 432 simply cuts-out some of the busy work and time-consuming aspects of the transition, while still ensuring the new instructor is getting the support they need to be an impactful role model in the lives of the students they will teach.

Thank you for your consideration with this proposed legislation. We are doing great things in Ohio, and Career Technical Education is playing a pivotal role in Ohio's success. The passage of HB 432 will make it easier for CTE to attract and retain the high-quality individuals needed to continue to bring forth the next generation of workers for Ohio.