

Interested Party Testimony for SB104
Workforce and Higher Education Finance Committee
2/28/2024

Superintendent Marc Kreisler, Bloom Vernon Local Schools
Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chairman Rulli, and members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Marc Kreisler, I am the Superintendent of Bloom-Vernon Local Schools in Scioto County and President Elect of the Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools.

Our Coalition and its member superintendents are in favor of many provisions included in the sub bill language for SB104, such as the required student orientation process and the split costs for textbooks between the school district and college.

However, a major concern regarding the tuition costs per CCP delivery method remains unaddressed. Since the pandemic, we have seen an increase in students opting for online course options over courses offered in our school districts or on the college's campus. This typically asynchronous learning experience can be challenging for our students (who are accustomed to an in-person, hands-on delivery model) and has resulted in lower or failing grades on their permanent transcripts. More so, the base cost of a CCP course to be taught on the college campus and online are the same, at a default floor of \$166.55 per credit hour – 4 times the cost of CCP delivery at a district's high school, which is \$41.64. The December 2023 Auditor of State Cost Study on CCP concluded that while there are differences in reporting from college to college, *overall online CCP delivery is financially advantageous to colleges and disproportionate to the services provided.*

Warren Local Schools, a fellow CORAS district, previously testified that prior to the pandemic, 25% of their students opted for online CCP courses, and last academic year over 50% of students took CCP courses online – costing the district over \$100,000. River View Local Schools previously testified their online student population has also doubled since the pandemic, and their district has averaged about 5 students an academic year who fail 7 or more online CCP courses. My district's FY24 CCP Deduction Report showed we paid \$28,523 for 685 credit hours taught on our campus, compared to \$10,600 for 64 online credit hours; almost one third the cost for 500 less credit hours earned. Furthermore, my neighboring district of Wheelersburg Local paid \$21,111 for 507 credit hours taught in their school. Wheelersburg's FY24 online CCP enrollment was double their in school enrollment – 1,013 credit hours earned – *but it cost the district eight times as much, a grand total of \$168,715.* Coupled with lower student scores, paying those fees does not make good financial sense.

Our Coalition is advocating the online cost per credit hour be reduced to match the \$41.64 costs for high school classroom delivery. As it currently stands, online CCP tuition at \$166.55 is a large financial burden on our districts, and subsequently our families when students are not passing online courses, while producing profits for colleges regardless of outcomes. We believe SB104 is the appropriate vessel for such changes.

If online CCP tuition costs can not be reduced, we strongly request this committee consider simple prioritization regulations to address this delivery method debacle: if a CCP course is offered locally at the student's high school, or a nearby college campus, the student must enroll in an in-person learning option. If the course is not offered locally, the student may enroll in the online course. This will guide our kids into the CCP delivery model that best educates and accommodates our students, protects local district's and the state's credentialing investments in our teachers, and equates to huge savings for our school districts.

Thank you for your time, I would be glad to answer any questions the committee may have.