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CENTER

145 N. QUENTIN ROAD
NEWARK, OHIO 43055
(P) 740-349-6084
(F) 740-349-6107
www.lcesc.org

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Written Testimony

Dale L. Dickson, Director of Auxiliary Services
Licking Regional Educational Service Center
Before the Ohio General Assembly Education Committee
March 4, 2025

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of continued funding for the **CPR in Schools** program in the upcoming biennium budget.

As a Director with the Licking Regional Educational Service Center, I have had the privilege of facilitating CPR training by Amber Higbie, CPR in Schools Program Manager for staff representatives from multiple high schools, including Philo, Granville, Heath, Johnstown, Lakewood, Licking Heights, Phoenix Central Alternative School, Licking Valley, Newark, Utica, Northridge, Tri-Valley, and Zanesville. These schools have now received, and actively use, the high-quality **CPR in Schools Training Kits**, enabling students to learn essential lifesaving skills efficiently and effectively.

The impact of this program cannot be overstated. Since the 2017-2018 school year, Ohio has mandated CPR and AED instruction as a high school graduation requirement. The American Heart Association, with funding from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, has provided critical resources to support this initiative. This fully funded program ensures students receive hands-on training in CPR and AED use in as little as 20 minutes, empowering them with the confidence to act in emergencies.

Educators across our region have responded with overwhelmingly positive feedback, praising the **flexibility of the training kits, ease of use, and high levels of student engagement when using these kits**. The ability to train students in just one class period makes this program both practical and impactful. However, **continued funding is vital** to sustain and expand access to these resources, ensuring that all Ohio public high schools can equip students with lifesaving skills.

Without continued investment, schools may struggle to maintain this training due to equipment limitations and staffing constraints. This program directly aligns with Ohio's commitment to **public safety and workforce readiness**, preparing students not only to meet graduation requirements but also to contribute to safer communities.

I strongly urge this committee to prioritize funding for the CPR in Schools program in the new biennium budget. This initiative is more than an educational mandate—it is a public health necessity. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dale L. Dickson'.

Dale L. Dickson
Director of Auxiliary Services
145 N. Quentin Road, Newark OH 43055
ddickson@lcesc.org

Direct Office Phone: 740-349-6098

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: February 27, 2025

Name: Dale L. Dickson

Are you representing: Yourself ☒ Organization ☐

Organization (If Applicable): Licking Regional Educational Service Center

Position/Title: Director of Auxiliary Services

Address: 145 N. Quentin Road

City: Newark State: Ohio Zip: 43055

Best Contact Telephone: 740-349-6098 Email: ddickson@lcesc.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes ☒ No ☐

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): Biennium Budget

Specific Issue: CPR in Schools Continued Funding

Are you testifying as a: Proponent ☒ Opponent ☐ Interested Party ☐

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes ☒ No ☐

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? Written testimony being provided.

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

I am supporting continued funding for the CPR in Schools program to promulgate and enhance quality CPR/AED training for students prior to high school graduation as required in Ohio law.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.



American Heart Association.

You're the Cure

CPR IN SCHOOLS

Bystander CPR can triple the chances of surviving a cardiac arrest. We are creating a Nation of Lifesavers by collaborating with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce to supply Ohio high schools with the materials and curriculum training needed to teach students this lifesaving skill.

What we have accomplished since HB 33:

By the end of the 24/25 school year, **500 High Schools** will have received educator training and CPR in Schools training materials.

This equates to approx. **122,870 graduating students¹** that are equipped with the lifesaving skill of Bystander CPR.

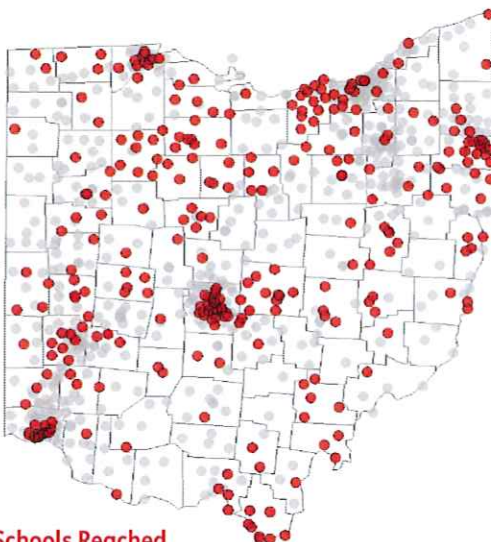
42% of schools reached are in Rural areas who are less likely to have supplemental funding for resources like this. They, based on geographic location, have a longer than average EMS response time. Bystander CPR is critical in these communities.

Why we are requesting continued funding to the ODEW in HB 96:

To reach the remaining **450 public High Schools** in Ohio, provide those campuses with training and equipment.

Allow the ODEW to provide continuing education to teachers across the state on CPR/AED curriculum implementation.

This would ensure that an additional **242,660 graduates** in our communities are equipped with the knowledge and confidence to respond in a cardiac arrest emergency.



Schools Reached
Schools Not Yet Reached

Educator Feedback:

"Thank you so much for sending some awesome equipment! It was much needed and I am very thankful for it! This will allow me to teach CPR and AED use with much more success in my classroom!"

"This material is so appreciated. Our area is rural and it takes responders an average of 25 minutes to arrive. I am excited to have the equipment to teach our students this skill"

- Post-Training Survey Feedback

"In the past two years I have had three students have real life situations occur when they needed to use their CPR skills learned in class. I am thankful for the recent funding provided to get CPR in Schools kits & training into more schools. I believe this will allow more students to receive quality CPR training."

- Kayla Campos, Utica High School

For more information, visit www.heart.org/OhioCPRinSchools or scan:

Amber Higbie, CPR Program Manager | amber.higbie@heart.org | 281.841.2401

Dustin Holfinger, State Government Relations Director | dustin.holfinger@heart.org | 614.578.3042



¹. Student data source: NCES Common Core of Data, 2023/2024 school year ([link](#)).