

Proponent Testimony for HB62

House Education Committee

03/28/2025

Superintendent Cathy Trevathan, Hillsdale Local School District

Chairwoman Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am Catherine Trevathan, the Hillsdale Local School District Superintendent in Ashland County.

The Hillsdale Local School District is in favor of all provisions included in HB62.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of House Bill 62. My name is Catherine Trevathan, and I proudly serve as the Superintendent of the Hillsdale Local School District in Ashland County. I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed changes to the College Credit Plus (CCP) program outlined in HB 62.

At Hillsdale, we are deeply committed to providing our students access to high-quality, college-level coursework while still in high school. The CCP program has opened doors for many of our students, offering them a head start on their college journey and helping families save significantly on tuition. However, we also face very real challenges in implementing and sustaining this program at the local level—particularly when it comes to textbook costs and equitable funding.

House Bill 62 takes important steps to address these concerns:

- **Encouraging Open-Source Materials:** Requiring colleges to prioritize open-source materials wherever possible is a fiscally responsible move. Not only does this reduce the burden on K-12 districts and families, but it also promotes access and academic equity. When students don't have to worry about whether they can afford their course materials, they can focus fully on learning.
- **Shared Textbook Costs:** In cases where open-source materials are unavailable, the proposed 50/50 cost-sharing model between secondary schools and colleges is fair and sustainable. It acknowledges that both institutions benefit from CCP participation and help balance financial responsibility more equitably.
- **Revised Payment Structures:** Adjusting funding for courses that could be taught in-house by qualified high school staff supports local control and incentivizes schools to invest in teacher credentials. At Hillsdale, we have talented teachers qualified to teach CCP courses, and we believe we should be empowered to do so—at a reasonable cost to the state.

- Improved Communication Requirements: Finally, it is essential that colleges notify high schools when students withdraw from CCP courses. When we know a student has withdrawn, we can step in quickly with support or guidance, ensuring that no student falls through the cracks. Withdrawing from classes and not communicating with the local school district can jeopardize not only eligibility but also on-time graduation.

These changes are thoughtful, practical, and student-centered. They reflect an understanding of the realities faced by districts like ours and offer meaningful solutions that will strengthen the CCP program for years to come.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Ohio's students. I urge you to support House Bill 62 and help us continue to expand college opportunities while being responsible stewards of public funds.

Sincerely,
Cathy Trevathan
Superintendent
Hillsdale Local School District