



February 5, 2025

Honorable Representative Brian Stewart
Ohio House Finance Committee
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Honorable Senator Jerry Cirino
Ohio Senate Finance Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, First Floor 127
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Junior Achievement's Financial Literacy and Workforce Readiness Programming Initiative - State Budget Request

At AEP Ohio, we are committed to powering communities—both through the energy we provide and the investments we make in the people who call them home. A strong, prepared workforce is essential to the future of Ohio's economy, which is why we are proud to support Junior Achievement of Central Ohio (JA) and their mission to equip students with financial literacy, career readiness, and entrepreneurship skills.

The requested funding will allow JA to expand its impact, reaching even more students, educators, and schools. We encourage others to join us in supporting this important work because when we invest in our students today, we strengthen our communities for tomorrow.

As a longtime significant supporter of Junior Achievement, we recognize the critical role JA plays in closing the workforce skills gap. By expanding its reach across 25 counties in central, southern, and eastern Ohio, JA is ensuring that more students—starting as early as middle school—gain the knowledge and real-world experiences needed to make informed career and financial decisions. This is especially vital as Ohio faces a tightening labor market and increasing demand for skilled talent in key industries.

AEP Ohio is also proud to annually support JA Finance Park at both the Columbus and Newark Learning Centers. This hands-on program gives middle school students a transformative experience in financial decision-making, helping them build skills that will serve them for a lifetime. By supporting JA, we are investing in the next generation of innovators, problem-solvers, and community leaders—the very people who will drive Ohio's economic growth and energy future.

Sincerely,

Angie Rybalt

Director Customer Experience, AEP Ohio



cardinalhealth.com

February 25, 2025

Honorable Representative Brian Stewart
Ohio House Finance Committee
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative Stewart,

At Cardinal Health, we are committed to improving lives every day—both through the healthcare solutions we provide and by investing in the future workforce. As a long-time supporter and board member of Junior Achievement of Central Ohio, I have seen firsthand how Junior Achievement equips students with the financial literacy, career readiness and entrepreneurial skills needed to thrive in today's rapidly evolving economy.

Cardinal Health proudly supports Junior Achievement BizTown in the Columbus Learning Center, where students engage in a simulated economy, and broader programming, reaching over 36,000 students annually—many from low- to moderate-income households.

To expand reach and ensure more students across Ohio gain access to Junior Achievement's learning experiences, we support the inclusion of an amendment to HB 96, allocating \$2.75 million per fiscal year to Junior Achievement. This investment will allow Junior Achievement to strengthen its impact across Ohio, helping students develop actionable career plans and become part of our state's future workforce. With labor participation on the decline and industries like ours facing pressing talent shortages, workforce development has never been more essential. Junior Achievement provides students with hands-on learning opportunities, preparing them for real-world success. And the results speak for themselves—Junior Achievement alumni are more financially independent, report higher career satisfaction and make informed career choices that benefit them and the economy.

By securing this funding, Junior Achievement will have the ability to reach even more students, teachers and schools across the state. Cardinal Health encourages support of this initiative—because investing in students today means building a stronger workforce and economy for Ohio's future.

Sincerely,

Jason Hollar
Chief Executive Officer



February 5, 2025

Honorable Representative Brian Stewart
Ohio House Finance Committee
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Honorable Senator Jerry Cirino
Ohio Senate Finance Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, First Floor 127
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Junior Achievement's Financial Literacy and Workforce Readiness Programming Initiative - State Budget Request

On behalf of Newark City Schools, I am writing to express our strong support for the joint state operating budget appropriation request that, if approved, will measurably expand Junior Achievement's programming, benefiting local youth, schools, teachers, and communities—not just in Newark, but across the broader region. This investment will enhance opportunities for students to build the financial literacy, career readiness, and leadership skills they need to succeed in an evolving workforce.

At Newark City Schools, we are committed to providing students with meaningful, real-world learning experiences, which is why we are proud to partner with Junior Achievement of Central Ohio (JA) in bringing JA BizTown and JA Finance Park to the new JA Learning Center in Newark. Through this initiative, students from Newark and surrounding districts will gain hands-on experience managing personal finances, making career decisions, and understanding how businesses operate—critical skills that will shape their futures.

This partnership is part of a larger vision for the former State Farm building, where we are creating a hub for lifelong learning that serves students and the community. With Junior Achievement's expertise, we will provide thousands of students each year with immersive financial and career education experiences. These programs will help bridge the gap between education and workforce needs, ensuring students are well-prepared for high-growth industries in our region.

On behalf of Newark City Schools, I wholeheartedly support the continued expansion of Junior Achievement in our region. I encourage others to invest in this initiative, which is helping prepare today's students for tomorrow's opportunities and strengthening both our schools and our economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Lewis", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David L. Lewis
Superintendent
Newark City Schools

LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

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NEWARK, OHIO 43055
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www.lcesc.org

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February 5, 2025

Honorable Representative Brian Stewart

Ohio House Finance Committee
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Representative Stewart,

RE: Junior Achievement's Financial Literacy and Workforce Readiness Programming Initiative - State Budget Request

On behalf of the Licking Regional Educational Service Center (ESC), I am writing to express our strong support for the joint state operating budget appropriation request, which, if approved, will significantly expand Junior Achievement's programming, benefiting students, schools, and communities across our region. This investment is essential to ensuring that students gain the financial literacy, career readiness, and entrepreneurial skills needed to succeed in an evolving workforce.

Through our partnership with Junior Achievement of Central Ohio, we have played a critical role in expanding JA's reach into Licking and surrounding counties, making it possible to engage students in areas that had not previously been served. With the establishment of the JA Learning Center in Newark, students from multiple new districts—including Southwest Licking Local, Licking Valley Local and Northridge Local—now have access to immersive financial and career education programs. Additionally, districts that previously traveled to Columbus for JA programs can now transition to the Newark center, keeping students closer to home while opening opportunities for even more schools in counties such as Knox, Muskingum, and Coshocton to participate. Our organization has invested \$40,000 per year to support the location manager position as a commitment to the benefit provided by the center.

The requested budget appropriation will provide critical resources to sustain and grow these efforts, allowing Junior Achievement to fund staff, increase engagement across new districts, and serve as a model for future regional partnerships. Expanding this initiative will ensure that more students—regardless of their background or location—have access to the hands-on learning experiences that empower them to achieve more.

On behalf of Licking Regional ESC, I strongly support this initiative and encourage others to invest in Junior Achievement's expansion. Together, we can ensure that students in our region are prepared for successful futures in an increasingly competitive workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dale E. Lewellen'.

Dale Lewellen
Superintendent
Licking Regional Educational Service Center
145 N. Quentin Road, Newark OH 43055
dl Lewellen@lcesc.org

740-349-6084



February 27th, 2025

Honorable Representative Brian Stewart
Ohio House Finance Committee
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative Stewart,

At the Career and Technology Education Centers (CTEC), we are committed to equipping students with the skills, knowledge, and hands-on experience necessary to succeed in the workforce. This is why we proudly support Junior Achievement (JA) and its efforts to expand programming through the joint state operating budget appropriation request. We strongly advocate for the inclusion of an amendment to HB 96 that would allocate \$2.75 million per fiscal year to Junior Achievement. This crucial funding will enhance JA's ability to deliver its impactful programs to a wider audience, ensuring that more students across our region benefit from comprehensive financial literacy, career readiness, and entrepreneurship education.

JA's programming complements CTEC's mission to promote workforce development by bridging the gap between education and industry. Through immersive experiences like JA BizTown and JA Finance Park, students gain real-world insights into managing finances, exploring careers, and making informed decisions about their futures. These programs align with our vision of preparing individuals not just for jobs, but for lifelong learning and career growth.

As our communities continue to evolve, we must ensure that students have access to educational opportunities that prepare them for in-demand careers. JA plays a critical role in this effort, and additional funding will allow them to serve even more students, strengthening our local workforce and economy. We fully support this request and encourage its approval to help expand JA's reach and impact.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jayme Blackstone'.

Jayme Blackstone
Career Development Coordinator
C-TEC

CENTRAL OHIO TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Office of the President
John M. Berry, Ph.D.

February 27, 2025

Honorable Representative Brian Stewart
Ohio House Finance Committee
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative Stewart,

On behalf of Central Ohio Technical College (COTC), I am writing to express our strong support for the joint state operating budget appropriation request, which will allow Junior Achievement (JA) to expand its reach and deepen its impact on students across our region. As an annual supporter of JA Finance Park in Newark and a proud advocate for Junior Achievement, we recognize the critical role that JA plays in preparing the next generation for success in both education and the workforce.

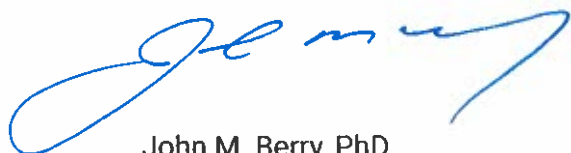
We urge the inclusion of an amendment to HB 96 that would provide \$2.75 million per fiscal year to Junior Achievement areas in Ohio. This funding is essential to enhancing JA's programs across all 88 counties, enabling more students to access the vital resources that foster career readiness and financial literacy. By investing in JA, we are not only supporting individual students but also building a stronger foundation for our state's workforce and economy.

At COTC, our mission is to empower lives through accessible education, transforming students and communities while advancing workforce readiness. JA Finance Park aligns seamlessly with this mission by providing middle and high school students with real-world financial literacy and career exploration experiences. These hands-on learning opportunities help bridge the gap between education and industry, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and decision-making abilities they need to thrive in an evolving job market.

The requested budget appropriation will provide crucial resources to expand JA's programming, making it accessible to even more students, schools, and communities in our region. This investment will strengthen Ohio's future workforce by fostering financial responsibility and career preparedness at an early age.

As a driving force in technical education and workforce development, COTC values the opportunity to collaborate with Junior Achievement to provide meaningful educational experiences that shape the next generation of professionals. We fully support this funding request and encourage its approval to ensure JA can continue its essential work in preparing students for lifelong success.

Sincerely,



John M. Berry, PhD
President

February 5, 2025

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Ohio House Finance Committee
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RE: Junior Achievement's Financial Literacy and Workforce Readiness Programming Initiative - State Budget Request

On behalf of Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center (ESC), I am writing to express our strong support for the joint state operating budget appropriation request, which, if approved, will significantly expand Junior Achievement's programming and impact students, schools, and communities across our region. Investing in hands-on, experiential education is critical to preparing students for Ohio's evolving workforce, and Junior Achievement's programs play a vital role in that mission.

The requested budget appropriation will provide the resources necessary to sustain and expand these efforts, ensuring that students in our region—regardless of their background—have access to high-quality career readiness programs. Investing in Junior Achievement is an investment in Ohio's future workforce, and we are excited to continue working together to provide students with the opportunities they need to achieve more.

Muskingum Valley ESC is proud to have partnered with Junior Achievement to host JA Inspire in October 2024, bringing together students, educators, and local businesses for a career exploration event that connects students with real-world opportunities. This event provided students across our region with exposure to in-demand careers while helping employers engage with the future workforce. This type of programming is essential for ensuring students understand the pathways available to them and are equipped with the skills needed to succeed. Beyond JA Inspire, Junior Achievement's commitment to workforce readiness, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship education aligns closely with Muskingum Valley ESC's focus on developing strong school-to-career connections. Expanding JA's reach into new districts will allow even more students to benefit from interactive, skills-based learning experiences that directly prepare them for their futures.

Sincerely,



Eastin Lewellen
Director of Workforce Development
Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center