



# TRI-VALLEY

## *Local Schools*

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### Ohio Senate Education Committee

#### House Bill 96: Career Awareness Funding

Proponent Testimony from Mark Neal, Superintendent,  
Tri-Valley Local School District

May 2, 2025

Good afternoon Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee.

My name is Mark Neal, and I serve as the Superintendent of Tri-Valley Local School District. I appreciate the opportunity to speak today in support of the reinstatement of Career Awareness Funding, and to explain the positive impact these funds have on our students, even though they are administered through our partner Career and Technical Center, Mid-East CTC.

Mid-East Career and Technology Centers (MECTC) plays a vital role in our region, providing career-technical education to high school juniors and seniors. But their impact extends far beyond those high school years. MECTC provides crucial career awareness activities and resources for our younger students, and these activities directly benefit Tri-Valley Local School District.

While Tri-Valley Local School District does not receive these funds directly, the programming they support is invaluable to our students. The Career Awareness Funding allows MECTC to provide a range of activities, including:

- Elementary School Activities:
  - Field trips to Zanesville Campus - Kindergarten
  - Careers for Me Junior (2nd Grade)
  - Community Career Puzzles (3rd Grade)
  - All About Me Posters (4th Grade)
  - Careers for Me II (5th Grade)
  - Very Mid-East Christmas Event (K-5th Grade)
- Middle School Activities:
  - One-day Career Exploration Workshop - 7th Grade
    - Career Interest Inventories (OhioMeansJobs)
    - Career pathway exploration and research
      - Skills, outlook, educational pathways, salary and lifestyle
  - Program tours (Zanesville Campus) - 8th Grade
    - Mid-East CTC provided reimbursement for transportation
  - Two-day Career Planning Workshop - 8th grade
    - Career interest inventories (OhioMeansJobs)
    - Career pathway exploration and research
      - Skills, outlook, educational pathways, salary and lifestyle

- High School Activities:
  - Sophomore presentation about career options at Mid-East CTC
  - Sophomore Showcase visits to Buffalo and Zanesville Campuses
    - Delivered by Mid-East program instructors and student ambassadors
    - Mid-East provided lunch
    - Mid-East provided transportation reimbursement
  - Career Nights - Buffalo and Zanesville Campuses
    - Open to sophomores and families who wanted more information about Mid-East CTC

These activities expose our elementary, middle, and high school students to a variety of career paths at a critical time in their development. They help our students begin to understand the connection between what they learn in the classroom and their future opportunities.

The work that MECTC does in our elementary, middle, and high schools is essential. It helps us to build a strong foundation for our students' future success. It is an investment in our children, our community, and our region.

I urge you to consider the positive impact that Career Awareness Funding has on students throughout our region, including those in Tri-Valley Local School District. I strongly encourage you to restore this funding in the Senate's version of the budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mark Neal  
Superintendent  
Tri-Valley Local School District

