

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chairman Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony on House Bill 96, the State Operating Budget.

My name is Tish Jenkins and I serve as Superintendent for GOAL Digital Academy. GOAL Digital is an online community school that offers a unique learning model focused on student success. We serve students in the central Ohio region and offer seven in-person learning lab locations in Cardington, Delaware, Galion, Mansfield, Marion, Mt. Vernon, and Newark. Through these learning labs, GOAL Digital offers, but cannot require, a blended model of learning where students receive face-to-face adult support to help them learn, set goals, and prepare for their futures.

While there are many items in House Bill 96 that we are following, we are requesting language for a pilot program to allow GOAL Digital to operate a blended learning model that would require students to attend some in-person classes. Under current law, an online community school cannot offer other models. This pilot program would allow an existing, established, and quality online community school to offer both an online learning program and a blended learning program. Through this program, GOAL would be able to serve some of our highest risk and most in need of additional support students through in-person learning for at least 50% of the time (i.e., blended learning model), while other students may continue to learn online for at least 50% of the time (i.e., online instructional method).

It is important to note that this pilot program would not need additional funding, however, an online community school that participates in the pilot, would be eligible to receive the additional funds provided to brick-and-mortar community schools for DPIA, building, transportation, and nutrition services.

I have attached the proposed amendment language (SCXXXX) for your review and would appreciate your support as we hope to maximize our ability as educators to help our students succeed.

I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Tish Jenkins

Goal Digital Academy Superintendent