



# EASTLAND-FAIRFIELD

## CAREER & TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Ohio Senate Finance Committee

May 27, 2025

Written Testimony of Shelley Groves, Superintendent of  
Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools

Good afternoon, Chairman Cirino, Vice-Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and Members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Shelley Groves, and I have the privilege of serving as the Superintendent of Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools (EFCTS). Thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony regarding the impact Career Awareness Funding has had on our district.

Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools serves juniors and seniors from 16 associate districts in central Ohio and serves as the lead for our Career and Technical Planning District (CTPD) which covers Franklin, Fairfield, and Pickaway counties. EFCTS was founded in 1968 and has grown to offer more than 25 high school career pathway programs on our two main campuses, Eastland Career Center and Fairfield Career Center. We have also expanded our programming into our partner district by offering 9 satellite programs. Our enrollment over the past several years has increased to over 1500 high school students served per year and we have documented partnerships with over 1,000 business partners.

Thanks to the Career Awareness Funding, another area of expansion in our CTPD has been our opportunity to offer middle school Career Connections courses. As the CTPD lead, we hire instructors which we place at middle schools within our 16 associate districts. As of the 24-25 school year we are offering middle school Career Connections at 11 of our 16 districts. It is in these courses that middle school students are introduced to various workforce pathways through problem solving and project-based learning activities.

The Career Awareness Funding has also impacted our ability to serve elementary students and educators. With this funding, we have had the opportunity to create "career kits" which we deliver to elementary and middle schools in our CTPD. These kits provide hands-on activities that align directly with STEM, problem solving, reading comprehension, sequential reasoning, as well as visualization and observational skills. These kits are developed by grade band standards and contain activities and content directly related to one of 14 different pathways (automotive, animal management, sports medicine, fire fighting, welding, construction, cosmetology, pre-nursing, HVAC, electrical, culinary, etc.). We are in the process of developing additional kits to address manufacturing and education, which again, would be supported through Career Awareness Funds.





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Career Awareness Funding is critical to the continuation and expansion of career exploration in central Ohio and our CTPD. The demand and need for expansion of these middle and elementary school opportunities continue to grow. Eastland-Fairfield is committed to providing exceptional career exploration but this does come at a cost. Eastland-Fairfield receives approximately \$630,000 annually through this funding, and our actual expenditures for these initiatives far exceed that amount.

Below is a summary of the impact these dollars have on students in our planning district, which include items previously mentioned:

- Hiring of 10 Career Connection Instructors (utilized by 11 of our 16 partner districts and request for this service to continue to grow)
- Employment of our Career Development Team (3 recruiters and 2 support roles who develop the career kits utilized by all 16 of our associate districts)
- Supplies to create, replenish, and update all pathway kits yearly
- Middle School Career Fair (venue cost and activity supplies)
- Discovery Day events for 5th and 6th graders (venue cost and activity supplies for both events)

Your continued support of Career and Technical Education is greatly appreciated. I invite any member of this committee to visit Eastland-Fairfield to see the great work we are doing for students in central Ohio. I respectfully request that you restore Career Awareness Funding so we may continue to expand career exploration to students in our CTPD, which prepares students to make more educated decisions for their future, and the future of the Ohio workforce.

Thank you again for your time, consideration, and support of Career and Technical Education in Ohio.

Sincerely,

Shelley Groves  
Superintendent, Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools