

Testimony before the Senate Finance Committee

June 1, 2017

Chairman Oelslager, Ranking Minority Member Skindell, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of continued full funding for INFOhio's Digital Resources. I am Theresa M. Fredericka, Director of INFOhio a division of the Management Council of the Ohio Education Computer Network.

Let me begin by acknowledging the members of the Ohio Education Computer Network for the leadership provided to school libraries. Creating a robust technical foundation, they are overseeing the transition of school libraries from a print environment to a digital environment; they are facilitating the transformation much needed in our schools to support digital learning.

Since 1995, INFOhio has cost effectively— and more importantly, equitably— provided vital digital resources to all PreK-12 schools, public, private, charter, online, and home schools through the Ohio Education Computer Network. The *By the Numbers flyer* provided to you with this testimony illustrates our reach across the state and our effectiveness.

This morning I also acknowledge for their leadership the members of Libraries Connect Ohio which includes OPLIN (representing public libraries), OhioLINK (representing university libraries), and the State Library of Ohio. We pool our funds to take advantage of economies of scale in licensing agreements for digital content, which reduces the cost for all of us, thereby reducing the cost for the state of Ohio as a whole. This partnership gives a great advantage for Ohio's PreK-12 educational community.

The digital content that INFOhio provides is documented on the *Teach Learn* flyer also included with this testimony. You will find high-quality, reliable resources that support Ohio's Learning Standards. These are not available for free on the Internet and 96% of Ohio schools report that they could not provide these resources without INFOhio.

Working through the Ohio Department of Education, the INFOhio resources provide the digital content critical to teaching today's students how to research, think critically and then create new ideas. These skills are core to ensuring our PreK-12 students are ready for further education and the workforce. Funding INFOhio digital resources ensures that Ohio's PreK-12 students will be prepared to successfully transition from high school to the resources that Ohio students use for college assignments and Ohio employees use in the workforce. This is our contribution to the Ohio Attainment Goal 2025 set by the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

What does this \$1.1 million cut mean to Ohio's 1.9 million PreK-12 students, their teachers, and their parents? Let's hear from two school districts— Canton City Schools and Jackson Local— just how these resources which are provided to all Ohio schools at no cost, are being used daily to improve instruction.

Thank you.

Testifying on behalf of INFOhio:

Mindy Engler, Library Media Specialist, Canton McKinley High School, Canton City Schools; Ri'Jina Jennings, Student, Canton McKinley High School, Canton City Schools; Deontae McCollum, Student, Canton McKinley High School, Canton City Schools; Christina Conti, Jackson High School, Jackson Local School District, Massilon; and Monica Myers, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Jackson Local School District, Massilon