



October 27, 2021

**Ohio House Economic and Workforce Development Committee
Senate Bill 166 Proponent Testimony
Greg Edinger, Superintendent, Vanguard-Sentinel Career & Technology Center**

Chair Edwards, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Upchurch, and Members of the Ohio House Economic and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of Senate Bill 166. My name is Greg Edinger, Superintendent of Vanguard Sentinel Career and Technology Centers, and I submit this testimony on behalf of my district, as well as the Ohio Association of Career Technical Superintendents (OACTS) and the Ohio Association for Career Technical Education (Ohio ACTE).

SB 166 will enhance career-technical education (CTE) and workforce development in the State of Ohio. Vanguard Sentinel Career and Technology Centers have developed a blue print for success where we have committed to a high standard of excellence, providing a personalized, flexible and positive learning environment, creating a culture of innovation and providing and facilitating community partnerships. Senate Bill 166 aligns with these goals and will expand our ability to provide a learning environment that responds to individual student success.

I can describe certain specific benefits of the proposed legislation:

- **Business Incentives for Work-Based Learning:** The importance of work-based learning experiences and the exposure these opportunities provide high school students cannot be overstated. Although a student's ability to link his or her academic, technical and professional skills to a work site is enormously beneficial, we are currently finding that employers are sometimes hesitant to provide these opportunities for a variety of reasons. The incentives proposed in SB 166 should encourage more employers to develop WBL programs for students that are training for in-demand jobs. In addition to the financial incentives (tax credits; insurance protections, etc.), companies will quickly realize they are able to screen a targeted group of potential employees, which could possibly reduce their recruiting efforts and result in new long-term employees for them. This benefit to Ohio's students—allowing them to embark on their career path as part of their underlying k-12 education—is a core reason our Associations strongly support this bill.
- **Incentivize and Enhance Access to Driver's Education:** Unfortunately, an increasingly significant barrier to workforce development and technical training—whether at the high school or adult level—is a lack of access to transportation. Too often Ohio's students

literally cannot make it to the job or training site because they do not have a driver's license and lack access to public transportation. As a joint vocational school district, we have encountered a growing number of students who do not have the financial means or opportunity to take the course and therefore don't get their license. This alone can be a barrier to employment, so providing this opportunity during the school day will assist us in training students as the future workforce. SB 166 allows schools to utilize a portion of their career-technical education (weighted) funding to make a driver education course available to high school students—either independently or via a partnership with a separate entity. In addition, SB 166 allows students to receive credit and/or an industry credential for successful completion of a driver's education course. These provisions will advance opportunities for so many of our students by increasing access to driver's ed. and incentivizing students to get their license.

- Additional CTE-related Provisions: Last, SB 166 contains other changes to state law that appear intended to advance career-tech, including provisions granting flexibility for our schools to continue offering remote / online technical training options to students; and provisions aligning the Community Reinvestment Act with other tax incentive programs to ensure JVSDs are included in the applicable PILOT. SB 166 will be a benefit to the state's career centers and businesses alike.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective.