

Cajon Keeton, Treasurer, Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District (Ottawa County)

Proponent Testimony for House Bill 1

- Technology Sub Committee
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Chair Richardson and members of the Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 1.

Ohio is rated in the top three in the country for bandwidth availability in our schools thanks to the state's decades-long initiative to provide networking capability for education. Data shows that 96 percent of Ohio schools have internet connectivity in their academic buildings. The state can and should connect the relatively small percentage of schools that are not connected. Currently, Ohio does not have a dedicated formula to fund technology in our Pre K – 12 schools.

CHALLENGE

For Ohio students to succeed, districts should have the resources either to hard-wire or offer wireless access in classrooms, and each student should be provided an electronic device such as a Chrome book, iPad, or laptop as determined by the individual school district. This will ensure that all of Ohio's students have access to modern technology to give them a competitive edge for their future and to close technology skills gaps in our future workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of the Technology Subgroup, as outlined in the following chart, have already been incorporated in the new Base Cost proposal.

Base Cost would fund:

\$68.50 per student, annually

\$68.50 was arrived at with the following formula:

- \$37.50 – Individual digital devices for grades 1 -12
 - based upon Chrome book, or equivalent, with 4-year replacement cycle
- \$3.50 – Access Points: Maintenance and replacement
- \$2.50 – Network Switches: Maintenance and replacement
- \$25.00 – Information Technology Centers (ITC) or Third Party Vendor: Essential Functions
 - Fiscal, Student Information, EMIS, Info Ohio, Internet

In light of COVID-19, state funded and locally determined technology needs have never been greater.