



**Ohio Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee / State Operating Budget (HB 110)
May 5, 2021**

**Testimony of the Career-Technical Education Associations
(Ohio ACTE, OACTS, Ohio CCS)
Keith Horner, Superintendent, Apollo Career Center**

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Ohio Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Keith Horner, Superintendent of Apollo Career Center, and I am testifying on behalf my school, as well as the state's 89 public career technical schools—including its 49 Joint Vocational School Districts, 24 comprehensive & 16 compact career-technical schools, and 52 Ohio Technical Centers (OTCs)—all of which are represented by the Ohio Association for Career Technical Education (Ohio ACTE), the Ohio Association of Career Technical Superintendents (OACTS), and the Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career Technical Schools (Ohio CCS). Collectively, these associations represent the entire career-technical education (CTE) community in Ohio, including its schools, teachers, administrators, and the students they serve.

Ohio offers career-tech through 89 "Career Technical Planning Districts" (CTPDs)—regions established strategically throughout the state to ensure every student has access to CTE opportunities. Each CTPD utilizes one of three "delivery-models" at the high school level: 1) Joint Vocational School Districts (JVSDs), also known as Career Centers, which serve several member school districts and provide career technical courses/programming to those member districts; 2) Comprehensives, which are typically large, traditional school districts that are big enough to independently offer their own CTE programming; and 3) Compacts, which are multiple school districts that share delivery and costs for career-tech through service agreements.

Apollo Career Center is located in Lima, Ohio and serves 11 member districts across four counties. We have 21 high school programs and have seen substantial growth over the last four years as the advantages of Career Technical Education become more evident and the Greater Lima Region supports and elevates the importance of skilled trades. Apollo is also a thriving (adult ed.) OTC, serving adults in nine counties with programs focusing on Health Care, Manufacturing, Public Safety and Truck Driving. We have worked with over 60 businesses for customized training programs and over 140 fire departments across the nine county region. Included in these are Ford, Dana, and General Dynamics Land Systems to build tanks. Through strong long-standing partnerships with business and industry, students are offered internships, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities that benefit the community, the economy and the future of Apollo students.

As part of the state operating budget bill (HB 110), our schools continue to focus on the following issues to further strengthen CTE in Ohio:

1. K-12 School Funding: We support the Fair School Funding Plan as adopted in the House Passed version of HB 110. **Above all else, we emphasize the need to “unfreeze” our career-technical education (supplemental) “weighted” funding—used to purchase the equipment and supplies necessary to operate our most in-demand technical programs—and (at a minimum) ensure these funds are maintained at current levels and remain outside any cap, so that career-technical schools regain the ability to expand programming based on increases in regional demand and student enrollment.**

Note on Recommended Amendment: The Fair School Funding Plan converts current weighted funding tiered amounts (see RC 3317.014) to a percentage of the (career-tech) statewide average base cost per pupil. The purpose of this modification is to ensure that if and when the average base cost per pupil increases in the future, CTE weighted funding will see a proportional increase. However, a possible scenario is that career-tech schools / programs see a decrease in weighted funding under the current language because the percentages in the bill are being calculated from a (possibly higher) estimated base cost and not the (possibly lower) actual base cost (determined after enactment of the funding plan). Any decreases in weighted funding resulting from a slightly lower (actual) base cost per pupil would severely restrict our ability to expand and serve more students (similar to FY20 and FY21 when this funding was frozen at FY19 levels). Therefore, as a way to protect against potential inaccuracies in current funding projections, we would respectfully request that the dollar amounts associated with the five different (CTE funding) tiers currently included in Ohio Revised Code section 3317.014 be included in HB 110 as minimums for each tier (at least for the first two years) to ensure that this funding is not unintentionally reduced with the new formula.

2. Adult Diploma Program: We seek to expand the number of adult students we assist in obtaining a high school diploma via the Adult Diploma Program, and support the budget amendment added by the House which decreased the minimum eligibility age from 22 to 20. ADP provides funding for training as an alternative pathway for adults to earn an industry-recognized credential aligned to one of Ohio’s in demand jobs. Under ADP, an adult student may simultaneously earn a state-issued high school diploma at the conclusion of the program. We hope to be able to serve more adults by expanding student eligibility for ADP state funding opportunities.
3. Industry Credential Funding: We are grateful to the Administration and legislature for the various successful streams of industry-credential funding that have again been included in the proposed budget bill. The \$41M for High School Industry Recognized Credentials and \$50M for tech-focused (adult) credentials (in addition to other streams of funding) will continue to assist our schools in responding to the state’s diverse regional workforce needs.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.