



**The Alliance for High Quality Education
Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee
SB 229 Proponent Testimony
September 28, 2021**

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and Members of the Senate Primary & Secondary Education Committee, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony today in support of SB 229.

My name is Anthony Podojil, Ph.D., and I am the Executive Director of The Alliance for High Quality Education (AHQE)¹.

The Alliance thanks Senator Blessing for introducing SB 229 and we appreciate Chairman Brenner's commitment to quickly moving the bill through the legislative process. SB 229 is timely and will provide clarity to school districts for the 2021-22 school year. Like all of you, the Alliance member superintendents have made every attempt to keep students in school for in-person instruction this year. Unfortunately, blended learning flexibility is still needed as an option due to COVID-19. The Alliance feels strongly that the extension of the provisions offered last year regarding the delivery of on-line learning formats is critical for this school year.

AHQE requests that the Committee amend SB 229 to clarify the circumstances under which a school district must provide students learning under a submit blended learning declaration with a computer and/or internet access. Districts should be required to confirm that every student has access to the tools they need for online/blended instruction but we ask that they only be required to provide computers and internet access to those students who demonstrate need.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide written testimony today.

¹ The Alliance for High Quality Education is a consortium of 74 high-performing school districts located throughout the State of Ohio including the Toledo, Cleveland, Akron-Canton, Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati areas. The Alliance for the last twenty-nine years has represented its members' interests on matters of state education policy and funding, as well as contributing to fostering high quality educational opportunities for students in their districts and those across the state.

Prior to joining the Alliance as its Executive Director, I worked as an elementary teacher and Middle School and High School building administrator in the Orange, Chagrin Falls, Riverside and Cleveland Heights/University Heights school districts. I also served as superintendent for the West Geauga Local Schools for thirteen years. I earned my doctorate at Cleveland State University in Urban Educational Administration.

