



**Success Club**

*An early intervention tool for college and career awareness*

Established 2015

[www.successclubataltitude.com](http://www.successclubataltitude.com)

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 109.

Ohio is poised for great things in the area of workforce development and transformation. SB 109 allows Ohioans of varied skill levels, backgrounds, and interests to couple poise with progress. OhioMeansJobs has identified more than 200 occupations, across a wide range of industry, that are considered in-demand. Passing SB 109 equates to more Ohioans considering, pursuing, and being employed in these 200-plus areas.

My name is Spencer B. Geraghty. I am an Intervention Specialist employed by the Canton City School District. In addition to my classroom teaching duties I am responsible for a program called Success Club. The fundamental purpose of the program is to provide early intervention in the areas of college and career awareness. Many students, particularly those who would be considered at-risk, benefit from the opportunity to explore in-demand college and career options.

Success Club began in 2015 with 10 students at one middle school, grades 6-8. This year, the fifth of the program, Success has grown to impact an anticipated 150 students across five middle schools and two school districts, one urban, one rural. Regardless of growth, the streamlined, four part, focus remains the same.

The focus of Success Club aligns to the weeks of the month. Students meet after-school once a week. Students also have at least one opportunity to explore college/career during school as well. The first week of the month focuses on soft skills necessary to succeed, regardless of post-secondary pathway. Skills are focused on one month at a time, built in sequential order. Students learn the basics of each skill and have opportunities to put all their newly acquired skills to use over the course of the academic year.

The second week of the month focuses on research: students research program activities scheduled for subsequent weeks. Research is done using standardized forms that allow students to see information in a consistent way. Additionally, students utilize the OhioMeansJobs Backpack resource to learn about themselves. They learn what career path they will be most suited for as a result of their interests and skills, specifically how they can use their strengths to access 200-plus in-demand jobs.

The third week of the month focuses on college/career exploration via site visits. Success Club visits every college and university in the immediate area, seven in total. In addition to college and university visits, the program visits a variety of career sites, a total of four this year. Students have, previously, researched the visit in week two, already having a foundational understanding upon arrival to the site. Please remember, the students participating in Success Club are 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. They are between 11 and 14 years old. The ability to visit a college campus and in-demand career site allows their eyes to be opened to the great pathways available for them in Canton, Stark County, Northeast Ohio, and our great State as a whole.

**Success Club Mission:** Prepare students for the future, wherever it may lead them.

The final week of the month focuses on re-investment via professional panels. Each month a community partner sends a panel of professionals to answer the questions students researched during week two. This year, students will hear from professionals in the areas of trucking, Armed Forces, tourism and hospitality management, public safety, building trades, and healthcare. The opportunity to hear information, first-hand, is an impactful experience that has the potential to shape the path of a student for the rest of their life.

The outcomes of Success Club and Senate Bill 109 look to achieve the same outcome: investing in Ohio's workforce, both now and for generations to come. In the FY18 [report](#) issued by The Office of Workforce Transformation, three primary goals were outlined; they can be found on page 15. The goals are: 1. Connect Business and Education, 2. Create a Culture of Continuous Learning, 3. Build Career Pathways.

Success Club has experienced tremendous growth as a result of partnership in the community. We have successfully connected business and education. SB 109 provides opportunity to solidify connections. Colleges and Universities are interested in promoting degree areas that lead to employment for graduates. Employers are interested in hiring candidates who are talented and local to the area. With scholarships and tax credits, the process can be expedited for continued economic growth.

Senate Bill 109 will make investments that promote continuous learning. When students and business learn together, there are benefits for all Ohioans. Students in Success Club possess the foundational elements to create a culture of continuous learning. Success Club teaches students about themselves, who they are now and who they can be. Employers are beginning to realize they need to talk with students at a young age. Businesses are learning how they can best adapt to serve the needs of the community, remaining competitive, and employing students who are ready to ensure continuous growth.

As the Chancellor's office develops assessment metrics, the process of continuous learning will continue to occur. There is no doubt we will see real and concrete success as a result of passing SB 109. When Ohioans are employed in high-demand fields the possibility for re-investment becomes limitless. The results of booming re-investment will, no doubt, cause this program to be furthered after 2023. One point that may be interesting to consider, this legislation has the potential to cause population growth as those with credentials for in-demand careers may move to the great state of Ohio. Also, SB 109 has the potential to be a model for other States wishing to grow workforce for in-demand fields.

The final goal, building career pathways, is the overarching focus of both Success Club and SB 109. A pathway, of any kind, takes someone going first and blazing a trail. This legislation lets Ohioans know their State blazes a trail. Ohio is working to promote their success as they transition from secondary education to post-secondary and on to beginning an in-demand career. Thank you for your attention to the incredibly important matter of Ohio's workforce. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. B. Geraghty', written in a cursive style.

Spencer B. Geraghty

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