



**House Workforce and Higher Education Committee
House Bill 98**

**Ohio School Boards Association
Ohio Association of School Business Officials
Buckeye Association of School Administrators**

May 6, 2025

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio and members of the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill (HB) 98. My name is Nicole Piscitani with the Ohio School Boards Association. Joining me in answering your questions are Dr. Paul Imhoff with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators and Katie Johnson with the Ohio Association of School Business Officials. Collectively, our organizations represent public school superintendents, school board members, treasurers/CFOs and other school business officials from around the state.

On behalf of our members, we are proud to support HB 98, which establishes the Community Connectors Workforce Program. HB 98 provides \$8 million each fiscal year to support Ohio's educational service centers to hire staff to connect high school students to jobs and internships in their communities. These individuals will offer instruction in soft skills and professional skills training and collaborate with OhioMeansJobs and other community partners to identify available jobs and internships in the community, among other responsibilities.

One of the things our members hear most from employers is the importance of soft skills. Can you work collaboratively with others? Can you communicate effectively in a team setting? Can you think critically? Do you have effective time management skills? These life skills serve as an important supplement to the strong educational foundation our schools provide, and HB 98 will ensure there will be additional professionals in our schools to assist students with cultivating these critical skills.

HB 98 also ensures our high school students have access and exposure to career opportunities through a career mentor. Students' lives are changed when they discover their passions and by exposing our kids to careers within their own local economies, we forge stronger communities across Ohio. HB 98 is so crucial, because it provides a



human link between the educational opportunities our schools provide and the workforce opportunities that exist before them.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity testify in support of HB 98 today, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.