

**House Education
SB2145**

March 1, 2023

Chairman Heinert and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Wayde Sick, State Director for the Department of Career and Technical Education. I am here to testify in support of SB2145, as amended by the Senate.

The State Board for Career and Technical Education has the authority to approve the operations of Postsecondary Career Schools. The reason for this authority is to provide oversight over the operations and to ensure the students enrolling in these programs are protected. They are assured the training they receive is high quality, they have the option to receive refunds, if not satisfied with the training, and there is a process for complaints. Examples of approved Postsecondary Career Schools include Lynnes Welding and Emerging Digital Academy. A requirement, as defined in century code, is to be nationally or regionally accredited. The reason for this is to assure the content is of high quality and that the program is legitimate and reputable.

SB2145 is an attempt to allow the State Board for Career and Technical Education the ability to exempt an organization that is offering a full-stack software engineering course that was in operation before 2020. This is specifically Emerging Digital Academy (EDA). EDA has been provisionally approved to operate in the state as they have been working with a national accreditor. Statute allows EDA to operate provisionally, if they are in good faith, making progress towards national accreditation.

According to EDA, due to its unique content, they are having difficulty becoming nationally accredited. SB2145, as written, would exempt them from needing to be

nationally accredited to operate in the state. This exemption would expire on January 1, 2026.

The reason for the expiration date, is also in SB2145 is the request for a study of the statute that governs the approval process for Postsecondary Career Schools. This study would allow the state to study the current statute, to determine if there are necessary changes, that will provide schools flexibility, while ensuring student confidence. This study would advise the State Board for Career and Technical Education and the 69th Legislative Assembly of any necessary changes to statute. EDA would then need to follow any changes to the approval process.

SB2145 also includes an emergency clause. This allows EDA to operate in the upcoming year, as all Postsecondary Career Schools are required to request reapproval to operate every year. EDA's approval expires June 30, 2023. This bill if passed, without an emergency clause, will not take effect until August 1, 2023, so EDA would have to go through the reapproval process with the Board again.

This concludes my testimony, and I am happy to stand for any questions.