

# **Joint Statement Submitted by the Fairfield County ESC's Business Advisory Council (BAC) and the Fairfield County ESC Board of Education**

**March 1, 2022**

## **INTRODUCTION**

According to state law, the Business Advisory Council and the Governing Board for the ESC are required to issue a joint statement by March 1, 2022. This statement will contain, as an attachment, the BAC Board adopted bylaws, the Action Plan adopted by the BAC Board, and a report of progress on the work outlined in the council's action plan for the 2021-22 school year. The adopted BAC Bylaws and the BAC Action Plan are available and are referenced in separate documents.

A BAC Brochure was designed, adopted and distributed to communicate the mission and goals of the BAC. Meeting dates, the BAC members and the purpose for the BAC are also included in the brochure.

The following joint statement summarizes the actions taken and actions pending by the BAC. It is believed that this statement and supporting documentation demonstrate that the BAC under the authority of the Fairfield County ESC Board of Education have fulfilled their respective responsibilities consistent with the intent of the law.

## **FOUR BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETINGS CONDUCTED BETWEEN MAY 18, 2021-FEBRUARY 16, 2022**

### **Summary of the May 18, 2021 BAC Meeting:**

Mr. Corey Clark from Job and Family Services presented on the Summer Youth Employment Program and the WIOA Youth Services-Teen Works.

Officers were elected, Bylaws were adopted, Goals were adopted, and the meeting Calendar was adopted for the 2021-22 school year.

Mr. Rick Szabrak along with Ms. Karie Stone and Ms. Mary Rawlins presented on the Career Readiness Program. The Career Expo was held in which 115 students were endorsed. Ohio Mean Job Day worked on resumes and interview skills. Career Closet is being created and donations can be donated at the Workforce Center. Manufacturing Ready to Work Program, overview of what the Workforce Center is and the training offered. Career Signing Day will be held in August to "kick-off" the new school year.

### **Summary of the September 21, 2021 BAC Meeting:**

The BAC reviewed and approved the updated 2021 Action Plan.

The BAC discussed the recent BAC Council update from ODE that discussed how to navigate the website.

The Aim Hire: Workforce and Education Conference took place on Oct 6, 2021 and was virtual.

Mr. Rick Szabrak, Ms. Karie Stone, and Ms. Mary Rawlins gave updates on the Career Readiness Program. Students working on soft skills and career exploration, Pickerington students are utilizing the Workforce Center to work on mini-labs. Mr. Szabrak invited the group to the Workforce Center Ribbon cutting ceremony that took place on September 22, 2021.

The group had discussion on lack of available persons in the workforce, and the increase of wages is not effective. Childcare and Transportation have been deemed the main issues with Governor Husted's office is stating that rent forgiveness and backlog of unemployment payments and childcare tax credits is delaying people needing to re-enter the workforce.

### **Summary of the November 16, 2021 BAC Meeting:**

The BAC discussed the need to add additional potential employers along with the need to develop a subcommittee for business members.

The BAC discussed the pre-apprenticeship grants and opportunities along with the pre-apprenticeship coordinator position that is open.

Mr. Rick Szabrak, Ms. Karie Stone, and Ms. Mary Rawlins gave updates on the Career Readiness Program. Ms. Rawlins spoke on the Pickerington "Discovery Period" giving students the opportunity to gain experience in all 9 programs offered at the Workforce Center. Ms. Stone spoke on Lancaster City schools and her engagement with the students there.

Discussion was held on inviting the local Chamber Members.

### **Summary of the March 22, 2022 BAC Meeting:**

The BAC discussed the addition of new members. Explored the different businesses in Fairfield County as provided by Mr. Szabrak.

The BAC discussed obstacles from Educators to Businesses: Transportation, parents, age.

Discussion on structure of the council.

Discussion on the need to introduce businesses to students at a younger age, introduction with parents in an informal setting.

The Career Navigators touched base on their enrollment numbers and the number of students they are working with through the Workforce Development Center and On Site at District Locations.

Career Expo Day is April 7, 2022 and will be held from 9 a.m.-12 p.m., 48 employers signed up for the Career Expo. 12 p.m.-1 p.m. there will be a Business Networking luncheon.

Career Signing Day: Second week of May, exact date TBD.

Discussion on the pre-apprenticeship program from the new pre-apprenticeship coordinator and a Representative from Hocking College spoke on the programs: Skilled Trade and Waste Water started with 42 students. Built on a model from Claypool Electric, week on week off model. Looking into continuous improvement. Planning Summer Camps and Adult Ed ready to work programs. Working with ESC to plan a drivers Ed program.

Representative from the Lancaster-Fairfield Chamber of Commerce spoke on a meeting that was held by the State Treasurer that was supposed to be on inflation actually touched base more into the Workforce and supply chain issues that we are currently experiencing. The market will correct itself eventually.

The BAC discussed growth within the county and that there is not competition amongst the businesses and higher education institutions. All working together to find solutions.

Joint Statement was approved.

### **Summary of the BAC's Advice and Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the BAC continue to support and endorse the Career Readiness and Endorsement Process and to begin the process earlier during the second semester of the junior year for eligible students.

The BAC would recommend to the Boards of Education in all Fairfield County School Districts to pass a resolution officially supporting and encourage the implementation and use of the Career Readiness Endorsement in their respective high schools.

The BAC would like to encourage business leaders, school districts and educational personnel to build upon the developed relationships which are designed to improve the implementation of the Career Readiness Endorsement Process and maximize the benefits to the greatest number of students in the Fairfield County School Systems.

The BAC would like all high schools to adopt and schedule a career signing day as one option to provide official recognition of students' commitment to a post secondary career.