

Van Wert County Business Advisory Council Joint Statement for 2025

The Van Wert Area Business Advisory Council remains committed to empowering a synergistic partnership between schools, businesses, and the communities they serve. By bridging the gap between education and industry, we strive to build a harmonious and interconnected ecosystem where students, educators, and businesses can collaborate seamlessly. Through our initiatives, we equip educators with the insights and tools needed to align their teaching practices with the evolving needs of companies, fostering a skilled, adaptable, and future-ready workforce. This mission is at the core of all our efforts, ensuring a prosperous and progressive society for all.

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Council Structure and Leadership Updates

Since submitting our 2024-25 Business Advisory Council (BAC) plan, we have experienced no changes in leadership and structure. Our commitment to fostering collaboration between education and industry remains steadfast, strengthening opportunities for students to pursue meaningful careers in Van Wert County.

Goal Accomplishment Assessment

On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being fully accomplished, our 2024-25 Business Advisory Council Plan goals have been achieved.

Accomplished Goals:

- **10 | Let's Get Down to Business (5th Grade):** A day-long program that allows 5th graders to explore local businesses, learn about career skills and understand economic and financial literacy concepts through hands-on learning experiences.
- **10 | Real World Real Money (7 & 8th Grade, High School):** A youth financial literacy program in collaboration with OSU Extension, providing four classroom lessons and a real-life spending simulation to teach the impact of education and career choices on income, money management, and lifestyle decisions.
- **10 | Portrait of a Graduate / Quality Profile (All Grades):** A program designed to develop well-rounded, productive adults by integrating academic content with key competencies, spanning from preschool to senior year and involving educators, businesses, and community stakeholders.
- **10 | Project-Based Learning (Middle & High School):** Van Wert City Schools has been designated a New Tech Network Showcase School. Its curriculum focuses on written and oral communication, collaboration, and agency. Students are assessed on these skills throughout middle and high school.
- **10 | Project Lead the Way (High School 9-12):** Lincolnview High School offers Pre-Engineering and Biomedical programs, providing interactive STEM classes that equip students with in-demand knowledge and skills for future careers.
- **7 | Ohio Means Jobs Backpack Tool (Middle & High School):** Students create accounts and complete career cluster inventories, navigating the website for test prep, scholarships, career pathways, and practice assessments (ACT, PSAT, SAT, AP, WorkKeys). 8th and 10th graders revisit the site and consult with counselors before visiting Vantage Career Center.
- **6 | Youth On-the-Job Training Program (Various):** Helps employers hire and train full-time employees, reimbursing up to 50% of wages for eligible trainees. A federally funded program focusing on in-demand

occupations, with Van Wert County Jobs and Family Services assisting in agreements. Maximum reimbursement: \$4,000. Maximum training period: 6 months.

- **8 | This will be 10 once event is completed on March 26, 2025 | Van Wert County High School Career Fair (Juniors & Seniors):** A county-wide career fair where high school juniors and seniors meet with employers, learn soft skills, and prepare resumes in advance. Students dress in business attire and interact with 6-8 area employers.
- **10 | Vantage Mock Interviews (Vantage Students - Juniors & Seniors):** A one-day event at Vantage Career Center focusing on soft skills development, resume building, and the interview process.
- **5 | This is mid-year will be 10 when school year is complete | Business & Industry Tours (Various):** Students tour local manufacturing, healthcare, and service businesses, increasing exposure to local career opportunities. Company representatives showcase their businesses and discuss required skills and education.
- **6 | This will be 10 once event is completed in June 2025 | Education on Location (Teachers):** A week-long event featuring behind-the-scenes tours for teachers at local and regional service, manufacturing, and healthcare facilities, providing insight into job opportunities and business operations.
- **10 | Industry Recognized Credentials:** Vantage Career Center's students received 1,853 industry recognized credentials in the 2023-2024 school year and are on track to meet or exceed this goal for this school year.

Challenges Faced:

- Scheduling conflicts between school calendars and business availability for job shadowing experiences.
- More funding is needed to expand career exploration initiatives and provide hands-on training opportunities.
- Addressing students' and educators' awareness and engagement levels in skilled trades and local career paths.

New Partnerships in 2024-25

In pursuit of our vision, we have expanded our partnerships to include additional businesses, organizations, and community stakeholders:

- Center to Advanced Manufacturing partnership with Bowling Green State University, Owens Community College, and University of Findlay
- Flagstar Bank, Van Wert branch

These partnerships enhance our ability to provide real-world career exploration opportunities, workforce training, and direct employer-student engagement, ensuring our local talent pipeline remains strong and adaptable.

Adjustments to the 2024-25 Plan

No adjustments to the 2025-2025 Plan have been made.

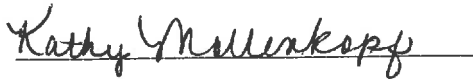
Media Coverage and Case Studies

During the 2024-25 school year, the Van Wert County BAC received notable media attention, including:

- VWHS Academic Award Luncheon <https://www.vwcs.net/post-panel/news/~board/van-wert-city-schools/post/vwhs-recognizes-2023-2024-academic-award-recipients>
- VWMS Accomplishments: <https://www.vwcs.net/post-panel/news/~board/van-wert-city-schools/post/vw-boe-hears-middle-school-accomplishments>
- CEO Program Gains National Recognition: <https://www.vwcs.net/post-panel/news/~board/van-wert-city-schools/post/vwcs-ceo-program-gains-national-recognition>
- Senior/1st Grade Walk: <https://www.vwcs.net/post-panel/news/~board/van-wert-city-schools/post/vwhs-seniors-pass-the-torch>
- H2O Program: https://www.vwcs.net/post-panel/news/~board/van-wert-city-schools/post/h2o-program-hosts-holiday-celebrations-for-vwms-and-vwhs?fbclid=IwY2xjawlrTVleHRuA2FlbQlxMAABHSu8LxoSYl_0ya2JstuixDRN4c4lnkR6n4-8dx5au63l7wj1LOKV5cubSg_aem_kpFAuhb3cE8r5OutwcqzGg
- Lincolnview New STEM Lab: <https://thevwindependent.com/news/2024/11/22/lincolnview-shows-off-new-stem-lancer-learning-lab/>

- Vantage Launches Robotics Program: <https://thevwindependent.com/news/2025/01/16/vantage-launches-robotics-program/>
- Vantage Career Center Earns 5-star Rating: <https://thevwindependent.com/news/2024/10/03/vantage-a-five-star-school-board-hears-various-requests/>

The Van Wert Area Business Advisory Council remains dedicated to fostering strong partnerships between education and industry. By ensuring our students are equipped with the skills necessary for successful careers, we continue to build a workforce-ready future for Van Wert County. Our vision of a seamlessly integrated educational and business community remains our guiding principle, driving ongoing collaboration, strategic initiatives, and dedicated community involvement.



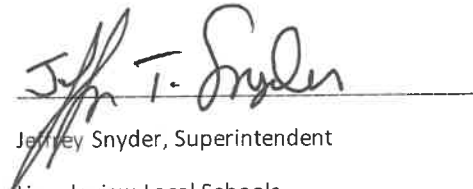
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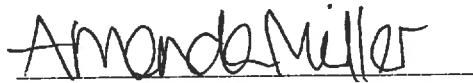
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Amanda Miller, Workforce Development Manager

Van Wert Area Economic Development and Business Advisory Council member