

## **The Business of Education: How Public Schools Deliver Every Day**

Mohawk Local Schools is a small, rural district in northwest Ohio — but the story told here extends far beyond our own boundaries. This advocacy message offers a broad look at the efficiency, complexity, and dedication that define *all* Ohio public school districts. It is intended to recognize the collective professionalism and commitment of school employees statewide who serve students, families, and communities every day.

People often ask:

“Why can’t schools run more like businesses?”

“If my company has to be efficient and accountable, why don’t schools do the same?”

Here’s the truth: Ohio’s public schools have long operated as efficient, high-performing organizations — managing resources with care, adapting to change, and serving their communities with excellence.

### **1. Customized “Products” — Every Single Day**

Imagine a company that produces thousands of unique, evolving products every day — each one shaped by outside forces like family circumstances, community expectations, and ever-changing regulations.

That’s what public schools do. Every student’s education is customized, continually adjusted, and constantly monitored for quality. And those results are measured and compared statewide — where districts routinely perform at or above the average while serving every student who walks through their doors.

### **2. Teachers: The Front-Line Managers of Learning**

Each teacher works with as many as 150 students every single day. They don’t just “deliver lessons.” They:

- Customize learning for different skill levels, abilities, and learning styles.
- Monitor progress through assessments, assignments, and daily observation.
- Evaluate and adjust instruction in real time based on student needs.
- Communicate constantly with families, counselors, and administrators.
- Foster relationships that build motivation, confidence, and character.

In business terms, that’s a manager handling 150 active projects — simultaneously — while also serving as quality-control specialist, customer liaison, and mentor.

### **3. Efficiency That Rivals Any Industry**

Public schools deliver top-quality outcomes while operating under strict financial oversight and budgetary limits. They’re required to do more with less — balancing rising costs,

unfunded mandates (& the associated expenses), and increasing expectations — while remaining transparent and publicly accountable for every dollar.

Better performance. Lower cost. That's a scenario most businesses only dream of.

#### **4. No Waiting Lists. No “Out of Stock.”**

Unlike private companies, schools can't pick their customers or decline service. They must meet the needs of every student — regardless of background, ability, or circumstance — and they must do so immediately, with no option to delay, outsource, or discontinue the model.

#### **5. Lean Management, Maximum Accountability**

In most industries, one manager oversees 6–10 employees. In public education, building administrators often manage over 20 staff members, plus hundreds of families seeking updates, answers, and support.

These leaders juggle compliance, human resources, budgeting, safety, facilities, and community relations — all while maintaining the trust of taxpayers who fund their mission. That's accountability at a scale few private managers ever face.

#### **6. A Highly Skilled, Shrinking Workforce**

Teachers, counselors, and specialists are licensed professionals — often holding advanced degrees. Yet the pipeline is shrinking nationwide as fewer college graduates enter education. Despite that, schools continue to deliver exceptional outcomes through innovation, collaboration, and a deep sense of purpose.

#### **7. The Bottom Line**

So the next time someone says, “Why can't schools run like businesses?” The better question might be: “Why don't more businesses run like our public schools?”

Because if they did, they'd be producing individualized results for every client, under constant public scrutiny, in one of the most regulated industries — while responding daily to hundreds of customers and mentoring the next generation of citizens.

Behind every successful classroom, bus route, meal served, and graduation walk is a system that runs with heart, precision, and care. This is what Ohio's public schools do — not for profit, but for people. That's not just effective management; that's a commitment to community.