Business Advisory Councils

2026 Joint Statement for Business Advisory Councils

Joint Statements must be made publicly available by March 1, 2026.

Name of Business Advisory Council:
Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio Business Advisory Council

Primary Contact:
Dr. Traci Hostetler, Superintendent
Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio
7320 N. Palmyra Rd.
Canfield, OH 44406
t.hostetler@esceasternohio.org
330.533.8755

Secondary Contact:
Sandy Furano, Director of Career Counseling Services
Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio
7320 N. Palmyra Rd.
Canfield, OH 44406
s.furano@esceasternohio.org
330.533.8755

1. **Are there any changes to your Business Advisory Councils' structure or leadership since you submitted your plan for this academic year?**

   The Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio Business Advisory Council meets on the third Thursday of each month from August 2025 through May 2026 and is led by the ESC Career Counseling team. In February 2026, a Junior–Senior High School Student Business Advisory Council was established as an extension of the ESCEO BAC to serve as a liaison between students and business partners and to support the development of student-centered career initiatives that promote career development and pathways aligned with the needs of students and school districts.

2. **Of goals submitted in your 2026 Business Advisory Council Plan, on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being goals accomplished. What goals were you able to accomplish?**

   Using a 1–10 scale to assess progress toward the Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio BAC's 2026 goals, the following outlines the submitted goals, summarizes our accomplishments, and includes the corresponding ratings.

ESCEO BAC Goals	Accomplishments
Goal: 5th Annual Mahoning Valley Skilled Trades Expo **Timeline:** Annually since September 2019 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Business Advisory Council has expanded work-based learning opportunities for students through initiatives such as the annual Mahoning Valley Skilled Trades Expo, which will celebrate its seventh year in September 2026. Held over a three-day period, the expo draws nearly 7,000 students from five counties including Mahoning, Columbiana, Trumbull, Stark, and Portage. The Mahoning Valley Skilled Trades Expo features hands-on workshops, live demonstrations, and direct engagement with skilled trade professionals, providing students with real-world exposure to diverse career pathways and workplace expectations. Through the event, students are introduced to Building Trades pre-apprenticeship programs available in their school districts, where they can earn industry-recognized credentials while in high school and have opportunities for direct entry into apprenticeships after graduation. The goal of the expo is to increase career awareness, strengthen student engagement, and build meaningful connections between students and local industry partners in support of regional workforce development.
Goal: 5th Annual Mock Interview Boot Camp **Timeline:** Annually since January 2021 **Rating:** 10/10	The 5th Annual Mock Interview Boot Camp equips high school seniors with the essential skills needed for successful interviews related to high school employment, college acceptance, and future career opportunities. The program focused on polishing and practicing interview responses, resume writing, interview preparation strategies, dressing for success, and proper interview follow-up etiquette. The ESCEO Business Advisory Council members served as guest speakers for each breakout session, providing students with real-world insights, professional feedback, and industry-based perspectives that enhanced the authenticity and impact of the experience.
Goal: Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship **Timeline:** Ongoing since Sepetember 2021 **Rating:** 10/10	The Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship Program provides students with the in-demand skills, resources, and hands-on experience needed to pursue successful careers in the building trades after graduation. Students participate in authentic, project-based learning in carpentry and multiple construction trades, developing skills in the use of hand and power tools, trade-related mathematics, blueprint reading, worksite safety, and essential soft skills such as teamwork and communication. The program also introduces students to bricklaying, painting, laborer trades, and other construction pathways. Upon successful completion, students may earn up to 24 industry-recognized credentials and qualify for direct entry into a building trades apprenticeship program. To date, more than 500 students have enrolled. The ESCEO Business Advisory Council is committed to expanding work-based learning opportunities through

	this initiative, which has been successfully implemented for five years and is now offered in 18 aligned school districts across Mahoning, Columbiana, and Trumbull counties and is enhanced by feeder experiences such as the Lencyk Masonry Program and interactive visits from trade unions, creating a strong, industry-aligned pipeline from high school to apprenticeships and employment that supports regional workforce needs.
Goal: Lencyk Masonry Program **Timeline:** Ongoing since March 2024 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Business Advisory Council has expanded industry representation through a partnership with Lencyk Masonry Company that integrates masonry training into the existing Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship program. During the 2024–2025 school year, the pilot was implemented in the Austintown, Jackson-Milton, Warren City, United Local, and Brookfield school districts, engaging approximately 100 students in hands-on learning focused on masonry techniques, materials, and tools under the guidance of industry professionals. Through this experience, students developed technical skills, gained a deeper understanding of masonry's essential role in construction, and explored a variety of career pathways within the field. The program has continued in these districts and can expand to additional schools as funding allows. To ensure alignment with regional workforce needs and address skills gaps, the BAC actively cultivates new industry partnerships through outreach to local businesses, trade associations, and workforce development networks. The Lencyk Masonry aims to strengthen the Building Trades program by providing specialized masonry instruction that increases student engagement, enhances job readiness, expands career opportunities in construction, and improves preparation for entry into the workforce.
Goal: OH WOW! Children's Museum - Tinkercad and 3D Printing **Timeline:** Ongoing since April 2025 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Business Advisory Council has partnered with OH WOW! Children's Museum to provide students in grades 5–12 with access to Tinkercad and 3D printing through a hands-on learning experience. In this program, students design digital prototypes and bring their ideas to life using 3D printing technology, building technical skills, problem-solving abilities, and design thinking. The experience also introduces students to career pathways in engineering, manufacturing, and product development. To ensure alignment with regional workforce and talent needs, the BAC identifies and engages new partners through outreach to local businesses and workforce development networks. These partnerships provide expertise, resources, and mentorship, supporting students and educators in developing practical, career-ready skills and strengthening pathways to high-demand professions.

Goal: YouScience **Timeline:** Ongoing since September 2023 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Career Counseling Team has successfully implemented YouScience aptitude testing with over 2,000 middle and high school students to identify their strengths, interests, and natural talents, guiding them toward informed career exploration and decision-making. Through comprehensive assessments of cognitive abilities, personal preferences, and performance-based "brain games," students gained meaningful insights into how their innate aptitudes align with specific career paths, educational majors, and workplace environments where they are most likely to succeed. As a result, participants received detailed, personalized reports that mapped their unique skill sets to in-demand careers, postsecondary options, and scholarship opportunities. The platform also provided actionable insights to support college planning, resume development, and long-term academic and vocational decision-making.
Goal: Pathful Connect **Timeline:** Ongoing since September 2023 **Rating:** 10/10	Pathful Connect has provided middle and high school students with an engaging platform to explore careers by connecting directly with industry professionals. Through virtual events, live Q&A sessions, and career resources, students gained valuable insights into various professions across fields like science, technology, arts, and trades. This initiative increased student engagement, improved career awareness, and empowered them to make informed decisions about their future. Data from participation rates, student interactions, and feedback surveys demonstrated measurable outcomes, including enhanced decision-making and networking opportunities. With over 2,500 students engaged, Pathful Connect has proven to be a valuable tool in preparing students for their future careers.
Goal: Career Exploration Courses **Timeline:** Ongoing since August 2018 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Career Counseling Team provides career exploration courses to 29 school districts, exposing middle and high school students to a wide range of career pathways and helping them understand the skills, education, and competencies required for each profession. These courses support students in exploring interests, discovering potential passions, and developing essential employability skills. Through structured career exposure, students strengthen critical competencies such as decision-making, problem-solving, and critical thinking. By fostering career awareness and self-discovery, these courses empower students to make informed, confident decisions about their academic pathways and future career endeavors.
Goal: Career Exploration Through Virtual Reality Lenses **Timeline:** Ongoing since August 2024 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Career Counseling Team has successfully facilitated career exploration through the use of Virtual Reality headsets and Transfr software, enabling middle and high school students to immerse themselves in a wide range of career experiences. Since August 2024, more than 8,000 students have completed over 13,500

	career simulations, engaging in hands-on, realistic job scenarios that provided insight into various professions, industries, and required skill sets. Through Transfr's immersive, risk-free virtual reality platform with digital coaches, students explored in-demand fields such as manufacturing, healthcare, and construction while building technical skills and confidence before working with real equipment. This dynamic, experiential approach increased career awareness and empowered students to make informed decisions about their future educational pathways and career pursuits.
Goal: Career Exploration Coloring Book **Timeline:** In development **Rating:** 8/10	The ESCEO Career Counseling Team is in the process of creating a Career Exploration Coloring Book to be implemented through a structured, interactive plan aimed at building early career awareness among elementary students. Development of the coloring book will take place in collaboration with educators and school counselors to ensure the content is age-appropriate, inclusive, and engaging, featuring illustrations that highlight a wide variety of careers. The books will be distributed primarily to students in grades K–3 and used to encourage exploration and discussion of future possibilities. To celebrate learning and increase engagement, students will be invited to showcase their completed pages and share their favorite careers during a "Career Exploration Showcase." The coloring book is expected to be completed by August 2026.
Goal: ESC YOUth Entrepreneurship Program **Timeline:** Ongoing since February 2025 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Career Counseling Team created a YOUth Entrepreneurship Program for Middle and High School students. The YOUth Entrepreneurship Program is a hands-on, innovative curriculum designed to foster creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills while equipping students with practical business knowledge and financial literacy. Emphasizing teamwork, leadership, and communication, the program empowers students to develop viable business plans and gain real-world experience launching projects or startup concepts. Implementation begins with ESC Career Counselors partnering with participating schools to integrate the program into classroom instruction. Students learn the fundamentals of entrepreneurship by creating business plans, developing and producing unique products, and designing effective marketing strategies. The curriculum includes targeted lessons on financial literacy, teamwork, leadership, and communication to provide a well-rounded foundation for entrepreneurial success. The program culminates in an engaging "Shark Tank" style event, where students pitch their business ideas to a panel of judges that includes ESCEO Business Advisory Council members, showcasing their creativity, confidence, and entrepreneurial mindset. Students have developed a variety of entrepreneurial concepts, including food trucks, baked goods, Smart Tackle box, Bouncer athletic shoes, and other student-created ventures.

Goal: Partnership with Junior Achievement Biztown & Finance Park **Timeline:** Currently under construction **Rating:** 8/10	The ESCEO Career Counseling Department has partnered with Junior Achievement of Eastern Ohio to establish JA BizTown and Finance Park on the second floor of the Eastwood Mall. JA BizTown is an interactive simulated city where students take on real-world job roles, manage finances, and operate businesses, while Finance Park provides hands-on experience in personal budgeting and financial decision-making. Students participate in these experiences after completing a 12-week preparatory curriculum designed to build the knowledge and skills necessary for success in BizTown and Finance Park. ESCEO Business Advisory Council members are invited to participate by leasing storefronts that represent their businesses and volunteering during events, offering mentorship and real-world perspectives to students in grades 4–9. The Builders Association, a BAC member, has already committed time and resources to assist with storefront construction. Scheduled for completion by Spring 2026, the JA BizTown and Finance Park project will create a sustainable platform for student engagement, career exploration, and expanded industry partnerships that support local talent pipeline development.
Goal: Youngstown State University Division of Workforce Education and Innovation Career Pathways **Timeline:** Ongoing since August 2023 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Business Advisory Council has expanded work-based learning opportunities through a partnership with Youngstown State University to support students who are not currently meeting Ohio's graduation requirements but have an interest in the manufacturing and information technology fields. This initiative, which has been successfully implemented for three years, provides students with access to structured credentialing pathways that lead to gainful employment or post-secondary opportunities. Students participate in a hybrid learning model, completing coursework remotely and attending hands-on training sessions at the Youngstown State University Excellence Training Center. Through this program, students can earn a variety of industry-recognized credentials, including Certified Manufacturing Associate (CMfgA), Universal Robotics Core Training, OSHA 30-Hour General Industry, OSHA 10, CompTIA IT Fundamentals, CompTIA A+, Stop the Bleed, and CPR/First Aid/AED certifications. By combining online learning, in-person technical training, and real-world skill-building experiences, the program helps students build the technical expertise and confidence needed to succeed in high-demand industries. Students complete a 12-point industry-recognized credential pathway. By completing the program, students not only meet graduation criteria but also graduate with credentials that make them career- and college-ready, creating a direct pipeline to local employment opportunities or advanced post-secondary education.

Goal: Drone Education Part 107 Remote Pilot Certification/YSU Northeast Ohio Student Drone Showcase **Timeline:** Ongoing since August 2023 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESC Career Counseling Team has expanded work-based learning opportunities by introducing students to the rapidly growing field of drone technology and its applications across multiple industries. Now in its third year, the program allows students to explore and prepare for careers that utilize drone technology for both recreational and commercial purposes. Participants have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials, including the FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certification, VSO Level 1, VSO Ground, and VSO Flight certifications, validating their technical skills and workforce readiness. Through a combination of hands-on flight training, classroom instruction, and certification preparation, students gain real-world experience in sectors such as agriculture, construction, emergency services, and logistics. The program's goal is to transition student use of drones from recreational activities to professional applications within the high school setting, creating clear pathways to continued education and employment. To further expand career awareness, the ESCEO Career Counseling Team has partnered with Youngstown State University to host the Northeast Ohio Student Drone Showcase at the YSU Williamson Innovation Park, exposing students to a wide range of career opportunities within the drone industry.
Goal: Building Trades Adirondack Competition **Timeline:** Ongoing since March 2023 **Rating:** 10/10	The ESCEO Career Counseling Team has partnered with BAC member The Builders Association to expand work-based learning opportunities through the continued growth of its Building Trades Competition. The competition engages students using the *Career Connections Book 2* curriculum and provides structured, hands-on learning centered on the construction of an Adirondack chair. Students may participate individually or as a class, with each school allowed up to two submissions to promote meaningful engagement. The initiative is further strengthened by industry partnerships, particularly mentors from The Builders Association, who support students through classroom visits, technical expertise, and valuable career insights. Winners of the competition are provided tools and materials from The Builders Association. Additionally, judges from The Builders Association offer students detailed feedback on their Adirondack chairs, helping them identify areas for improvement and recognize the skills in which they are excelling.
Goal: Job Shadow Experiences **Timeline:** Ongoing since August 2018 **Rating:** 10/10	The job shadowing experience continues to give students the opportunity to explore potential career paths, ask questions, and receive guidance from experienced professionals. These experiences provide valuable networking opportunities, allowing students to build connections that may lead to future internships, mentorships, or employment. The Career Counseling Department collaborates with Business Advisory Council members and local community partners to coordinate these opportunities, ensuring

	students are exposed to a wide range of industries and professions. Through job shadowing, students gain firsthand insight into the skills and expectations associated with various careers, helping them determine how their interests align with real-world career pathways. To date, more than 350 students have participated in job shadowing experiences, gaining meaningful knowledge and connections that support their career development and informed decision-making.
Goal: Junior and Senior High School Business Advisory Council **Timeline:** Implemented February 2026 **Rating:** 10/10	The Junior/Senior High School Business Advisory Committee serves as the liaison between students and the ESC Business Advisory Council, ensuring that the ESC BAC receives direct, authentic input from students. Composed of students representing multiple school districts, the committee works alongside ESCEO BAC and Career Counselors to communicate student perspectives on career exploration. Through guided discussions, feedback, and collaboration, students share what they are curious about, what career experiences they find meaningful and beneficial, and which activities they feel are less effective or a poor use of time. This direct student voice helps the ESC BAC shape career programming that is relevant, engaging, and aligned with student needs, while also exposing students to career-connected opportunities such as job shadows, pre-apprenticeships, and career exploration experiences.

a. What challenges have you experienced implementing your goals?

Funding and resource limitations have at times challenged the implementation of our career readiness goals. Effective career readiness initiatives require sustained investment in staffing, technology, transportation, and instructional materials; however, constraints within school district budgets and limited grant availability can make it difficult to fully support these efforts. Additionally, providing consistent access to career counseling, work-based learning opportunities, and industry partnerships, particularly for students in rural or underserved communities, remains an ongoing challenge. These barriers can limit student participation in meaningful career exploration experiences and reduce exposure to potential career pathways and essential workforce skills.

3. What new partnerships have your Business Advisory Council formed for the SY26?

Below is a table showing the new partnerships that have been established with the ESCEO Business Advisory Council for SY26.

Newton Falls Local School District **Lakeview Local School District** **Howland Local School District**	These school districts have purchased Career Counseling Services from the Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio in August 2025. They actively participate in our monthly Business Advisory Council meetings, contributing to collaborative efforts in career readiness and workforce development.

717 Credit Union	717 Credit Union has partnered with the ESCEO Business Advisory Council and Career Counseling Team to deliver financial literacy lessons to middle and high school students in the classroom. This partnership helps students build essential money management skills and better understand real-world financial decision-making as part of their career readiness development.
Shepherd of the Valley	Shepherd of the Valley has partnered with the Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio Business Advisory Council and Career Counseling Team to offer a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program for high school students ages 16 and older. This program provides students with hands-on healthcare training and the opportunity to earn their CNA certification while still in high school. Upon successful completion and certification, students may be eligible to pursue a tuition-assisted nursing program, creating a direct pathway from high school into a high-demand healthcare career.
YSU Pathways Network Grant	The Youngstown State University Career Pathways Network grant supports collaborative efforts between education and workforce partners to strengthen career pathways for students. The Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio is a key partner in this grant, working alongside Youngstown State University, school districts, and industry partners to expand career exploration, postsecondary access, and workforce-aligned learning opportunities. This initiative focuses on creating clear, connected pathways from K–12 education to postsecondary training and employment, ensuring students are better equipped for college and career success.

4. **Have you added or removed any goals submitted in your SY26 Business Advisory Council Plans? If so, please provide details.**

   The Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio has not removed or added any goals for the 2025-2026 school year.

5. **Have you received any media coverage or participated in any case studies as a Business Advisory Council? If so, please share.**

   Below are links to media coverage that spotlights our Career Counseling team and our ESCEO Business Advisory Council initiatives and events.

   - Junior Achievement of Eastern Ohio Biztown
   - Northeast Ohio Student Drone Showcase