



educational service center
of Central Ohio



Business Advisory Council 2026-2027



ESC of Central Ohio's Business Advisory Council

Our Story

In 2011, the Central Ohio Compact was established, convened by the ESC of Central Ohio and Columbus State Community College. It included public and private districts and schools, higher education institutions, industry partners, and other stakeholders. Through this regional approach, the Compact created



a model of collaboration focused on increasing college success for Central Ohio students and positioning the region as a leader in economic growth, per-capita income, and quality of life.

Soon after, the state of Ohio passed House Bill 59 requiring each school district to appoint a business advisory council (BAC) to convene education and business leaders to engage in dialogue, build trust, and identify strategies that transform the student learning experience. To provide flexibility and allow for regional approaches similar to the Compact, school districts were given the option of entering into an agreement with an educational service center (ESC)-led council instead. During those early years, the ESC of Central Ohio's BAC was composed of 18 workforce partners and 18 school district partners. This was seeded by the work of the Compact, focusing on student skills development, changes in the economy and job market, and strengthening relationships among business, labor organizations, and education personnel.

Fast forward to 2026 and the ESC of Central Ohio's Business Advisory Council now comprises of 31 school districts and career technical centers and over 130 community, business, and government partners. The goals of the BAC center around developing professional skills for all students in future careers, building partnerships among all members, and creating coordinated experiences for students. Additionally, the BAC focuses on networking and providing support as the workforce landscape of the Central Ohio region continues to expand, ensuring a robust workforce that has the education and training to meet current and future demands.

BAC Mission

To leverage regional partnerships to connect all students with career opportunities and support workforce development in Central Ohio.

BAC Vision

To make Central Ohio a leader in workforce innovation, equipping all students with the skills and connections for career success.



2026-2027 BAC Meeting Schedule		
October 22, 2026	9:00-10:30 – Main Meeting	10:30-11:30 Focus ISP Committee Work*
December 10, 2026	9:00-10:30 – Main Meeting	10:30-11:30 Focus ISP Committee Work*
February 18, 2027	9:00-10:30 – Main Meeting	10:30-11:30 Focus ISP Committee Work*
April 15, 2027	9:00-10:30 – Main Meeting	10:30-11:30 Focus ISP Committee Work*

*Focus Committee Work will be facilitated by K-12 and Business leaders around the topics of Developing Professional Skills, Building Partnerships, and Coordinating Experiences. Additional meetings will be scheduled as programming is developed throughout the 2026-2027 school year.

Regional Strategy

To meet the wide-ranging needs of BAC members, the ESC has adopted a regional strategy to leverage and connect with ongoing efforts across Central Ohio. This work is conducted in partnership with the Career Pathway Support Network, Central Ohio Compact, workforce development boards, the Central Ohio Pre-Apprenticeship Hub, non-profit organizations, area chambers of commerce, and workforce development agencies.

Regional programs and plans have been developed to expose students to in-demand careers, scale internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities, support mentoring programs that connect students directly with business and industry mentors and provide professional development opportunities and technical assistance.

To showcase this regional alignment, the BAC worked with various local and state organizations focused on increasing awareness and opportunities for students. Highlighted in this plan are the Industry Sector Partnership Committee, Careers2Classrooms educator workforce boot camp, coordinated experience events, High School Tech Internship and pre-apprenticeships. These examples would not have been possible without our K-12 and business members collaborating to create unique Central Ohio experiences for all stakeholders.

Industry Sector Partnerships (ISPs) Committee: Aligning with regional workforce efforts is one of the core purposes of our regional approach. Following each quarterly BAC meeting, a committee meeting is convened with representatives from the following Industry Sector Partnerships (ISPs): Central Ohio Manufacturing Partnership, Healthcare Collaborative of Central Ohio, Insuring Ohio Futures, Information Technology Accelerator Partnership Ohio (NCUSTEC), Fostering Futures (culinary), Life Sciences Futures, Ohio Accounting Talent Coalition, and the Ohio Supply Chain Academic Network.

During these meetings, data analysis, resource sharing, student programming, and event coordination are discussed. Over the past year, the committee conducted an analysis of the durable skills most valued by employers. While this group is still in its early stages, plans are underway to increase coordination and collaboration in support of both our K-12-member school districts and the industries they represent.

Industry Sector Partnerships Committee



Careers2Classrooms Teacher Workforce Boot Camp: In partnership with the Columbus Chamber of Commerce, the ESC of Central Ohio hosted its fourth annual Careers2Classrooms Educator Workforce Boot Camp, strengthening the connection between K-12 education, workforce development, and the region's economic priorities. During the 2025-2026 program year, educators engaged directly with fourteen industry partners representing eight key sectors: construction, healthcare, manufacturing, technology, bioscience, energy, supply chain and logistics, and transportation.

Through immersive workplace experiences, educators gained firsthand knowledge of high-demand careers, emerging workforce needs, and multiple pathways available to students after graduation. The goal of the boot camp is for participants to translate these experiences into career-connected lesson plans, projects, and professional learning that help students understand the relevance of classroom content to future opportunities.

The impact of Careers2Classrooms extends far beyond the educators who participate. Since its inception, the program has served 31 districts and 159 educators, creating a growing network of teacher leaders committed to expanding career-connected learning opportunities for students. By bringing authentic industry experiences into their classrooms, educators help students make informed decisions about postsecondary education, training, and employment pathways while increasing awareness of careers critical to the Central Ohio economy. The program's success is evidenced by continued demand from alumni participants, many of whom have advocated for additional cohort opportunities, including the expansion to a third cohort, to deepen engagement and sustain collaboration with industry partners.

The program culminated with a capstone showcase hosted by COSI on June 12, 2026, where educators presented projects focused on measurable student impact to building administrators, community members, business partners, and elected officials. The event featured keynote remarks from Director Stephen D. Dackin, Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Director, underscoring the importance of fostering strong partnerships between education and industry to prepare Ohio's future workforce. The capstone presentations demonstrated how educator-industry partnerships can strengthen workforce readiness, expand career awareness, and better prepare students for success in an evolving economy.



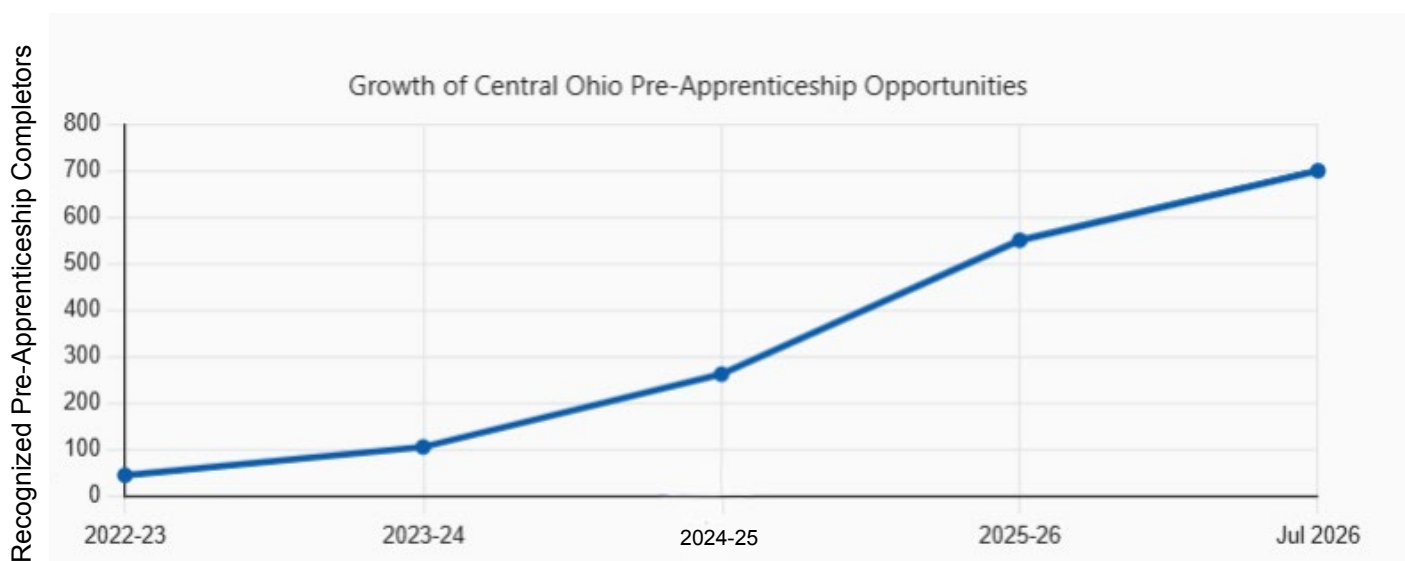
Pre-Apprenticeships: In collaboration with ASPYR Workforce Solutions, the ESC of Central Ohio continues to serve as a statewide leader in the development and expansion of high-quality pre-apprenticeship programs. Through the support of our Business Advisory Council (BAC) members and regional employer partners, students are gaining access to meaningful work-based learning experiences that connect classroom learning to high-demand careers and could matriculate into a registered apprenticeship.

During the 2025-2026 school year, the ESC facilitated the development of 49 new pre-apprenticeship plans and supported 768 students who successfully completed their pre-apprenticeship experience. Students earned a pre-apprenticeship certificate, a 12-point industry-recognized credential, and the OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal, providing them with valuable workforce credentials and a strong foundation for future employment and apprenticeship opportunities.

The growth of the Central Ohio Pre-Apprenticeship Hub has been remarkable. Since 2022-2023, recognized pre-apprenticeship opportunities have expanded from fewer than 45 opportunities to 400 opportunities by July 2026, demonstrating the power of collaboration between education and industry partners. The most recent growth period alone saw completors increase from 552 at the end of the 2025-2026 school year to 768 by July 2026, representing an additional 27% increase in just two months.

The impact of this work extends beyond student participation. District engagement has grown substantially, increasing from 16 participating districts during the 2023-2024 school year to 38 districts through February 2026, a 138% increase in district partnerships. This expansion reflects the commitment of BAC members to creating equitable access to career-connected learning experiences and strengthening the talent pipeline for Central Ohio employers.

Together, our education and business partners are building a sustainable workforce development ecosystem that provides students with authentic career experiences, industry-recognized credentials, and clear pathways into employment, registered apprenticeships, and postsecondary education.





Pictured above includes Director Dackin, Deputy Director Varner and Justin Barnes of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Vice President of Government Affairs who toured pre-apprenticeships with students from the ESC of Central Ohio's Member Districts.

Health Care Collaborative of Central Ohio: The Healthcare Collaborative of Central Ohio event brought together four regional healthcare providers (Mount Carmel Health System, Nationwide Children's Hospital, OhioHealth, and The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center). The featured careers were respiratory therapist, registered nurse, surgical technologist, radiology technologist, certified medical assistant, and medical laboratory technician. Over 2,100 high school students engaged in interactive skills from each of these six priority careers.



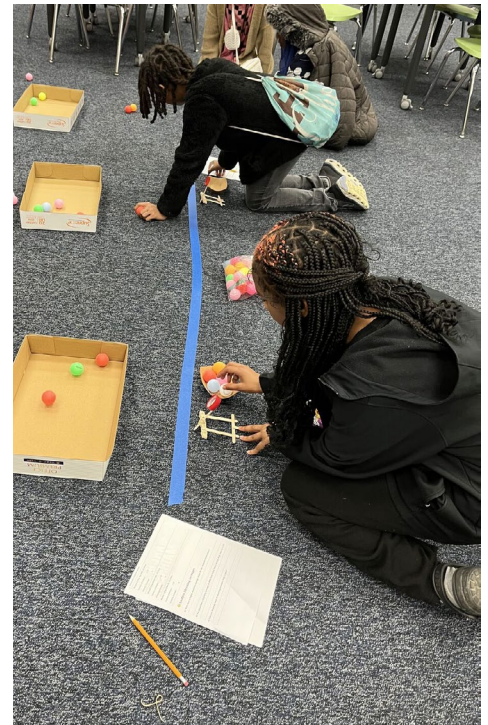
Lifestyle Fair: On May 20, 2026, Hilliard City Schools and West Jefferson Local Schools, in partnership with the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio and Find Your Grind (FYG), hosted our second annual Career Lifestyle Fair at Tolles Career and Technical Center, having over 1,300 seventh grade students participate. Departing from traditional booth style expos, the event featured immersive, hands-on activations tied to FYG's 16 lifestyle archetypes such as building and launching rockets, coding robots, testing circuits, and learning to DJ, allowing students to step into future career scenarios rather than just learning about them. The event was kicked off by Keynote Speaker Otis Winston, former OSU two sport captain and actor. Local businesses and organizations contributed interactive stations, enriching the program with real world industry insight and fostering a strong connection between education and the local workforce.

Educators, students, and community partners praised the day's energy and emphasis on curiosity, purpose, and future readiness, calling it a celebration of students imagining and engaging with what is possible.



STEAM SPARK (2026–2027), Columbus City Schools:

A partnership between Columbus City Schools, Cardinal Health, and the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Central Ohio, STEAM SPARK is a year-long mentorship program that brought together 20 middle school girls at Hilltonia Middle School for monthly, hands-on explorations of Science, Healthcare, Engineering, Technology, and Math. Designed and led by volunteer mentors from Cardinal Health and the ESC of Central Ohio, the program paired real-world professionals with students to build confidence, curiosity, and community around STEM fields; all through fun, collaborative activities rather than traditional classroom instruction. The program's impact was significant enough to draw local media attention, including coverage from NBC4 Columbus highlighting how STEAM SPARK promotes the sciences to middle schoolers. Each monthly session opened with mentor introductions and a shared set of group norms; include everyone, try something new, be kind in words and actions. Creating a consistent, safe space for girls to take risks and grow. Over the course of the year, students rotated through a diverse range of STEAM challenges: programming and choreographing robot dance routines, an engineering-thinking exercise built around writing precise sandwich-making instructions, a design-thinking unit where they built bubble wands with 3D printing pens, a healthcare session on blood pressure led by a Cardinal Health pharmacist, a basketball-themed catapult-building competition, and a year-end drone delivery challenge that had teams coding flight paths for a simulated rescue mission. Throughout the year, students consistently heard from working professionals about their careers and their passion for STEAM, helping to demystify science and healthcare career paths and put a human face on fields the girls might not otherwise encounter. Pre- and post-session surveys were used throughout the program to capture student feedback and measure growth in interest and confidence. By pairing structured STEAM challenges with mentorship, teamwork, and genuine adult investment, STEAM SPARK gave 20 Hilltonia Middle School girls a full year of evidence that science and engineering careers are not just accessible, they are exciting, collaborative, and within reach.



High School Tech Internships: The ESC, in partnership with BridgED, applied for and received a High School Tech Internship Intermediary Grant through the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation. This grant covers administration, marketing, and recruitment for student interns. As part of this regional pilot for our HSTI footprint, we implemented a registration platform with SchoolLinks to help businesses, schools, and students coordinate internship experiences. A total of 204 student interns were placed in 49 BAC businesses in 10 counties throughout Central Ohio.



Business Advisory Council Participants - Career Field Alignment

Agriculture and Environmental Systems MedVet, MidOhio Food Collective	Arts and Communication Zed Digital, Portfolio Creative, New Vision Media	Business and Administrative Services Columbus Chamber Foundation, Columbus Chamber of Commerce, Ease, Ignite Industrial Professionals
Construction Technologies EcoPlumbers, Hamilton Parker, Independent Electrical Contractors Central Ohio Chapter, Kokosing Construction Company, Rosati Windows, The Strait & Lamp Group, Turner, Emergency Plumbing, Freeland Contractors	Education and Training Otterbein University, State Support Team 11, TechCorps, Transfr, Columbus State Community College, The Ohio State University	Energy and Natural Resources American Electric Power, NiSource
Engineering and Science Technologies Path Robotics, ROTO, Center of Science and Industry (COSI), CCI Engineering Services, Divelbiss Corporation, RSandH, HNTB Engineering, K-12 Tech Repairs, Nestle R&D Marysville, Past Foundation, Rhythm North America Co Ltd, Teltron Design Group	Finance Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Root Insurance, Fifth Third Bank	Government and Public Administration Aspyr Workforce Innovation, DriveOhio, Franklin County Job and Family Services, One Columbus, Ohio Excels
Health Science Cardinal Health, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Ohio Health, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, Ohio Life Science, Mt. Carmel Health Systems, Trinity Healthcare, Mary Rutan Health	Hospitality and Tourism City Barbeque, Wendy's, Experience Columbus, Cameron Mitchell Restaurants	Human Services Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Community Shelter Board, Goodwill, Ingram-White Castle Foundation, MidOhio Food Collective
Information Technology AT&T, AWS InCommunities, CGI, EastIT, NetSteady, OSA Technology Partners, PerryProTech, Buckeye Innovation, Hilliard Development Corporation, Strickle, Tech Corps	Law and Public Safety City of Columbus, City of Westerville	Manufacturing Fluvitex USA, G&J Pepsi, Honda, NIFCO, Illuminate, Worthington Industries, Yellow Weld LLC
Marketing Adept Marketing	Transportation Systems Advance Auto Parts, Cipital City Trailers Inc., Central Ohio Transit Authority, Columbus Regional Airport Authority, FlyOhio, FST Logistics, Performance Automotive Network, The Rickenbacker Employer Assistance Network, Germain Automotive	

Benefits of the ESC's Business Advisory Council

Business advisory councils, mandated by law since 1995, offer significant benefits to every Ohio school district.

The inclusion of business advisory standards in HB49 has heightened the state's focus on these councils, underscoring their vital role in today's economy. The BAC will provide guidance to local school districts on economic and job market changes by:

- Identifying new and emerging careers
- Aligning career pathways with current careers
- Offering recommendations on necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies
- Advocating for effective curricula
- Providing work-based learning opportunities
- Advising on facilities and equipment needed for teaching work-based skills and career exploration
- Supporting local school districts by fostering collaborative relationships among businesses, labor organizations, and educators



Business Advisory Council Participants



2026-2027 ESC BAC Initiatives

The 2026-2027 Business Advisory Council will focus on three key quality practices:

- Developing Professional Skills for Future Careers
- Building Partnerships
- Coordinating Experiences

To achieve these objectives, the ESC of Central Ohio Business Advisory Council (BAC) meets quarterly. Additionally, the BAC has established work groups consisting of our regional industry sector partners. These work groups will meet regularly after each quarterly meeting to advance the BAC's initiatives. All school districts and business partners will have the opportunity to engage with all initiatives unless a particular in-demand career sector is singled out for a particular event. It should be noted that the ESC's BAC is focused on its mission and vision to include all students with the opportunities listed in the initiatives for the 2026-2027 school year. A focused effort will be made to reach, engage and serve targeted populations. Target populations include, but are not limited to, gender, economically disadvantaged, race, ethnicity, individuals with disabilities, foster youth, and English learners (EL).



Developing Professional Skills for Future Careers

Initiative 1

Utilize the ODEW Career Connected Learning Framework to strengthen career connected learning across the Central Ohio region by providing workshops for Business Advisory Council members focused on the framework, available resources, and strategies for developing students' professional skills. Offer Career Connected Learning Reviews to school partners to assess current programming, identify opportunities for growth, and support the development of future career connected learning experiences for all students.



Intended Outcome: Business Advisory Council members and school partners will have a stronger understanding of the Career Connected Learning Framework and use the framework and review process to strengthen professional skills development and expand coordinated, student centered career connected learning opportunities.



Data Measurement: Measure participation in Career Connected Learning workshops and reviews, including the number of BAC members and school partners engaged. Collect pre and post workshop feedback to measure increased understanding of the framework and resources and track the number of schools completing a Career Connected Learning Review and identifying actionable recommendations or next steps for future programming.

Initiative 2

Identify where CTE 26 pathways currently exist across Industry Sector Partnerships (ISPs) in the Central Ohio Region, to strengthen and improve ISP engagement with member districts.



Intended Outcome: Industry Sector Partnerships will be able to align current CTE 26 pathway offerings with the needs and priorities of their school district partners, creating stronger, more coordinated engagement between districts and industry.



Data Measurement: Evidence will include meeting agendas, a finalized inventory/map of identified CTE 26 pathways by sector, and professional learning sessions for member districts delivered during the scheduled quarterly BAC meetings.

Initiative 3

Provide regional educator professional development through the Central Ohio Career Readiness Council's (COCRC) and Tech Talk Tuesday Communities of Practice.



Intended Outcome: Identification of barriers and developing solutions for all students accessing work-based learning opportunities throughout their academic careers.



Data Measurement: Number of meetings held, participants, barriers, and solutions implemented during the 2026-2027 school year.





Build Partnerships

Initiative 1

Coordinate with the Central Ohio Compact to facilitate committee work involving community, government, business, and K-12 partners.



Intended Outcome: Enhance educational quality and workforce alignment in Central Ohio through collaborative efforts among community, government, business, and K-12 partners.



Data Measurement: Measured through metrics such as partnership engagement, student performance, workforce readiness, community involvement, and continuous improvement feedback along with Lumina Foundation's Credentials of Value Goal.

Initiative 2

Partner with Columbus Chamber of Commerce and 16 BAC businesses to hold the fourth annual Careers2Classroom Workforce Boot Camp for 72 educators from Central Ohio school districts.



Intended Outcome: Equip 72 Central Ohio educators with industry insights and practical skills through the third annual Careers2Classroom Educator Workforce Boot Camp in partnership with the Columbus Chamber of Commerce and 24 BAC businesses.



Data Measurement: Measured by tracking educator participation, feedback on the boot camp's effectiveness, and subsequent integration of industry knowledge into classroom teaching.



Initiative 3

Host regional Chamber of Commerce events to enhance networking and sharing of program information happening through area career technical centers, the ESC, industry sector partnerships, and individual businesses.



Intended Outcome: Expand regional Academic Alliance for regional Chambers of Commerce to enhance networking and disseminate program information through area career technical centers, the ESC, industry sector partnerships, and individual businesses.



Data Measurement: Measured by tracking event happenings, attendance, participant feedback, the number of new partnerships formed, and subsequent engagement in the highlighted programs.

Coordinate Experiences

Initiative 1

Develop a matching system in partnership with the Central Ohio Career Pathway Support Network and the Columbus Chamber of Commerce to connect students with internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities.



Intended Outcome: Students have increased access to relevant internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities that align with their career interests and pathway goals.



Data Measurement: Measure the number of participating businesses and schools, opportunities posted, student matches, and completed internship or pre-apprenticeship experiences through the matching system.

Initiative 2

Partner with Industry Sector Partnerships and community organizations to create and implement student events and resources across Construction, Healthcare, Manufacturing and emerging career fields.



Intended Outcome: Expose high school students in the Central Ohio area to in-demand careers in those fields.



Data Measurement: Number of events and focused sectors as well as students involved in the activities (grade levels, numbers of students).

Initiative 3

Facilitate the continued expansion and sustainability of youth pre-apprenticeships as part of the Central Ohio Pre-Apprenticeship Hub.



Intended Outcome: Sustain and expand youth pre-apprenticeships within the Central Ohio Pre-Apprenticeship Hub to provide more students with hands-on training and career readiness.



Data Measurement: Measured by tracking the number of new pre-apprenticeships opportunities created, student enrollment and completion rates, and post-program employment or further education placements.

Supplemental Work for BAC 2026-2027

- Expand student design challenge for BAC member school districts to create the 2026-2027 BAC Community Connector Award to be presented to winners at the last meeting of the school year.
- Create BAC student delegate position to attend quarterly meetings starting in December to both inform students and add their voice to our meetings.



Work-Based Learning Experiences (ORC 3313.6112)

ORC 3302.03

(viii) Earning an OhioMeansJobs-readiness seal established under section 3313.6112 of the Revised Code and completing two hundred fifty hours of an internship or other work-based learning experience that is either:

(I) Approved by the business advisory council established under section 3313.82 of the Revised Code that represents the student's district;

Or

(II) Aligned to the career-technical education pathway approved by the department in which the student is enrolled.

Below is a list of approved Business Advisory Council (BAC) work-based learning activities that align with ORC 3302.03 VIII (I). If your district offers additional work-based learning experiences not included on this list, please contact BAC Business Lead John Hambrick at john.hambrick@escoco.org. We are happy to review them and, if appropriate, add them to the approved list.

ESC of Central Ohio's BAC Approved Work-Based Learning Activities:

- Career-Based Intervention (CBI) instruction and work-based learning activities
- Recognized Pre-Apprenticeships
- Registered Apprenticeships
- High School Tech Internship Program
- School-based enterprises that utilize the ODEW Work-Based Learning (WBL) template (Click here for template: [NEW-Work-Based-Learning-Agreement-10-15-2020 \(1\).docx](#)) and are implemented and monitored by the school district.
- Simulated Work-Based Learning experiences that utilize the ODEW WBL template (Click here for template: [NEW-Work-Based-Learning-Agreement-10-15-2020 \(1\).docx](#)) and are implemented and monitored by the school district.
- Any work-based learning activity that follows the ODEW WBL template (Click here for template: [NEW-Work-Based-Learning-Agreement-10-15-2020 \(1\).docx](#)) and is implemented and monitored by the school district.

Resources

- ESC of Central Ohio: [Business Advisory Council](#)
- ESC of Central Ohio: [Business Advisory Council | Parent & Community Awareness](#)
- ESC of Central Ohio: [Educator Workforce Boot Camp](#)
- ESC of Central Ohio: [Workforce Readiness Collaborative](#)
- Columbus State Community College: [Industry Demand & Engagement](#)
- Central Ohio CPSN: [Resource Hub](#)
- MORPC: [insight2050 Report](#)
- Ohio Department of Education and Workforce: [Ohio Business Advisory Councils – Next Steps](#)
- Ohio Laws & Rules: [Ohio Revised Code 3313.82: Business Advisory Councils](#)
- Ohio Laws & Rules: [Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4109 | Employment of Minors](#)
- [One Columbus](#)



educational service center of Central Ohio



Education Lead

Robb Gonda
Robb.Gonda@escoco.org
614.542.4123

Business Lead

John Hambrick
John.Hambrick@escoco.org
614.753.4645

Central Office & State Support Team 11

2080 Citygate Drive
Columbus, OH 43219
614.445.3750

Glenmont Office & OCALI

470 Glenmont Avenue
Columbus, OH 43214
614.410.0321

North Office

7840 Graphics Way
Lewis Center, OH 43035
740.657.5060

Integrity Office

1565 Integrity Drive East
Columbus, OH 43209
614.445.3750

Northgate Office

7207 Northgate Way
Westerville, OH 43082
614.445.3750