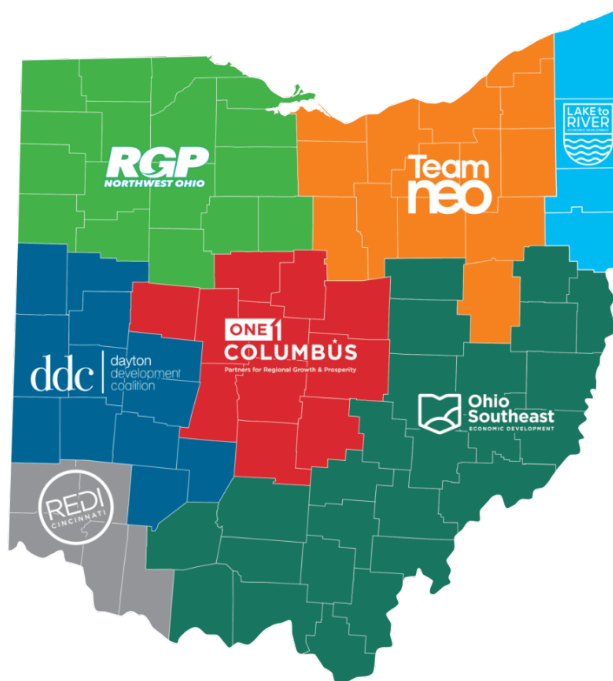




2026-2027 Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council Plan

Ohio law requires all school districts to submit a business advisory council plan for each academic year. Each district must submit plans to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce via [OH|ID](#) by September 30. The Department strongly recommends using this template to capture accurately the plans for the 2026-2027 academic school year. Councils may use the data template section to capture accomplishments of the 2025-2026 academic year. Feel free to add extra space to include initiatives that demonstrate implementation of each quality practice and add extra rows if necessary to the tables to include more than two initiatives for each quality practice.

1. **Name of business advisory council:** ESC of Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council
2. **Identify the structure of the business advisory council** (school district, educational service center, joint vocational school district, or independent collaborative): Educational Service Center
3. **[JobsOhio Region](#) in which business advisory council operates:** Northeast (Team NEO)



ESC of Northeast Ohio 2026-2027 Business Advisory Council (BAC) Members

District	District Primary Contact and Role	Primary Contact Email	District Secondary Contact and Role	Secondary Contact Email
Akron Public Schools	Mary B. Outley Superintendent	moutley@apslearn.org	Marcy Ebright Director of College and Career Academies	mebright@apslearn.org
Aurora City Schools	Paul Milcetic Superintendent	pmilcetic@aurora-schools.org		
Barberton City Schools	Jason Ondrus Superintendent	jondrus@barbertonschools.org	Mike Andric Assistant Superintendent	mandric@barbertonschools.org
Bay Village City Schools	Scot Prebles Superintendent	scot.prebles@bay-schoolsohio.org	Robert Hoon, Assistant Superintendent	robert.hoon@bay-schoolsohio.org
Beachwood City Schools	Robert Hardis Superintendent	rph@beachwood-schools.org	Ken Veon, Assistant Superintendent	kev@beachwood-schools.org
Bedford City Schools	Tom Evans Superintendent	tevans@bedford-schools.org		
Berea City Schools	Tracy Wheeler Superintendent	twheeler@berea-schools.org	Nick Discenza, Director, Academic Affairs	ndiscenza@berea-schools.org
Berkshire Local Schools	John Stoddard Superintendent	john.stoddard@berkshireschools.org	Matt Morbeto, Director of Curriculum & Instruction	Matt.morbeto@berkshireschools.org
Brecksville-Broadview Hts. City Schools	Jeffery Harrison Superintendent	harrisonj@bbhcsd.org	David Martin, Director of Teaching and Learning	martind@bbhcsd.org
Brooklyn City Schools	Ted Caleris Superintendent	ted.caleris@bcshurricanes.org	Lisa Deliz, Assistant Superintendent	lisa.deliz@bcshurricanes.org
Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Schools	Jennifer Penczarski Superintendent	jennifer.penczarski@chagrinschools.org	Mike Daugherty, Assistant Superintendent	mike.daugherty@chagrinschools.org
Chardon Local Schools	Mike Hanlon Superintendent	michael.hanlon@chardonschools.org	Ed Klein, Assistant Superintendent	Ed.klein@chardonschools.org
Cleveland Heights-University Hts. City Schools	Elizabeth Kirby Superintendent	E_Kirby@chuh.org	Felisha Gould, Assistant Superintendent	F_gould@chuh.org

Cleveland Metropolitan City Schools	Warren Morgan Superintendent	warren.morgan@clevelandmetroschools.org	Karen Thompson, Chief of Operations	Karen.thompson@clevelandmetroschools.org
Crestwood Local Schools	Aireane Curtis Superintendent	acurtis@crestwoodschoos.org		
Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools	Matt Young Superintendent	myoung@cuyhts.org	George Burich, Assistant Superintendent	gburich@cuyhts.org
Cuyahoga Valley Career Center	Dave Mangas Superintendent	dmangas@cvccworks.org	Marcy Green Assistant Superintendent	mgreen@cvccworks.edu
East Cleveland City Schools	Henry Pettigrew II Superintendent	hpettigrew@eastclevelandschools.org		
Euclid City Schools	Karen Brown Superintendent	Kbrown@euclidschools.org	Gina Rashad Assistant Superintendent	grashad@euclidschools.org
Fairview Park City Schools	Keith Ahearn Superintendent	kahearn@fairview.k12.oh.us	Melanie Wightman Director of Teaching and Learning	Mwightman@fairview.k12.oh.us
Garfield Heights City Schools	Samual Vawters Superintendent	svawters@ghbulldogs.org	Sean Patton, Assistant Superintendent	spatton@ghbulldogs.org
Independence Local Schools	Kelli Cogan Superintendent	kcogan@independence.k12.oh.us	Natalie Matthews Assistant Superintendent	nmatthews@independence.k12.oh.us
Invictus High School	Dean Manke Director	Dean.manke@invictushigh.org		
James A. Garfield Local Schools	Ted Lysiak Superintendent	tlysiak@jagschools.org		
Kenston Local Schools	Bruce Willingham Superintendent	bruce.willingham@kenstonapps.org	Katie Poe, Assistant Superintendent	Katie.poe@kenstonapps.org
Kirtland Local Schools	Chad VanArnhem Superintendent	chad.vanarnhem@kirtlandschools.org		
Lake Erie International High School	Lyniece Bradford C.T.E. Coordinator, Lake Erie College	Lyniece.bradford@leihsedu.org		
Lakewood City Schools	Maggie Niedzwiecki Superintendent	Maggie.niedzwiecki@lakewoodcityschools.org	Steven Ast, Assistant Superintendent	Steve.ast@lakewoodcityschools.org
Maple Heights City School	Olympia Della Flora Superintendent	olympia.dellaflora@mapleschools.com	Christopher Sutton, Assistant Principal	Christopher.sutton@mapleschools.org
Mayfield City School	Michael Barnes Superintendent	mbarnes@mayfieldschools.org	Jeff Legan, Assistant Superintendent	jlegan@mayfieldschools.org
North Olmsted City Schools	Chris Caleris Superintendent	Chris.Caleris@nolmsted.org	Scott Moore, Associate Superintendent	Scott.moore@nolmsted.org
North Royalton City Schools	Michael Laub Superintendent	michael.laub@northroyaltonsd.org	Melissa Vojta, Assistant Superintendent	Melissa.vojta@northroyaltonsd.org

Orange City Schools	Lynn Campbell Superintendent	lcampbell@orangecsd.org	Paul Lucas, Director of Human Resources	plucas@orangecsd.org
Parma City Schools	Scott Hunt Superintendent	hunts@parmacityschools.org	Tiffany Stropko, Assistant Superintendent	stropkot@parmacityschools.org
Randall Park High School	Tara Colon Director	Tara.colon@randallparkhigh.org		
Ravenna City Schools	Ben Ribelin Superintendent	ben.ribelin@ravennaschools.us	Lee Smith, Assistant Superintendent	Lee.smith@ravennaschools.org
Revere City Schools	Daniel White Superintendent	dwhite@revereschools.org	Micki Krantz, Assistant Superintendent	mkrantz@revereschools.org
Richmond Heights Local Schools	Marnisha Brown Superintendent	Brown.marnisha@richmondheightsschools.org	Kelly Askew-Tucker, Director of Educational Services	Askew.kelly@richmondheights.org
Rocky River City Schools	Adham Schirg Superintendent	Adham.schirg@rrcs.org	Elizabeth Anderson, Assistant Superintendent	Anderson.elizabeth@rrcs.org
Shaker Heights City Schools	David Glasner Superintendent	Glasner_d@shaker.org	Marla Robinson, Chief Academic Officer	
Solon City Schools	Fred Bolden Superintendent	fbolden@solonboe.org	Debbie Siegel, Assistant Superintendent	dsiegel@solonboe.org
South Euclid-Lyndhurst City Schools	Dominick Kaple Superintendent	kaple@sel.k12.oh.us	Melissa Thompson, Assistant Superintendent	thompsonm@sel.k12.oh.us
Streetsboro City Schools	Cindy Deevers Superintendent	cdeevers@scsrockets.org	Brett McCann, District BAC Representative	bmccann@scsrockets.org
Twinsburg City Schools	Sandy Womack Superintendent	swomack@twinsburgcsd.org	Toni Cluse, Director	tcluse@twinsburgcsd.org
Warrensville Heights City Schools	Donald Jolly II Superintendent	Donald.jolly@whcsd.org	Tamea Caver, Assistant Superintendent	Tamea.caver@whcsd.org
Waterloo Local Schools	Frank Gant Superintendent	fgant@waterloovikings.org		
Westlake City Schools	Scott Goggin Superintendent	goggin@wlake.org	Kathi Maxwell, Assistant Superintendent	maxwell@wlake.org
Wickliffe City Schools	Mike Chokshi Superintendent	Michael.choski@wickliffeschools.org		
Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools	Patrick Ward Superintendent	Patrick.ward@wescschools.org	Victoria Morley, Director of Workforce Development	victoria.morley@wescschools.org

Note: Please add rows as needed.

ESC of Northeast Ohio BAC Member Student Enrollment 2025

School District	County	Elementary	Middle	High	Type	CTPD
Akron Public Schools	Summit	9027	4272	5591	Urban	Akron City CTPD
Aurora City Schools	Portage	1250	705	948	Rural	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
Barberton City Schools	Summit	1373	711	1141	Rural	Four City Compact CTPD
Bay Village City Schools	Cuyahoga	1032	553	690	Suburban	Lakewood City CTPD
Beachwood City Schools	Cuyahoga	578	348	623	Suburban	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
Bedford City Schools	Cuyahoga	1190	626	896	Urban	Bedford CTPD
Berea City Schools	Cuyahoga	2214	1135	1610	Suburban	Polaris JVSD CTPD
Berkshire Local Schools	Geauga	614	283	419	Rural	Auburn JVSD CTPD
Brecksville-Broadview Hts. City Schools	Cuyahoga	1562	824	1107	Suburban	Cuyahoga Valley JVSD CTPD
Brooklyn City Schools	Cuyahoga	468	288	387	Urban	Polaris JVSD CTPD
Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Schools	Cuyahoga	663	364	539	Rural	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
Chardon Local Schools	Geauga	928	520	807	Rural	Auburn JVSD CTPD
Cleveland Heights-University Hts. City Schools	Cuyahoga	1990	1006	1599	Urban	Tri-Heights Career Prep Consortium CTPD
Cleveland Metropolitan City Schools	Cuyahoga	13911	6792	10217	Urban	Cleveland Municipal CTPD
Crestwood Local Schools	Portage	465	335	339	Rural	Maplewood Area JVSD CTPD
Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools	Cuyahoga	295	170	229	Suburban	Cuyahoga Valley JVSD CTPD
East Cleveland City Schools	Cuyahoga	444	230	392	Urban	East Cleveland City CTPD
Euclid City Schools	Cuyahoga	1797	829	1344	Urban	Euclid City CTPD
Fairview Park City Schools	Cuyahoga	607	333	448	Suburban	Polaris JVSD CTPD
Garfield Heights City Schools	Cuyahoga	1102	585	884	Urban	Cuyahoga Valley JVSD CTPD
Independence Local Schools	Cuyahoga	432	228	266	Suburban	Cuyahoga Valley JVSD CTPD
James A. Garfield Local Schools	Portage	531	266	329	Rural	Maplewood Area JVSD CTPD
Kenston Local Schools	Geauga	1100	602	766	Rural	Auburn JVSD CTPD
Kirtland Local Schools	Lake	422	251	330	Rural	Auburn JVSD CTPD
Lake Erie International High School	Cuyahoga	0	0	123	Suburban	Cleveland Municipal CTPD
Lakewood City Schools	Cuyahoga	1790	892	1410	Urban	Lakewood City CTPD
Maple Heights City School	Cuyahoga	1219	589	887	Urban	Tri-Heights Career Prep Consortium CTPD
Mayfield City School	Cuyahoga	1647	859	1512	Suburban	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
North Olmsted City Schools	Cuyahoga	1456	811	1048	Suburban	Polaris JVSD CTPD
North Royalton City Schools	Cuyahoga	1682	910	1386	Suburban	Cuyahoga Valley JVSD CTPD
Orange City Schools	Cuyahoga	895	481	596	Suburban	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
Parma City Schools	Cuyahoga	3676	1928	2976	Urban	Parma City CTPD
Randall Park High School	Cuyahoga	0	0	201	Urban	Tri-Heights Career Prep Consortium CTPD

Ravenna City Schools	Portage	834	381	452	Rural	Maplewood Area JVSD CTPD
Revere City Schools	Summit	1251	638	870	Rural	Cuyahoga Valley JVSD CTPD
Richmond Heights Local Schools	Cuyahoga	292	183	246	Suburban	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
Rocky River City Schools	Cuyahoga	1150	614	744	Suburban	Lakewood City CTPD
Shaker Heights City Schools	Cuyahoga	1878	933	1368	Suburban	Tri-Heights Career Prep Consortium CTPD
Solon City Schools	Cuyahoga	1817	1135	1529	Suburban	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
South Euclid-Lyndhurst City Schools	Cuyahoga	1441	687	1039	Urban	Mayfield Excel T.E.C.C. CTPD
Streetsboro City Schools	Portage	809	443	526	Rural	Maplewood Area JVSD CTPD
Twinsburg City Schools	Summit	1561	877	1173	Rural	Cuyahoga Valley JVSD CTPD
Warrensville Heights City Schools	Cuyahoga	764	437	666	Urban	Tri-Heights Career Prep Consortium CTPD
Waterloo Local Schools	Portage	317	175	197	Rural	Maplewood Area JVSD CTPD
Westlake City Schools	Cuyahoga	1350	754	973	Suburban	Lakewood City CTPD

During the 2026-2027 School year, the BAC offered over 100 engagement and networking opportunities as shared in our prior year Annual Plan and Joint Statement. A summary of that information is below, demonstrating 100% of districts in the BAC actively participating in technical assistance, college and career readiness supports, or engagement and networking opportunities that were offered by the ESC of NEO's Business Advisory Council.

Directly Served by ESC NEO BAC	Opportunities	Number of participants Served Annually	Number of BAC Districts Represented
Educators and Administrators	50+	2,500+	49
School Counselors/Social Workers	4 Quarterly Meeting	100+	35
CTE/CTPDs	17 Networking /Meetings	100+	30+
K-12 Students	230 FY 2026	7,000+	16
Adult Learners (14- 64)	10	250+	30
Organizations and Businesses	18	150+	30+

List business advisory council members (business, higher education, and community partners, for example). List industries represented on the business advisory council based on [Ohio's Top Jobs](#) classification. Include workforce boards, economic development, higher education, and community partners.

NEO BAC Steering Committee Members	Title	Name of Business	Industry
Al DiFranco	President	Junior Achievement	Community Partner
Khaz Finely	Manager, Outreach and External Engagement	Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland	Government Agency-Finance
Naima Lusane	Executive Director, College and Career Readiness Chief Administrator	Cuyahoga Community College	Tech Prep
Dave Mangas	Superintendent	Cuyahoga Valley Career Center	Career Center
Doug Miller	Director, Marketing and Community Engagement	Polaris Career Center	Carer Center
Tom Miller	Director, Tech Prep Programs	Greater Cleveland Partnership	Technology
Ryan Pendleton	Executive Director	Connect ITC and Shared Service Alliance	ITC and Business Services
Hope Bell	Senior Manager, Community Partnerships	ConxusNEO	Health Care
Crystal Reed	Director, Youth Mental & Behavioral Health Workforce Coalition	Greater Cleveland Works (Jobs Ohio)	Regional Economic Development and Mental Health
Jared Daly	Regional Coordinator of Workforce	Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities (DD)	Regional Economic Development and Developmental Disabilities
Jeff McClellan	Founding Directo and Entrepreneur	STARTSOLE	Business, Data, and Entrepreneurship
Jennie Becker	Manager of Experiential Learning	MAGNET	Manufacturing
Teresa Simons	Executive Director	Alliance for Working Together (AWT)	Manufacturing
Brenda Callaghan	Executive Director	Build Trades	Building and Construction Trades
Michael Nelson	Medical Director, Center for Youth and College of Education	Cleveland Clinic	Health Care
Janice Taylor-Heard	Associate Vice President, Early College Opportunities	Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)	Higher Education
Karen L. Brown	Superintendent	Euclid City Schools	Cuyahoga County – K-12 Educ. First Ring
Kimm Leininger	President and CEO	Geauga Growth Partnership	Community Partner
John Stoddard	Superintendent	Berkshire Local Schools	Geauga County, K-12 Education
Patrick Ward Vicki Morley	Superintendent Director of Workforce Development	Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools	Lake County, K-12 Education
Ted Lysiak	Superintendent	James A. Garfield Local	Portage County, K-12 Education
Mike Andric	Assistant Superintendent	Barberton City Schools	Summit County, K-12 Education
Jennifer Dodd	Assistant Superintendent	ESC of Northeast Ohio	Co-Chair

Paula Kucinic	Director of Prof. Learning and Workforce Development	ESC of Northeast Ohio	Co-Chair
Nadine Grimm	Coordinator of 21 st Century Learning	ESC of Northeast Ohio	Secretary

Schedule of 2026-2027 Meetings/Networks and Workgroups

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council (BAC) Steering Committee Meetings

August 18, 2026	November 19, 2026
February 3, 2027	May 14, 2027

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council (BAC) Networking Meetings

September 23, 2026	November 19, 2026
Winter-TBA	Spring: TBA

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio Career Leaders Network Meetings

September 30, 2026	November 19, 2026
February 11, 2027	April 15, 2027

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio Career and Technical Education (CTE) Leaders Network Meetings

September 16, 2026	November 12, 2026
January 21, 2027	April 29, 2027

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio Adult Advisory Council Meetings

September 11, 2026	November 12, 2026
February 2, 2027	April 13, 2027

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio Adult Providers Network Meetings

September 11, 2026	November 19, 2026
February 12, 2027	April 23, 2027

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio School Counselor/Social Workers Network Meetings

September 18, 2026	December 10, 2026
February 5, 2027	April 23, 2027

2026-2027 Northeast Ohio AP Network Meetings

October 13, 2026	March 9, 2027
May 17, 2027	

2026-2027 Northeast Pre-Apprenticeship Network Meetings

September 21, 2026	November 16, 2026
January 25, 2027	March 8, 2027

Northeast Ohio BAC Partnering Businesses, Agencies, and Non-Profits

ACT	CITY OF LAKEWOOD	DALE CARNEGIE	GOODWILL
ADVANCED INNOVATIVE MANUFACTURING	CLEVELAND BUILDS	DAVEY TREE	GREAT LAKES CHEESE
AVENUE OF AURORA	CLEVELAND CAVALIERS	DEALER TIRE	GREAT LAKES GROWERS
ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION SOLUTIONS	CLEVELAND CLINIC	DEFINED LEARNING	GREATER CLEVELAND CAREER CONSORTIUM
AKRON UNIVERSITY	CLEVELAND CLINIC	DELMONTE HOTELS	GREATER CLEVELAND PARTNERSHIP
ALL CARING HOSPICE	CLEVELAND GUARDIANS	DELTA DENTAL	GREATER CLEVELAND SPORTS COMMISSION
AMT MEDICAL	CLEVELAND METROPARKS	DESTINATION CLEVELAND	HARNER PLUMBING
ARBYS	CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY	DOLLAR BANK	HBA OF GREATER CLEVEAND
AREA TEMPS	CMP COMMUNICATIONS	DOLLAR TREE	HIGHER EDUCATION COMPACT OF CLEVELAND
ASHLAND UNIVERSITY	COLLEGE NOW	DOMINION ENERGY	HOLDEN FORESTS AND GARDENS
AVERY DENNISON	COMPONENT REPAIR TECHNOLOGIES (CRT)	DRYWALL FINISHERS	HOLIDAY INN ROCKSIDE
AWT	CONEXUS NEO	DUNKIN	HOLMES APPLESAUCE
BRIGHT BEGINNINGS	CONSULTAMOS LLC	EATON	HOME DEPOT
BUIDING LABORERS 310	CORNERSTONE OF HOPE	ELECTRICAL LOCAL	HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE
CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY	CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF CLEVELAND	HOSPITALITY RESTAURAUNTS
CEDAR FAIR	CUYAHOGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	FEDEX	HYLAND SOFTWARE
CEMENT MASONS	CUYAHOGA SOILD AND WARTER CONSERVATION DISTRICT	FISH WINDOW CLEANING	JERGENS
CENTRAL GRAPHICS	CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER	GEAUGA GROWTH PARTNERSHIP	JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
CITY OF CLEVELAND	CUYAHOGA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	GIANT EAGLE	JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE	CVS HEALTH	GIRL SCOUTS OF NORTHEAST OHIO	JUMP START

KENT DISPLAYS	N.A.S.A.	PORTAGE LAKES CAREER CENTER	TOTAL QUALIT LOGISTICS
KENT STATE UNIVERSITY	NATIONAL INTERSTATE INSURANCE CO.	PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD	TRANSPORT SERVICES
KNEZ BUILDERS	NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT	R.I.T.E.	TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL
KOINONIA HOMES	NORTHEAST OHIO TECH PREP	ROCKET MORTGAGE FIELD HOUSE	TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT
LABORERS 860	OBERLIN COLLEGE	RTA	UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS
LAKELAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE	OHIO ACTE	SAWMILL CREEK	US AIRFORCE/SPACE FOREVER
LINCOLN ELECTRIC	OHIO AEROSPACE INSTITUTE	SCHNELLER	US ARMY
LOWES	OHIO DEPARTMENT OF REHABIITATION AND CORRECTION	SEEDS OF LITERACY	US COAST GUARD
LUBRIZOL	OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)	SHEET METAL WORKERS LOCAL 33	US FOODS
MAGNET	OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT)	SHERWIN WILLIAMS	US MARSHALS SERVICE
MANUFACTURING WORKS	OHIO GUIDESTONES WORKFORCE 360	SPEEDWAY	US MARINES
MAPLEWOOD CAREER CENTER	OHIO HOMELAND SECURITY	SWAGELOCK	US MERCHANT MARINES
MARTHA HOLDEN JENNINGS FOUNDATION	OPPORTUNITIES FOR OHIOANS WITH DISABILITIES	TARGET	US NAVY
MAY DUGAN CENTER	OLYMPIC STEEL	TEAM NEO	US SECRET SERVICE
MCDONALDS	ORLANDO BAKERY	TECH ELEVATOR	WESTON HURD
MEDICAL MUTUAL	OHIO SCHOOLS COUNCIL (OSC)	THE AKRON UNIVERSITY	YMCA
MEDINA COUNTY CAREER CENTER	OHIO WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS	THE CLEVELAND FOUNDATION	YOUSCIENCE
METRO HEALTH	PLAYHOUSE SQUARE	THE IMAGE GROUP	YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED
METROPOLITAN VETINARY ACADEMY	POLARIS CAREER CENTER	THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY	
MITCHELL'S ICE CREAM	PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES	TOOLING SMU	

Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council (BAC) Vision and Mission for the 2026 - 2027 School Year

The Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council (NEO BAC) is a regional BAC serving 46 Northeast Ohio School districts and two independent high schools within five counties across Northeast Ohio. It collaborates with and convenes businesses, higher education, workforce organizations, sector partnerships, community agencies, career centers, and other partners to support students, educators, and families within our communities. Its mission is to create opportunities for students, educators, business leaders, and community partners to network, collaborate, and develop programs that strengthen the Northeast Ohio workforce and support economic growth.

During 2026-2027, the NEO BAC will continue its multi-year approach to building a stronger Northeast Ohio workforce through three interconnected quality practices: 1) **Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers**, 2) **Build Partnerships**, and 3) **Coordinate Experiences**. The 2026–2027 plan builds on established networks, business partnerships, career pathway initiatives, work-based learning opportunities, and regional workforce-development efforts implemented during 2025–2026 and as set forth in our Joint Statement

Vision: The vision of the Northeast Ohio Business Advisory (BAC) is to unite K-12 educational agencies, businesses, organizational groups, career and technical education (CTEs), community organizations, institutions of higher education, professional organizations, educators, and individuals who are committed to building a stronger Northeast Ohio Workforce.

Mission: The mission of the Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council (BAC) is to provide opportunities where students, educators, and business and community leaders can network, collaborate, partner, and collectively work together to create innovative programs and opportunities that support and develop a stronger Northeast Ohio workforce. The Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council (Northeast Ohio BAC) is aligned to the Northeast Ohio (Team NEO) Jobs Ohio Region.

Business advisory councils operate under [three quality practices](#): **Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers**, **Build Partnerships**, and **Coordinate Experiences**.

DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR FUTURE CAREERS

Describe how the business advisory council plans to **Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers** for the 2026-2027 school year.

- Describe the plan, including initiatives, projects, or events. Include specific districts, number of students and grade bands impacted by initiative(s), and list all businesses involved.
- Use the template as a guide to list all initiatives, projects, and events used to develop professional skills for future careers (include business input in curriculum alignment with skills needed for in-demand professions, educator engagement and development, employers' involvement in classrooms, etc.). Be sure to include existing programs and how they will be sustained and scaled.
- When describing initiatives, please connect them to previous initiatives so that the Department can see the progression of the business advisory council from year to year.

Quality Practice: Developing Professional Skills for Future Careers

Initiative 1: The Northeast Ohio Career Pathways Support Network – Career Exploration and CTE Expansion

Describe, in detail, the plan associated with implementing this quality practice.

The NEO BAC actively supports the work of the Northeast Ohio Career Pathways Support Network (CPSN), which provides a 14-county regional structure for expanding career-connected learning and middle grades career-technical education. In particular, through BAC partnerships with TeamNEO, Geauga Growth Partnership, ConxusNEO, Greater Cleveland Works, Ohio Means Jobs and other workforce development organizations, the BAC provides members with real-time understanding of the labor needs within our region, which clearly have been identified as 1) the need to provide earlier career awareness and exploration among our students, as well as 2) the need to improve and expand career technical education and work-based learning opportunities for the developing talent pipeline.

The BAC supports the four CPSN areas of work: **Middle Grades CTE Expansion; Advising, Mentoring and Navigating; Workforce Alignment and Employer Partnerships; and Instructor and Administrator Supports.** BAC members directly support districts by engagement in the CPSN subcommittees that are designing regional models, resources, and supports for **middle grades (7-10) CTE expansion** through providing:

- Focused professional development for instructors and administrations about the newly-required foundational VM curriculum for grade 7 and 8 students through webinars and workshops;
- “Deep dives” for CTE-26 training for applications with reviewers, CTPDs, and district representatives;
- Quarterly Networking meetings for School Counselors, Career Leaders, CTE Educators
- CPSN Career Consultants’ training to assist administrators and educators to develop connections and transitions from middle school career awareness and experiences to preparatory academic high school pathways and CTE programs, with those at Career Technical Planning Districts (CTPDs) and at Career Centers, leading to post-secondary education and career opportunities. This effort supports all students with targeted supports for those with special needs.

In support of **career exploration and expansion of the talent pipeline**, the BAC partners with **businesses and workforce sector partners** who help inform pathway development and provide insight into emerging workforce needs through:

- Focus groups engaging educator and business representatives to discuss workforce issues and create curriculum (e.g., healthcare focus group resulting in 6-district healthcare workforce pilot);
- Career sector panels representing in-demand occupations for our region—manufacturing and logistics (May 2026); healthcare (Sept., 2026); construction (Feb., 2027);
- BAC Network meetings about leading edge industries (Biotechnology, Advanced Air Mobility)
- STEM student learning projects (Summer and Fall, 2026)
- New models for education and workforce (e.g., JobsOhio Earn and Learn Initiative, Nov. 2026)
- Career Connected Learning Framework Rollout (Oct. 2026)
- Educator and Student Business Bootcamps (Summer 2026; Summer 2027)

By offering such informational and experiential opportunities, the BAC **raises awareness and exploration** about the local labor market, industries and businesses in our region, career opportunities and associated education and employment requirements, and business partner opportunities for job

shadowing, simulations, internships, and work-based learning. As students explore these opportunities, they will better understand about businesses and local labor market needs, available career technical opportunities, skills development, and how best to plan and navigate academic and career opportunities for future growth.

The CPSN and CTE Expansion initiative will continue the work begun in 2025–2026 and expands the connections between K–12 education, career-technical education, postsecondary education, and employers within the broader Northeast Ohio CPSN region that includes 32 Career Technical Planning Districts, 13 JVSDs, 9 Career Compacts, 10 Comprehensive CTPDs, 15 technical centers, 9 public colleges and universities, 13 ESCs, and 24 BACs.

List all participating school districts. What percentage of students within the business advisory council will be impacted by this initiative?

The initiative will be available to our 48 district and school members of the BAC. Additionally, it will include participating districts within the broader Northeast Ohio CPSN region, with ESCNEO BAC member districts leading and participating in CPSN initiatives as appropriate.

Student impact: The 2026 Joint Statement does not establish a specific 2026–2027 student participation number. Rather, the BAC will establish the number of participating districts and students as districts identify their implementation plans.

During 2025–2026, the regional CPSN initiative involved a broad 14-county network including 172 public school districts and numerous CTE, postsecondary, and community partners.

List all businesses and specify industries involved. What role does business play in implementation?

Business and industry partners will be engaged through the BAC, Business-Industry Leader Teams (BILTs), employer partnerships, career pathway development, and CPSN Workforce Alignment and Employer Partnerships activities.

Industries represented in existing BAC partnerships include **healthcare, advanced manufacturing, information technology, construction, transportation/logistics, agriculture, life sciences, government/public service, and other in-demand sectors.**

Businesses will provide information regarding workforce needs, technical and professional skills, career pathways, credentials, work-based learning opportunities, and emerging occupations. They may also participate in employer panels, pathway development, classroom activities, site visits, work-based learning, educator professional learning, and student-focused initiatives.

How does this initiative help support or teach relevant, in-demand technical and professional skills for students and educators?

The initiative connects career exploration and CTE programming to actual workforce expectations. Students will have opportunities to understand career pathways, technical skills, professional skills, credentials, and postsecondary options.

Educators and administrators will receive support in understanding CTE curriculum requirements, CTE pathways, labor-market needs, pathways design, industry-recognized credentials (IRCs), IRCs approval processes, pre-apprenticeships, and connections between middle grades exploration and high school

programs of study. This builds upon the 2025–2026 CPSN work supporting districts in developing new middle grades career-connected courses aligned to high school and postsecondary pathways.

***What skills gap or talent pipeline challenge does this initiative address to help your area/region?
What data supports the identified skill gap or pipeline challenge?***

The initiative addresses the need to create stronger connections between students' early career awareness and the education and training required for in-demand occupations. It also addresses the challenge of ensuring that educators and school leaders understand current workforce needs and can translate those needs into meaningful career-connected learning and CTE pathways. This initiative provides training for educators in the existing and new IRCs application and approval processes. It provides training for students with the new Career Connected Learning Framework supporting career awareness, exploration, preparation, and participation.

The 2026 Joint Statement identifies the complexity of designing middle grades CTE pathways that connect to high school and higher education, while also strategically engaging business, nonprofit, and higher education partners.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

The regional approach provides opportunities to make career exploration and pathway development more accessible to students with diverse learning needs. Business and education partners can help identify essential workplace skills and authentic career experiences that can be incorporated into individualized career planning. The CPSN Initiative specifically supports students pursuing alternative high school graduation pathways by providing targeted support by CPSN Career Consultants for those with special needs.

Through collaboration among educators, employers, career centers, workforce partners, and postsecondary institutions, students with disabilities can be connected to career exploration, workplace expectations, credentials, work-based learning, and career pathways appropriate to their interests and strengths.

Quality Practice: Developing Professional Skills for Future Careers

Initiative 2: Skills for Success – Creating Your Career Toolbox

Describe, in detail, the plan associated with implementing this quality practice.

The NEO BAC will continue to expand the **Skills for Success: Creating Your Career Toolbox** initiative, which focuses on executive functioning and professional skills necessary for academic and career success for all students, as well as adult learners. As our BAC coordinates the ODEW Career Connected Learning Framework through our CPSN network with local and regional clusters, the Skills for Success Toolbox will provide strategies and supports for implementing components of the Framework.

The Skills for Success initiative was piloted with 20 teachers, who assisted in providing feedback about the toolbox components, and who then launched the skills toolbox to 12 districts representing five Northeast Ohio counties. Additionally, Skills for Success continues to be included in our Educator Business Bootcamps as a valuable resource for general education teachers who are required to integrate career-focused information and training within their curriculum, but who typically have had no background or prior learning about career skills development.

The toolkit is housed on the BAC website and is available to all Northeast Ohio districts. The BAC will sustain the resource and expand awareness and use among districts, educators, students, and adult learners. It has particular relevance now that the new Career Connected Learning Framework has been introduced by ODEW as a tool complementary to the new Framework with a focus on developing the interests and aptitudes of students and/or adult learners. It is particularly relevant in identifying and exploring students' goals, understanding about careers and required education or training, and providing practical steps to acquire the knowledge and skills required for the academic and career development necessary for current and future success. Assessments, Journal pages, and skills worksheet elements of the toolkit provide hands-on application of strategies highlighted in Skills for Success providing students with tangible resources as they learn and grow their skills.

The initiative will continue to address professional skills such as organization, planning, communication, self-management, problem-solving, and other skills necessary for successful transition to college, career, and adult workforce settings.

List all participating school districts. What percentage of students within the business advisory council will be impacted by this initiative?

The toolkit is available to all Northeast Ohio districts. The initial implementation involved educators and their students in **12 districts across five counties**. It also has been introduced via our ESC's Educator Business Bootcamps to an **additional 35 educators representing 19 districts** from Cuyahoga, Lake, and other counties who are using the toolbox with their students.

The ESC's BAC presents the ODEW Career Connected Learning Rollout on Oct. 22, 2026, with registration among member and regional districts, and will be followed by in-person and virtual sessions focused on specific components of the Framework. As a complementary resource, Skills for Success will supplement the Framework resources. The specific 2026–2027 number of districts and students implementing the resource will be determined as districts identify their professional-skills priorities.

List all businesses and specify industries involved. What role does business play in implementation?

Business and industry input will continue to inform the professional skills emphasized through the initiative. As we engage them in our BAC's focus groups and focused industry sector panels, notably for

in-demand sectors in our region such as healthcare, manufacturing, construction, etc., BAC business partners help our members to identify and clarify the professional behaviors and workplace expectations needed for successful employment within their businesses and the industry sectors.

How does this initiative help support or teach relevant, in-demand technical and professional skills for students and educators?

Because we regularly engage with our region's industry sector partners and learn from them about most relevant career training and skills required for current and future careers, the Skills for Success toolkit continues to develop as a dynamic resource that responds to current business skills needs while providing a tool with relevance for students preparing for work today and occupations of the future. This initiative helps students and educators develop practical, transferable professional skills that are applicable across industries. It recognizes that successful career preparation requires more than technical knowledge and requires time and resources to develop those essential skills that include executive functioning, communication, organization, self-management, collaboration, and problem-solving.

The initiative also gives educators a common resource that can be integrated into classroom instruction, advising, career exploration, and transition activities. It is equally useful and engaging for educators seeking to integrate skills development as a component of their general education classes as it can be for career development educators or school counselors focused on specific professional skills development for students.

What skills gap or talent pipeline challenge does this initiative address to help your area/region? What data supports the identified skill gap or pipeline challenge?

The initiative addresses the need for students and adult learners to develop the professional and executive-functioning skills expected in academic and workplace settings. It provides a common framework that can be used across districts and learner populations. Because it focuses on skills that can be taught and integrated at different grade levels or different levels of student understanding, whether individually or collectively, it complements the components of the new Career Connected Learning Framework along the continuum of career awareness, exploration, preparation, and participation. Skills for Success modules for teaching and learning can address each of these framework components as required for student supports.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

The Skills for Success initiative design intentionally has addressed diverse learner populations, including students in classrooms, students at risk or in transition, as well as adult learners.

With its focus on executive functioning and transferable professional skills, the Skills for Success Toolkit provides particular opportunities to support students who may need additional assistance with organization, communication, self-management, planning, transitions, and navigating workplace expectations. Our business partners, particularly those who employ individuals with disabilities or special needs, have identified these qualities and skills as those most important beyond technical skills need for employment. As ODEW's Career Pathways Support Network and Career Connected Learning Framework are rolled out during this academic year, it is supported both by the BAC and by Career Connected Learning Consultants with particular expertise in serving students in transition and those with special needs.

The NEO BAC will expand and deepen business, industry, workforce, higher education, community, and education partnerships by using existing networks and Business-Industry Leader Teams (BILTs) to identify employer needs and connect those needs to career pathways, credentials, professional learning, and work-based learning.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Describe how the business advisory council plans to **Build Partnerships** for the 2026-2027 school year.

- Describe how the business advisory council will grow partnerships in alignment with in-demand careers in the region with representation from industry, workforce boards, port authority, OhioMeansJobs Centers, industry sector partnerships, higher education, etc.
- Use the template as a guide to list all initiatives, projects, and events used to build partnerships. Include information on partnership alignment, effectiveness, and initiatives spearheaded by these collaborations. Demonstrate cooperative efforts between districts and partners to benefit students and businesses.
- When describing initiatives, please connect them to previous initiatives so that the Department can see the progression of the business advisory council from year to year.

QUALITY PRACTICE: BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

INITIATIVE 1: Business – Industry Leadership Teams (BILTs) – Expanding Industry Partnerships

Describe in detail how the business advisory council plans to strengthen and expand business and industry representation and partnerships. Describe how the council identifies new industry and business partners to address the talent pipeline business skills gap.

The NEO BAC will strengthen and expand its **Business-Industry Leader Teams (BILTs)** by intentionally recruiting businesses and industry representatives from high-demand and emerging sectors. The BAC partners with TeamNEO, ConxusNEO, Geauga Growth Partnership, AWT, MAGNET, and other workforce development organizations to gather data about in-demand and emerging industry sectors, and to identify business partners. The BAC will use its existing network of more than 40 business and community partners as a foundation for expanding representation within the in-demand industry sectors in our region.

BILTs will provide a structured mechanism for businesses to work directly with educators and school leaders to identify workforce needs, review career pathways, identify essential technical and professional skills, and create opportunities for students and educators to interact with industry. For the introduction and expansion of businesses with the BILTs ecosystem, the BAC provides information sessions for businesses about the mission and goals of ESCs and BACs, invites business representatives to BAC Network meetings about specific workforce sectors or cutting-edge occupations, connects district representatives directly with business leaders, hosts focus groups and panel discussions to provide deeper understanding and insights into the needs of businesses and to discuss how educators and other stakeholders may support curricular changes for student preparation for in-demand jobs.

The BAC will particularly expand representation in sectors identified through regional workforce needs and existing BAC activities, including **healthcare, advanced manufacturing, information technology, construction, transportation/logistics, agriculture, and life sciences**. As the Career Pathways Support Network emphasizes middle school students' career foundations and engagement, the BAC is providing focused panel discussions with industry sector experts not only with overviews of sector workforce data, but by providing deep discussions with real time Q&A sessions to understand more fully the needs and capacities of businesses to respond to changing education and workforce environments. As BAC members understand more fully about data-informed and changing workforce needs, districts are considering adjusting existing pathways curricula and/or anticipating new opportunities. For example, a Sept. 2026 healthcare sector panel discussion introduced the Youth Behavior & Mental Health pathway and a peer certificate opportunity to participants.

The 2025–2026 BAC established BILTs and employer focus groups to gather relevant workforce information. A healthcare focus group resulted in the **Northeast Ohio Pathways in Health Careers Initiative**, involving educators and students from six districts, YouScience assessments and resources, healthcare providers from Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth, University Hospitals, and Case Western Reserve University and Lakeland Community College. Districts continue to collaborate with healthcare providers introduced during the pilot for the benefit of their students' interest and preparation for healthcare careers.

How will the council draw feedback from business and industry to inform decision-making?

The BAC will identify new partners through existing business networks, economic development organizations, industry associations, higher education partners, workforce organizations, career centers, employer referrals, and recommendations from current BAC members. Our affiliations with public sector partners, such as Greater Cleveland Works affiliated with OhioMeans Jobs and county offices, Urban League, Healthcare Sector Partners, Manufacturing Sector Partners MAGNET and AWT, ClevelandBuilds, and others allow us to call upon industry experts to inform our members about industry opportunities and to advise about the talent gap and means of response. We attend information meetings hosted by TeamNEO, Geauga Growth Partnership, and others to gather information and data, but also to meet and network with new industry and business partners. Via our BAC's Educator Business Bootcamp, we reach out to local industries to provide both information and site visits to help us understand the role of the businesses supporting industry sectors in our region and the talent gaps they face. Our BAC hosts businesses for focus groups, panel discussions, BAC Network meetings, Educator Business Bootcamps, etc. thus keeping our members informed and connected to business partners.

Priority will be given to industries experiencing workforce demand (in our region: healthcare, manufacturing, construction), industries with emerging occupations and technologies (e.g., biotechnology, advanced air mobility, EV battery production), and industries where stronger K–12 connections can expand career awareness, pathway participation, credentials, apprenticeships, and work-based learning. In November, the BAC will host representatives from the new JobsOhio Earn and Learn initiative with models of the business/university collaboration leading to both workforce opportunities and higher education for participants.

What is the business advisory council's plan to utilize feedback and guidance from business and industry partners to increase skills for students and educators?

Employer feedback will be translated into career pathway recommendations, curriculum connections, professional learning, credentials, pre-apprenticeship opportunities, work-based learning, career exploration activities, and educator experiences. Our BAC has experience designing and implementing strong sector partnerships (e.g., the collaborative **Northeast Ohio Pathways in Health Careers Initiative**) and resources (**Skills for Success — Creating Your Career Toolbox**).

For educators, employer feedback will help teachers understand workplace expectations and current technologies. For students, the information will help schools align career exploration and pathway opportunities with actual employment opportunities.

How will identified industry partners co-develop relevant in-demand skills for students and educators?

Industry partners will participate in pathway development, employer panels, classroom activities, site visits, work-based learning, educator externships and bootcamps, credential development, and discussions regarding technical and professional skills.

The BAC's existing Teacher Work-Based Learning Camps demonstrate this model by bringing educators together with economic development partners and business leaders to learn about employer needs and the content and skills required for entry-level employment and careers. Additionally, business and industry-sector partners and higher education representatives are participating in the Career Pathways Support Network subcommittees that are exploring workforce data and implementing responses to the talent gap.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

BILT partners can help identify workplace skills that are transferable across occupations and identify career experiences that can be adapted for students with disabilities. Employers can provide exposure to workplace expectations, career options, job-shadowing, work-based learning, and entry-level career opportunities.

The BAC will encourage partners to consider accessibility, appropriate accommodations, varied pathways into employment, and opportunities for students with disabilities to demonstrate competencies in authentic workplace settings. During our focus groups, panel discussions, BAC Network meetings, and individual meetings with business representatives, a point of discussion is how the respective businesses respond to individuals with special needs, and the preparation and skill sets supporting their employment opportunities.

Note: Please add space/rows as needed.

QUALITY PRACTICE: BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

INITIATIVE 2: CTE Alignment and Pathway Development – Pre-Apprenticeships, Credentials and Career Pathways

Describe in detail how the business advisory council plans to strengthen and expand business and industry representation and partnerships. Describe how the council identifies new industry and business partners to address the talent pipeline business skills gap.

The BAC will continue its regional CTE alignment work connecting districts with employers, career centers, postsecondary institutions, workforce organizations, and industry partners to develop and expand career pathways. By means of understanding labor market data in our region, we have identified those in-demand industries seeking prepared employees. Through our BAC, we engage with the industry sector partnerships, workforce development boards, JobsOhio, OhioMeansJobs and business professional associations that lead and strengthen workforce development within our region.

During 2025–2026, regional informational sessions hosted by the BAC connected more than 40 Northeast Ohio districts with employers and agencies regarding pre-apprenticeships, OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seals, pathways, and certificates in high-demand areas such as healthcare and information technology. During a September, 2026 Pre-Apprenticeship Information Workshop, the BAC hosted more than 40 participants representing districts, CTPDs, and businesses throughout the region. The BAC will build upon these relationships by identifying additional employers willing to support pre-apprenticeships, credentials, career exploration, work-based learning, and pathway development.

What is the BAC plan to utilize insight from business and industry to increase skills for students and educators?

The BAC will use employer input to identify the technical and professional skills required for entry-level employment and communicate those needs to educators, CTE leaders, counselors, and district administrators. With the rollout of the new Industry-Recognized Credentials, both standalone and bundled, ODEW and its partnering committee representing businesses and industries statewide, have identified the highest valued credentials by businesses, and also have provided a weighted evaluation process that analyzes occupational demand, credential demand, education mobility, and career outcomes. This evaluation system reflects insights from the businesses and agencies involved in identifying both technical and transferable professional skills required for valued credentials within industry sectors that are also valued in other occupations.

Feedback from our local and regional business partners will inform curriculum priorities, credential selection, pathway design, pre-apprenticeship development, work-based learning experiences, and educator professional learning.

How will identified expanded industries develop relevant in-demand skills for students and educators?

Expanded industry partners will provide authentic examples of workplace expectations, current technologies, equipment, career pathways, credentials, and technical skills required for entry level employees. Employers may provide speakers, site visits, demonstrations, job shadows, internships, work-based learning, and professional learning for educators.

The BAC's CTE Network already brings together CTPD and Tech Prep leaders to address pathway development, labor-market data, pre-apprenticeships, credentials, and educator recruitment and licensing. With the addition of Career Connected Learning Consultants who provide knowledge and expertise related to strategies for students in transition and special needs, the BAC can provide expert advice and interaction with businesses learning about and implementing workplace opportunities for

individuals with special needs.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

Expanded industry partners will provide authentic examples of workplace expectations, current technologies, equipment, career pathways, credentials, and technical skills required for entry level employees. Employers may provide speakers, site visits, demonstrations, job shadows, internships, work-based learning, and professional learning for educators.

The BAC's CTE Network already brings together CTPD and Tech Prep leaders to address pathway development, labor-market data, pre-apprenticeships, credentials, and educator recruitment and licensing. With the addition of Career Connected Learning Consultants who provide knowledge and expertise related to strategies for students in transition and special needs, the BAC can provide expert advice and interaction with businesses learning about and implementing workplace opportunities for individuals with special needs.

Note: Please add space/rows as needed.

The NEO BAC will coordinate experiences by connecting students and educators to employers and community partners through work-based learning, career exploration, career fairs, job shadows, internships, employer speakers, site visits, and other authentic career experiences.

COORDINATE EXPERIENCES

Describe how the business advisory council plans to **Coordinate Experiences** for the 2026- 2027 school year.

- Describe how the business advisory council will connect students to experiential learning to show competency of skills learned through hands-on demonstration and experiences (for example, internships, problem-based learning, state-approved [pre- apprenticeships](#), and registered state [apprenticeships](#)).
- When describing initiatives, please connect them to previous initiatives so that the Department can see the progression of the business advisory council from year to year.

QUALITY PRACTICE: COORDINATE EXPERIENCES

Initiative 1: Regional Work-Based Learning Expansion

Describe in detail how the business advisory council plans to increase [Work-Based Learning](#) for students.

The NEO BAC will continue its partnership with the **Greater Cleveland Career Consortium (GCCC)** to expand coordinated career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for students in grades 6–12.

The GCCC uses a collective-impact approach to career exploration and readiness and provides a comprehensive career exploration curriculum, in-school lessons, career advising, business speakers, job shadows, and work-based learning. The GCCC approach and the Career Connected Learning Framework align with identified components of career awareness, exploration, preparation, and participation. The BAC serves as the conduit of information and exchange between the two approaches, providing guidance for pathways content and skills development.

During 2025–2026, **8,000 students in 11 BAC districts** participated in more than **150 in-school lessons and 350 work-based learning opportunities** provided through **140 employer partners**. Students in middle grades typically engage with businesses through speakers and business site visits. In high school, students have opportunities to learn via job shadowing, internships, or simulations, as well as part-time employment. Participating businesses with work-based learning opportunities represent the in demand workforce sectors in Northeast Ohio, including leading businesses in manufacturing (Sherwin Williams, Lincoln Electric, Grayter, MAGNET, etc.), healthcare (Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals System, MetroHealth, etc.), construction (Turner, Electrical Union #38, Cleveland Builds, etc.), as well as government/municipal entities, higher education and others.

The BAC will use this established infrastructure and identified business relationships to expand employer participation and increase opportunities for students to experience authentic workplaces and to apply academic and professional skills beyond the original GCCC structure. As 2026-27 begins, the ESCNEO will CGCCC districts, stakeholders and funding organizations to review and bridge the organizations into an updated collective ecostructure.

<i>List all school districts and number of students that will benefit from this initiative.</i> The initiative currently serves 11 BAC districts and approximately 8,000 students through the GCCC model. The BAC will work with participating districts to sustain and expand these opportunities during 2026–2027.
<i>List all businesses and industries that will be involved.</i> The initiative includes approximately 140 employer partners representing multiple Northeast Ohio industries. Business partners participate by providing work-based learning opportunities, career speakers, job shadows, workplace experiences, and information about career pathways and employment.
<i>What role does business play in planning and implementation?</i> Businesses and non-profits supporting workforce development serve as direct partners in designing and delivering authentic career experiences. Employers provide information about career opportunities and workplace expectations and create opportunities for students to observe, explore, and practice skills in real-world settings. Businesses provide speakers in schools, volunteers in classrooms for project-based learning, and provide professional advice through a GCCC Business Providers Network that meets quarterly.

QUALITY PRACTICE: COORDINATE EXPERIENCES

Initiative 2: Student Driver's Education Training Initiative

What is the Initiative?

The ESC BAC is collaborating with The George Gund Foundation to pilot and coordinate Driver's Education Training for Say Yes Cleveland students who are enrolled at Cuyahoga Community College Metro Campus, and who are impacted by the 2025 Ohio law requiring residents aged 18-20 to complete driver's training requirements to become eligible to take the road test and earn the Ohio driver's license. This initiative is independent from Drive to Succeed Ohio scholarships.

What is the Purpose of the Initiative?

As of September 30, 2025, all Ohio residents aged 18, 19, and 20 must complete the state's full Class D driver training before they can take the road test and get a license. Previously, this was required only for those ages 16 and 17 years. As a result of the new requirements, which involve considerable expense of \$500+, the Gund Foundation is collaborating with the ESC's BAC to pilot and coordinate driver's education training for students 18-20 currently enrolled as Say Yes Cleveland students at Cuyahoga Community College, who are interested in completing the driver's training classroom education and pursuing behind the wheel training in preparation for the Ohio driver's license test. This new initiative responds to the need to prepare youth under 21 years of age with support for driver's training.

What is the BAC plan to utilize insights from business and industry to increase skills for students and educators?

The Driver's Education Training initiative provides an opportunity for students to gain a skill of value for their current educational and employment opportunities, as well as for their futures. Many students, especially those within urban areas where in-demand, high paying employment opportunities are limited, are denied opportunities for employment both due to a lack of transportation and/or of having an Ohio driving license, which often is a workforce requirement. Collaborations between employers and transit systems have been tried to support employment opportunities with limited success thus far. The Governor's office recently announced support for improving urban and rural transit systems, and also to improve transportation options and mobility for Ohioans. These programs speak to the importance of driver's training as a skill and tool for educational and workforce opportunity for student participants. With the driver's training initiative, the ESC is collaborating with Professional Driving School, a leading driver's training agency in our region, to provide both 24 hours of classroom content as required by law, and 8 hours of practical skills training for behind the wheel driving. Additionally, students participate in 50 hours of driving, of which 10 hours are night time driving, with a licensed driver that is logged and notarized, before students are eligible to take the driving skills test and earn their Ohio driver's license.

How will identified expanded industries develop relevant in-demand skills for students and educators?

Cleveland, Akron, and Canton each have large transportation and logistics sectors requiring Ohio drivers licenses for employment. Related occupations include delivery drivers, ride share drivers, medical and non-emergency transport. Ohio Labor Market data show statewide need for heavy/tractor trailer drivers (95,523), light truck driver (48,377), drivers/sales workers (131,620). Students obtaining their driver's training through this initiative may be eligible to become employed with businesses in our region that have substantial need for driving and transportation. As we partner with industries in the construction trades, for example, we know that driver's licenses are required for employment. The BAC meets with business partners and has considerable outreach through its members who are knowledgeable about employment requirements of partners. Along with the technical driving requirement, the ESC BAC

provides skills training through its Skills for Success Toolkit to develop the executive functioning skills important for employment.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

The Ohio Traffic Safety Office licenses and regulates driver training for persons with disabilities. Depending on individual circumstances related to cognitive and/or physical needs and related to diagnosis, students with disabilities may enroll in an Ohio-approved driver training program for persons with disabilities, complete required driving hours under supervision, which may be adapted to individual needs. Our initiative has discussed options with MetroHealth, which offers adaptive driver's training and vehicles for those with disabilities.

How will this initiative coordinate experiences across the region?

The initiative currently is in its pilot phase. BAC representatives meet regularly with and collaborate with Gund Foundation program officer, Cuyahoga Community College representatives for legal and facilities requirements, College Now advisors who assist Say Yes Cleveland Students at CCC, and representatives from Professional Driving School. The BAC has created a publicity flyer and student requirements document for transparency about requirements and expectations for driver's training, which is an activity requiring student maturity. We anticipate this initiative is a model for others across the region.

What is the anticipated impact?

In the first student cohort (July-Sept., 026), the driver's training program served **17 students**, who have successfully completed all requirements of classroom training and behind the wheel driving. We are recruiting for the second cohort of students during Fall 2026. We anticipate a Spring 2027 cohort. Numbers of participating students impacted will be available when the cohorts complete training. Beyond the mere number of students, the driver's training outcome has impact for the families to which students belong while providing the skills and driver's license as a tool of potential benefit for the participant's future life and careers.

QUALITY PRACTICE: COORDINATE EXPERIENCES

Initiative 3: Northeast Ohio Career-Connected Learning Asset Inventory Mapping

What is the Initiative?

The ESCNEO BAC will develop and maintain a regional **Career-Connected Learning Asset Inventory Map** that identifies businesses, industries, postsecondary institutions, workforce organizations, community-based organizations, training providers, and other partners offering career-connected learning opportunities. The inventory will organize existing regional assets and opportunities so districts and schools can more easily identify and connect with partners aligned to student career interests, workforce needs, and local and regional career pathways.

What is the Purpose of the Initiative?

The purpose is to create a shared understanding of the career-connected learning resources available throughout Northeast Ohio and strengthen the coordination of experiences for students and educators. The asset inventory will help identify existing partnerships, opportunities to expand access, gaps in services or geographic coverage, and potential connections between education and industry.

What is the BAC plan to utilize insights from business and industry to increase skills for students and educators?

The BAC will engage business and industry partners in identifying the skills, experiences, credentials, and career exposure opportunities that are most relevant to current and emerging workforce needs. These insights will inform the development and organization of the asset inventory and help districts identify partners that can provide authentic experiences such as work-based learning, job shadowing, career mentoring, industry tours, internships, pre-apprenticeships, and professional skills development. Business and industry feedback will also help identify opportunities where educators can strengthen their understanding of workplace expectations and industry-aligned skills.

How will identified expanded industries develop relevant in-demand skills for students and educators?

The asset inventory will intentionally identify partners from high-demand and emerging industries and connect them with schools and districts seeking career-connected learning opportunities. Through these connections, students can gain exposure to industry expectations and develop technical, employability, and professional skills aligned to regional workforce needs. Educators will also have opportunities to engage directly with industry partners to better understand current workplace practices, technologies, skills, and career pathways and incorporate those insights into classroom instruction and career advising.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

The asset inventory will identify partners and opportunities that can support inclusive career-connected learning experiences for students with disabilities. The BAC will work with employers, districts, workforce partners, and community organizations to identify opportunities for career exploration, work-based learning, mentoring, internships, and other experiences that can be adapted to meet diverse student needs. Mapping these resources will make it easier for educators and support teams to identify appropriate partners and expand access to meaningful career experiences for students with disabilities.

How will this initiative coordinate experiences across the region?

The asset inventory will serve as a shared regional resource that helps districts move from identifying individual opportunities to strategically coordinating experiences. ESCNEO will use the inventory to connect districts with appropriate business and industry partners, identify opportunities that can be expanded across multiple districts, reduce duplication of outreach, and identify areas where additional partnerships are needed. The inventory will also support the BAC's broader efforts to strengthen regional alignment among education, business, workforce, and community partners.

What is the anticipated impact?

The initiative will create a more connected regional ecosystem in which districts and schools can more efficiently access business and industry partners and coordinate meaningful career-connected learning experiences. By making regional assets more visible and accessible, the BAC can expand participation, strengthen employer engagement, increase exposure to in-demand careers, and support more equitable access to career experiences across Northeast Ohio.

Evidence/Measures of Progress

- Number and type of regional assets identified and mapped
- Number of business and industry partners represented
- Number of districts/schools accessing or utilizing the inventory
- Number and type of career-connected learning opportunities identified
- New or expanded education-business partnerships resulting from the inventory
- Representation of high-demand and emerging industries
- Opportunities identified for students with disabilities and other student populations
- Gaps in geographic, industry, or career pathway representation identified and addressed

Overall Progression From 2025–2026 to 2026–2027

The 2026–2027 BAC Plan represents a progression from **building a regional network of relationships to intentionally leveraging those relationships to create scalable career pathways and experiences.**

In 2025–2026, the BAC expanded its foundation through:

- Business-Industry Leader Teams and employer focus groups;
- Career Pathways Support Network regional coordination;
- CTE pathway and pre-apprenticeship support;
- Teacher Work-Based Learning Camps;
- Greater Cleveland Career Consortium work-based learning;
- E4ME career exploration;
- Adult Education Providers Network;
- Career Leaders and CTE Networks;
- Skills for Success professional-skills development; and
- partnerships with healthcare, manufacturing, technology, construction, higher education, workforce, and community organizations.

In 2026–2027, the BAC will move these efforts toward **greater alignment, expansion, and coordination** by using business input to strengthen career pathways, expanding BILTs and industry representation, increasing work-based learning opportunities, and connecting students and educators to the technical and professional skills required for future careers.

This approach reflects the BAC's established vision of uniting K–12 education, businesses, community organizations, higher education, professional organizations, and individuals committed to building a stronger Northeast Ohio workforce.

Ohio Business-Education Leader Awards for Excellent Business Advisory Councils Overview

The Ohio Business-Education Leader Awards for Excellent Business Advisory Councils recognize educators, business partners, staff, schools, educational service centers, joint vocational school districts, and communities who come together to create dynamic, career- focused learning environments for students.

The awards recognize business advisory councils that demonstrate excellence in ensuring Ohio students are prepared for successful career paths, including college, industry credentials, apprenticeships, military enlistment, or any combination of these. Business advisory councils that choose to pursue this recognition will be considered for awards of excellence and star ratings.

Councils are encouraged to submit the award addendum and a link to the joint statement for the 2024-2025 school year to be considered as a high-performing council for the Business- Education Leader Award for Excellent Business Advisory Councils.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- **Enrollment Eligibility:** Business advisory councils must submit their annual plans, joint statement, and required addendum using the approved template from the Department’s Microsoft Forms by **September 30, 2025**.
- **Data Considerations:** Data metrics may include, but are not limited to, trend data on previous school-year graduation cohorts earning the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal, completing work-based learning, and earning industry-recognized credentials.
- **Conditional Selection:** The award is subject to the Department’s review of the accuracy of the business advisory council’s submission. The award review committee will consist of Department staff and business and education leaders.

AWARDS

In addition to a star rating, state business and education leaders will select one or more councils from the following award categories based on the submission materials provided:

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

QUALITY PRACTICES

The business advisory council award is based on the implementation of the following quality practices. During the recognition year, the business advisory council, in consultation with the local governing board, should:

1. **Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers** – Work together to define key professional skills needed for the future job market. Develop a curriculum that instills these skills while advising on changes in the economy and job market.
2. **Build Partnerships** – Develop and increase collaborative relationships among businesses, labor, and education personnel. Partnerships should align with in-demand industries in the region.
3. **Coordinate Experiences** – Create environments that allow students to demonstrate proficiency in critical professional and specialized skills that will aid in future employment.

In addition to the addendum to the business advisory council plan, the following information is requested for the submitting organization to qualify:

1. ESC of Northeast Ohio's Business Advisory Council (BAC)

2. [A link to the previous year's joint statement](#) or a copy of the joint statement.
 - Local data measuring the implementation of the quality practices for the prior school year. Data may be obtained from the school counselor, administration, career navigators, work-based learning tracker, data identified by district, or other sources.
 - If the business advisory council represents multiple school districts, specify initiatives and objectives for each district, and provide data for each district served.
 - Responses to the following questions:

The 2026 Joint Statement documents the ESCNEO-BAC's 2025–2026 accomplishments, partnerships, networks, and progress implementing the three ODEW quality practices. The Joint Statement also documents that the ESCNEO-BAC received the 2026 Business-Education Leader Award for Excellent Business Advisory Council's three-star recognition

3. How has the business advisory council helped students prepare and successfully enter the local workforce?

The ESCNEO Business Advisory Council serves as a regional conduit connecting K–12 education, business and industry, workforce organizations, higher education, career centers, community organizations, and other partners to strengthen career readiness and workforce development. The BAC represents 46 Northeast Ohio school districts and two independent high schools across five counties and works through regional networks, business partnerships, career pathway initiatives, and coordinated career-connected learning opportunities.

During 2025–2026, the BAC continued to move beyond individual career-readiness activities toward a more coordinated regional workforce-development ecosystem. Major efforts included the Career Pathways Support Network, Business-Industry Leader Teams (BILTs), CTE pathway development, pre-apprenticeship and credential discussions, the Greater Cleveland Career Consortium (GCCC), professional learning for educators, and partnerships with healthcare, manufacturing, technology, construction, higher education, workforce, and community organizations.

For 2026–2027, the BAC plan builds on this foundation through three interconnected quality practices: **Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers, Build Partnerships, and Coordinate Experiences**. The plan specifically calls for stronger connections among K–12 education, CTE, postsecondary education, employers, and workforce needs.

a. Include any curriculum changes influenced by the BAC

The BAC has influenced curriculum and pathway development by bringing educators and employers together to identify workforce needs and translate those needs into career pathways, credentials, CTE programs, and professional skills.

One example is **Berkshire Local Schools' Workforce Development Campus**, which includes Agribusiness, Production Robotics, and Mechanical Technology pathways. The Mechanical Technology program was developed with an employment partner and integrates advanced manufacturing technologies and industry-recognized credentials. The model also introduces students to pathways earlier through a sophomore exploration course and connects those experiences to future work-based learning.

The BAC also supported the development of the **Northeast Ohio Pathways in Health Careers Initiative** following a healthcare employer/educator focus group. The initiative brings together districts, YouScience, regional healthcare providers, and Lakeland Community College to increase student awareness of health careers and support the development of pathways, credentials, certificates, and work-based learning opportunities.

The 2026 Joint Statement also documents that ESCNEO's regional CTE support resulted in **at least six new pathways being added for FY26**.

b. Include how the Business Advisory Council is preparing student with both technical and professional skills needed to address local business needs.

The BAC prepares students for both technical and professional skills by connecting them with actual workplace expectations and by helping educators understand the skills employers identify as important.

The 2026–2027 plan emphasizes technical skills, professional skills, credentials, career pathways, pre-apprenticeships, work-based learning, and postsecondary options. Business partners contribute through pathway development, employer panels, site visits, classroom activities, work-based learning, and educator professional learning.

The BAC also continues to support **Skills for Success: Creating Your Career Toolbox**, which addresses professional skills including organization, planning, communication, self-management, problem-solving, collaboration, and other transferable skills. The toolkit was piloted with 20 teachers and launched to 12 districts across five counties.

5. How has the BAC and its members supported students in work-based learning opportunities (internships, apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship) opportunities? (Note: Career exploration activities such as job shadowing, mock interviews, and mentoring should not be included in the data)?

The ESCNEO-BAC supports work-based learning through direct programming, regional partnerships, employer engagement, career pathway development, and coordination among districts and workforce partners.

The strongest current regional example is the **Greater Cleveland Career Consortium (GCCC)**. During 2025–2026, 11 BAC districts participated in the GCCC model, reaching approximately **8,000 students through more than 150 in-school lessons and 350 work-based learning opportunities provided through approximately 140 employer partners**.

The BAC also supports internships, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, career pathway experiences, and industry-connected opportunities through career centers, CTPDs, community colleges, employers, and other regional

partners.

a. Percentage of BAC students placed in work-based learning

The 2026–2027 plan does not establish a single percentage representing all BAC students placed in work-based learning. Because the BAC represents multiple districts and work-based learning is delivered through both BAC-supported regional initiatives and individual district partnerships, the BAC is continuing to collect district-level data.

For the established GCCC model, approximately **8,000 students in 11 BAC districts** participated in the broader career-readiness model during 2025–2026, including **350 work-based learning opportunities**. The BAC will continue to collect district-level WBL participation data for 2026–2027.

The 2025 state report card data released identified that approximately 8.4% of Ohio’s Class of 2025 earned the OMJ Readiness Seal along with 250 hours of work-based learning, more than double the prior level. For the Northeast Ohio BAC, representing five counties, our average is 11.2%, significantly higher than the state’s average, with Cuyahoga, Lake, and Summit accounting for the largest numbers.

County	2025 Graduates	% Earning OMJ Seal + 250+ WBL Hours	Estimated Students
Cuyahoga	10,251	14.1%	1,449
Geauga	734	5.0%	37
Lake	2,302	10.4%	239
Portage	1,550	4.9%	76
Summit	5,031	8.3%	416
Total	19,868	11.2%	2,217

b. What are some examples of work-based learning

Examples supported through the BAC's regional network include:

- Internships
- Apprenticeships
- Pre-apprenticeships
- Structured workplace experiences
- Industry-connected projects
- Clinical experiences associated with healthcare pathways
- Work-based learning opportunities coordinated through GCCC
- Career pathway experiences connected to CTE and industry credentials
- Employer-supported experiences through career centers and CTPDs

The BAC's work also supports educators through work-based learning institutes, employer site visits, educator externships, and industry bootcamps. The 2026 Joint Statement describes the Manufacturing Teacher Bootcamp in which educators visit businesses and trade organizations and then develop classroom lessons based on their learning.

c. How many of your business partners have accepted students into work-based learning experiences?

The GCCC model currently identifies approximately **140 employer partners** participating in the regional career-connected learning infrastructure. The BAC will continue to distinguish between employers participating in career

exploration activities and those accepting students into qualifying WBL placements. One of the 2025 initiatives for the NEO BAC is to establish a baseline of number of business partners accepting students into qualifying WBL experiences in each of our BAC districts.

d. How has Work-Based Learning benefits students and employers?

Work-based learning provides students with opportunities to apply classroom learning in authentic workplace environments, develop technical and professional skills, understand employer expectations, build professional networks, and explore career pathways.

For employers, WBL provides opportunities to interact with potential future employees, communicate workforce needs to educators, influence pathway development, and help develop a stronger regional talent pipeline.

The BAC's regional approach also reduces the burden on individual districts by connecting them with employers and organizations that can provide authentic experiences.

e. What percentage of students have earned an in-demand, Industry Recognized Credential because of the the work-based learning experience with employers within the BAC?

The available BAC data documents significant regional credential attainment, including **9,622 in-demand credentials in the five-county region**. While we cannot state categorically that those credentials were earned specifically *because of* students' WBL experience with BAC employers, we do know that such a high level of credential attainment for specific industries translates into better student workforce readiness and greater on-the-job potential. The BAC will continue tracking credentials attainment, as well as district reports of their students' WBL experiences and with specific employers when possible.

Industry-Recognized Credentials — 2025

Percentage of graduates earning 12+ credential points in a single career field or a state-recognized license

Across the five counties, approximately 6,173 of 19,868 graduates—31.1%—met this credential measure.

County	2025 Graduates	% Earning 12+ Credential Points / State License	Estimated Students
Cuyahoga	10,251	30.3%	3,108
Geauga	734	33.5%	246
Lake	2,302	35.7%	821
Portage	1,550	20.7%	321
Summit	5,031	33.3%	1,677
Total	19,868	31.1%	6,173

5–7. Additional information regarding work-based learning

The BAC's work-based learning strategy is intentionally regional. Rather than operating as a single placement program, the BAC connects districts to the larger ecosystem of career centers, CTPDs, employers, higher education institutions, workforce organizations, and community partners.

The 2026–2027 plan specifically moves the BAC toward greater coordination through the **Regional Work-Based**

Learning Expansion and the **Career-Connected Learning Asset Inventory Mapping** initiative. The asset inventory will identify employers, industries, postsecondary institutions, workforce organizations, community organizations, training providers, and other partners that provide career-connected learning opportunities.

The inventory is intended to help districts identify available opportunities, reduce duplication of outreach to employers, identify gaps in geographic or industry representation, and connect students to experiences aligned with their interests and regional workforce needs.

8. How has the BAC supported mentorship programs and/or provided networking opportunities?

The ESCNEO-BAC operates through a connected web of professional learning and career-readiness networks that provide ongoing opportunities for educators, business leaders, workforce partners, and community organizations to collaborate.

The **Northeast Ohio Career Leaders Network** includes more than 60 Northeast Ohio school districts, businesses, and agencies and provides opportunities to share resources related to college and career readiness and workforce development. Business and community leaders provide information related to career fairs, pathways, credentials, and pre-apprenticeship development.

The BAC also supports mentorship and networking through GEAR UP, the Greater Cleveland Career Consortium, career fairs, employer panels, career events, and regional networking opportunities.

a. What career activities have been influenced by the BAC? (Include districts involved and data on students involved in each activity).

Examples include:

- GCCC career exploration and work-based learning opportunities serving approximately 8,000 students in 11 BAC districts.
- Career pathway development and exploration activities.
- Health career exploration and pathway activities.
- CTE and pre-apprenticeship informational sessions.
- Regional career fairs and employer panels.
- Student career camps and leadership programs.
- Career-connected learning through the Career Pathways Support Network.
- GEAR UP programming serving 2,079 students annually in 10 middle schools across seven districts.

b. What Professional development opportunities are available through the business advisory council for teachers? (include teacher bootcamps, externships, and tours).

The BAC provides educators with professional learning through:

- Teacher work-based learning institutes
- Manufacturing teacher bootcamps
- Employer site visits
- Industry tours
- Healthcare career professional learning
- CTE pathway development support
- Career pathway and credential training

- Project-based learning
- Skills for Success professional learning
- Regional BAC and Career Leaders Network sessions

The 2026 Joint Statement specifically documents a Manufacturing Teacher Bootcamp designed for up to 19 educators, including industry site visits and development of classroom lessons based on the experience.

9-10. Additional information regarding mentorship/networking

A major strength of the ESCNEO-BAC is its ability to serve as a **neutral regional convener**. The BAC brings together organizations that may otherwise operate independently and creates opportunities for education, business, workforce, and community leaders to identify shared priorities.

This approach has enabled the BAC to move from isolated programs toward a more coordinated regional ecosystem. The 2026 Joint Statement documents the BAC Network, Career Leaders Network, CTE Network, Adult Education Providers Network, School Counselor/Social Workers Network, AP Network, and other regional structures as mechanisms for collaboration and information sharing.

11. What major decisions has the BAC influenced for member school districts, and how have decision impacted students, educators, and curriculum?

The BAC has influenced district decisions related to **career pathway development, CTE expansion, industry-recognized credentials, pre-apprenticeships, career exploration, professional skills, work-based learning, and connections with employers and postsecondary institutions**.

One documented example is Berkshire Local Schools' development of its Workforce Development Campus and new pathways in Agribusiness, Production Robotics, and Mechanical Technology. The BAC shared and elevated this model as an example of how districts can respond to local workforce needs through employer partnerships, technical training, credentials, and work-based learning.

The BAC's CTE support has also assisted districts with applications, pathway design, state compliance, funding, CTPD connections, teacher licensure, and curriculum support, contributing to the addition of at least six new pathways for FY26.

Through the 2026–2027 plan, these efforts will continue through CPSN, BILTs, CTE alignment, pre-apprenticeship development, credential development, and career-connected learning.

12. Use this section to add any additional information for question #11

13. How are BAC members representative of the area's job market? (Specify industries represented on the business advisory council reflective of in-demand occupations in the area).

The NEO BAC uses a regional representation model that includes education, business, economic development, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, higher education, career centers, community organizations, and workforce partners.

Current and recent BAC representation includes sectors such as:

- Healthcare
- Advanced manufacturing
- Information technology
- Construction
- Transportation and logistics
- Agriculture
- Life sciences
- Government/public service
- Higher education
- Workforce and economic development
- Community and nonprofit organizations

The 2026–2027 plan specifically identifies healthcare, advanced manufacturing, information technology, construction, transportation/logistics, agriculture, and life sciences as sectors in which the BAC will continue expanding industry representation.

The BAC also uses workforce information from organizations and partners including Team NEO, Greater Cleveland Partnership, economic development organizations, workforce organizations, and industry associations to inform its work.

14. Use this section to add any additional information for question #13.

15. How is the BAC collecting, implementing, and responding to feedback and industry trends in the region in which it operates? Include sample of feedback (business, educator, and students)?

The BAC uses multiple mechanisms to gather and respond to employer and stakeholder feedback, including:

- Business-Industry Leader Teams
- Employer focus groups
- BAC Steering Committee meetings
- BAC Network meetings
- Employer panels
- Business and HR leader discussions
- Site visits
- District and educator feedback
- Workforce and labor-market information
- Career pathway discussions
- Postsecondary and workforce partner input

The BILT model is a central component of the 2026–2027 plan. BILTs will bring business representatives and educators together to identify workforce needs, review pathways, identify technical and professional skills, and

develop opportunities for students and educators.

A strong example is the healthcare focus group. Feedback from educators and healthcare employers resulted in the **Northeast Ohio Pathways in Health Careers Initiative**, demonstrating how employer input moves from discussion to an actual regional initiative. An upcoming event is a joint program of members of the BAC, Adult Education Providers Network, Career Leaders Network, and Career Pathways Support Network with JobsOhio to learn about the new Earn and Learn initiative with models from business/university collaborations.

16. Use this section to add any additional information for questions #15

17. What barriers has your Business Advisory Council encountered in implementing these quality practices?

The primary barriers are the **size and diversity of the region, differing district needs, limited time for educators and employers, and the difficulty of coordinating a large number of existing providers, businesses, programs, and opportunities.**

The 2026 Joint Statement specifically identifies the complexity of serving a diverse five-county region and coordinating the breadth of available partnerships and resources. It also identifies the challenge of communicating the region's many opportunities to districts in a cohesive and timely manner.

a. How has the BAC overcome these barriers?

The BAC addresses these challenges by serving as a regional convener and conduit. Rather than asking every district to independently establish every business connection, the BAC:

- Builds regional business relationships.
- Uses BILTs to create structured employer engagement.
- Shares opportunities through established professional networks.
- Coordinates regional events and experiences.
- Connects districts with employers, CTPDs, career centers, colleges, and workforce organizations.
- Provides technical assistance through ESC staff.
- Uses digital communication through ESCNEO Works.
- Is developing the **Career-Connected Learning Asset Inventory Map** to make regional opportunities more visible and accessible.

The asset inventory is particularly responsive to this barrier because its purpose is to organize the region's existing assets and make it easier for districts to locate appropriate partners and experiences.

18. Additional information about developing professional skills and sharing BAC work

The BAC develops professional skills through a combination of student programming, educator professional learning, career pathway development, employer engagement, and regional networks.

The **Skills for Success: Creating Your Career Toolbox** initiative provides a common resource for developing professional and executive-functioning skills, including organization, planning, communication, self-management, problem-solving, and collaboration.

The BAC also shares its work through ESCNEO Works, regional newsletters, BAC Network meetings, professional learning networks, district meetings, career events, business partnerships, and other regional communication channels.

The BAC's 2026 Joint Statement documents that ESCNEO Works serves as a digital resource for educators, counselors, career liaisons, students, and business representatives, including business leader videos, career information, student opportunities, BAC information, and partner resources.

19-20 What additional information would you like to share. Please provide any details on how the work of the BAC is shared within the community

21. How does the BAC work collaboratively to build partnerships and enhance experiences?

The BAC's regional model is built around collaboration. The 2026–2027 plan intentionally strengthens partnerships through **BILTs, CTE pathway development, CPSN, GCCC, work-based learning, postsecondary partnerships, workforce organizations, and the Asset Inventory Map.**

BILTs provide a structured way for employers to work directly with educators to identify workforce needs, review pathways, define technical and professional skills, and develop student and educator experiences.

The BAC also builds partnerships by connecting existing organizations rather than creating duplicative structures. For example, the healthcare pathway initiative connects districts, YouScience, healthcare providers, and Lakeland Community College.

The 2026–2027 Asset Inventory Mapping initiative will further support this work by identifying and organizing the region's business, industry, workforce, postsecondary, and community assets.

22. Use this section to add any additional information to question #21

23. What additional information would you like to share about how career readiness experiences are coordinated? How have they benefited students and employers?

The BAC coordinates experiences through a regional ecosystem that connects districts with businesses, career centers, CTPDs, colleges, workforce organizations, and community partners.

The GCCC provides a strong example. During 2025–2026, 11 BAC districts participated, with approximately 8,000 students receiving access to more than 150 in-school lessons and 350 work-based learning opportunities through approximately 140 employer partners.

The new **Career-Connected Learning Asset Inventory Map** will strengthen coordination by creating a shared regional resource identifying available partners and experiences. The goal is to help districts locate appropriate opportunities, identify gaps, reduce duplication of employer outreach, and expand access to experiences across the region.

For students, coordinated experiences provide opportunities to explore careers, understand workplace expectations, develop technical and professional skills, and connect classroom learning to future education and employment.

For employers, coordinated engagement creates a more efficient way to communicate workforce needs, interact with educators and students, and participate in developing the future workforce.

24. Use this section to add any additional information for question #23

25. Which business partner has been the most influential on the BAC and why?

Among responsive BAC business partners, the Cleveland Clinic stands out as both a major regional health system and a leader in developing educational programs with work based learning components. One of its staff serves on our BAC Steering Committee. As a representative of the **healthcare sector and a model for educational collaboration**, engagement from Clinic staff in the BAC's healthcare focus group directly resulted in the Northeast Ohio Pathways in Health Careers Initiative. A healthcare employer/educator focus group convened through the BAC identified workforce needs and opportunities for collaboration, resulting in a regional initiative involving districts, YouScience, healthcare providers, and Lakeland Community College. Its more recent involvement in our BAC healthcare sector panel discussion revealed newly established education programs at the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Youth Education & College as a result of ongoing collaboration with the ESC's BAC. This is one example of the BAC's ongoing relationship with healthcare providers that illustrates how an employer moves from serving as an advisor to actively engaging with the BAC to shape pathways, resources, and student career experiences.

26. Additional information regarding BAC accomplishments

The 2026–2027 BAC Plan represents a significant progression from the previous year's work. During 2025–2026, the BAC strengthened its foundation through BILTs and employer focus groups, the Career Pathways Support Network, CTE pathway and pre-apprenticeship support, educator work-based learning opportunities, GCCC, Skills for Success, the Career Leaders and CTE Networks, and partnerships with healthcare, manufacturing, technology, construction, higher education, workforce, and community organizations.

The 2026 Joint Statement documents the BAC's continued development of a regional workforce ecosystem, including:

- Representation from business, education, healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, economic development, higher education, and community organizations.
- Career Pathways Support Network implementation across a 14-county region.
- Support for CTE pathway expansion and new pathway development.
- Business-Industry Leader Teams and employer focus groups.
- The Northeast Ohio Pathways in Health Careers Initiative.
- Greater Cleveland Career Consortium partnerships.
- Educator professional learning and industry experiences.
- GEAR UP programming serving 2,079 students annually across seven districts and 10 middle schools.
- Industry-recognized credential and career-readiness efforts.
- Engagement with the Northeast Ohio Adult Education Providers Network.
- Continued development of a regional network connecting education, business, workforce, and community partners.

The 2026–2027 plan builds on these accomplishments by moving toward **greater alignment, expansion, and coordination**. BILTs will expand industry representation and employer feedback; CTE and pathway initiatives will translate workforce needs into programs, credentials, and pre-apprenticeships; Regional Work-Based Learning Expansion will increase authentic career experiences; and the **Career-Connected Learning Asset Inventory Map** will make regional opportunities more visible and accessible. An anticipated outcome of alignment, expansion, and coordination is more efficient and effective navigation for students as they move through educational pathways and into work-based learning preparatory to careers.

Together, these efforts reflect the BAC's ongoing role as a regional convener and connector—bringing education, business, workforce, higher education, and community partners together to strengthen career readiness and build a stronger Northeast Ohio workforce.