

2026-2027 Greater Cincinnati 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 205-2026 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. **Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council**:
2. **Structure: Educational Service Center**
3. **Southwest Ohio JobsOhio Region**

District	District Primary Contact and Role	Primary Contact Email	District Secondary Contact and Role	Secondary Contact Email
HAMILTON COUNTY DISTRICTS				
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DEER PARK CITY	JIM STOLL SUPERINTENDENT	Stoll.j@dpccsd.org	MINDY ROBERSTON, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM	robertson.m@dpccsd.org

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Forest Hills	Suzanna Davis, Superintendent	suzannadavis@foresthills.edu	Dr. Charles Ogdan, Assistant Superintendent	charlesogdan@foresthills.edu;
Indian Hill Exempted Village	Kirk Koennecke, Superintendent	melissa.stewart@ihsd.us	Jeff Damadeo	Jeff.damadeo@ihsd.us
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Madeira	Kenji Matsudo, Superintendent	kmatsudo@madeiracityschools.org	Dave Bergan, Asst Supt	dbergan@madeiracityschools.org
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Southwest Local	John Hamstra, Superintendent	john.hamstra@southwestschools.org	Corinne Hayes Asst. Supt.	corinne.hayes@southwestschools.org
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Three Rivers	Tim Sies Superintendent	Tsies@trlsd.org	Megan Rivet, Assistant Superintendent	mrivet@trlsd.org
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Wyoming City	Tim Weber, Superintendent	webert@wyomingcityschools.org	Ericka Simmons	SIMMONSE@WYOMINGCITYSCHOOLS.ORG
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CLERMONT COUNTY DISTRICTS				
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BUTLER COUNTY DISTRICTS				
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4. **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 partner

Business Advisory Council Member	Title/Organization	Email	Industry
Weir, Jeff	Clermont County ESC	Weir_j@ccesc.org	Education
Lawson, Rachel	Advantic Building	Rlawson@advanticbuilding.com	Construction
Spreder, Kimberly	ACI Construction	kspreder@aci-construction.org	Construction
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Smiley, Nick	OVABC Tools Program	nick@ovabc.org	Business
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Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

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Simmons, Jesse	Supply Chain	jesse.simmons@supplychainoki.com	Supply Chain

Schedule of Meetings

5. **Planning meetings for the 2026-2027 school year include**:

Quarter 1 Meeting: **September 4, 2026**	Quarter 2 Meeting: **November 20, 2027**
Quarter 3 Meeting: **February 26, 2027**	Quarter 4 Meeting: **April 30, 2027**

Note: Some business advisory councils may choose to meet more frequently; please include any planned meetings in the schedule.

Business Advisory Council Mission and Vision for the 2026-2027 School Year

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.

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- 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.

Initiative 1: Counselor Connect
Describe, in detail, the plan associated with implementing this quality practice. The implementation plan for Counselor Connect establishes a sustainable, regional professional learning community for school counselors across Greater Cincinnati. The initiative is executed through the following detailed structure: 1. **Quarterly Meeting Cadence and Hosting Strategy**: The network meets four times per academic year (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer/Late Spring 2. **Thematic Agenda Alignment**: Each quarterly meeting focuses on core workforce pillars including navigating Ohio Graduation Requirements, CCWMR metrics, and embedding the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal into district advising, high-demand regional Industry Recognized Credentials (IRCs) and regional career pathway mapping, work-based learning (WBL) scaling, business-education partnership models, site-based job shadowing protocol, systemic district planning, postsecondary transition data evaluation, and aligning district counseling plans with regional labor market trends. 3. **Facilitation & Collaborative Structure**: Each session incorporates structured collaborative time ("Counselor Working Roundtables") for peer-to-peer sharing of best practices, policy updates, and implementation toolkits.
List all participating school districts. What percentage of students within the business advisory council will be impacted by this initiative? One hundred percent of students in the following school districts will be impacted by this initiative: Deer Park City Schools Finneytown Local Schools Forest Hills Local Schools Indian Hill Exempted Village School District Lockland City Schools

Madeira City Schools
Mariemont City Schools
Mt. Healthy City Schools
North College Hill City Schools
Northwest Local Schools
Norwood City Schools
Princeton City Schools
Reading Community City Schools
Southwest Local Schools
St. Bernard/Elmwood Place City Schools
Sycamore Community Schools
Three Rivers Local Schools
Winton Woods City Schools
Wyoming City Schools
Batavia Local Schools
Bethel-Tate Local Schools
Clermont Northeastern Local Schools
Felicity Franklin Local School District
Goshen Local Schools
Milford Exempted Village Schools
New Richmond Schools
West Clermont Local Schools
Williamsburg Local Schools
Lakota Local Schools
Ross Local Schools

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

Below is a list of industries and businesses that will support the work of Counselor Connect:

- City of Cincinnati – Government
- AMIP – Manufacturing
- InterAlliance – IT/ AI
- Cincinnati State Technical - Education
- The Health Collaborative – Health
- SCOKI – Supply Chain
- Christ Hospital – Health
- Ohio CAT – Construction

Business leaders are active partners in the Counselor Connect network:

1. **Curriculum Co-Design & Presenters**: Business leaders may serve as key panelists and subject matter experts during meetings, sharing real-time talent needs, entry-level hiring criteria, and emerging skill requirements directly with educational leaders.

2. **Direct Engagement Opportunities**: Participating businesses collaborate with counselors to establish work-based learning pipelines, including internship placements, guest

speaker networks, mentor programs for the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal, and educator externships.

3. **Credential & Pathway Validation**: Employers review local career-technical pathways and industry credentials to ensure high school offerings align with actual hiring and advancement requirements in the region.

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

Counselor Connect bridges the gap between regional workforce expectations and K-12 education by embedding technical and professional skills into daily student guidance:

1. **Educator Skill Capacity**: Counselors gain direct, up-to-date knowledge of regional high-demand technical competencies and Ohio's 15 Core Professional Skills.
2. **Direct Student Coaching Translation**: Equipped with real-time industry data, counselors translate technical requirements into actionable advising strategies, individualized student success plans, and targeted course selection guidance.
3. **Student Support**: Student will receive updated and timely notifications about upcoming work-based learning experiences from their counselors.

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?

1. **Pipeline & Awareness Challenge**: School counselors are pivotal influencers in student career trajectory planning, yet many lack direct exposure to non-degree high-demand pathways, pre-apprenticeships, and technical credentials. Counselor Connect addresses this information asymmetry by creating direct access to regional business leaders.
2. **Regional Skills Gap**: Employers across Greater Cincinnati consistently report shortages in filling middle-skill positions, roles requiring postsecondary credentials or industry certifications short of a four-year degree alongside a pronounced gap in candidate baseline professional skills.
3. **Supporting Data**:
    - **Regional Labor Market Data**: State and regional workforce reports indicate that over 50% of top-growth occupations in the region require postsecondary technical credentials or associate degrees, yet high school completion tracking shows an over-reliance on traditional 4-year pathways without technical credentials.
    - **Employer Feedback**: Regional employer surveys conducted by business associations consistently cite soft-skill deficits and a lack of student awareness regarding local high-wage, high-demand technical careers as major hiring barriers.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

Counselor Connect intentionally integrates inclusive advising and transition planning to ensure equitable outcomes for students with disabilities:

1. **Inclusive Work-Based Learning & Credentials**: Dedicated meeting components focus on creating and adapting Industry Recognized Credentials, pre-apprenticeships, and work-based learning opportunities for students with IEPs and 504 plans.
2. **Interagency Collaboration**: Sessions incorporate strategies for connecting counselors directly with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), Pre-Employment Transition Services providers, and community rehabilitation agencies.

Initiative 2: SPARC (Student Partners Advancing Regional Careers

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

The implementation plan for the SPARC Council establishes an intentional, student-centered regional leadership network designed to embed authentic youth perspective into the Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council (GCBAC) strategic planning. Implementation is structured across four primary phases:

1. **Recruitment & Selection Framework**:
    - Partner with high school leadership, CTE coordinators, and school counselors across participating GCBAC member districts to recruit a diverse cohort of student leaders representing 10th–12th grades.
    - Ensure equitable representation across urban, suburban, and rural member districts, balancing diverse career interests.
2. **Meeting Schedule & Structural Cadence**:
    - Convene council members four times during the academic year for structured working sessions rotated across regional employer headquarters, innovation hubs, and community facilities.
    - Design each meeting around a dual format: professional skill development/networking during the first half, followed by structured focus groups and co-design working sessions in the second half.
3. **Peer Research & School Feedback Loops**:

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- Equip SPARC student leaders with tools to collect authentic feedback from their peers at their home high schools regarding career planning resources, work-based learning access, and post-secondary expectations.
- Aggregate peer insights to identify regional trends, gaps in career advising, and student perceptions of local industries.

4. **Governance & Advisory Reporting to GCBAC**:
    - Establish a formal reporting channel where SPARC student representatives present actionable recommendations, student voice survey findings, and program evaluation data directly to the GCBAC executive board and committee leadership.
    - Incorporate student feedback into annual GCBAC goal setting, ensuring regional workforce initiatives directly reflect student needs and preferences.

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

One hundred percent of students in the following school districts will be impacted by this initiative:

Deer Park City Schools
Finneytown Local Schools
Forest Hills Local Schools
Indian Hill Exempted Village School District
Lockland City Schools
Madeira City Schools
Mariemont City Schools
Mt. Healthy City Schools
North College Hill City Schools
Northwest Local Schools
Norwood City Schools
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Southwest Local Schools
St. Bernard/Elmwood Place City Schools
Sycamore Community Schools
Three Rivers Local Schools
Winton Woods City Schools
Wyoming City Schools
Batavia Local Schools
Bethel-Tate Local Schools
Clermont Northeastern Local Schools

Felicity Franklin Local School District
Goshen Local Schools
Milford Exempted Village Schools
New Richmond Schools
West Clermont Local Schools
Williamsburg Local Schools
Lakota Local Schools
Ross Local Schools

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

Business partners serve as active listeners, advisors, hosts, and mentors throughout the SPARC Council lifecycle:

1. **Executive Listening Sessions & Interactive Panels**: Business leaders participate directly in roundtables with SPARC leaders, engaging in bi-directional dialogue where employers share industry trends and actively listen to student perspectives on workplace culture, benefits, and recruitment messaging.

2. **Mentorship & Professional Skill Coaching**: Business representatives will have the opportunity to mentor student leaders on executive presence, public speaking, data presentation, and career networking during council working sessions.

3. **Co-Designing Youth Talent Pipelines**: Employers use student feedback gathered during SPARC sessions to refine internship programs, youth apprenticeship models, pre-employment outreach, and social media/marketing materials targeted at young talent.

Businesses that will support the work of SPARC include but are not limited:

- City of Cincinnati – Government
- AMIP – Manufacturing
- InterAlliance – IT/ AI
- Cincinnati State Technical - Education
- The Health Collaborative – Health
- SCOKI – Supply Chain
- Christ Hospital – Health
- Ohio CAT – Construction

How does this initiative help develop relevant, in-demand skills for students and educators?

SPARC builds a two-way learning bridge that develops student professional competencies while informing educator practice:

1. **For Student Leaders**:
    - Direct practice and cultivation of Ohio's 15 Core Professional Skills, including Leadership, Communication, Critical Thinking, Professionalism, Collaboration, Public Speaking, and Digital Literacy.
    - Experience presenting data-driven recommendations to C-suite executives, school superintendents, and workforce leaders.
    - First-hand technical literacy regarding regional high-demand career pathways, credential requirements, and emerging workforce technologies.
2. **For Educators & School Leaders**:
    - Provides superintendents, principals, counselors, and CTE directors with direct student feedback regarding which career exploration tools, software platforms, and advising structures are effective.
    - Equips educators with up to date and relevant data to modernize career advisory curricula, work-based learning policies, and course scheduling based on real student experiences.

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?

1. **Pipeline & Perceptual Challenge Addressed**:
    - A critical barrier in regional talent pipelines is the disconnect between student perceptions of local careers and actual workforce demand. High school students frequently lack awareness of high-wage, high-demand regional careers in sectors like advanced manufacturing, healthcare technology, supply chain, and skilled trades.
    - Traditional talent pipelines often design programs for students without consulting with students, leading to low engagement in available work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, and industry credential opportunities.
2. **Supporting Data**:

- **Student Awareness & Alignment Data**: Regional labor market data from the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services indicates that a significant percentage of regional job growth is concentrated in middle-skills and technical fields. However, state and regional career preference surveys show that a vast majority of high school students base career choices on limited exposure (family, social media), leaving critical regional technical pathways under-enrolled.
- **Employer & Retention Data**: Greater Cincinnati workforce surveys consistently highlight that young workers entering the labor force struggle with baseline professional soft skills, leading to early turnover. SPARC directly addresses this by immersing students in corporate and professional environments early.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

SPARC is purposefully designed to ensure inclusive representation and equitable access for students with disabilities:

1. **Inclusive Recruitment & Representation**: The selection process actively includes all students including students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans, ensuring the council reflects the full spectrum of the regional student body.
2. **Amplifying Disability Voice in Transition Planning**: SPARC provides a dedicated platform for all students to articulate their specific experiences with career exploration, accessibility barriers, accommodation needs, and school-to-work transition services.
3. **Informing Accessible Workplace Practices**: Student feedback from participants with differing abilities provides business advisory members with direct insights into creating neurodiverse-friendly work environments, accessible work-based learning opportunities, and inclusive hiring practices across the region.

Initiative 3: Curriculum Alignment Collaboration/IRC Bundles

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

The implementation plan for the Curriculum Alignment Collaboration establishes a joint working council between Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council (GCBAC) Executive Committee members and the Hamilton County Educational Service Center (HCESC) Instructional Council comprising Assistant Superintendents, Curriculum Directors, and Career-Technical Education (CTE) Directors and Coordinators. The initiative is executed through a structured, multi-phase operational plan:

1. **Co-Design Cadence & Working Sessions**:

- The joint committee meets throughout the academic year to bridge K-12 curriculum design directly with regional economic priorities.
- Sessions follow a structured co-working framework focused on labor market analysis, credential crosswalk mapping, skill standard review, and state policy alignment.

2. **K-12 Bundled Industry Recognized Credential (IRC) Development**:
   - Collaborators focus on co-creating, packaging, and bundling stackable Industry Recognized Credentials across high-demand regional industry sectors.
   - Bundles combine foundational technical credentials, secondary specialized certifications, and OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal professional skills into cohesive, state-aligned graduation pathways suitable for both comprehensive and CTE high school environments.
3. **State Approval & Policy Navigation**:
   - Joint teams author and submit formal applications to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) for state approval of newly co-created IRC bundles, ensuring districts across the region can utilize these credentials toward state graduation requirements and CCWMR metrics.

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

One hundred percent of students in the following school districts will be impacted by this initiative:

Deer Park City Schools
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Sycamore Community Schools

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Clermont Northeastern Local Schools
Felicity Franklin Local School District
Goshen Local Schools
Milford Exempted Village Schools
New Richmond Schools
West Clermont Local Schools
Williamsburg Local Schools
Lakota Local Schools
Ross Local Schools

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

Business leaders are active advisors in this initiative:

1. **Industry Credential Validation & Prioritization**: GCBAC Executive Committee members evaluate regional labor market trends and validate which industry credentials carry true hiring and wage value in the Greater Cincinnati economy, preventing districts from offering low-value or outdated certifications.

2. **Curriculum & Skill Standard Review**: Employers review proposed course learning objectives, technical skill rubrics, and lab/equipment standards to ensure academic instruction mirrors current workplace technology, software, and operational practices.

3. **State Advocacy & Formal Endorsement**: Business partners provide official employer endorsement letters, labor market demand documentation, and direct testimony required for state-level ODEW credential bundle approval.

Businesses that will support the Curriculum Alignment/Industry Recognized Credentials Bundles include but are not limited:

- City of Cincinnati – Government
- AMIP – Manufacturing
- InterAlliance – IT/ AI
- Cincinnati State Technical - Education
- The Health Collaborative – Health
- SCOKI – Supply Chain
- Christ Hospital – Health
- Ohio CAT – Construction

How does this initiative help develop relevant, in-demand skills for students and educators?

This collaboration assists in modernizing K-12 instruction to ensure direct alignment with modern workforce demands:

1. **Educator Capacity & Strategic Curriculum Design**: Curriculum directors and CTE coordinators gain direct access to industry leaders, transforming abstract labor market data into actionable course updates. Educators learn how to embed stackable industry standards directly into core K-12 academic coursework rather than treating career technical training as an isolated elective.
2. **High-Demand Technical Competency for Students**: Students complete high school with state-approved, stackable credential bundles that prove mastery in high-demand technical areas prior to entering postsecondary education or the workforce.
3. **Embedded Professional Skill Mastery**: Credential bundles integrate Ohio's 15 Core Professional Skills directly into classroom learning modules and authentic workplace performance evaluations.

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?

1. **Pipeline & Curriculum Disconnect Challenge**:
    - Historically, K-12 curriculum development occurs in isolation from regional economic development strategies, leading to a gap where high school course offerings and standalone credential options do not align with actual regional hiring requirements.
    - Individual school districts frequently lack the capacity, business access, and administrative bandwidth to independently design and submit complex credential bundle applications for state approval.
2. **Regional Skills Gap Addressed**:
    - Regional employers face critical shortages in middle-skill technical roles that require specialized certifications beyond a high school diploma but short of a four-year degree.
3. **Supporting Data**:

- **Regional Labor Market Data**: Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) and regional economic growth reports show that over 50% of high-growth, high-wage occupations in Greater Cincinnati require postsecondary technical credentials or associate-level competencies.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

Curriculum Alignment Collaboration purposefully embeds accessibility and universal design principles into K-12 credential pathways:

1. **Universal Design for Stackable Credentials**: By co-designing modular, stackable credential bundles, the initiative creates flexible learning pathways that allow all students including studentswith IEPs and 504 plans to earn meaningful, progressive micro-credentials at a manageable pace.
2. **Special Education & CTE Alignment**: HCESC Instructional Council leadership ensures special education directors and transition specialists collaborate on mapping credential requirements, establishing necessary classroom accommodations, adapted testing protocols, and modified equipment standards.
3. **Equitable Access to Competitive Employment**: Equips students with disabilities with state-approved, industry-backed credentials that formally validate their technical competencies, significantly improving postsecondary transition outcomes and placement into competitive employment.

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.

Initiative 1: GCBAC Industry Networks

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 Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council (GCBAC) is restructuring its operational framework to establish dedicated, sector-specific **GCBAC Industry Networks** (e.g., Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology/Cybersecurity, Government, Construction , and Supply Chain & Logistics). This structural transition moves the BAC from a singular broad advisory body into targeted, highly collaborative industry cohorts designed to drive deeper engagement and address specific regional workforce needs:

1. **Targeted Sector Expansion & Regional Partnership Alignment**:
    - The GCBAC leverages partnerships with regional economic development organizations to identify emerging businesses, high-growth employers, and expanding industry sectors.
    - Industry Networks establish structured participation to accommodate businesses of all sizes, ensuring equitable representation across small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) and major regional corporations.
2. **Data-Driven Partner Identification & Gap Mapping**:
    - The council conducts an annual regional supply-and-demand audit, cross-referencing regional job posting data, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) high-demand occupation lists, and district enrollment metrics in Career-Technical Education (CTE) pathways.

- By mapping regional employment projections against current district workforce program offerings, the GCBAC pinpoints specific industry sectors and technical skill domains experiencing critical talent shortages, actively recruiting business leaders from those gap areas to join relevant Industry Networks.

3. **Structured Network Onboarding & Recruitment Cadence**:

    - GCBAC leadership conducts Industry Network recruitment briefings and employer orientation sessions, outlining clear value propositions for business involvement, including direct access to regional K-12 talent pipelines and opportunities to influence local curriculum design.

Initiative 1: GCBAC Industry Networks

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

1. **Quarterly Industry Network Convenings:** Each sector-specific Industry Network (Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, IT/Cybersecurity, Government, Construction, Supply Chain & Logistics) holds quarterly discussions where employers share direct feedback on emerging skill demands, technology shifts, and hiring expectations.
2. **Annual Regional Supply-and-Demand Audit:** The council formally collects and cross-references employer input with regional job posting data, ODJFS high-demand occupation lists, and district CTE enrollment data to surface skill gaps that decision-makers act on.
3. **Recruitment Briefings & Orientation Sessions:** During onboarding, new industry partners provide input on value propositions and priorities, which the council uses to shape Network structure and focus areas.
4. **Cross-Collaboration Feedback Loop:** Insights raised in Industry Networks are routed into joint committees, ensuring employer feedback directly shapes credential and pathway decisions.

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?

The GCBAC Industry Networks function as continuous feedback loops, ensuring that workplace trends, technological shifts, and skill expectations translate directly into educational practice across member school districts:

1. **Industry Skills & Executive Professional Learning Networks**:
    - Each Industry Network facilitates quarterly employer discussions into *Industry Skills & Workforce Needs* professional learning. These professional learning opportunities highlight emerging software, technical tools, industry credentials, and entry-level competency requirements specific to the Greater Cincinnati region.
    - Insights are formally distributed to superintendents, curriculum directors, CTE coordinators, and school counselors across all GCBAC member districts to guide school course offerings and career advising.
2. **Direct Integration with Educator Professional Development**:
    - Industry Network insights directly inform regional educator professional development programs, including the *Counselor Connect: Workforce & Future-Ready Network* and teacher externship initiatives.
    - Business representatives host interactive workshops, site-based immersion days, and panel discussions for educators, providing unvarnished data on technical expectations, workplace culture, and changing hiring requirements.
3. **Cross-Collaboration with K-12 Curriculum Alignment Initiatives**:
    - Insights gathered within Industry Networks directly feed into joint working committees such as the *Curriculum Alignment Collaboration* with the Hamilton County Educational Service Center (HCESC) Instructional Council to inform the co-creation of stackable, state-approved Industry Recognized Credential (IRC) bundles.

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

Expanded industry partners active in the GCBAC Industry Networks engage directly with educational ecosystems to cultivate technical literacy and professional competencies:

1. **Co-Designing Authentic Learning & Work-Based Opportunities**:
    - Industry Network members work alongside district leaders to build structured work-based learning (WBL) pathways, including site visits, job shadowing, student mentorships, pre-apprenticeships, and internships.
    - Partners collaborate with educators to design real-world, industry-aligned classroom projects and capstone challenges that reflect authentic technical and problem-solving scenarios encountered in modern workplaces.
2. **Cultivating Ohio's 15 Core Professional Skills**:
    - Network employers embed professional competencies into student work-based learning and mentorship interactions.
    - Business leaders participate in student mock interviews, resume reviews, and classroom speaking engagements, reinforcing the real-world importance of the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal competencies.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

The GCBAC Industry Networks prioritize universal design, accessibility, and inclusive workforce entry to ensure students with disabilities are fully integrated into regional career readiness strategies:

1. **Mapping Inclusive Entry-Level & Stackable Career Pathways**:
    - Partners analyze job roles within their sectors to outline progressive, stackable skill benchmarks that lead to competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities.
2. **Expanding Accessible Work-Based Learning & Accommodations**:
    - Employer partners provide site access for job coaches and transition specialists to support students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans during site-based workplace experiences.

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Initiative 2: Second Annual Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council Symposium

Describe in detail how the business advisory council plans to strengthen and expand business and industry representation.

The 2nd Annual Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council (GCBAC) Symposium serves as a strategic regional catalyst to expand, diversify, and deepen cross-sector partnerships between K-12 education, regional workforce boards, and business leaders across Greater Cincinnati:

1. **Strategic Regional Convening & Partner Expansion**:
    - The GCBAC utilizes the annual Symposium (hosted at the Hamilton County Educational Service Center) as a high-impact regional forum bringing together superintendents, career-technical leaders, educators, and diverse business leaders.
    - The event engages marquee industry leadership and regional trade organizations such as Sustaining Success (former Procter & Gamble executive leadership), the Advanced Manufacturing Industry Partnership (AMIP), CINFAB, LEAD, and the Workforce Council of Southwest Ohio expanding the GCBAC's reach into high-growth sectors including AI/Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Construction/Skilled Trades, and Professional Services.
2. **Data-Driven Identification of Business Partners & Skill Gaps**:
    - The GCBAC leverages localized labor and youth voice research—such as findings presented in *Building Better Career Pathways in Hamilton County* (Cohear-Report_OMJ_Summer-2021-1.pdf) and *Cincinnati Region Labor Market Analysis(Cincinnati-Region-Labor-Market-Analysis-Summer-2024.pdf)* to identify precise workforce shortages and perception gaps across regional industry sectors.
    - By analyzing these data insights, the council actively recruits target industry employers experiencing acute pipeline deficits to participate in regional steering cohorts, panel presentations, and district advisory roles.

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

The GCBAC Symposium translates direct industry expertise into actionable instructional practice, school counseling strategies, and district administrative planning across member schools:

1. **Forward-Looking Executive Insights & Emerging Tech Integration**:
    - Featuring keynote leadership on topics, the Symposium provides educators with first-hand insights into how technological disruption, artificial intelligence, and workplace automation are reshaping entry-level skill requirements.
    - Educators evaluate how foundational workplace attributes such as personal accountability and work ethic must be intentionally integrated alongside technical learning.
2. **Half Day Accredited Professional Development for Educators**:
    - The Symposium provides educators, school counselors, and administrators with 4 to 5 contact hours of high-quality professional development, ensuring that direct business insights immediately inform classroom instruction, career advising, and district curriculum design.
3. **Peer-to-Peer Educational & Industry Knowledge Transfer**:
    - Through structured breakout sessions featuring co-presentations by district leaders and industry representatives, educators gain clear templates for bridging the gap between classroom academic content and real-world workplace competencies.

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

Expanded industry partners active in the Symposium collaborate with member districts to implement industry-recognized credentials, operational methodologies, and experiential learning models:

1. **Industry-Recognized Credentials & Applied Methodologies**:
    - Industry partners collaborate with member districts to embed stackable, in-demand credentials into school pathways as demonstrated by Reading Community City School District's integration of the *NCCER Construction Credential*.

2. **Redesigning Student Career Experiences for Real Impact**:

    - Industry partners work with HCESC and school districts to replace passive career awareness with high-impact engagement models.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

The GCBAC Symposium emphasizes inclusive, equitable career readiness strategies that ensure students with disabilities acquire essential skills and supported entry into the regional workforce:

1. **Universal Access to Industry-Recognized Credentials & Practical Skills**:

    - Industry credential pathways presented at the Symposium are designed with modular learning structures that enable students with diverse learning styles and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to earn stackable, resume-building certifications.

2. **Inclusive Workforce Entry & Transition Frameworks**:

    - Frameworks shared during the Symposium specifically address strategies for supporting non-traditional graduates and students with disabilities as they navigate entry into competitive regional employment.
    - Industry partners collaborate with district transition specialists to establish supportive workplace onboarding, clear job expectations, and workplace mentoring.

3. **Focus on Essential Professional Competencies**:

    - Industry-led sessions focusing on core personal success factors provide actionable tools for educators to build independent living and employability skills, empowering students with disabilities to demonstrate OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal competencies to perspective regional employers.

Note: Please add space/rows as needed.

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Initiative 3: Career Pathway Support Network (CPSN) Partnership

Describe in detail how the business advisory council plans to strengthen and expand business and industry representation.

1. **Leverage the Counselor Connect Network as the Regional Engagement Hub**
   The council will utilize the *Counselor Connect: Workforce & Future-Ready Network*, hosted quarterly at Hamilton County ESC (HCESC), as the primary structure to convene LEA staff, Technical Assistance (TA) providers, Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) staff, and regional business/industry partners. This creates a predictable quarterly schedule for industry leaders to directly inform pathway design and credential alignment.

2. **Data-Driven Identification of Partner Needs via Regional Baseline Gap Analysis**
   The council will identify new industry and business partners by evaluating the regional baseline of enrollment and attainment gaps between students with disabilities (SWD) and the general student population. Industry partners operating within pathways showing high employment demand but low SWD credential attainment will be targeted for strategic recruitment.

3. **Multi-County and Multi-Tier LEA Collaboration**
   The council will maintain direct engagement and coordinate with ESC leads across the five-county region. This ensures business representation expands beyond urban hubs to include regional, sub-urban, and rural industry employers across the talent pipeline.

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

1. **Embed Employer Insights into Quarterly Regional Convenings**
   At each quarterly *Counselor Connect* meeting, business and industry partners will provide real-time updates on high-demand technical and employability skills. Educators, counselors, and TA providers will translate these insights into actionable guidance and pathway redesign strategies.

2. **Co-Develop Guidance Tools and Implementation Resources**
   Insights from industry will be used to develop guidance materials, training tools, and pathway resources.

3. **Continuous Data Review to Guide Educational Decision-Making**
   Regional credential data for SWD will be continuously evaluated and summarized for school districts. Industry feedback will help educators interpret this data to identify skill gaps and refine classroom instruction and career advising accordingly.

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

1. **Direct Alignment to Ohio's New SWD Credential List**
   Expanded industry partners will collaborate with HCESC and LEA leadership to define the technical competencies required for credentials, ensuring that school pathway curricula align with authentic workplace standards.
2. **Technical Assistance and Pathway Redesign Support**
   Partners will be available for collaboration in pathway redesign sessions, providing industry insights so SWD can master technical skills required by regional employers.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

1. **Closing Regional Enrollment and Attainment Gaps**
   By collaboratively establishing regional baseline metrics and improvement goals, partners will directly support efforts to increase SWD enrollment and completion in high-quality, graduation-aligned credential pathways.
2. **Expanding Access to High-Quality, Graduation-Aligned Credentials**
   Partners/GCBAC will assist schools in scaling access to the new IRC list for SWD, ensuring students earn meaningful credentials that validate their skills to future employers and satisfy state graduation requirements.
3. **Building Systemic District Capacity and Counselor Knowledge**
   Through the quarterly *Counselor Connect* network and shared regional reporting, business partners empower school counselors and intervention specialists to deliver high-quality, industry-informed career advising specifically tailored to students with disabilities.

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.

Initiative 1: Regional K-12 Transportation Solution for Career Exploration & Work-Based Learning

Describe in detail how the business advisory council plans to increase Work-Based Learning for students.

1. **Addressing the Primary Barrier to Access**: Surveys conducted with school districts in the Greater Cincinnati BAC confirmed that transportation is the single greatest obstacle preventing middle and high school students in Hamilton County from accessing work-based learning (WBL) and career exploration. The BAC plans to eliminate these barriers specifically targeting low-income students and those lacking reliable access to personal vehicles, public transit, driver's education, or insurance by implementing a 3-year, $195,000 regional strategy focused on two core pillars.
2. **Deploying a Regional Student Transportation Coordinator ($35,000/year | $105,000 total)**:
    1. **Centralized Partner Alignment**: A contracted coordinator will serve as the single point of contact aligning school districts, local employers, Industry Sector Partnerships (ISPs), and community organizations across Hamilton County.
    2. **Needs Assessment & Strategic Planning**: The coordinator will conduct a comprehensive regional needs assessment, map existing assets, eliminate duplication of effort, and author a unified regional transportation plan.
    3. **Systems & Data Tracking**: The coordinator will establish a centralized data-tracking and reporting framework to monitor student participation and outcomes, develop shared tools and resources, and manage regional communications.

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4. **Long-Term Sustainability**: The coordinator will research and assist with securing sustainable public and private funding streams to maintain the transportation framework beyond the initial 3-year grant cycle.

3. **Establishing a Flexible Transportation Solutions Fund ($30,000/year | $90,000 total)**:

    1. **Immediate Direct Supports**: Provides targeted, short-term financial and logistical assistance so students can participate in internships, job shadowing, clinical experiences, and career exploration.

    2. **Allowable Expenses & Pilot Strategies**: Funding covers bus passes, public transit subsidies, ride-share credits, driver's education and licensing assistance, shared vehicle access, and other pilot transportation strategies.

List all school districts and number of students that will benefit from this initiative.

One hundred percent of students in the following school districts will have access to this initiative:

Deer Park City Schools
Finneytown Local Schools
Forest Hills Local Schools
Indian Hill Exempted Village School District
Lockland City Schools
Madeira City Schools
Mariemont City Schools
Mt. Healthy City Schools
North College Hill City Schools
Northwest Local Schools
Norwood City Schools
Princeton City Schools
Reading Community City Schools
Southwest Local Schools
St. Bernard/Elmwood Place City Schools
Sycamore Community Schools
Three Rivers Local Schools
Winton Woods City Schools
Wyoming City Schools
Batavia Local Schools
Bethel-Tate Local Schools
Clermont Northeastern Local Schools
Felicity Franklin Local School District
Goshen Local Schools
Milford Exempted Village Schools
New Richmond Schools
West Clermont Local Schools

Williamsburg Local Schools Lakota Local Schools Ross Local Schools
List all businesses and industries that will be involved. Below is a sampling of businesses our districts partner with and represent the following industries: Health, IT, Construction, Supply Chain, Manufacturing, Government, and Education Easters Selas Interalliance Supply Chain OKI CVG Allied Construction Ohio Concrete and Imi Concrete AtriCure/AMIP Cincy Health Force Batavia Nursing Care Cincinnati State UC Clermont Cold Jet Ohio Concrete/Ernst Concrete Southern Ohio Technical Institute Sinclair TP Mechanical Choose Aerospace and CVG TQL OMJ Elite Biomedical UPS Official Driving School Purina East fork Northern Kentucky University and Miami University Supply Chain OKI, Deltec, Children's, Motz DHL Bean & Brew

Office Pride (custodial work)
Military
Sporty's and Deltec
Elite Biomedical
City of Cincinnati
Local Firefighters and Paramedics
TP Mechanical
Deer Park Police
Makino
MercyHealth & Christ Hospital
Cincinnati Air
Elite Welding Academy
Makino
MetCut
Atricure
Middletown, Monroe and Trenton Chamber of Commerce Members
Local National Guard Office
Primerica
Keller Williams Realty
Frontier Motors
Miami Machine
Butler Tech
AMS Parts
Primerica
Premier Health Care
Aurgroup Credit Union
Pilot Chemical
Miami University
Ohio JATC Carpenters Union
Atrium/Premier
Keller Williams,
Frontier Motors,
Wendy's
Menards
Hamilton Tool
Salon 611

What role does business play in planning and implementation?

1. **Identifying Need and Documenting Barriers**: Business leaders participating in the Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council provided critical baseline insight through district and partner surveys, validating that lack of vehicle access, limited public transit,

and driver's education costs represent the main barrier keeping local students out of career-connected learning pathways.

2. **Co-Designing Regional Plans via Industry Sector Partnerships**: Employer partners engage directly through Industry Sector Partnerships (ISPs) alongside school districts and community stakeholders. Working with the Regional Student Transportation Coordinator, businesses help shape the regional transportation plan and align workplace scheduling with transportation options.

3. **Providing Work-Based Learning Opportunities**: Local businesses serve as the essential host sites providing the internships, job shadowing slots, clinical experiences, and career exploration opportunities that students access through the transportation supports.

Initiative 2: Experience Connector Data Base

Describe in detail how the business advisory council plans to increase Work-Based Learning for students.

1. **Centralizing Access to Regional Opportunities**: The Greater Cincinnati Business Advisory Council (GCBAC) will develop, research, and maintain the Experience Connector Data Base as a single, centralized regional repository. This platform aggregates verified work-based learning (WBL) opportunities including internships, pre-apprenticeships, job shadowing, clinical placements, co-ops, and site visits giving all participating school districts a dedicated, reliable source for student placements.

2. **Eliminating Silos and Administrative Friction**: Historically, school districts and employers suffered from fragmented, ad-hoc outreach. The Experience Connector streamlines this process by serving as a common ecosystem where district career coordinators, school counselors, and teachers can quickly align student interests, CTE pathways, and graduation requirements with active employer offerings.

3. **Ongoing Data Verification and Content Research**: The BAC will actively manage, research, and vet the database to ensure opportunities are current, accurately categorized by industry sector, and compliant with relevant labor and workplace safety standards.

4. **Promoting Regional Equity and Access**: By establishing a shared regional database, the BAC ensures that all school districts regardless of their size, geographic location, or existing employer network have equal access to high-quality career experiences. This levels the playing field for students from rural, urban, and under-resourced districts who might otherwise lack exposure to high-demand industry networks.

5. **Connecting WBL to High-Demand Career Pathways**: The platform prioritizes opportunities in key regional industries (e.g., healthcare, advanced manufacturing, IT, logistics), allowing educators to direct students toward meaningful, high-wage, in-demand career pathways across Greater Cincinnati.

List all school districts that will benefit from this initiative.

One hundred percent of students in the following school districts will have access to this initiative:

Deer Park City Schools
Finneytown Local Schools
Forest Hills Local Schools
Indian Hill Exempted Village School District
Lockland City Schools
Madeira City Schools
Mariemont City Schools
Mt. Healthy City Schools
North College Hill City Schools
Northwest Local Schools
Norwood City Schools
Princeton City Schools
Reading Community City Schools
Southwest Local Schools
St. Bernard/Elmwood Place City Schools
Sycamore Community Schools
Three Rivers Local Schools
Winton Woods City Schools
Wyoming City Schools
Batavia Local Schools
Bethel-Tate Local Schools
Clermont Northeastern Local Schools
Felicity Franklin Local School District
Goshen Local Schools
Milford Exempted Village Schools
New Richmond Schools
West Clermont Local Schools
Williamsburg Local Schools
Lakota Local Schools
Ross Local Schools

List all businesses and industries that will be involved.

Below is a sampling of businesses our districts partner with and represent the following industries: Health, IT, Construction, Supply Chain, Manufacturing, Government, and Education

Easters Selas
Interalliance
Supply Chain OKI
CVG
Allied Construction
Ohio Concrete and Imi Concrete
AtriCure/AMIP Cincy
Health Force
Batavia Nursing Care
Cincinnati State
UC Clermont
Cold Jet
Ohio Concrete/Ernst Concrete
Southern Ohio Technical Institute
Sinclair
TP Mechanical
Choose Aerospace and CVG
TQL
OMJ
Elite Biomedical
UPS
Official Driving School
Purina
East fork
Northern Kentucky University and Miami University
Supply Chain OKI,
Deltec,
Children's,
Motz
DHL
Bean & Brew
Office Pride (custodial work)
Military
Sporty's and Deltec
Elite Biomedical
City of Cincinnati
Local Firefighters and Paramedics
TP Mechanical
Deer Park Police

Makino
MercyHealth & Christ Hospital
Cincinnati Air
Elite Welding Academy
Makino
MetCut
Atricure
Middletown, Monroe and Trenton Chamber of Commerce Members
Local National Guard Office
Primerica
Keller Williams Realty
Frontier Motors
Miami Machine
Butler Tech
AMS Parts
Primerica
Premier Health Care
Aurgroup Credit Union
Pilot Chemical
Miami University
Ohio JATC Carpenters Union
Atrium/Premier
Keller Williams,
Frontier Motors,
Wendy's
Menards
Hamilton Tool
Salon 611

What role does business play in implementation?

1. **Populating and Updating WBL Listings**: Regional employer partners serve as the primary source of content for the Experience Connector. Businesses directly submit listings, outlining specific role responsibilities, and age/grade eligibility.
2. **Providing Operational Feedback and continuous Improvement:** Employers participate in feedback loops with the BAC to evaluate candidate quality, placement efficiency, and platform user experience, ensuring the tool continues to meet evolving business talent pipeline needs.
3. **Championing Sector Recruitment**: Business members leverage their participation in Industry Sector Partnerships (ISPs), local chambers of commerce, and trade associations

to recruit additional regional employers to post opportunities on the platform, continuously expanding the volume and diversity of student placements available.

Note: Please add space/rows as needed.

Ohio Business-Education Leader Awards for Excellent Business Advisory Councils

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 distinction will be considered for awards of excellence and star ratings.

For the 2026-2027 School year, Councils MUST fill out this electronic application to be considered for this recognition. Please note this form needs to be completed in one sitting, as there are no options to save your progress and return later. Applicants are encouraged to gather all necessary information before beginning the application process to ensure smooth and successful submission. If you have any questions or need further clarification, send inquires to BusinessAdvisoryCouncil@education.ohio.gov.

Department of Education & Workforce