

2025-2026 Business Advisory Council

Lorain County BAC Plan

1. Name of Business Advisory Council

Lorain County Business Advisory Council (BAC)

2. Identify the structure of the business advisory council

Educational Service Center (ESCLC) – Countywide Collaborative

(Represents all 15 Lorain County school districts, coordinated through ESCLC.)

3. JobsOhio Region in which the business advisory council operates

Northeast Region

District	District Primary Contact and Role	Primary Contact Email	District Secondary Contact and Role	Secondary Contact Email
Amherst Exempted Village	MICHAEL MOLNAR, SUPERINTENDENT	MIKE_MOLNAR@AMHERSTK12.ORG	SARAH WALKER, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT	SARAH_WALKER@AMHERSTK12.ORG
DATA CONTACT: MICHAEL MOLNAR, SUPERINTENDENT, MIKE_MOLNAR@AMHERSTK12.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: MICHAEL MOLNAR		
Avon Lake City	JOELLE MAGYAR, SUPERINTENDENT	JOELLE.MAGYAR@ALCSOH.ORG	NED LAUVER, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS	NED.LAUVER@ALCSOH.ORG
DATA CONTACT: JACK DIBEE, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, JACK.DIBEE@ALCSOH.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: NED LAUVER BRAD COCCO, BRAD.COCCO@ALCSOH.ORG KELLY KOZAR, KELLY.KOZAR@ALCSOH.ORG		
Avon Local	MIKE LAUB, SUPERINTENDENT	LAUB@AVONEAGLES.ORG	KRISTINA BULLER	BULLERK@AVONEAGLES.ORG
DATA CONTACT: MARY JANE HULL HULLM@AVONEAGLES.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: KRISTINA BULLER, BULLERK@AVONEAGLES.ORG JEN FITCH, FITCHV@AVONEAGLES.ORG		
Clearview Local	JEROME DAVIS, SUPERINTENDENT	JEROME.DAVIS@CLEARVIEWSCHOOLS.ORG		
DATA CONTACT: ROBERT GOSSOM, ROBERT.GOSSOM@CLEARVIEWSCHOOLS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: MICHAEL NEWMAN, ASST. PRINCIPAL MICHAEL.NEWMAN@CLEARVIEWSCHOOLS.ORG		
Columbia Local	GRAIG BANSEK, SUPERINTENDENT	GBANSEK@CLSDRAIDERS.ORG	TROY BUNNER, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS	TBUNNER@CLSDRAIDERS.ORG

DATA CONTACT: MATT MARINO, CAREER READINESS COORDINATOR, MMARINO@CLSDRAIDERS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: MATT MARINO, CAREER READINESS COORDINATOR, MMARINO@CLSDRAIDERS.ORG		
Elyria City	ANN SCHLOSS, SUPERINTENDENT	SCHLOSSANN@ELYRIASCHOOLS.ORG	BRIAN KOKAI, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS	KOKAIBRIAN@ELYRIASCHOOLS.ORG
			JACQUELINE ANDERLE, IMPLEMENTATION SPECIALIST	ANDERLEJACQUELINE@ELYRIASCHOOLS.ORG
DATA CONTACT: JACQUELINE ANDERLE, IMPLEMENTATION SPECIALIST, ANDERLEJACQUELINE@ELYRIASCHOOLS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: JACQUELINE ANDERLE COURTNEY GRIFFITH, ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL, GRIFFITHSCOURTNEY@ELYRIASCHOOLS.ORG		
Firelands Local	MICHAEL VON GUNTEN, SUPERINTENDENT	MVONGUNTEN@FIRELANDSSCHOOLS.ORG	LORI ROEMER, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	LROEMER@FIRELANDSSCHOOLS.ORG
DATA CONTACT: MICHAEL VON GUNTEN, SUPERINTENDENT, MVONGUNTEN@FIRELANDSSCHOOLS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: MIKE VON GUNTEN		
Keystone Local	ZACHARY WEAGLEY, SUPERINTENDENT	zachary.weagley@keystoneschools.org	AMANDA GORAN, CURRICULUM DIRECTOR	AMANDA.GORAN@KEYSTONESCHOOLS.ORG
			DEVIN STANG, BOARD MEMBER	DEVINKLS1989@GMAIL.COM
DATA CONTACT: ZACHARY WEAGLEY, SUPERINTENDENT, ZACHARY.WEAGLEY@KEYSTONESCHOOLS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: AMANDA GORAN		
Lorain City	STEVEN STURGILL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WRAP-AROUND SERVICES/OPERATIONS	SSTURGILL@LORAINSCHOOLS.ORG	BRANDI McVETY SCHOOL COUNSELOR	BMCVETY@LORAINSCHOOLS.ORG
DATA CONTACT: AMANDA STURGEON, DIRECTOR OF EARLY COLLEGE, ASTURGEON@LORAINSCHOOLS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: AMANDA STURGEON		
Lorain County JVS	GLENN FAIRCLOTH, SUPERINTENDENT	GFAIRCLOTH@LCJVS.NET	MARIO CODISPOTI, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS	MCODISPOTI@LCJVS.NET
DATA CONTACT: MICHELLE MCCLINTIC, SUPERVISOR, MMCCCLINTIC@LCJVS.NET		TASK FORCE CONTACT: MATHIAS HAUCK, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIST, MHAUCK@LCJVS.NET		
Midview Local	FRANK MAJOR, SUPERINTENDENT	FMAJOR@MIDVIEWK12.ORG	JODI WOLF, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION	JWOLF@MIDVIEWK12.ORG

	DEANNA HERSKO DIRECTOR OF CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND WORK-BASED LEARNING	DHERSKO@MIDVIEWK 12.ORG		
DATA CONTACT: JODI WOLF, JWOLF@MIDVIEWK12.ORG, DEANNA HERSKO, DHERSKO@MIDVIEWK12.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: JODI WOLF / DEANNA HERSKO		
North Ridgeville City	ROXANN CASERIO, SUPERINTENDENT	ROXANNCASERIO@NR CS.NET	LEE ARMBRUSTER, COORDINATOR OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	LEEARMBRUSTER@NRCS.NET
DATA CONTACT: LEE ARMBRUSTER, COORDINATOR OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, LEEARMBRUSTER@NRCS.NET		TASK FORCE CONTACT: LEE ARMBRUSTER		
Oberlin City	DAVID HALL, SUPERINTENDENT	DHALL@OBERLINSCH OOLS.NET	RICH MORECK, COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELOR	RMORECK@OBERLINSCHOOLS. NET
DATA CONTACT: RICHARD MORECK, CAREER NAVIGATOR, RMORECK@OBERLINESCHOOLS.NET		TASK FORCE CONTACT: RICH MORECK DR MICAH TOMLIN		
Sheffield-Sheffield Lake City	MICHAEL COOK, SUPERINTENDENT	MCOOK@SHEFFIEL DSCHOOLS.ORG	BRENDA SVEC, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM	BSVEC@SHEFFIELDSCHOOL S.ORG
DATA CONTACT: BRENDA SVEC, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, BSVEC@SHEFFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: SCOTT O'DONNELL, TEACHER SODONNELL@SHEFFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG NIENKE McNICHOLS, CMCNICHOLS@SHEFFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG BRENDA SVEC, MICHAEL COOK		
Wellington Exempted Village	ANDREW PELTZ, SUPERINTENDENT	APELTZ@WELLINGTON VILLAGESCHOOLS.ORG	STEPHANIE GLASURE CURRICULUM DIRECTOR	SGLASURE@WELLINGTONVILLA GESCHOOLS.ORG
DATA CONTACT: CLAIRE FRANTZ, COUNSELOR CFRANTZ@WELLINGTONVILLAGESCHOOLS.ORG		TASK FORCE CONTACT: ROB HOWELLS, CBI INSTRUCTOR RHOWELLS@WELLINGTONVILLAGESCHOOLS.ORG		
ESC of Lorain County	FRANCO GALLO, SUPERINTENDENT	GALLO@ESCLC.ORG	DAVE KISH, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT	KISH@ESCLC.ORG
ESC of Lorain County	DAVE MILLER, DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	MILLER@ESCLC.ORG	DEBBIE MELDA, BOARD PRESIDENT	MELDA@ESCLC.ORG

State Support Team 2	KENNIE SEARIGHT, CAREER TECHNICAL PLANNING CONSULTANT	SEARIGHT@SSTR2.ORG		
		TASK FORCE CONTACT: KENNIE SEARIGHT, SEARIGHT@SSTR2.ORG		
LT GOVERNOR JIM TRESSEL'S OFFICE	LU COOKE, NORTHWEST REGIONAL LIAISON	LUANNE.COKE@GOVERNOR.OHIO.GOV		

List business advisory council members (business, higher education, 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.

Business Advisory Council Member, title	Business	Email	Industry
Kurt Scholl	911 - Lorain County	kscholl@loraincounty.us	Service
Nicholas Hurst	Achieve Credit Union	nhurst@achievecu.org	Business
Doug Keehan	Advanced Polymer	doug.keehan@adv-polymer.com	Manufacturing
Barbara Gould	Bendix	barbara.gould@bendix.com	Manufacturing
Scott Radcliffe	Berrington Pumps	sradcliffe4@gmail.com	Manufacturing
Chad Grude, Regional Sales Manager	Bettcher Industries	grudegroup@yahoo.com	Manufacturing
Hallie Stewart	Black Tip, LLC	hstewart@beevalve.com	Manufacturing
Tammy Tansey	Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers	ttansey@oh-kyrtc.net	Bricklayers & Craftworkers
Angela Carpenter	CDi Cutting Dynamics	acarpenter@cuttingdynamics.com	Manufacturing
Jim Crawford	Central Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters	jcrawford@ikorcc.com	Carpentry
Casey McManis	Central Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters	Cmcmanis@ikorcc.com	Carpentry
Michele Henes, Coordinator	Children's Learning Center	mhenes@lorainccc.edu	Day care
Marcus Madison	Cleveland Clinic	madisom@ccf.org	Healthcare
Kelly Biggar	Effective Leadership Academy	kbiggar@effectivela.org	Service
Brandon Butorac, Technical Placement Specialist - NE Ohio	Ford	BBUTORAC@FORD.COM	Manufacturing

Dave Fox	Fraley & Fox Construction	dfafox@gmail.com	Trades
Jeff Armbruster, County Administrator	Government, Lorain County	jarmbruster@loraincounty.us	Government
Karen Perkins, Deputy Administrator	Government, Lorain County	kperkins@loraincounty.us	Government
Dave Blevins, Director, OMJ	Government, Lorain County	dblevins@loraincounty.us	Government
Christine Kish, Exec Assistant to the County Administrator	Government, Lorain County	ckish@loraincounty.us	Government
Chris Durkin	Government, Lorain County	cdurkin@loraincounty.us	Government
Nico Samaniego, President	Government, Lorain County Chamber of Commerce	nico@loraincountychamber.com	Government
Brandon Thimke	Government, Lorain County Community Development	bthimke@loraincounty.us	Government
Danelle Musil	Government, Lorain County Sheriff's Office	dmusil@loraincountysheriff.org	Government
Jennifer Bracken, Assistant Director	Government, Metroparks	jbracken@metroparks.cc	Government
Kent Iler	Iler Networking & Computing	kent@iler.com	Information Technology
DeAndre Nixon	iN Education, INC	denixon@ineducationonline.org	Human Services
Christina Wade	Integrated Network Concepts	cwade@integrated.net	Information Technology
Jim Adams	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	jadams@ibew129.org	Trades
Ed Yenni, President	Logisync	eyenni@logisync.com	Technology
Cindy Kushner, Director of School and Community Partnerships	Lorain County Community College	ckushner@lorainccc.edu	Higher Education
Amy Szmania	Lorain County Community College	aszmania@lorainccc.edu	Higher Education
Jonathan Dryden, Professor	Lorain County Community College	jdryden@lorainccc.edu	Higher Education
Nadia Leary, Program Director, CP	Lorain County Community College	nleary@lorainccc.edu	Higher Education
John Butkowski, Director	Lorain County Manufacturing Council	jbutkowski@windstream.net	Manufacturing
Marilyn Mosinski	Manufacturing Works	mmosinski@mfgworkscl.org	Manufacturing
Greg Wiester, CNC Manager	Master Bolt	greg.wiester@outlook.com	Manufacturing

Jimmy Miller, President	Miller Home Title Agency	jimmy@millerht.com	Real Estate
M. Judith Crocker, President	MJ Crocker & Associates, LLC	mjcrockerassociates@gmail.com	Manufacturing
Jenn Ott	Modern Poured Walls Construction Services	jott@mpwcs.com	Business
Michelle Moore, Regional manager	NEO Techcorp	mmoore@techcorps.org	Technology
Marsalis Hammons	Nordson	Marsalis.hammons@nordson.com	Philanthropy
Tim King	North Coast Building Industry Association Collaboration	tking@khov.com	Carpentry
John Toth	North Coast Building Industry Association Collaboration	John.toth@floorcoveringsinternational.com	Carpentry
Judie Docs	North Coast Building Industry Association Collaboration	judienchia@gmail.com	Carpentry
Nick Yarham, Owner	Northern HammerWorks	nick@northernhammerworks.com	Manufacturing
Jeffrey Keesee, Branch manager	Northwest	Jeffrey.Keesee@northwest.com	Service Industry
Greg Zaryk	Oakleaf Partners	gzaryk@upccleveland.org	Human Services
Lisa Hutson	ONE Lorain County	lhutson@oneloraincounty.com	Community
Kelly Mckee Foos	Quick Med Urgent Care	kelly.mckeefoos@quickmedclinic.com	Healthcare
Ryan Gerber	RGI Creative	ryan@rgicreative.com	Marketing, Design, Carpentry
Bill Cromling	Ross Environmental Services	weccmc@gmail.com	Hazardous Waste
Brian Seman	SE Manufacturing	brian.s@semanllc.com	Technology & Manufacturing
Kimberly Hazelgrove	Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio	khazelgrove@secondharvestfoodbank.org	Service Industry
Ryan Keller	SecureSight	rkeller@securesight.co	Information Technology
Nicole McCaffrey	SkillsSpout	nicole@skillspout.com	Information Technology
Patricia Miller, CEO	Spacebound	officersbin@spacebound.com	Technology
Robert Miller, Manager IT Services and Solutions	Spacebound	emiller@spacebound.com	Technology
Cassandra Baumhardt, School and Library Sales	Spacebound	cbaumhardt@spaceboundsolutions.com	Technology

Katie Smith	SpaceBound	KSmith@SpaceBound.com	Technology
Michael Vasiloff	SpaceBound	mvasiloff@spacebound.com	Technology
Mike Potts, Owner	Superprinter	superprinter60@gmail.com	Service industry
Ray Anthony	T & M Concrete	CTFIRE210@aol.com	Manufacturing
John Lorenz, Retired Business Executive	Technology & Manufacturing, retired	jhlorenz.consulting@gmail.com	Technology & Manufacturing
Erin Hlavin, Director of HR	Thogus Products	ehlavin@thogus.com	Manufacturing
Matt Frombach	UH Hospitals	Matt.Frombach@uhhospitals.org	Healthcare
Tricia Gadd	UH Hospitals	Tricia.Gadd@uhhospitals.org	Healthcare
Ryan Aroney, Director	United Way	ryan.aroney@uwloraingcounty.org	Philanthropy
Katie Lee (added 9.30.25)	Cogence Alliance	klee@karpinskieng.com	Industry Sector
Ken Fraelich(added 9.30.25)	Common Ground	kfraelich@commongroundcenter.org	Non Profit

Note: May add cells as needed.

Schedule of Meetings

Planning meetings for the (Academic Year) school year include:

Quarter 1 Meeting: October 2, 2025	Quarter 2 Meeting: November 2, 2025
Quarter 3 Meeting: March 3, 2025	Quarter 4 Meeting: May 5, 2025

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

Response → Many of our initiatives are supported by Special Ops Task Forces composed of members from business, K-12 education, higher education, and community-based organizations. These task forces meet regularly throughout the year to collaborate and ensure the objectives of each initiative are achieved. Their continuous involvement allows us to maintain momentum and adjust strategies as needed, ensuring successful outcomes.

September 10th - Career Pathways Expo Special Ops Task Force

September 24th - Career Pathways Expo Special Ops Task Force

October 8th - Career Pathways Expo Special Ops Task Force

October 22nd - Career Pathways Expo Special Ops Task Force

Planning Committee Meetings TBD

- Career Navigators Roll Out
- YouScience Initiative Roll Out
- Real World Student Experiences Initiatives Roll Out
- IRC, Job Shadowing, Pre-apprenticeship, Internship Initiative Roll Out

For an updated list of our meetings, visit our website at sites.google.com/esclc.org/loraincountybac/meeting-dates or click on the “Meeting Dates” tab.

Business Advisory Council Mission and Vision for the 2025-2026 School Year

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

2025-26 BAC SUMMARY

The Lorain County Business Advisory Council (BAC), coordinated by the Educational Service Center of Lorain County (ESCLC), represents all 15 school districts in Lorain County, with 100% participation. Each year, the BAC strengthens the alignment between education and workforce needs by bringing schools, higher education, and business partners together to prepare students for the future of work.

For 2025–26, the BAC will focus on five major initiatives:

- **YouScience Expansion Project** – scaling aptitude and interest assessments to better align students with pathways. *(District rating: 4.5 out of 5)*
- **Industry-Recognized Credentials, Job Shadowing, Internships, and Pre-Apprenticeships** – expanding credentialing and structured work-based learning opportunities. *(District rating: 5 out of 5)*
- **Expand Business Partnerships Across Lorain County** – recruiting and onboarding new business partners to grow the network. *(Not polled in survey)*
- **Hands-On Career Pathways Expo** – hosting a large-scale, interactive event to connect students and employers. *(District rating: 5 out of 5)*
- **Real World Student Experiences** – building immersive events across healthcare, IT, manufacturing, skilled trades, and other high-demand fields. *(District rating: 4.91 out of 5)*

Together, these initiatives represent a natural progression from prior years, expanding successful pilots while creating new opportunities for both students and employers. Feedback was gathered through a survey of each district’s central point of contact ([Survey Link](#) at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSea0r4fBdT3K4BuetYQWHvESv0vCDsgXSBBi9X52bl9xxwDeg/viewform>), which confirmed strong support for the 2025–26 plan.

Supporting documentation, archived events, and planning resources are available on the [LorainCountyBAC.org](https://loraincountybac.org) website.

DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR FUTURE CAREERS

Describe how the business advisory council plans to Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers for the 2025-2026 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.

INITIATIVE 1 - YouScience Expansion Project (District rating: 4.5/5)

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

Why / Need for the initiative:

Students often make career decisions based solely on their interests, which can shift frequently and are shaped by limited exposure. Aptitudes, however, are stable indicators of natural strengths and potential. Without tools to capture these aptitudes, many students miss pathways in STEM, technical trades, and high demand industries that align with their abilities. Businesses consistently report gaps in aligning student preparation with regional workforce needs, emphasizing the importance of data-driven career guidance.

Summary of the initiative:

The Lorain County BAC will build on the successful pilot from the 2024-25 school year to expand the use of YouScience across districts in 2025–26. This platform provides each student with a profile combining aptitudes and interests, which counselors and Career Navigators will use to guide career advising, align coursework, and connect students with authentic experiences such as job shadowing, internships, pre-apprenticeships, and Real World Student Experiences. The Lorain County BAC will aggregate results to identify countywide strengths and gaps, share insights with business partners, and use the data to inform workforce development strategies. Importantly, YouScience results will also be used to select and match students for Real World Student Experiences, ensuring participants are placed in opportunities aligned with their aptitudes as well as their interests.

Shared cost structure:

To ensure long-term sustainability, the educational service center of Lorain County (ESCLC), which carries out the work of the Lorain County Business Advisory Council, in partnership with LCJVS and LCCC, has committed to funding YouScience for three years with a gradual cost-share model: **Year 1 – BAC/partners cover 90%, districts 10%; Year 2 – BAC/partners cover 75%, districts 25%; Year 3 – BAC/partners and districts split costs evenly (50/50).**

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

Survey feedback indicates strong support for this initiative, with an average district rating of 4.45 out of 5 for YouScience. This demonstrates that schools see clear value in expanding access to aptitude and interest data as part of their career readiness work.

However, we recognize that a small number of districts are currently in multi-year contracts with other vendors offering similar tools, such as Naviance or SchoolLinks. Based on current adoption patterns, we project that approximately 75% of Lorain County districts will participate in 2025–26, representing the majority of the county's student population.

We estimate that 12 of our 15 school districts (80%) will utilize YouScience as part of their career readiness programming. Grades 7–12 represent approximately 46% of our total student population of 38,445 (~17,685 students). Based on adoption across these 12 districts, this means about 14,150 students — or 37% of our total student body — will be directly impacted by YouScience.

Our goal is to ensure that participating districts integrate YouScience results into their counseling and career advising programs, and that the platform becomes a consistent tool for aligning students with pathways and experiences. Over time, as existing vendor contracts expire, additional districts may join, increasing the percentage of students impacted across Lorain County.

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

Businesses across Lorain County are supportive of the YouScience Expansion Project because it improves the match between students and workforce opportunities. By using aptitude results, the BAC can connect students to activities such as the *Real World Student Experiences* series, pre-apprenticeships, internships, and job shadows that align with their natural strengths. Employers benefit from having students who are more likely to thrive in their field, making the time and resources invested more meaningful.

Key sectors represented include healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, government, and the skilled trades. Businesses in these industries see YouScience as a tool that ensures students who visit their sites or participate in their programs are genuinely interested and capable, which strengthens both student engagement and the employer talent pipeline.

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

The YouScience Expansion Project equips students with a deeper understanding of their own aptitudes and how those strengths connect to in-demand careers. By identifying areas such as problem-solving, spatial reasoning, critical thinking, or technical orientation, students can make more informed choices about pathways in STEM, healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, and skilled trades. This directly supports the development of professional skills like adaptability, communication, and decision-making, while also connecting students to industry-recognized technical competencies.

For educators and counselors, YouScience provides actionable data that strengthens career advising practices. It enables them to guide students toward coursework, credentials, and experiences that align with real workforce needs, while also ensuring that employers interact with students who are prepared and motivated to engage in authentic career-connected learning.

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 YouScience Expansion Project addresses the ongoing challenge of aligning student preparation with the region's talent pipeline needs. Employers consistently report shortages in skilled workers for industries such as healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, and the skilled trades. Students often overlook these fields because they don't know what they don't know, and their natural aptitudes are not identified early or connected to real opportunities.

YouScience helps close this gap by providing clear data on student strengths, including problem-solving, spatial reasoning, numerical reasoning, and technical orientation. These results give the Lorain BAC and business partners a countywide view of student capabilities, which can be compared against in-demand career fields identified by labor market data. We will select students to participate in our real world student experiences based on their aptitudes in addition to their interests in the 2025-26 school year.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

The YouScience Expansion Project creates an equitable platform for students with disabilities to explore career pathways. Because the tool measures aptitudes rather than relying only on past performance or self-reported interests, it highlights strengths that might otherwise go unnoticed. This allows educators and counselors to identify opportunities that align with a student's natural abilities, even if academic challenges or disability-related barriers exist.

For students with disabilities, YouScience results can guide more personalized advising, connect them with tailored experiences in the *Real World Student Experiences* series, and help schools document evidence of career exploration activities for transition planning. By matching students based on aptitudes, the initiative ensures that all learners —

including those with disabilities — are considered for meaningful career-connected opportunities.

INITIATIVE 2 - IRCs, Job Shadowing, Internships, and Pre-Apprenticeships (District rating: 5/5)

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

Why / Need for the initiative:

Employers across Lorain County continue to highlight the shortage of students leaving high school with the technical skills, credentials, and work experience needed for immediate employment or further training. Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs), the OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeships, and internships provide clear, validated pathways that strengthen both employability and postsecondary options. Without intentional support, students may graduate without these critical experiences, leaving local skills gaps unaddressed.

Summary of the initiative:

The Lorain County BAC will work with districts, business partners, and sector groups to expand the number of students earning IRCs and OMJ Readiness Seals, as well as engaging in job shadowing, pre-apprenticeships, and internships. This initiative builds on momentum from 2024–25, when districts reported 29 students earning IRCs (including 24 at Amherst and 5 at Columbia) and 12 students completing the county’s first manufacturing pre-apprenticeship at Firelands High School. While job shadowing has long taken place locally, the BAC will establish a more formal process to connect business partners directly with schools so these opportunities are more consistent and equitable across all 15 districts.

The BAC will coordinate information sessions, promote employer participation, and provide tools for schools to integrate credential and work-based learning into student pathways. Employers will be engaged through BAC meetings and direct outreach to host interns and pre-apprenticeship students, while educators will be supported with professional learning on how to embed credentials into coursework. In addition, the BAC will explore supporting districts in launching structured internships to provide longer-term experiences that build both technical and professional skills.

Sustainability:

This initiative will be tracked annually through credential and seal completion data, as well as participation in job shadows, internships and pre-apprenticeships. The goal is to ensure consistent year-over-year growth, with BAC communication channels (newsletters, website, meetings) used to celebrate progress and encourage further adoption. By formalizing job shadow connections and exploring internships, the BAC will create a sustainable, countywide system that ensures more students graduate with credentials, real-world experience, and stronger ties to local employers.

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

All 15 Lorain County districts are eligible to expand student opportunities with IRCs, job shadowing, internships and pre-apprenticeships. Survey results show strong support for expanding work-based learning and credentialing opportunities, with *this initiative receiving an average rating of 4.9 out of 5 from districts*. This reflects a clear recognition of the value in providing students with credentials and real-world experiences that prepare them for immediate entry into the workforce or postsecondary training.

Over time, as more employers engage and districts expand their offerings, participation is expected to increase, further boosting the percentage of students graduating with credentials and work-based experiences across Lorain County.

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

Our primary partners for this initiative include businesses across multiple high-demand industries, and we anticipate working closely with them as we roll out expanded opportunities for IRCs, job shadows, internships, and pre-apprenticeships:

DRAFT PROPOSAL

- Manufacturing (LCMSP partners): AJ Rose Manufacturing, Thogus Products, Bendix, EMC Precision, and Cutting Dynamics.
 - *Role:* Define industry-recognized skill needs, host students for job shadows, explore mentor interns, and provide credential-based pre-apprenticeship opportunities (e.g., OSHA-10, FANUC robotics).
- Healthcare: Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital and University Hospitals.
 - *Role:* Offer job shadows in clinical settings, guide districts in aligning coursework with healthcare careers, provide internships, and support credential-linked pre-apprenticeship pathways such as STNA.
- Information Technology: Spacebound and Hyland Software.
 - *Role:* Design IT-focused job shadows, explore structured internships, support IT-related credential exploration, and mentor students in pre-apprenticeship or extended project-based roles.
- Skilled Trades & Construction: Rudolph Libbe Group.
 - *Role:* Provide hands-on job shadow opportunities on construction projects, explore structured internships in the trades, and deliver pre-apprenticeship experiences through the Construction Trades Challenge.
- Education & Workforce Partners: Lorain County JVS, Lorain County Community College, and State Support Team Region 2 (SSTR2).
 - *Role:* Support integration of credentials into curriculum, ensure alignment with state readiness measures, and provide professional learning for educators implementing these programs.

Business partners serve as co-designers and hosts, shaping expectations, mentoring students, and providing feedback to ensure that experiences at every level — job shadows, internships, and pre-apprenticeships — prepare students for in-demand careers.

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

This initiative provides students with both technical competencies and professional skills that are directly aligned with regional workforce needs. Through job shadows, internships, and pre-apprenticeships, students gain exposure to in-demand technical skills such as advanced manufacturing processes, healthcare credentials (e.g., STNA), IT troubleshooting and programming, and skilled trades applications. These experiences also reinforce industry-recognized standards, including OSHA-10, FANUC robotics, and healthcare safety protocols, giving students a competitive advantage when entering the workforce or postsecondary training.

At the same time, students develop professional skills—communication, teamwork, time management, problem-solving, and adaptability—by engaging with real employers in authentic workplace settings. These transferable skills are consistently identified by businesses as essential for long-term success, regardless of industry.

Educators also benefit by gaining a clearer understanding of how technical and professional skills are applied in the workplace. Through direct collaboration with employers and BAC professional learning opportunities, teachers and counselors can better align classroom instruction and advising with in-demand careers, ensuring students are more fully prepared to meet the needs of Lorain County's talent pipeline.

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?

This initiative addresses a well-documented skills gap in Lorain County and Northeast Ohio: too few students graduate with the industry credentials and hands-on work experience needed to fill positions in high-demand fields. We are using the data from Ohio Means Jobs regional partner Team NEO's [2024 Aligning Opportunities Report](#). Employers in healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, and the skilled trades report ongoing shortages of entry-level workers who can demonstrate both technical competency and professional readiness.

By increasing opportunities for students to earn Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs) and participate in job shadowing, internships and pre-apprenticeships, the initiative strengthens the pipeline of students prepared to meet regional workforce needs. These credentials and experiences are aligned with state-identified in-demand jobs and supported by labor market data showing growth in sectors such as healthcare support, advanced manufacturing, and information technology.

Survey feedback reinforces this priority, with the initiative receiving an average rating of 4.9 out of 5, signaling strong district support for expanding work-based learning and credential opportunities that directly address workforce shortages.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

This initiative creates expanded access for students with disabilities to participate in meaningful career pathways. Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs) often include accommodations and alternative testing formats, ensuring that students with disabilities can demonstrate competency in high-demand technical areas. Job shadowing, internships and Pre-apprenticeships also provide structured, hands-on environments where students can apply their skills with appropriate support in place.

For schools, these opportunities can be directly tied to IEP transition plans, helping students meet postsecondary goals while gaining real-world experience. By ensuring that work-based learning and credential opportunities are inclusive, the Lorain County BAC supports equitable access to professional and technical skill development, preparing students with disabilities to transition successfully into employment or further training.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Describe how the business advisory council plans to Build Partnerships for the 2025-2026 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 - Expand Business Partnerships Across Lorain County

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.

Why / Need for the initiative:

Since our inception in 2018, the Lorain County BAC has built strong relationships within the education sector. However, there remains room for growth in engaging additional businesses. Expanding partnerships ensures students gain access to real-world career opportunities and helps businesses strengthen their future workforce.

Action Plan:

Each district will recruit at least one new business partner, with a collective goal of adding 15 new partners during the 2025–26 school year. This builds on last year’s initiative, when the BAC set and pursued a similar target of 15 new partners 2024-25 BAC Plan Lorain County. Last year, we added eight new businesses to the Lorain County BAC. New partners will be supported through onboarding resources, integration into BAC meetings and events, and inclusion in the [interactive membership map](#). The Director of Workforce Development will also meet with each new partner to align opportunities such as IRC selection, job shadowing, internships, pre-apprenticeships, classroom presentations and the option to participate in designing a “Real World Student Experience”.

In addition, the [2025 Hands-On Career Pathways Expo](#) is expected to serve as a major driver of new partnerships. Many of the businesses participating in the Expo are not yet members of the BAC, and the event will provide a natural entry point to engage them in ongoing collaboration with schools and students. We are finalizing the details of this event as our BAC plan is being completed.

Partnership Alignment & Effectiveness:

By expanding its network, the BAC strengthens alignment with in-demand industries including manufacturing, healthcare, technology, and public service. This year’s initiative continues that momentum by focusing on both recruitment and deeper engagement. At least 70% of newly recruited businesses will be targeted for active student involvement within the first year of membership.

Progression from Previous Year:

This initiative is a direct continuation of last year’s plan, demonstrating the BAC’s steady growth strategy. By systematically expanding membership each year, the BAC not only increases opportunities for students and educators but also ensures businesses see a clear return on investment through talent pipeline development.

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

The Lorain County BAC will continue to gather business and industry feedback through multiple channels. At quarterly BAC meetings, employers share perspectives on workforce needs, industry trends, and the skills students must develop to succeed. These conversations are structured into the agenda and paired with educator share-outs to encourage two-way dialogue.

Outside of meetings, feedback is collected through direct outreach, employer surveys, and debrief sessions following student events such as the Hands-On Career Pathways Expo and Real World Student Experiences. The BAC Director also meets individually with new and existing partners to identify opportunities, challenges, and suggestions for improvement.

This feedback directly informs council decision-making, helping to shape initiatives, adjust programming, and ensure alignment with in-demand careers across Lorain County.

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 Lorain County BAC will actively use employer feedback to shape programming that develops relevant skills for both students and educators. Business and industry partners regularly share workforce needs and skill expectations at quarterly meetings and through debrief sessions following events like the Hands-On Career Pathways Expo and the Real

World Student Experiences series.

This feedback will guide the design of student activities — ensuring that credentials, job shadows, and internships and pre-apprenticeships are tied to in-demand competencies — and inform professional learning opportunities for educators, such as externships and targeted workshops. By integrating industry input into every stage of planning, the BAC ensures that skills taught in schools are aligned with current and emerging workforce needs across healthcare, manufacturing, IT, and skilled trades.

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

Identified industry partners will collaborate directly with the Lorain County BAC to co-develop programming that builds in-demand skills. Employers will provide input on the specific technical and professional skills needed in their industries, and the BAC will translate this feedback into student experiences such as job shadowing, internships, pre-apprenticeships, and the Hands-On Career Pathways Expo. They also play an instrumental role as we partner with them as we develop our Real World Student Experiences series in partnership with local businesses. Each Real World Student Experience is co-developed with a specific business partner. As planning takes place, the partner is key to the design of the experience. The event, often promoted as a competition, is developed based on the business partners resources, and ultimately provides students with engaging dialogue and activities designed to communicate and provide students with relevant in-demand skills.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

Business and industry partners will play an active role in ensuring that career readiness opportunities are inclusive for students with disabilities. Employers engaged through the Lorain County BAC will provide job shadows, pre-apprenticeship activities, and Real World Student Experiences that include appropriate support and accommodations, allowing all students to demonstrate their skills in authentic workplace settings.

Partners will also collaborate with educators to align experiences with IEP transition goals, helping students with disabilities build both technical and professional skills needed for successful employment. By focusing on strengths and aptitudes, rather than limitations, partners help create equitable opportunities that prepare students with disabilities to enter the workforce with confidence.

This inclusive approach ensures that the BAC's career readiness initiatives benefit the full spectrum of learners across Lorain County.

INITIATIVE 2 - Hands-On Career Pathways Expo (District rating: 5/5)

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.

Need:

Students and businesses both identified the need for more authentic, interactive opportunities to connect. Career fairs alone have not provided the depth or engagement necessary for students to truly understand career options or for businesses to connect with the right future talent.

Action Plan:

In 2025–26, the Lorain County BAC will host the [2025 Hands-On Career Pathways Expo](https://sites.google.com/esclc.org/loraincountybac/career-pathways-expo). This countywide event will bring together business partners, sector organizations, skilled trades, and higher education to create interactive, career-connected stations where students explore in-demand industries. Unlike traditional fairs, this Expo emphasizes hands-on engagement — letting students try tools, practice skills, and interact directly with professionals. Each exhibitor will provide a 30 second to 2 minute hands-on activity designed to help students understand what careers look and feel like. We currently have 3,000 students enrolled and have had interest from our non BAC schools. We hope to open this event up to additional schools following the pilot. As of the date of this plan, we have approximately 50 businesses who have committed to bringing one or more hands-on career stations.

We'll use the event to grow our partner base — many businesses at the Expo are not yet BAC members. We anticipate onboarding new businesses directly from the Expo through follow-ups, onboarding support, and inclusion in BAC's interactive partner map. Feedback from both students and industry participants will inform future event design and guide alignment with workforce needs.

Partnership Alignment & Effectiveness:

The Expo aligns with in-demand sectors in Lorain County — healthcare, manufacturing, IT, government, and the trades — and is co-developed with industry sector partners, higher education, workforce boards, and OhioMeansJobs Centers, our economic development board, OhioMeansJobs, Lorain County Community College and the Lorain County JVS. This initiative builds on last year's partner recruitment work by creating a flagship event that strengthens engagement and visibility of BAC partners.

Resources / Reference:

More information about the Career Pathways Expo can be found here:
<https://sites.google.com/esclc.org/loraincountybac/career-pathways-expo>

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

The Lorain County BAC is intentionally engaging businesses in both the design and review of the Hands-On Career Pathways Expo. A 29-member planning committee has been established to shape the event, with many representatives coming directly from business and industry, including partners such as Rudolph Libbe Group and Spacebound.

All business partners were invited to participate in the planning process, ensuring that the Expo reflects authentic workplace skills and aligns with employer expectations. These partners provide direct feedback on the structure of activities, the alignment of experiences to career pathways, and the types of skills highlighted.

This feedback loop ensures that the Expo is not only engaging for students but also relevant to the workforce pipeline, giving employers a direct voice in the decision-making process while informing how the BAC structures future experiences.

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 Lorain County BAC will use business and industry feedback to directly shape both student and educator programming. We will survey participants from all stakeholder groups following our 2025 Hands-On Career Pathways Expo. This data will be used to inform the future expo events.

For educators, feedback will be built in, allowing teachers and counselors to better understand industry standards and bring those expectations into the classroom. Employers will also help refine credential offerings and skill-building

activities to align with regional labor market needs.

By incorporating employer input into planning and implementation, the BAC ensures that its initiatives strengthen both technical and professional skills for students while keeping educators current with evolving workforce expectations.

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

Identified industry partners will collaborate with the Lorain County BAC to co-develop skills by shaping both student and educator experiences. Businesses will design hands-on activities for events such as the Career Pathways Expo that students practice real workplace skills directly connected to in-demand jobs.

The Hands-On Career Pathways Expo will also foster relationships that can build pre-apprenticeships, internships, and credential-based programs that align with their workforce needs. This co-development process ensures that skills taught and practiced are authentic, up-to-date, and aligned with the regional economy, strengthening both student career readiness and educator capacity.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

The Hands-On Career Pathways Expo will be designed to welcome and accommodate students with disabilities so they can participate in the event to the extent possible. While the event is not designed specifically for students with disabilities, the council and its business partners will work to ensure that activities are adaptable and that accommodations are made where needed. This approach will provide students with equitable opportunities to explore careers, develop professional skills, and connect with employers in high-demand industries.

By involving business partners in the planning and delivery, the Expo also encourages employers to consider inclusive practices, helping strengthen overall career readiness for students with disabilities across Lorain County.

COORDINATE EXPERIENCES

Describe how the business advisory council plans to Coordinate Experiences for the 2025- 2026 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 - Real World Student Experiences (District rating: 4.91/5)

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

Why / Need for the initiative:

Students need more than classroom learning to understand career pathways. Employers across Lorain County consistently emphasize the importance of hands-on experiences — workplace visits, job shadows, pre-apprenticeships, and internships — to help students build technical and professional skills that align with in-demand jobs. Traditional

career fairs and presentations are not sufficient to prepare students for workforce expectations.

Summary of the initiative:

The Lorain County BAC will expand its Real World Student Experiences series in 2025–26 to provide immersive, hands-on opportunities for students across multiple industries. Key experiences we will build on include:

- Healthcare: Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital Student Experience (3rd year running).
- Skilled Trades: Construction Trades Challenge in partnership with the Rudolph Libbe Group.
- Technology: IT Critical Thinking Challenge pilot experience.

In addition, the BAC will replicate many additional successful experiences from last year, while continuing to refine and add activities as new opportunities emerge. A full record of archived student events can be found here:

<https://sites.google.com/escl.org/loraincountybac/real-world-student-experiences/archived-events-students>

These programs are designed to be interactive and skill-focused, moving beyond exposure to engagement. Students will participate in structured activities such as team-based challenges, mock trials, simulations, and applied math/technical exercises, all aligned to industry skill sets.

Progression from prior years:

This initiative builds directly on successful pilots in healthcare, manufacturing, IT, and the skilled trades that now engage hundreds of students annually. In 2024–25, the BAC added government and IT pathways; in 2025–26, the council will further expand participation, refine programming based on feedback, and add new partners. We are currently talking to representatives from Ford to explore how we can create an immersive Real World Student Experiences with Ford.

Integration with other initiatives:

Student selection for these opportunities will increasingly use YouScience aptitude data to ensure participants are matched to experiences aligned with their strengths. Feedback from employers will be gathered after each event to continuously improve program design.

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

All 15 Lorain County school districts will benefit from the Real World Student Experiences initiative:

- Amherst Exempted Village Schools
- Avon Lake City Schools
- Avon Local Schools
- Clearview Local Schools
- Columbia Local Schools
- Elyria City Schools
- Firelands Local Schools
- Keystone Local Schools
- Lorain City Schools
- Midview Local Schools
- North Ridgeville City Schools
- Oberlin City Schools
- Sheffield-Sheffield Lake City Schools
- Wellington Exempted Village Schools
- Lorain County JVS

In 2024–25, 100% of BAC member districts participated in at least one Real World Student Experience, and we anticipate full participation will continue in 2025–26. Based on enrollment projections across events in healthcare, manufacturing, IT, and government, the BAC anticipates 300–350 students will take part in these hands-on experiences during the upcoming

school year.

List all businesses and industries that will be involved.

Businesses and industries engaged in the *Real World Student Experiences* initiative represent a wide range of sectors. From last year's events, participating partners included healthcare (Cleveland Clinic), technology and IT (Pathways to Programming, IT Critical Thinking Challenge with Spacebound and Hyland Software), skilled trades and construction (Construction Trades Challenge with Rudolph Libbe), law enforcement and forensics (Investigating Evidence, Careers with the FBI, including the FBI and Lorain County Forensics Laboratory), and judicial and government agencies (Court of Common Pleas, Summer Honorary Bailiff, Careers in Government). The Lorain County BAC will replicate many of these successful experiences in 2025–26 while also introducing new opportunities. A full archive of past events is available here: [Real World Student Experiences – Archived Events](#).

We don't know what new activities will evolve this year, but we will replicate these and add new experiences as our partnerships grow. Our *Hands-On Career Pathways Expo* is also providing a great venue to get new BAC members excited about creating a specific experience with their business.

What role does business play in planning and implementation?

Business partners are integral to both the design and execution of the Real World Student Experiences series. For each experience, the Lorain County BAC works with industry partners to co-design activities that reflect real workplace roles and skills. For example, for the Construction Trades Challenge, Rudolph Libbe Group helped develop the event scope, tasks, and hands-on challenge details. Their input shapes everything from safety protocols to the tools and materials students use.

Businesses also host site visits, mentor student teams, provide staff to lead and judge challenges, and support logistics. Moreover, in planning documents like the one for the Rudolph Libbe Construction Trades Challenge ([Planning Doc](#)), BAC and partners design the agenda together based on feedback to ensure experiences are safe, relevant, and provide meaningful exposure.

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:

- A link to the previous year's joint statement or a copy of the joint statement.
 - <https://sites.google.com/escl.org/loraincountybac/resources/joint-statements>
- 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:

1. **How has your business advisory council helped students prepare and successfully enter the local workforce?**
 - a. **Include any curriculum changes influenced by your business advisory council (state-specific initiatives, outcomes, and data).**
 - b. **Include how your business advisory council is preparing students with both technical and professional skills needed to address local attainment and talent pipeline needs.**
 - c. **How has your business advisory council and its members supported students in work-based learning (i.e., internships, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships) opportunities? (NOTE: Career exploration activities such as job shadowing, mock interviews, and mentoring should not be included in data.)**
 - d. **What process has been established by your business advisory council to approve work-based learning in compliance with the College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness measure (ORC3302.03) for the district report card?**
 - e. **What are some examples of high-quality, work-based learning supported by your business advisory council? How many of your business partners have accepted students into work-based learning experiences?**
 - f. **How has work-based learning benefited students and employers?**
 - g. **What percentage of students have earned an in-demand, Industry-Recognized Credential because of the work-based learning experience with employers within your business advisory council?**

Student Preparation & Workforce Readiness

How has your business advisory council helped students prepare and successfully enter the local workforce? Include any curriculum changes influenced by your business advisory council (state-specific initiatives, outcomes, and data).

We have helped students prepare and successfully enter the local workforce by coordinating immersive, sector-based experiences and influencing local curriculum. Across the county, BAC programming reached over 240 students through healthcare, IT, manufacturing, construction, justice, and sustainability experiences. For example, 77 students participated in the Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital rotations, 49 in Hyland's *Pathways to Programming*, 27 in the Construction Trades Challenge with Rudolph Libbe, 23 in the IT Critical Thinking Challenge with SpaceBound, and 35 in the countywide Careers in Government competition. Smaller, high-impact groups participated in Metro Parks paid internships (6), Court of Common Pleas (7), Forensics Science Exploration (10), the FBI Career Exploration (27), and the Honorary Bailiff summer program (6).

At the district level, schools reported programmatic changes influenced by the BAC, including: Lorain's creation of three pre-apprenticeship programs spanning healthcare, IT, and business across five CTE programs; Amherst's Robotics and Advanced Manufacturing program in 2024–25 and a new Business and Entrepreneurship program in 2025–26; Columbia's launch of a Career Readiness Program; Firelands' addition of two new pre-apprenticeships; and Sheffield's integration of YouScience into the 8th and 11th grade curriculum to measure student aptitudes. These changes align with state initiatives to expand access to Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs) and provide stronger connections between curriculum and workforce readiness.

Include how your business advisory council is preparing students with both technical and professional skills needed to address local attainment and talent pipeline needs.

The BAC is preparing students with technical skills by embedding real-world practice into every event. Students coded HTML and CSS at Hyland, diagnosed and repaired IT hardware/software issues at SpaceBound, tested chemical samples in forensic labs, matched trade tools with career roles in construction, and learned hospital operations in healthcare rotations. Alongside technical learning, students built professional skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. The Careers in Government competition required students to collaborate, analyze evidence, and present findings under time pressure, while internships such as Metro Parks required reliability, documentation, and reflection. Together, these experiences meet both the hard skill demands of Lorain County's talent pipeline and the professional readiness employers request most often.

How has your business advisory council and its members supported students in work-based learning (i.e., internships,

apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships) opportunities?

The BAC has expanded authentic work-based learning (WBL) opportunities through internships, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships. Six students completed the Metro Parks “Explore U” paid internship, earning \$12/hour while rotating through multiple departments. Construction-focused WBL included the Construction Trades Challenge, which connected 27 students with apprenticeship pathways and certification requirements. At Firelands High School, the manufacturing pre-apprenticeship program (developed with BAC partners) was expanded to include two new pre-apprenticeships in 2024–25. Lorain created three new pre-apprenticeship programs spanning healthcare, IT, and business across five CTE programs. North Ridgeville added an OHSAA Officiating credential, with 28 students earning the IRC during the 2024–25 school year.

In addition, districts across Lorain County filed new pre-apprenticeship programs with the state for 2024–25. Amherst (4), Avon (4), Avon Lake (4), Clearview (4), Elyria (4), Firelands (2), Keystone (4), Lorain City (4), Midview (2), North Ridgeville (4), Oberlin (4), Sheffield (1) all received approval through a registered apprenticeship partner. Of these, North Ridgeville already had active students enrolled during the 2024–25 school year. This growth reflects a countywide commitment to embedding WBL into the high school experience and scaling access to state-recognized pre-apprenticeship pathways.

At the Lorain County JVS, pre-apprenticeships span multiple career clusters: Health Sciences, IT, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Construction/Transportation/Architecture, and Education. These programs cover dozens of pathways, from Allied Health and Welding to Culinary and Cybersecurity. JVS also expanded access in 2024–25 when the state consolidated its original four pre-apprenticeship applications into one comprehensive model. This ensures that all students across JVS’s programs are connected to state-recognized pre-apprenticeship opportunities. 99 students complete pre-apprenticeships.

What process has been established by your business advisory council to approve work-based learning in compliance with the College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness measure (ORC 3302.03) for the district report card?

Our school districts approve their own student work-based learning opportunities within each district. The role of the Lorain County Business Advisory Council is to support and inform those efforts in several ways:

- We share information on career-technical education pathways approved by the Department of Education and Workforce during our ESC-led curriculum network meetings, school counselor network meetings, career pathway network meetings, and superintendent meetings.
- We connect districts to local business partners who may be in need of high school-aged workers through our BAC meetings and our interactive partner map on the BAC website.
- We provide updated resources from the Department of Education and Workforce and from local businesses to encourage the development of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities within the districts we serve.

At this time, the BAC does not directly approve individual WBL placements. Instead, our focus is on equipping districts with resources, pathways, and business connections so they can manage approval and compliance with the College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness measure locally.

What are some examples of high-quality, work-based learning supported by our business advisory council? How many of your business partners have accepted students into work-based learning experiences?**Examples of high-quality WBL supported by the BAC include:**

- Metro Parks Explore U Internship: Paid, rotational experience across conservation, operations, recreation, and administration. 6 students participated.
- Construction Trades Challenge: Hands-on facility and field challenge with Rudolph Libbe, GEM Inc., connecting students directly with apprenticeship pathways.
- Healthcare rotations at Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital: Seven monthly sessions where students interacted with staff across multiple departments, documenting roles, education requirements, and reflections.
- District-level expansion of WBL programs: Firelands added two new pre-apprenticeships; Lorain created three spanning healthcare, IT, and business; and North Ridgeville students earned 28 OHSAA Officiating credentials.

How has work-based learning benefited students and employers?

Work-based learning has benefited students by providing direct, hands-on practice in career fields aligned with Ohio's in-demand jobs list and helping them develop both technical and professional skills. Students reported greater confidence in choosing pathways after participating in internships such as the Metro Parks "Explore U" program and Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital student experience. These opportunities not only exposed students to multiple departments but also connected them with mentors who explained career entry points and advancement. Employers benefited by engaging with a future talent pipeline, showcasing the variety of roles available in their industries, and shaping instruction at the school level. For example, manufacturing partners such as Rudolph Libbe used the Construction Trades Challenge to introduce students to apprenticeship pathways, while our' pre-apprenticeship models allowed employers to interact with students as schools connect with local businesses as pre-apprenticeships take place.

What percentage of students have earned an in-demand, Industry-Recognized Credential because of the work-based learning experience with employers within your business advisory council?

Through the combined efforts of the BAC and district-level programming, dozens of students earned Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs) directly tied to work-based learning experiences. Amherst reported 24 students earning FANUC Handling Tool & Operations certifications through its RISE program; North Ridgeville reported 28 students earning OHSAA Officiating credentials; and Columbia, Lorain, and Firelands reported additional IRCs earned through pre-apprenticeship programs in manufacturing, healthcare, IT, and business. Based on district reporting and student participation data, these credentials provide not only a measurable outcome for the state report card but also meaningful career entry points for students as they transition into the workforce. We estimate about 1% of high school students earn an IRC.

2. How has your business advisory council supported mentorship programs and/or provided networking opportunities for students and professionals on a regular basis?

The BAC supports mentorship and networking by creating consistent opportunities for students and educators to interact with professionals across multiple sectors. This includes both countywide events coordinated by the BAC and district-level activities shaped by BAC connections.

At the county level, Real World Student Experiences gave students access to mentors in healthcare, IT, manufacturing, government, and law. Professionals guided hands-on projects, coached students through challenges, and shared career pathways. Similarly, at LCJVS, all work-based learning experiences embed a mentorship component, with professionals providing structured feedback through the OMJ rubric. Educators also benefit from professional networking through the Educator Externship and School Counselor Bootcamp, maintaining connections with businesses that carry back into classrooms and advising.

Districts also reported specific ways the BAC supports mentorship and networking:

- Marion L. Steele High School: Consults the BAC when planning its annual Career Fair, attended by juniors and seniors, featuring employers, vendors, and military recruiters.
- Multiple districts: BAC field trips and guest speakers connect students to professionals and provide lists of business partners used for planning career fairs and job shadowing.
- Firelands and others: BAC networking helps create ongoing industry connections, even when formal mentorship programs are not yet in place.
- Common practices reported: employer panels, pairing students with mentors, career fairs, on-site company visits, and links to community mentoring programs (e.g., Big Brothers Big Sisters).
- Skill development: districts emphasized that these activities build communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability.

While not every district has launched a formal mentorship program, most noted that networking through BAC events and resources is already providing significant value, and several expressed interest in expanding mentorship further in the coming year.

3. What career activities have been influenced by your business advisory council? Include districts involved and data on students involved in each activity.

The BAC has influenced a wide range of career activities that provide students with meaningful exposure to local industries. At the county level, BAC-led Real World Student Experiences engaged over 260 students across healthcare, IT, manufacturing,

construction, government, justice, and environmental sectors. These events not only connected students to professionals but also gave them hands-on, career-aligned practice.

Countywide BAC Career Activities (2024–25):

- Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital Rotations – 77 students participated across 7 months (multiple districts).
- Hyland Pathways to Programming – 49 students engaged in software and coding (multiple districts).
- Construction Trades Challenge (Rudolph Libbe, GEM Inc.) – 27 students competed in a hands-on trades competition.
- IT Critical Thinking Challenge (SpaceBound) – 23 students tackled applied problem-solving scenarios.
- Careers in Government Competition – 35 students visited multiple county government offices.
- Metro Parks Explore U Internship – 6 students completed a paid, rotational internship.
- Court of Common Pleas Experience – 7 students explored careers in the justice system.
- Forensics Science Exploration – 10 students participated in lab-based activities.
- FBI Career Exploration Visit – 27 students learned about federal law enforcement careers.
- Honorary Bailiff Summer Program – 6 students participated in a stand-alone court mentorship.

District-Level Activities Influenced by the BAC (Feedback from our Districts)

- Career Fairs: Multiple districts reported redesigning career fairs with BAC input. Marion L. Steele High School consults the BAC annually for its Career Fair, which includes employers, vendors, and military recruiters.
- Pre-Apprenticeship Programs: Lorain created three new pre-apprenticeships (healthcare, IT, business); Firelands added two; and multiple districts (Midview, North Ridgeville, Elyria, Keystone, Amherst, Oberlin, Clearview, Avon, Avon Lake, Sheffield) filed new pre-apprenticeship programs with state-approved partners.
- Field Trips & Guest Speakers: Districts used the [BAC interactive map](#) and partner list to set up visits and bring in industry professionals.
- Integration of Career Tools: Sheffield implemented YouScience for 8th and 11th graders to measure aptitudes; Columbia launched a Career Readiness Program; Amherst introduced Robotics/Advanced Manufacturing (2024–25) and Business & Entrepreneurship (2025–26).
- Industry-Recognized Credentials: North Ridgeville added an OHSAA Officiating IRC with 28 students earning credentials in 2024–25; Amherst reported 24 students earning FANUC Handling Tool & Operations certifications.

Together, these countywide events and district-level activities demonstrate how the BAC influences both direct student experiences and structural program changes that expand access to career pathways across Lorain County.

4. What professional development opportunities are available through your business advisory council for teachers? Include teacher bootcamps, externships, tours, and other opportunities.

The BAC prioritizes educator professional learning as a key strategy for strengthening career readiness. By equipping teachers, counselors, and administrators with real-world workforce knowledge, districts can better guide students into high-demand pathways.

Countywide BAC-Supported Professional Development (2024–25):

- Educator Externship (5-Day, Summer 2025):
 - Agenda at tinyurl.com/LorainEdExternship25
 - 37 educators participated (34 for graduate credit, 3 non-credit).
 - Included on-site visits to [multiple businesses](#) across Lorain County.
 - Participants engaged in applied learning, networking, and reflective practice.
 - All graduate-credit participants successfully completed requirements.
- School Counselor Bootcamp (December 2024):
 - 13 counselors and transition coordinators participated in 2024–25.

- Focused on aligning advising with emerging workforce needs and included hands-on exposure to industry credentials and career pathways.
- District-Reported Professional Development Opportunities (Survey Responses):
 - Districts noted that externships and business tours organized by the BAC gave teachers firsthand knowledge of workplace expectations.
 - Educators accessed career pathway updates and networking during BAC-led curriculum, counselor, and pathway meetings.
 - Several districts emphasized that these opportunities are helping teachers and counselors better advise students, connect curriculum to industry, and expand awareness of credentials.

Through these structured opportunities, the BAC ensures that educators are connected to real employers and industry practices. This professional development directly informs curriculum decisions, advising practices, and classroom instruction across Lorain County.

5. What major decisions has your business advisory council influenced for its member school districts, and how have decisions impacted students, educators, and curriculum?

The Lorain County BAC has played a key role in shaping district decisions around curriculum, career pathways, credential offerings, and program design, with direct impact on students and educators. By leveraging feedback from business partners and providing data on in-demand careers, the BAC helps districts make decisions that align instruction with workforce needs.

District-Level Decisions Influenced by the BAC (as reported in surveys):

- Lorain City Schools: Created three pre-apprenticeship programs spanning healthcare, IT, and business across five CTE programs.
- Amherst: Launched a Robotics and Advanced Manufacturing program in 2024–25 and a new Business & Entrepreneurship program in 2025–26, both influenced by BAC conversations and business input.
- Columbia: Implemented a Career Readiness Program to expand career-focused learning opportunities.
- Firelands: Added two new pre-apprenticeships, scaling WBL options for students.
- North Ridgeville: Introduced an OHSAA Officiating credential, with 28 students earning IRCs in 2024–25.
- Sheffield: Integrated YouScience aptitude assessments into 8th and 11th grade curriculum to support advising and course planning.
- Other districts: Reported using the BAC interactive map and business connections to guide career fairs, field trips, and employer engagement strategies.

Countywide Impacts Influenced by the BAC:

- Expansion of WBL Opportunities: More than a dozen districts filed new pre-apprenticeship programs with state-approved partners for 2024–25, significantly expanding access to approved pathways.
- Curriculum Alignment: Districts reported that BAC-supported externships and PD opportunities shaped how educators integrate IRCs, pathways, and skill development into courses.
- Student Impact: Over 260 students participated in BAC-led Real World Student Experiences during 2024–25, giving districts data and feedback to inform career advising, pathway enrollment, and curriculum design.
- Educator Impact: 37 educators participated in the Educator Externship, while 13 counselors engaged in the Counselor Bootcamp, both of which influenced advising strategies and course planning in schools.

The BAC's influence is evident in both new programs launched at the district level and in countywide systems of practice (externships, pre-apprenticeships, real-world student experiences). Together, these decisions have expanded access to credentials, improved alignment between instruction and workforce demand, and provided both educators and students with more direct pathways into high-demand careers.

6. How are the members of your business advisory council representative of the job market in the area you serve? Specify industries represented on your business advisory council reflective of in-demand occupations in the area.

The Lorain County Business Advisory Council is intentionally structured to reflect the diverse job market and in-demand industries across Northeast Ohio. Members include leaders from healthcare, IT, manufacturing, government, finance, education, and community organizations. This balance ensures that both high-growth sectors and public service careers are represented in discussions and programming.

Industries represented on the BAC and aligned to in-demand occupations include:

- **Healthcare:** Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital, UH Health System representatives, and partners in allied health fields provide insights into nursing, patient care, and healthcare operations.
- **Manufacturing & Skilled Trades:** Members from the Lorain County Manufacturing Sector Partnership (LCMSP), Rudolph Libbe/GEM Inc., and AJ Rose support career pathways into machining, engineering, and construction trades.
- **Information Technology:** Partners such as Hyland Software and SpaceBound connect students with careers in programming, hardware/software support, and emerging tech.
- **Government & Public Service:** County Commissioners, Sheriff's Office, Forensics Lab, Court of Common Pleas, and Metro Parks provide exposure to careers in law, criminal justice, emergency services, natural resources, and sustainability.
- **Finance & Business:** Local banks, chambers of commerce, and business leaders support pathways in entrepreneurship, business operations, and accounting.
- **Education & Workforce Development:** School district leaders, higher education partners, and OhioMeansJobs Lorain County link students with advising, credentials, and wraparound services.

This cross-sector representation allows the BAC to serve as a mirror of the local labor market, ensuring that its activities — from Real World Student Experiences to curriculum recommendations — directly prepare students for Ohio's in-demand occupations.

7. How is your business advisory council collecting, implementing, and responding to feedback and industry trends in the region in which it operates? Include samples of feedback (business, educator, and student).

The Lorain County BAC has established multiple feedback loops to ensure its programming stays responsive to workforce needs. Feedback is collected through surveys, educator reflections, student evaluations, and ongoing business conversations. This input is then used to adjust programming, inform curriculum, and expand opportunities that align with industry trends.

Ways the BAC Collects Feedback:

- **Business partners:** Gathered during quarterly BAC meetings, sector-partner meetings (e.g., LCMSP), and through follow-up discussions with site hosts (e.g., Cleveland Clinic, Hyland, Metro Parks).
- **Educators:** Documented through externship reflection surveys, counselor bootcamp evaluations, and ongoing input during ESC-led curriculum, counselor, and career pathway network meetings.
- **Students:** Collected after Real World Student Experiences through surveys and feedback forms (e.g., IT Critical Thinking Challenge, Educator Externship student-facing events, Cleveland Clinic rotations).

Examples of Feedback and How the BAC Responded:

- **Business Feedback:**
 - Skilled trades requested stronger connections to apprenticeship pipelines → led to creation of the Construction Trades Challenge and supported the expansion of pre-apprenticeship programs in Firelands, Lorain, and other districts.

- Healthcare partners identified a need for earlier exposure to patient care and allied health careers → Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital rotations expanded into their third year with consistent participation.
- Educator Feedback:
 - 100% of educators in the 2025 Externship reported increased confidence in connecting curriculum to workforce needs → BAC expanded externship host sites and integrated graduate credit options. This year, we had two tracks for educators!
 - Counselors in the Bootcamp requested clearer tools for advising around credentials → BAC responded by sharing updated Ohio Department of Education & Workforce credential resources through counselor network meetings.
- Student Feedback:
 - Students in the IT Critical Thinking Challenge noted that teamwork and problem-solving were the most valuable parts of the experience → challenge rubric was refined to weigh collaboration more heavily for next year's event.
 - Participants in the Careers in Government event highlighted how hands-on activities (e.g., mock commissioners meeting, forensic analysis) made career pathways “real” → BAC committed to replicating interactive models in future student events.
 - Cleveland Clinic student reflections emphasized how shadowing multiple departments helped them confirm or adjust career interests → BAC is exploring replicating this model with other hospitals.

By collecting and acting on this feedback, the BAC ensures that its programming is industry-driven, educator-informed, and student-centered, adapting each year to meet the evolving needs of the local workforce.

8. What barriers has your business advisory council encountered in implementing these quality practices?

a. How has your business advisory council overcome these barriers or what needs to occur to overcome these barriers?

Like many regional BACs, the Lorain County BAC has faced barriers related to capacity, alignment, and sustainability. While strong partnerships exist, scaling opportunities for all 15 districts requires intentional planning and support.

Key Barriers Encountered:

- **Capacity & Scale:** Many experiences (e.g., internships, externships, hospital rotations) are limited in size, leaving demand higher than available slots.
- **Transportation:** Districts reported challenges coordinating buses and schedules for Real World Student Experiences.
- **Equity of Access:** Not all districts are equally resourced to launch pre-apprenticeships, IRC pathways, or career fairs without external support.

Steps Taken to Overcome Barriers:

- **Scalability:** The BAC uses small-group pilot programs (e.g., Metro Parks internships, IT Challenge) and expands them over time when capacity allows. Replication models (e.g., Cleveland Clinic rotations) are being explored with additional hospitals.
- **Communication Improvements:** The BAC uses its LorainCountyBAC.org website to promote activities for students and educators, and also relies on Google Groups to maintain regular communication with districts and partners.
- **Building Equity:** By centralizing business partnerships through the ESC/BAC, smaller and rural districts gain access to the same opportunities as larger districts.

What Still Needs to Occur:

- Additional business partners are needed to create internship and pre-apprenticeship capacity.

- Sustainable funding for transportation and educator PD will ensure consistent access.
- There is currently no funding provided to ESCs for their role in leading BACs. Some level of ongoing support is needed to provide high-level services and sustain countywide initiatives.

Through these strategies, the BAC is steadily reducing barriers while positioning itself — and its member districts — to expand high-quality career-connected learning opportunities across Lorain County.

9. What additional information would you like to share about how your business advisory council develops professional skills for future careers? Please provide any details on how the work of the business advisory council is shared within the community.

The Lorain County BAC intentionally designs experiences that build both technical and professional skills students will need to thrive in the workforce. Beyond classroom instruction, students gain hands-on exposure to communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and leadership through countywide programming and district-led activities influenced by the BAC.

How the BAC Develops Professional Skills:

- **Dedicated Website and Partner Map-** The LorainCountyBAC.org website serves as a strong resource to promote and engage students and employers, developing professional skills for future careers.
- **Student Events:** Real World Student Experiences (healthcare, IT, construction, government, law, and sustainability) embedded professional skills into every challenge — from collaboration and presentation in the Careers in Government competition to reflection and reliability in the Metro Parks internship.
- **Work-Based Learning:** Pre-apprenticeships in Lorain, Firelands, and other districts required students to demonstrate employability skills alongside technical training. North Ridgeville's OHSAA Officiating credential emphasized responsibility, communication, and leadership.
- **Educator Development:**
 - **The Educator Externship and School Counselor Bootcamp** equipped teachers and advisors with insights into workforce readiness, which are transferred back into advising practices and curriculum planning.
 - **AI and Its Impact of Future Careers** - During the 2025 Externship, an ESC expert led a session on how artificial intelligence is impacting the workplace and how educators can best guide students toward careers that will be reshaped by AI. The BAC is actively exploring how to prepare both students and schools for a world where AI plays a central role.
- **Data-Driven Career Readiness:** At the first BAC meeting of the year, TeamNEO, our regional data experts, provided an in-depth report on jobs in demand and workforce trends across industries. This data is used by districts to align career exploration activities and pathways with regional opportunities.
- **YouScience** - Continues to expand and will impact students positively as we use aptitudes to direct students career decisions as they develop professional skills for future careers.
- **District-Level Integration:** Schools reported field experiences, employer panels, and job fairs (e.g., Marion L. Steele's annual career fair) as key ways students practice professional skills while interacting with industry professionals.

How the BAC Shares Its Work with the Community:

- **LorainCountyBAC.org Website:** Highlights events, provides an interactive map of business partners, and shares resources for educators and families.
- **Google Groups & Networks:** BAC Members (including businesses and school contacts) ensure consistent updates to school leaders, business partners and all stakeholders.
- **Quarterly BAC Meetings:** Open to districts, higher education, and business partners, these meetings serve as a hub for sharing successes and opportunities.
- **Community Visibility:** Student events are promoted through partner websites, newsletters, and social media channels, raising awareness of workforce development efforts countywide.

Through these strategies, the BAC ensures that professional skills are not just discussed but practiced in authentic environments — and that the impact of this work is visible across Lorain County, guided by regional labor market data and forward-looking conversations about the impact of AI.

10. What additional information would you like to share on how your business advisory council works collaboratively on initiatives to build partnerships and enhance experiences for students?

The Lorain County BAC functions as a collaborative hub where schools, businesses, higher education, and community partners design opportunities that would not be possible in isolation. By leveraging the ESC as a convener, the BAC connects 15 districts with a wide variety of industries, ensuring equitable access to high-quality experiences.

Collaborative Initiatives Include:

- **Real World Student Experiences:** These countywide programs — such as the Careers in Government competition, Construction Trades Challenge, IT Critical Thinking Challenge, and Cleveland Clinic rotations — are co-designed with local employers, county government, and higher education partners. Multiple business and public-sector leaders collaborate to host, coach, and mentor students, while the ESC coordinates logistics across districts.
- **Pre-Apprenticeship Development:** Through collaboration between districts, the BAC, and industry partners, new pre-apprenticeship programs were launched or expanded in most of our districts. These align with regional workforce needs and connect directly to apprenticeship pipelines.
- **Educator Externship & Bootcamp:** The BAC brought together 37 educators for externships and 13 school counselors for the annual bootcamp, linking them with businesses to better inform advising and instruction. These experiences were created through strong partnerships with employers who opened their doors and staff time to host educators.
- **Cross-Sector Expertise:** The BAC leverages expertise from partners like TeamNEO, which provided labor market data at a BAC meeting, and ESC specialists who shared insights on how AI is reshaping the workplace. This collaborative sharing informs district decisions and helps schools guide students into in-demand careers.
- **Ongoing Networking & Field Experiences:** Districts reported that career fairs, industry panels, and mentorship opportunities (often hosted by BAC partners) are enhanced through BAC collaboration. For example, Marion L. Steele consults the BAC when planning its annual career fair, ensuring business voices are directly included.

How This Enhances Student & Educator Experiences:

- Students benefit from hands-on, authentic practice across sectors that align with Ohio's in-demand jobs list.
- Educators gain real-world context they bring back to classrooms and counseling.
- Businesses benefit by shaping local talent development while connecting with potential future employees.

Through this collaboration, the BAC ensures that experiences are bigger than any one district or company, reflecting the collective commitment of Lorain County to prepare students for the workforce.

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

Career readiness experiences in Lorain County are coordinated through a countywide system led by the ESC and BAC. The BAC serves as the central convener — bringing together districts, employers, and higher education partners to design, schedule, and scale experiences that reflect regional workforce needs. Coordination happens through multiple channels:

- **BAC Meetings:** Employers, schools, and community partners share upcoming opportunities and co-develop new experiences.
- **ESC-Led Networks:** Curriculum directors, school counselors, career pathway leads, and superintendents receive updates, resources, and business contacts through regular ESC network meetings.
- **Career Pathways Readiness Network:** Launched in 2024–25, this network met every other month and engaged career-related personnel from member schools. Sessions focused on Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs), pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and supporting tools, giving staff the knowledge and connections to expand programming in their districts.
- **Centralized Tools:** The BAC maintains an [interactive partner map](#) on [LorainCountyBAC.org](#) and uses Google Groups to communicate with the various stakeholders.

- **District Input:** Data collected annually through the BAC Data Collection Form ensures that school needs and student interest guide future programming.

How Students Benefit

- Students gain hands-on experience aligned with Ohio’s in-demand jobs list. For example, Cleveland Clinic rotations gave 77 students exposure to healthcare careers, 49 students coded websites at Hyland, and 27 engaged with apprenticeship pathways in the Construction Trades Challenge.
- Students develop professional skills — teamwork, problem-solving, communication — while exploring multiple sectors.
- Smaller, targeted groups (e.g., Metro Parks internships, Forensics, Honorary Bailiff) provided deeper mentoring relationships and authentic workplace expectations.

How Employers Benefit

- Employers showcase the breadth of career options in their industry and directly connect with potential future employees.
- They gain valuable feedback from students and educators, helping them shape outreach and training pipelines.
- Partners like Rudolph Libbe, Cleveland Clinic, Hyland, and Lorain County government have used these events to introduce students to apprenticeship pathways, credentialing requirements, and realistic job expectations.

In short, these experiences are jointly coordinated — with schools providing students, the ESC/BAC managing logistics and alignment, and businesses designing hands-on activities. The result is a sustainable system of career readiness that benefits both students and employers by building a pipeline of prepared, informed, and motivated future workers.

12. Which business partner has been the most influential on your business advisory council and why?

The Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital has been the most influential partner on our Business Advisory Council. During 2024–25, they completed their third consecutive year of hosting monthly student rotations, with 12 students per month participating in hands-on, behind-the-scenes career exploration. Across seven months, this totaled 77 students served.

Through this partnership, students gained exposure to both clinical and non-clinical roles, illustrating the hospital as a complete ecosystem of careers. For example, when operating rooms were available, students suited up in blue “bunny suits” and learned about the role of surgical technicians — an in-demand career with earnings up to \$65,000 annually from a two-year credential. Students also explored less-visible but essential careers, such as supply chain, information technology, and hospital administration, broadening their awareness of healthcare as a sector.

Most importantly, Cleveland Clinic consistently emphasizes its tuition reimbursement and professional growth opportunities, helping students understand how entry-level positions can lead to sustainable, long-term careers. This ongoing commitment makes Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital a model partner — one that not only hosts and mentors students, but also demonstrates a pathway for career growth, financial stability, and workforce readiness in a sector critical to Lorain County.

Data templates should be used to track data reflective of accomplishments over the 2025-2026 academic year.

Quality Practice I: Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers

Career Awareness / Exploration	Grades Impacted	Number of Students	Districts Impacted
Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital	9-12	77	all
Hyland Pathways to Programming	9-12	49	Clearview, Keystone, Lorain City Schools, Lorain County JVS

Construction Trades Challenge (Rudolph Libbe)	9-12	27	Clearview, Firelands
Careers in Government Competition	9-12	35	Avon Lake, Clearview, Columbia, North Ridgeville, Sheffield-Sheffield Lake
FBI Career Exploration	9-12	25	Clearview, Columbia, Lorain, Lorain JVS, Midview, Oberlin, Wellington
Honorary Bailiff Summer Program	8-12	6	Avon Lake, Firelands, Elyria, North Ridgeville
Metro Parks Explore U Internship	9-12	6	Keystone, Firelands, Wellington
Forensics Science Exploration	9-12	10	Clearview, Columbia, Sheffield-Sheffield Lake
Court of Common Pleas Experience	9-12	7	Wellington, Keystone
Professional Development	Offerings (Industry tours, teacher bootcamp, etc.)	Number of Educators	Districts Impacted
2-Day Educator Bootcamp	Bootcamp	13	Amherst, Avon, Avon Lake, ESC of Lorain, Firelands, Sheffield-Sheffield Lake, Townsend, North Ridgeville
5 Day Educator Externship	Bootcamp	37	Avon, Avon Lake, Black River Career Prep, College Now Greater Cleveland, Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, Elyria, ESC of Lorain, Keystone, Lorain County JVS, Midview, Townsend Community Schools, Vermilion, Wellington

Quality Practice II: Build Partnerships

Partnerships Represented	Industry	What initiatives have they contributed to through the business advisory council?
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Cleveland Clinic Avon Hospital	9-12	Cleveland Clinic Student Experiences (Monthly Visits)
Hyland Computer	9-12	Hyland Pathways to Programming
Rudolph Libbe Group	9-12	Construction Trades Challenge
Local Administration office (Jeff Armbruster Administration)	9-12	Careers in Government Competition
FBI Career Exploration	9-12	FBI Career Exploration
Lorain County Court System	8-12	Honorary Bailiff Summer Program
Metro Parks Explore U Internship	9-12	Explore U Internship
Lorain County Forensics Department	9-12	Forensics Science Exploration
Court of Common Pleas	9-12	Court of Common Pleas Experience
Lorain County JVS	9-12	Extended partnerships with many businesses as students participate in pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships. 99 students complete pre-apprenticeships at the Lorain County JVS.
How many partners have hired students? • Metro Parks (6 paid interns) • North Ridgeville (28 OHSA Officiating credentials tied to work placement) • Firelands, Lorain, Amherst, and other districts placed students into pre-apprenticeships with BAC business partners.		

Quality Practice III: Coordinate Experiences

Internships/Industry	Districts	Percentage of Students Placed	Paid or Unpaid
Metro Parks "Explore U" Internship	Columbia, Keystone, Firelands	100% of selected cohort (6 students)	Paid (\$12/hr)
Registered Pre-Apprenticeships	Districts	Percentage of Students Placed	Paid or Unpaid
Manufacturing	Firelands	12 students	Unpaid, credential-linked
Healthcare, IT, Business	Lorain	Across 5 CTE programs	Unpaid

OHSAA Officiating	North Ridgeville	28 students	Paid (credential leads directly to officiating jobs)
Additional approved programs (Midview, Elyria, Keystone, Amherst, Avon, Avon Lake, Oberlin, Clearview, Sheffield)	Multiple	Approved by state in 2024–25; active placements starting	Beginning 2025-26.
Registered Apprenticeships	Districts	Percentage of Students Placed	Paid or Unpaid
No data available			

District	Percentage of Students with Student Success Plans Completed
No data available	