

2026-2027 Plan Template

Ohio law requires all school districts to submit a business advisory council plan for each academic year. Each district must submit plans to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce via OH|ID by September 30. The Department strongly recommends using this template to capture accurately the plans for the 2026-2027 academic school year. Councils may use the data template section to capture accomplishments of the 205-2026 academic year. Feel free to add extra space to include initiatives that demonstrate implementation of each quality practice and add extra rows if necessary to the tables to include more than two initiatives for each quality practice.

1. **Name of business advisory council**:
2. **Identify the structure of the business advisory council** (school district, educational service center, joint vocational school district, or independent collaborative):
3.

District	District Primary Contact and Role	Primary Contact Email	District Secondary Contact and Role	Secondary Contact Email
Adams County Ohio Valley	Larry Hook, Superintendent	larry.hook@ovsd.us	Katrina Wagoner, Assistant Superintendent	katrina.wagoner@ovsd.us
Eastern Brown	Jordan Michael, Superintendent	jordan.michael@elsd.us	Brandy Pitzer, Supervisor of Special Programs	brandy.pitzer@elsd.us
Fayetteville-Perry	Dave Gibson, Interim Superintendent	dave.gibson@fpls.us	April Flowers, High School Principal	april.flowers@fpls.us

Georgetown EV	Brad Winterrod, Superintendent	brad.winterod@gtown.k12.oh.us	Bethany Fitzpatrick, School Counselor	bethany.fitzpatrick@gtown.k12.oh.us
Ripley (RULH)	Amanda McFarland, Director of Curriculum & Instruction	amanda.mcfarland@rulh.us	James Wilkins, Superintendent	james.wilkins@rulh.us
Western Brown Local	Raegan White, Superintendent	raegan.white@wbbroncos.com	Nicole Fain, Career & College Readiness Advisor	nicole.fain@wbbroncos.com
Brown County Educational Service Center	Bill Garrett, Superintendent	bill.garrett@brownesc.us	Kim Adams, Workforce Development Coordinator	kim.adams@brownesc.net
Southern Hills CTC	Angela Gray, Secondary Director	angela.gray@shctc.us	Miranda Copas, Student Services Director	miranda.copas@shctc.us

4. **JobsOhio Region in which business advisory council operates**:*Note: Please add rows as needed.*

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

Business Advisory Council Member	Title	Name of Business	Industry
Trevor Corboy	Agriculture & Natural Resources & Community Development Extension Educator	The Ohio State University	Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

Greta Gray	Community Outreach Advisor	Nutrien Ag Solutions	Human Services, Agriculture
Heather Patten	Assistant Director	Brown County Public Libraries	Education & Training
Bethany Fitzpatrick	Guidance Counselor	Georgetown Exempted Village Schools	Education & Training
Peggy Chalker	Dean of Transfer & Articulation and Mt. Orab Campus Director	Southern State Community College	Education & Training
Jeremy Ward	Network Director	BB2C	Education & Training
Danielle Sawyers	Gifted Coordinator	Western Brown Schools	Education & Training
Chris Shaffer	Director of Agency and Educational Partnerships	Shawnee State University	Education & Training
Annette Jenkins	Career Pathway Support Network College Coordinator	Southern State Community College	Education & Training
Christy Clary	Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development	The Ohio State University	Education & Training
Mat Reno	Career Navigator	Adams County Ohio Valley School District	Education & Training
Miranda Copas	Student Services Director	Southern Hills Career & Technical Center	Education & Training
Matt Taske	Financial Advisor	Edward Jones	Finance
Nick Brown	Commercial/Agriculture Loan Officer	Merchants National Bank	Finance
Gordon Ellis	County Commissioner	Brown County	Government & Public Administration
Alan Bird	CEO	Adams County Regional Hospital	Healthcare
Pamela Williams	Director	Brown County Health Department	Healthcare
Davina Campbell	Instructor	Nursing Made Easy	Healthcare
Lisa Scott	Community Outreach Partner	Future Plans	Human Services

Becky Cropper	40 Developmental Assets and Grant Coordinator	Brown County Educational Service Center	Human Services
Evelyn Yockey	Brown County Connections Coordinator	Brown County Educational Service Center	Human Services
Debi Shultz	Community Volunteer ; Mental Health & Drug Addiction Services Board Member	Brown County	Human Services
Sally Aiken	Director of Advancement	United Way of Greater Cincinnati	Human Services
Cindy Young	Rural Engagement Coordinator Clermont, Brown & Adams	Women Helping Women	Human Services
Kara Juillerat	IT Satellite Instructor	Eastern Local Schools/Southern Hills CTC	Information Technology
Brenda McGinnis	Ohio Code Scholar Operations Support Coordinator	Southern State Community College	Information Technology
Doug Daniels	Drone Pilot and Commander of Ohio Basic Peace Officer Academy	Highland County Sheriff Office	Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security
Amy Jo Queen	Southwest Ohio Regional Project Assistant Director	Future Plans	Management & Entrepreneurship
Rachel Corboy	President/CEO Brown County Chamber	Brown County Chamber of Commerce	Management & Entrepreneurship
Lisa Hord	Strategic Project Support Specialist	Southern State Community College	Management & Entrepreneurship
Gina Collinsworth	Director, Entrepreneurship & Community Engagement	Shawnee State University	Management & Entrepreneurship
Paul Worley	Economic Development Director	Adams County	Management & Entrepreneurship

Keshia Fite	Account Executive	Adams/Brown OhioMeansJobs	Marketing
Adam King	Relationship Building Coordinator	Shafer Heating and Cooling	Marketing
Carrie Feathestone	Marketing Director	Adams County Regional Hospital	Marketing, Sales & Services
Noah Smith	Marketing Coordinator	Adams County Regional Hospital	Marketing, Sales & Services

Schedule of Meetings

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

Quarter 1: August 28, 2026	Quarter 2: October 28, 2026
Mid Year: January 27, 2027 (Virtual-Monitor Progress on Initiatives).	Quarter 3: March 31, 2027
Quarter 4: June 2, 2027	Click HERE to review meeting schedule shared with council members and others in monthly BAC^2 Newsletter Building Bridges Bulletin

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

Additional sub committee meetings have and will continue to be scheduled throughout the year. Sub committees include;

- STEAM committee (Becky Cropper, Danielle Sawyers, Stephanie Wagoner, Evelyn Yockey, Kim Adams, Heather Patten, Abbey Hurt, Mat Reno, Deb Shultz, Danielle Thompson, Joe Phelps, Lisa Hord, Susan Huff, Abby Hurt, John Barnes, Deanna Vietze)
- STEAMology committee (Becky Cropper, Danielle Sawyers, Stephanie Wagoner, Evelyn Yockey, Kim Adams)
- Brown LEADS for Youth committee (Kim Adams, Amanda McFarland, Amy Jo Queen, Lisa Scott, Trevor Corboy, Christy Clary, Lisa Hord, Kris Lofrumento, Abbey Hurt)
- Grain Bin Mapping Project Committee (Kim Adams, Doug Daniels, Brenda McGinnis, Adam McGinnis, Trevor Corboy)
- Student Engagement-Dare to Dream Project-Work Group Members: Amanda McFarland, Kara Juillerat, Angela Gray, Jennifer Foebar, Gina Collinsworth, Carrie Featherstone and Allen Bird. Work Group Chair/Lead: Gina Collingsworth
- Parent/Community Engagement-Leveraging business partnerships. Work Group Members: Mat Reno, Lisa Scott, Chris Shaffer, Sally Aiken, Cindy Young, Noah Smith, Debi Shultz, Adam King. Work Group Chair/Lead:Mat Reno and Lisa Scott
- Teacher/Policy- Grow Your Own and/or Create a "College Experience" Course to prepare students for college readiness, professionalism, resources. Workforce Career Center that includes mentorships/job shadowing. Group Members:

Nikki Fain, Bethany Fitzpatrick, Annette Jenkins, Codi Newkirk, Danielle Sawyers, Peggy Chalker

- Economic Development Engagement- Develop a brochure to advertise to businesses. Work group members are Keshia Fite, Amy Jo Queen, Paul Worley, Rachel Corboy, Heather Patten, Becky Cropper. Group Chairs: Becky Cropper and Amy Jo Queen-

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

The Brown & Adams County Business Advisory Council (BAC^2) is committed to strengthening the connection between education, business, and community to prepare students for success in the regional workforce and beyond. Guided by the belief that "Skills Pay the Bills," the BAC^2 recognizes that every student deserves meaningful opportunities to see, explore, and connect to careers and possibilities within their community and beyond. Through collaboration among educators, business and industry leaders, postsecondary partners, government representatives, and community organizations, the BAC^2 works to ensure that students understand the skills required for success and have opportunities to develop and apply those skills through authentic experiences.

The expansion of the Council to include Adams County Ohio Valley Schools (ACOV) beginning August 1, 2025, has created an opportunity to move beyond a county-focused approach and develop a stronger regional talent pipeline connecting students, schools, employers, and communities across Brown and Adams Counties. This regional approach recognizes that students learn, work, and build their futures across community boundaries. By combining resources, relationships, and expertise, the BAC^2 can create broader opportunities for students while helping businesses communicate workforce needs and actively participate in developing the talent needed to strengthen the regional economy.

The BAC^2's vision is that *every student will have the opportunity to see, explore, and connect to the careers and opportunities that exist within their community and beyond.* Its mission is to connect education, business, and community partners to expand career awareness, create authentic workforce experiences, and develop pathways that prepare students for success in the regional economy. This includes strengthening career exposure, work-based learning, job shadows, mentoring, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, career readiness, and other experiences that help students make meaningful connections between what they learn in the classroom and what they can do in their future careers. A key priority for 2026–2027 is expanding representation across the career clusters at the BAC^2 table. While the Council has strong representation in areas such as Education & Training, Human Services, Management & Entrepreneurship, Marketing, and Finance, additional voices are needed from Manufacturing; Architecture & Construction; Transportation, Hospitality & Tourism; Arts, and STEM-related careers. The goal is not simply to increase meeting attendance, but to build a diverse network of partners who can provide students with meaningful connections to the full range of careers and workforce opportunities available throughout the region.

The 2026–2027 BAC^2 meeting schedule is intentionally designed around the themes of Invest, Explore, Monitor, Connect, and Reflect. The August meeting, *Investing in Our People & Communities Month*, focused on how businesses and community partners can invest in students and the future workforce. October's *We Work the Waterways – Manufacturing*

Month will highlight manufacturing and related careers while expanding connections with industry, technology, engineering, transportation, and skilled trades. The January virtual meeting will provide an opportunity to monitor progress on BAC^2 initiatives, celebrate accomplishments, identify barriers, and determine next steps. March's *Healthcare Month* at Adams County Regional Hospital will highlight the broad range of careers within the Health Science cluster while intentionally strengthening healthcare partnerships. The year will conclude in June with an *End-of-Year Reflection* focused on measuring impact, identifying remaining career-cluster gaps based on a data presentation by Jennifer Thomas, Senior Director, Strategy & Research, REDI Cincinnati, celebrating partnerships and student opportunities, and establishing priorities for 2027–2028.

The BAC^2 will advance this vision and mission through collaborative initiatives designed to create opportunities for students, value for businesses, and stronger communities. Initiatives for 2026–2027 continue to include STEAM Committee & STEAMology, connecting educators, businesses, and community partners through emerging technology, STEM, workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and career-connected learning; Brown LEADS for Youth, developing student leadership, career exploration, civic engagement, essential skills, and relationships with local leaders and employers; and the Grain Bin Mapping Project, providing authentic experiences in agriculture, technology, drones, mapping, data collection, project management, teamwork, and community service. Additional initiatives include Dare to Dream, connecting students with business sponsors and mentors through entrepreneurship and real-world business challenges; Parent & Community Engagement, leveraging partnerships to strengthen career awareness, AI Education, and opportunities for students and families; College Experience & Workforce Career Center, exploring college and career readiness while connecting students with internship sites, mentors, and career exploration; and Economic Development Engagement, developing outreach tools and strategies that make it easier for businesses to understand how they can partner with schools and contribute to the regional talent pipeline.

Ultimately, the 2026–2027 Brown & Adams County BAC^2 Plan is about moving from connection to action. The Council will continue to build relationships that create meaningful opportunities for students while helping businesses communicate their workforce needs and become active partners in developing the next generation of employees, entrepreneurs, and community leaders. By intentionally bringing the right people to the table, expanding representation across career clusters, and turning partnerships into authentic student experiences, the BAC^2 will work toward a shared regional goal: helping every student see the possibilities, experience the opportunities, and connect their skills to a successful future.

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

Develop Professional Skills for Future Careers

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

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

Initiative 1
Describe, in detail, the plan associated with implementing this quality practice. **AI Education: Understanding the Bots, Benefits, Risks & Future of Work** A critical component of the BAC^2 professional skills development plan includes AI Education. Helping students, parents, educators, and community members understand AI bots, including generative AI tools, and the opportunities and risks associated with their use is an essential component of career readiness and self care. The initiative will launch through an AI Education & the Future of Work information session held in conjunction with a highly attended, winter, tri-county basketball tournament. Using basketball as a community engagement vehicle will allow BAC^2 to reach students, parents, educators, employers, and community members who may not otherwise participate in traditional workforce-development events. The session will introduce participants to AI literacy, responsible AI use, career applications, emerging workplace expectations, and the importance of human skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, adaptability, creativity, integrity, and continuous learning. Additional AI Education sessions will be planned during and after school for educators and business leaders. Recent national media coverage, including a *60 Minutes* segment examining harmful outcomes associated with AI bots, provides an important opportunity to engage

families and community members in conversations about the potential risks of these technologies. The BAC^2 initiative will use these concerns as a springboard for balanced AI education that examines both the benefits and potential consequences of AI use.

The initiative will emphasize that AI is a tool, not a substitute for human judgment.

Students, parents, educators, employers, and community members will explore both sides of the technology.

Potential Benefits of AI Bots

- Brainstorming and generating ideas
- Supporting research and learning
- Providing personalized explanations
- Assisting with writing and communication
- Translating and improving accessibility
- Analyzing information and data
- Exploring careers and workplace applications
- Supporting creativity and problem-solving
- Increasing workplace efficiency
- Helping employees learn new skills

Potential Risks and Challenges

- AI-generated misinformation and fabricated information
- Bias in AI-generated responses
- Privacy and protection of personal information
- Overreliance on AI rather than independent thinking
- Academic integrity and inappropriate use for schoolwork
- Deepfakes and manipulated media
- Inappropriate or harmful content
- Difficulty determining whether information is accurate
- Potential changes to jobs and workplace responsibilities
- Ethical questions surrounding AI decision-making
- Cybersecurity and data concerns

The initiative will be sustained and scaled by embedding AI and future-career exploration into existing BAC^2 programs rather than treating the basketball tournament information session as a one-time event. Following the initial community launch, AI career connections will be incorporated into classroom activities, Brown LEADS, STEAMology, employer engagement, educator professional learning, and family/community outreach. Employer feedback will continue to inform curriculum connections and the professional skills students are asked to develop.

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

This initiative will serve all six participating BAC^2 school districts: **Eastern Local Schools, Western Brown Local Schools, Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools, Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington (RULH) Local Schools, Georgetown Exempted Village Schools, and Adams County Ohio Valley (ACOV) Local Schools**, with the Brown County Educational Service Center serving as the regional educational partner. Collectively, these six districts represent approximately 10,113 students across elementary, middle, and high school grade bands. Because the initiative is designed as a regional BAC^2 initiative and will be available to all participating districts, 100% of the students within the BAC^2's six participating school districts are within the intended reach of the initiative. The initiative will be implemented through a combination of the tri-county basketball community information session, classroom activities, educator professional learning, career exploration, business engagement, Brown LEADS, STEAMology, and family/community outreach. Actual student participation will be tracked throughout implementation, allowing BAC^2 to measure the percentage of students directly engaged in specific AI education activities.

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

We will leverage the Brown & Adams County Business Advisory Council's existing network of employers and community partners rather than creating a separate business structure. Business and industry partners include **Shafer Heating & Cooling; Merchants National Bank; Adams County Economic Development; Southern State Community College; Future Plans/GRIT; Ohio State University Extension; Brown County Chamber of Commerce; Adams-Brown Farm Bureau; local farmers; local FAA-licensed drone pilots; Adams County Regional Medical Center; OhioMeansJobs Adams/Brown; Shawnee State University; Magnera; Brown County Public Libraries; Women Helping Women; Adams/Brown Community Action; Nutrien; Milacron; Edward Jones; Green Acres; Brown County Health Department; and Building Bridges 2 Careers (BB2C).** These partners represent HVAC/skilled trades, finance, economic development, higher education, career development, agriculture, aviation, advanced manufacturing, healthcare/emergency services, technology, and community business development.

Businesses will play an active implementation role by providing employer input regarding the technical and professional skills needed in an AI-influenced workplace; participating as speakers, mentors, panelists, facilitators, and workplace hosts; demonstrating how technology and AI are being used in their industries; helping students connect classroom skills to real careers; and supporting educators in aligning learning experiences with current workforce expectations. Business partners will also help students examine both the benefits and risks of AI, including accuracy, privacy, ethics, cybersecurity, critical thinking, and responsible decision-making.

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

The initiative supports and teaches relevant, in-demand technical and professional skills by providing students and educators with practical experiences focused on AI literacy, digital technology, responsible technology use, and the professional skills needed in an evolving workforce. Students will learn how AI bots work, explore their benefits and limitations, evaluate AI-generated information, recognize bias and misinformation, protect personal information, and make responsible decisions about when and how AI should be used. Career-connected activities and business involvement will demonstrate how AI and emerging technologies are being used across regional industries, including manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, education, construction, transportation, business, and technology. Students will simultaneously develop critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, adaptability, ethical decision-making, professionalism, and continuous-learning skills. Educators will develop their AI literacy and learn practical strategies for integrating AI into instruction, career exploration, accessibility, and authentic learning experiences. By connecting classroom learning with employer expectations, the initiative helps students understand that future career success will require both technical knowledge and strong human skills, while helping educators prepare students for the realities of an increasingly technology-driven workplace.

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

The initiative addresses a growing regional skills gap in AI literacy, digital technology, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, adaptability, and responsible technology use. As AI and other technologies increasingly influence careers across manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, education, construction, transportation, business, and other industries, students need to enter the workforce able to use emerging technologies while maintaining strong human and professional skills. Ohio's AI in Education Strategy identifies foundational AI literacy, data literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving, communication and collaboration, adaptability and continuous learning, emotional intelligence, and integrity as important skills for an AI-enhanced workforce. This is reinforced by the OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal, which was developed from input from 230 Ohio business leaders who identified skills including learning agility, critical thinking, creativity and innovation, communication, digital technology, and career management as essential or important for workplace success. Ohio's adoption of new Technology Learning Standards incorporating AI and digital literacy further demonstrates the immediate need for schools to prepare students for a technology-driven workforce. The BAC^2 initiative addresses this talent-pipeline challenge by connecting students, educators, families, and regional employers to develop AI literacy and the professional skills needed to successfully navigate an evolving workplace.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

The AI Education initiative will intentionally include students with disabilities by emphasizing AI as both an accessibility tool and a career-readiness skill. Students will explore how AI and assistive technologies can support reading, writing, communication, organization, problem-solving, and access to information while learning the importance of protecting privacy, evaluating accuracy, recognizing bias, and avoiding overreliance on technology. The initiative will connect AI literacy to transition and employment by helping students identify how technology can support their individual strengths and needs while continuing to develop essential professional skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, adaptability, self-advocacy, and responsible decision-making.

Initiative 2

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

STEAMology – Strategies That Engage All Minds

STEAMology is an established BAC^2 professional learning initiative designed to connect educators with regional businesses, organizations, industries, and community resources so they can translate authentic workplace experiences into meaningful classroom learning and career exposure for students. Launched in June 2023 by BAC^2 members Becky Cropper and Evelyn Yockey, BCESC Professional Learning Specialist Stephanie Wagoner, and Western Brown Gifted Coordinator Danielle Sawyer, STEAMology has continued as an annual week-long professional learning experience. As STEAMology approaches its fifth year in 2027, BAC^2 will sustain the successful educator-focused model while expanding the initiative into a broader Agriculture & Agritourism Career Exposure Experience that connects education, business, agriculture, tourism, workforce development, and the community. The proposed all-day regional experience, with a possible “Farm to Plate” evening component, will provide educators with opportunities to tour farms, agricultural businesses, agritourism destinations, and other regional enterprises; interact directly with business owners and industry professionals; identify career pathways and in-demand skills; and develop connections for future classroom experiences, job shadowing, internships, mentorships, and career-connected learning. Farmers and businesses will have opportunities to showcase their operations, careers, products, technologies, and entrepreneurial opportunities, while Chamber, Farm Bureau, workforce, and community partners will help identify and strengthen regional talent-pipeline connections. Future Plans and other workforce organizations will help educators and participants connect experiences to career pathways and workforce needs. The initiative will also provide opportunities for educators to earn graduate or continuing education credit, increasing participation and supporting sustained professional learning. The 2027 expansion will build upon the relationships developed through the first four years of STEAMology and create a scalable regional model in which educators experience the workplace, connect with employers, identify classroom applications, and ultimately create opportunities for students to see, explore, and connect to careers in their own communities.

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

This initiative has been historically represented by **Eastern Local Schools, Western Brown Local Schools, Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington (RULH) Local Schools, Georgetown Exempted Village Schools, Adams County Ohio Valley (ACOV) Local Schools, and Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools**. Together, these six participating districts serve approximately 10,113 students across Brown and Adams Counties. Because the STEAMology initiative is designed as a regional professional learning and career-connected experience that engages educators, businesses, agriculture, tourism, workforce partners, and community organizations across the BAC^2 region, 100% of students within the participating districts are within the intended reach of the initiative, as educators bring the knowledge, resources, and career connections developed through STEAMology back to their classrooms and schools.

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

A list of businesses is to be determined. Business and site-host recruitment for the 2027 STEAMology Agriculture & Agritourism Career Exposure Experience will be coordinated through a collaborative team with established relationships throughout Brown and Adams Counties. **Ohio State University Extension Educator Trevor Corboy, Brown County Chamber CEO Rachel Corboy, Adams County Economic Development Director Paul Worley, and STEAMology Committee members Kim Adams, Becky Cropper, Evelyn Yockey, Stephanie Wagoner, and Danielle Sawyers** will work together to identify and contact potential business, agriculture, agritourism, tourism, manufacturing, food-service, and workforce partners. The team will determine potential site hosts based on their ability to provide meaningful educator experiences, demonstrate careers and workforce skills, showcase innovative practices or entrepreneurship, and make connections to classroom learning. Site hosts will be invited to provide tours, demonstrations, career information, and opportunities for educators to identify future student experiences such as job shadows, internships, mentorships, classroom speakers, and authentic learning projects. This collaborative recruitment process will ensure that the experience represents a variety of industries and communities while building sustainable relationships between educators and regional employers. Adams County Economic Development's role in supporting existing businesses and employment opportunities and OSU Extension's agriculture and community-development role provide particularly strong foundations for this regional approach.

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

The STEAMology Agriculture & Agritourism Career Exposure Experience will help develop relevant, in-demand skills by connecting educators directly with regional businesses, farms, agritourism organizations, and workforce partners so they can better understand the knowledge and skills students need for future success. Educators will experience real-world applications of agriculture, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, business, marketing, communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, entrepreneurship, digital technology, and adaptability and will use these experiences to strengthen classroom instruction and career connections. Through tours, demonstrations, and conversations with employers, educators will learn about emerging technologies, workplace expectations, career pathways, and technical and professional skills needed in the region. These experiences will then be translated into classroom activities, projects, career exploration, job shadows, internships, mentorships, and other career-connected learning opportunities.
The initiative therefore creates a business-to-educator-to-student pipeline, ensuring that classroom learning reflects authentic workplace applications and helps students see how the skills they develop in school connect to real careers and opportunities within their own communities and beyond.

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

The initiative will focus on critical thinking and problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation, leadership, learning agility, digital technology, career management, entrepreneurship, STEM application, agricultural technology, technical skills, and adaptability. These skills closely align with Ohio's OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal, which identifies professional skills required for workplace success based on input from 230 Ohio business leaders, including critical thinking/problem-solving, teamwork, learning agility, creativity/innovation, communication, digital technology, and career management.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

The initiative emphasizes transferable skills such as communication, problem-solving, collaboration, self-advocacy, adaptability, technology use, organization, and workplace professionalism, which are important for students with disabilities as they transition from school to employment or postsecondary education. Business partnerships can also create opportunities for job shadows, internships, mentoring, career tours, and hands-on experiences that allow students to practice skills in authentic settings. By intentionally including accessibility and accommodations in career-connected learning, STEAMology helps ensure that students with disabilities are not simply exposed to careers but are provided meaningful opportunities to see themselves as capable participants in the regional workforce.

Initiative 3

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

STEAMology Resource Library

The Brown County Educational Service Center will continue to develop and expand the STEAMology Resource Library as a sustainable, high-quality professional learning support for educators across Adams and Brown Counties. Each year, grant funding from partners such as Ohio College Tech Prep, Workforce Development Region 7,Brown County Rural Water, the Nippert Foundation and The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation Foundation will be used to add new, high-quality STEAM resources based on educator and student needs, emerging technologies, and regional workforce priorities. Educators will be able to browse the collection virtually or in person and check out hands-on learning kits, lesson guides, project-based learning materials, STEM/STEAM tools, and career-connected resources that align with curriculum objectives and provide real-world applications. The implementation plan includes ongoing guidance and support to help teachers effectively use the resources, differentiate instruction, engage diverse learners, and connect classroom activities to technical and professional skills valued in the workplace. The library will be continuously evaluated and expanded to ensure resources remain relevant and responsive to changing educational and workforce needs, creating a sustainable system that builds educator capacity and provides students throughout the region with engaging, hands-on opportunities to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, communication, technology, and career-ready skills.

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

This initiative has been historically represented by **Eastern Local Schools, Western Brown Local Schools, Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington (RULH) Local Schools, Georgetown Exempted Village Schools, Adams County Ohio Valley (ACOV) Local Schools, and Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools**. Together, these six participating districts serve approximately 10,113 students across Brown and Adams Counties. Because the STEAMology initiative is designed as a regional professional learning and career-connected experience that engages educators, businesses, agriculture, tourism, workforce partners, and community organizations across the BAC^2 region, 100% of students within the participating districts are within the intended reach of the initiative, as educators bring the knowledge, resources, and career connections developed through STEAMology back to their classrooms and schools.

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

The continued growth of the lending library has been made possible through generous grant funding and support from **Brown County Rural Waters, Ohio College Tech Prep, Workforce Development Region 7, The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, and the Nippert Foundation,** allowing STEAMology to continually add

high-quality resources that expand opportunities for students and educators across the region. This ongoing partnership will help ensure that the STEAMology Resource Library remains responsive to regional workforce needs while providing students with meaningful opportunities to develop skills they can apply to future careers.

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

Students use these resources to repeatedly practice critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, digital technology, adaptability, and other professional skills while engaging in authentic STEM/STEAM challenges. Educators develop their own capacity to integrate current technologies, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, and career-connected applications into instruction, while using resources to differentiate learning and meet the needs of diverse learners. Business and industry input helps ensure that new resources are selected based on emerging technologies, workforce expectations, and regional career needs. By continually adding and updating resources through support from Brown County Rural Waters, Ohio College Tech Prep, Workforce Development Region 7, The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, and the Nippert Foundation, the initiative creates a sustainable system that strengthens educator practice and gives students meaningful opportunities to develop the technical, durable, and professional skills needed for future education, training, and employment.

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 STEAMology Resource Library addresses a regional talent-pipeline challenge of providing students with consistent access to hands-on, technology-rich learning experiences that develop the durable, technical, and professional skills employers need, while also helping educators build the capacity to teach those skills. Ohio has identified 15 professional skills essential for workplace success through input from 230 Ohio business leaders, including reliability, work ethic, teamwork, learning agility, critical thinking/problem-solving, leadership, creativity/innovation, communication, digital technology, and career management. The STEAMology Resource Library responds to this need by giving educators across Brown and Adams Counties access to hands-on kits, technology, project-based learning materials, and career-connected resources that can be integrated into classroom instruction. By continually expanding the library through grant funding and aligning resources with educator needs and regional workforce priorities, the initiative helps teachers provide students with repeated opportunities to practice problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, communication, digital technology, STEM application, and career management, strengthening the connection between classroom learning and the skills students will need for postsecondary education, training, and employment.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

The STEAMology Resource Library supports students with disabilities by providing educators with hands-on, flexible, and differentiated instructional resources that can be adapted to a wide range of learning needs while maintaining high expectations. Hands-on STEAM kits, project-based learning materials, visual resources, technology tools, and lesson supports give students multiple ways to access content, demonstrate understanding, and engage in authentic problem-solving and career-connected activities. Educators can use the resources to provide appropriate scaffolds, accommodations, collaboration opportunities, and varied pathways for students to participate successfully in learning. The library also helps teachers connect academic instruction to real-world skills such as communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, technology use, and self-advocacy, which are important for successful transition to postsecondary education, training, and employment. By expanding access to engaging, career-connected learning experiences, the Resource Library helps ensure that students with disabilities have meaningful opportunities to explore their strengths, build confidence, develop workplace-relevant skills, and see themselves as capable contributors to the future workforce.

Initiative 4

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

Brown LEADS for Youth

The Brown & Adams County Business Advisory Council (BAC^2) will continue and strengthen Brown LEADS for Youth as a regional leadership and professional-skills development opportunity for students in grades 11–12. The program launched in 2025–2026 with 32 students participating and 6 completing the full program. Rather than simply increasing enrollment, the 2026–2027 plan will focus on creating an experience that students find meaningful enough to continue throughout the year. Each participating district will be invited to identify 10–15 students who are curious about their future, interested in developing confidence and leadership skills, or may not typically volunteer for traditional leadership opportunities. Students will participate in four regional meetings throughout the school year, at no cost to districts or students, with lunch provided. Year One content will emphasize self-awareness, strengths and interests, career exploration, workforce readiness, professional communication, and networking with business, education, and community leaders. The program will also explore a partnership with Tom Sutton, owner/operator of Chick-fil-A at Eastgate North Drive, to incorporate Chick-fil-A Leader Academy materials and structured monthly “Leader Labs” focused on leadership principles, collaboration, service, and real-world problem solving.

Brown LEADS will intentionally connect leadership development to unities to interact directly with business and community leaders, learn about regional career pathways,

participate in service learning, and apply leadership skills to real-world challenges. The program will build from self-awareness and career exploration toward professionalism, leadership in action, and student-led community impact. Students will work collaboratively to identify a community need and develop and implement a solution, allowing them to demonstrate skills such as reliability, work ethic, punctuality, discipline, teamwork, professionalism, learning agility, critical thinking and problem-solving, leadership, creativity and innovation, communication, digital technology, global/intercultural fluency, and career management. Business and community partners will serve as mentors and provide students with authentic feedback about workplace expectations, professional behaviors, communication, and career opportunities. This approach will create meaningful connections between students, employers, educators, and the community while giving students opportunities to practice professional skills in settings beyond the classroom.

A key component of implementation will be aligning Brown LEADS experiences with the **OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal** so that students can intentionally document and demonstrate professional skills throughout the program. Students will maintain evidence of their skill development and work with at least three experienced mentors who can validate their skills across at least two environments—school, work, and/or community. The BAC^2 will work with district counselors and staff to identify students, establish tentative meeting dates, monitor participation, connect students with mentors and business partners, and gather student feedback throughout the year to improve engagement and retention. At the conclusion of the program, students will reflect on their growth, leadership experiences, career interests, and next steps. Through this structure, Brown LEADS will serve as a sustained bridge between student strengths and interests, leadership development, professional-skill development, business mentorship, community engagement, and future career opportunities.

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

The participating school districts for the Brown LEADS for Youth initiative are **Eastern Local Schools, Western Brown Local Schools, Georgetown Exempted Village Schools, Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools, Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington (RULH) Local Schools, and Adams County Ohio Valley (ACOV) Local Schools**, with students from **Southern Hills Career and Technical Center** also participating. The initiative is designed primarily for students in grades 11–12, with each participating district invited to identify approximately 10–15 students. Based on the six participating districts serving approximately 10,113 students, Brown LEADS will directly impact a targeted group of students in grades 11–12 while providing opportunities for broader exposure through business, community, and career-connected activities. Because participation is intentionally limited to students who are selected for the leadership program, the initiative will not directly impact 100% of students, but students across all six districts are within the BAC^2's intended reach.

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

Chick-fil-A – Eastgate North Drive, through a potential partnership with Tom Sutton, may provide Chick-fil-A Leader Academy materials, monthly Leader Labs, leadership development, teamwork, service-learning, and student-led Impact Projects. OhioMeansJobs will support career-readiness activities, connect students with workforce resources, and help align the program with OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal requirements. The Brown County Chamber of Commerce and Adams County Chamber of Commerce will help connect students with local businesses, community leaders, networking opportunities, career exploration, and mentorships, while Adams County Economic Development will provide connections to regional industries, workforce needs, career pathways, and employment opportunities. Local employers and business mentors from multiple industries will provide career presentations, workplace experiences, job shadows, mentoring, networking, and feedback on professional skills, while community organizations will provide service-learning opportunities, community mentors, and authentic settings for students to demonstrate leadership and professional skills. Together, these partners will help students connect leadership development to real-world experiences and build the professional skills needed for future education, training, and employment.

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

Brown LEADS for Youth supports the development of relevant, in-demand technical and professional skills by combining leadership development, career exploration, business engagement, and authentic real-world experiences. Students will develop professional skills aligned with OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal expectations, including reliability, work ethic, punctuality, discipline, teamwork and collaboration, professionalism, learning agility, critical thinking and problem-solving, leadership, creativity and innovation, oral and written communication, digital technology, global/intercultural fluency, and career management. Through business presentations, career exploration, mentoring, workplace visits, job shadows, service-learning, and the student-led Impact Project, students will have opportunities to practice these skills in authentic school, work, and community settings. Students from participating districts and Southern Hills Career and Technical Center will also have opportunities to connect their career-technical interests and classroom learning to regional employers and career pathways. Educators and school counselors will strengthen their understanding of current workforce expectations through direct interaction with business and community partners, allowing them to incorporate career-connected learning, professional skills, and authentic workplace applications into student advising and instruction. Through this partnership, Brown LEADS will help students understand not only what careers are available, but also what skills employers expect and how students can demonstrate those skills in future education, training, and employment settings.

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?

Brown LEADS for Youth addresses a regional talent-pipeline challenge: helping high school students develop the professional skills, career awareness, confidence, and connections needed to successfully transition from school into postsecondary education, training, and employment. Regional employers need students who can demonstrate reliability, work ethic, teamwork, communication, critical thinking/problem-solving, leadership, adaptability, digital technology, and career-management skills, while students also need meaningful opportunities to understand local career pathways and build relationships with employers before graduation. The OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal provides a framework of professional skills that students can demonstrate and validate through school, work, and community experiences. The need for stronger career-connected experiences is also reflected in the BAC^{2}'s 2025–2026 Brown LEADS participation data: 32 students participated, but only 6 completed the program, indicating a need to strengthen student engagement, sustained participation, mentoring, and authentic career experiences. In addition, the BAC^{2}'s GRIT Assessment implementation demonstrates the importance of connecting student interests with regional workforce opportunities; during 2025–2026, districts reported 74 Eastern freshmen, 10 Eastern sophomores, 93 North Adams sophomores, 68 Peebles sophomores, and 86 West Union sophomores assessed. Brown LEADS will use this growing career-interest information, combined with employer feedback and direct business engagement, to connect students' strengths and interests with career pathways, mentors, and work-based learning opportunities. The initiative therefore addresses both sides of the talent pipeline: helping students develop the professional skills employers need while helping students and businesses build relationships earlier so local talent is better connected to regional employment opportunities.

How does this initiative impact students with disabilities?

The program is intentionally designed to welcome students who may not typically volunteer for traditional leadership opportunities and will focus on individual strengths, interests, confidence, and potential rather than limiting participation based on disability. Through career exploration, business mentoring, service-learning, workplace visits, job shadows, and the student-led Impact Project, students with disabilities will have opportunities to practice and demonstrate professional skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, reliability, professionalism, adaptability, digital technology, and career management.

Build Partnerships

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

- Describe how the business advisory council will grow partnerships in alignment with in-demand careers in the region with representation from industry, workforce boards,

port authority, OhioMeansJobs Centers, industry sector partnerships, higher education, etc.

- Use the template as a guide to list all initiatives, projects, and events used to build partnerships. Include information on partnership alignment, effectiveness, and initiatives spearheaded by these collaborations. Demonstrate cooperative efforts between districts and partners to benefit students and businesses.
- When describing initiatives, please connect them to previous initiatives so that the Department can see the progression of the business advisory council from year to year.

Initiative 1
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. **Economic Development Engagement** During the 2026–2027 school year, the Brown & Adams County Business Advisory Council (BAC^2) will intentionally strengthen and expand business and industry partnerships through targeted economic development engagement, direct business outreach, and multiple opportunities for employers to connect with students and schools. A BAC business recruitment brochure will be developed to clearly communicate the council's purpose, the benefits of partnering with local schools, available engagement opportunities, and the value of developing a local talent pipeline; BAC members, including OhioMeansJobs partners, will distribute the brochure directly to businesses and community organizations. The council will also add a business interest form to the BAC website and promote it through social media and Chamber networks to create an ongoing mechanism for identifying and recruiting new partners. The monthly BAC newsletter will continue to provide businesses with information about upcoming opportunities, student initiatives, career-connected learning, and ways to become involved. The council will intentionally recruit businesses representing priority industries and sectors needed to address regional workforce needs, including manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare, skilled trades, education, food service, tourism, and other emerging areas. New partners will be identified through existing Chamber and economic-development relationships, OhioMeansJobs connections, BAC member referrals, community networking, and direct outreach to businesses that represent underrepresented industries or emerging workforce needs. Businesses will be invited to participate in job and career fairs, networking events, career exploration, classroom connections, job shadows, internships, mentorships, work-based learning, and other opportunities that require an investment of time, expertise, and relationships—not simply financial support. The BAC will also explore partnerships with local Driver Education providers to develop an affordable Driver's Education opportunity through vouchers, reduced pricing, or payment plans, recognizing that transportation access can be an important barrier to employment for students. Work Group members Keisha Fite, Becky Cropper, Amy Jo Queen, Heather Patten, Paul Worley, and Rachel Corboy, led by Becky Cropper and Amy Jo Queen, will guide this partnership-building work by continually asking what

Initiative 1
businesses need, what schools and students need, and how the BAC can create mutually beneficial relationships. Through this approach, businesses will gain greater awareness of the qualified students being prepared for employment in their communities, while students gain increased exposure to local careers, professional networks, and employment opportunities, creating a stronger and more sustainable regional talent pipeline.
How will the council draw feedback from business and industry to inform decision-making? The Brown & Adams County Business Advisory Council (BAC^2) will use multiple ongoing methods to gather and apply feedback from business and industry partners to inform council priorities, programming, and decision-making. Business representatives will have structured opportunities to provide input during BAC meetings, work groups, career fairs, networking events, and industry-focused discussions, with meeting topics intentionally centered on regional workforce needs and specific career sectors such as manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, skilled trades, education, food service, and tourism. The council will use questions, surveys, discussion prompts, and direct conversations with employers to identify workforce skill gaps, hiring needs, barriers to employment, and opportunities for student engagement. The BAC will also use its business interest form, monthly newsletter, Chamber and economic development relationships, and OhioMeansJobs connections to gather feedback from a broader range of employers, including businesses that are not currently represented on the council. Feedback will be reviewed by the council and appropriate work groups and used to shape student career-exposure opportunities, work-based learning, professional learning, resource development, and future business recruitment.
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? Feedback information will guide the development and expansion of student opportunities such as career exploration, job shadows, mentorships, career fairs, work-based learning, and classroom-to-career connections. Business feedback will also inform educator professional learning, helping teachers better understand workplace expectations and incorporate relevant technical, digital, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, creativity, adaptability, and career-management skills into instruction. The BAC^2 will intentionally connect employers with educators so that businesses can share real-world applications, current technologies, career pathways, and the skills needed for success in their industries. Through initiatives such as STEAMology, Brown LEADS for Youth, the STEAMology Resource Library, and expanded business engagement, the council will translate employer feedback into practical learning experiences that benefit both students and educators. The BAC^2 will continually revisit employer feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts and adjust priorities as workforce needs change, creating a responsive

Initiative 1
education-to-workforce pipeline that prepares students with skills valued by regional employers.
How will identified industry partners co-develop relevant in-demand skills for students and educators? The BAC2 Economic Development Engagement Committee will complete the following steps when utilizing the feedback data; 1. Identify priority industries and workforce needs. 2. Review the information together and identify the skills that should receive greater emphasis in student learning and educator professional development. 3. Continue to work together to design authentic learning experiences, classroom activities and professional learning experiences for educators that intentionally teach and reinforce priority skills. 4. Connect industry partners with educators to provide educators with real-world examples, current technology and workplace practices to see how skills are applied on the job. 5. Develop an evaluation tool that will gather feedback on the effectiveness and relevance of the experiences. 6. Adjust and expand programming based upon feedback. This continuous cycle of Identify → Prioritize → Co-Develop →Implement → Evaluate → Improve will ensure that business and industry partners have an active voice in shaping learning experiences while educators and students gain practical skills aligned with current and emerging regional workforce opportunities.
How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities? Business and industry partners will play an important role in increasing career readiness for students with disabilities by providing authentic, accessible opportunities to explore careers, develop workplace skills, and build confidence. Through partnerships with employers, students will participate in career exploration, workplace visits, job shadows, mentorships, career fairs, classroom experiences, and other work-based learning opportunities that allow them to see how their strengths and skills connect to real jobs. Employers will help educators identify essential workplace expectations and provide feedback on the skills students need to be successful, including communication, collaboration, problem-solving, adaptability, technology, organization, self-advocacy, and workplace professionalism. Educators will use this feedback to provide appropriate scaffolds, accommodations, differentiated instruction, and opportunities for students to practice skills in meaningful, real-world settings while maintaining high expectations.

Initiative 1

Initiative 2

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

Future Plans or Other Career Interest Survey Results to develop Regional Talent Pipeline Plans

Build Partnerships: Data-Driven Career Connections using the GRIT Assessment by Future Plans will build upon the 2025–2026 implementation of the interest survey by moving from career awareness and assessment toward intentional use of student career-interest data to strengthen business and industry partnerships. The Brown & Adams County Business Advisory Council (BAC^2) recognizes that effective talent-pipeline development begins with understanding students' strengths, interests, and career aspirations and then connecting those interests to the needs and opportunities of regional employers. During 2025–2026, GRIT Assessment implementation varied across participating districts. Eastern assessed 74 freshmen and 10 sophomores; North Adams (ACOV) assessed 93 sophomores; Peebles (ACOV) assessed 68 sophomores; West Union (ACOV)assessed 86 sophomores; Ripley, Georgetown, and Fayetteville did not assess sophomores that year. Fayetteville intentionally delayed assessment because the district had assessed its freshman class the previous year and planned to assess that cohort as sophomores. This initial implementation provided the BAC with an important foundation for expanding consistent career-interest data collection across the region.

During 2026–2027, the BAC^2 will expand assessment implementation and begin using the data to inform business recruitment and career-connected learning opportunities. At the beginning of the current school year, Ripley has assessed 45 sophomores, Peebles 59 sophomores, West Union 86 sophomores, and North Adams 80 sophomores, demonstrating continued participation and progress toward broader regional implementation. The BAC^2 will work toward at least 75% implementation across the six participating school districts and will collaborate with Future Plans/GRIT, school counselors, educators, economic development partners, and business representatives to analyze aggregated student interest and strengths data.

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

Initiative 2

The council will identify common career interests, emerging career clusters, and areas where student interests align—or do not align—with regional workforce needs. These findings will be used to identify and recruit businesses and industries that can provide meaningful career exploration, workplace tours, classroom connections, job shadows, internships, mentorships, summer opportunities, and other work-based learning experiences. Business partners will be invited to help interpret workforce needs and co-develop experiences that allow students to see how their strengths connect to actual careers. The BAC^2 will use the resulting information to develop regional talent-pipeline plans that connect student interests and career aspirations with education pathways, employer needs, and employment opportunities.

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

As the BAC^2 expands industry representation, identified businesses and industry partners will help determine and develop the relevant, in-demand skills students and educators need for success in the workplace. The council will use aggregated GRIT Assessment, and other career-interest data to identify student career interests and compare those interests with regional workforce needs. Once priority industries and career clusters are identified, the BAC^2 will engage employers from those sectors in conversations with educators and students to identify the technical skills, workplace knowledge, certifications, technologies, and durable skills expected of entry-level employees. Industry partners will then work with educators to translate these expectations into meaningful career-connected learning experiences, including classroom presentations, demonstrations, workplace tours, job shadows, mentorships, career fairs, and work-based learning opportunities. Employers will also be invited to provide professional learning for educators so teachers can gain firsthand knowledge of current industry practices, technologies, career pathways, and workplace expectations and incorporate these experiences into classroom instruction.

How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities?

Educators and business partners will identify potential barriers that may prevent students with disabilities from fully participating in career-connected experiences based on the individual data gathered from the assessment results. Educators will use this information to provide appropriate scaffolds, accommodations, differentiated instruction, and multiple ways for students to demonstrate their skills while maintaining high expectations.

Initiative 2

Initiative 3

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

Grow Your Own School Psychologist and Speech/Language Pathologist Program

This initiative will begin by analyzing student career-interest data from the GRIT Assessment and other district career assessments to identify students whose interests, strengths, and career goals align with education, behavioral health, communication sciences, and related helping professions. The BAC^2 will establish a partnership with Ohio University to explore a regional pathway for students interested in School Psychology and Speech/Language Pathology. A BAC^2 member currently serves on the Ohio University Chillicothe Branch Education Program Advisory Committee, providing a direct connection between the regional business advisory council and the university. Initial conversations and planning for possible program development will begin during the committee meeting on October 19, 2026. The BAC^2 will also engage Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center to learn from its existing development programs that introduce School Psychology and Speech/Language Pathology careers to students in grades 11–12 and determine which components could be adapted for our region. Local school districts and educational service organizations will provide information about workforce needs, career requirements, job-shadowing opportunities, and potential employment pathways, while Ohio University and other postsecondary partners will help identify appropriate educational and credentialing pathways. This business and education partnership is particularly important because the region has experienced significant difficulty filling these positions; during the current year, three positions remained unfilled and two additional positions are being supported through remote/virtual services from professionals located outside the region. By bringing together school districts, educational service providers, higher education, workforce partners, and regional professionals, the BAC^2 will create authentic opportunities for students to see, explore, and connect with these careers. The long-term goal is to build a sustainable regional talent pipeline in which local students become aware of these high-need professions, gain meaningful career exposure and experiences while in high school, understand the educational pathways required, and ultimately return to the region as qualified professionals.

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

Initiative 3
Through the Grow Your Own program, school partners will provide information about current workforce needs, essential technical and professional skills, workplace expectations, career pathways, and opportunities for job shadowing, mentoring, and career exploration. The BAC^2 will use student GRIT Assessment and other career-interest data to connect students with appropriate experiences while sharing current workforce information with educators and counselors so they can better guide students toward relevant coursework, postsecondary programs, and career opportunities. Feedback from Ohio University, Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center, local school districts, and practicing professionals will be used to continually refine the program and develop meaningful career-connected learning experiences that strengthen both student skills and educator knowledge of regional workforce needs.
How will identified expanded industries develop relevant in-demand skills for students and educators? Through career exploration, job shadowing, mentoring, presentations, and partnerships with Ohio University and educational service providers, students will gain authentic exposure to School Psychology and Speech/Language Pathology careers, while educators will gain a clearer understanding of career pathways and regional workforce demands.
How will partners impact career readiness for students with disabilities? Partners will support career readiness for students with disabilities by providing accessible career exploration, mentoring, job-shadowing, and authentic workplace learning opportunities connected to School Psychology, Speech/Language Pathology, and related helping professions. Partners will help students identify their strengths and interests, understand career and educational requirements, develop professional communication and collaboration skills, and build self-advocacy and confidence. Educators and career partners will work together to provide appropriate accommodations, supports, and individualized pathways so students can see meaningful career possibilities and understand the steps needed to pursue them.

Coordinate Experiences

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

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

Initiative 1

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

Little State STEAM

Little State STEAM, scheduled for May 13, 2027, will connect students in grades 6–8 to experiential learning opportunities where they can demonstrate and apply academic, technical, and professional skills through hands-on activities. Entering its third year, the event continues to expand as a regional career exploration experience. On May 7, 2026, the second annual Little State STEAM welcomed 1835 students from Brown, Adams, Highland, and Clermont counties to the Brown County Fairgrounds. Students explored career pathways in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts/Agriculture, and Mathematics through 108 interactive, hands-on booths featuring local businesses, organizations, professionals, tools, technologies, and real-world applications. The event was supported by 63 volunteers and generated 458 survey responses, with students and educators highlighting the variety of careers and hands-on experiences as key strengths. Students participated in experiences ranging from drone technology and engineering challenges to agricultural innovations, helping them connect classroom learning to authentic career applications. Feedback also indicated increased student interest in emerging career areas, including drone technology. For 2027, the BAC^2 will use participant feedback to strengthen the event, expand business and industry participation, and provide even more opportunities for students to demonstrate competencies such as communication, collaboration, creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, technical skills, and innovation. Through these authentic experiences, Little State STEAM will continue to help students see what is possible, understand how their skills connect to careers, and begin building the confidence and competencies needed for future education and employment.

Initiative 1
List all school districts and number of students that will benefit from this initiative. Little State STEAM, scheduled for May 13, 2027, is projected to benefit approximately 2000 students in grades 6–8 based on participation from the previous event. Participating districts and prior student attendance include Western Brown Local Schools (191), North Adams Local Schools (160), Peebles Local Schools (197), West Union Local Schools (65), Bright Local Schools (159), Felicity-Franklin Local Schools (107), Eastern Local Schools (261), Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington Local Schools (227), Fayetteville Local Schools (178), Georgetown Exempted Village Schools (145), and Hillsboro City Schools (145). Students from Brown, Adams, Highland, and Clermont counties will benefit from hands-on career exploration, interactive demonstrations, and opportunities to connect classroom learning to real-world applications across a wide range of STEAM and career pathways. The 2027 event will build upon the success of the 2026 event, which engaged 1835 students through 108 interactive booths and the support of 63 volunteers.
List all businesses and industries that will be involved. Little State STEAM will engage a broad network of regional businesses, industries, educational institutions, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community partners to provide students with authentic, hands-on career experiences. Anticipated 2027 participants (based on 2026 participant list) include **Absolute Cable Fire & Security; Adams Brown Recycling; Adams County Regional Medical Center; Adams Rural Electric Cooperative; AEP; Arrick Propane; Atomic Credit Union; ATSG; Biggby Coffee; Brown Beekeepers; Brown County Board of Health & Addiction Services; Brown County Chamber of Commerce; Brown County Courts; Brown County ESC Psychologists; Brown County Farm Bureau; Brown County Health Department; Brown County Humane Society; Brown County Master Gardeners; Brown County Public Library; Brown County Rural Water; Brown County Sheriff's Office; Brown County Soil & Water Conservation District; C103 Radio/Good Guys Radio & TV; Child Focus; Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science; Cincinnati Observatory; Clark Construction; CMT Components; COAD 4 Kids/COAD Mobile Heat Lab; Colonial Post & Fence; Dragonfly Village; Eastern Local Special Services; Edward Jones Financial; Electric Vehicle Association of Ohio; Empire Roofing Solutions; First State Bank; FOX19 News; GE Aerospace; Georgetown Ag Pro; Georgetown Animal Hospital; Georgetown Fire & EMS; Georgetown Tire & Service Center; Green Acres Foundation/Education; GRIT/Future Plans; HCC Tech Support; Highland County Soil & Water Conservation District; Koenig Equipment; Mercy Health Imaging Department; Mt. Orab Fire & EMS; N.A.L. Company, Inc.; Nursing Made Easy; Nutrien Ag Solutions; Ohio Code Scholar; Ohio Department of Taxation; Ohio Division of Forestry; Ohio Division of Wildlife; OSU Extension – Adams, Brown, and Clermont Counties; Paul Hall &**

Initiative 1

Associates Insurance; Quality Staffing Services; R&L Carriers; RULH Marine Corps JROTC; RULH Treasurer's Office; Rumpke; Seal-Tite; Shafer Heating and Cooling; Shawnee State University Manufacturing; Sons of Toil; Southern Hills Community Bank; Southern Hills Career and Technical Center; Southern State Community College; Sporty's; Straight Creek Valley Farm; Talbert House; Trillium H2 Power; UC Health Air Care; University of Cincinnati Information Technologies; University of Cincinnati College of Education, Criminal Justice & Human Services; Valerie Long Shelter Insurance Agency; WAVE Foundation; Western Brown School District Technology Department; Women Helping Women; TECHMobile Ohio; UC Health; and Doug Daniels Drone Technology & Security. These partners represent a diverse range of career clusters, including healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing, engineering, skilled trades, construction, energy and utilities, transportation and logistics, technology, aviation, finance, education, public safety, government, environmental sciences, communications and media, hospitality, human services, and entrepreneurship. Partners will provide interactive demonstrations, hands-on activities, workplace simulations, career conversations, technology demonstrations, and opportunities for students to explore the skills and educational pathways associated with each industry. This expanding network strengthens the connection between regional employers and education while giving students meaningful opportunities to see, explore, and experience careers before making future education and career decisions.

What role does business play in planning and implementation?

Businesses and industry partners will play an active role in planning and implementing Little State STEAM by helping identify relevant career skills, co-designing hands-on learning experiences, providing demonstrations and workplace expertise, and connecting students with authentic career applications. Partners will collaborate with educators to align activities with Ohio career clusters and regional workforce needs, provide volunteers and resources, and use student and participant feedback to strengthen future events.

Initiative 2

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

Adams County College & Career Fair

The Adams County College & Career Fair, scheduled for October 15 from 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. at North Adams High School, will provide local high school students with an experiential opportunity to explore postsecondary education, career

Initiative 2
pathways, military service, and regional employment opportunities through direct interaction with college, career, and community representatives. Students will engage in conversations, ask questions, gather information, and learn about the education, technical skills, and professional competencies required for careers of interest. The event will utilize StriveScan, when available for participating organizations, allowing students to efficiently track the representatives they meet and support meaningful follow-up after the event. By connecting students directly with postsecondary institutions, workforce organizations, military representatives, and community partners, the fair will strengthen career awareness, decision-making, communication, and career-readiness skills while helping students connect their interests and abilities to concrete education and employment pathways.
List all school districts that will benefit from this initiative. The College and Career Fair is open to local high schools throughout the region, with invitations extended to **Adams County Christian School; Eastern Brown High School; Fayetteville High School; Georgetown High School; Lynchburg-Clay High School; Manchester High School; Ripley High School; Southern Hills Career and Technical Center; Western Brown High School; Whiteoak High School (Bright Local Schools); Peebles High School, North Adams High School, and West Union High School (Adams County Ohio Valley Schools); Ohio Valley Career and Technical Center; Southern Ohio Educational Service Center; and Brown County Educational Service Center**. The initiative will benefit students across Brown, Adams, Highland, and surrounding counties, with participation open to additional local schools as teams are formed.
List all businesses and industries that will be involved. Participating organizations will include Hocking College, Marshall University, University of Cincinnati, Ohio University, Rio Grande Community College, Shawnee State University, Art Academy of Cincinnati, Aveda Institute, Adams County Community Foundation, ABCAP, GRIT/Future Plans, OhioMeansJobs, the U.S. Navy, and additional regional partners. These partners represent industries and pathways including higher education, healthcare and cosmetology, arts and design, technology, workforce development, financial and community services, military/public service, and skilled and technical careers.

Initiative 2

What role does business play in implementation?

Business and industry partners will support implementation by providing students with direct access to employers and career professionals who can share real-world information about career pathways, workplace expectations, required skills, and employment opportunities. Through career conversations, demonstrations, networking, and interactive experiences, partners will help students connect their interests and classroom learning to authentic career options. Business participation will also provide opportunities for students to practice communication, questioning, decision-making, and professional skills while helping educators better understand current regional workforce needs.

Initiative 3

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

Dare to Dream

Dare to Dream, a high school entrepreneurship program through Shawnee State University, will provide students with an authentic experiential learning opportunity to develop an original business idea and prepare a professional pitch. The Brown & Adams County Business Advisory Council is currently working with schools to identify and form teams of 3–5 students representing high school classes, after-school projects, or student organizations. Participation is free for students and schools, making the opportunity accessible to students across the region. Participating schools will submit Letters of Intent on November 1, 2026, conduct in-school preliminary competitions in February 2027, and selected teams will advance to Ohio and Kentucky regional semifinals and final pitch events in February/March 2027. With support and coaching from Shawnee State University, students will actively apply skills in innovation, problem-solving, financial literacy, communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, and professional presentation as they develop and pitch their business concepts. Students may also have the opportunity to compete for prize funding to help advance their ideas.

Dare to Dream strengthens the connection among students, educators, higher education, and business leaders by providing a structured pathway for students to move an idea from concept to potential business venture. Shawnee State representatives will support schools and educators as teams are developed and will provide guidance throughout the competition process. Business professionals can serve as mentors and judges, provide feedback on business concepts, and help students understand real-world market and workforce expectations. Educators benefit

Initiative 3

from a turnkey entrepreneurship experience that can complement business, career-technical, and general education coursework while engaging students who may not thrive in traditional learning environments. Through this coordinated experience, students demonstrate competency through authentic application rather than simply learning about entrepreneurship, while businesses gain early access to emerging talent and an opportunity to help shape the skills needed for the region's future workforce.

List all school districts that will benefit from this initiative.

The Dare to Dream initiative will provide opportunities for students from the following local schools and districts:

- Adams County Ohio Valley Schools (ACOV)
  - Peebles High School
  - North Adams High School
  - West Union High School
- Ohio Valley Career Tech Center
- Eastern Local Schools – Eastern Brown High School
- Western Brown Local Schools – Western Brown High School
- Georgetown Exempted Village Schools – Georgetown High School
- Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington (RULH) Local Schools – Ripley High School
- Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools – Fayetteville High School
- Southern Hills Career and Technical Center
- Bright Local Schools – Whiteoak High School

These schools represent a diverse group of students across Brown, Adams and one county in Highland, providing access to entrepreneurship education, business mentorship, professional presentation experiences, and opportunities to develop and pursue innovative business ideas.

List all businesses and industries that will be involved.

Current sponsors identified through the Dare to Dream program hosted by Shawnee State University Kricker Innovation Hub, include **Glockner Enterprises, KFB The Better Bank, Appalachian Investors Alliance, Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation, Commercial Bank of Grayson Foundation, Tom Wolf McDonald's, VanArt Properties, Giovanni's (Ashland, KY), and First State Bank**

Initiative 3

of Adams and Brown Counties. These partners represent industries including automotive, banking and financial services, investment and economic development, real estate, food service, and community economic development.

What role does business play in implementation?

Businesses play a critical role in implementing Dare to Dream by providing financial support that directly rewards student innovation and entrepreneurship. Last year's business sponsors provide prize money to recognize teams that develop and present strong business ideas, with last year's competition awarding $5,000 to the champion team, $4,500 to the runner-up, $3,500 to the third-place teams (there was a tie), and $2,500 to the fifth-place team. This investment provides students with meaningful resources to further develop their entrepreneurial ideas while demonstrating that local businesses value creativity, initiative, problem-solving, and the development of future entrepreneurs and workforce leaders.

Initiative 4

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

Grain Bin Mapping Project

The Grain Bin Mapping Project provides an authentic work-based learning opportunity by connecting students with local agriculture, technology, public safety, and workforce needs. In its second year, the project began with one grain bin owner, Frank Fussnecker, whose six grain bins were mapped during an April 10, 2026 site visit, with nine additional farmers/grain bin owners signed up to participate. Students will engage in real-world tasks such as collecting GPS coordinates, documenting physical site conditions, identifying potential hazards and access points, taking photographs, organizing data, and entering information into a mapping/database system. Through these experiences, students will apply skills in technology, agriculture, data collection, communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and workplace safety while interacting directly with farmers and other community professionals. As the project expands to additional grain bin sites, the BAC^2 will increase the number of students participating in authentic workplace experiences and create opportunities for students to explore careers in agriculture, GIS/mapping, technology, emergency services, public safety, and related skilled occupations. The

Initiative 4
project demonstrates how local business and community partnerships can provide meaningful, career-connected learning that allows students to apply classroom skills to an authentic regional workforce.
List all school districts that will benefit from this initiative. An invitation to participate in the program was extended to all Brown County Schools for the initial kickoff with only 3 of 5 districts opting to participate. The districts are; **Eastern Local Schools, Georgetown Exempted Village Schools, and Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools**. Each district will identify a group of 6–12 students who will participate in the project after school. Students will work in teams to map grain bins within designated township sections of the county: Fayetteville-Perry students will cover Perry, Sterling, Green, Pike, and Scott Townships; Eastern Local students will cover Clark, Washington, Eagle, Rankin, and Jackson Townships; and Georgetown Exempted Village students will cover Lewis, Pleasant, Jefferson, Byrd, Union, and Huntington Townships. This structure provides students with hands-on, community-based work experiences while allowing them to contribute to an authentic regional agriculture and public safety project. We hope to grow this initiative to include all Adams County Ohio Valley buildings (Peebles, North Adams, West Union and Ohio Valley CTC) in the spring of 2027.
List all businesses and industries that will be involved. The Grain Bin Mapping Project will involve a diverse group of agricultural, emergency response, public safety, and technology partners, including **OSU Extension, Brown County Fire and Rescue, Brown County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), local farmers and grain bin owners, and licensed drone pilot and security officer Doug Daniels**. We have also received **sponsor support from Paul Hall and Associates, Inc. and Nationwide Foundation.** These partners will provide students with authentic exposure to the agriculture, emergency services, public safety, drone technology, mapping, and security industries while supporting the collection and documentation of grain bin information throughout the county.

Initiative 4

What role does business play in implementation?

Businesses and community partners play an essential role in implementing the Grain Bin Mapping Project by providing expertise, resources, equipment, funding, and authentic workplace experiences for students. OSU Extension, Brown County Fire and Rescue, Brown County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), local farmers/ grain bin owners, and licensed drone pilot and security officer Doug Daniels will support students as they collect, document, and map grain bin locations and identify important access and safety information. Paul Hall and Associates, Inc. and the Nationwide Foundation have provided sponsorship support to purchase the peel-and-stick identification materials, a charging pack for drone batteries and safety vests used for the project.

Initiative 5

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

Hackathon

The Hackathon will expand work-based learning by providing students with an authentic, hands-on opportunity to apply technology, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, communication, and artificial intelligence skills to the development of a real-world application. Building on the successful 2026 Hackathon hosted by Warren High School, and shared by BAC^2 member, Amy Queen, approximately 60 students from five schools participated, the BAC^2 plans to bring a similar experience to the Southwest Ohio region, potentially hosting an event in the Brown County area during the winter. Students will work throughout an all-day event with Team Leads, educators, technology professionals, college and CTC students, and business partners to develop an app using AI and present their work. The event will also create opportunities for tech interns, college students, CTC students, and employers to collaborate, mentor, and network. By connecting students with professionals and authentic technology challenges, the Hackathon will provide a meaningful work-based learning experience that allows students to demonstrate competency through hands-on application while exploring emerging careers in AI, technology, computer science, and entrepreneurship.

Initiative 5
List all school districts that will benefit from this initiative. An invitation to participate in Hackathon will be extended to students from the following schools and districts: **Adams County Ohio Valley Local Schools** (Peebles High School, West Union High School, and North Adams High School), **Manchester Local Schools, Eastern Local Schools, Western Brown Local Schools, Georgetown Exempted Village Schools, Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools, Ripley-Union-Lewis-Huntington (RULH) Local Schools, Southern Hills Career and Technical Center, Ohio Valley Career and Technical Center, Bright Local Schools** (Whiteoak High School), and **Felicity-Franklin Local Schools**. The BAC^2 plans to use available career assessment data, including the GRIT Assessment, to help identify and invite students whose interests, strengths, and career goals align with technology, artificial intelligence, computer science, problem-solving, and other skills developed through the Hackathon experience. This approach will help connect students with an authentic experiential learning opportunity that aligns with their individual interests and potential career pathways.
List all businesses and industries that will be involved. The Hackathon initiative will involve partners from technology, artificial intelligence, education, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and business/industry. Key partners and potential participants include Teach For America, Future Plans, BB2C, INTERalliance, Southern State Community College (SSCC), Shawnee State University, local employers and technology professionals, career-technical centers, and participating business sponsors.
What role does business play in planning and implementation? Business and industry partners can participate as team leads, judges, guest speakers, event sponsors, or hosting partners, providing students with direct exposure to technology careers and workplace expectations.

Click HERE to Review Joint Statement which includes data collected from previous year BAC Plan Initiatives.