



**North Central Ohio**  
**Educational Service Center**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2023-2024**

928 W. Market Street, Suite A  
Tiffin, OH 44883  
419-447-2927  
[www.ncoesc.org](http://www.ncoesc.org)

**EDUCATION  
IS THE MOST  
POWERFUL WEAPON  
WE CAN USE  
TO CHANGE THE WORLD**

**- NELSON MANDELA**



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## Message from the Superintendent

NCOESC holds a long and proud tradition of educational excellence to provide quality services throughout our service region. NCOESC currently serves more than 26,000 students from Marion, Sandusky, Seneca, Wyandot, Union, Richland, Crawford and Morrow counties and sponsors 15 community schools that serve an estimated 2,630 students., with school size ranging from 35-560

In addition, NCOESC also serves as the fiscal agent for the Region 7 State Support Team enabling us to provide educational services for 155 school buildings in 52 school districts in Region 7 which includes the counties of Ashland, Richland, Morrow, Knox, Crawford, Marion, Huron, Medina, Seneca and Wyandot.

The North Central Ohio Educational Service Center is committed to offering quality programs and services that will help school districts and community schools meet their unique needs. We have an experienced staff with in-depth knowledge on a wide variety of topics. Our staff has the expertise and training to design programs, services and professional development to address the needs of each district.

Agency personnel have developed a network of resources at the local, state, and even at the national level to support initiatives needed by the agency and districts we serve. Staff members regularly attend trainings to stay current with the latest research-based best practices, state and federal regulations and updated standards. Each district is unique and has specific areas of need. It is our goal to provide each school district with services customized to meet their identified needs. We have a commitment to our children in our partner schools to provide each child with the necessary tools and knowledge to become successful adults when leaving our schools and entering the next phase of life.

**Brenda Luhring**  
Superintendent/CEO





## Board of Governors

**Pamela Pinney**

*Board President*

**Jim McFarland**

*Board Vice President*

**Bryan Bumgarner**

*Board Member*

**J. Diane West**

*Board Member*

**Jack Koschnick**

*Board Member*

**Mick Landon**

*Board Member*

**Ryan Pelter**

*Board Member*

**T. Dwain Sayre**

*Board Member*

**Steve Snavely**

*Board Member*



**OUR MISSION- WHAT WE DO**

NCOESC provides innovative and exemplary services that promote deeper learning, foster meaningful relationships, and empower all stakeholders.

**OUR VISION-WHAT WE WANT TO BE**

A recognized leader committed to meeting the **evolving** needs of our educational partners.

# NCOESC COMMITMENTS

- 01. INNOVATIVE PRACTICES
- 02. MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS
- 03. DEEPER THINKING
- 04. EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS
- 05. EXEMPLARY SERVICE



## Member Districts

### Seneca County

Hopewell-Loudon Local  
New Riegel Local  
Old Fort Local  
Seneca East Local  
Fostoria City  
Tiffin City

### Crawford County

Buckeye Central  
Colonel Crawford Local  
Wynford Local

### Union County

North Union Local

### Wyandot County

Carey Exempted Village  
Mohawk Local  
Upper Sandusky Ex Village

### Marion County

Elgin Local  
Pleasant Local  
Ridgedale Local  
River Valley Local  
Tri-Rivers Career Center

### Sandusky County


Fremont City  
Vanguard-Sentinel Career Center

### Richland County

Ontario Local  
Shelby City



 Current NCOESC Districts

 Counties with Districts receiving services from the NCOESC Region 7 State Support Team

 Counties with Districts who contract for services with NCOESC



**Ashland County**

Ashland City  
Hillsdale Local  
Loudonville-Perryville Exempted Village  
Mapleton Local

**Crawford County**

Buckeye Central Local  
Colonel Crawford Local  
Crestline Exempted Village  
Galion City  
Wynford Local

**Huron County**

Willard City

**Knox County**

Centerburg Local  
Danville Local  
East Knox Local  
Fredericktown Local  
Mount Vernon City

**Marion County**

Elgin Local  
Marion City  
Pleasant Local  
Ridgedale Local  
River Valley Local  
Trecia Digital Academy  
Tri-Rivers Career Center

**Morrow County**

Cardington-Lincoln Local  
Goal Digital Academy  
Highland Local  
Mount Gilead Exempted Village  
Northmor Local  
The Tomorrow Center

**Richland County**

Clearfork Local  
Crestview Local  
Foundation Academy  
Goal Digital Academy  
Lexington Local  
Lucas Local  
Madison Local  
Mansfield Local  
Ontario Local  
Plymouth-Shiloh Local  
Shelby Local  
The Richland Academy of Academic Arts

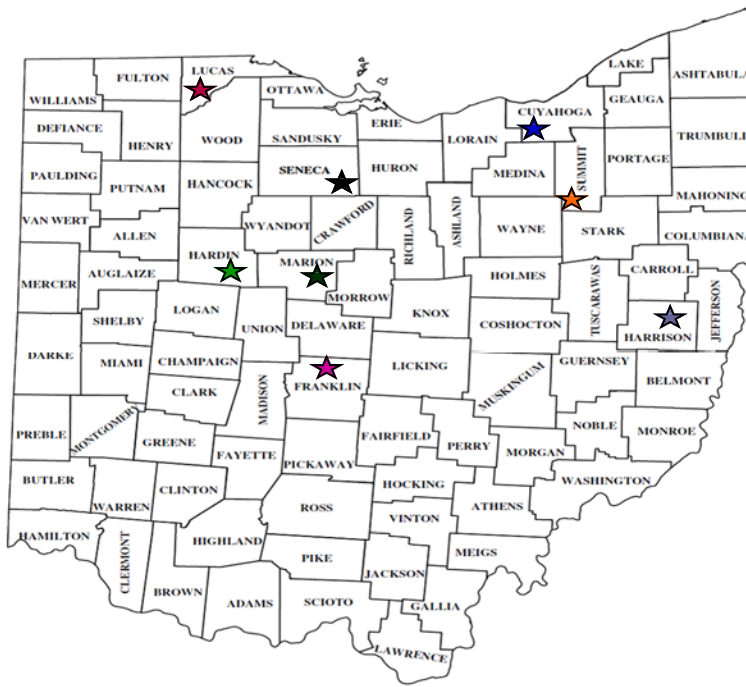
**Seneca County**

Bridges Community School  
Hopewell-Loudon Local  
New Riegel Local  
North Central Academy  
Old Fort Local  
Seneca East Local  
Tiffin City

**Wyandot County**

Carey Exempted Village  
Mohawk Local  
Upper Sandusky Exempted Village

## 2023-2024 Sponsored Schools



Ann Jerkins-Harris Academy of Excellence

Albert Einstein Academy-Lakewood

Albert Einstein-Strongsville

Eastland Preparatory Academy

Educational Academy for Boys and Girls

Focus Learning North Columbus

Focus Learning Central Columbus

Hardin Community School

Hope Learning Academy

Imagine Columbus Primary Academy

Imagine Leadership Academy

Marion Preparatory Academy

Midnimo Cross Cultural Academy

North Central Academy

Rise and Shine Academy

Unity Academy



## Community School Sponsorship

### Mission

*To build strong partnerships with developers and educational leaders of community schools by providing sponsorship service and technical support that meets and exceeds excellence in support of school choice options*

### Vision

*To be recognized across the state as a sponsor with high standards and integrity*

### Goals

- 1) To form partnerships and provide assistance to community schools through commitment to quality school choice and establishing high-quality school programs in Ohio.*
- 2) To provide support in helping our community schools meet the needs of students they serve.*
- 3) To service as critical partners to help community schools maintain compliance with state and federal laws.*





## Community School Sponsorship Performance Summary

Each year, the Ohio Department Workforce and Education (DEW) submits a report on Ohio's community schools to the governor and members of the Ohio General Assembly. As part of this process, the North Central Ohio Educational Service Center (NCOESC) is submitting this report to evaluate and summarize the performance and compliance of its sponsored schools in four areas: Academic Performance, Fiscal Performance, Organization and Operation, and Legal Compliance.

As a community school sponsor (authorizer), NCOESC strives to be a leader in the charter school movement, advocating for school choice. Our mission is to build strong partnerships with educational leaders to promote unique and high-quality educational experiences for students in Ohio, advocating excellence in education. During the 2023-2024 school year, NCOESC sponsored fifteen community schools with enrollment of approximately 2,793 students. NCOESC sponsored 1 drop-out recovery schools and fourteen general education schools in 2023-24. These schools represent a variety of grade-level configurations and unique educational opportunities for students they serve.

### **Performance Ratings**

NCOESC provides rigorous oversight, monitoring, and technical assistance to our sponsored schools with processes and protocols that align with standards developed by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and the state of Ohio's Sponsor Performance Review. NCOESC collects data from its sponsored schools throughout the year to determine specifically the extent to which each school is performing in the following four areas: academic, fiscal, operational/organizational and legal compliance. Data gathered through a variety of means reviewed and analyzed to determine school's performance includes the following:

- Site visits to schools, including walkthroughs while school is in session with findings reported to the governing authority at meetings;
- Monthly financial reviews;
- Attendance at community school governing authority board meetings;
- Ongoing reviews of assessment data highlighting student achievement and growth;
- Ongoing reviews in the areas of state and federal compliance, academics, special education, operations, and finance;
- Ongoing technical assistance delivered by trained and experienced staff; and,
- Reviews of reports electronically submitted to the NCOESC compliance-tracking database.

Information provided below also addresses criteria to determine whether a school exceeds, meets, or does not meet the expected performance level in each of the four areas; academic performance, fiscal performance, organizational/operational performance, and legal compliance.

### **Academic Performance (Achievement)**

As a community school authorizer the North Central Ohio ESC has a duty to monitor and provide oversight and technical assistance to all of its sponsored schools. This includes an assessment of each school's academic performance on an annual basis. During a typical year, the North Central Ohio ESC uses multiple measures of academic performance and the results of the school's attainment of goals outlined in the charter contract's Academic Assessment & Accountability/Performance Framework (Attachments 6.4 & 11.6, Part I & II of Sponsorship Contract) to determine a school's rating.

The Ohio Department of Education transitioned from letter grades to a star-reporting system in the current grade card components. Each star rating (1-5) relates to a performance level or a performance percentage in the components; achievement, early literacy, graduation and gap closing. For the progress component the star ratings of each school are related to the amount of annual growth or progress of each student.

### **Fiscal Performance**

NCOESC rated each school's fiscal performance using information from the following: board-approved financial reports, Ohio Auditor of State audits (including any findings and successfully addressing such findings), monthly financial reviews, five-year forecasts, annual budgets, and other financial information as requested of the school throughout the year.

With the information described, NCOESC rates the school's Fiscal Performance by calculating scores in six areas:

- Current Ratio (Total Assets/Liabilities- Is school keeping up with short-term financial obligations?)
- Days cash on hand (45 days or more is good while 15 to 45 fair, and under 15 days signals potential financial distress)
- Change in Fund Balance Ratio (Is school living within their means?)
- Enrollment trends (Main revenue stability)
- Five-year forecast review
- Most -recently released audit results

A school "exceeds" expectations if it meets the NCOESC measurement standards in all six areas. A school "meets expectations" if it meets the NCOESC measurement standards in at least four areas. If the fiscal performance was below these standards, it is determined the school "did not meet" expectations for its fiscal performance rating.

## **Organization and Operational Performance**

NCOESCS rated the school's organization and operational performance based on combined information showing how successfully the governing authority executed its governance duties under the contract. The factors considered include conducting required number of meetings, maintaining sufficient number of approved members, maintaining sufficient board meeting minutes, fulfilling member-training requirements, maintaining compliance with the governing authority's Code of Regulations, conducting monthly financial reviews, and complying with open meetings requirements.

A school "exceeds" expectations if the minimum contractual requirements are met in all areas and exceeded in at least one of the areas. A school "meets" expectations if the minimum contractual requirements are met in all of the areas. If the organization and operational performance was below these standards, it is determined the school "did not meet" expectations for its organizational and operational performance rating.

## **Legal Compliance**

NCOESC rated the school's Legal Compliance based on a combination of its adherence to state and federal statute, the community school contract, and compliance items from the sponsor evaluation. A school will have met expectations if it has a 100% compliance rate with health and safety requirements and at least 95% for all requirements.

## **Summary**

During the 2023-2024 school year, NCOESC sponsored 15 community schools. NCOESC is pleased to report the following:

8 out of 14 schools (1 Drop out recovery schools are not scored in this area) received a 3-star rating or better in the Progress category. 2 Schools achieved a 5 star rating in the Progress category.

3 out of 14 schools achieved 3 Stars on Gap Closing. 1 school achieved a 4 star on Gap closing, and 4 schools received a 5 star on Gap Closing.

Our 1 Drop Out Recovery School Exceeded Graduation Rates, Exceeded Progress, and met Gap Closing.

NCOESC staff members work diligently to provide technical assistance to school leaders, governing authority members, fiscal officers, and other stakeholders to improve compliance and ensure steady progress for those schools not meeting expectations in a given area. NCOESC remains committed to working with each school to individualize our technical assistance offerings so that more Ohio students have access to high-quality educational options.



## **North Central Ohio ESC Sponsored Community Schools' Performance**

In evaluating the performance of our schools, NCOESC looks at multiple measures but particularly Achievement and Progress.

Achievement answers the questions—How many students passed the state tests (Indicators Met) and how well each student performed on the state tests (Performance Index).

The progress component looks closely at the growth that all students are making from year-to- year based on their past performances.

The next page is a snapshot of our schools' achievement and progress for the 2023-20224 school year. It is important to note that 13 of our 15 schools serve high percentages of students who are economically disadvantaged.

## North Central Ohio ESC Sponsored Community Schools' Performance for SY 2023-2024

School/TRN	Grade Levels Served	% of Economically Disadvantaged	% of SWD & ELL	Attendance Rate	County	Academic	Fiscal Performance	Organization & Operation	Legal Compliance
Ann Jerkins-Harris School of Excellence/013195	K-8	100%	SWD- 17.4 ELL- NC	91%	Lucas	Did Not Meet	Met	Exceeds	Met
Albert Einstein Academy/013994	K-12	20%	SWD-34.1% ELL- NC	87%	Cuyahoga	Did Not Meet	*Met	Exceeds	Met
Eastland Preparatory Academy/014090	K-12	100%	SWD- 12.1% ELL- NC	78%	Franklin	Did Not Meet	*Met	Met	Met
Educational Academy for Boys & Girls	K-5	100%	SWD-8.1% ELL- 82.9%	93%	Franklin	Met	*Met	Exceeds	Met
Focus Learning Academy of Central Columbus/142943	K	100%	SWD- NC ELL- 40.2%	94%	Franklin	Met	*Met	Exceeds	Met
Focus Learning Academy of Northern Columbus/142943	K-8	99%	SWD- 3.5% ELL- 58.5%	95%	Franklin	Met	*Met	Exceeds	Met
Hardin Community School/011324	6-12	82%	SWD- 34.8% ELL- NC	96%	Hardin	Met	Met	Exceeds	Met
Hope Learning Academy/014091	K-8	66%	SWD- 72.9% ELL- NC	90%	Lucas	Did Not Meet	Met	Met	Met
Imagine Columbus Primary Academy/014139	K- 8	99%	SWD- 13.4% ELL- 15.6%	89%	Franklin	Did Not Meet	Met	Exceeds	Met
Imagine Leadership Academy/014121	1-8	100%	SWD- 15.1% ELL- NC	90%	Summit	Did Not Meet	Met	Exceeds	Met
Marion Preparatory Academy/17585	K -9	100%	SWD- 25.8% ELL- NC	88%	Marion	Did Not Meet	*Met	Exceeds	Met
Midnimo Cross Cultural Academy/000780	6-8	100%	SWD- 6.5% ELL- 42%	91%	Franklin	Met	*Met	Exceeds	Met
North Central Academy/012054	7-12	73%	SWD- 35.8% ELL- NC	86%	Senaca	Did Not Meet	Met	Did Not Meet	Met
Rise & Shine Academy/013999	K-7	38%	SWD- 2.3% ELL- NC	88%	Lucas	Did Not Meet	Met	Met	Met
Unity Academy	9-10	98%	SWD- 7.7% ELL- NC	89%	Franklin	Met	*Met	Exceeds	Met

\*Under Fiscal Column- Management Company and per agreement all financial obligations are met.





## **Services Offered at No Cost to Member Districts and NCOESC Sponsored Community Schools**

The North Central Ohio Educational Service Center offers a variety of professional Development support services to Member Districts and NCOESC's Sponsored Community Schools. Networking sessions for Principals, Curriculum Directors, Special Education Directors, School Counselors, School Testing Coordinators and Teachers cover a wide-range of educational topics including but not limited to those listed below:

School Leadership/Curriculum Director Network Meetings, School Counselor/Social Worker Network Meetings, Superintendent Meetings, Special Education Meetups, OTES/OPES 2.0 Network, Federal Programs Network, & State Curriculum Updates as well as many other professional development options on the topics listed below:

- English Language Learners
- EVAAS
- Crisis Prevention & Intervention
- Threat Assessment Training
- Local Report Card
- Gifted Education
- Mental Health
- Resident Educator
- Child Safety & Prevention

In addition to the above, The North Central Ohio Educational Service Center provides monitoring, oversight and technical assistance to its sponsored community schools in the following ways:

- Monitors progress and compliance with Sponsorship Agreement, Education Plan and Accountability Plan
- Completes annually, opening assurances by conducting site visits 10-days prior to the school's opening date
- Completes at least two other site visits (fall and spring) during the school year and reviews academic programming and compliance requirements
- Attends board meetings on a monthly or bi-monthly basis where the sponsor shares updates
- Provides financial reviews per ORC
- Provides legal updates and timely information relative to DEW initiatives via email and/or newsletter

- Serves as a liaison between school and DEW with any investigations or complaints
- Provides technical assistance and regular communications to sponsored schools regarding academic performance, professional development, law updates and any other issues or concerns that arise.
- If needed, provides intervention through consultation, assistance, assignment of corrective action plan and/or probationary status. Fiscal corrective actions are assigned by the treasurer.
- Reviews/assesses new and renewed contracts
- Compiles annual reports on each of the schools.



## Fiscal Services

The North Central Ohio ESC's mission is to be a recognized leader committed to meeting the needs of our educational partners through excellent service exhibited by honesty, trust and integrity. We serve as fiscal agent for the Seneca County Family and Children First Council, State Support Team Region 7, and the North Central Ohio Trust Joint Self Insurance Consortium.

**The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce has designated our organization a “High Performing ESC” as a result of our application which demonstrated 44% cost savings to districts in five primary service areas.**

Our ESC continues to grow by providing new services, programs, technology, professional development and special education services on behalf of the schools we serve through cost effective delivery and quality customer service to meet the educational needs of our partners.

Specifically for our community schools, we have dedicated the services of a Director of Community Schools to provide guidance and oversight to the schools we sponsor. We also employ licensed school treasurers to conduct monthly fiscal reviews and provide feedback on financial reports to the school board and directors. Our community school compliance officers provide further assistance to our schools by attending school board meetings and conducting site visits. We are able to offer the services of an EMIS Coordinator as a shared service with other community schools to minimize costs while providing quality financial services at the school's request.

By utilizing the ESC model of shared services we are able to provide significant cost savings to our local, city, and exempted village school districts, as well as community schools throughout Ohio. The exemplary resources we offer in Curriculum, Special Education, Early Childhood, and other Specialized Services are recognized throughout the region by our districts and partners.

## FY23 General Fund Financial Activities

