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ALL OF OHIO'S 51 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS RECEIVE HIGH-PERFORMING ESC DESIGNATION FOR ELEVENTH STRAIGHT YEAR

ESCs report more than \$107 million in annual savings to client school districts

COLUMBUS, OH — For the eleventh straight year, each of Ohio's 51 Educational Service Centers (ESCs) applied for and received the High-Performing ESC designation from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW). The Department confirmed that all 51 applications were reviewed and approved for the latest designation cycle.

To achieve the annual High-Performing ESC designation, an ESC must demonstrate total cost savings of at least 5% across five ESC-selected primary services for its client school districts, compared with the cost of districts providing those services themselves or purchasing them from another provider.

Ohio's ESCs substantially exceeded that benchmark, reporting statewide savings of 35.87% in Fiscal Year 2026, based on data submitted for the FY2027 designation cycle. This represents more than \$107.13 million in annual savings across just the five services selected by each ESC for its application—more than seven times the required savings threshold.

“Once again, Ohio's educational service centers demonstrate how they provide their client schools and districts with exceptional services at reasonable costs,” said Craig Burford, Executive Director of the Ohio ESC Association (OESCA).

“These results reflect the value of shared services and regional collaboration. Across the ten application years documented in our current data, ESCs have reported more than \$849.5 million in savings to school districts—and that captures only the services included in these applications,” Burford added. “Now more than ever, policymakers should recognize this sustained fiscal value and find additional ways to leverage the ESC network to support Ohio's schools and students.”

For the latest application cycle, ESCs reported charges of approximately \$191.55 million for selected services that would otherwise have cost districts approximately \$298.68 million to provide themselves or purchase from another provider. The difference represents resources districts can direct toward other educational priorities.

In notifying ESCs of their approval, the Department emphasized that the reported savings represent only part of the value ESCs provide to schools and districts statewide and thanked the network for its partnership.

Ohio's 51 ESCs are local education agencies that provide schools and client school districts with professional development, technology, coaching and support, planning, and administrative and operational services. These services help improve student learning, enhance the quality of instruction, expand access to resources, and maximize operating and fiscal efficiencies.

The Ohio ESC Association supports, educates and advocates for Ohio's ESCs. Learn more at www.oesca.org.

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