



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE  
**KEITH FABER**





**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER**  
**KNOX COUNTY**  
**JUNE 30, 2023**

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# OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



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800-282-0370

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Knox County Educational Service Center  
Knox County  
308 Martinsburg Road  
Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050

To the Board of Education:

### **Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements**

#### ***Opinions***

We have audited the cash-basis financial statements of the governmental activities, the major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Knox County Educational Service Center, Knox County, Ohio (the Educational Service Center), as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Educational Service Center's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective cash-basis financial position of the governmental activities, the major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Educational Service Center, as of June 30, 2023, and the respective changes in cash-basis financial position thereof for the year then ended in accordance with the cash-basis of accounting described in Note 2.

#### ***Basis for Opinions***

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Educational Service Center, and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

#### ***Emphasis of Matter - Accounting Basis***

Ohio Administrative Code § 117-2-03(B) requires the Educational Service Center to prepare its annual financial report in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We draw attention to Note 2 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared on the cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

***Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the cash basis of accounting described in Note 2, and for determining that the cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for preparation of the financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Educational Service Center's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards*, we

- exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Educational Service Center's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

***Supplementary Information***

Our audit was conducted to opine on the financial statements as a whole that collectively comprise the Educational Service Center's basic financial statements.

The Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards as required by Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements.

Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied to the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, this schedule is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

***Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards***

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated November 6, 2024, on our consideration of the Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Keith Faber  
Auditor of State  
Columbus, Ohio

November 6, 2024

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**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**STATEMENT OF NET POSITION - CASH BASIS  
JUNE 30, 2023**

	<b>Governmental Activities</b>
<b>Assets:</b>	
Equity in pooled cash and cash equivalents	<u>\$ 2,005,637</u>
<b>Net position:</b>	
Restricted for:	
State funded programs	\$ 1,461
Federally funded programs	47,750
Student activities	8,543
Other purposes	120,659
Unrestricted	<u>1,827,224</u>
Total net position	<u>\$ 2,005,637</u>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - CASH BASIS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

	<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>Program Receipts</b>		<b>Net (Disbursements) Receipts and Changes in Net Position</b>	
		<b>Charges for Services and Sales</b>	<b>Operating Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>Governmental Activities</b>	
<b>Governmental activities:</b>					
Instruction:					
Regular	\$ 429,276	\$ 248,513	\$ 110,567	\$	(70,196)
Special	5,213,887	5,123,847	153,529		63,489
Support services:					
Pupil	1,070,008	1,049,182	27,199		6,373
Instructional staff	223,589	137,332	64,296		(21,961)
Board of education	46,325	47,699	-		1,374
Administration	988,646	664,134	266,770		(57,742)
Fiscal	221,157	218,065	7,593		4,501
Operations and maintenance	68,959	48,795	17,470		(2,694)
Central	284,194	68,472	176,311		(39,411)
Extracurricular activities	4,516	9,650	-		5,134
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 8,550,557</b>	<b>\$ 7,615,689</b>	<b>\$ 823,735</b>		<b>(111,133)</b>
<b>General receipts:</b>					
Grants and entitlements not restricted					
to specific programs					423,531
Miscellaneous					10,088
Total general receipts					433,619
Change in net position					322,486
<b>Net position at beginning of year</b>					<b>1,683,151</b>
<b>Net position at end of year</b>					<b>\$ 2,005,637</b>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND FUND BALANCES - CASH BASIS  
GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS  
JUNE 30, 2023**

	<b>General</b>	<b>Other Governmental Funds</b>	<b>Total Governmental Funds</b>
<b>Assets:</b>			
Equity in pooled cash and cash equivalents	<u>\$ 2,297,311</u>	<u>\$ (291,227)</u>	<u>\$ 2,006,084</u>
<b>Fund balances:</b>			
Restricted:			
State funded programs	\$ -	\$ 1,461	\$ 1,461
Federally funded programs	-	47,750	47,750
Student activities	-	8,543	8,543
Other purposes	-	120,659	120,659
Assigned:			
Student instruction	33,695	-	33,695
Student and staff support	29,062	-	29,062
Unassigned (deficit)	<u>2,234,554</u>	<u>(469,640)</u>	<u>1,764,914</u>
Total fund balances (deficit)	<u>\$ 2,297,311</u>	<u>\$ (291,227)</u>	<u>\$ 2,006,084</u>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

RECONCILIATION OF TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL FUND BALANCES TO  
NET POSITION OF GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES - CASH BASIS  
JUNE 30, 2023

<b>Total governmental fund balances</b>	\$ 2,006,084
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*Amounts reported for governmental activities on the  
statement of net position are different because:*

An internal service fund is used by management to charge  
the costs of insurance to individual funds. The cash assets  
of the internal service fund are included in governmental  
activities on the statement of net position.

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(447)

<b>Net position of governmental activities</b>	<u>\$ 2,005,637</u>
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SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - CASH BASIS  
GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

	<b>General</b>	<b>Other Governmental Funds</b>	<b>Total Governmental Funds</b>
<b>Receipts:</b>			
Intergovernmental	\$ 423,531	\$ 777,294	\$ 1,200,825
Extracurricular	-	15,167	15,167
Contributions and donations	-	46,440	46,440
Customer services	7,600,523	-	7,600,523
Miscellaneous	10,088	-	10,088
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>8,034,142</b>	<b>838,901</b>	<b>8,873,043</b>
<b>Disbursements:</b>			
Current:			
Instruction:			
Regular	285,507	143,769	429,276
Special	4,975,242	238,388	5,213,630
Support services:			
Pupil	1,015,814	54,194	1,070,008
Instructional staff	133,230	90,359	223,589
Board of education	46,325	-	46,325
Administration	644,998	343,648	988,646
Fiscal	211,782	9,375	221,157
Operations and maintenance	47,389	21,570	68,959
Central	66,499	217,695	284,194
Extracurricular activities	-	4,516	4,516
<b>Total disbursements</b>	<b>7,426,786</b>	<b>1,123,514</b>	<b>8,550,300</b>
Net change in fund balances	607,356	(284,613)	322,743
<b>Fund balances (deficit) at beginning of year</b>	<b>1,689,955</b>	<b>(6,614)</b>	<b>1,683,341</b>
<b>Fund balances (deficit) at end of year</b>	<b>\$ 2,297,311</b>	<b>\$ (291,227)</b>	<b>\$ 2,006,084</b>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**RECONCILIATION OF THE STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS  
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES OF GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS  
TO THE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - CASH BASIS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**Net change in fund balances - total governmental funds** \$ 322,743

*Amounts reported for governmental activities in the  
statement of activities are different because:*

An internal service fund used by management to charge  
the costs of insurance to individual funds is not reported in  
the statement of activities. Governmental fund disbursements  
and the related internal service fund receipts are eliminated.  
The net receipts (disbursement) of the internal service fund  
is allocated among the governmental activities.

(257)

**Change in net position of governmental activities** \$ 322,486

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**STATEMENT OF NET POSITION - CASH BASIS  
PROPRIETARY FUND  
JUNE 30, 2023**

	<b>Governmental Activities - Internal Service Fund</b>
<b>Assets:</b>	
Equity in pooled cash and cash equivalents	<u><u>\$ (447)</u></u>
<b>Net position:</b>	
Unrestricted	<u><u>\$ (447)</u></u>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS AND  
CHANGES IN NET POSITION - CASH BASIS  
PROPRIETARY FUND  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

	<b><u>Governmental Activities - Internal Service Fund</u></b>
<b>Operating disbursements:</b>	
Other	\$ 257
Operating loss/change in net position	(257)
<b>Net position at beginning of year</b>	<u>(190)</u>
<b>Net position at end of year</b>	<u>\$ (447)</u>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 1 - DESCRIPTION OF THE ENTITY**

On July 18, 1914, the Knox County Educational Service Center ("Educational Service Center") was formed. The Educational Service Center supplies supervisory, administrative, and other needed services to area school districts.

The Educational Service Center operates under a locally-elected five member Board form of government and provides educational services as mandated by State and Federal agencies. The Board controls the Educational Service Center's support facilities staffed by 194 full and part time non-certificated, 120 full and part time certificated teaching personnel, and 6 administrators who provide services to 8,766 students and other community members.

**NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

As discussed further in Note 2.D, these financial statements are presented on a cash basis of accounting. This basis of accounting differs from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). Generally accepted accounting principles include all relevant Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncements, which have been applied to the extent they are applicable to the cash basis of accounting. Following are the more significant of the Educational Service Center's accounting policies.

**A. Reporting Entity**

A reporting entity is composed of the primary government, component units, and other organizations that are included to ensure the financial statements are not misleading. The primary government of the Educational Service Center consists of all funds, departments, boards, and agencies that are not legally separate from the Educational Service Center. For the Educational Service Center, this includes general operations and related activities of the Educational Service Center.

Component units are legally separate organizations for which the Educational Service Center is financially accountable. The Educational Service Center is financially accountable for an organization if the Educational Service Center appoints a voting majority of the organization's governing board and (1) the Educational Service Center is able to significantly influence the programs or services performed or provided by the organization; or (2) the Educational Service Center is legally entitled to or can otherwise access the organization's resources; the Educational Service Center is legally obligated or has otherwise assumed the responsibility to finance the deficits of, or provide financial support to, the organization; or the Educational Service Center is obligated for the debt of the organization. Component units may also include organizations that are fiscally dependent on the Educational Service Center in that the Educational Service Center approves the budget, the issuance of debt, or the levying of taxes, and there is a potential for the organization to provide specific financial benefits to or impose specific financial burdens on the Educational Service Center. The Educational Service Center has no component units. The basic financial statements of the reporting entity include only those of the Educational Service Center (the primary government).

The following organizations are described due to their relationship to the Educational Service Center:

*JOINTLY GOVERNED ORGANIZATIONS*

Knox County Career Center

The Knox County Career Center is a joint vocational school. The Knox County Career Center includes six member school districts spread throughout Coshocton, Delaware, Holmes, Knox, Licking, Morrow and Richland counties. It is operated under the direction of a Board consisting of three representatives from Knox County Educational Service Center elected board, three from Mount Vernon City elected board and one from Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center elected board, which possesses its own budgeting and taxing authority. Each participant's control is limited to its representation on the board. The Knox County Educational Service Center paid \$4,800 for services during fiscal year 2023. To obtain financial information write to the Knox County Career Center, 302 Martinsburg Road, Mt. Vernon, Ohio 43050.

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)**

**META Solutions**

META Solutions is jointly governed organization among 128 member districts. META Solutions was formed for the purpose of applying modern technology with the aid of computers and other electronic equipment to the administrative and instructional functions among member districts. Each of the governments of these schools supports META Solutions based upon a per pupil charge dependent upon the software package utilized. META Solutions is governed by a board of directors consisting of superintendents of the members' districts. The degree of control exercised by any participating school district is limited to its representation on the board. The Educational Service Center paid \$21,720 for services during fiscal year 2023. Audited yearly financial statements are available at META Solutions, 100 Executive Drive, Marion, Ohio, 43302.

***INSURANCE PURCHASING POOL***

**Ohio School Boards Association Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program (GRP)**

The Educational Service Center participates in the Ohio School Boards Association Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program (GRP), an insurance purchasing pool. The GRP's business and affairs are conducted by a three-member Board of Directors consisting of the President, the President-Elect and the Immediate Past President of the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA). The Executive Director of the OSBA, or his designee, serves as coordinator of the program. Each year, the participants pay an enrollment fee to the GRP to cover the costs of administering the program.

**B. Basis of Presentation**

The Educational Service Center's basic financial statements consist of government-wide financial statements, including a statement of net position – cash basis and a statement of activities – cash basis, and fund financial statements which provide a more detailed level of financial information.

**Government-Wide Financial Statements** - The statement of net position – cash basis and the statement of activities – cash basis display information about the Educational Service Center as a whole. These statements include the financial activities of the primary government, except for fiduciary funds. The activity of the internal service fund is eliminated to avoid "doubling up" receipts and disbursements. The statements usually distinguish between those activities of the Educational Service Center that are governmental and those that are considered business-type. The Educational Service Center, however, has no business-type activities.

The statement of net position – cash basis presents the cash balance of the governmental activities of the Educational Service Center at fiscal year-end. The statement of activities – cash basis compares disbursements with program receipts for each function or program of the Educational Service Center's governmental activities. Disbursements are reported by function. A function is a group of related activities designed to accomplish a major service or regulatory program for which the Educational Service Center is responsible. Program receipts include charges paid by the recipient of the program's goods or services and grants and contributions restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular program. General receipts are all receipts not classified as program receipts, with certain limited exceptions. The comparison of direct disbursements with program receipts identifies the extent to which each governmental function is self-financing on a cash basis or draws from the Educational Service Center's general receipts.

All cash assets and net cash position associated with the operation of the Educational Service Center are included on the statement of net position – cash basis.

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)**

*Fund Financial Statements* - During the fiscal year, the Educational Service Center segregates transactions related to certain Educational Service Center functions or activities in separate funds in order to aid financial management and to demonstrate legal compliance. Fund financial statements are designed to present financial information of the Educational Service Center at this more detailed level. The focus of governmental fund financial statements is on major funds. Each major fund is presented in a separate column. Non-major funds are aggregated and presented in a single column. The internal service fund is presented in a single column on the face of the proprietary fund statements. Fiduciary funds are reported by fund type.

**C. Fund Accounting**

The Educational Service Center uses funds to maintain its financial records during the fiscal year. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. There are three categories of funds: governmental, proprietary, and fiduciary.

*GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS*

Governmental funds are those through which most governmental functions typically are financed. The Educational Service Center classifies funds financed primarily from intergovernmental receipts (e.g., grants) and other non-exchange transactions as governmental funds. The Educational Service Center's only major fund is the general fund.

*General Fund* - The general fund is used to account for all financial resources, except those required to be accounted for in another fund. The general fund balance is available to the Educational Service Center for any purpose provided it is expended or transferred according to the general laws of Ohio.

The other governmental funds of the Educational Service Center account for grants and other resources who use is restricted, committed or assigned to a particular purpose.

*PROPRIETARY FUNDS*

Proprietary fund reporting focuses on the determination of operating income and changes in net cash position. Proprietary funds are classified as either enterprise or internal service; the Educational Service Center has no enterprise funds.

*Internal Service Fund* - The internal service fund accounts for the financing of services provided by one department or agency to other departments or agencies of the Educational Service Center on a cost reimbursement basis. The Educational Service Center's only internal service fund accounts for a former self-insurance dental and vision program for Educational Service Center employees. The self-insurance program ended in fiscal year 2021.

*FIDUCIARY FUNDS*

Fiduciary fund reporting focuses on net cash position and changes in net cash position. The fiduciary fund category is split into four classifications: pension trust funds, investment trust funds, private purpose trust funds and custodial funds. Trust funds are distinguished from custodial funds by the existence of a trust agreement or equivalent arrangements that have certain characteristics. The Educational Service Center has no trust funds. Custodial funds are used to report fiduciary activities that are not required to be reported in a trust fund. The Educational Service Center's custodial fund accounts for contributions collected and remitted on-behalf of another government. The custodial fund had no activity during the fiscal year.

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)**

**D. Basis of Accounting**

Although Ohio Administrative Code § 117-2-03(B) requires the Educational Service Center's financial report to follow GAAP, the Educational Service Center chooses to prepare its financial statements and notes in accordance with the cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than GAAP. The Educational Service Center recognizes receipts when received in cash rather than when earned and recognizes disbursements when paid rather than when a liability is incurred.

As a result of the use of the cash basis of accounting, certain assets and their related revenues (such as accounts receivable and revenue for billed or provided services not yet collected) and certain liabilities and their related expenses (such as accounts payable and expenses for goods or services received but not yet paid, and accrued expenses and liabilities) are not recorded in the financial statements.

**E. Budgetary Process**

The Educational Service Center is not required to file budgetary information with the Ohio Department of Education. Even though the budgetary process for the Educational Service Center is discretionary, the Educational Service Center's Board does approve appropriations and estimated resources for all funds for control purposes. The Educational Service Center's Board adopts an annual appropriation resolution, which is the Board's authorization to spend resources and sets annual limits on expenditures at the level of control selected by the Board. The level of control has been established by the Board at the fund, function, and object level for all funds. Any revisions that alter the total of any fund appropriation or alter total function appropriations within a fund, or alter object appropriations within functions, must be approved by the Board. During the year, several supplemental appropriations were enacted, which represented the appropriation of available resources. Throughout the fiscal year, appropriations may be authorized or supplemented as circumstances warrant. The Educational Service Center has elected to not present a budgetary schedule as supplementary information for the general fund.

**F. Cash and Investments**

To improve cash management, cash received by the Educational Service Center is pooled in a central bank account. Monies for all funds are maintained in this pool. Individual fund integrity is maintained through the Educational Service Center's records. Each fund's interest in the pool is presented as "Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents" on the basic financial statements.

Under existing Ohio statutes all investment earnings are assigned to the general fund unless statutorily required to be credited to a specific fund. By policy of the Board of Education, investment earnings are assigned to the fund from which the investment was made. There was no interest credited to the general fund during fiscal year 2023.

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)**

For presentation on the basic financial statements, investments of the cash management pool and investments with original maturities of three months or less at the time they are purchased by the Educational Service Center are considered to be cash equivalents. Investments with an initial maturity of more than three months are reported as investments.

An analysis of the Educational Service Center's investment account at year end is provided in Note 4.

**G. Capital Assets**

Acquisitions of property, plant, and equipment are recorded as disbursements when paid. The financial statements do not report these assets.

**H. Inventory and Prepaid Items**

The Educational Service Center reports cash disbursements for inventory and prepaid items when paid. These items are not reflected as assets in the accompanying financial statements.

**I. Compensated Absences**

Employees are entitled to cash payments for unused vacation and sick leave in certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment. Unpaid vacation and sick leave are not reflected as liabilities under the cash basis of accounting used by the Educational Service Center.

**J. Long-Term Obligations**

The Educational Service Center's cash basis financial statements do not report liabilities for long-term obligations. Proceeds of debt are reported when cash is received, and principal and interest payments are reported when paid. Since recording a capital asset (including the intangible right to use) when entering into a lease or financed purchase transaction, or Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) is not the result of a cash transaction, neither an other financing source nor a capital outlay disbursement is reported at inception. Lease payments, financed purchase payments, and SBITA payments are reported when paid.

**K. Leases**

The Educational Service Center is the lessee of equipment under a noncancelable lease. Lease payables are not reflected under the Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting. Lease disbursements are recognized when they are paid.

**L. Net Position**

Net position is reported as restricted when there are limitations imposed on its use either through external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, or laws or regulations of other governments. Net position restricted for other purposes includes resources restricted by local grantors and donors and for resources restricted for scholarships for which the Educational Service Center has administrative involvement in the award process. The Educational Service Center's policy is to first apply restricted resources when a disbursement is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position is available.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)**

**M. Fund Balance**

Fund balance is divided into five classifications based primarily on the extent to which the Educational Service Center is bound to observe constraints imposed upon the use of the resources in governmental funds. The classifications are as follows:

*Non-spendable* - The non-spendable classification includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are not in spendable form or legally or contractually required to be maintained intact. The "not in spendable form" includes items that are not expected to be converted to cash. The Educational Service Center had no nonspendable fund cash balances at June 30, 2023.

*Restricted* - Fund balance is reported as restricted when constraints placed on the use of resources are either externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments, or are imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

*Committed* - The committed classification includes amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes imposed by a formal action (resolution) of the Board of Education. The committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the Board of Education removes or changes the specified use by taking the same type of action (resolution) it employed to previously commit those amounts. Committed fund balance also incorporates contractual obligations to the extent that existing resources in the fund have been specifically committed for use in satisfying those contractual requirements.

*Assigned* - Amounts in the assigned classification are intended to be used by the Educational Service Center for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. In governmental funds, other than the general fund, assigned fund balance represents the remaining amount that is not restricted or committed. Assigned amounts represent intended uses established by the Board of Education. The Board of Education has authorized the Treasurer to assign fund balance for purchases on order provided such amounts have been lawfully appropriated.

*Unassigned* - Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the general fund and includes all spendable amounts not contained in the other classifications. In other governmental funds, the unassigned classification is used only to report a deficit fund cash balance resulting from overspending for specific purposes for which amounts had been restricted, committed, or assigned.

The Educational Service Center first applies restricted resources when an expenditure is incurred for purposes for which either restricted or unrestricted (committed, assigned, and unassigned) amounts are available. Similarly, within unrestricted fund balance, committed amounts are reduced first followed by assigned and then unassigned amounts when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund balance classifications can be used.

**N. Pensions/Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)**

For purposes of measuring the net pension/OPEB liability and net OPEB asset, information about the fiduciary net position of the pension/OPEB plans and additions to/deductions from their fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by the pension/OPEB plan. For this purpose, benefit payments (including refunds of employee contributions) are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. The pension/OPEB plans report investments at fair value.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)**

**O. Interfund Activity**

Exchange transactions between funds are reported as receipts in the seller funds and as disbursements in the purchaser funds. Flows of cash or goods from one fund to another without a requirement for repayment are reported as interfund transfers. Interfund transfers are reported as other financing sources/uses in governmental funds. Repayments from funds responsible for particular disbursements to the funds that initially paid for them are not presented on the basic financial statements.

**P. Interfund Balances**

On fund financial statements, the Educational Service Center reports advances in and advances out for interfund loans. These items are not reflected as assets and liabilities in the accompanying fund financial statements under the cash basis of accounting. Advances are eliminated in the governmental activities column on the statement of net position. During fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center did not make any advances in or advances out to other funds.

**Q. Operating Receipts and Disbursements**

Operating receipts are those receipts that are generated directly from the primary activity of the proprietary fund. Operating receipts consist of a refund from Jefferson Health Plan related to a former self-insurance program. Operating disbursements are necessary costs incurred to provide the good or service that is the primary activity of the fund. Any receipts or disbursements not meeting the definitions of operating are reported as nonoperating.

**R. Extraordinary and Special Items**

Extraordinary items are transactions or events that are both unusual in nature and infrequent in occurrence. Special items are transactions or events that are within the control of the Board of Education and that are either unusual in nature or infrequent in occurrence. Neither type of transaction occurred during fiscal year 2023.

**S. Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITAs)**

The Educational Service Center has Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITAs) under noncancelable arrangements. SBITA payables are not reflected under the Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting. SBITA disbursements are recognized when they are received/paid.

**NOTE 3 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE**

**A. Change in Accounting Principles**

For fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center has implemented GASB Statement No. 91, "Conduit Debt Obligations", GASB Statement No. 94, "Public-Private and Public-Public Partnerships and Availability Payment Arrangements", GASB Statement No. 96, "Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements", certain questions and answers of GASB Implementation Guide 2021-1 and certain paragraphs of GASB Statement No. 99, "Omnibus 2022".

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 3 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE - (Continued)**

GASB Statement No. 91 provides a single method of reporting conduit debt obligations by issuers and eliminate diversity in practice associated with (1) commitments extended by issuers, (2) arrangements associated with conduit debt obligations, and (3) related note disclosures. This Statement achieves those objectives by clarifying the existing definition of a conduit debt obligation; establishing that a conduit debt obligation is not a liability of the issuer; establishing standards for accounting and financial reporting of additional commitments and voluntary commitments extended by issuers and arrangements associated with conduit debt obligations; and improving required note disclosures. The implementation of GASB Statement No. 91 did not have an effect on the financial statements of the Educational Service Center.

GASB Statement No. 94 is to improve financial reporting by addressing issues related to public-private and public partnership arrangements (PPPs). As used in this Statement, a PPP is an arrangement in which a government (the transferor) contracts with an operator (a governmental or nongovernmental entity) to provide public services by conveying control of the right to operate or use a nonfinancial asset, such as infrastructure or other capital asset (the underlying PPP asset), for a period of time in an exchange or exchange-like transaction. The implementation of GASB Statement No. 94 did not have an effect on the financial statements of the Educational Service Center.

GASB Statement No. 96 provides guidance on the accounting and financial reporting for subscription-based information technology arrangements (SBITAs) for government end users (governments). This Statement (1) defines a SBITA; (2) establishes that a SBITA results in a right-to-use subscription asset—an intangible asset—and a corresponding subscription liability; (3) provides the capitalization criteria for outlays other than subscription payments, including implementation costs of a SBITA; and (4) requires note disclosures regarding a SBITA. To the extent relevant, the standards for SBITAs are based on the standards established in Statement No. 87, Leases, as amended. The notes to the basic financial statements include the disclosure requirements under the Statement.

GASB Implementation Guide 2021-1 provides clarification on issues related to previously established GASB guidance. The implementation of GASB Implementation Guide 2021-1 did not have an effect on the financial statements of the Educational Service Center.

GASB Statement No. 99 to enhance comparability in accounting and financial reporting and to improve the consistency of authoritative literature by addressing (1) practice issues that have been identified during implementation and application of certain GASB Statements and (2) accounting and financial reporting for financial guarantees. The implementation of GASB Statement No. 99 did not have an effect on the financial statements of the Educational Service Center.

**B. Compliance**

Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(B) requires the Educational Service Center to prepare its annual financial report in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. However, the Educational Service Center prepared its basic financial statements on a cash basis, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The accompanying basic financial statements omit assets, deferred outflows of resources, liabilities, deferred inflows of resources, net position/fund balances, and disclosures that, while material, cannot be determined at this time. The Educational Service Center can be fined and various other administrative remedies may be taken against the Educational Service Center.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 3 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE - (Continued)**

**C. Deficit Fund Balances**

Fund balances at June 30, 2023 included the following individual fund deficits:

<u>Nonmajor funds</u>	<u>Deficit</u>
Public School Preschool	\$ 165,959
Miscellaneous State Grants	20,270
ESSER	200,862
Governor's Emergency Education Relief	46,527
IDEA Part B - Preschool Stimulus	35,765
Miscellaneous Federal Grants	257

**NOTE 4 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS**

Monies held by the Educational Service Center are classified by State statute into three categories.

Active monies are public monies determined to be necessary to meet current demands upon the Educational Service Center treasury. Active monies must be maintained either as cash in the Educational Service Center treasury, in commercial accounts payable or withdrawable on demand, including negotiable order of withdrawal (NOW) accounts, or in money market deposit accounts.

Inactive deposits are public deposits the Board of Education has identified as not required for use within the current five year period of designation of depositories. Inactive deposits must either be evidenced by certificates of deposit maturing not later than the end of the current period of designation of depositories, or by savings or deposit accounts including, but not limited to, passbook accounts.

Interim deposits are deposits of interim monies. Interim monies are those monies which are not needed for immediate use but which will be needed before the end of the current period of designation of depositories. Interim deposits must be evidenced by time certificates of deposit maturing not more than one year from the date of deposit or by savings or deposit accounts, including passbook accounts.

Interim monies held by the Educational Service Center may be deposited or invested in the following securities:

1. United States Treasury bills, bonds, notes, or any other obligation or security issued by the United States Treasury, or any other obligation guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States;
2. Bonds, notes, debentures, or any other obligation or security issued by any federal government agency or instrumentality including, but not limited to, the Federal National Mortgage Association, Federal Home Loan Bank, Federal Farm Credit Bank, Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation and Government National Mortgage Association.. All federal agency securities shall be direct issuances of federal government agencies or instrumentalities;
3. Written repurchase agreements in the securities listed above;
4. Bonds and other obligations of the State of Ohio, and with certain limitations including a requirement for maturity within ten years from the date of settlement, bonds and other obligations of political subdivisions of the State of Ohio, if training requirements have been met;
5. Time certificates of deposit or savings or deposit accounts including, but not limited to, passbook accounts;

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 4 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS - (Continued)**

6. No-load money market mutual funds consisting exclusively of obligations described in division (1) or (2) and repurchase agreements secured by such obligations, provided that investments in securities described in this division are made only through eligible institutions;
7. The State Treasurer's investment pool, the State Treasury Asset Reserve of Ohio (STAR Ohio);
8. Certain bankers' acceptances (for a period not to exceed one hundred eighty days) and commercial paper notes (for a period not to exceed two hundred seventy days) in an amount not to exceed 40 percent of the interim monies available for investment at any one time if training requirements have been met.

Protection of the deposits is provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), by eligible securities pledged by the financial institution as security for repayment, or by the financial institutions participation in the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS), a collateral pool of eligible securities deposited with a qualified trustee and pledged to the Treasurer of State to secure the repayment of all public monies deposited in the financial institution.

Investments in stripped principal or interest obligations, reverse repurchase agreements, and derivatives are prohibited. The issuance of taxable notes for the purpose of arbitrage, the use of leverage, and short selling are also prohibited. Except as noted above, an investment must mature within five years from the date of purchase, unless matched to a specific obligation or debt of the Educational Service Center and must be purchased with the expectation that it will be held to maturity. Investments may only be made through specified dealers and institutions. Payment for investments may be made upon delivery of the securities representing the investments to the Treasurer or, if the securities are not represented by a certificate, upon receipt of confirmation of transfer from the custodian.

**A. Deposits**

At June 30, 2023, the carrying amount of all the Educational Service Center deposits was \$2,019,053. Custodial credit risk for deposits is the risk that in the event of bank failure, the Educational Service Center will not be able to recover deposits or collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party. At fiscal year-end, \$1,895,329 of the Educational Service Center's bank balance of \$2,145,329 was exposed to custodial credit risk because it was uninsured and uncollateralized. Although all State statutory requirements for the deposit of money had been followed, noncompliance with federal requirements could potentially subject the Educational Service Center to a successful claim by the FDIC.

The Educational Service Center has no deposit policy for custodial credit risk beyond the requirements of State statute. Ohio law requires that deposits either be insured or protected by:

Eligible securities pledged to the Educational Service Center and deposited with a qualified trustee by the financial institution as security for repayment whose market value at all times shall be at least 105 percent of the deposits being secured; or

Participation in the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS), a collateral pool of eligible securities deposited with a qualified trustee and pledged to the Treasurer of State to secure the repayment of all public monies deposited in the financial institution. OPCS requires the total market value of the securities pledged to be 102 percent of the deposits being secured or a rate set by the Treasurer of State.

**B. Investments**

As of June 30, 2023, the Educational Service Center had no investments.

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**NOTE 5 - STATE FUNDING**

The Educational Service Center, under State law, provides supervisory services to the local school districts within its territory. Each city and exempted village school district that entered into an agreement with the Educational Service Center is considered to be provided supervisory services. The cost of the supervisory services is determined by formula under State law.

The State Department of Education apportions the costs for all supervisory services among the Educational Service Center's school district based on each school district's total student count. The State Department of Education deducts each school district's amount from their State Foundation Program settlements and remits the amount to the Educational Service Center. The Educational Service Center may provide additional supervisory services if the majority of the school districts agree to the services and the apportionment of the costs.

The Educational Service Center also receives funding from the State Department of Education, in the amount of \$26.00 multiplied by the average daily membership of the Educational Service Center. Average daily membership includes the total student counts of all of the local school districts served by the Educational Service Center. This amount is paid from State resources. The State Department of Education also deducts from the State Foundation Program settlements of each of the school districts served by the Educational Service Center an amount equal to \$6.50 multiplied by the school district's total student count and remits this amount to the Educational Service Center.

The Educational Service Center may contract with local, city, exempted village, joint vocational, or cooperative education school districts to provide special education and related services or career technical education services. The individual boards of education pay the costs for these services directly to the Educational Service Center.

**NOTE 6 - RISK MANAGEMENT**

**A. Property and Liability**

The Educational Service Center is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees and natural disasters. During fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center contracted with the Ohio School Plan for property and general liability insurance.

The ESC's liability coverage includes general liability, employer's liability, security and law enforcement liability, fiduciary liability, errors and omissions liability and employment practices liability. They each have a \$1,000,000 per occurrence limit with a \$3,000,000 annual aggregate. The first three have no deductible and the last three have a \$2,500 deductible.

Settled claims have not exceeded this commercial coverage in any of the past four years. There have been no significant reduction in insurance coverage from last year.

**B. Workers' Compensation**

For fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center participated in the Ohio School Boards Association Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program (GRP), an insurance purchasing pool (Note 2). The intent of the GRP is to achieve the benefit of a reduced premium for the Educational Service Center by virtue of its grouping and representation with other participants in the GRP. The workers' compensation experience of the participants is calculated as one experience and a common premium rate is applied to all participants in the GRP. Each participant pays its workers' compensation premium to the State based on the rate for the GRP rather than its individual rate. Participation in the GRP is limited to school districts and educational service centers that can meet the GRP's selection criteria. The firm of Sheakley provides administrative, cost control and actuarial services to the GRP.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 6 - RISK MANAGEMENT – (Continued)**

**C. Self-Insurance**

Beginning in fiscal year 2009, the Educational Service Center offered medical, surgical and prescription drug claims coverage to all employees through a self-insurance internal service fund. Self-Funded Plans, Incorporated serves as the third-party administrator. As of July 1, 2012, the Educational Service Center was no longer self-insured for health insurance but was still self-insured for dental and vision. The Educational Service Center's self-insurance plan for dental and vision claims ended June 30, 2021. During fiscal year 2022, the Educational Service Center paid run out claims related to the former self-insurance program. There was no claims liability during fiscal year 2023. Changes in the fund's claims liability amount in fiscal year 2022 and 2023 were:

Fiscal Year	Balance Beginning of Year	Current Year Claims	Claims Payments	Balance End of Year
2022	\$ -	\$ 624	\$ 624	\$ -
2023	-	-	-	-

**NOTE 7 - OTHER EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

The criteria for determining vacation and sick leave benefits are derived from State laws. Administrators that work 12 months earn twenty days of vacation per year. Accumulated unused vacation time is paid upon termination of employment. Employees working less than 12 months per year do not earn vacation time. All employees earn sick leave at the rate of one and one-fourth days per month. Sick leave may be accumulated up to 180 days for 180-day employees and 200 days for 260-day employees. Upon retirement, payment is made for one-fourth of the total sick leave accumulation, up to a maximum accumulation of 50 days. Any employee receiving such payment must meet the retirement provisions set by STRS or SERS.

Life Insurance is provided through AUL. The Governing Board pays 100 percent of the premium. Coverage is \$40,000 life and an additional \$40,000 Accidental Death, Dismemberment, and Loss of Sight.

Prior to July 1, 2021, dental and vision insurance was provided through a self-insurance program (see note 6.C). Effective July 1, 2021, the Educational Service Center's self-insurance program for dental and vision insurance ended and dental and vision insurance is now available for purchase by the employees but is not provided by the Board of Education or subsidized in any amount. Dental insurance is offered through TruAssure and vision insurance is offered through VBA.

The Educational Service Center also offers a Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) plan, which provides wellness benefits to Educational Service Center employees. The MEC plan offered is 100 percent Board paid and still offers wellness coverage that employees would otherwise have to go to the marketplace for.

**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS**

The Statewide retirement systems provide both pension benefits and other postemployment benefits (OPEB).

***Net Pension Liability/Net OPEB Liability/Asset***

The net pension liability and the net OPEB liability/asset reported on the statement of net position represents a liability or asset to employees for pensions and OPEB, respectively.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

Pensions and OPEB are a component of exchange transactions—between an employer and its employees—of salaries and benefits for employee services. Pensions/OPEB are provided to an employee—on a deferred-payment basis—as part of the total compensation package offered by an employer for employee services each financial period. The obligation to sacrifice resources for pensions is a present obligation because it was created as a result of employment exchanges that already have occurred.

The net pension/OPEB liability (asset) represent the Educational Service Center's proportionate share of each pension/OPEB plan's collective actuarial present value of projected benefit payments attributable to past periods of service, net of each pension/OPEB plan's fiduciary net position. The net pension/OPEB liability (asset) calculation is dependent on critical long-term variables, including estimated average life expectancies, earnings on investments, cost of living adjustments and others. While these estimates use the best information available, unknowable future events require adjusting these estimates annually.

The Ohio Revised Code limits the Educational Service Center's obligation for this liability to annually required payments. The Educational Service Center cannot control benefit terms or the manner in which pensions/OPEB are financed; however, the Educational Service Center does receive the benefit of employees' services in exchange for compensation including pension and OPEB.

GASB 68/75 assumes the liability is solely the obligation of the employer, because (1) they benefit from employee services; and (2) State statute requires funding to come from these employers. All pension contributions to date have come solely from these employers (which also includes pension costs paid in the form of withholdings from employees). The retirement systems may allocate a portion of the employer contributions to provide for these OPEB benefits. In addition, health care plan enrollees pay a portion of the health care costs in the form of a monthly premium. State statute requires the retirement systems to amortize unfunded pension liabilities within 30 years. If the pension amortization period exceeds 30 years, each retirement system's board must propose corrective action to the State legislature. Any resulting legislative change to benefits or funding could significantly affect the net pension/OPEB liability (asset). Resulting adjustments to the net pension/OPEB liability (asset) would be effective when the changes are legally enforceable. The Ohio Revised Code permits, but does not require, the retirement systems to provide healthcare to eligible benefit recipients.

The net pension/net OPEB liability (asset) are not reported on the face of the financial statements, but rather are disclosed in the notes because of the use of the cash basis framework.

The remainder of this note includes the required pension disclosures. See Note 9 for the required OPEB disclosures.

***Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)***

Plan Description - The Educational Service Center's non-teaching employees participate in SERS, a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by SERS. SERS provides retirement, disability and survivor benefits, annual cost-of-living adjustments, and death benefits to plan members and beneficiaries. Authority to establish and amend benefits is provided by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3309. SERS issues a publicly available, stand-alone financial report that includes financial statements, required supplementary information and detailed information about SERS' fiduciary net position. That report can be obtained by visiting the SERS website at [www.ohsers.org](http://www.ohsers.org) under Employers/Audit Resources.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

Age and service requirements for retirement are as follows:

	Eligible to Retire on or before August 1, 2017 *	Eligible to Retire after August 1, 2017
Full benefits	Age 65 with 5 years of services credit; or Any age with 30 years of service credit	Age 67 with 10 years of service credit; or Age 57 with 30 years of service credit
Actuarially reduced benefits	Age 60 with 5 years of service credit; or Age 55 with 25 years of service credit	Age 62 with 10 years of service credit; or Age 60 with 25 years of service credit

\* Members with 25 years of service credit as of August 1, 2017 will be included in this plan.

Annual retirement benefits are calculated based on final average salary multiplied by a percentage that varies based on years of service; 2.2% for the first thirty years of service and 2.5% for years of service credit over 30. Final average salary is the average of the highest three years of salary.

An individual whose benefit effective date is before April 1, 2018, is eligible for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) on the first anniversary date of the benefit. Beginning April 1, 2018, new benefit recipients must wait until the fourth anniversary of their benefit for COLA eligibility. The COLA is added each year to the base benefit amount on the anniversary date of the benefit. A three-year COLA suspension was in effect for all benefit recipients for the years 2018, 2019, and 2020. Upon resumption of the COLA, it will be indexed to the percentage increase in the CPI-W, not to exceed 2.5% and with a floor of 0%. In 2022, the Board of Trustees approved a 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for eligible retirees and beneficiaries in 2023.

Funding Policy - Plan members are required to contribute 10.00% of their annual covered salary and the Educational Service Center is required to contribute 14.00% of annual covered payroll. The contribution requirements of plan members and employers are established and may be amended by the SERS' Retirement Board up to statutory maximum amounts of 10.00% for plan members and 14.00% for employers. The Retirement Board, acting with the advice of the actuary, allocates the employer contribution rate among four of the System's funds (Pension Trust Fund, Death Benefit Fund, Medicare B Fund, and Health Care Fund). For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, the allocation to pension, death benefits, and Medicare B was 14.00%. For fiscal year 2023, the Retirement Board did not allocate any employer contribution to the Health Care Fund.

The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to SERS was \$495,298 for fiscal year 2023.

***Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)***

Plan Description - Licensed teachers participate in STRS, a cost-sharing multiple-employer public employee retirement system administered by STRS. STRS provides retirement and disability benefits to members and death and survivor benefits to beneficiaries. STRS issues a stand-alone financial report that includes financial statements, required supplementary information and detailed information about STRS' fiduciary net position. That report can be obtained by writing to STRS, 275 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43215-3771, by calling (888) 227-7877, or by visiting the STRS website at [www.strsoh.org](http://www.strsoh.org).

New members have a choice of three retirement plans: a Defined Benefit (DB) Plan, a Defined Contribution (DC) Plan and a Combined (CO) Plan. Benefits are established by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3307.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

The DB plan offers an annual retirement allowance based on final average salary multiplied by a percentage that varies based on years of service. Effective August 1, 2015, the calculation is 2.20% of final average salary for the five highest years of earnings multiplied by all years of service. Eligibility changes will be phased in until August 1, 2023, when retirement eligibility for unreduced benefits will be five years of service credit and age 65, or 35 years of service credit and at least age 60.

Eligibility changes for DB Plan members who retire with actuarially reduced benefits will be phased in until August 1, 2023 when retirement eligibility will be five years of qualifying service credit and age 60, or 30 years of service credit regardless of age.

The DC Plan allows members to place all of their member contributions and 9.53% of the 14% employer contributions into an investment account. The member determines how to allocate the member and employer money among various investment choices offered by STRS Ohio. The remaining 4.47% of the 14% employer rate is allocated to the defined benefit unfunded liability. A member is eligible to receive a retirement benefit at age 50 and termination of employment. The member may elect to receive a lifetime monthly annuity or a lump sum withdrawal.

The Combined Plan offers features of both the DB Plan and the DC Plan. In the Combined Plan, 12% of the 14% member rate goes to the DC Plan and the remaining 2% is applied to the DB Plan. Member contributions to the DC Plan are allocated among investment choices by the member, and contributions to the DB Plan from the employer and the member are used to fund the defined benefit payment at a reduced level from the regular DB Plan. The defined benefit portion of the Combined Plan payment is payable to a member on or after age 60 with five years of service. The defined contribution portion of the account may be taken as a lump sum payment or converted to a lifetime monthly annuity after termination of employment at age 50 and after termination of employment.

New members who choose the DC Plan or Combined Plan will have another opportunity to reselect a permanent plan during their fifth year of membership. Members may remain in the same plan or transfer to another STRS plan. The optional annuitization of a member's defined contribution account or the defined contribution portion of a member's Combined Plan account to a lifetime benefit results in STRS bearing the risk of investment gain or loss on the account. STRS has therefore included all three plan options as one defined benefit plan for GASB 68 reporting purposes.

A DB or Combined Plan member with five or more years of credited service, who is determined to be disabled, may qualify for a disability benefit. New members, on or after July 1, 2013, must have at least ten years of qualifying service credit to apply for disability benefits. Members in the DC Plan who become disabled are entitled only to their account balance. Eligible survivors of members who die before service retirement may qualify for monthly benefits. If a member of the DC Plan dies before retirement benefits begin, the member's designated beneficiary is entitled to receive the member's account balance.

**Funding Policy** - Employer and member contribution rates are established by the State Teachers Retirement Board and limited by Chapter 3307 of the Ohio Revised Code. The fiscal year 2023 employer and employee contribution rate of 14% was equal to the statutory maximum rates. For fiscal year 2023, the full employer contribution was allocated to pension.

The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to STRS was \$357,439 for fiscal year 2023.

***Net Pension Liability***

The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2022, and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The Educational Service Center's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the Educational Service Center's share of contributions to the pension plan relative to the contributions of all participating entities.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

Following is information related to the proportionate share:

	<u>SERS</u>	<u>STRS</u>	<u>Total</u>
Proportion of the net pension liability prior measurement date	0.068014900%	0.017500400%	
Proportion of the net pension liability current measurement date	<u>0.077530800%</u>	<u>0.018784600%</u>	
Change in proportionate share	<u>0.009515900%</u>	<u>0.001284200%</u>	
Proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 4,193,469	\$ 4,175,841	\$ 8,369,310

***Actuarial Assumptions - SERS***

SERS' total pension liability was determined by their actuaries in accordance with GASB Statement No. 67, as part of their annual actuarial valuation for each defined benefit retirement plan. Actuarial valuations of an ongoing plan involve estimates of the value of reported amounts (e.g., salaries, credited service) and assumptions about the probability of occurrence of events far into the future (e.g., mortality, disabilities, retirements, employment termination). Actuarially determined amounts are subject to continual review and potential modifications, as actual results are compared with past expectations and new estimates are made about the future.

Projections of benefits for financial reporting purposes are based on the substantive plan (the plan as understood by the employers and plan members) and include the types of benefits provided at the time of each valuation and the historical pattern of sharing benefit costs between the employers and plan members to that point. The projection of benefits for financial reporting purposes does not explicitly incorporate the potential effects of legal or contractual funding limitations.

Actuarial calculations reflect a long-term perspective. For a newly hired employee, actuarial calculations will take into account the employee's entire career with the employer and also take into consideration the benefits, if any, paid to the employee after termination of employment until the death of the employee and any applicable contingent annuitant. In many cases actuarial calculations reflect several decades of service with the employer and the payment of benefits after termination.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

Key methods and assumptions used in calculating the total pension liability in the latest actuarial valuation, prepared as of June 30, 2022, are presented below:

Wage inflation:

Current measurement date	2.40%
Prior measurement date	2.40%

Future salary increases, including inflation:

Current measurement date	3.25% to 13.58%
Prior measurement date	3.25% to 13.58%

COLA or ad hoc COLA:

Current measurement date	2.00%
Prior measurement date	2.00%

Investment rate of return:

Current measurement date	7.00% net of system expenses
Prior measurement date	7.00% net of system expenses

Discount rate:

Current measurement date	7.00%
Prior measurement date	7.00%

Actuarial cost method

Entry age normal (level percent of payroll)

In 2022, mortality rates were based on the PUB-2010 General Employee Amount Weight Below Median Healthy Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 94.20% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% for females. Mortality among disabled members were based upon the PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 5 years and adjusted 103.3% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

In the prior measurement date, mortality rates were based on the PUB-2010 General Employee Amount Weight Below Median Healthy Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 94.20% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% for females. Mortality among disabled members were based upon the PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 5 years and adjusted 103.3% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

The most recent experience study was completed for the five-year period ended June 30, 2020.

The long-term return expectation for the Pension Plan Investments has been determined using a building-block approach and assumes a time horizon, as defined in SERS' *Statement of Investment Policy*. A forecasted rate of inflation serves as the baseline for the return expectation. Various real return premiums over the baseline inflation rate have been established for each asset class. The long-term expected nominal rate of return has been determined by calculating a weighted average of the expected real return premiums for each asset class, adding the projected inflation rate, and adding the expected return from rebalancing uncorrelated asset classes.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

The target allocation and best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class are summarized in the following table:

Asset Class	Target Allocation	Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return
Cash	2.00 %	(0.45) %
US Equity	24.75	5.37
Non-US Equity Developed	13.50	6.22
Non-US Equity Emerging	6.75	8.22
Fixed Income/Global Bonds	19.00	1.20
Private Equity	11.00	10.05
Real Estate/Real Assets	16.00	4.87
Multi-Asset Strategy	4.00	3.39
Private Debt/Private Credit	3.00	5.38
Total	<u><u>100.00 %</u></u>	

**Discount Rate** - The total pension liability was calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed the contributions from employers and from the members would be computed based on contribution requirements as stipulated by State statute. Projected inflows from investment earnings were calculated using the long-term assumed investment rate of return (7.00%). Based on those assumptions, the plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefits to determine the total pension liability.

**Sensitivity of the Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate** - Net pension liability is sensitive to changes in the discount rate, and to illustrate the potential impact the following table presents the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%, as well as what each plan's net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (6.00%), or one percentage point higher (8.00%) than the current rate.

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 6,172,586	\$ 4,193,469	\$ 2,526,089

**Actuarial Assumptions - STRS**

Key methods and assumptions used in the latest actuarial valuation, reflecting experience study results used in the June 30, 2022, actuarial valuation are presented below:

	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2021
Inflation	2.50%	2.50%
Projected salary increases	Varies by service from 2.50% to 8.50%	12.50% at age 20 to 2.50% at age 65
Investment rate of return	7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation	7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation
Discount rate of return	7.00%	7.00%
Payroll increases	3.00%	3.00%
Cost-of-living adjustments (COLA)	0.00%	0.00%

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

For the June 30, 2022 actuarial valuation, post-retirement mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110% for males, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020. Pre-retirement mortality rates are based on Pub-2010 Teachers Employee Table adjusted 95% for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020. Post-retirement disabled mortality rates are based on Pub-2010 Teachers Disable Annuitant Table projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020.

For the prior measurement date, post-retirement mortality rates are based on the RP-2014 Annuitant Mortality Tables with 50% of rates through age 69, 70% of rates between ages 70 and 79, 90% of rates between ages 80 and 84, and 100% of rates thereafter, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016. Pre-retirement mortality rates are based on RP-2014 Employee Mortality Tables, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016. Post-retirement disabled mortality rates are based on the RP-2014 Disabled Mortality Tables with 90% of rates for males and 100% of rates for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016.

Actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2022 valuation are based on the results of an actuarial experience study for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2021. An actuarial experience study is done on a quinquennial basis.

STRS Ohio's investment consultant develops an estimate range for the investment return assumption based on the target allocation adopted by the Retirement Board. The target allocation and long-term expected rate of return for each major asset class are summarized as follows:

Asset Class	Target Allocation*	Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return **
Domestic Equity	26.00 %	6.60 %
International Equity	22.00	6.80
Alternatives	19.00	7.38
Fixed Income	22.00	1.75
Real Estate	10.00	5.75
Liquidity Reserves	1.00	1.00
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>	

\* Target allocation percentage is effective as of July 1, 2022. Target weights were phased in over a 3-month period concluding on October 1, 2022.

\*\*10-Year annualized geometric nominal returns, which include the real rate of return and inflation of 2.25% and is net of investment expenses. Over a 30-year period, STRS Ohio's investment consultant indicates that the above target allocations should generate a return above the actuarial rate of return, without net value added by management.

**Discount Rate** - The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.00% as of June 30, 2022. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumes that member and employer contributions will be made at the statutory contribution rates in accordance with the rates described previously. For this purpose, only employer contributions that are intended to fund benefits of current plan members and their beneficiaries are included. Based on those assumptions, STRS Ohio's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments to current plan members as of June 30, 2022. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments of 7.00% was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability as of June 30, 2022.

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**NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)**

***Sensitivity of the Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate*** - The following table represents the net pension liability as of June 30, 2022, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00%, as well as what the net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (6.00%) or one percentage point higher (8.00%) than the current assumption:

	1% Decrease	Current Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 6,308,174	\$ 4,175,841	\$ 2,372,546

***Changes Between Measurement Date and Reporting Date*** - STRS approved a one-time 1.00% cost-of-living adjustment to eligible benefit recipients effective July 1, 2023. It is unknown what effect this change will have on the net pension liability.

**NOTE 9 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS**

***Net OPEB Liability/Asset***

See Note 8 for a description of the net OPEB liability (asset).

***Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)***

Health Care Plan Description - The Educational Service Center contributes to the SERS Health Care Fund, administered by SERS for non-certificated retirees and their beneficiaries. For GASB 75 purposes, this plan is considered a cost-sharing other postemployment benefit (OPEB) plan. SERS' Health Care Plan provides healthcare benefits to eligible individuals receiving retirement, disability, and survivor benefits, and to their eligible dependents. Members who retire after June 1, 1986, need 10 years of service credit, exclusive of most types of purchased credit, to qualify to participate in SERS' health care coverage. In addition to age and service retirees, disability benefit recipients and beneficiaries who are receiving monthly benefits due to the death of a member or retiree, are eligible for SERS' health care coverage. Most retirees and dependents choosing SERS' health care coverage are over the age of 65 and therefore enrolled in a fully insured Medicare Advantage plan; however, SERS maintains a traditional, self-insured preferred provider organization for its non-Medicare retiree population. For both groups, SERS offers a self-insured prescription drug program. Health care is a benefit that is permitted, not mandated, by statute. The financial report of the Plan is included in the SERS Annual Comprehensive Financial Report which can be obtained on SERS' website at [www.ohsers.org](http://www.ohsers.org) under Employers/Audit Resources.

Access to health care for retirees and beneficiaries is permitted in accordance with Section 3309 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Health Care Fund was established and is administered in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 105(e). SERS' Retirement Board reserves the right to change or discontinue any health plan or program. Active employee members do not contribute to the Health Care Plan. The SERS Retirement Board established the rules for the premiums paid by the retirees for health care coverage for themselves and their dependents or for their surviving beneficiaries. Premiums vary depending on the plan selected, qualified years of service, Medicare eligibility, and retirement status.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 9 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)**

Funding Policy - State statute permits SERS to fund the health care benefits through employer contributions. Each year, after the allocation for statutorily required pensions and benefits, the Retirement Board may allocate the remainder of the employer contribution of 14% of covered payroll to the Health Care Fund in accordance with the funding policy. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, SERS did not allocate any employer contributions to post-employment health care. An additional health care surcharge on employers is collected for employees earning less than an actuarially determined minimum compensation amount, pro-rated if less than a full year of service credit was earned. For fiscal year 2023, this amount was \$25,000. Statutes provide that no employer shall pay a health care surcharge greater than 2% of that employer's SERS-covered payroll; nor may SERS collect in aggregate more than 1.5% of the total statewide SERS-covered payroll for the health care surcharge. For fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center's surcharge obligation was \$48,712.

The surcharge added to the allocated portion of the 14% employer contribution rate is the total amount assigned to the Health Care Fund. The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to SERS was \$48,712 for fiscal year 2023.

***Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)***

Plan Description - The State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS) administers a cost-sharing Health Plan administered for eligible retirees who participated in the defined benefit or combined pension plans offered by STRS. Ohio law authorizes STRS to offer this plan. Benefits include hospitalization, physicians' fees, prescription drugs and partial reimbursement of monthly Medicare Part B premiums. The Medicare Part B monthly reimbursement elimination date was postponed indefinitely. The Plan is included in the report of STRS which can be obtained by visiting [www.strsoh.org](http://www.strsoh.org) or by calling (888) 227-7877.

Funding Policy - Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3307 authorizes STRS to offer the Plan and gives the Retirement Board discretionary authority over how much, if any, of the health care costs will be absorbed by STRS. Active employee members do not contribute to the Health Care Plan. Nearly all health care plan enrollees, for the most recent year, pay a portion of the health care costs in the form of a monthly premium. Under Ohio law, funding for post-employment health care may be deducted from employer contributions, currently 14% of covered payroll. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, STRS did not allocate any employer contributions to post-employment health care.

***Net OPEB Liability/Asset***

The net OPEB liability/asset was measured as of June 30, 2022, and the total OPEB liability/asset used to calculate the net OPEB liability/asset was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The Educational Service Center's proportion of the net OPEB liability/asset was based on the Educational Service Center's share of contributions to the respective retirement systems relative to the contributions of all participating entities.

Following is information related to the proportionate share:

	<u>SERS</u>	<u>STRS</u>	<u>Total</u>
Proportion of the net OPEB liability/asset prior measurement date	0.069901800%	0.017500400%	
Proportion of the net OPEB liability/asset current measurement date	<u>0.078745500%</u>	<u>0.018784600%</u>	
Change in proportionate share	<u>0.008843700%</u>	<u>0.001284200%</u>	
Proportionate share of the net OPEB liability	\$ 1,105,595	\$ -	\$ 1,105,595
Proportionate share of the net OPEB asset	\$ -	\$ (486,396)	\$ (486,396)

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 9 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)**

*Actuarial Assumptions - SERS*

The total OPEB liability is determined by SERS' actuaries in accordance with GASB Statement No. 74, as part of their annual actuarial valuation for each retirement plan. Actuarial valuations of an ongoing plan involve estimates of the value of reported amounts (e.g., salaries, credited service) and assumptions about the probability of occurrence of events far into the future (e.g., mortality, disabilities, retirements, employment terminations). Actuarially determined amounts are subject to continual review and potential modifications, as actual results are compared with past expectations and new estimates are made about the future.

Projections of benefits for financial reporting purposes are based on the substantive plan (the plan as understood by the employers and plan members) and include the types of benefits provided at the time of each valuation and the historical pattern of sharing benefit costs between the employers and plan members to that point. The projection of benefits for financial reporting purposes does not explicitly incorporate the potential effects of legal or contractual funding limitations.

Actuarial calculations reflect a long-term perspective. For a newly hired employee, actuarial calculations will take into account the employee's entire career with the employer and also take into consideration the benefits, if any, paid to the employee after termination of employment until the death of the employee and any applicable contingent annuitant. In many cases, actuarial calculations reflect several decades of service with the employer and the payment of benefits after termination.

Key methods and assumptions used in calculating the total OPEB liability in the latest actuarial valuation date of June 30, 2022 are presented below:

Wage inflation:

Current measurement date	2.40%
Prior measurement date	2.40%

Future salary increases, including inflation:

Current measurement date	3.25% to 13.58%
Prior measurement date	3.25% to 13.58%

Investment rate of return:

Current measurement date	7.00% net of investment expense, including inflation
Prior measurement date	7.00% net of investment expense, including inflation

Municipal bond index rate:

Current measurement date	3.69%
Prior measurement date	1.92%

Single equivalent interest rate, net of plan investment expense, including price inflation:

Current measurement date	4.08%
Prior measurement date	2.27%

Medical trend assumption:

Current measurement date	7.00 to 4.40%
Prior measurement date	

Medicare	5.125 to 4.400%
Pre-Medicare	6.750 to 4.400%

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 9 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)**

In 2022, mortality rates were based on the PUB-2010 General Employee Amount Weight Below Median Healthy Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 94.20% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% for females. Mortality among disabled members were based upon the PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 5 years and adjusted 103.3% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

In the prior measurement date, mortality rates were based on the PUB-2010 General Employee Amount Weighted Below Median Healthy Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 94.20% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% for females. Mortality among disabled members were based upon the PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 5 years and adjusted 103.3% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

The most recent experience study was completed for the five-year period ended June 30, 2020.

The long-term expected rate of return on plan assets is reviewed as part of the actuarial 5-year experience study. The most recent study covers fiscal years 2016 through 2020, and was adopted by the Board in 2021. Several factors are considered in evaluating the long-term rate of return assumption including long-term historical data, estimates inherent in current market data, and a long-normal distribution analysis in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return were developed by the investment consultant for each major asset class. These ranges were combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return, 7.00%, by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and then adding expected inflation. The capital market assumptions developed by the investment consultant are intended for use over a 10-year horizon and may not be useful in setting the long-term rate of return for funding pension plans which covers a longer timeframe. The assumption is intended to be a long-term assumption and is not expected to change absent a significant change in the asset allocation, a change in the inflation assumption, or a fundamental change in the market that alters expected returns in future years.

The target asset allocation and best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class are summarized as follows:

Asset Class	Target Allocation	Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return
Cash	2.00 %	(0.45) %
US Equity	24.75	5.37
Non-US Equity Developed	13.50	6.22
Non-US Equity Emerging	6.75	8.22
Fixed Income/Global Bonds	19.00	1.20
Private Equity	11.00	10.05
Real Estate/Real Assets	16.00	4.87
Multi-Asset Strategy	4.00	3.39
Private Debt/Private Credit	3.00	5.38
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>	

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 9 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)**

**Discount Rate** - The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability at June 30, 2022, was 4.08%. The discount rate used to measure total OPEB liability prior to June 30, 2022, was 2.27%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions will be made from members and the System at the contribution rate of 1.50% of projected covered payroll each year, which includes a 1.50% payroll surcharge and no contributions from the basic benefits plan. Based on these assumptions, the OPEB plan's fiduciary net position was projected to become insufficient to make all projected future benefit payments of current System members by SERS actuaries. The Municipal Bond Index Rate is used in the determination of the SEIR for both the June 30, 2022 and the June 30, 2021 total OPEB liability. The Municipal Bond Index rate is the single rate that will generate a present value of benefit payments equal to the sum of the present value determined by the long-term expected rate of return, and the present value determined by discounting those benefits after the date of depletion. The Municipal Bond Index Rate is 3.69% at June 30, 2022 and 1.92% at June 30, 2021.

**Sensitivity of the Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate and Changes in the Health Care Cost Trend Rates** - The net OPEB liability is sensitive to changes in the discount rate and the health care cost trend rate. The following table presents the net OPEB liability, what the net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1 percentage point lower (3.08%) and higher (5.08%) than the current discount rate (4.08%). Also shown is what the net OPEB liability would be based on health care cost trend rates that are 1 percentage point lower (6.00% decreasing to 3.40%) and higher (8.00% decreasing to 5.40%) than the current rate (7.00% decreasing to 4.40%).

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability	\$ 1,373,166	\$ 1,105,595	\$ 889,593
Educational Service Center's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability	Current		
	1% Decrease	Trend Rate	1% Increase
	\$ 852,612	\$ 1,105,595	\$ 1,436,032

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 9 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)**

***Actuarial Assumptions - STRS***

Key methods and assumptions used in the latest actuarial valuation, reflecting experience study results used in the June 30, 2022 actuarial valuation, compared with June 30, 2021 actuarial valuation, are presented below:

	June 30, 2022		June 30, 2021	
Inflation	2.50%		2.50%	
Projected salary increases	Varies by service from 2.50% to 8.50%		12.50% at age 20 to 2.50% at age 65	
Investment rate of return	7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation		7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation	
Payroll increases	3.00%		3.00%	
Cost-of-living adjustments (COLA)	0.00%		0.00%	
Discount rate of return	7.00%		7.00%	
Blended discount rate of return	N/A		N/A	
Health care cost trends	Initial	Ultimate	Initial	Ultimate
Medical				
Pre-Medicare	7.50%	3.94%	5.00%	4.00%
Medicare	-68.78%	3.94%	-16.18%	4.00%
Prescription Drug				
Pre-Medicare	9.00%	3.94%	6.50%	4.00%
Medicare	-5.47%	3.94%	29.98%	4.00%

Projections of benefits include the historical pattern of sharing benefit costs between the employers and retired plan members.

For the June 30, 2022 actuarial valuation, for healthy retirees the post-retirement mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110% for males, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020; pre-retirement mortality rates are based on Pub-2010 Teachers Employee Table adjusted 95% for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020. For disabled retirees, mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Disabled Annuitant Table projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020.

For the prior measurement date, for healthy retirees the mortality rates are based on the RP-2014 Annuitant Mortality Tables with 50% of rates through age 69, 70% of rates between ages 70 and 79, 90% of rates between ages 80 and 84, and 100% of rates thereafter, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016. For disabled retirees, mortality rates are based on the RP-2014 Disabled Mortality Tables with 90% of rates for males and 100% of rates for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016.

Actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2022 valuation are based on the results of an actuarial experience study for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2021. An actuarial experience study is done on a quinquennial basis.

***Assumption Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date*** - The discount rate remained unchanged at 7.00% for the June 30, 2022 valuation.

***Benefit Term Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date*** - Salary increase rates were updated based on the actuarial experience study for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2021 and were changed from age based to service based.

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**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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**NOTE 9 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)**

STRS' investment consultant develops an estimate range for the investment return assumption based on the target allocation adopted by the Retirement Board. The target allocation and long-term expected rate of return for each major asset class are summarized as follows:

Asset Class	Target Allocation*	Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return **
Domestic Equity	26.00 %	6.60 %
International Equity	22.00	6.80
Alternatives	19.00	7.38
Fixed Income	22.00	1.75
Real Estate	10.00	5.75
Liquidity Reserves	1.00	1.00
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>	

\* Target allocation percentage is effective as of July 1, 2022. Target weights were phased in over a 3-month period concluding on October 1, 2022.

\*\*10-Year annualized geometric nominal returns, which include the real rate of return and inflation of 2.25% and is net of investment expenses. Over a 30-year period, STRS Ohio's investment consultant indicates that the above target allocations should generate a return above the actuarial rate of return, without net value added by management.

**Discount Rate** - The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability was 7.00% as of June 30, 2022. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed STRS Ohio continues to allocate no employer contributions to the health care fund. Based on those assumptions, the OPEB plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments to current plan members as of June 30, 2022. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on health care fund investments of 7.00% was applied to all periods of projected health care costs to determine the total OPEB liability as of June 30, 2022.

**Sensitivity of the Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Asset to Changes in the Discount and Health Care Cost Trend Rate** - The following table represents the net OPEB asset as of June 30, 2022, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00%, as well as what the net OPEB asset would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (6.00%) or one percentage point higher (8.00%) than the current assumption. Also shown is the net OPEB asset as if it were calculated using health care cost trend rates that are one percentage point lower or one percentage point higher than the current health care cost trend rates.

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's proportionate share of the net OPEB asset	\$ 449,660	\$ 486,396	\$ 517,863
	Current		
	1% Decrease	Trend Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's proportionate share of the net OPEB asset	\$ 504,511	\$ 486,396	\$ 463,530

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE 10 - CONTINGENCIES**

**A. Grants**

The Educational Service Center received financial assistance from federal and state agencies in the form of grants. The expenditure of funds received under these programs generally requires compliance with terms and conditions specified in the grant agreements and is subject to audit by the grantor agencies. Any disallowed claims resulting from such audits could become a liability of the general fund or other applicable funds. However, in the opinion of management, any such disallowed claims will not have a material adverse effect on the overall financial position of the Educational Service Center at June 30, 2023.

**B. Litigation**

There are currently no matters in litigation with the Educational Service Center as defendant.

**C. Foundation Funding**

Foundation funding is based on the annualized full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment of each student. Traditional districts must comply with minimum hours of instruction, instead of a minimum number of school days each year. The funding formula the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is legislatively required to follow will continue to adjust as enrollment information is updated by the Educational Service Center, which can extend past the fiscal year-end. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is legislatively required to adjust/reconcile funding as enrollment information is updated by schools throughout the State, which can extend past the fiscal year end. ODE adjustments have been finalized, and there was no material impact to these financial statements.

**NOTE 11 - OTHER COMMITMENTS**

The Educational Service Center utilizes encumbrance accounting as part of its budgetary controls. Encumbrances outstanding at year end may be reported as part of restricted, committed, or assigned classifications of fund cash balance. At year end, the Educational Service Center's commitments for encumbrances in the governmental funds were as follows:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Year-End Encumbrances</u>
General	\$ 62,757
Nonmajor governmental	<u>18,524</u>
Total	<u>\$ 81,281</u>

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**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

<b>FEDERAL GRANTOR</b>	<b>Federal</b>	
<i>Pass Through Grantor</i>	AL Number	<b>Total Federal Expenditures</b>
<b>Program / Cluster Title</b>		
<b>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF Education</b>		
<i>Passed Through Ohio Department of Education</i>		
Special Education Cluster:		
Special Education - Preschool Grants	84.173A	<u>\$ 37,899</u>
Total Special Education Cluster		<u>\$ 37,899</u>
Education Stabilization Fund:		
Family and Community Partner Liaisons	84.425U	<u>\$ 66,760</u>
Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER)	84.425D	<u>\$ 651,866</u>
Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER)	84.425C	<u>\$ 53,658</u>
Total Education Stabilization Fund		<u>\$ 772,284</u>
<b>Total U.S. Department of Education</b>		<u><b>\$ 810,183</b></u>
<b>Total Expenditures of Federal Awards</b>		<u><b>\$ 810,183</b></u>

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of this schedule.*

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS  
2 CFR 200.510(b)(6)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

**NOTE A – BASIS OF PRESENTATION**

The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (the Schedule) includes the federal award activity of the Knox County Educational Service Center (the Educational Service Center) under programs of the federal government for the year ended June 30, 2023. The information on this Schedule is prepared in accordance with the requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Because the Schedule presents only a selected portion of the operations of the Educational Service Center, it is not intended to and does not present the financial position, changes in net position, or cash flows of the Educational Service Center.

**NOTE B – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Expenditures reported on the Schedule are reported on the cash basis of accounting. Such expenditures are recognized following the cost principles contained in Uniform Guidance wherein certain types of expenditures may or may not be allowable or may be limited as to reimbursement.

**NOTE C – INDIRECT COST RATE**

The Educational Service Center has elected not to use the 10-percent de minimis indirect cost rate as allowed under the Uniform Guidance.

**NOTE D - SUBRECIPIENTS**

The Educational Service Center did not provide funds to subrecipients during the audit period.

**NOTE E - TRANSFERS BETWEEN PROGRAM YEARS**

Federal regulations require schools to obligate certain federal awards by June 30. However, with DEW's consent, schools can transfer unobligated amounts to the subsequent fiscal year's program. The Educational Service Center transferred the following amounts from 2023 to 2024 programs:

<b><u>Program Title</u></b>	<b><u>AL Number</u></b>	<b><u>Amt. Transferred</u></b>
Education Stabilization Fund	84.425D	\$ 290,787
Education Stabilization Fund	84.425U	\$ 126,007



65 East State Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
[ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov](mailto:ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov)  
800-282-0370

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER  
FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS  
REQUIRED BY GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS**

Knox County Educational Service Center  
Knox County  
308 Martinsburg Road  
Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050

To the Board of Education:

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (*Government Auditing Standards*), the cash-basis financial statements of the governmental activities, the major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Knox County Educational Service Center, Knox County, (the Educational Service Center) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Educational Service Center's basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated November 6, 2024, wherein we noted the Educational Service Center uses a special purpose framework other than generally accepted accounting principles.

***Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting***

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the Educational Service Center's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. We identified a certain deficiency in internal control, described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2023-002 that we consider to be a significant deficiency.

Knox County Educational Service Center  
Knox County  
Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over  
Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters  
Required by Government Auditing Standards  
Page 2

***Report on Compliance and Other Matters***

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Educational Service Center's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards and which is described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2023-001.

***Educational Service Center's Response to Findings***

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the Educational Service Center's responses to the findings identified in our audit and described in the accompanying schedule of findings and corrective action plan. The Educational Service Center's responses were not subjected to the other auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, we express no opinion on the responses.

***Purpose of this Report***

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the Educational Service Center's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.



Keith Faber  
Auditor of State  
Columbus, Ohio

November 6, 2024

# OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



65 East State Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
[ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov](mailto:ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov)  
800-282-0370

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO THE MAJOR FEDERAL PROGRAM AND ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER COMPLIANCE REQUIRED BY THE UNIFORM GUIDANCE

Knox County Educational Service Center  
Knox County  
308 Martinsburg Road  
Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050

To the Board of Education:

### **Report on Compliance for the Major Federal Program**

#### ***Qualified and Unmodified Opinions***

We have audited Knox County Educational Service Center's, Knox County, (Educational Service Center) compliance with the types of compliance requirements identified as subject to audit in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) *Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on Knox County Educational Service Center's major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2023. Knox County Educational Service Center's major federal program is identified in the *Summary of Auditor's Results* section of the accompanying schedule of findings.

#### ***Qualified Opinion on the Education Stabilization Fund***

In our opinion, except for the noncompliance described in the *Basis for Qualified and Unmodified Opinions* section of our report, Knox County Educational Service Center complied, in all material respects, with the compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on the Education Stabilization Fund for the year ended June 30, 2023.

#### ***Basis for Qualified and Unmodified Opinions***

We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS); the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (*Government Auditing Standards*); and the audit requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (*Uniform Guidance*). Our responsibilities under those standards and the *Uniform Guidance* are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance* section of our report.

Knox County Educational Service Center

Knox County

Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance with Requirements

Applicable to the Major Federal Program and on Internal Control Over Compliance

Required by the Uniform Guidance

Page 2

We are required to be independent of the Educational Service Center and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified and unmodified opinions on compliance for the major federal program. Our audit does not provide a legal determination of the Educational Service Center's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above.

#### ***Matter Giving Rise to Qualified Opinion on the Education Stabilization Fund***

As described in finding 2023-003 in the accompanying schedule of findings, the Educational Service Center did not comply with requirements regarding Special Tests and Provisions – Wage Rate Requirements applicable to its AL #84.425 Education Stabilization Fund major federal program.

Compliance with such requirements is necessary, in our opinion, for the Educational Service Center to comply with requirements applicable to that program.

#### ***Responsibilities of Management for Compliance***

The Educational Service Center's Management is responsible for compliance with the requirements referred to above and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of effective internal control over compliance with the requirements of laws, statutes, regulations, rules, and provisions of contracts or grant agreements applicable to the Educational Service Center's federal programs.

#### ***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether material noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above occurred, whether due to fraud or error, and express an opinion on the Educational Service Center's compliance based on our audit. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance will always detect material noncompliance when it exists. The risk of not detecting material noncompliance resulting from fraud is higher than for that resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above is considered material, if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, it would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user of the report on compliance about the Educational Service Center's compliance with the requirements of the major federal program as a whole.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance, we:

- exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- identify and assess the risks of material noncompliance, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the Educational Service Center's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

- obtain an understanding of the Educational Service Center's internal control over compliance relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and any significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in internal control over compliance that we identified during the audit.

### ***Other Matters***

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the Educational Service Center's response to the noncompliance finding identified in our compliance audit described in the accompanying corrective action plan. The Educational Service Center's response was not subjected to the other auditing procedures applied in the audit of compliance and, accordingly, we express no opinion on the response.

### ***Report on Internal Control Over Compliance***

Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance* section above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. However, as discussed below, we did identify a certain deficiency in internal control over compliance that we consider to be a material weakness.

A *deficiency in internal control over compliance* exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program on a timely basis. A *material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance, such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance. We consider the deficiency in internal control over compliance described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2023-003, to be a material weakness.

Our audit was not designed for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

*Government Auditing Standards* requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the Education Service Center's response to the internal control over compliance finding identified in our audit described in the accompanying schedule of findings and corrective action plan. The Educational Service Center's response was not subjected to the other auditing procedures applied in the audit of compliance and, accordingly, we express no opinion on the response.

Knox County Educational Service Center  
Knox County  
Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance with Requirements  
Applicable to the Major Federal Program and on Internal Control Over Compliance  
Required by the Uniform Guidance  
Page 4

The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of this testing based on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.



Keith Faber  
Auditor of State  
Columbus, Ohio

November 6, 2024

KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS  
2 CFR § 200.515  
JUNE 30, 2023

1. SUMMARY OF AUDITOR'S RESULTS

(d)(1)(i)	Type of Financial Statement Opinion	Unmodified
(d)(1)(ii)	Were there any material weaknesses in internal control reported at the financial statement level (GAGAS)?	No
(d)(1)(ii)	Were there any significant deficiencies in internal control reported at the financial statement level (GAGAS)?	Yes
(d)(1)(iii)	Was there any reported material noncompliance at the financial statement level (GAGAS)?	Yes
(d)(1)(iv)	Were there any material weaknesses in internal control reported for major federal programs?	Yes
(d)(1)(iv)	Were there any significant deficiencies in internal control reported for major federal programs?	No
(d)(1)(v)	Type of Major Programs' Compliance Opinion	Qualified
(d)(1)(vi)	Are there any reportable findings under 2 CFR § 200.516(a)?	Yes
(d)(1)(vii)	Major Programs (list):	AL# 84.425: Education Stabilization Fund
(d)(1)(viii)	Dollar Threshold: Type A\B Programs	Type A: > \$ 750,000 Type B: all others
(d)(1)(ix)	Low Risk Auditee under 2 CFR § 200.520?	No

2. FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS

FINDING NUMBER 2023-001

**GAAP Reporting – Material Noncompliance**

**Ohio Rev. Code §117.38** provides that each public office shall file a financial report for each fiscal year. The Auditor of State may prescribe forms by rule or may issue guidelines, or both, for such reports. If the Auditor of State has not prescribed a rule regarding the form for the report, the public office shall submit its report on the form utilized by the public office.

**Ohio Admin. Code 117-2-03(B)** requires the Educational Service Center to file annual financial reports which are prepared using generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

The Educational Service Center prepared financial statements that, although formatted similar to financial statements prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, report on the cash basis of accounting rather than GAAP. The accompanying financial statements and notes omit certain assets, liabilities, deferred inflows/outflows of resources, fund equities/net position, and disclosures that, while presumed material, cannot be determined at this time.

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS  
2 CFR § 200.515  
JUNE 30, 2023  
(Continued)**

**2. FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS (continued)**

**FINDING NUMBER 2023-001 (continued)**

**GAAP Reporting – Material Noncompliance (continued)**

Pursuant to Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38 the Educational Service Center may be fined and subject to various other administrative remedies for its failure to file the required financial report. Failure to report on a GAAP basis compromises the Educational Service Center's ability to evaluate and monitor the overall financial condition of the Educational Service Center. To help provide the users with more meaningful financial statements, the Educational Service Center should prepare its annual financial statements according to generally accepted accounting principles.

**Officials' Response:** See Corrective Action Plan

**FINDING NUMBER 2023-002**

**Bank Reconciliation – Significant Deficiency**

Sound accounting practices require that when designing the public office's system of internal control and the specific control activities, management should ensure adequate security of assets and records, and verify the existence and valuation of assets and liabilities and periodically reconcile them to the accounting records. The reconciliation of cash (bank) balances to accounting system records (book) is the most basic and primary control process performed. Lack of completing an accurate and timely reconciliation may allow for accounting errors, theft and fraud to occur without timely detection. The Treasurer is responsible for reconciling the book (fund) balance to the total bank balance on a monthly basis, and the Board is responsible for reviewing the reconciliations and related support.

Due to a lack of controls over the bank reconciliation process, monthly bank to book reconciliations were not properly performed by the District for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. As a result, the Educational Service Center had an unknown unreconciled variance of \$46,851.

Failure to reconcile monthly increases the possibility that the Educational Service Center will not be able to identify, assemble, analyze, classify, and record its transactions correctly or to document compliance with finance related legal and contractual requirements. Further, the lack of accurate monthly reconciliations increases the risk of theft/fraud over the cash cycle and could lead to inaccurate reporting in the annual financial statements.

During the subsequent fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, the Educational Service Center contracted with an outside accounting firm to aid in determining the causes of the reconciling errors. Educational Service Center management was able to demonstrate that the Educational Service Center was properly reconciled for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

The Treasurer should record all transactions and prepare monthly bank to book cash reconciliations, which include all bank accounts and all fund balances. The actual variance amount should be included on the reconciliation and not recorded as an outstanding item to make the reconciliation appear to balance. Variances should be investigated, documented and corrected. The Board should implement controls over the bank reconciliation process, such as reviewing the monthly cash reconciliations including the related support (such as reconciling items) and document such reviews.

**Officials' Response:** See Corrective Action Plan

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS  
2 CFR § 200.515  
JUNE 30, 2023  
(Continued)**

**3. FINDINGS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS**

**Prevailing Wage Reports- Material Weakness/Noncompliance**

<b>Finding Number:</b>	2023-003
<b>Assistance Listing Number and Title:</b>	AL # 84.425 Education Stabilization Fund
<b>Federal Award Identification Number / Year:</b>	2023
<b>Federal Agency:</b>	U.S. Department of Education
<b>Compliance Requirement:</b>	Special Tests and Provisions - Wage Rate Requirements
<b>Pass-Through Entity:</b>	Ohio Department of Education and Workforce
<b>Repeat Finding from Prior Audit?</b>	No
<b>Prior Audit Finding Number:</b>	N/A

**2 CFR § 3474.1** gives regulatory effect to the Department of Education (DOE) for **Appendix II to 2 CFR § 200** which states, in part, all contracts made by the non-Federal entity under the Federal award must contain provisions covering the following:

(D) Davis-Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 3141-3148). When required by Federal program legislation, all prime construction contracts in excess of \$2,000 awarded by non-Federal entities must include a provision for compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 3141-3144, and 3146-3148) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 5, "Labor Standards Provisions Applicable to Contracts Covering Federally Financed and Assisted Construction"). In accordance with the statute, contractors must be required to pay wages to laborers and mechanics at a rate not less than the prevailing wages specified in a wage determination made by the Secretary of Labor. In addition, contractors must be required to pay wages not less than once a week. The non-Federal entity must place a copy of the current prevailing wage determination issued by the Department of Labor in each solicitation. The decision to award a contract or subcontract must be conditioned upon the acceptance of the wage determination. The non-Federal entity must report all suspected or reported violations to the Federal awarding agency. The contracts must also include a provision for compliance with the Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (40 U.S.C. 3145), as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR Part 3, "Contractors and Subcontractors on Public Building or Public Work Financed in Whole or in Part by Loans or Grants from the United States"). The Act provides that each contractor or subrecipient must be prohibited from inducing, by any means, any person employed in the construction, completion, or repair of public work, to give up any part of the compensation to which he or she is otherwise entitled. The non-Federal entity must report all suspected or reported violations to the Federal awarding agency.

Lack of effective controls led to the Educational Service Center expending \$24,320 of expenditures for AL# 84.425 Education Stabilization Fund for remodeling services which did not meet the requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act. The Educational Service Center did not obtain copies of the weekly certified payroll reports from the contractor to verify prevailing wages were paid on a weekly basis for each week in which any contract work was performed.

This noncompliance also resulted in a qualified opinion over the AL# 84.425 Education Stabilization Fund program.

**KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER  
KNOX COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS  
2 CFR § 200.515  
JUNE 30, 2023  
(Continued)**

**3. FINDINGS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS (continued)**

**Prevailing Wage Reports- Material Weakness/Noncompliance (continued)**

Failure to have effective controls in place over wage-rate requirements may result in the Educational Service Center and its contractors or subcontractors failing to pay prevailing wages when required by Federal law and could result in reduction of future Federal funding or other sanctions imposed by Federal grantors.

When required by Federal grant legislation, the Educational Service Center should develop and implement an internal control process to ensure prime construction contracts in excess of \$2,000 paid with Federal grant monies contain provisions that require the contractor to comply with wage rate requirements and the DOL regulations (29 CFR Part 5). Further, the Educational Service Center should develop and implement an internal control process to ensure certified payroll reports are provided weekly by the contractor.

**Officials' Response:** See Corrective Action Plan



**SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS**  
**JUNE 30, 2023**

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2022-001	GAAP Mandated Files OCBOA	Not Corrected	Repeated as Finding 2023-001
2022-002	Financial Statement Presentation	Fully Corrected	None

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## CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

2 CFR § 200.511(c)

June 30, 2023

**Finding Number:** 2023-001

**Planned Corrective Action:**

The Knox ESC has decided to prepare an OCBOA financial report instead of filing a GAAP financial report in an effort to save the district the added cost of conducting a GAAP filing. We will review this decision on an annual basis to determine if GAAP will be more beneficial.

**Anticipated Completion Date:** N/A

**Responsible Contact Person:** Melissa Carpenter, Treasurer

**Finding Number:** 2023-002

**Planned Corrective Action:**

Starting July 1, 2024 (FY25), the Knox ESC had a \$0.00 variance. We will continue to reconcile & compare our monthly bank statements with various reports produced in EFinance each month. We also have checks/balances with various monthly tasks to ensure what is posting in the system matches the activity in our bank account. If there is a variance, we will identify it within the month it occurred.

September 15, 2024

**Responsible Contact Person:** Melissa Carpenter, Treasurer

**Finding Number:** 2023-003

**Planned Corrective Action:**

The Knox ESC has reviewed board policy #6325 related to the procurement of federal grants/funds. We acknowledge/understand our responsibility to follow the requirements set forth by this board policy, and further agree to adhere to these requirements going forward. On any/all future projects, federally funded, we will plan to seek and secure a qualified/responsible vendor that also follows Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements.

September 15, 2024

**Responsible Contact Person:** Melissa Carpenter, Treasurer

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# OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



KNOX COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

KNOX COUNTY

AUDITOR OF STATE OF OHIO CERTIFICATION

This is a true and correct copy of the report, which is required to be filed pursuant to Section 117.26, Revised Code, and which is filed in the Office of the Ohio Auditor of State in Columbus, Ohio.



Certified for Release 11/26/2024

65 East State Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215  
Phone: 614-466-4514 or 800-282-0370

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at  
[www.ohioauditor.gov](http://www.ohioauditor.gov)