



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER

**WESTERN BUCKEYE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
PAULDING COUNTY
JUNE 30, 2024**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE	PAGE
Independent Auditor's Report	1
Prepared by Management:	
Basic Financial Statements:	
Government-Wide Financial Statements:	
Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis	5
Statement of Activities – Cash Basis	6
Fund Financial Statements:	
Statement of Assets and Fund Balances – Cash Basis Governmental Funds.....	7
Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Changes in Fund Balances – Cash Basis Governmental Funds.....	8
Notes to the Basic Financial Statements.....	9
Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Required by <i>Government Auditing Standards</i>	37
Schedule of Findings.....	39
Prepared by Management:	
Summary Schedule of Prior Audit Findings	40

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center
Paulding County
835 North Williams Street
Paulding, Ohio 45879

To the Governing Board:

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 Western Buckeye Educational Service Center, Paulding County, Ohio (the Educational Service Center), as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024, 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, 2024, 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.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated March 26, 2025, 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

March 26, 2025

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Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Statement of Net Position - Cash Basis

June 30, 2024

	Governmental Activities
Assets	
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>\$ 1,172,006</u>
Net Position	
Restricted for:	
Other Purposes	8,040
Unrestricted	<u>1,163,966</u>
<i>Total Net Position</i>	<u><i>\$ 1,172,006</i></u>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Statement of Activities - Cash Basis

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

	<u>Program Cash Receipts</u>			<u>Net (Disbursements) Receipts and Changes in Net Position</u>			
	<u>Cash Disbursements</u>	<u>Charges for Services</u>	<u>Operating Grants and Contributions</u>	<u>Governmental Activities</u>			
Governmental Activities							
Current:							
Instruction:							
Regular	\$ 312,707	\$ 249,845	\$ 110	\$ (62,752)			
Special	2,505,967	5,040,690	183,002		2,717,725		
Support Services:							
Pupils	1,803,039	14,293	321,733		(1,467,013)		
Instructional Staff	276,586	2,739	113,528		(160,319)		
Board of Education	39,937	1,474	2,726		(35,737)		
Administration	821,952	252,223	54,999		(514,730)		
Fiscal	262,893	2,196	36,315		(224,382)		
Business	2,880	26	204		(2,650)		
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	32,261	270	4,602		(27,389)		
Pupil Transportation	24,856	226	1,758		(22,872)		
Central	5,884	53	416		(5,415)		
Capital Outlay	51,565	468	3,647		(47,450)		
<i>Total</i>	<u>\$ 6,140,527</u>	<u>\$ 5,564,503</u>	<u>\$ 723,040</u>		<u>147,016</u>		
General Receipts							
Investment Earnings					44,128		
Miscellaneous					<u>119,843</u>		
<i>Total General Receipts</i>					<u>163,971</u>		
<i>Change in Net Position</i>					310,987		
<i>Net Position Beginning of Year</i>					<u>861,019</u>		
<i>Net Position End of Year</i>					<u>\$ 1,172,006</u>		

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Statement of Assets and Fund Balances - Cash Basis

Governmental Funds

June 30, 2024

	General	Other Governmental	Total Governmental Funds
Assets			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,225,745	\$ (53,842)	\$ 1,171,903
Restricted Assets:			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	103		103
<i>Total Assets</i>	<u>\$ 1,225,848</u>	<u>\$ (53,842)</u>	<u>\$ 1,172,006</u>
Fund Balances			
Nonspendable	\$ 103		\$ 103
Restricted	5,038	\$ 2,899	7,937
Assigned	1,695		1,695
Unassigned (Deficit)	1,219,012	(56,741)	1,162,271
<i>Total Fund Balances (Deficit)</i>	<u>\$ 1,225,848</u>	<u>\$ (53,842)</u>	<u>\$ 1,172,006</u>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center
Paulding County
Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Changes in Fund Balances - Cash Basis
Governmental Funds
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

	General	Other Governmental	Total Governmental Funds
Receipts			
Intergovernmental	\$ 367,558	\$ 354,233	\$ 721,791
Investment Earnings	44,128		44,128
Tuition and Fees	546,855		546,855
Customer Services	5,013,110		5,013,110
Gifts and Donations	5,787		5,787
Miscellaneous	<u>1,863</u>		<u>1,863</u>
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<u>5,979,301</u>	<u>354,233</u>	<u>6,333,534</u>
Disbursements			
Current:			
Instruction:			
Regular	312,707		312,707
Special	2,505,967		2,505,967
Support Services:			
Pupils	1,574,572	228,467	1,803,039
Instructional Staff	166,071	110,515	276,586
Board of Education	39,937		39,937
Administration	799,536	22,416	821,952
Fiscal	241,937	20,956	262,893
Business	2,880		2,880
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	29,765	2,496	32,261
Pupil Transportation	24,856		24,856
Central	5,884		5,884
Capital Outlay	<u>51,565</u>		<u>51,565</u>
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<u>5,755,677</u>	<u>384,850</u>	<u>6,140,527</u>
<i>Excess of Receipts Over (Under) Disbursements</i>	<u>223,624</u>	<u>(30,617)</u>	<u>193,007</u>
Other Financing Sources			
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	<u>117,980</u>		<u>117,980</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Balances</i>	<u>341,604</u>	<u>(30,617)</u>	<u>310,987</u>
<i>Fund Balances (Deficit) Beginning of Year</i>	<u>884,244</u>	<u>(23,225)</u>	<u>861,019</u>
<i>Fund Balances (Deficit) End of Year</i>	<u>\$ 1,225,848</u>	<u>\$ (53,842)</u>	<u>\$ 1,172,006</u>

SEE ACCOMPANYING NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 1 - REPORTING ENTITY

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center (the Educational Service Center) is located in Paulding, Ohio, the county seat of Paulding County. The Educational Service Center supplies supervisory, special education, administrative, and other services to the Antwerp, Crestview, Lincolnview, and Wayne Trace Local School Districts, the Paulding Exempted Village School District, and the Van Wert City School District. The Educational Service Center furnishes leadership and consulting services designed to strengthen these school districts in areas they are unable to finance or staff independently.

The Educational Service Center operates under a locally-elected Board of Education consisting of one member elected from each of the four local school districts and one member elected at-large for staggered four year terms. The Educational Service Center has five administrators, sixty-nine employees, and forty-five certified teaching personnel who provide services to the local, exempted village and city school districts.

The 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 Western Buckeye Educational Service Center, this consists of general operations.

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. There are no component units of the Western Buckeye Educational Service Center.

The Educational Service Center participates in a jointly governed organization and three insurance pools. These organizations are the Northwest Ohio Area Computer Services Cooperative, Schools of Ohio Risk Sharing Authority, Ohio School Boards Association Workers' Compensation Group Rating Plan, and the Van Wert Area Schools Insurance Group.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Jointly Governed Organization

Northwest Ohio Area Computer Services Cooperative

The Educational Service Center is a participant in the Northwest Ohio Area Computer Services Cooperative (NOACSC), which is a computer consortium. NOACSC is an association of school districts within the boundaries of Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Lucas, Mercer, Paulding, Putnam, Seneca, Van Wert, Wood, and Wyandot Counties, and the Cities of St. Marys and Wapakoneta. The organization was formed for the purpose of applying modern technology with the aid of computers and other electronic equipment to administrative and instructional functions among member educational entities. The governing board of NOACSC consists of two representatives from each county elected by majority vote of all charter member school districts within each county. The degree of control exercised by any participating educational entity is limited to its representation on the Board. Financial information can be obtained from NOACSC, 4277 East Road, Elida, Ohio 45807

Insurance Pools

Schools of Ohio Risk Sharing Authority

The Educational Service Center participates in the Schools of Ohio Risk Sharing Authority (SORSA), an insurance purchasing pool established under Section 2744.081 of the Ohio Revised Code. SORSA is a 100% member-owned, non-profit insurance risk pool owned and governed by school district members. SORSA is dedicated to providing broad insurance coverage and high-quality claims and risk management services while maintaining long-term financial stability. SORSA was incorporated on January 31, 2002. Operations and plan coverage officially began on February 1, 2002. On June 30, 2024, 2023, and 2022, SORSA had 159, 145, and 130 members, respectively. SORSA employs a full-time Executive Director, Risk Control Manager, Claims Loss Manager, Program Manager, and Underwriting Manager. SORSA has agreements with several separate organizations whereby each provides certain administrative, executive, accounting, or other services to SORSA. Verhoff & Company, LLC provides bookkeeping, payroll, consulting, and accounting services to SORSA. Verhoff & Company, LLC records and tracks accounts receivable from billings to SORSA members for annual premiums and monitors and maintains several bank accounts in the name of SORSA. The insurance brokerage firm of Marsh USA LLC is contracted to provide reinsurance brokerage and consulting services. SORSA contracts with the law firms Isaac Wiles and Scott Scriven LLP to provide lead defense counsel for third-party claims against members. Additional legal firms are contracted as needed. SORSA contracts with the Dinsmore law firm to provide legal counsel to the SORSA Board of Directors. Actuarial services are provided by the firm Pinnacle Actuarial Services, Inc. Property replacement cost appraisals are provided by the firm CBIZ Valuation Group, LLC.

SORSA financial information can be obtained from Verhoff and Company, 814 North Locust Street, Ottawa, Ohio 45875. Brokerage information can be obtained from Marsh, Two Alliance Center, 3560 Lenox Road, Suite 2400, Atlanta, Georgia 30326. All other information can be obtained from SORSA at 555 Metro Place North, Suite 645, Dublin, Ohio 43017.

Ohio School Boards Association Workers' Compensation Group Rating Plan

The Educational Service Center participates in a group rating plan for workers' compensation as established under Section 4123.29 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Ohio School Boards Association Workers' Compensation Group Rating Plan (GRP) was established through the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) as an insurance purchasing pool.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 OSBA. The Executive Director of the OSBA, or his designee, serves as coordinator of the GRP. Each year, the participants pay an enrollment fee to the GRP to cover the costs of administering the program.

Van Wert Area Schools Insurance Group

The Van Wert Area Schools Insurance Group (VWASIG) is a public entity shared risk pool consisting of five members. VWASIG is a Voluntary Employee Benefit Association under Section 501(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code and provides medical, dental, and life insurance benefits to the employees of the participants. Each member appoints a representative to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is the legislative and managerial body of VWASIG. Financial information can be obtained from the Lincolnview Local School District, 15945 Middle Point Road, Van Wert, Ohio 45891.

The Educational Service Center's management believes these financial statements present all activities for which the Educational Service Center is financially accountable.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements of Western Buckeye Educational Service Center 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. Basis of Accounting

The Educational Service Center's financial statements are prepared using the cash basis of accounting. Except for modifications having substantial support, receipts are recorded in the Educational Service Center's financial records and reported in the financial statements when cash is received rather than when earned and disbursements are recorded when cash is paid rather than when a liability is incurred. Any such modifications made by the Educational Service Center are described in the appropriate section in this note.

As a result of the use of this cash basis of accounting, certain assets and deferred outflows of resources and their related revenues (such as accounts receivable and revenue for billed or provided services not yet collected) and certain liabilities and deferred inflows of resources 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 these financial statements. These statements include adequate disclosure of material matters, in accordance with the basis of accounting described in the preceding paragraph.

B. Basis of Presentation

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

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Government-Wide Financial Statements

The statement of net position and the statement of activities display information about the Educational Service Center as a whole. These statements include the financial activities of the primary government.

The statement of net position presents the cash balance of the governmental activities of the Educational Service Center at fiscal year end. The statement of activities 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 goods or services offered by the program and grants and contributions that are 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 activity is self-financing on a cash basis or draws from the general receipts of the Educational Service Center.

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. Nonmajor funds are aggregated and presented in a single column.

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. Funds are divided into three categories: governmental, proprietary, and fiduciary. The Educational Service Center does not have any proprietary or fiduciary funds.

Governmental Funds

Governmental funds are those through which all governmental functions of the Educational Service Center are financed. The Educational Service Center's only major governmental 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 whose use is restricted, committed, or assigned to a particular purpose.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

D. Basis of Accounting

The Educational Service Center's financial statements are prepared using the cash basis of accounting. Except for modifications having substantial support, receipts are recorded in the Educational Service Center's financial records and reported in the financial statements when cash is received rather than when earned and disbursements are recorded when cash is 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. Cash and Investments

To improve cash management, cash received by the Educational Service Center is pooled. Monies for all funds are maintained in the pool. Individual fund integrity is maintained through Educational Service Center records. Interest in the pool is presented as "Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents".

During the fiscal year, investments consisted of STAR Ohio. STAR Ohio is an investment pool, managed by the State Treasurer's Office, which allows governments within the State to pool their funds for investment purposes. STAR Ohio is not registered with the SEC as an investment company but has adopted Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 79, *Certain External Investment Pools and Pool Participants*. The Educational Service Center measures the investment in STAR Ohio at the net asset value (NAV) per share provided by STAR Ohio. The NAV per share is calculated on an amortized cost basis that provides a NAV per share that approximates fair value.

For 2024, there were no limitations or restrictions on any participant withdrawals due to redemption notice periods, liquidity fees, or redemption gates. However, twenty-four hours advance notice for deposits and withdrawals of \$100 million or more is encouraged. STAR Ohio reserves the right to limit the transaction to \$250 million per day, requiring the excess amount to be transacted the following business day(s), but only to the \$250 million limit. All accounts of the participant will be combined for these purposes.

The Educational Service Center allocates investment earnings and other interest according to State statutes. Investment earnings and other interest revenue credited to the General Fund during fiscal year 2024 was \$44,128, which includes interest earned from other Educational Service Center funds.

Investments of the cash management pool and investments with an original maturity of three months or less at the time they are purchased by the Educational Service Center are presented on the financial statements as cash equivalents. Investments with an initial maturity of more than three months that were not purchased from the pool are reported as investments.

Investments are reported as assets. Accordingly, purchases of investments are not recorded as disbursements, and sales of investments are not recorded as receipts. Gains or losses at the time of sale are recorded as receipts or negative receipts (contra revenue), respectively.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

F. Restricted Assets

Assets are reported as restricted when limitations on their use change the nature or normal understanding of the availability of the asset. Such constraints are either externally imposed by creditors, contributors, grantors, laws of other governments, or imposed by law through constitutional provisions. Restricted assets in the General Fund represent unclaimed monies that have a legal restriction on their use.

G. Capital Assets

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

H. 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.

I. Leases

The Educational Service Center is the lessee in various leases related to buildings, vehicles and other equipment under noncancelable leases. Lease receivables/payables are not reflected under the Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting. Lease revenue/disbursements are recognized when they are received/paid.

J. Long-Term Obligations

The Educational Service Center's cash basis financial statements do not report liabilities for bonds, leases and other 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, SBITA or financed purchase transaction is not the result of a cash transaction, neither another financing source nor a capital outlay disbursement is reported at inception. Lease, SBITA and financed purchase payments are reported when paid.

K. Net Position

Net position is reported as restricted when there are limitations imposed on its use through external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, or laws or regulations of other governments. Net position restricted for other purposes consists of unclaimed monies that have a legal restriction on their use. The Educational Service Center's policy is to first apply restricted resources when an expense is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position is available.

L. 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:

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Nonspendable - The nonspendable 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.

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 is imposed by law through constitutional provisions.

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 balance.

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.

M. Pensions/Other Postemployment Benefits

For purposes of measuring the net pension/OPEB liability (asset), deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions/OPEB, and pension/OPEB expense, 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.

N. New Accounting Pronouncements

For fiscal year 2024, GASB Statement No. 100, *Accounting Changes and Error Corrections* was effective. This GASB pronouncement had no effect on beginning net position/fund balance as the Educational Service Center had no accounting changes or error corrections related to fiscal year 2024.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 3 – 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 outflow of resources, liabilities, deferred inflow 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 administrative remedies may be taken against the Educational Service Center.

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 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.

Protection of the Educational Service Center's deposits is provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and by eligible securities pledged by the financial institution as security for repayment.

Interim monies may be invested in the following obligations provided they mature or are redeemable within five years from the date of settlement:

1. United States Treasury bills, notes, bonds, or any other obligations 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 other obligations or securities 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 provided the market value of the securities subject to the repurchase agreement must exceed the principal value of the agreement by at least 2 percent and be marked to market daily, and that the term of the agreement must not exceed thirty days;

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 subdivision of the State of Ohio, if training requirements have been met;
5. The certificates of deposit or savings or deposit accounts including, but not limited to, passbook accounts;
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 (STAR Ohio); and
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.

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 only upon delivery of the securities representing the investments to the Educational Service Center's Treasurer or qualified trustee or, if the securities are not represented by a certificate, upon receipt of confirmation of transfer from the custodian.

Deposits - At year-end, \$884,582 of the Educational Service Center's bank balance of \$1,135,720 was exposed to custodial credit risk. Although the securities were held by the pledging financial institutions' trust department in the Educational Service Center's name and all statutory requirements for the investment of money had been followed, noncompliance with Federal requirements could potentially subject the Educational Service Center to a successful claim by the FDIC.

Custodial Credit Risk Custodial credit risk for deposits is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the Educational Service Center will not be able to recover deposits or collateral securities that are in possession of an outside party. The Educational Service Center has no deposit policy for custodial 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 required 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.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center
Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Investments

As of June 30, 2024, the Educational Service Center had the following investments:

S&P Global Ratings	Investment Type	Measurement Value	Investment Maturity		Percent of Total
			12 Months or Less		
Net Asset Value (NAV):					
AAAm	STAR Ohio	\$ 40,082	\$ 40,082		100.00%

The fair value of these investments is not materially different than measurement value.

Interest Rate Risk Interest rate risk arises because potential purchasers of debt securities will not agree to pay face value for those securities if interest rates subsequently increase. The Educational Service Center's investment policy restricts the Treasurer from investing in anything other than as identified in the Ohio Revised Code and that all investments must mature within five years from the date of investment unless they are matched to a specific obligation or debt of the Educational Service Center. The Treasurer is also restricted from purchasing investments that cannot be held until the maturity date.

Credit Risk The Educational Service Center has no investment policy dealing with investment credit risk beyond the requirements in state statutes. STAR Ohio is an investment pool operated by the Ohio State Treasurer. It is unclassified since it is not evidenced by securities that exist in physical or book entry form. Ohio law requires STAR Ohio maintain the highest rating provided by at least one nationally recognized standard rating service. The weighted average of maturity of the portfolio held by STAR Ohio as of June 30, 2024, is 47 days and carries a rating of AAAm by S&P Global Ratings. The Educational Service Center's negotiable certificates of deposit were not rated but are fully covered by FDIC.

Custodial Credit Risk For an investment, custodial credit risk is the risk that, in the event of the failure of the counterparty, the Educational Service Center will not be able to recover the value of its investments or collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party. The negotiable CDs are covered by FDIC. The Educational Service Center has no investment policy dealing with investment custodial risk beyond the requirement in ORC 135.14(M)(2) which states, "Payment for investments shall be made only upon the delivery of securities representing such investments to the treasurer, investing authority, or qualified trustee. If the securities are transferred are not represented by a certificate, payment shall be made only upon receipt of confirmation or transfer from the custodian by the treasurer, governing board, or qualified trustee."

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 5 – STATE FUNDING

A. State Funding

The Educational Service Center, under State law, provides services to local school districts within its territory. Each city, local and exempted village school district that entered into an agreement with the Educational Service Center is considered to be provided services. The cost of the services is determined by formula under State law. The State Department of Education apportions the costs for all services among the Educational Service Center's city, local and exempted school districts based on each school's total student count. The 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 services if the majority of local and client school districts agree to the services and the apportionment of the costs to all of the client school districts.

Beginning in fiscal year 2022, the Educational Service Center received funding from the State Department of Education using a new funding model which is based on student count. Any change in funding were subject to a phase in percentage of 33.33 percent for fiscal year 2023 and 50.00 percent for fiscal year 2024. This amount is paid from State resources. The State Department of Education also deducts from the State Foundation Program settlement of each of the Educational Service Center's local and client school districts an amount equal to \$6.50 times the school district's total student count and remits this amount to the Educational Service Center.

The Educational Service Center may contract with city, exempted village, local, 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.

B. Local Funding

Approximately 6 percent of the funding for Educational Service Centers comes from the member districts they serve through deductions or transfers that the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) makes out of state foundation to the Educational Service Centers. A number of calculations comprise this deduction.

Special education extended service – Since the State stopped paying for extended service, special education extended service has become a local responsibility. It is paid based on total costs of the program allocated on a per pupil basis.

NOTE 6 - RISK MANAGEMENT

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. The Educational Service Center contracts for general, automobile and buildings and personal property liability coverage.

Settled claims have not exceeded this commercial coverage in any of the past three years and there has been no significant reduction in insurance coverage from the prior fiscal year.

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS

The net pension liability is disclosed as a commitment and not reported on the face of the financial statements as a liability because of the use of the cash basis framework.

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

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Net Pension Liability/Net OPEB Liability (Asset)

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 net pension/OPEB liability (asset) represents 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 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 this estimate 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 modified cash basis framework.

The remainder of this note includes the required pension disclosures. See Note 8 for the required OPEB disclosures.

Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)

Plan Description – Educational Service Center 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, 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 under Employers/Audit Resources.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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	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 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, may be included in this plan.

Annual retirement benefits are calculated based on final average salary multiplied by a percentage that varies based on year of service; 2.2 percent for the first 30 years of service and 2.5 percent 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. 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. The COLA is indexed to the percentage increase in the CPI-W, not to exceed 2.5 percent and with a floor of 0 percent. A three-year COLA suspension was in effect for all benefit recipients for the years 2018, 2019, and 2020. The Retirement Board approved a 2.5 percent COLA for calendar year 2023.

Funding Policy – Plan members are required to contribute 10 percent of their annual covered salary and the Educational Service Center is required to contribute 14 percent 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 percent for plan members and 14 percent 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, 2024, the allocation to pension, death benefits, and Medicare B was 14.0 percent. For fiscal year 2024, 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 \$248,953 for fiscal year 2024.

Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)

Plan Description – Educational Service Center licensed teachers and other faculty members participate in STRS Ohio, a cost-sharing multiple employer public employee 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 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3771, by calling (888) 227-7877, or by visiting the STRS Web site at www.strssoh.org.

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

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 2.2 percent of final average salary for the five highest years of earnings multiplied by all years of service. In April 2017, the Retirement Board made the decision to reduce COLA granted on or after July 1, 2017, to 0 percent upon a determination by its actuary that it was necessary to preserve the fiscal integrity of the retirement system. Benefit recipients' base benefit and past cost-of living increases are not affected by this change. Effective July 1, 2022, a one-time ad-hoc COLA of 3 percent of the base benefit was granted to eligible benefit recipients to begin on the anniversary of their retirement benefit in fiscal year 2023 as long as they retired prior to July 1, 2018. Effective July 1, 2023, a one-time ad-hoc COLA of 1 percent of the base benefit was granted to eligible benefit recipients to begin on the anniversary of their retirement benefit in fiscal year 2024 as long as they retired prior to July 1, 2019. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3307.67(E) the STRS Ohio Retirement Board may adjust the COLA upon a determination by the board's actuary that a change will not materially impair the fiscal integrity of the system or is necessary to preserve the fiscal integrity of the system. Eligibility charges 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 34 years of service credit at any age.

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 their member contributions and 11.09 percent of the 14 percent employer contributions into an investment account. The member determines how to allocate the member and employer money among various investment choices offered by STRS. The remaining 2.91 percent of the 14 percent 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 percent of the 14 percent member rate is deposited into the member's DC account and the remaining 2 percent 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 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.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 2024 employer and employee contribution rate of 14 percent was equal to the statutory maximum rates. For 2024, the full employer contribution was allocated to pension.

The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to STRS was \$344,982 for fiscal year 2024.

Net Pension Liability

The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2023, and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an independent actuarial valuation as of that date. The Educational Service Center's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the employer's share of employer contributions in the pension plan relative to the total employer contributions of all participating employers. Following is information related to the proportionate share:

	SERS	STRS	Total
Proportion of the Net Pension Liability:			
Current Measurement Date	0.0402096%	0.01732841%	
Prior Measurement Date	0.0380080%	0.01798351%	
Change in Proportionate Share	<u>0.0022016%</u>	<u>-0.00065510%</u>	
Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 2,221,788	\$ 3,731,661	\$ 5,953,449

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. Future benefits for all current plan members were projected through 2137.

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.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Key methods and assumptions used in calculating the total pension liability in the latest actuarial valuation, prepared as of June 30, 2023, are presented below:

Actuarial Cost Method	Entry Age Normal (Level Percent of Payroll)
Inflation	2.40 percent
Future Salary Increases, including inflation	3.25 percent to 13.58 percent
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent, net of system expense
COLA or Ad Hoc COLA	2.00 percent, on and after April 1, 2018, COLA's for future retirees will be delayed for three years following commencement

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 percent for males and set forward two years and adjusted 81.35 percent for females. Mortality among disabled members were based upon the PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward five years and adjusted 103.3 percent for males and set forward three years and adjusted 106.8 percent 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 by 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 an arithmetic 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.

The target asset 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 %	0.75 %
US Equity	24.75	4.82
Non-US Equity Developed	13.50	5.19
Non-US Equity Emerging	6.75	5.98
Fixed Income/Global Bonds	19.00	2.24
Private Equity	12.00	7.49
Real Estate/Real Assets	17.00	3.70
Private Debt/Private Credit	5.00	5.64
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>	

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Discount Rate The total pension liability for 2023 was calculated using the discount rate of 7.00 percent. The discount rate did not use a municipal bond rate. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed employers would contribute the actuarially determined contribution rate of projected compensation over the remaining 21-year amortization period of the unfunded actuarial accrued liability. The actuarially determined contribution rate of fiscal year 2023 was 14.00 percent. Projected inflows from investment earnings were calculated using the long term assumed investment rate of return, 7.00 percent. 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. The annual money weighted rate of return, calculated as the internal rate of return on pension plan investments, for fiscal year 2023 was 6.90 percent.

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 Educational Service Center's proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 7.00 percent, as well as what the Educational Service Center's net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (6.00 percent), or one percentage point higher (8.00 percent) than the current rate.

	1% Decrease	Current Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 3,279,245	\$ 2,221,788	\$ 1,331,081

Actuarial Assumptions - STRS

Key methods and assumptions used in the latest actuarial valuation, reflecting experience study results used in the June 30, 2023, actuarial valuation, are presented below:

Inflation	2.50 percent
Salary Increases	
Current Measurement Period	Varies by service from 2.50 percent to 8.50 percent
Payroll Increases	3.00 percent
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent, net of investment expenses, including inflation
Discount Rate of Return	7.00 percent
Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA)	0.00 percent

Post-retirement mortality rates for healthy retirees are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110 percent 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 percent 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.

Actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2023 valuation, were based on the results of the latest available actuarial experience study, which is for the period July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2021. An actuarial experience study is done on a quinquennial basis.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

*Notes to the Basic Financial Statements
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024*

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 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	<u>1.00</u>	1.00
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>	

*Final target weights reflected at October 1, 2022.

**10-Year annualized geometric nominal returns, which include the real rate of return and inflation of 2.25 percent and is net of investment expenses. Over a 30-year period, STRS 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 percent as of June 30, 2023. 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 rate increases described above. 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' fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments to current plan members as of June 30, 2023. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments of 7.00 percent was applied to all periods of projected benefit payment to determine the total pension liability as of June 30, 2023.

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

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 5,738,471	\$ 3,731,661	\$ 2,034,452

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS

The net OPEB liability (asset) is disclosed as a commitment and not reported on the face of the financial statements as a liability because of the use of the cash basis framework.

See Note 7 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. The following types of credit purchased after January 29, 1981 do not count toward health care coverage eligibility: military, federal, out-of-state, municipal, private school, exempted, and early retirement incentive credit. 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 under Employers/Audit Resources. The Health Care program is financed through a combination of employer contributions, recipient premiums, investment returns, and any funds received on behalf of SERS' participation in Medicare programs. The System's goal is to maintain a health care reserve account with a 20-year solvency period in order to ensure that fluctuations in the cost of health care do not cause an interruption in the program. However, during any period in which the 20-year solvency period is not achieved, the System shall manage the Health Care Fund on a pay-as-you-go basis.

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.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 percent of covered payroll to the Health Care Fund in accordance with the funding policy. For fiscal year 2024, no allocation was made to 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 2024, this amount was \$30,000. Statutes provide that no employer shall pay a health care surcharge greater than 2.00 percent of that employer's SERS-covered payroll; nor may SERS collect in aggregate more than 1.50 percent of the total statewide SERS-covered payroll for the health care surcharge. For fiscal year 2024, the Educational Service Center's surcharge obligation was \$31,189. The surcharge, added to the allocated portion of the 14 percent employer contribution rate is the total amount assigned to the Health Care Fund. The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to SERS was equal to its surcharge obligation for fiscal year 2024.

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 Plan is included in the report of STRS which can be obtained by visiting 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 percent of covered payroll. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, 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, 2023, and the total OPEB liability 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:

	SERS	STRS
Proportion of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset):		
Current Measurement Date	0.0415043%	0.01732841%
Prior Measurement Date	0.0389365%	0.01798351%
Change in Proportionate Share	<u>0.0025678%</u>	<u>-0.00065510%</u>
Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset)	\$ 683,760	\$ (337,014)

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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, 2023, are presented below:

Inflation	2.40 percent
Salary Increases, including inflation	3.25 percent to 13.58 percent
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent net of investment expenses, including expenses
Fiduciary Net Position Depletion	Projected to be 2048
Municipal Bond Index Rate	
Measurement Date	3.86 percent
Prior Measurement Date	3.69 percent
Single Equivalent Interest Rate	
Measurement Date	4.27 percent, net of plan investment expense, including price inflation
Prior Measurement Date	4.08 percent, net of plan investment expense, including price inflation
Health Care Cost Trend Rate	
Pre-Medicare	6.75 percent - 4.40 percent
Medical Trend Assumption	6.75 percent - 4.40 percent

Mortality rates among healthy retirees 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 percent for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35 percent 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 percent for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8 percent for females. Mortality rates for contingent survivors were based on PUB-2010 General Amount Weighted Below Median Contingent Survivor mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 105.5 percent for males and adjusted 122.5 percent for females. Mortality rates for actives is based on PUB-2010 General Amount Weighted Below Median Employee mortality table. Mortality rates are projected using a fully generational projection with Scale MP-2020.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 five-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 (expected return, net of investment expense and inflation) 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 percent, 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, as used in the June 30, 2020 five-year experience study, are summarized as follows:

Asset Class	Target Allocation	Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return
Cash	2.00 %	0.75 %
US Equity	24.75	4.82
Non-US Equity Developed	13.50	5.19
Non-US Equity Emerging	6.75	5.98
Fixed Income/Global Bonds	19.00	2.24
Private Equity	12.00	7.49
Real Estate/Real Assets	17.00	3.70
Private Debt/Private Credit	5.00	5.64
Total	100.00 %	

Discount Rate The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability at June 30, 2023, was 4.27 percent. The discount rate used to measure total OPEB liability prior to June 30, 2023, was 4.08 percent. 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 percent of projected covered payroll each year, which includes a 1.50 percent 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, 2023, and the June 30, 2022, 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 3.86 percent at June 30, 2023 and 3.69 percent at June 30, 2022.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

*Notes to the Basic Financial Statements
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024*

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 and what the net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (3.27 percent) and higher (5.27 percent) than the current discount rate (4.27 percent). Also shown is what the net OPEB liability would be based on health care cost trend rates that are one percentage point lower (5.75 percent decreasing to 3.40 percent) and higher (7.75 percent decreasing to 5.40 percent) than the current rate (6.75 percent decreasing to 4.40 percent).

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 874,042	\$ 683,760	\$ 533,716
	1% Decrease	Current	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 502,335	\$ 683,760	\$ 924,174

Actuarial Assumptions – STRS

Key methods and assumptions used in the latest actuarial valuation, reflecting experience study results used in the June 30, 2023 and 2022, actuarial valuation are presented below:

	June 30, 2023	June 30, 2022
Projected Salary Increases	Varies by service from 2.50 percent to 8.50 percent	Varies by service from 2.50 percent to 8.50 percent
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent, net of investment expenses, including inflation	7.00 percent, net of investment expenses, including inflation
Payroll Increases	3 percent	3 percent
Discount Rate of Return	7.00 percent	7.00 percent
Health Care Cost Trends		
Medical		
Pre-Medicare	7.50 percent initial 4.14 percent ultimate	7.50 percent initial 3.94 percent ultimate
Medicare	-10.94 percent initial 4.14 percent ultimate	-68.78 percent initial 3.94 percent ultimate
Prescription Drug		
Pre-Medicare	-11.95 percent initial 4.14 percent ultimate	9.00 percent initial 3.94 percent ultimate
Medicare	1.33 percent initial 4.14 percent ultimate	-5.47 percent initial 3.94 percent ultimate

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

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Healthy retirees post-retirement mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110 percent 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 percent 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.

Actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2023, 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' 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 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>	

*Final target weights reflected at October 1, 2022.

**10-Year annualized geometric nominal returns, which include the real rate of return and inflation of 2.25 percent and is net of investment expenses. Over a 30-year period, STRS 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 percent as of June 30, 2023. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed STRS continues to allocate no employer contributions to the health care fund. Based on these 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, 2023. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on health care plan investments of 7.00 percent was applied to all periods of projected health care costs to determine the total OPEB liability as of June 30, 2023.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Sensitivity of the Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Asset to Changes in the Discount Rate and Health Care Cost Trend Rate The following table represents the net OPEB asset as of June 30, 2023, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00 percent, 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 percent) or one percentage point higher (8.00 percent) 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)	\$ (285,238)	\$ (337,014)	\$ (382,105)
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB (Asset)	1% Decrease	Current Trend Rate	1% Increase
	\$ (384,197)	\$ (337,014)	\$ (280,182)

NOTE 9 - OTHER EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A. Compensated Absences

The criteria for determining vacation and sick leave benefits are derived from negotiated agreements and State laws. Classified employees earn ten to twenty days of vacation per year, depending on length of service. Accumulated unused vacation time is paid to classified employees and administrators upon termination of employment with a maximum payout of twenty-five days. Teachers do not earn vacation time.

Teachers, administrators, and classified employees earn sick leave at a rate of one and one-fourth days per month. Sick leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of one hundred eighty days. Upon retirement, payment is made for one-fourth of accrued but unused sick leave credit to a maximum of thirty days for employees with less than ten years of service with the Educational Service Center, and a maximum of fifty days for employees with ten or more years of service.

Upon the merger of Paulding and Van Wert Educational Service Centers in fiscal year 1999, certain employees accumulated sick leave balances exceeded one hundred eighty days. For these employees, the maximum sick leave accrual is being maintained at their balance upon the merger.

B. Health Care Benefits

The Educational Service Center participates in the Van Wert Area Schools Insurance Group (VWASIG) for all employee health care benefits. Through VWASIG, the Educational Service Center offers medical, dental, and life insurance benefits. Depending upon the plan chosen, the employees share the cost of the monthly premium with the Board. The premium varies with employee depending on marital and family status.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 10 - FUND BALANCE

Fund balance is classified as nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and/or unassigned 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 constraints placed on fund balance for the major governmental funds and all other governmental funds are presented below.

	General	Other Governmental Funds	Total
Nonspendable for:			
Unclaimed Monies	\$ 103	\$ -	\$ 103
Restricted for:			
Special Instruction	-	2,899	2,899
Other Purposes	5,038	-	5,038
Total Restricted	<u>5,038</u>	<u>2,899</u>	<u>7,937</u>
Assigned for:			
Instruction	125	-	125
Support Services	1,570	-	1,570
Total Assigned	<u>1,695</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,695</u>
Unassigned	1,219,012	(56,741)	1,162,271
Total Fund Balance	<u>\$ 1,225,848</u>	<u>\$ (53,842)</u>	<u>\$ 1,172,006</u>

As of June 30, 2024 the following funds had deficit cash balances:

	<u>Deficit</u>
<i>Other Governmental Funds</i>	
Extended Learning	\$ 52,989
Title VI-B	3,752
Total	<u>\$ 56,741</u>

The deficit cash balances were due to the timing between grant receipts and disbursements in the grant funds. The general fund is liable for any deficits in these funds and will provide transfers when cash is required, not when accruals occur.

NOTE 11 - ENCUMBRANCE 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 balance. At fiscal year-end, the Educational Service Center commitments for encumbrances in the General Fund and the Other Governmental Funds were \$1,695 and \$6,635 respectively.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center

Paulding County

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTES 12 - 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, 2024.

B. Litigation

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

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

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center
Paulding County
835 North Williams Street
Paulding, Ohio 45879

To the Governing Board:

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 Western Buckeye Educational Service Center, Paulding County, Ohio (the Educational Service Center) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024, 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 March 26, 2025 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. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Western Buckeye Educational Service Center
Paulding 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 is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and which is described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2024-001.

Educational Service Center's Response to Finding

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

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

March 26, 2025

WESTERN BUCKEYE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
PAULDING COUNTY

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
JUNE 30, 2024

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

FINDING NUMBER 2024-001

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.

Pursuant to Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38 the Educational Service Center may be fined 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:

Management believes reporting on a basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) is more cost efficient.



WESTERN BUCKEYE

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

Thomas L. Taylor, Superintendent
Tricia K. Taylor, Treasurer

835 N. Williams Street, Paulding, Ohio 45879 • Phone: 419-399-4711

SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS JUNE 30, 2024

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2023-001	This finding was first reported in 2014. Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38 and Ohio Admin. Code § 117-2-03(B) for reporting on a basis other than generally accepted accounting principles.	Not corrected and reissued as Finding 2024-001 in this report.	This finding reoccurred since management believes reporting on a basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) is more cost efficient. The Educational Service Center will continue to report on an OCBOA (Other Comprehensive Basis of Accounting) basis for future audits.

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



WESTERN BUCKEYE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

PAULDING 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 4/8/2025

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