

**TRI-COUNTY
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER**
WAYNE COUNTY, OHIO

**REGULAR AUDIT
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED
JUNE 30, 2024**



65 Central State Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov
800-282-0370

Members of Governing Board
Tri-County Educational Service Center
741 Winkler Drive
Wooster, Ohio 44691

We have reviewed the *Independent Auditor's Report* of the Tri-County Educational Service Center, Wayne County, prepared by Julian & Grube, Inc., for the audit period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Based upon this review, we have accepted these reports in lieu of the audit required by Section 117.11, Revised Code. The Auditor of State did not audit the accompanying financial statements and, accordingly, we are unable to express, and do not express an opinion on them.

Our review was made in reference to the applicable sections of legislative criteria, as reflected by the Ohio Constitution, and the Revised Code, policies, procedures and guidelines of the Auditor of State, regulations and grant requirements. The Tri-County Educational Service Center is responsible for compliance with these laws and regulations.

Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

December 23, 2024

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**TRI-COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
WAYNE COUNTY, OHIO**

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Independent Auditor's Report

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County
741 Winkler Drive
Wooster, Ohio 44691

To the Members of the Governing Board:

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying cash basis financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Tri-County Educational Service Center, Wayne County, Ohio, as of and for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Tri-County 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, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Tri-County Educational Service Center, as of June 30, 2024, and the respective changes in cash basis financial position, thereof for the fiscal year then ended in accordance with 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 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 Tri-County 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

Ohio Administrative Code § 117-2-03(B) requires the Tri-County 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 opinions are not modified with respect to this matter.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these 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 the 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 misstatements, 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 Tri-County 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 generally accepted auditing standards 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 generally accepted auditing standards 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 Tri-County 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 Tri-County 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 Information

Management is responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the management's discussion and analysis but does not include the basic financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinions on the basic financial statements do not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the basic financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the basic financial statements, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.

Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards*

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated November 25, 2024 on our consideration of the Tri-County Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting and on 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 Tri-County 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 Tri-County Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julian & Grube, Inc.".

Julian & Grube, Inc.
November 25, 2024

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Management's Discussion and Analysis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
(Unaudited)

The discussion and analysis of the Tri-County Educational Service Center's (the "ESC") financial performance provides an overall review of the ESC's financial activities for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024. The intent of this discussion and analysis is to look at the ESC's performance as a whole; readers should also review the notes to the basic financial statements to enhance their understanding of the ESC's financial performance.

Financial Highlights

Key financial highlights for fiscal year 2024 are as follows:

- q In total, net position increased \$587,783 from fiscal year 2023.

Using this Annual Report

This annual report consists of a series of financial statements and notes to those statements. The statements are organized so the reader can understand the ESC as a whole, entire operating entity. The statements then proceed to provide an increasingly detailed look at specific financial activities.

The *Statement of Net Position* and *Statement of Activities* provide information about the activities of the whole ESC. Fund financial statements provide the next level of detail. For governmental funds, these statements tell how services were financed in the short-term as well as what remains for future spending. The fund financial statements also look at the ESC's most significant fund with all other non-major funds presented in total in one column. The general fund is the ESC's most significant fund.

Basis of Accounting

The ESC has elected to present its financial statements on the cash basis of accounting. This cash basis of accounting is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. The cash basis of accounting involves the measurement of cash and cash equivalents and changes in cash and cash equivalents resulting from cash receipt and disbursement transactions.

Essentially, the only assets reported on this strictly cash and investment and disbursement basis presentation in a statement of net position will be cash and cash equivalents. The statement of activities reports cash receipts and disbursements, or in other words, the sources and uses of cash and cash equivalents. Therefore, when reviewing the financial information and discussion within this annual report, the reader should keep in mind the limitations resulting from the use of the cash basis of accounting.

Reporting the ESC as a Whole

Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities

While this document contains the large number of funds used by the ESC to provide programs and activities, the view of the ESC as a whole looks at all financial transactions and asks the question, "How did we do financially during fiscal year 2024?" The statement of net position and the statement of activities answer this question.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Management's Discussion and Analysis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
(Unaudited)

These two statements report the ESC's *net position* and *changes in net position*. This change in net position is important because it tells the reader that, for the ESC as a whole, the *financial position* of the ESC has improved or diminished. The causes of this change may be the result of many factors, some financial, some not. Non-financial factors include the ESC's facility conditions, required educational programs, and other factors.

In the statement of net position and the statement of activities, governmental activities include the ESC's programs and services, including instruction, support services, and operation of non-instructional services.

Reporting the ESC's Most Significant Fund

Fund Financial Statements

Fund financial reports provide detailed information about the ESC's major fund. The ESC uses many funds to account for financial transactions. However, these fund financial statements focus on the ESC's most significant fund. The ESC's major governmental fund is the general fund.

Governmental Funds - Most of the ESC's activities are reported in governmental funds, which focus on how money flows into and out of those funds and the balances left at year-end available for spending in future periods. These funds are reported using the cash basis of accounting. The governmental fund statements provide a detailed short-term view of the ESC's general government operations and the basic services it provides. Governmental fund information helps determine whether there are more or less financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance educational programs.

Proprietary Fund - The ESC maintains one type of proprietary fund. Internal service funds are an accounting device used to accumulate and allocate costs internally among the ESC's various functions. The ESC uses an internal service fund to account for its health insurance benefits. Because this service predominately benefits governmental functions, it has been included within the governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements.

Reporting the ESC's Fiduciary Responsibilities

Fiduciary funds - Fiduciary funds are used to account for resources held for the benefit of parties outside the ESC. The ESC's fiduciary activities are reported in separate Statements of Fiduciary Net Position and Changes in Fiduciary Net Position. These activities are excluded from the ESC's other financial statements because the assets cannot be utilized by the ESC to finance its operations. The ESC does not report any fiduciary funds.

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Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Management's Discussion and Analysis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
(Unaudited)

The ESC as a Whole

Table 1 provides a summary of the ESC's net position for fiscal year 2024 compared to 2023.

(Table 1)
Net Position –Cash Basis

	Governmental Activities		
	2024	2023	Change
Assets			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Investments	\$ 6,233,357	\$ 5,884,424	\$ 348,933
Cash and Cash Equivalents with Fiscal Agent	1,895,528	1,656,678	238,850
<i>Total Assets</i>	<u>\$ 8,128,885</u>	<u>\$ 7,541,102</u>	<u>\$ 587,783</u>
Net Position			
Restricted for Other Purposes	\$ 73,165	\$ 77,010	\$ (3,845)
Unrestricted	8,055,720	7,464,092	591,628
<i>Total Net Position</i>	<u>\$ 8,128,885</u>	<u>\$ 7,541,102</u>	<u>\$ 587,783</u>

A portion of the ESC's net position represents resources subject to external restrictions on how they may be used. The remaining balance of the government-wide unrestricted net position may be used to meet the ESC's ongoing obligations.

The large increase in assets is due to an increase in cash and investments, which was primarily caused by the timing of amounts received for payment of services provided, offset by expenditures for those services.

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Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Management's Discussion and Analysis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
(Unaudited)

Table 2 shows the changes in net position for fiscal year 2024 as compared to fiscal year 2023.

(Table 2)
Changes in Net Position –Cash Basis

	Governmental Activities		
	2024	2023	Change
Receipts			
<i>Program Receipts</i>			
Charges for Services and Sales	\$ 11,794,319	\$ 12,533,641	\$ (739,322)
Operating Grants, Contributions and Interest	733,286	715,579	17,707
<i>Total Program Receipts</i>	<u>12,527,605</u>	<u>13,249,220</u>	<u>(721,615)</u>
<i>General Receipts</i>			
Grants and Entitlements not Restricted to			
Specific Programs	835,674	742,312	93,362
Investment Earnings	296,037	192,243	103,794
Miscellaneous	28,580	8,829	19,751
<i>Total General Receipts</i>	<u>1,160,291</u>	<u>943,384</u>	<u>216,907</u>
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<u>13,687,896</u>	<u>14,192,604</u>	<u>(504,708)</u>
<i>Program Disbursements</i>			
Instruction:			
Regular	1,351,703	1,524,564	(172,861)
Special	2,575,997	2,936,882	(360,885)
Adult/Continuing Education	-	15	(15)
Other	2,935	709	2,226
Support Services:			
Pupils	2,038,114	1,955,280	82,834
Instructional Staff	776,934	582,512	194,422
Governing Board	81,512	90,026	(8,514)
Administration	1,267,924	1,292,654	(24,730)
Fiscal	385,510	375,423	10,087
Business	9,508	13,538	(4,030)
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	226,240	199,163	27,077
Pupil Transportation	7,867	2,200	5,667
Central	4,340,849	4,705,590	(364,741)
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:			
Community Services	15,989	47,450	(31,461)
Capital Outlay	19,031	31,580	(12,549)
<i>Total Program Disbursements</i>	<u>13,100,113</u>	<u>13,757,586</u>	<u>(657,473)</u>
<i>Change in Net Position</i>	<u>587,783</u>	<u>435,018</u>	<u>152,765</u>
<i>Net Position Beginning of Year</i>	<u>7,541,102</u>	<u>7,106,084</u>	<u>435,018</u>
<i>Net Position End of Year</i>	<u>\$ 8,128,885</u>	<u>\$ 7,541,102</u>	<u>\$ 587,783</u>

Fluctuations among individual program receipts and disbursements are a result of a change in how certain consultant services are provided.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Management's Discussion and Analysis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
(Unaudited)

Governmental Activities

The ESC's Funds

The ESC's governmental funds are accounted for using the cash basis of accounting.

The general fund is the chief operating fund of the ESC. The fund balance of the general fund increased during the current fiscal year, however, there were no significant events that led to this change.

Current Issues

Changes in legislation over the years, currently allows school districts to choose the Educational Service Center with which they wish to align. This change can be made every two years. Member districts need to inform their current ESC of their intention to make a change. The next opportunity for districts to choose a different Educational Service Center will be no later than January 1, 2025, which would be effective for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025. The district must inform the Ohio Department of Education which ESC they have chosen. This freedom to choose has only increased the organization's efforts to improve. We feel confident the Tri-County Educational Service Center will become better in the long run.

Contacting the ESC's Financial Management

This financial report is designed to provide the citizens supported by the districts, investors, and creditors with a general overview of the ESC's finances and to show the ESC's accountability for the money it receives. If you have any questions about this report or need additional financial information, contact Mary Workman, Treasurer, Tri-County ESC, 741 Winkler Drive, Wooster, Ohio 44691, or by calling 330-345-6771.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Statement of Net Position - Cash Basis
June 30, 2024

	Governmental Activities
Assets	
Equity in Pooled Cash and Investments	\$ 6,233,357
Cash and Cash Equivalents with Fiscal Agent	1,895,528
<i>Total Assets</i>	<u>8,128,885</u>
Net Position	
Restricted for Other Purposes	73,165
Unrestricted	8,055,720
<i>Total Net Position</i>	<u>\$ 8,128,885</u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Statement of Activities - Cash Basis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

	Program Cash Receipts			Net (Disbursements) Receipts and Changes in Net Position
	Cash Disbursements	Charges for Services and Sales	Operating Grants and Contributions	Governmental Activities
Governmental Activities				
Instruction:				
Regular	\$ 1,351,703	\$ 1,255,012	\$ 9,489	\$ (87,202)
Special	2,575,997	2,731,952	72,410	228,365
Other	2,935	-	2,920	(15)
Support Services:				
Pupils	2,038,114	1,600,683	225,848	(211,583)
Instructional Staff	776,934	258,821	327,262	(190,851)
Governing Board	81,512	41,564	-	(39,948)
Administration	1,267,924	1,005,877	5,959	(256,088)
Fiscal	385,510	201,374	2,694	(181,442)
Business	9,508	4,848	-	(4,660)
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	226,240	114,001	24,287	(87,952)
Pupil Transportation	7,867	-	7,826	(41)
Central	4,340,849	4,566,461	35,452	261,064
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:				
Community Services	15,989	13,726	108	(2,155)
Capital Outlay	19,031	-	19,031	-
Totals	\$ 13,100,113	\$ 11,794,319	\$ 733,286	\$ (572,508)

General Receipts

Grants and Entitlements not Restricted to Specific Programs	835,674
Investment Earnings	296,037
Miscellaneous	28,580

<i>Total General Receipts</i>	<u>1,160,291</u>
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<i>Change in Net Position</i>	587,783
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<i>Net Position Beginning of Year</i>	<u>7,541,102</u>
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<i>Net Position End of Year</i>	<u><u>\$ 8,128,885</u></u>
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See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Statement of Assets and Fund Balances - Cash Basis
Governmental Funds
June 30, 2024

	<u>General</u>	<u>Other Governmental Funds</u>	<u>Total Governmental Funds</u>
Assets			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Investments	\$ 6,166,570	\$ 66,787	\$ 6,233,357
Fund Balances			
Restricted	-	73,165	73,165
Committed	52,897	-	52,897
Assigned	609,979	-	609,979
Unassigned	5,503,694	(6,378)	5,497,316
<i>Total Fund Balances</i>	<u>\$ 6,166,570</u>	<u>\$ 66,787</u>	<u>\$ 6,233,357</u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Reconciliation of Total Governmental Fund Balances to
Net Position of Governmental Activities - Cash Basis
June 30, 2024

Total Governmental Fund Balances	\$ 6,233,357
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*Amounts reported for governmental activities in the
statement of net position are different because:*

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

1,895,528

<i>Net Position of Governmental Activities</i>	<u><u>\$ 8,128,885</u></u>
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See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

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

	General	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Receipts			
Intergovernmental	\$ 910,848	\$ 652,611	\$ 1,563,459
Investment Income	248,240	-	248,240
Tuition and Fees	525,124	-	525,124
Gifts and Donations	5,501	-	5,501
Charges for Services	11,701,499	-	11,701,499
Miscellaneous	28,580	-	28,580
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<u>13,419,792</u>	<u>652,611</u>	<u>14,072,403</u>
Disbursements			
Current:			
Instruction:			
Regular	1,365,901	-	1,365,901
Special	2,563,049	56,407	2,619,456
Other	-	2,935	2,935
Support Services:			
Pupils	1,837,857	219,811	2,057,668
Instructional Staff	451,447	329,620	781,067
Governing Board	81,512	-	81,512
Administration	1,284,793	-	1,284,793
Fiscal	388,282	2,644	390,926
Business	9,508	-	9,508
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	203,426	24,112	227,538
Pupil Transportation	-	7,867	7,867
Central	4,859,279	-	4,859,279
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:			
Community Services	15,989	-	15,989
Capital Outlay	<u>-</u>	<u>19,031</u>	<u>19,031</u>
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<u>13,061,043</u>	<u>662,427</u>	<u>13,723,470</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Balances</i>	358,749	(9,816)	348,933
<i>Fund Balances Beginning of Year</i>	<u>5,807,821</u>	<u>76,603</u>	<u>5,884,424</u>
<i>Fund Balances End of Year</i>	<u>\$ 6,166,570</u>	<u>\$ 66,787</u>	<u>\$ 6,233,357</u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Tri-County Educational Service Center

Wayne County, Ohio

*Reconciliation of the Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Changes
in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds to the Statement of Activities - Cash Basis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024*

Net Change in Fund Balances - Total Governmental Funds	\$	348,933
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*Amounts reported for governmental activities in the
statement of activities are different because:*

Internal service funds charge insurance costs to other funds. The entity-wide statements eliminate governmental fund disbursements and related internal service fund charges. Governmental activities report allocated net internal service fund receipts (disbursements).		<u>238,850</u>
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<i>Change in Net Position of Governmental Activities</i>	<u><u>\$</u></u>	<u><u>587,783</u></u>
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See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Statement of Fund Net Position - Cash Basis
Proprietary Fund
June 30, 2024

	Governmental Activities
	<hr/>
	Internal Service Fund
	<hr/>
Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents with Fiscal Agent	\$ 1,895,528
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Net Position	
Unrestricted	\$ 1,895,528
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See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Changes in Fund Net Position - Cash Basis
Proprietary Fund
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

	Governmental Activities - Internal Service Fund
Operating Receipts	
Charges for Services	\$ 2,093,408
Other Operating Receipts	28,234
<i>Total Operating Receipts</i>	<u>2,121,642</u>
Operating Disbursements	
Purchased Services	645,183
Claims	1,285,406
<i>Total Operating Disbursements</i>	<u>1,930,589</u>
<i>Operating Income</i>	<u>191,053</u>
Non-Operating Receipts	
Interest	<u>47,797</u>
<i>Change in Net Position</i>	238,850
<i>Net Position Beginning of Year</i>	<u>1,656,678</u>
<i>Net Position End of Year</i>	<u><u>\$ 1,895,528</u></u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Notes to the Basic Financial Statements
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 1 - DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

The Tri-County Educational Service Center (the “ESC”) is a body politic and corporate established for the purpose of exercising the rights and privileges conveyed to it by the constitution and laws of the State of Ohio. The ESC is an educational service center as defined by Section 3311.05 of the Ohio Revised Code. The ESC operates under an elected governing board of nine members and provides services to the public schools in Holmes, Wayne and Ashland Counties. The Board controls the ESC’s instructional support services.

Reporting Entity

A reporting entity is comprised of the primary government, component units and other organizations that are included to ensure that the financial statements are not misleading. The primary government of the ESC consists of all funds, departments, boards and agencies that are not legally separate from the ESC. For the ESC, this includes general operations, and related special education, supervisory and administrative and fiscal activities of the ESC.

Component units are legally separate organizations for which the ESC is financially accountable. The ESC is financially accountable for an organization if the ESC appoints a voting majority of the organization's governing board and (1) the ESC is able to significantly influence the programs or services performed or provided by the organization; or (2) the ESC is legally entitled to or can otherwise access the organization's resources; the ESC is legally obligated or has otherwise assumed the responsibility to finance deficits of, or provide financial support to, the organization; or the ESC is obligated for the debt of the organization. Component units may also include organizations that are fiscally dependent on the ESC in that the ESC approves the budget, the issuance of debt, or the levying of taxes. The ESC does not have any component units.

The ESC is associated with the Tri-County Computer Service Association (TCCSA), a jointly governed organization; the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO)/Sedgwick Workers’ Compensation Group Rating Program (GRP), the Schools of Ohio Risk Sharing Authority Board (SORSA) and the Jefferson Health Plan, which are public entity risk pools.

Jointly Governed Organization

Tri-County Computer Service Association (TCCSA) is a jointly governed organization comprised of 23 School District’s and the ESC, created as a regional council of governments pursuant to State statute. The jointly governed organization was formed for the purpose of applying modern technology with the aid of computers and other electronic equipment to administrative and instructional functions for member districts. Each of the governments of these districts support TCCSA based on a per pupil charge dependent upon the software package utilized. The TCCSA assembly consists of a superintendent or designated representative from each participating district and a representative from the fiscal agent. TCCSA is governed by a board of directors chosen from the general membership of the TCCSA assembly. The board of directors consists of a representative from the fiscal agent, the chairman of each operating committee, and at least an assembly member from each county from which participating districts are located. Financial information can be obtained by contacting the Treasurer of the TCCSA at 2125 Eagle Pass; Wooster, OH 44691.

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Public Entity Risk Pools

Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program The ESC participates in the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO)/Sedwick Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program (GRP). The GRP is sponsored by OASBO and administered by Sedgwick. The intent of the GRP is to achieve the benefit of a reduced premium for the ESC by virtue of its grouping and representation with other participants in the GRP. The ESC pays a fee to the GRP to cover the costs of administering the program.

Schools of Ohio Risk Sharing Authority Board The ESC also participates in the Schools of Ohio Risk Sharing Authority Board (SORSA), an insurance purchasing pool. SORSA's business affairs are conducted by a nine member Board of Directors consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and five delegates. SORSA was created to provide joint self-insurance coverage and to assist members to prevent and reduce losses and injuries to the ESC's property and person. It is intended to provide liability and property insurance at reduced premiums for the participants. SORSA is organized as a nonprofit corporation under provisions of Ohio Revised Code 2744.

Jefferson Health Plan The ESC participates in the Jefferson Health Plan, a claims servicing pool comprised of fifty members. Each participant is a member of the assembly. The Plan's business and affairs are conducted by a nine member Board of Directors elected from the Jefferson Health Plan's assembly. Each member pays a monthly premium based on their claims history and a monthly administration fee. All participating members retain their risk and the Plan acts as the claims servicing agent.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

As discussed further in the Basis of Accounting section of this note, these financial statements are presented on the cash basis of accounting. This cash 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 ESC's accounting policies.

A. Basis of Presentation

The ESC's basic financial statements consist of government-wide 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.

Government-wide Financial Statements The statement of net position and the statement of activities display information about the ESC as a whole. These statements include the financial activities of the primary government, except for fiduciary funds. The activity of the internal service fund is also eliminated to avoid "doubling up" receipts and disbursements.

The statement of net position presents the financial condition of the governmental activities of the ESC at fiscal year-end. The statement of activities presents a comparison between direct disbursements and program receipts for each program or function of the ESC's governmental activities. A function is a group of related activities designed to accomplish a major service or regulatory program for which the government is responsible.

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Program receipts include charges paid by the recipient of the goods or services offered by the program, grants and contributions that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular program, and interest earned on grants that is required to be used to support a particular program. General receipts are receipts which are not classified as program receipts, with certain limited exceptions. The comparison of direct disbursements with program receipts identifies the extent to which each governmental function is self-financing on a cash basis or draws from the general receipts of the ESC.

Fund Financial Statements During the year, the ESC segregates transactions related to certain ESC 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 ESC 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. The internal service fund is presented in a single column on the face of the proprietary fund statements.

B. Fund Accounting

The ESC uses funds to maintain its financial records during the year. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self balancing set of accounts. There are two categories of funds: governmental and proprietary.

Governmental Funds The ESC classifies funds financed primarily from intergovernmental receipts (e.g. grants), and other exchange and nonexchange transactions as governmental funds. The following is the ESC's major governmental fund:

General fund The general fund is used to account for and report all financial resources not accounted for and reported in another fund. The general fund balance is available for any purpose provided it is expended or transferred according to the general laws of Ohio.

The other governmental funds of the ESC account for grants and other resources to which the ESC is bound to observe constraints imposed upon the use of the resources.

Proprietary Funds The ESC classifies funds financed primarily from user charges for goods or services as proprietary. The ESC's only proprietary fund is an internal service fund.

Internal service fund The internal service fund accounts for the financing of services provided by one department or agency to other departments or agencies of the ESC on a cost reimbursement basis. The ESC's only internal service fund accounts for a self-insurance program for employee medical benefits.

C. Basis of Accounting

The ESC's financial statements are prepared using the cash basis of accounting. Except for modifications having substantial support, receipts are recorded in the ESC'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 ESC are described in the appropriate section in this note.

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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.

D. Budgetary Process

Although not legally required, the ESC adopts its budget for all funds. The budget includes the estimated resources and expenditures for each fund and consists of three parts; Part (A) includes entitlement funding from the State, Part (B) includes the cost of all other lawful expenditures of the ESC (which are apportioned by the State Department of Education to each local Governing Board under the supervision of the ESC), and Part (C) includes the adopted appropriation resolution.

In fiscal year 2004, the ESC requirement to file budgetary information with the Ohio Department of Education was eliminated. Even though the budgetary process for the ESC was discretionary, the ESC continued to have its Governing Board approve appropriations and estimated resources. The ESC's Governing Board adopts an annual appropriation resolution, which is the Governing Board's authorization to spend resources and sets annual limits on expenditures plus encumbrances at the level of control selected by the Governing Board. The level of control has been established by the Governing Board at the fund level for all funds.

E. Cash and Cash Equivalents

To improve cash management, all cash received by the ESC is pooled. Monies for all funds are maintained in this account or temporarily used to purchase investments. Individual fund integrity is maintained through ESC records. Interest in the pool is presented as "equity in pooled cash and investments" on the financial statements.

The ESC participates in the Jefferson Health Plan insurance consortium for self-insurance. These monies are held separate from the ESC's central bank account and are reflected in the financial statements as "cash and cash equivalents with fiscal agent."

During the current fiscal year, the ESC invested in STAR Ohio. STAR Ohio (the State Treasury Asset Reserve of 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 ESC measures their 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 an NAV per share that approximates fair value.

For the current fiscal year, there were no limitations or restrictions on any participant withdrawals due to redemption notice periods, liquidity fees, or redemption gates. However, 24 hours advance notice for deposits and withdrawals of \$100 million or more is appreciated. STAR Ohio reserves the right to limit the transaction to \$250 million per day. All accounts of the participant will be combined for these purposes.

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Following Ohio statutes, the Governing Board has, by resolution, specified the funds to receive an allocation of interest earnings. Interest receipts credited to the general fund during fiscal year 2024 amounted to \$248,240, which includes \$25,120 assigned from other ESC 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 ESC are presented on the financial statements as equity in pooled cash and investments.

F. Inventory and Prepaid Items

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

G. Capital Assets

Acquisitions of property, plant and equipment are recorded as disbursements when paid. These items are not reflected as assets in the accompanying financial statements.

H. Interfund Receivables/Payables

The ESC reports advances-in and advances-out for interfund loans. These items are not reflected as assets and liabilities in the accompanying financial statements.

I. Accumulated Leave

In certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment or retirement, employees are entitled to cash payments for unused leave. Unpaid leave is not reflected as a liability under the ESC's cash basis of accounting.

J. Employer Contributions to Cost-Sharing Plans

The ESC recognizes the disbursement for employer contributions to cost-sharing pension plans when they are paid. As described in Notes 7 and 8, the employer contributions include portions for pension benefits and for postemployment health care benefits.

K. Fund Balance

In accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions*, the ESC classifies its fund balance based on the purpose for which the resources were received and the level of constraint placed on the resources. The classifications are as follows:

Nonspendable – The nonspendable fund balance category 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” criterion includes items that are not expected to be converted to cash. It also includes the long-term amount of loans receivable, as well as property acquired for resale, unless the use of the proceeds from the collection of those receivables or from the sale of those properties is restricted, committed or assigned.

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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 fund balance classification includes amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes imposed by a formal action (resolution) of the ESC Governing Board. Those committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the ESC Governing Board 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 fund balance classification are intended to be used by the ESC 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. In the general fund, assigned amounts represent intended uses established by policies of the ESC Governing Board. The Governing Board has by resolution authorized the Treasurer to assign fund balance. The Governing Board may also assign fund balance as it does when appropriating fund balance to cover a gap between estimated receipt and appropriations in the subsequent year's appropriated budget.

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 resulting from overspending for specific purposes for which amounts had been restricted, committed or assigned.

The ESC applies restricted resources first when disbursements are 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 disbursements are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund balance classifications could be used.

L. 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 primarily includes amounts for activities associated with assisting the instructional staff with the content and process of providing learning experiences for pupils.

The ESC's policy is to first apply restricted resources when a cash disbursement is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position are available.

M. Interfund Transactions

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

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N. Pensions and OPEB

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

O. Leases

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

P. Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA)

The ESC is party to various SBITAs; however, liabilities are not reflected under the ESC's cash basis of accounting. SBITA disbursements are recognized when they are paid.

NOTE 3 – COMPLIANCE

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

NOTE 4 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS

State statute classifies monies held by the ESC into three categories.

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

Inactive monies are public deposits that the ESC's Governing 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.

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

Interim monies may be deposited or invested in the following securities:

1. United States Treasury Notes, Bills, Bonds, or any other obligation or security issued by the United States Treasury or any other obligation guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States;
2. Bonds, notes, debentures, or any other 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, Government National Mortgage Association, and Student Loan Marketing 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 that the market value of the securities subject to the repurchase agreement must exceed the principal value of the agreement by at least two percent and be marked to market daily, and that the term of the agreement must not exceed thirty days;
4. Bonds and other obligations of the State of Ohio, and with certain limitations including a requirement for maturity within ten years from the date of settlement, bonds and other obligations of political subdivisions of the State of Ohio, if training requirements have been met;
5. No-load money market mutual funds consisting exclusively of obligations described in division (1) or (2) of this section and repurchase agreements secured by such obligations, provided that investments in securities described in this division are made only through eligible institutions;
6. The State Treasurer's investment pool (STAR Ohio);
7. Certain bankers' acceptances and commercial paper notes for a period not to exceed one hundred and eighty days and two hundred and seventy days, respectively, in an amount not to exceed forty percent of the interim moneys available for investment at any one time; and,
8. Time certificates of deposit or savings or deposit accounts including, but not limited to, passbook accounts.

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 ESC, 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 treasurer or qualified trustee or, if the securities are not represented by a certificate, upon receipt of confirmation of transfer from the custodian.

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Deposits - At year-end, \$1,268,854 of the ESC's bank balance of \$1,518,854 was exposed to custodial credit risk. Although the securities were held by the pledging financial institutions' trust department in the ESC's name and all statutory requirements for the investment of money had been followed, noncompliance with Federal requirements could potentially subject the ESC 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 ESC will not be able to recover deposits or collateral securities that are in possession of an outside party.

The ESC 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 ESC and deposited with a qualified trustee by the financial institution as security for repayment whose market value at all times shall be at least 105 percent of the deposits being secured; or
- Participation in the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS), a collateral pool of eligible securities deposited with a qualified trustee and pledged to the Treasurer of State to secure the repayment of all public monies deposited in the financial institution. OPCS requires the total market value of the securities pledged to be 102 percent of the deposits being secured or a rate set by the Treasurer of State.

Investments

As of June 30, 2024, the ESC had the following investment and maturity:

S&P Global Ratings		Measurement Value	Investment Maturities			Percent of Total
	Investment Type		12 Months or Less	12 to 36 Months	More Than 36 Months	
	Net Asset Value (NAV):					
AAAm	STAR Ohio	\$ 2,738,669	\$ 2,738,669	\$ -	\$ -	56.15%
N/A	Money Market	1,840	1,840	-	-	0.04%
	Cost:					
AA+	Federal Home Loan Mtg	230,000	125,000	105,000	-	4.72%
AA+	Federal Home Loan Bank	394,950	100,000	-	294,950	8.10%
AA+	Federal Farm Credit Bank	198,747	-	99,746	99,001	4.08%
AA+	US Treasury Note	521,583	322,217	-	199,366	10.69%
N/A	Negotiable Certificates of Deposit	87,912	87,912	-	-	1.80%
A-1+/A-1	Commercial Paper	703,202	703,202	-	-	14.42%
	Total Investments	\$ 4,876,903	\$ 4,078,840	\$ 204,746	\$ 593,317	100.00%

Interest Rate Risk. As a means of limiting its exposure to fair value losses arising from rising interest rates and according to state law, the ESC's investment policy limits investment portfolio maturities to five years or less.

Credit Risk. 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. The ESC has no investment policy that would further limit its investment choices.

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Concentration of Credit Risk. The ESC places no limit on the amount that may be invested in any one issuer. The table above includes the percentage to total of each investment type held by the ESC at June 30, 2024.

Funds Held by Fiscal Agent

The ESC participates in the Jefferson Health Plan for employee benefits. The amount held at fiscal year end for the employee benefit self-insurance fund was \$1,895,528. All benefit deposits are made to the consortium's depository account. Collateral is held by a qualified third-party trustee in the name of the Consortium.

NOTE 5 – STATE FUNDING

The ESC is funded by the State Governing Board from State funds for the cost of Part (A) of the budget.

Part (B) of the budget is funded in the following way: \$6.50 times the Average Daily Membership (ADM – the total number of pupils under the ESC's supervision) is apportioned by the State Board of Education from the local ESC's to which the ESC provides services from payments made under the State's foundation program.

Simultaneously, \$26.00 times the sum of the ADM is paid by the State Governing Board from State funds to the ESC. If additional funding is required and if a majority of the boards of education of the participating ESC's approve, the cost of Part (B) of the budget that is in excess of \$43.50 times ADM approved by the State Governing Board is apportioned to the participating ESC's through reductions in their State foundation.

The local District's to which the ESC provides services have agreed to pay \$6.50 per pupil to provide additional funding for services provided by the ESC. The State Governing Board initiates and supervises the procedure by which the participating boards approve or disapprove the apportionment.

NOTE 6 - RISK MANAGEMENT

The ESC is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees and natural disasters. During the fiscal year, the ESC contracted with the Schools of Ohio Risk Sharing Authority for property and general liability insurance coverage.

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

For fiscal year 2024, the ESC participated in the OASBO/Sedgwick Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program (GRP), an insurance purchasing pool. The intent of the GRP is to achieve the benefit of a reduced premium for the ESC by virtue of its grouping and representation with other participants in the GRP. The workers' compensation experience of the participating school ESCs is tiered into groups based upon past workers' compensation experience. Within each tiered group, a common premium rate is applied to all school ESCs within that group. Each participant pays its workers' compensation premium to the state based on the rate for the GRP rather than its individual rate. Total savings are then calculated and each participant's individual performance is compared to the overall savings percentage of their tiered group. Participation in the GRP is limited to school ESCs that can meet the GRPs selection criteria. The firm of CompManagement, Inc. provides administrative, cost control and actuarial services to the GRP.

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The ESC holds all reserves including Incurred But Not Reported (IBNR), Shock Stabilization and Fluctuation reserves.

The ESC is self-insured for employee health insurance claims, but maintains aggregate stop-loss insurance through Jefferson Health Plan. The Self-Insurance Fund pays covered claims to Jefferson Health Plan and recovers these costs from premium charges to employees and Midland Council of Governments based on calculations provided by Jefferson Health Plan's consultant (Findley Davis, Inc.). The June 30, 2024 loss reserves estimated by the ESC's actuary are as follows:

Internal Service Fund Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,895,528
IBNR actuarial liability	<u>(213,305)</u>
Fund Surplus	<u>\$ 1,682,223</u>

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).

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 ESC'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 ESC's obligation for this liability to annually required payments. The ESC cannot control benefit terms or the manner in which pensions/OPEB are financed; however, the ESC 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).

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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 – ESC non-teaching employees participate in SERS, a statewide, 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.

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 ESC 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

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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 ESC's contractually required contribution to SERS was \$384,577 for fiscal year 2024.

Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)

Plan Description – ESC 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 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43215-3771, by calling (888) 227-7877, or by visiting the STRS Web site at www.strsoh.org.

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

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. 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.

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

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

Funding Policy – Employer and member contribution rates are established by the State Teachers Retirement Board and limited by Chapter 3307 of the Ohio Revised Code. The 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 ESC's contractually required contribution to STRS was \$864,138 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 ESC'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	0.0670008%	0.04435467%	
Prior Measurement Date	0.0718319%	0.04530185%	
Change in Proportionate Share	<u>-0.0048311%</u>	<u>-0.00094718%</u>	
Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 3,702,141	\$ 9,551,751	\$ 13,253,892

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.

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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 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 investment expense, including inflation
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 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:

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<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Target Allocation</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return</u>
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>	

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 ESC'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 ESC's proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 7.00 percent, as well as what the ESC'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.

	<u>1% Decrease</u>	<u>Current Discount Rate</u>	<u>1% Increase</u>
ESC's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 5,464,168	\$ 3,702,141	\$ 2,217,965

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	From 2.5 percent to 8.5 percent based on service
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent, net of investment expenses, including inflation
Discount Rate of Return	7.00 percent
Payroll Increases	3.00 percent
Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA)	0.00 percent, effective July 1, 2017

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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.

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	100.00 %	

*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 ESC's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate The following table presents the ESC'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 ESC'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:

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	1% Decrease	Current Discount Rate	1% Increase
ESC's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 14,688,478	\$ 9,551,751	\$ 5,207,485

Assumption and Benefit Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date The discount rate remained at 7.00 percent for June 30, 2023 valuation. Demographic assumptions were changed based on the actuarial experience study for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2021.

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 ESC 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.

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.

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

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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 ESC's surcharge obligation was \$44,803. 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 ESC'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 ESC's proportion of the net OPEB liability (asset) was based on the ESC'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	0.0685189%	0.04435467%
Prior Measurement Date	0.0731257%	0.04530185%
Change in Proportionate Share	<u>-0.0046068%</u>	<u>-0.00094718%</u>
Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset)	\$ 1,128,811	\$ (862,637)

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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	
Medicare	5.125 percent - 4.40 percent
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.

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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 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 plan 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.

Sensitivity of the ESC'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

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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).

	1% Decrease	Current Discount Rate	1% Increase
ESC's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 1,442,944	\$ 1,128,811	\$ 881,105
	1% Decrease	Current Trend Rate	1% Increase
ESC's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 829,299	\$ 1,128,811	\$ 1,525,706

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.

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.

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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:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Target Allocation*</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Rate of Return**</u>
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	100.00 %	

*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.

Sensitivity of the ESC'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.

	<u>1% Decrease</u>	<u>Current Discount Rate</u>	<u>1% Increase</u>
ESC's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB (Asset)	\$ (730,109)	\$ (862,637)	\$ (978,055)
	<u>1% Decrease</u>	<u>Current Trend Rate</u>	<u>1% Increase</u>
ESC's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB (Asset)	\$ (983,410)	\$ (862,637)	\$ (717,168)

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Assumption Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date The discount rate remained unchanged at 7.00 percent for the June 30, 2023 valuation.

Benefit Term Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date Healthcare trends were updated to reflect emerging claims and recoveries experiences as well as benefit changes effective January 1, 2024.

NOTE 9 – FUND BALANCE

Fund balance can be classified as nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned and/or unassigned based primarily on the extent to which the ESC 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 as follows:

	General	Other Governmental Funds	Total
Restricted for:			
Grants	\$ -	\$ 73,165	\$ 73,165
Committed for:			
Retirement	52,897	-	52,897
Assigned for:			
Instruction	200	-	200
Support Services	37,546	-	37,546
Other Purposes	424,668	-	424,668
Preschool Activities	147,565	-	147,565
Total Assigned	609,979	-	609,979
Unassigned	5,503,694	(6,378)	5,497,316
Total Fund Balance	\$ 6,166,570	\$ 66,787	\$ 6,233,357

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

	Deficit
Non-Major Governmental Funds	
Family & Community	\$ 149
ECSE Preschool Grant	6,229
Total	\$ 6,378

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.

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County, Ohio
Notes to the Basic Financial Statements
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 10 – CONTINGENCIES AND COMMITMENTS

A. Grants

The ESC received financial assistance from federal and state agencies in the form of grants. The disbursements of funds received under these programs generally require compliance with terms and conditions specified in the grant agreements and are 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 ESC at June 30, 2024.

B. Litigation

The ESC is not involved in any litigation that, in the opinion of management, would have a material effect on the financial statements.

C. Encumbrance Commitments

Significant outstanding encumbrances for governmental funds include \$104,877 in the general fund and \$96,559 in the non-major governmental funds.

**Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other
Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With
*Government Auditing Standards***

Tri-County Educational Service Center
Wayne County
741 Winkler Drive
Wooster, Ohio 44691

To the Members of the Governing Board:

We have audited, in accordance with 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, the cash basis financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Tri-County Educational Service Center, Wayne County, Ohio, as of and for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Tri-County Educational Service Center's basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated November 25, 2024, wherein we noted the Tri-County 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 Tri-County 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 Tri-County Educational Service Center's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Tri-County 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 Tri-County 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.

Tri-County Educational Service Center

Wayne County

Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters

Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With *Government Auditing Standards*

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Tri-County 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 and responses as item 2024-001.

Tri-County Educational Service Center's Response to the Finding

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the Tri-County Educational Service Center's response to the finding identified in our audit and described in the accompanying schedule of findings and responses. The Tri-County 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 Tri-County 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 Tri-County Educational Service Center's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.



Julian & Grube, Inc.

November 25, 2024

**TRI-COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
WAYNE COUNTY, OHIO**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RESPONSES
JUNE 30, 2024**

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS	
Finding Number	2024-001

Noncompliance - Annual Financial Report

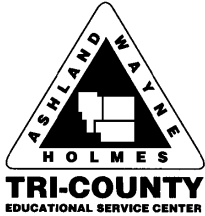
Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 provides each public office shall file a financial report for each fiscal year. The Auditor of State may prescribe forms by rule or may issue guidelines, or both, for such reports. If the Auditor of State has not prescribed a rule regarding the form for the report, the public office shall submit its report on the form utilized by the public office. Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03 further clarifies the requirements of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38. Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(B) requires the ESC to prepare its annual financial report in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

The ESC prepares its financial statements in accordance with the cash-basis of accounting in a report format similar to the requirements of Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement 34, *Basic Financial Statements - and Management's Discussion and Analysis - for State and Local Governments*. This presentation differs from GAAP. There would be variances on the financial statements between this accounting practice and GAAP that, while presumably material, cannot be reasonably determined at this time.

Failure to prepare proper GAAP financial statements may result in the ESC being fined or other administrative remedies.

The ESC should prepare its financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

Client Response: Due to the cost requirement of preparing these financial statements according to Accounting Principles Generally Accepted in the United States of America (GAAP), the Board has determined that preparing year-end statements on a cash-basis of accounting will accurately reflect the ESC's financial position and allow for those resources previously spent on GAAP to be allocated to education purposes.



TRI-COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

741 Winkler Drive
Wooster, Ohio 44691
Jon Ritchie, Superintendent

Phone 330-345-6771
Fax 330-345-7622
www.tricountyesc.org

SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS JUNE 30, 2024

Finding Number	Year Initially Occurred	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2023-001	2012	<u>Noncompliance</u> - Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(B) requires the ESC to prepare its annual financial report in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). However, the ESC prepared its annual financial report in accordance with the cash-basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than GAAP.	Not Corrected	Repeated as finding 2024-001, as the ESC did not prepare its annual financial report in accordance with GAAP.

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OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



TRI COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

WAYNE 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 1/2/2025

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