



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



**LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
LICKING COUNTY
JUNE 30, 2024 AND 2023**

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**LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
LICKING COUNTY
JUNE 30, 2024 AND 2023**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Licking Regional Educational Service Center
Licking County
145 N Quentin Rd
Newark, OH 43055-4623

To the Board of Education:

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinions

We have audited the cash-basis financial statements of the governmental activities, the General Fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Licking County, Ohio (the Educational Service Center), as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024 and 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Educational Service Center's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective cash-basis financial position of the governmental activities, the General Fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Educational Service Center, as of June 30, 2024 and 2023, and the respective changes in cash-basis financial position thereof for the year then ended in accordance with the cash-basis of accounting described in Note 2.

Basis for Opinions

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

Emphasis of Matter - Accounting Basis

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

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

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

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

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

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

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

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

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

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Educational Service Center's basic financial statements.

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

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

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information included in the annual financial report. The other information comprises the management's discussion & 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 March 27, 2025, on our consideration of the Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Educational Service Center's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

March 27, 2025

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Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio
Management's Discussion and Analysis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024
Unaudited

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

Financial Highlights

Key financial highlights for fiscal year 2024 are as follows:

- Net position of the governmental activities increased \$662,370.

Using this Annual Financial Report

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

The Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis and Statement of Activities – Cash Basis provide information about the activities of the whole Educational Service Center, presenting both an aggregate view of the Educational Service Center's finances and a longer-term view of those finances. 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 Educational Service Center's most significant funds with all other non-major funds presented in total in one column.

Basis of Accounting

The basis of accounting is a set of guidelines that determine when financial events are recorded. The Educational Service Center has elected to present its financial statements on a cash basis of accounting. This basis of accounting is a basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. Under the Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting, receipts and disbursements are recorded when cash is received or paid.

As a result of using the cash basis of accounting, certain assets and their related revenues (such as accounts receivable) and certain liabilities and their related expenses (such as accounts payable) are not recorded in the financial statements. Therefore, when reviewing the financial information and discussion within this report, the reader must keep in mind that limitations resulting from the use of the cash basis of accounting.

Reporting the Educational Service Center as a Whole

Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis and Statement of Activities – Cash Basis

While this document contains information about the funds used by the Educational Service Center to provide programs and activities for the Educational Service Center, the view of the Educational Service Center 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 – Cash Basis and the Statement of Activities – Cash Basis answer this question. These statements report the Educational Service Center's net position and changes in that position. This change in net position is important because it tells the reader that, for the Educational Service Center as a whole, the financial

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Management's Discussion and Analysis

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Unaudited

position of the Educational Service Center has improved or diminished. The causes of this change may be the result of many factors, some financial, some not.

In the Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis and the Statement of Activities – Cash Basis, all of the Educational Service Center's activities are reported as governmental including instruction and support services.

Reporting the Educational Service Center's Most Significant Funds

Fund Financial Statements

Fund financial reports provide detailed information about the Educational Service Center's major fund. The Educational Service Center uses many funds to account for a multitude of financial transactions. However, these fund financial statements focus on the Educational Service Center's most significant funds. The Educational Service Center's major governmental fund is the General Fund.

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

The Educational Service Center as a Whole

The Educational Service Center has chosen to report on an Other Comprehensive Basis of Accounting in a format similar to that required by Governmental Accounting Statement No. 34.

Recall that the Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis provides the perspective of the Educational Service Center as a whole. Table 1 provides a summary of the Educational Service Center's net position for 2024 compared to 2023.

Table 1 - Net Position - Cash Basis

	Governmental Activities		
	2024	2023	Change
Assets			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 5,973,358	\$ 5,310,988	\$ 662,370
Net Position			
Restricted	113,024	109,353	3,671
Unrestricted	5,860,334	5,201,635	658,699
<i>Total Net Position</i>	<u>\$ 5,973,358</u>	<u>\$ 5,310,988</u>	<u>\$ 662,370</u>

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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Management's Discussion and Analysis

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Unaudited

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

Table 2 shows the changes in net position for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, and comparisons to fiscal year ended June 30, 2023.

Table 2 - Changes in Net Position - Cash Basis

	Governmental Activities		
	2024	2023	Change
Receipts			
<i>Program Cash Receipts:</i>			
Charges for Services and Sales	\$ 14,560,781	\$ 14,198,418	\$ 362,363
Operating Grants and Contributions	1,442,136	1,694,806	(252,670)
<i>Total Program Cash Receipts</i>	<u>16,002,917</u>	<u>15,893,224</u>	<u>109,693</u>
<i>General Receipts:</i>			
Grants and Entitlements Not Restricted	1,043,275	944,914	98,361
Other	223,950	188,660	35,290
<i>Total General Receipts</i>	<u>1,267,225</u>	<u>1,133,574</u>	<u>133,651</u>
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<u>17,270,142</u>	<u>17,026,798</u>	<u>243,344</u>
Program Disbursements			
Instruction:			
Regular	152,384	229,350	(76,966)
Special	7,237,949	7,059,498	178,451
Support Services:			
Pupils	5,705,773	5,255,024	450,749
Instructional Staff	106,063	519,226	(413,163)
Board of Education	15,220	13,518	1,702
Administration	2,405,755	2,046,194	359,561
Fiscal	244,120	198,574	45,546
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	282,601	115,703	166,898
Pupil Transportation	-	4,882	(4,882)
Central	15,150	17,708	(2,558)
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:			
Community Services	436,894	431,494	5,400
Extracurricular Activities	5,863	6,184	(321)
Debt Service:			
Principal Retirement	-	17,213	(17,213)
Interest and Fiscal Charges	-	1,450	(1,450)
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<u>16,607,772</u>	<u>15,916,018</u>	<u>691,754</u>
<i>Increase in Net Position</i>	<u>662,370</u>	<u>1,110,780</u>	<u>(448,410)</u>
<i>Net Position at Beginning of Year</i>	<u>5,310,988</u>	<u>4,200,208</u>	<u>1,110,780</u>
<i>Net Position at End of Year</i>	<u>\$ 5,973,358</u>	<u>\$ 5,310,988</u>	<u>\$ 662,370</u>

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Management's Discussion and Analysis

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Unaudited

Fluctuations among individual program revenues and expenses are a result of a change in how certain consulting services are provided to member districts.

The Statement of Activities – Cash Basis shows the cost of program services and the charges for services and grants and contributions, offsetting those services.

The Educational Service Center's Major Fund

The Educational Service Center's major fund, the General Fund, is accounted for using the cash basis of accounting. The general fund's net change in fund balance for fiscal year 2024 was an increase of \$629,363. This was primarily caused by the amounts received for payment provided for services, offset by expenditures for those services.

Budgeting Highlights

Under Ohio law Educational Service Centers are no longer required to prepare a budget. Therefore, at June 30, 2024 a budgetary statement is not presented within the basic financial statements because the Board did not approve estimated revenues or adopt appropriations.

Economic Factors

During the fiscal year, the Educational Service Center entered into an agreement with Northern Local School District to provide gifted services in the amount of \$40,000 for the 2023-2024 school year. Educational Service Center received a grant for school safety grant in the amount of \$2,500. The Educational Service Center saw an increase of 9% for their medical insurance through Medical Mutual of Ohio. This increase represented approximately \$59,653 in additional expenses.

Contacting the Educational Service Center's Financial Management

This financial report is designed to provide our citizens, districts, investors and creditors with a general overview of the Educational Service Center's finances and to show the Educational Service Center's accountability for the money it receives. If you have any questions about this report or need additional financial information please contact Julio Valladares, Treasurer at the Licking Regional Educational Service Center, 145 Quentin Road, Newark, Ohio 43055. You may also E-mail the treasurer at jcvalladares@lcesc.org.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center

Statement of Net Position - Cash Basis

June 30, 2024

	Governmental Activities
Assets	
<hr/>	
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	<hr/> <hr/> \$ 5,973,358
<hr/>	
Net Position	
Restricted For:	
Advisory Services	83,278
Other Purposes	29,746
Unrestricted	<hr/> 5,860,334
<i>Total Net Position</i>	<hr/> \$ 5,973,358

Licking Regional Educational Service Center

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								
Current:								
Instruction:								
Regular	\$ 152,384	\$ 144,217	\$ 5,667	\$	(2,500)			
Special	7,237,949	6,650,185	300,115		(287,649)			
Support Services:								
Pupils	5,705,773	4,794,002	719,732		(192,039)			
Instructional Staff	106,063	29,399	73,082		(3,582)			
Board of Education	15,220	14,611	-		(609)			
Administration	2,405,755	2,119,679	205,157		(80,919)			
Fiscal	244,120	195,567	40,843		(7,710)			
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	282,601	175,298	95,543		(11,760)			
Central	15,150	12,772	1,997		(381)			
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:								
Community Services	436,894	419,422	-		(17,472)			
Extracurricular Activities	5,863	5,629	-		(234)			
<i>Total</i>	<u>\$ 16,607,772</u>	<u>\$ 14,560,781</u>	<u>\$ 1,442,136</u>		<u>(604,855)</u>			

General Receipts

Grants and Entitlements Not Restricted to Specific Programs	1,043,275
Investment Earnings	205,285
Miscellaneous	18,665
<i>Total General Receipts</i>	<u>1,267,225</u>

Change in Net Position 662,370

<i>Net Position Beginning of Year</i>	5,310,988
<i>Net Position End of Year</i>	<u>\$ 5,973,358</u>

Licking Regional Educational Service Center*Balance Sheet - Cash Basis**Governmental Funds**June 30, 2024*

	General	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Assets			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 5,910,311	\$ 63,047	\$ 5,973,358
Fund Balances			
Restricted	-	113,024	113,024
Assigned	365,403	-	365,403
Unassigned	5,544,908	(49,977)	5,494,931
<i>Total Fund Balances</i>	<i>\$ 5,910,311</i>	<i>\$ 63,047</i>	<i>\$ 5,973,358</i>

Licking Regional Educational Service Center
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	\$ 1,034,713	\$ 1,442,135	\$ 2,476,848
Investment Income	205,285	-	205,285
Tuition and Fees	156,137	-	156,137
Charges for Services	14,390,895	13,750	14,404,645
Contributions and Donations	8,562	-	8,562
Miscellaneous	11,165	7,500	18,665
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<i>15,806,757</i>	<i>1,463,385</i>	<i>17,270,142</i>
Disbursements			
Current:			
Instruction:			
Regular	135,902	16,482	152,384
Special	6,951,551	286,398	7,237,949
Support Services:			
Pupils	4,993,741	712,032	5,705,773
Instructional Staff	30,624	75,439	106,063
Board of Education	15,220	-	15,220
Administration	2,207,980	197,775	2,405,755
Fiscal	203,714	40,406	244,120
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	182,601	100,000	282,601
Central	13,304	1,846	15,150
Extracurricular Activities	5,863	-	5,863
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:			
Community Services	436,894	-	436,894
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<i>15,177,394</i>	<i>1,430,378</i>	<i>16,607,772</i>
<i>Net Change in Fund Balance</i>	<i>629,363</i>	<i>33,007</i>	<i>662,370</i>
<i>Fund Balance Beginning of Year</i>	<i>5,280,948</i>	<i>30,040</i>	<i>5,310,988</i>
<i>Fund Balance End of Year</i>	<i>\$ 5,910,311</i>	<i>\$ 63,047</i>	<i>\$ 5,973,358</i>

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 1 – REPORTING ENTITY

The Licking Regional Educational Service Center (formerly known as Licking County Educational Service Center) (the Educational Service Center) is located in Newark, Ohio, the county seat. The Educational Service Center supplies supervisory, special education, administrative, cooperative classes, multi-handicapped preschool, and other services to Franklin, Johnstown-Monroe, Lakewood, Licking Valley, North Fork, Southwest Licking, Tri-Valley, Granville Exempted Village, Newark, Heath and Zanesville Schools. The Educational Service Center also provides limited services to the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County, Logan-Hocking, Canal Winchester, West Muskingum, Northern, Groveport Madison, Worthington, Westerville, Gahanna-Jefferson, Reynoldsburg, Lancaster, Licking Heights and Southwestern School Districts. The Educational Service Center furnishes leadership and consulting services designed to strengthen the school districts in areas they are unable to finance or staff independently.

The Licking Regional Educational Service Center operates under a locally-elected Board form of government consisting of five members elected at-large for staggered four year terms.

The reporting entity is composed of the primary government, component units, and other organizations that are included to insure that the financial statements of the Educational Service Center are not misleading.

Primary Government

The primary government consists of all funds, departments, boards, and agencies that are not legally separate from the Educational Service Center. For the Educational Service Center, this includes general operations and student related activities.

The Educational Service Center participates in five jointly governed organizations and three insurance pools.

Jointly Governed Organizations

Licking Area Computer Association

The Educational Service Center is a participant in the Licking Area Computer Association (LACA), a regional council of governments computer consortium. LACA is an association which services twenty-six school districts, educational service centers, and community schools within the boundaries of Licking, Muskingum, Fairfield, Perry, and Knox counties. The organization was formed for the purpose of applying modern technology with the aid of computers and other electronic equipment to administrative and instructional functions among member school districts. The governing board of LACA consists of the superintendents from all participating school districts. The continued existence of LACA is not dependent on the Educational Service Center's continued participation and no equity interest exists.

The LACA constitution states that any school or educational service center withdrawing from the Association prior to dissolution forfeits their claim to the Association's capital assets. The Board exercises total control over the operations of LACA including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. Financial statements for LACA can be obtained from the Licking Area Computer Association, 145 South Quentin Road, Newark, OH 43055.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County

The Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County is a distinct political subdivision of the State of Ohio operated under the direction of a Board consisting of three board members from the Licking Regional Educational Service Center, two from the Newark City School District, one from the Heath City School District, and one from the Granville Exempted Village School District, which possesses its own budgeting and taxing authority. The Board exercises total control over the operations of the Career and Technology Education Center including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. To obtain financial information write to the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County, Benjamin Streby, who serves as Treasurer, at 150 Price Road, Newark, Ohio 43055.

META Solutions

The Educational Service Center participates in the META Solutions (META), which is a jointly governed organization, created as a regional council of governments pursuant to Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code. META operates as, and has all the powers of, a data acquisition site/information technology center pursuant to applicable provisions of the Ohio Revised Code. The organization was formed for the purpose of identifying, developing, and providing to members and nonmembers innovative educational and technological services and products, as well as expanded opportunities for cooperative purchasing. The General Assembly of META consists of one delegate from every member school district. The delegate is the superintendent of the school district or the superintendent's designee. The degree of control exercised by any participating school district is limited to its representation on the General Assembly. The General Assembly exercises total control over the operation of META including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. Financial information can be obtained from the Metropolitan Educational Technology Association at 2100 Citygate Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43219.

Licking County Children and Families First Council

The Licking County Children and Families First Council (Council) is a jointly governed organization created under Ohio Revised Code Section 121.37. The Council is made up of the following members: Director of the Licking Knox County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board, Director of the Licking County Alcoholism Prevention Program, Health Commissioner of the Licking County Health Department, Health Commissioner of the City of Newark, Director of Licking County Human Services, Director of Family and Health Services, Director of Moundbuilders Guidance Center, Director of Family Counseling Services, Director of Licking County Coalition for Housing, Superintendent of the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Licking County Juvenile Court Judge, Superintendent of the Licking County Educational Services Center, the Superintendent of Newark City Schools, a representative of the City of Newark, a representative of the Licking Economic Action Development Study, a representative of the Licking County United Way, a representative from Family and Consumer Services, a representative of the County's Early Intervention Network, a representative of the Licking County Commissioners Office, the East District Family and Children First Coordinator and at least three individuals representing the interests of families of the County. When possible, the number of members representing families shall be equal to twenty percent of the Council's remaining membership. The governing board exercises total control over the operations of the Council including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Ohio Coalition of Equity and Adequacy of School Funding

The Ohio Coalition of Equity and Adequacy of School Funding is organized as a council of governments pursuant to Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Coalition was organized to challenge the constitutionality of the Ohio school funding system. The purpose of the Coalition is to bring about greater equity and adequacy of public school funding in Ohio. The Coalition is governed by a Steering Committee of 90 school district representatives. Though most of the members are superintendents, some treasurers, board members, and administrators also serve. Several persons serve as ex officio members. The Committee exercised total control over the operations of the Coalition including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. Each participant's control is limited to its representation on the board. The membership of the coalition includes over 500 school districts throughout the State of Ohio. Member school districts, joint vocational schools, and educational service centers pay annual dues and supplemental dues based on their pupil enrollment. The Coalition is not dependent on the continued participation of the Educational Service Center and the Educational Service Center does not maintain an equity interest or financial responsibility for the Coalition. The fiscal agent for the Coalition is the Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center. Financial information may be obtained from the Ohio Coalition of Equity and Adequacy of School Funding at 100 South Third Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

Insurance Pools

Ohio School Comp Workers' Compensation Group Retrospective Rating Program

The Ohio School Comp Workers' Compensation Group Retrospective Rating Program (Program) is a shared risk pool among School Districts in Ohio. Section 4123.29, Ohio Revised Code, permits the establishment of employer group retrospective rating plans for workers' compensation rating purposes. The Program is governed by the Ohio School Board Association (OSBA) Executive Committee that consists of seven members as follows: the president of OSBA, Immediate Past President of OSBA, and five representatives elected from the participating school districts.

The Program, a Bureau of Workers' Compensation certified sponsor, established the program based upon guidelines set forth by the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC). The Program created a group of School Districts that will practice effective workplace safety and claims management to achieve lower premiums for workers compensation coverage than they would individually. The participating School Districts continue to pay their own premiums and have the opportunity to receive retrospective premium adjustments based upon the combined performance of the group. Depending upon that performance, the participating School Districts can receive either a premium refund or premium assessment. The Program's third party administrator (TPA), Sedgewick, provides administrative, cost control, and actuarial services to the Program. The cost of the TPA will be paid by each School Districts in proportion to its payroll to the total payroll of the group.

Ohio School Plan

The Educational Service Center participates in the Ohio School Plan (OSP), an insurance purchasing pool. The Ohio School Plan (OSP) is created and organized pursuant to and as authorized by Section 2744.081 of the Ohio Revised Code. The OSP is an unincorporated, non-profit association of its members and an instrumentality for each member for the purpose of enabling members of the Plan to provide for a formalized, joint insurance purchasing program to maintain adequate insurance protection, risk management programs, and other administrative services. The OSP's business and affairs are conducted by an eleven member Board of directors consisting of School District superintendents and treasurers. Hylant Administrative Services, LLC is the Administrator of the OSP and is responsible for providing underwriting, claims management, risk management, accounting, system support services, sales, and marketing.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Ohio School Benefits Cooperative

The Educational Service Center participates in the Ohio School Benefits Cooperative, a claims servicing and group purchasing pool comprised of fifteen members. The Ohio School Benefits Cooperative (OSBC) is created and organized pursuant to and as authorized by Section 9.833 of the Ohio Revised Code. OSBC is governed by a nine member Board of Directors, all of whom must be School District and/or educational service center administrators. The Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center serves as the fiscal agent for OSBC. OSBC is an unincorporated, non-profit association of its members and an instrumentality for each member for the purpose of enabling members of the Plan to maximize benefits and/or reduce costs of medical, prescription drug, vision, dental, life, and/or other group insurance coverages for their employees, and the eligible dependents and designated beneficiaries of such employees, and propose to have certain other eligible Educational Service Center or groups of Educational Service Centers join them for the same purposes. Participants pay a \$500 membership fee to OSBC. OSBC offers two options to participants.

Participants may enroll in the joint insurance purchasing program for medical, prescription drug, vision dental, and/or life insurance. A second option is available for self-insured participants that provides for the purchase of stop loss insurance coverage through OSBC's third party administrator. The OSBC's business and affairs are conducted by a nine member Board of Directors consisting of school district superintendents elected by the members of the OSBC. Medical Mutual is the Administrator of the OSBC. On July 1, 2006, the Educational Service Center elected to participate in the joint insurance purchasing program for medical, prescription drug, and dental coverage.

Component Units

Component units are legally separate organizations for which the Educational Service Center is financially accountable. The Educational Service Center is financially accountable for an organization if the Educational Service Center appoints a voting majority of the organization's governing board and (1) the Educational Service Center is able to significantly influence the programs or services performed or provided by the organization; or (2) the Educational Service Center is legally obligated or has otherwise assumed the responsibility to finance the deficits of, or provide financial support to, the organization; or the Educational Service Center is obligated for the debt of the organization. Component units may also include organizations that are fiscally dependent on the Educational Service Center in that the Educational Service Center approves the budget, the issuance of debt, or the levying of taxes. No separate governmental units meet the criteria for inclusion as a component unit.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

Basis of Presentation

The Educational Service Center'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 Educational Service Center as a whole. These statements include the financial activities of the primary government. These statements usually distinguish between those activities of the Educational

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

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Service Center that are governmental (primarily supported by intergovernmental receipts) and those that are considered business-type activities (primarily supported by fees and charges). The Educational Service Center, however, has no business-type activities.

The statement of net position presents the cash balance of the governmental activities of the Educational Service Center at fiscal year-end. The statement of activities presents a comparison between disbursements and program receipts for each program or function of the Educational Service Center's governmental activities. Disbursements are reported by function. A function is a group of related activities designed to accomplish a major service or regulatory program for which the government is responsible. 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 all receipts not classified as program receipts, with certain limited exceptions. The comparison of direct disbursements with program receipts identifies the extent to which each governmental function is self-financing on a cash basis or draws from the general receipts of the Educational Service Center.

Fund Financial Statements During the fiscal year, the Educational Service Center segregates transactions related to certain Educational Service Center functions or activities in separate funds in order to aid financial management and to demonstrate legal compliance. Fund financial statements are designed to present financial information of the Educational Service Center at this more detailed level. The focus of governmental fund financial statements is on major funds. The Educational Service Center's major fund is presented in a separate column. Nonmajor funds are aggregated and presented in a single column.

Fund Accounting

The Educational Service Center uses funds to maintain its financial records during the fiscal year. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid management by segregating transactions related to certain functions or activities. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. All funds used by the Educational Service Center are classified as governmental.

Governmental Funds Governmental funds are those through which most governmental functions typically are financed. Governmental fund reporting focuses on the sources, uses, and balances of current financial resources. The following is a description of the Educational Service Center's major governmental fund:

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

The other governmental funds of the Educational Service Center account for grants and other resources whose use is restricted to a particular purpose.

Basis of Accounting

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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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

Budgetary Data

No budgetary information is presented because the Board did not approve estimated revenues or adopt appropriations. Under Ohio law, Educational Service Centers are no longer required to prepare a budget.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

To improve cash management, all cash received by the Educational Service Center is pooled. Monies for all funds are maintained in these accounts or temporarily used to purchase short term investments. Individual fund integrity is maintained through Educational Service Center records. Interest in the pool is presented as “equity in pooled cash and cash equivalents” on the financial statements.

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

Following Ohio statutes, the Board of Education 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 \$205,285, which includes \$7,142 assigned from other Educational Service Center funds.

Inventory and Prepaid Items

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

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.

Interfund Receivables/Payables

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

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 Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting.

Pensions/Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

For purposes of measuring the net pension/OPEB liability (asset), deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions/OPEB, and pension/OPEB expense, information about the fiduciary net position of the pension/OPEB plans and additions to/deductions from their fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by the pension/OPEB plan. For this purpose, benefit

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

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payments (including refunds of employee contributions) are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. The pension/OPEB plans report investments at fair value.

Leases

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

Long-Term Obligations

The Educational Service Center's cash basis financial statements do not report liabilities for bonds, leases and other long-term obligations. Proceeds of debt are reported when cash is received and principal and interest payments are reported when paid. Since recording a leased asset when entering into a lease is not the result of a cash transaction, neither an other financing source nor a capital outlay expenditure is reported at inception. Lease payments are reported when paid.

Net Position

Net position is reported as restricted when there are limitations imposed on their use either through the enabling legislation adopted by the Educational Service Center or through external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, or laws or regulations of other governments. Net position restricted for other purposes include State and federal grants restricted to expenditures for specified purposes. The Educational Service Center applies restricted resources first when a disbursement is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position are available.

Fund Balance

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

Nonspendable: The nonspendable fund balance category includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are not in spendable form, or are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact. The "not in spendable form" includes items that are not expected to be converted to cash. It also includes the long-term amount of loans and notes receivable, prepaids, 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. Currently the Educational Service Center does not have any nonspendable fund balances.

Restricted: The restricted fund balance category includes amounts that can be spent only for the specific purposes stipulated by State constitution or external resource providers. 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 or enabling legislation (Educational Service Center resolutions).

Enabling legislation authorizes the Educational Service Center to access, levy, charge, or otherwise mandates payment of resources (from external resources providers) and includes a legally enforceable requirement that those resources be used only for the specific purposes stipulated in the legislation. Legal enforceability means that the Educational Service Center can be compelled by an external party such as citizens, public interest groups, or the judiciary to use resources created by enabling legislation

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

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only for the purposes specified by the legislation.

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

Assigned: Amounts in the assigned fund balance classification are intended to be used by the Educational Service Center for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. In governmental funds other than the General Fund, assigned fund balance represents the remaining amount that is not restricted or committed. These amounts are assigned by the Educational Service Center's Board of Education. In the General Fund, assigned amounts represent intended uses established by policies of the Educational Service Center's Board of Education or an Educational Service Center official delegated that authority by resolution or by State Statute. State statute authorizes the Educational Service Center's Treasurer to assign fund balance for purchases on order provided such amounts have been lawfully appropriated.

Unassigned: Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the General Fund and includes all spendable amounts not contained in the other classifications. In other governmental funds, the unassigned classification is used only to report deficit balances.

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

Internal Transactions

Transfers within governmental activities are eliminated. Internal allocations of overhead disbursements from one program to another or within the same program are eliminated on the Statement of Activities. Payments of interfund services provided and used are not eliminated.

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.

Special Items

Extraordinary items are transactions or events that are both unusual in nature and infrequent in occurrence. Special items are transactions or events that are within the control of management and are either unusual in nature or infrequent in occurrence. During fiscal year 2024, the Educational Service Center did not have activity that met the definition of a special item.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

NOTE 3 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS

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

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

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

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

Protection of the Educational Service Center's deposits is provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) 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 held by the Educational Service Center may be deposited or invested in the following securities:

1. United States Treasury bills, bonds, notes, or any other obligation or security issued by the United States Treasury, or any other obligation guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States;
2. Bonds, notes, debentures, or any other obligations or securities issued by any federal government agency or instrumentality including, but not limited to, the Federal National Mortgage Association, Federal Home Loan Bank, Federal Farm Credit Bank, Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, and Government National Mortgage Association. All federal agency securities shall be direct issuances of federal government agencies or instrumentalities;
3. Written repurchase agreements in the securities listed above provided the market value of the securities subject to the repurchase agreement must exceed the principal value of the agreement by at least two percent and be marked to market daily, and 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. Time certificates of deposit or savings or deposit accounts including, but not limited to, passbook accounts;
6. No-load money market mutual funds consisting exclusively of obligations described in (1) or (2) and repurchase agreements secured by such obligations, provided that investments in securities described in this division are made only through eligible institutions;
7. The State Treasurer's investment pool (STAR Ohio);

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

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8. Certain bankers' acceptances (for a period not to exceed one hundred eighty days) and commercial paper notes (for a period not to exceed two hundred seventy days) in an amount not to exceed 40 percent of the interim monies available for investment at any one time if training requirements have been met.

Investments in stripped principal or interest obligations, reverse repurchase agreements and derivatives are prohibited. The issuance of taxable notes for the purpose of arbitrage, the use of leverage and short selling are also prohibited. Investments may only be made through specified dealers and institutions.

Deposits

Custodial Credit Risk – Custodial credit risk for deposits is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the Educational Service Center may not be able to recover deposits that are in the possession of an outside party. Of the Educational Service Center's bank balance, \$500,863 of the Educational Service Center's bank balance of \$4,093,702 was exposed to custodial credit risk. Although the securities were held by the pledging financial institutions' trust department in the Service Center's name and all statutory requirements for the investment of money had been followed, noncompliance with Federal requirements could potentially subject the Service Center to a successful claim by the FDIC.

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

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

S&P Global Rating	Investment	Measurement	Investment Maturity in Months		% Total
			0 - 12	Amount	
Net Asset Value (NAV):					
AAAm	Star Ohio		\$ 2,279,314	\$ 2,279,314	100.0%

NOTE 4 - STATE FUNDING

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

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For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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

The Educational Service Center also receives funding from the State Department of Education in the amount of \$26 times the average daily membership of the Educational Service Center. Average daily membership includes the total student counts of all local school districts within the Educational Service Center's territory and all of the Educational Service Center's client school districts. This amount is paid from State resources. The State Department of Education also deducts from the State Foundation Program settlement of each of the Educational Service Center's local and client school districts an amount equal to \$6.50 times the school district's total student count and remits this amount to the Educational Service Center.

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

NOTE 5 - RISK MANAGEMENT

The Educational Service Center is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft or damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disasters. During fiscal year 2024, the Educational Service Center participated with other school districts in the Ohio School Plan (OSP), a public entity insurance purchasing pool. Each individual school district enters into an agreement with the OSP and its premium is based on types of coverage, limits of coverage, and deductibles that it selects.

Settled claims have not exceeded coverage in any of the past three years. There have been no significant reductions in insurance coverage from last year.

NOTE 6 - 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 Educational Service Center's proportionate share of each pension/OPEB plan's collective actuarial present value of projected benefit payments attributable to past periods of service, net of each pension plan's fiduciary net position. The net pension/OPEB liability (asset) calculation is dependent on critical long-term variables, including estimated average life expectancies, earnings on investments, cost of living adjustments and others. While these estimates use the best information available, unknowable future events require adjusting this estimate annually.

The Ohio Revised Code limits the Educational Service Center's obligation for this liability to annually required payments. The Educational Service Center's cannot control benefit terms or the manner in which

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

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pensions/OPEB are financed; however, the Educational Service Center's does receive the benefit of employees' services in exchange for compensation including pension and OPEB.

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

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

The remainder of this note includes the required pension disclosures. See Note 7 for the required OPEB disclosures.

Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)

Plan Description – Educational Service Center 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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

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recipients for the years 2018, 2019, and 2020. The Retirement Board approved a 2.5 percent COLA for calendar year 2023.

Funding Policy – Plan members are required to contribute 10 percent of their annual covered salary and the Educational Service Center is required to contribute 14 percent of annual covered payroll. The contribution requirements of plan members and employers are established and may be amended by the SERS’ Retirement Board up to statutory maximum amounts of 10 percent for plan members and 14 percent for employers. The Retirement Board, acting with the advice of the actuary, allocates the employer contribution rate among four of the System’s funds (Pension Trust Fund, Death Benefit Fund, Medicare B Fund, and Health Care Fund). For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, the allocation to pension, death benefits, and Medicare B was 14.0 percent. For fiscal year 2024, the Retirement Board did not allocate any employer contribution to the Health Care Fund.

The Educational Service Center’s contractually required contribution to SERS was \$539,731 for fiscal year 2024.

Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)

Plan Description – Educational Service Center licensed teachers and other faculty members participate in STRS Ohio, a cost-sharing multiple employer public employee system administered by STRS. STRS provides retirement and disability benefits to members and death and survivor benefits to beneficiaries. STRS issues a stand-alone financial report that includes financial statements, required supplementary information, and detailed information about STRS’ fiduciary net position. That report can be obtained by writing to STRS, 275 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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

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of the account may be taken as a lump sum payment or converted to a lifetime monthly annuity at age 50 and after termination of employment.

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

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

Funding Policy – Employer and member contribution rates are established by the State Teachers Retirement Board and limited by Chapter 3307 of the Ohio Revised Code. The 2024 employer and employee contribution rate of 14 percent was equal to the statutory maximum rates. For 2024, the full employer contribution was allocated to pension.

The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to STRS was \$889,507 for fiscal year 2024.

Net Pension Liability

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

	SERS	STRS	Total
Proportion of the Net Pension Liability:			
Current Measurement Date	0.0933837%	0.04623908%	
Prior Measurement Date	0.0973411%	0.04523770%	
Change in Proportionate Share	<u><u>-0.0039574%</u></u>	<u><u>0.00100138%</u></u>	
Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 5,159,930	\$ 9,957,556	\$ 15,117,486

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.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

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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:

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 total pension liability for 2023 was calculated using the discount rate of 7.00 percent. The discount rate did not use a municipal bond rate. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed employers would contribute the actuarially determined contribution rate of projected compensation over the remaining 21-year amortization period of the unfunded actuarial accrued liability. The actuarially determined contribution rate of fiscal year 2023 was 14.00 percent. Projected inflows from investment earnings were calculated using the long term assumed investment rate of return, 7.00 percent. Based on those assumptions, the plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefits to determine the total pension liability. The annual money weighted rate of return, calculated as the internal rate of return on pension plan investments, for fiscal year 2023 was 6.90 percent.

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

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 7,615,794	\$ 5,159,930	\$ 3,091,333

Actuarial Assumptions - STRS

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

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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

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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	<u>100.00 %</u>	

*Final target weights reflected at October 1, 2022.

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

Discount Rate. The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.00 percent as of June 30, 2023. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumes that member and employer contributions will be made at the statutory contribution rates in accordance with rate increases described above. For this purpose, only employer contributions that are intended to fund benefits of current plan members and their beneficiaries are included. Based on those assumptions, STRS' fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments to current plan members as of June 30, 2023. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments of 7.00 percent was applied to all periods of projected benefit payment to determine the total pension liability as of June 30, 2023.

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

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 15,312,519	\$ 9,957,556	\$ 5,428,725

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 7 - 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 6 for a description of the net OPEB liability (asset).

Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)

Health Care Plan Description - The Educational Service Center contributes to the SERS Health Care Fund, administered by SERS for non-certificated retirees and their beneficiaries. For GASB 75 purposes, this plan is considered a cost-sharing other postemployment benefit (OPEB) plan. SERS' Health Care Plan provides healthcare benefits to eligible individuals receiving retirement, disability, and survivor benefits, and to their eligible dependents. Members who retire after June 1, 1986, need 10 years of service credit, exclusive of most types of purchased credit, to qualify to participate in SERS' health care coverage. The following types of credit purchased after January 29, 1981 do not count toward health care coverage eligibility: military, federal, out-of-state, municipal, private school, exempted, and early retirement incentive credit. In addition to age and service retirees, disability benefit recipients and beneficiaries who are receiving monthly benefits due to the death of a member or retiree, are eligible for SERS' health care coverage. Most retirees and dependents choosing SERS' health care coverage are over the age of 65 and therefore enrolled in a fully insured Medicare Advantage plan; however, SERS maintains a traditional, self-insured preferred provider organization for its non-Medicare retiree population. For both groups, SERS offers a self-insured prescription drug program. Health care is a benefit that is permitted, not mandated, by statute. The financial report of the Plan is included in the SERS Annual Comprehensive Financial Report which can be obtained on SERS' website at www.ohsers.org under Employers/Audit Resources.

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 was earned. For fiscal year 2024, this amount was \$30,000. Statutes provide that no employer shall pay a health care surcharge greater than 2.00 percent of that employer's SERS-covered payroll; nor may SERS collect in aggregate more than 1.50 percent of the total statewide SERS-covered payroll for the health care surcharge. For fiscal year 2024, the Educational Service Center's surcharge obligation was \$65,956. The surcharge, added to the allocated portion of the 14 percent employer contribution rate is the total amount assigned to the Health Care Fund. The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to SERS was equal to its surcharge obligation for fiscal year 2024.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)

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

Funding Policy – Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3307 authorizes STRS to offer the Plan and gives the Retirement Board discretionary authority over how much, if any, of the health care costs will be absorbed by STRS. Active employee members do not contribute to the Health Care Plan. Nearly all health care plan enrollees, for the most recent year, pay a portion of the health care costs in the form of a monthly premium. Under Ohio law, funding for post-employment health care may be deducted from employer contributions, currently 14 percent of covered payroll. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, STRS did not allocate any employer contributions to post-employment health care.

Net OPEB Liability (Asset)

The net OPEB liability (asset) was measured as of June 30, 2023, and the total OPEB liability used to calculate the net OPEB liability (asset) was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The Educational Service Center's proportion of the net OPEB liability (asset) was based on the Educational Service Center's share of contributions to the respective retirement systems relative to the contributions of all participating entities. Following is information related to the proportionate share:

	SERS	STRS
Proportion of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset):		
Current Measurement Date	0.0960000%	0.04623908%
Prior Measurement Date	0.0995852%	0.04523770%
Change in Proportionate Share	<u>-0.0035852%</u>	<u>0.00100138%</u>
Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset)	\$ 1,581,548	\$ (899,286)

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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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.

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:

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Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

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 Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate and Changes in the Health Care Cost Trend Rates The net OPEB liability is sensitive to changes in the discount rate and the health care cost trend rate. The following table presents the net OPEB liability and what the net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (3.27 percent) and higher (5.27 percent) than the current discount rate (4.27 percent). Also shown is what the net OPEB liability would be based on health care cost trend rates that are one percentage point lower (5.75 percent decreasing to 3.40 percent) and higher (7.75 percent decreasing to 5.40 percent) than the current rate (6.75 percent decreasing to 4.40 percent).

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 2,021,670	\$ 1,581,548	\$ 1,234,493
	Current		
	1% Decrease	Trend Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 1,161,908	\$ 1,581,548	\$ 2,137,626

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:

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For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

	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.

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

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

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

*Final target weights reflected at October 1, 2022.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

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For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

**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 Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Asset to Changes in the Discount Rate and Health Care Cost Trend Rate The following table represents the net OPEB asset as of June 30, 2023, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00 percent, as well as what the net OPEB asset would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (6.00 percent) or one percentage point higher (8.00 percent) than the current assumption. Also shown is the net OPEB asset as if it were calculated using health care cost trend rates that are one percentage point lower or one percentage point higher than the current health care cost trend rates.

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB (Asset)	\$ (761,128)	\$ (899,286)	\$ (1,019,607)
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB (Asset)	Current		
	1% Decrease	Trend Rate	1% Increase
	\$ (1,025,191)	\$ (899,286)	\$ (747,636)

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 8 - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Compensated Absences

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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Teachers, administrators, and classified employees earn sick leave at the rate of one and one-fourth days per month. Sick leave may be accumulated up to 200 days for all personnel. Upon retirement, payment is made for one-fourth of accrued, but unused sick leave credit to a maximum of 50 days.

Insurance Benefits

The Educational Service Center provides health and major medical insurance for all eligible employees through Medical Mutual of Ohio. The Educational Service Center pays employee medical and drug monthly premiums of up to \$1,820.83 for family coverage and \$896.41 for single coverage. Premiums are paid from the same funds that pay the employees' salaries. The Educational Service Center also provides dental and prescription drug insurance to its employees through the same insurance carrier. The Educational Service Center pays employee monthly dental premiums up to \$62.03 for family coverage and up to \$30.13 for single coverage. The Educational Service Center also provides life insurance in the amount of \$50,000 through OneAmerica Company contracted by Grady Enterprises at a cost of \$5.00 per employee per month.

NOTE 9 - CONTINGENCIES

Grants

The Educational Service Center received financial assistance from federal and state agencies in the form of grants. The disbursement of funds received under these programs generally requires 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 Educational Service Center at June 30, 2024.

Litigation

As of June 30, 2024, the Educational Service Center was not a party to any lawsuits.

NOTE 10 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE

Accountability

The following funds had deficit cash balance as of June 30, 2024:

	<u>Deficit</u>
<i>Non-Major Governmental Funds</i>	
IDEA, Part B	1,722
Family Engagement Liaison Grant	48,255
Total	<u>\$ 49,977</u>

The deficit cash balances were due to the timing between grant receipts and disbursements in the grant funds. The general fund is liable for any deficits in these funds and will provide transfers when cash is required.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

Compliance

Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code 117-2-03(B) provides that the Educational Service Center shall prepare its annual financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. However, the Educational Service Center prepares its financial statements in accordance with standards established by the cash basis of accounting. The accompanying financial statements and notes omit assets, liabilities, fund equities and disclosures that, while material, cannot be determined at this time. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38, the Educational Service Center can be fined and various other administrative remedies for its failure to file the required financial report.

NOTE 11 - FUND BALANCES

Fund balance is classified as nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and/or unassigned based primarily on the extent to which the Educational Service Center is bound to observe constraints imposed upon the use of the resources in governmental funds. The constraints placed on fund balance for the major governmental fund and all other governmental funds are presented as follows:

	Other Governmental		
	General	Funds	Total
Restricted for:			
Advisory Services	-	83,278	83,278
State Funded Programs	-	29,403	29,403
Other Purposes	-	343	343
Total Restricted	-	113,024	113,024
Assigned for:			
Instruction	149,503	-	149,503
Support Services	181,665	-	181,665
Public School Support	34,235	-	34,235
Total Assigned	365,403	-	365,403
Unassigned	5,544,908	(49,977)	5,494,931
Total Fund Balance	\$ 5,910,311	\$ 63,047	\$ 5,973,358

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Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Management's Discussion and Analysis

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Unaudited

The discussion and analysis of the Licking County Educational Service Center's financial performance provides an overall review of the Educational Service Center's financial activities for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. The intent of this discussion and analysis is to look at the Educational Service Center's financial performance as a whole; readers should also review the cash financial statements and the notes to the basic financial statements to enhance their understanding of the Educational Service Center's financial performance.

Financial Highlights

Key financial highlights for fiscal year 2023 are as follows:

- Net position of the governmental activities increased \$1,110,780.

Using this Annual Financial Report

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

The Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis and Statement of Activities – Cash Basis provide information about the activities of the whole Educational Service Center, presenting both an aggregate view of the Educational Service Center's finances and a longer-term view of those finances. 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 Educational Service Center's most significant funds with all other non-major funds presented in total in one column.

Basis of Accounting

The basis of accounting is a set of guidelines that determine when financial events are recorded. The Educational Service Center has elected to present its financial statements on a cash basis of accounting. This basis of accounting is a basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. Under the Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting, receipts and disbursements are recorded when cash is received or paid.

As a result of using the modified cash basis of accounting, certain assets and their related revenues (such as accounts receivable) and certain liabilities and their related expenses (such as accounts payable) are not recorded in the financial statements. Therefore, when reviewing the financial information and discussion within this report, the reader must keep in mind that limitations resulting from the use of the cash basis of accounting.

Reporting the Educational Service Center as a Whole

Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis and Statement of Activities – Cash Basis

While this document contains information about the funds used by the Educational Service Center to provide programs and activities for the Educational Service Center, the view of the Educational Service Center as a whole looks at all financial transactions and asks the question, "How did we do financially during fiscal year 2023?" The Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis and the Statement of Activities – Cash Basis answer this question. These statements report the Educational Service Center's net position and changes in that position. This change in net position is important because it tells the reader that, for the Educational Service Center as a whole, the financial

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Management's Discussion and Analysis

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Unaudited

position of the Educational Service Center has improved or diminished. The causes of this change may be the result of many factors, some financial, some not.

In the Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis and the Statement of Activities – Cash Basis, all of the Educational Service Center's activities are reported as governmental including instruction and support services.

Reporting the Educational Service Center's Most Significant Funds

Fund Financial Statements

Fund financial reports provide detailed information about the Educational Service Center's major fund. The Educational Service Center uses many funds to account for a multitude of financial transactions. However, these fund financial statements focus on the Educational Service Center's most significant funds. The Educational Service Center's major governmental fund is the General Fund.

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

The Educational Service Center as a Whole

The Educational Service Center has chosen to report on an Other Comprehensive Basis of Accounting in a format similar to that required by Governmental Accounting Statement No. 34.

Recall that the Statement of Net Position – Cash Basis provides the perspective of the Educational Service Center as a whole. Table 1 provides a summary of the Educational Service Center's net position for 2023 compared to 2022.

Table 1 - Net Position - Cash Basis

	Governmental Activities		
	2023	2022	Change
Assets			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 5,310,988	\$ 4,200,208	\$ 1,110,780
Net Position			
Restricted	109,353	84,458	24,895
Unrestricted	5,201,635	4,115,750	1,085,885
<i>Total Net Position</i>	<i>\$ 5,310,988</i>	<i>\$ 4,200,208</i>	<i>\$ 1,110,780</i>

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

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

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio
Management's Discussion and Analysis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023
Unaudited

Table 2 shows the changes in net position for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, and comparisons to fiscal year ended June 30, 2022.

Table 2 - Changes in Net Position - Cash Basis

	Governmental Activities		
	2023	2022	Change
Receipts			
<i>Program Cash Receipts:</i>			
Charges for Services and Sales	\$ 14,198,418	\$ 13,272,132	\$ 926,286
Operating Grants and Contributions	<u>1,694,806</u>	<u>1,449,838</u>	<u>244,968</u>
<i>Total Program Cash Receipts</i>	<u>15,893,224</u>	<u>14,721,970</u>	<u>1,171,254</u>
<i>General Receipts:</i>			
Grants and Entitlements Not Restricted	944,914	889,725	55,189
Other	<u>188,660</u>	<u>40,242</u>	<u>148,418</u>
<i>Total General Receipts</i>	<u>1,133,574</u>	<u>929,967</u>	<u>203,607</u>
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<u>17,026,798</u>	<u>15,651,937</u>	<u>1,374,861</u>
Program Disbursements			
Instruction:			
Regular	229,350	287,009	(57,659)
Special	<u>7,059,498</u>	<u>6,716,528</u>	<u>342,970</u>
Support Services:			
Pupils	5,255,024	4,807,435	447,589
Instructional Staff	519,226	466,464	52,762
Board of Education	13,518	12,276	1,242
Administration	2,046,194	1,748,087	298,107
Fiscal	198,574	274,152	(75,578)
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	115,703	96,697	19,006
Pupil Transportation	4,882	-	4,882
Central	17,708	22,305	(4,597)
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:			
Community Services	431,494	314,439	117,055
Extracurricular Activities	<u>6,184</u>	<u>5,874</u>	<u>310</u>
Debt Service:			
Principal Retirement	17,213	15,815	1,398
Interest and Fiscal Charges	<u>1,450</u>	<u>2,848</u>	<u>(1,398)</u>
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<u>15,916,018</u>	<u>14,769,929</u>	<u>1,146,089</u>
<i>Increase in Net Position</i>	<u>1,110,780</u>	<u>882,008</u>	<u>228,772</u>
<i>Net Position at Beginning of Year</i>	<u>4,200,208</u>	<u>3,318,200</u>	<u>882,008</u>
<i>Net Position at End of Year</i>	<u><u>\$ 5,310,988</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 4,200,208</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,110,780</u></u>

Fluctuations among individual program revenues and expenses are a result of a change in how certain consulting services are provided to member districts. There was an increase in miscellaneous revenue due to the receipt of grant from the Licking County Foundation for a food/hygiene pantry for the County School Districts.

The Statement of Activities – Cash Basis shows the cost of program services and the charges for services and grants and contributions, offsetting those services.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Management's Discussion and Analysis

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Unaudited

The Educational Service Center's Major Fund

The Educational Service Center's major fund, the General Fund, is accounted for using the cash basis of accounting. The general fund's net change in fund balance for fiscal year 2023 was an increase of \$942,597. This was primarily caused by the amounts received for payment provided for services, offset by expenditures for those services.

Budgeting Highlights

Under Ohio law Educational Service Centers are no longer required to prepare a budget. Therefore, at June 30, 2023 a budgetary statement is not presented within the basic financial statements because the Board did not approve estimated revenues or adopt appropriations.

Economic Factors

During the fiscal year, the Educational Service Center applied for and was awarded a safety grant from DEW in the amount of \$100,000 to install cameras in the Phoenix building. Additionally, the Educational Service Center installed cameras in the preschools building (Flying Colors) out of the general fund in the amount up to \$100,000. The Educational Service Center entered into an agreement to align with Franklin Local Schools to provide related services for fiscal year 2024 as well as other services to deem necessary. This alignment will bring over \$79,878 to the Educational Service Center to offset the cost of such services.

Contacting the Educational Service Center's Financial Management

This financial report is designed to provide our citizens, districts, investors and creditors with a general overview of the Educational Service Center's finances and to show the Educational Service Center's accountability for the money it receives. If you have any questions about this report or need additional financial information please contact Julio Valladares, Treasurer at the Licking County Educational Service Center, 145 Quentin Road, Newark, Ohio 43055. You may also E-mail the treasurer at jcvalladares@lcesc.org.

Licking County Educational Service Center

Statement of Net Position - Cash Basis

June 30, 2023

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>
Assets	
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>\$ 5,310,988</u>
 Net Position	
Restricted For:	
Advisory Services	72,914
Other Purposes	36,439
Unrestricted	<u>5,201,635</u>
<i>Total Net Position</i>	<u>\$ 5,310,988</u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Licking County Educational Service Center

Statement of Activities - Cash Basis
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

	Cash Disbursements	Program Cash Receipts		Net (Disbursements) Receipts and Changes in Net Position			
		Charges for Services and Sales	Operating Grants, and Contributions	Governmental Activities			
Governmental Activities							
Instruction:							
Regular	\$ 229,350	\$ 144,524	\$ 52,202	\$ (32,624)			
Special	7,059,498	6,658,504	304,370	(96,624)			
Support Services:							
Pupils	5,255,024	4,674,324	586,433	5,733			
Instructional Staff	519,226	25,088	634,774	140,636			
Board of Education	13,518	13,423	-	(95)			
Administration	2,046,194	1,923,685	107,102	(15,407)			
Fiscal	198,574	197,178	-	(1,396)			
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	115,703	112,407	3,231	(65)			
Pupil Transportation	4,882	-	4,894	12			
Central	17,708	14,683	1,800	(1,225)			
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:							
Community Services	431,494	428,461	-	(3,033)			
Extracurricular Activities	6,184	6,141	-	(43)			
Debt Service:							
Principal Retirement	17,213	-	-	(17,213)			
Interest and Fiscal Charges	1,450	-	-	(1,450)			
<i>Total</i>	<u>\$ 15,916,018</u>	<u>\$ 14,198,418</u>	<u>\$ 1,694,806</u>		<u>(22,794)</u>		

General Receipts

Grants and Entitlements Not Restricted to Specific Programs	944,914
Investment Earnings	102,575
Miscellaneous	86,085
<i>Total General Receipts</i>	<u>1,133,574</u>

<i>Change in Net Position</i>	1,110,780
<i>Net Position Beginning of Year</i>	4,200,208
<i>Net Position End of Year</i>	<u>\$ 5,310,988</u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Licking County Educational Service Center

Balance Sheet - Cash Basis

Governmental Funds

June 30, 2023

	General	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Assets			
Equity in Pooled Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>\$ 5,280,948</u>	<u>\$ 30,040</u>	<u>\$ 5,310,988</u>
Fund Balances			
Restricted	-	109,353	109,353
Committed	151,910	-	151,910
Assigned	146,678	-	146,678
Unassigned	4,982,360	(79,313)	4,903,047
<i>Total Fund Balances</i>	<u><i>\$ 5,280,948</i></u>	<u><i>\$ 30,040</i></u>	<u><i>\$ 5,310,988</i></u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Licking County Educational Service Center
Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Changes in Fund Balances - Cash Basis
Governmental Funds
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

	General	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Receipts			
Intergovernmental	\$ 932,272	\$ 1,694,806	\$ 2,627,078
Investment Income	102,575	-	102,575
Tuition and Fees	165,472	-	165,472
Charges for Services	14,019,105	13,840	14,032,945
Contributions and Donations	12,642	-	12,642
Miscellaneous	31,962	54,124	86,086
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<i>15,264,028</i>	<i>1,762,770</i>	<i>17,026,798</i>
Disbursements			
Current:			
Instruction:			
Regular	131,988	97,362	229,350
Special	6,722,646	336,852	7,059,498
Support Services:			
Pupils	4,708,183	546,841	5,255,024
Instructional Staff	25,266	493,960	519,226
Board of Education	13,518	-	13,518
Administration	1,937,304	108,890	2,046,194
Fiscal	198,574	-	198,574
Operation and Maintenance of Plant	113,203	2,500	115,703
Pupil Transportation	-	4,882	4,882
Central	14,408	3,300	17,708
Extracurricular Activities	6,184	-	6,184
Operation of Non-Instructional Services:			
Community Services	431,494	-	431,494
Debt Service:			
Principal Retirement	17,213	-	17,213
Interest and Fiscal Charges	1,450	-	1,450
<i>Total Disbursements</i>	<i>14,321,431</i>	<i>1,594,587</i>	<i>15,916,018</i>
<i>Net Change in Fund Balance</i>	<i>942,597</i>	<i>168,183</i>	<i>1,110,780</i>
<i>Fund Balance (Deficit) Beginning of Year</i>	<i>4,338,351</i>	<i>(138,143)</i>	<i>4,200,208</i>
<i>Fund Balance End of Year</i>	<i>\$ 5,280,948</i>	<i>\$ 30,040</i>	<i>\$ 5,310,988</i>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

NOTE 1 – REPORTING ENTITY

The Licking County Educational Service Center (the Educational Service Center) is located in Newark, Ohio, the county seat. The Educational Service Center supplies supervisory, special education, administrative, cooperative classes, multi-handicapped preschool, and other services to Johnstown-Monroe, Lakewood, Licking Valley, North Fork, Southwest Licking, Tri-Valley Local, Granville Exempted Village, Newark, and the Heath City School Districts. The Educational Service Center also provides limited services to the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County; the Logan-Hocking, Canal Winchester and West Muskingum, Northern School Districts, and the Groveport Madison, Worthington, Westerville, Gahanna-Jefferson, Reynoldsburg, Lancaster, and Southwestern City School Districts. The Educational Service Center furnishes leadership and consulting services designed to strengthen the school districts in areas they are unable to finance or staff independently.

The Licking County Educational Service Center operates under a locally-elected Board form of government consisting of five members elected at-large for staggered four year terms.

The reporting entity is composed of the primary government, component units, and other organizations that are included to insure that the financial statements of the Educational Service Center are not misleading.

Primary Government

The primary government consists of all funds, departments, boards, and agencies that are not legally separate from the Educational Service Center. For the Licking County Educational Service Center, this includes general operations and student related activities.

The Educational Service Center participates in the following, which are defined as jointly governed organizations.

Licking Area Computer Association

The Educational Service Center is a participant in the Licking Area Computer Association (LACA), a regional council of governments computer consortium. LACA is an association which services twenty-six school districts, educational service centers, and community schools within the boundaries of Licking, Muskingum, Fairfield, Perry, and Knox counties. The organization was formed for the purpose of applying modern technology with the aid of computers and other electronic equipment to administrative and instructional functions among member school districts. The governing board of LACA consists of the superintendents from all participating school districts. The continued existence of LACA is not dependent on the Educational Service Center's continued participation and no equity interest exists.

The LACA constitution states that any school or educational service center withdrawing from the Association prior to dissolution forfeits their claim to the Association's capital assets. The Board exercises total control over the operations of LACA including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. Financial statements for LACA can be obtained from the Licking Area Computer Association, 145 South Quentin Road, Newark, OH 43055.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County

The Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County is a distinct political subdivision of the State of Ohio operated under the direction of a Board consisting of three board members from the Licking County Educational Service Center, two from the Newark City School District, one from the Heath City School District, and one from the Granville Exempted Village School District, which possesses its own budgeting and taxing authority. The Board exercises total control over the operations of the Career and Technology Education Center including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. To obtain financial information write to the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County, Benjamin Streby, who serves as Treasurer, at 150 Price Road, Newark, Ohio 43055.

META Solutions

The School District participates in the META Solutions (META), which is a jointly governed organization, created as a regional council of governments pursuant to Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code. META operates as, and has all the powers of, a data acquisition site/information technology center pursuant to applicable provisions of the Ohio Revised Code. The organization was formed for the purpose of identifying, developing, and providing to members and nonmembers innovative educational and technological services and products, as well as expanded opportunities for cooperative purchasing. The General Assembly of META consists of one delegate from every member school district. The delegate is the superintendent of the school district or the superintendent's designee. The degree of control exercised by any participating school district is limited to its representation on the General Assembly. The General Assembly exercises total control over the operation of META including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. Financial information can be obtained from the Metropolitan Educational Technology Association at 2100 Citygate Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43219.

Licking County Children and Families First Council

The Licking County Children and Families First Council (Council) is a jointly governed organization created under Ohio Revised Code Section 121.37. The Council is made up of the following members: Director of the Licking Knox County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board, Director of the Licking County Alcoholism Prevention Program, Health Commissioner of the Licking County Health Department, Health Commissioner of the City of Newark, Director of Licking County Human Services, Director of Family and Health Services, Director of Moundbuilders Guidance Center, Director of Family Counseling Services, Director of Licking County Coalition for Housing, Superintendent of the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Licking County Juvenile Court Judge, Superintendent of the Licking County Educational Services Center, the Superintendent of Newark City Schools, a representative of the City of Newark, a representative of the Licking Economic Action Development Study, a representative of the Licking County United Way, a representative from Family and Consumer Services, a representative of the County's Early Intervention Network, a representative of the Licking County Commissioners Office, the East District Family and Children First Coordinator and at least three individuals representing the interests of families of the County. When possible, the number of members representing families shall be equal to twenty percent of the Council's remaining membership. The governing board exercises total control over the operations of the Council including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Ohio Coalition of Equity and Adequacy of School Funding

The Ohio Coalition of Equity and Adequacy of School Funding is organized as a council of governments pursuant to Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Coalition was organized to challenge the constitutionality of the Ohio school funding system. The purpose of the Coalition is to bring about greater equity and adequacy of public school funding in Ohio. The Coalition is governed by a Steering Committee of 90 school district representatives. Though most of the members are superintendents, some treasurers, board members, and administrators also serve. Several persons serve as ex officio members. The Committee exercised total control over the operations of the Coalition including budgeting, appropriating, contracting, and designating management. Each participant's control is limited to its representation on the board. The membership of the coalition includes over 500 school districts throughout the State of Ohio. Member school districts, joint vocational schools, and educational service centers pay annual dues and supplemental dues based on their pupil enrollment. The Coalition is not dependent on the continued participation of the Educational Service Center and the Educational Service Center does not maintain an equity interest or financial responsibility for the Coalition. The fiscal agent for the Coalition is the Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center. Financial information may be obtained from the Ohio Coalition of Equity and Adequacy of School Funding at 100 South Third Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

Insurance Pools

Ohio School Comp Workers' Compensation Group Retrospective Rating Program

The Educational Service Center participates in the Ohio School Comp Workers' Compensation Group Retrospective Rating Program (Program), an insurance purchasing pool. The Program is intended to achieve lower workers' compensation rates while establishing safer working conditions and environments for participants. The participating school districts continue to pay their own premiums and have the opportunity to receive retrospective premium adjustments based upon the combined performance of the group. Depending upon that performance, the participating school districts can either receive a premium refund or assessment. Employers will pay experience or based rated premiums under the same terms as if they were not in a group. The total premium for the entire group is the standard premium of the group. The standard premium serves as the benchmark that is adjusted up and down retroactively. In order to allocate the savings derived by formation of the Program, the Program's executive committee annually calculates the group-retrospective premium based on developed incurred claim losses for the whole group. The new premium is compared to the standard premium. If the retrospective premium is lower than the standard premium, a refund will be distributed to the employers of the group. If the retrospective premium is higher, an assessment will be charged to each participant.

Participation in the Program is limited to school districts that can meet the Program's selection criteria. The firm of Sedgewick serves as the third party administrator of the Program and provides administrative, cost control, and actuarial services. Each year, the Educational Service Center pays an enrollment fee to the Program to cover the cost of administering the Program.

The Education Service Center may withdraw from the Program if written notice is provided sixty days prior to the prescribed application deadline of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation. However, the participant is not relieved of the obligation to pay any amounts owed to the Program prior to withdrawal.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Ohio School Plan

The Educational Service Center participates in the Ohio School Plan (OSP), an insurance purchasing pool. The Ohio School Plan (OSP) is created and organized pursuant to and as authorized by Section 2744.081 of the Ohio Revised Code. The OSP is an unincorporated, non-profit association of its members and an instrumentality for each member for the purpose of enabling members of the Plan to provide for a formalized, joint insurance purchasing program to maintain adequate insurance protection, risk management programs, and other administrative services. The OSP's business and affairs are conducted by an eleven member Board of directors consisting of School District superintendents and treasurers. Hylant Administrative Services, LLC is the Administrator of the OSP and is responsible for providing underwriting, claims management, risk management, accounting, system support services, sales, and marketing.

Ohio School Benefits Cooperative

The Educational Service Center participates in the Ohio School Benefits Cooperative, a claims servicing and group purchasing pool comprised of fifteen members. The Ohio School Benefits Cooperative (OSBC) is created and organized pursuant to and as authorized by Section 9.833 of the Ohio Revised Code. OSBC is governed by a nine member Board of Directors, all of whom must be School District and/or educational service center administrators. The Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center serves as the fiscal agent for OSBC. OSBC is an unincorporated, non-profit association of its members and an instrumentality for each member for the purpose of enabling members of the Plan to maximize benefits and/or reduce costs of medical, prescription drug, vision, dental, life, and/or other group insurance coverages for their employees, and the eligible dependents and designated beneficiaries of such employees, and propose to have certain other eligible Educational Service Center or groups of Educational Service Centers join them for the same purposes. Participants pay a \$500 membership fee to OSBC. OSBC offers two options to participants.

Participants may enroll in the joint insurance purchasing program for medical, prescription drug, vision dental, and/or life insurance. A second option is available for self-insured participants that provides for the purchase of stop loss insurance coverage through OSBC's third party administrator. The OSBC's business and affairs are conducted by a nine member Board of Directors consisting of school district superintendents elected by the members of the OSBC. Medical Mutual is the Administrator of the OSBC. On July 1, 2006, the Educational Service Center elected to participate in the joint insurance purchasing program for medical, prescription drug, and dental coverage.

Component Units

Component units are legally separate organizations for which the Educational Service Center is financially accountable. The Educational Service Center is financially accountable for an organization if the Educational Service Center appoints a voting majority of the organization's governing board and (1) the Educational Service Center is able to significantly influence the programs or services performed or provided by the organization; or (2) the Educational Service Center is legally obligated or has otherwise assumed the responsibility to finance the deficits of, or provide financial support to, the organization; or the Educational Service Center is obligated for the debt of the organization. Component units may also include organizations that are fiscally dependent on the Educational Service Center in that the Educational Service Center approves the budget, the issuance of debt, or the levying of taxes. No separate governmental units meet the criteria for inclusion as a component unit.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

Basis of Presentation

The Educational Service Center'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 Educational Service Center as a whole. These statements include the financial activities of the primary government. These statements usually distinguish between those activities of the Educational Service Center that are governmental (primarily supported by intergovernmental receipts) and those that are considered business-type activities (primarily supported by fees and charges). The Educational Service Center, however, has no business-type activities.

The statement of net position presents the cash balance of the governmental activities of the Educational Service Center at fiscal year-end. The statement of activities presents a comparison between disbursements and program receipts for each program or function of the Educational Service Center's governmental activities. Disbursements are reported by function. A function is a group of related activities designed to accomplish a major service or regulatory program for which the government is responsible. 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 all receipts not classified as program receipts, with certain limited exceptions. The comparison of direct disbursements with program receipts identifies the extent to which each governmental function is self-financing on a cash basis or draws from the general receipts of the Educational Service Center.

Fund Financial Statements During the fiscal year, the Educational Service Center segregates transactions related to certain Educational Service Center functions or activities in separate funds in order to aid financial management and to demonstrate legal compliance. Fund financial statements are designed to present financial information of the Educational Service Center at this more detailed level. The focus of governmental fund financial statements is on major funds. The Educational Service Center's major fund is presented in a separate column. Nonmajor funds are aggregated and presented in a single column.

Fund Accounting

The Educational Service Center uses funds to maintain its financial records during the fiscal year. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid management by segregating transactions related to certain functions or activities. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. All funds used by the Educational Service Center are classified as governmental.

Governmental Funds Governmental funds are those through which most governmental functions typically are financed. Governmental fund reporting focuses on the sources, uses, and balances of current financial resources. The following is a description of the Educational Service Center's major governmental fund:

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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

The other governmental funds of the Educational Service Center account for grants and other resources whose use is restricted to a particular purpose.

Basis of Accounting

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

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

Budgetary Data

No budgetary information is presented because the Board did not approve estimated revenues or adopt appropriations. Under Ohio law, Educational Service Centers are no longer required to prepare a budget.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

To improve cash management, all cash received by the Educational Service Center is pooled. Monies for all funds are maintained in these accounts or temporarily used to purchase short term investments. Individual fund integrity is maintained through Educational Service Center records. Interest in the pool is presented as "equity in pooled cash and cash equivalents" on the financial statements.

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

Following Ohio statutes, the Board of Education has, by resolution, specified the funds to receive an allocation of interest earnings. Interest receipts credited to the General Fund during fiscal year 2023 amounted to \$102,575, which includes \$3,451 assigned from other Educational Service Center funds.

Inventory and Prepaid Items

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

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.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Interfund Receivables/Payables

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

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 Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting.

Pensions/Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

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

Leases

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

Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITDA)

For fiscal year 2023, GASB Statement No. 96, *Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITDA)* was effective. This GASB pronouncement had no effect on beginning net position/fund balance.

The Educational Service Center is party to various SBITDAs; however, liabilities are not reflected under the Educational Service Center's cash basis of accounting. SBITDA disbursements are recognized when they are paid.

Long-Term Obligations

The Educational Service Center's cash basis financial statements do not report liabilities for bonds, leases and other long-term obligations. Proceeds of debt are reported when cash is received and principal and interest payments are reported when paid. Since recording a leased asset when entering into a lease is not the result of a cash transaction, neither an other financing source nor a capital outlay expenditure is reported at inception. Lease payments are reported when paid.

Net Position

Net position is reported as restricted when there are limitations imposed on their use either through the enabling legislation adopted by the Educational Service Center or through external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, or laws or regulations of other governments. Net position restricted for other purposes include State and federal grants restricted to expenditures for specified purposes. The Educational Service Center applies restricted resources first when a disbursement is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position are available.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Fund Balance

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

Nonspendable: The nonspendable fund balance category includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are not in spendable form, or are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact. The "not in spendable form" includes items that are not expected to be converted to cash. It also includes the long-term amount of loans and notes receivable, prepaids, 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. Currently the Educational Service Center does not have any nonspendable fund balances.

Restricted: The restricted fund balance category includes amounts that can be spent only for the specific purposes stipulated by State constitution or external resource providers. 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 or enabling legislation (Educational Service Center resolutions).

Enabling legislation authorizes the Educational Service Center to access, levy, charge, or otherwise mandates payment of resources (from external resources providers) and includes a legally enforceable requirement that those resources be used only for the specific purposes stipulated in the legislation. Legal enforceability means that the Educational Service Center can be compelled by an external party such as citizens, public interest groups, or the judiciary to use resources created by enabling legislation only for the purposes specified by the legislation.

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

Assigned: Amounts in the assigned fund balance classification are intended to be used by the Educational Service Center for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. In governmental funds other than the General Fund, assigned fund balance represents the remaining amount that is not restricted or committed. These amounts are assigned by the Educational Service Center's Board of Education. In the General Fund, assigned amounts represent intended uses established by policies of the Educational Service Center's Board of Education or an Educational Service Center official delegated that authority by resolution or by State Statute. State statute authorizes the Educational Service Center's Treasurer to assign fund balance for purchases on order provided such amounts have been lawfully appropriated.

Unassigned: Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the General Fund and includes all spendable amounts not contained in the other classifications. In other governmental funds, the unassigned classification is used only to report deficit balances.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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

Internal Transactions

Transfers within governmental activities are eliminated. Internal allocations of overhead disbursements from one program to another or within the same program are eliminated on the Statement of Activities. Payments of interfund services provided and used are not eliminated.

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.

Special Items

Extraordinary items are transactions or events that are both unusual in nature and infrequent in occurrence. Special items are transactions or events that are within the control of management and either unusual in nature or infrequent in occurrence. During fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center did not have activity that met the definition of a special item.

NOTE 3 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS

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

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

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

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

Protection of the Educational Service Center's deposits is provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) 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.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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

1. United States Treasury bills, bonds, notes, or any other obligation or security issued by the United States Treasury, or any other obligation guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States;
2. Bonds, notes, debentures, or any other obligations or securities issued by any federal government agency or instrumentality including, but not limited to, the Federal National Mortgage Association, Federal Home Loan Bank, Federal Farm Credit Bank, Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, and Government National Mortgage Association. All federal agency securities shall be direct issuances of federal government agencies or instrumentalities;
3. Written repurchase agreements in the securities listed above provided the market value of the securities subject to the repurchase agreement must exceed the principal value of the agreement by at least two percent and be marked to market daily, and 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. Time certificates of deposit or savings or deposit accounts including, but not limited to, passbook accounts;
6. No-load money market mutual funds consisting exclusively of obligations described in (1) or (2) and repurchase agreements secured by such obligations, provided that investments in securities described in this division are made only through eligible institutions;
7. The State Treasurer's investment pool (STAR Ohio);
8. Certain bankers' acceptances (for a period not to exceed one hundred eighty days) and commercial paper notes (for a period not to exceed two hundred seventy days) in an amount not to exceed 40 percent of the interim monies available for investment at any one time if training requirements have been met.

Investments in stripped principal or interest obligations, reverse repurchase agreements and derivatives are prohibited. The issuance of taxable notes for the purpose of arbitrage, the use of leverage and short selling are also prohibited. Investments may only be made through specified dealers and institutions.

Deposits - At year-end, \$5,188,040 of the Educational Service Center's bank balance of \$5,688,901 was exposed to custodial credit risk. Although the securities were held by the pledging financial institutions' trust department in the Service Center's name and all statutory requirements for the investment of money had been followed, noncompliance with Federal requirements could potentially subject the Service Center to a successful claim by the FDIC.

Investments

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

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

NOTE 4 - STATE FUNDING

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

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

The Educational Service Center also receives funding from the State Department of Education in the amount of \$26 times the average daily membership of the Educational Service Center. Average daily membership includes the total student counts of all local school districts within the Educational Service Center's territory and all of the Educational Service Center's client school districts. This amount is paid from State resources. The State Department of Education also deducts from the State Foundation Program settlement of each of the Educational Service Center's local and client school districts an amount equal to \$6.50 times the school district's total student count and remits this amount to the Educational Service Center.

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

NOTE 5 - RISK MANAGEMENT

The Educational Service Center is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft or damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disasters. During fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center participated with other school districts in the Ohio School Plan (OSP), a public entity insurance purchasing pool. Each individual school district enters into an agreement with the OSP and its premium is based on types of coverage, limits of coverage, and deductibles that it selects.

Settled claims have not exceeded coverage in any of the past three years. There have been no significant reductions in insurance coverage from last year.

NOTE 6 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS

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.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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

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

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

The remainder of this note includes the required pension disclosures. See Note 7 for the required OPEB disclosures.

Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)

Plan Description – Educational Service Center 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.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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 CPIW, 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 calendar years 2018, 2019, and 2020. SERS approved a 2.5 percent COLA for calendar year 2022.

Funding Policy – Plan members are required to contribute 10 percent of their annual covered salary and the Educational Service Center is required to contribute 14 percent of annual covered payroll. The contribution requirements of plan members and employers are established and may be amended by the SERS’ Retirement Board up to statutory maximum amounts of 10 percent for plan members and 14 percent for employers. The Retirement Board, acting with the advice of the actuary, allocates the employer contribution rate among four of the System’s funds (Pension Trust Fund, Death Benefit Fund, Medicare B Fund, and Health Care Fund). For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, the allocation to pension, death benefits, and Medicare B was 14.0 percent. SERS did not allocate employer contributions to the Health Care Fund for fiscal year 2023.

The Educational Service Center’s contractually required contribution to SERS was \$518,669 for fiscal year 2023.

Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)

Plan Description – Educational Service Center licensed teachers and other faculty members participate in STRS Ohio, a cost-sharing multiple-employer public employee retirement system administered by STRS. STRS provides retirement and disability benefits to members and death and survivor benefits to beneficiaries. STRS issues a stand-alone financial report that includes financial statements, required supplementary information and detailed information about STRS’ fiduciary net position. That report can be obtained by writing to STRS, 275 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43215-3771, by calling (614) 227-4090, 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. Effective August 1, 2017 – July 1, 2019, any member could retire with reduced benefits who had (1) five years of service credit and age 60; (2) 27 years of service credit and age 55; or (3) 30 years of service credit regardless of age. Effective August 1, 2019 – July 1, 2021, any member may retire with reduced benefits who has (1) five years of service credit and age 60; (2) 28 years of service credit and age 55; or (3) 30 years of service credit regardless of age. Eligibility changes will continue to be phased in until August 1, 2026, when retirement eligibility for unreduced benefits will be five years of service credit and age 65, or 35 years of service credit and at least age 60. Eligibility changes for actuarially reduced benefits will be phased in until August 1, 2026, when retirement eligibility will be five years of qualifying service credit and age 60, or 30 years of service credit at any age.

The DC Plan allows members to place all their member contributions and 9.53 percent of the 14 percent employer contributions into an investment account. Investment allocation decisions are determined by the member. The remaining 4.47 percent of the 14 percent employer rate is allocated to the defined benefit plan unfunded liability. A member is eligible to receive a monthly retirement benefit at age 50 and termination of employment. The member may elect to receive a lifetime monthly annuity or a lump sum withdrawal.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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

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

A DB or Combined Plan member with five or more years of credited service who is determined to be disabled may qualify for a disability benefit. New members 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 statutory employer rate is 14 percent and the statutory member rate is 14 percent of covered payroll. The Educational Service Center was required to contribute 14 percent; the entire 14 percent was the portion used to fund pension obligations. The 2023 contribution rates were equal to the statutory maximum rates.

The Educational Service Center's contractually required contribution to STRS was \$877,735 for fiscal year 2023.

Pension Liabilities

The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2022, and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an independent actuarial valuation as of that date. The Educational Service Center's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the employer's share of employer contributions in the pension plan relative to the total employer contributions of all participating employers. Following is information related to the proportionate share:

	SERS	STRS	Total
Proportion of the Net Pension Liability:			
Current Measurement Date	0.09734110%	0.04523770%	
Prior Measurement Date	0.09877640%	0.04467959%	
Change in Proportionate Share	<u>-0.00143530%</u>	<u>0.00055811%</u>	
Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 5,264,964	\$ 10,056,397	\$ 15,321,361

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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 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. Future benefits for all current plan members were projected through 2132.

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, 2022 and June 30, 2021, are presented below:

Actuarial Cost Method	Entry Age Normal (Level Percentage of Payroll, Closed)
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

For 2022 and 2021, 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.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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

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

Discount Rate Total pension liability was calculated using the discount rate of 7.00 percent. The discount rate determination does not use a municipal bond rate. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that employers would contribute the actuarially determined contribution rate of projected compensation over the remaining 23-year amortization period of the unfunded actuarial accrued liability. 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 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 was negative 1.93 percent.

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

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 7,749,775	\$ 5,264,964	\$ 3,171,544

Actuarial Assumptions - STRS

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

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

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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

Inflation	2.50 percent
Actuarial Cost Method	Entry Age Normal (Level Percent of Payroll)
Projected Salary Increases	12.50 percent at age 20 to 2.50 percent at age 65
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent, net of investment expenses, including inflation
Payroll Increases	3.00 percent
Cost-of-Living Adjustments	0.00 percent

For 2022, 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.

For 2021, post-retirement mortality rates for healthy retirees are based on the RP-2014 Annuitant Mortality Table with 50 percent of rates through age 69, 70 percent of rates between ages 70 and 79, 90 percent of rates between ages 80 and 84, and 100 percent of rates thereafter, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016. Pre-retirement mortality rates are based on RP-2014 Employee Mortality Tables, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016. Post-retirement disabled mortality rates are based on the RP-2014 Disabled Mortality Table with 90 percent of rates for males and 100 percent of rates for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016.

The actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2022 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	<u>100.00 %</u>	

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

**10-Year annualized geometric nominal returns, which include the real rate of return and inflation of 2.25 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.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Discount Rate. The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.00 percent as of June 30, 2022. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumes that employer and member contributions will be made at statutory contribution rates of 14 percent each. 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, 2022. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on investments of 7.00 percent was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability as of June 30, 2022.

Sensitivity of the Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate The following table represents the County's proportionate share of the net pension liability as of June 30, 2022, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00 percent, as well as what the County'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 assumption:

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	\$ 15,191,556	\$ 10,056,397	\$ 5,713,644

Assumption and Benefit Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date The discount rate was adjusted to 7.00 percent for the June 30, 2022 valuation.

Demographic assumptions were changed based on the actuarial experience study for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2021.

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS

See Note 6 for a description of the net OPEB liability (asset).

Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)

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

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

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 the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, SERS did not allocate any employer contributions to health care. An additional health care surcharge on employers is collected for employees earning less than an actuarially determined minimum compensation amount, pro-rated if less than a full year of service credit was earned. For fiscal year 2023, this amount was \$25,000. Statutes provide that no employer shall pay a health care surcharge greater than 2.0 percent of that employer's SERS-covered payroll; nor may SERS collect in aggregate more than 1.5 percent of the total statewide SERS-covered payroll for the health care surcharge. For fiscal year 2023, the Educational Service Center's surcharge obligation was \$69,681.

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. Medicare Part B partial premium reimbursements will be continued indefinitely. The Plan is included in the report of STRS which can be obtained by visiting www.strsoh.org or by calling (614) 227-4090.

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, 2023, STRS did not allocate any employer contributions to post-employment health care.

OPEB Liability (Asset)

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

	<u>SERS</u>	<u>STRS</u>
Proportion of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset):		
Current Measurement Date	0.09958520%	0.04523770%
Prior Measurement Date	<u>0.09837400%</u>	<u>0.04468000%</u>
Change in Proportionate Share	<u>0.00121120%</u>	<u>0.00055770%</u>
Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset)	\$ 1,398,187	\$ (1,171,355)

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Actuarial Assumptions - SERS

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

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

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

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

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 expense, including inflation
Municipal Bond Index Rate	
Measurement Date	1.92 percent
Prior Measurement Date	3.69 percent
Single Equivalent Interest Rate	
Measurement Date	2.27 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	7.00 percent - 4.40 percent

Key methods and assumptions used in calculating the total OPEB liability in the latest actuarial valuation date of June 30, 2021, 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 expense, including inflation
Municipal Bond Index Rate	
Measurement Date	1.92 percent
Prior Measurement Date	2.45 percent
Single Equivalent Interest Rate	
Measurement Date	2.27 percent, net of plan investment expense, including price inflation
Prior Measurement Date	2.63 percent, net of plan investment expense, including price inflation
Health Care Cost Trend Rate	
Pre-Medicare	6.750 percent - 4.40 percent
Medicare	5.125 percent - 4.40 percent

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

For 2022 and 2021, 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 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 on April 15, 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 log-normal distribution analysis in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected return, net of investment expense and inflation) were developed by the investment consultant for each major asset class. These ranges were combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return, 7.00 percent, by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and then adding expected inflation. The capital market assumptions developed by the investment consultant are intended for use over a 10-year horizon and may not be useful in setting the long-term rate of return for funding pension plans which covers a longer time frame. 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 %	(0.45) %
US Equity	24.75	5.37
Non-US Equity Developed	13.50	6.22
Non-US Equity Emerging	6.75	8.22
Fixed Income/Global Bonds	19.00	1.20
Private Equity	11.00	10.05
Real Estate/Real Assets	16.00	4.87
Multi-Asset Strategies	4.00	3.39
Private Debt/Private Credit	3.00	5.38
Total	100.00 %	

Discount Rate The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability at June 30, 2022, was 4.08 percent. The discount rate used to measure total OPEB liability prior to June 30, 2022 was 2.27 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, 2022 and the June 30, 2021 total OPEB liability. The Municipal Bond Index rate is the single rate that will generate a present value of benefit payments equal to the sum of the present value determined by the long-term expected rate of return, and the present value determined by

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

discounting those benefits after the date of depletion. The Municipal Bond Index Rate is 3.69 percent at June 30, 2022 and 1.92 percent at June 30, 2021.

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

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 1,736,569	\$ 1,398,187	\$ 1,125,020
	Current		
	1% Decrease	Trend Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability	\$ 1,078,253	\$ 1,398,187	\$ 1,816,072

Actuarial Assumptions – STRS

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

Salary Increases	Varies by service from 2.50 percent to 8.50 percent	
Payroll Increases	3.00 percent	
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent, net of investment expenses, including inflation	
Discount Rate of Return	7.00 percent	
Health Care Cost Trend Rates		
Medical	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Ultimate</u>
Pre-Medicare	7.50 percent	3.94 percent
Medicare	-68.78 percent	3.94 percent
Prescription Drug		
Pre-Medicare	9.00 percent	3.94 percent
Medicare	-5.47 percent	3.94 percent

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

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Inflation	2.50 percent	
Projected Salary Increases	12.50 percent at age 20 to 2.50 percent at age 65	
Payroll Increases	3.00 percent	
Investment Rate of Return	7.00 percent, net of investment expenses, including inflation	
Discount Rate of Return	7.00 percent	
Health Care Cost Trend Rates		
Medical	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Ultimate</u>
Pre-Medicare	5.00 percent	4.00 percent
Medicare	-16.18 percent	4.00 percent
Prescription Drug		
Pre-Medicare	6.50 percent	4.00 percent
Medicare	29.98 percent	4.00 percent

In 2022, for healthy retirees the 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 Pub-2010 Teachers Disabled Annuitant Table projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020.

In 2021, for healthy retirees the mortality rates are based on the RP-2014 Annuitant Mortality Table with 50 percent of rates through age 69, 70 percent of rates between ages 70 and 79, 90 percent of rates between ages 80 and 84, and 100 percent of rates thereafter, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016. For disabled retirees, mortality rates are based on the RP-2014 Disabled Mortality Table with 90 percent of rates for males and 100 percent of rates for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2016.

The actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2022 valuation were adopted by the board from the results of an actuarial experience study for July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2021. An actuarial experience study is done on a quinquennial basis.

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

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

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

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

**Ten 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, 2022. 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 those assumptions, the OPEB plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments to current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on health care plan investments of 7.00 percent was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total OPEB liability as of June 30, 2022.

Sensitivity of the Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Asset to Changes in the Discount Rate and Health Care Cost Trend Rate The following table represents the net OPEB asset as of June 30, 2022, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00 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 of June 30, 2022, calculated using health care cost trend rates that are one percentage point lower and one percentage point higher than the current health care cost trend rates.

	Current		
	1% Decrease	Discount Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset)	\$ (1,082,886)	\$ (1,171,355)	\$ (1,247,135)
	Current		
	1% Decrease	Trend Rate	1% Increase
Educational Service Center's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Liability (Asset)	\$ (1,214,980)	\$ (1,171,355)	\$ (1,116,289)

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

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

Healthcare trends were updated to reflect emerging claims and recoveries experience.

NOTE 8 - EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Compensated Absences

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

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Teachers, administrators, and classified employees earn sick leave at the rate of one and one-fourth days per month. Sick leave may be accumulated up to 200 days for all personnel. Upon retirement, payment is made for one-fourth of accrued, but unused sick leave credit to a maximum of 50 days.

Insurance Benefits

The Educational Service Center provides health and major medical insurance for all eligible employees through Medical Mutual of Ohio. The Educational Service Center pays employee medical and drug monthly premiums of up to \$1,367.90 for family coverage and \$673.42 for single coverage. Premiums are paid from the same funds that pay the employees' salaries. The Educational Service Center also provides dental and prescription drug insurance to its employees through the same insurance carrier. The Educational Service Center pays employee monthly dental premiums up to \$58.77 for family coverage and up to \$28.55 for single coverage. The Educational Service Center also provides life insurance in the amount of \$50,000 through OneAmerica Company contracted by the META Solutions at a cost of \$4.75 per employee per month.

NOTE 9 - CONTINGENCIES

Grants

The Educational Service Center received financial assistance from federal and state agencies in the form of grants. The disbursement of funds received under these programs generally requires 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 Educational Service Center at June 30, 2023.

Litigation

As of June 30, 2023, the Educational Service Center was not a party to any lawsuits.

NOTE 10 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE

Accountability

The following funds had deficit cash balance as of June 30, 2023:

	<u>Deficit</u>
<i>Non-Major Governmental Funds</i>	
Public Preschool	\$ 18,936
IDEA, Part B	3,120
Title III	100
Family Engagement Liaison Grant	57,157
Total	<u><u>\$ 79,313</u></u>

The deficit cash balances were due to the timing between grant receipts and disbursements in the grant funds. The general fund is liable for any deficits in these funds and will provide transfers when cash is required.

Licking County Educational Service Center, Ohio

Notes to the Basic Financial Statements

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Compliance

Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code 117-2-03(B) provides that the Educational Service Center shall prepare its annual financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. However, the Educational Service Center prepares its financial statements in accordance with standards established by the cash basis of accounting. The accompanying financial statements and notes omit assets, liabilities, fund equities and disclosures that, while material, cannot be determined at this time. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38, the Educational Service Center can be fined and various other administrative remedies for its failure to file the required financial report.

NOTE 11 - FUND BALANCES

Fund balance is classified as nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and/or unassigned based primarily on the extent to which the Educational Service Center is bound to observe constraints imposed upon the use of the resources in governmental funds. The constraints placed on fund balance for the major governmental fund and all other governmental funds are presented as follows:

	Other Governmental		
	General	Funds	Total
Restricted for:			
Advisory Services	\$ -	\$ 72,914	\$ 72,914
State Funded Programs	-	36,439	36,439
Total Restricted	-	109,353	109,353
Committed for:			
EANS Program	36,892	-	36,892
Contractual Services	115,018	-	115,018
Total Committed	151,910	-	151,910
Assigned for:			
Instruction	18,398	-	18,398
Support Services	6,282	-	6,282
Community Services	72,601	-	72,601
Public School Support	49,397	-	49,397
Total Assigned	146,678	-	146,678
Unassigned	4,982,360	(79,313)	4,903,047
Total Fund Balance	\$ 5,280,948	\$ 30,040	\$ 5,310,988

NOTE 12 – SUBSEQUENT EVENT

During fiscal year 2023 the Educational Service Center changed its name to Licking Regional Educational Service Center because it is now providing services to members outside of Licking County, such as Muskingum County. This name change was effective as of July 1, 2023.

**LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
LICKING COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024**

FEDERAL GRANTOR <i>Pass Through Grantor</i> Program / Cluster Title	Federal AL Number	Total Federal Expenditures
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE		
<i>Passed Through Ohio Department of Education & Workforce</i>		
Child Nutrition Cluster		
School Breakfast Program	10.553	7,147
National School Lunch Program	10.555	<u>17,288</u>
Total Child Nutrition Cluster		24,435
Total U.S. Department of Agriculture		<u>24,435</u>
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION		
<i>Passed Through Ohio Department of Education & Workforce</i>		
COVID-19 American Rescue Plan - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER)	84.425U	823,178
English Language Acquisition State Grants	84.365A	23,172
Special Education Preschool Grants Program	84.173A	49,869
Total U.S. Department of Education		<u>896,219</u>
Total Expenditures of Federal Awards		<u>\$920,654</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this schedule.

**LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
LICKING COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
2 CFR 200.510(b)(6)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024**

NOTE A – BASIS OF PRESENTATION

The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (the Schedule) includes the federal award activity of Licking Regional Educational Service Center (the Educational Service Center) under programs of the federal government for the year ended June 30, 2024. The information on this Schedule is prepared in accordance with the requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). Because the Schedule presents only a selected portion of the operations of the Educational Service Center, it is not intended to and does not present the financial position or changes in net position of the Educational Service Center.

NOTE B – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

NOTE C – INDIRECT COST RATE

The Educational Service Center [has](#) elected to use the 5-percent de minimis indirect cost rate as allowed under the Uniform Guidance.

NOTE D – CHILD NUTRITION CLUSTER

The Educational Service Center commingles cash receipts from the U.S. Department of Agriculture with similar State grants. When reporting expenditures on this Schedule, the Educational Service Center assumes it expends federal monies first.



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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center
Licking County
145 N Quentin Rd
Newark, OH 43055-4623

To the Board of Education:

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (*Government Auditing Standards*), the cash-basis financial statements of the governmental activities, the General Fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Licking County, Ohio (the Educational Service Center) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024 and 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Educational Service Center's basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated March 27, 2025, where we noted the Educational Service Center uses a special purpose framework other than generally accepted accounting principles.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

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

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

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Licking Regional Educational Service Center
Licking County
Independent Auditor's Report On Internal Control Over Financial Reporting And On Compliance And
Other Matters Required By *Government Auditing Standards*
Page 2

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Educational Service Center's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance or other matters that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and which is described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2024-001.

Educational Service Center's Response to Finding

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

Purpose of This Report

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



Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

March 27, 2025



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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center
Licking County
145 N Quentin Rd
Newark, Ohio 43055

To the Board of Education:

Report on Compliance for the Major Federal Program

Opinion on the Major Federal Program

We have audited Licking Regional Educational Service Center, Licking County, (Educational Service Center) compliance with the types of compliance requirements identified as subject to audit in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) *Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on Licking Regional Educational Service Center's major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2024. Licking Regional Educational Service Center's major federal program is identified in the *Summary of Auditor's Results* section of the accompanying schedule of findings.

In our opinion, Licking Regional Educational Service Center complied, in all material respects, with the compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on its major federal program for the years ended June 30, 2024.

Basis for Opinion on the Major Federal Program

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

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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center

Licking County

Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance with Requirements

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

Page 2

Responsibilities of Management for Compliance

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

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance

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

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

- exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- identify and assess the risks of material noncompliance, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the Educational Service Center's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.
- obtain an understanding of the Educational Service Center's internal control over compliance relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Educational Service Center's internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

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

Licking Regional Educational Service Center

Licking County

Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance with Requirements

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

Page 3

Report on Internal Control Over Compliance

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

Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance* section above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses, as defined above. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance may exist that were not identified.

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

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



Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

March 27, 2025

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LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
LICKING COUNTY

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
2 CFR § 200.515
JUNE 30, 2024 AND 2023

1. SUMMARY OF AUDITOR'S RESULTS

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

LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER
LICKING COUNTY

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
2 CFR § 200.515
JUNE 30, 2024 AND 2023
(continued)

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

FINDING NUMBER 2024-001

Annual Financial Report - Noncompliance

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

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

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

Pursuant to **Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38** the Educational Service Center may be fined for its failure to file the required financial report. Failure to report on a GAAP basis compromises the Educational Service Center's ability to evaluate and monitor the overall financial condition of the Educational Service Center.

To help provide the users with more meaningful financial statements, the Educational Service Center should prepare its annual financial statements according to generally accepted accounting principles.

Officials' Response: See Corrective Action Plan

3. FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS

None

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SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS

2 CFR 200.511(b)
JUNE 30, 2024 AND 2023

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2022-001	Ohio Rev. Code §117.38 – Annual Financial Report The Educational Service Center files OCBOA Cash financial statements instead of mandated GAAP financial statements. First issued in 2013.	Not Corrected. Reissued as 2024-001.	The Board of Education voted in February of 2013 to not report GAAP. The cost to report on GAAP exceeds the benefits.

DALE LEWELLEN
SUPERINTENDENT

JULIO VALLADARES
TREASURER

GOVERNING BOARD

MARC GUTHRIE, PRESIDENT
JOSEPH SHANNON, VICE PRESIDENT
MATTHEW CLARK
ROBERT ESSEX
FOREST YOCUM

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN
2 CFR § 200.511(c)
JUNE 30, 2024 AND 2023

Finding Number: 2024-001
Planned Corrective Action: See table below
Anticipated Completion Date: N/A
Responsible Contact Person: Julio Valladares, Treasurer

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2024-001	Ohio Rev. Code §117.38 – Annual Financial Report The Educational Service Center files OCBOA Cash financial statements instead of mandated GAAP financial statements. First issued in 2013.	Not Corrected. Reissued as 2024-001.	The Board of Education voted in February of 2013 to not report GAAP. The cost to report on GAAP exceeds the benefits.

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OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

LICKING COUNTY

AUDITOR OF STATE OF OHIO CERTIFICATION

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



Certified for Release 4/15/2025

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