

Memorandum of Understanding ESC Leads Cluster Facilitation

The Northeast Ohio Career Pathway Support Network (CPSN) brings together a comprehensive coalition of Educational Service Centers (ESCs), Career-Technical Planning Districts (CTPDs), community colleges, universities, workforce boards, and business partners to expand equitable access to career pathways for students. The Northeast Ohio region includes:

- 14 counties
- 32 Career Planning Districts (CPDs)
- 172 public school districts
- 132 community schools
- 9 public colleges/universities
- 13 Educational Service Centers
- 24 Business Advisory Councils

Regional governance includes:

- A 20-member Steering Committee led by the ESC of Northeast Ohio
- Four Regional Subcommittees:
 - Middle Grades CTE Expansion
 - Advising and Mentoring Systems
 - Workforce Planning and Alignment
 - Instructor and Administrator Supports
- Additional Regional Committees: Data Committee and Higher Education Pathway Committee

Cluster leadership ensures alignment between local implementation and the work of the regional Steering Committee and subcommittees. Anchored by the Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (ESCNEO) as fiscal agent and regional convener, the Network leverages existing assets across five geographic clusters to address four statewide goals across the NEO region:

1. Increasing opportunities for middle grades Career and Technical expansion
2. Strengthening advising and mentoring,
3. Advancing workforce planning aligned to labor market demands, and
4. Providing professional supports for CTE instructors and administrators.

I. PARTIES

This Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into by and between the **Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (“ESCNEO”)**, fiscal agent for the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce’s Northeast Ohio Career Pathway Support Network (CPSN), and the Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center (**Contractor**) for the purpose of serving as the **CPSN Lead ESC for the Mid-Ohio Cluster**.

The purpose of this agreement is to ensure the CPSN implementation across the 14-county Northeast Ohio Region is grounded in local realities and responsive to the needs of school districts, Career-Technical Planning Districts (CTPDs), workforce partners, higher education institutions, and business and industry.

Each geographic cluster is led by a designated ESC serving as the primary convener and facilitators of local planning and coordination aligned to CPSN regional goals and state deliverables. This agreement is funded through a state grant administered by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW). All obligations under this agreement are expressly contingent upon availability, receipt, and continued authorization of state grant funding. ESCNEO reserves the right to modify or terminate this Agreement if requirements, funding levels, or state guidance change.

II. TERMS

This agreement shall commence on July 1, 2026, and shall remain in effect through June 30, 2027, unless earlier terminated in accordance with this Agreement. The Agreement may be amended through June 30, 2027 upon mutual written agreement of the parties and subject to continued availability of grant funds.

III. SCOPE OF WORK & DELIVERABLES

As the designated Lead ESC for the **Mid-Ohio Cluster**, the Mid-Ohio ESC agrees to:

1. Convene Regional Partners

Serve as the primary convener of:

- School districts
- Career-Technical Planning Districts (CTPDs)
- Community schools
- Public and postsecondary partners
- Workforce development boards
- Business and economic development partners

Clusters may include cross-county participation as determined by regional needs.

2. Facilitate Local Planning and Coordination,

- Organize and facilitate regular cluster meetings
- Establish collaborative structures that promote cross-sector alignment
- Support shared regional planning conversations

3. Develop and Implement a Cluster Action Plan

- Lead the development of an annual Cluster Action Plan
- Ensure alignment with:
 - The four CPSN regional goals
 - State deliverables and reporting requirements
 - Steering Committee priorities
- Monitor progress toward established benchmarks

4. Serve as Liaison to Regional Governance

- Participating in regional cluster lead meetings
- Communicate updates from the Steering Committee and subcommittees
- Elevate local needs, barriers, and best practices to regional leadership
- Ensure two-way communication between cluster stakeholders and regional leadership

5. Documentation and Reporting

- Maintain meeting records and attendance documentation
- Track progress on cluster action steps
- Provide information required for regional reporting to the state

IV. Responsibilities of the ESC of Northeast Ohio

The ESC of Northeast Ohio agrees to:

- Serve as fiscal agent and regional lead for NEO-CPSN
- Provide overall coordination of the regional Steering Committee and subcommittees
- Provide technical assistance, templates, planning tools, and guidance
- Communicate state expectations and deliverables
- Distribute cluster facilitation funding in accordance with contract terms

Support cross-cluster collaboration and consistency of implementation

IV. COMPENSATION

ESCNEO shall provide the Lead ESC with a flat rate of **\$30,000 per year** to support Cluster Facilitation activities.

These funds are intended to support coordination, facilitation, communication, planning, and administrative functions necessary to implement CPSN cluster-level work.

- Payment shall be made to the Contractor **annually** upon:
 - Execution of this agreement
 - Submission of required documentation
 - Demonstrated progress toward deliverables

The Contractor acknowledges that compensation is contingent upon continued availability of CPSN grant funding.

The Contractor is an independent contractor and not an employee or agent of ESCNEO.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY, COMPLIANCE & RECORDS

Contractor shall maintain all appropriate records related to services performed under this agreement and shall make such records available to ESCNEO upon request, consistent with applicable state and federal requirements. Any data accessed through this work shall be used solely for the purposes of fulfilling the Agreement and handled in accordance with all applicable privacy and confidentiality laws. The Partner Organization agrees to:

- Comply with FERPA and confidentiality requirements
- Adhere to CPSN grant assurances
- Align activities to the approved regional workforce plan
- Maintain documentation supporting quarterly and annual reporting

VI. TERMINATION

Either party may terminate this agreement for convenience with thirty (30) days' written notice. ESCNEO may terminate this Agreement immediately if funding is reduced, eliminated, or materially modified by ODEW, or if contractor is unable to perform the required services. Upon termination, Contractor shall be compensated only for service satisfactorily completed prior to the termination date and in accordance with available grant funds.

SIGNATURES

Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio

Authorized Representative: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Mid-Ohio ESC, Lead ESC

Authorized Representative: _____

Title: Sept. _____

Signature: K. Kimbrell _____

Date: 10/8/26 _____