



HOW BUSINESSES CAN PARTNER WITH SCHOOLS

As a business partner, you can help students chart their own courses in high-quality, high-demand pathways that lead to jobs before, during and after college.

Partnering with Schools Through Business Advisory Councils

SuccessBound celebrates and promotes useful and effective business-school relationships that create opportunities for Ohio's students to have workplace experiences and earn credentials, engage with mentors, and learn skills and technical competencies they can use in their career journeys. Business advisory councils can serve as important partners to inform curriculum development and provide real-world applications to what students learn in school.

Ohio recognizes the importance of these councils and has established a law (Ohio Revised Code 3313.82) that requires every school district and educational service center to have a business advisory council. Standards guide the [operation of business advisory councils](#). For the purpose of SuccessBound partnerships, districts may consider creating subcouncils that are more targeted and focused on building pathways for students in specific industries or with specific companies.

Workforce development and readiness is a major task for public schools, and a business advisory council can serve many important roles in establishing alignment between school and work, including:

- Advise school districts about the job market and potential opportunities in various regions in Ohio. [OhioMeansJob K-12](#) has a tool to research regional in-demand industries;
- Advocate for skills critical for employment and inform the development of curriculum to develop those skills;
- Serve as liaisons between schools and labor organizations.

How to Participate in a Business Advisory Council

Business leaders seeking to participate in a business advisory council should familiarize themselves with key regional industries and approach school districts to learn about how schools are meeting the workforce needs in their communities. Depending on regional needs and in conjunction with school districts, one large business advisory council with various industries represented might be formed. Conversely, a small business advisory council might be more appropriate. A smaller business advisory council could focus on one industry and comprise of subgroups within that industry. In either case, the council should establish bylaws to direct its collaborative work. Details on bylaws are available at the end of this section.

Get Started!

1. Get to know the schools in your community. For a list of schools in your community, go to the [SuccessBound Business-Education Partner Search Map](#).
2. Call, [email and write](#) school leaders in your community to express your interest and desire to help.
3. Follow your local and regional schools on Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms.
4. Participate in your [preschool-16 councils](#).
5. Educate yourself on what schools already are doing to build these partnerships and plan for ways you can easily get involved. Begin by reading about [regional workforce collaborations](#) and the [Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation](#).
6. Set up a meeting with the principal, school counselor or career pathways administrator. Find out what they need and ask how you can help.
7. Talk with other business leaders in the community about how they partner with schools.
8. Start or join your local school district's business advisory council.
9. Participate in [regional workforce collaboratives](#).



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Because the purpose of a SuccessBound business advisory council goes beyond simply advising schools on workforce needs, members should represent larger employers in the community with the bandwidth to not only advise the school district but also offer opportunities for students to participate in work-based learning opportunities.

Business leaders can contact a district's superintendent's office to inquire about participating in a council. It's possible the district already has a council because districts and educational service centers are required to have business advisory councils. After joining a council, business leaders might help recruit other potential business members for a more targeted council to create specific pathways and programs for students.

The first meeting with a business advisory council should have the following agenda items:

1. Discussion of the workforce needs and any skills gaps from the business members.
2. Discussion of current programming and student opportunities designed to build workforce readiness.
3. Brainstorming session on potential ways the company can provide workplace experiences for students. These may include mentoring or internship opportunities, the development of a career pathway or curriculum designed to place students at the company or other opportunities for students to engage in authentic learning opportunities that can lead to future employment or postsecondary training.

Ohio law requires business advisory councils to meet quarterly, but a subgroup dedicated to designing pathways should expect to meet more often. During the first few meetings, the council should establish an action plan for developing meaningful partnerships between companies and the school. **This plan should clearly identify the following:**

- The workplace and 21st century skills the school will develop;
- Programming to prepare students for entry-level work immediately after graduation;
- Programming to prepare students for postsecondary training required for employment;
- Each partner's role in executing programming;
- A timeline for adoption of new practices.

Businesses can contribute to building career and postsecondary readiness through the following

Job fairs or conferences: The school may choose to host an event where business representatives and employees from a number of local companies share information about job opportunities and required skills.

Job fairs or conferences: Companies can participate in community and school events where business representatives and employees from a number of local companies share information about job opportunities and required skills.

Job shadowing: Companies can organize opportunities for students to shadow employees to enhance career exploration and awareness of the nature of the business and job.

Work-based learning opportunities for students: Companies can organize opportunities for students to work at their businesses, so they can fully understand the expectations of the jobs and types of work people engage in. These opportunities can include unpaid or paid work; including full time, part-time or summer employment.

Apprenticeships: Companies can offer paid or unpaid apprenticeships where students work alongside more experienced employees to gain valuable skills and knowledge through hands-on learning.



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Class visits and career days: Business professionals could visit classrooms to speak to students about their companies. Business professionals could participate in career days to teach students about potential career opportunities in their industries.

Signing day celebration: Companies can host a signing day celebration for students who are hired. Family, friends, educators and community members can attend to learn more about the business and the work the student will do.

Promote the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal: Companies can encourage attainment of the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal, a formal designation students can earn on their high school diplomas and transcripts indicating they have the personal strengths, strong work ethic and professional experience that businesses need.

Participate in Ohio's In-Demand Jobs Week: [In-Demand Jobs Week](#) is a statewide celebration of jobs, industries and skills that are in-demand in Ohio. It occurs during the first full week in May. Community leaders statewide are encouraged to partner to plan engaging events and activities that will inspire excitement and awareness among students and job seekers.

Participate in Ohio's Manufacturing Day: Manufacturing Day usually takes place in October and is a celebration of manufacturing across Ohio. During this annual event, companies open their doors to their communities to showcase the many career opportunities available through modern manufacturing.

Mentoring and tutoring programs: Employers can provide opportunities for employees to serve as mentors and tutors to students, helping improve academic skills as well as social, emotional, and workplace and employability skills. This mentor experience should align to the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal.

Career advising and exploration: Schools can connect students to Career Connections and OhioMeansJobs K-12, where they can access a suite of tools and services to help them plan for their futures.

Participating in SuccessBound conferences: Businesses can attend SuccessBound conferences and other conferences aimed at promoting work-based learning and school-business partnerships. These are excellent networking and marketing opportunities.

Joining your P-16 council: [Ohio's preschool-16 councils](#) establish uniform statewide standards in mathematics, science, reading and writing that each student in a state institution of higher education must meet to be considered remediation-free. Contribute your perspective and insights to this work. Your voice is important and valuable.

Promoting student commitment to being drug free: Together, schools and businesses can raise awareness about the dangers of drug and alcohol use and how using drugs or alcohol can affect future job opportunities. They can develop drug-free agreements that reward students for maintaining healthy lifestyles.

The business advisory council also can work collaboratively to create a marketing plan to connect families to information about in-demand careers and to engage postsecondary and workforce development organizations to become active members in developing a strong workforce pipeline.

A strong community supports both education and workforce development. It has opportunities available to ensure it grows its own future. SuccessBound communities strive to achieve strong ties between schools, workforce development agencies, businesses and postsecondary institutions. A business advisory council is a key driver to establishing and fostering this collaboration. It can help a district turn an idea into action.

A note on bylaws: *Bylaws detail the purpose of the business advisory council, identify a protocol for recruiting and selecting members and define the processes for scheduling meetings, setting agendas and recording decisions. Because business advisory councils are subject to Ohio's "Sunshine Laws," members should be informed that all meeting records and meetings are open and available to the public. Keeping careful and accurate records is required.*