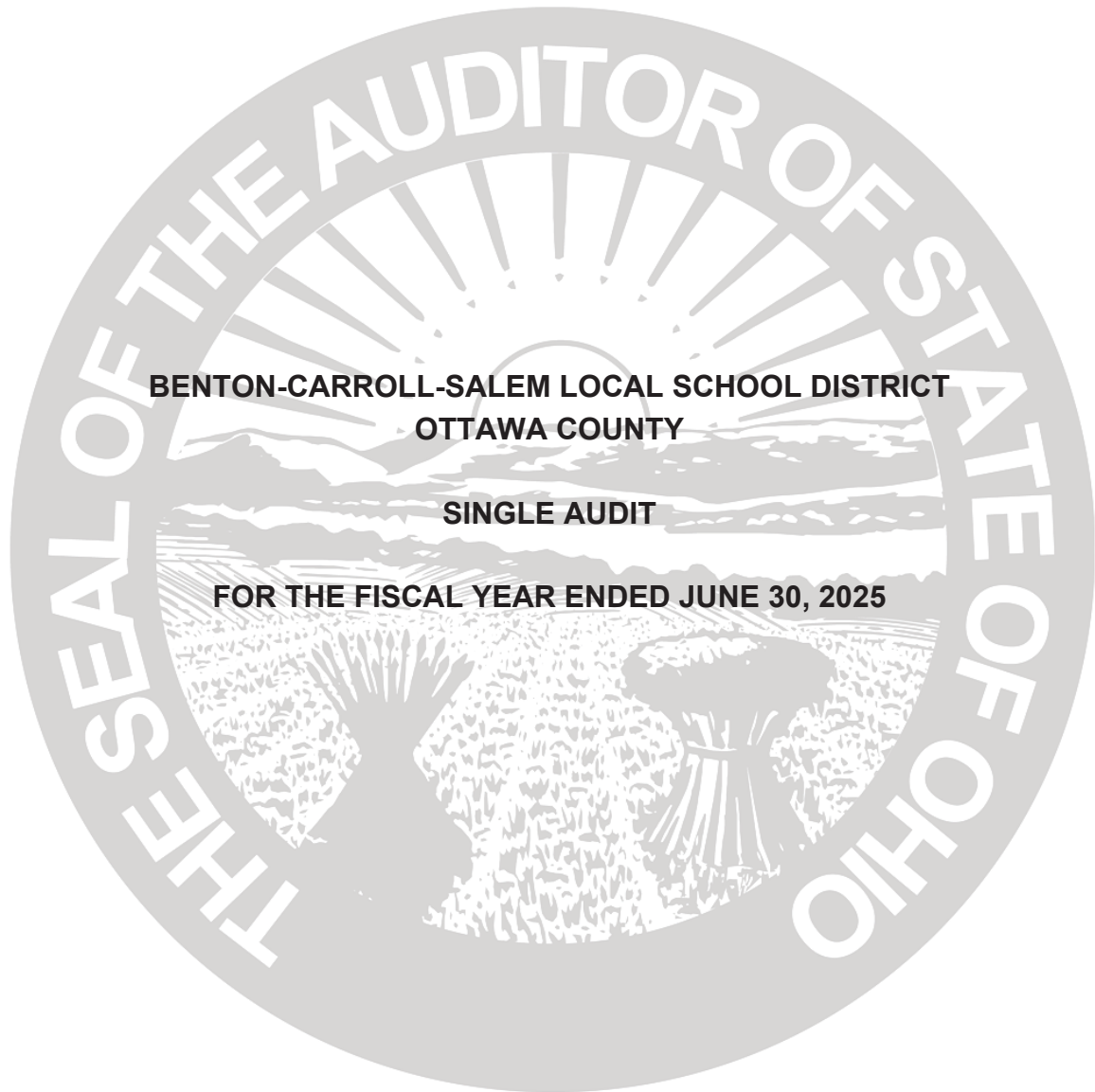




**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District
Ottawa County
11685 West State Route 163
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449-1278

To the Board of Education:

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Adverse Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the cash balances, receipts and disbursements for each governmental fund type of Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District, Ottawa County, Ohio (the District), as of and for the year ended June 30, 2025, and related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the *Basis for Adverse Opinion on the Financial Statements as a Whole* section of our report, the accompanying financial statements referred to above do not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the District, as of June 30, 2025, or the changes in financial position thereof for the year then ended.

Basis for Adverse Opinion on the Financial Statements as a Whole

As described in Note 2 of the financial statements, the financial statements are prepared by the District on the basis of the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit. However, Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(B) requires these statements to follow accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The effects on the financial statements of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 2 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumably material and pervasive.

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 District, 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 adverse audit opinion.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 3 to the financial statements, during 2025, the District restated the beginning fund balance in the General Fund to record a receipt in the proper period. 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 financial reporting provisions Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit; and 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 District'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 opinion. 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 District'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 District'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 District's financial statements.

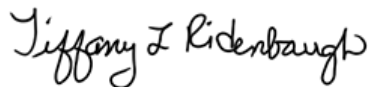
The Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards as required by Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial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

Because of the significance of the matter described in the *Basis for Adverse Opinion on the Financial Statements as a Whole* paragraph, it is inappropriate to express, and we do not express an opinion on the supplementary information referred to above.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated March 18, 2026, on our consideration of the District'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 District'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 District's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

KEITH FABER
Ohio Auditor of State



Tiffany L. Ridenbaugh, CPA, CFE, CGFM
Chief Deputy Auditor

March 18, 2026

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**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

COMBINED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS AND CHANGES IN
FUND BALANCES (REGULATORY CASH BASIS) - ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

	Governmental Fund Types			Totals (Memorandum Only)
	General	Special Revenue	Capital Projects	
Cash Receipts				
From local sources:				
Property taxes	\$ 12,157,948	\$ -	\$ 303,839	\$ 12,461,787
Tuition	448,871	-	-	448,871
Earnings on investments	322,157	5,375	885,082	1,212,614
Charges for services	-	305,913	-	305,913
Extracurricular	129,810	447,833	-	577,643
Classroom materials and fees	83,005	-	-	83,005
Rental income	4,335	-	-	4,335
Contributions and donations	450	75,089	-	75,539
Other local revenues	66,873	7,476	-	74,349
Intergovernmental - state	11,717,308	142	23,213	11,740,663
Intergovernmental - federal	108,432	992,199	-	1,100,631
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>25,039,189</u>	<u>1,834,027</u>	<u>1,212,134</u>	<u>28,085,350</u>
Cash Disbursements				
Current:				
Instruction:				
Regular	8,916,431	-	40,381	8,956,812
Special	2,102,195	371,231	-	2,473,426
Vocational	16,384	-	-	16,384
Other	3,198	-	-	3,198
Support services:				
Pupil	2,144,398	287,314	-	2,431,712
Instructional staff	250,879	58,998	-	309,877
Board of education	291,166	-	-	291,166
Administration	1,896,241	92,934	-	1,989,175
Fiscal	648,769	-	5,622	654,391
Operations and maintenance	2,468,089	3,850	95,273	2,567,212
Pupil transportation	919,015	-	67,500	986,515
Central	504,521	3,000	-	507,521
Operation of non-instructional services:				
Other operation of non-instructional	40,560	20,032	-	60,592
Food service operations	-	615,058	-	615,058
Extracurricular activities	582,901	518,198	-	1,101,099
Facilities acquisition and construction	14,593	-	414,641	429,234
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>20,799,340</u>	<u>1,970,615</u>	<u>623,417</u>	<u>23,393,372</u>
<i>Excess (Deficiency) of Receipts Over (Under) Disbursements</i>	<u>4,239,849</u>	<u>(136,588)</u>	<u>588,717</u>	<u>4,691,978</u>
Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)				
Transfers in	-	350,000	3,300,000	3,650,000
Transfers (out)	(3,650,000)	-	-	(3,650,000)
<i>Total Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)</i>	<u>(3,650,000)</u>	<u>350,000</u>	<u>3,300,000</u>	<u>-</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	<u>589,849</u>	<u>213,412</u>	<u>3,888,717</u>	<u>4,691,978</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances as Previously Reported</i>	<u>11,224,782</u>	<u>757,556</u>	<u>13,679,699</u>	<u>25,662,037</u>
<i>Restatement - Error Correction</i>	<u>1,526,202</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,526,202</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, July 1 (as Restated)</i>	<u>12,750,984</u>	<u>757,556</u>	<u>13,679,699</u>	<u>27,188,239</u>
Fund Cash Balances, June 30				
Restricted	-	1,055,124	2,171,321	3,226,445
Committed	2,913,609	-	15,397,095	18,310,704
Assigned	1,118,849	-	-	1,118,849
Unassigned (deficit)	9,308,375	(84,156)	-	9,224,219
<i>Fund Cash Balances, June 30</i>	<u>\$ 13,340,833</u>	<u>\$ 970,968</u>	<u>\$ 17,568,416</u>	<u>\$ 31,880,217</u>

The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 1 - DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District (the District) is located in Ottawa County, in Oak Harbor, Ohio. The District was established in the early 1970's through the consolidation of existing land areas and school districts. The District currently serves an area of approximately 106 square miles and includes all of the Villages of Oak Harbor, Graytown, and Rocky Ridge, and all or portions of Benton, Carroll, and Salem Townships.

The District was organized in accordance with Sections 2 and 3, Article VI of the Constitution of the State of Ohio. Under such laws, there is no authority for a school district to have a charter or adopt local laws. The legislative power of the District is vested in the Board of Education, consisting of five members elected at large for staggered four-year terms.

The District currently operates three instructional buildings, one administrative building, and one bus garage. The District is staffed by 84 non-certified employees and 110 certified full-time teaching personnel and administrators who provide services to 1,250 students and other community members.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

As discussed in Note 2.D., these financial statements are presented on the regulatory cash basis of accounting. The regulatory cash basis of accounting differs from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). GAAP includes all relevant Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncements. In cases where these regulatory cash basis statements contain items that are the same as, or similar to, those items in financial statements prepared in conformity with GAAP, similar informative disclosures are provided. The District's significant accounting policies are described below:

A. Reporting Entity

The reporting entity has been defined in accordance with GASB Statement No. 14, "The Financial Reporting Entity" as amended by GASB Statement No. 39, "Determining Whether Certain Organizations Are Component Units" and GASB Statement No. 61, "The Financial Reporting Entity: Omnibus an Amendment of GASB Statements No. 14 and No. 34". The reporting entity is composed of the primary government and component units. The primary government consists of all funds, departments, boards and agencies that are not legally separate from the District. For the District, this includes general operations, food service, preschool and student related activities of the District.

Component units are legally separate organizations for which the District is financially accountable. The District is financially accountable for an organization if the District appoints a voting majority of the organization's Governing Board and (1) the District is able to significantly influence the programs or services performed or provided by the organization; or (2) the District is legally entitled to or can otherwise access the organization's resources; or (3) the District is legally obligated or has otherwise assumed the responsibility to finance the deficits of, or provide financial support to, the organization; or (4) the District is obligated for the debt of the organization. Component units may also include organizations that are fiscally dependent on the District in that the District approves the budget, the issuance of debt or the levying of taxes. Certain organizations are also included as component units if the nature and significance of the relationship between the primary government and the organization is such that exclusion by the primary government would render the primary government's financial statements incomplete or misleading. Based upon the application of these criteria, the District has no component units. The basic financial statements of the reporting entity include only those of the District (the primary government).

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

The following organizations are described due to their relationship to the District:

JOINTLY GOVERNED ORGANIZATIONS

Northern Ohio Educational Computer Association

The District is a participant in the Northern Ohio Educational Computer Association (NOECA), which is a computer consortium. NOECA is an association of forty-one public school districts 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 NOECA Board of Directors consists of two representatives from each county in which participating school districts are located, the Chairman of each of the operating committees, and a representative from the fiscal agent. All revenues are generated from a combination of State funding and annual fees-per-student charged to participating school districts. During the fiscal year, the District paid NOECA \$0 for its services. Financial information is available from Matthew Bauer, Treasurer for the North Point Educational Service Center, who serves as fiscal agent, at 4918 Milan Road, Sandusky, Ohio 44870.

Bay Area Council of Governments

The Bay Area Council of Governments (BACG) consists of twenty-six school districts representing seven counties (Crawford, Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Sandusky, Seneca and Wood). This jointly governed organization was formed for the purpose of purchasing goods and services at a lower cost. The items currently being purchased through BACG are natural gas and insurance. The only cost to the District is an administrative charge if it participates in purchasing through the BACG. The District made no contributions to the BACG in fiscal year 2025. The membership of BACG consists of one elected representative from each of the seven counties, the Superintendent of the fiscal agent, and two non-voting members (administrator and fiscal agent). Members of the BACG serve two-year terms. Financial information is available from Matthew Bauer, Treasurer for the North Point Educational Service Center, who serves as fiscal agent, at 4918 Milan Road, Sandusky, Ohio 44870.

Penta Career Center

The Penta Career Center (Center) is a separate body politic and corporate, established by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) to provide vocational and special education needs of the students. The Center accepts non-tuition students from the District as a member school; however, it is considered a separate political subdivision and is not considered to be part of the District. Financial information is available from Penta Career Center, 9301 Buck Road, Perrysburg, Ohio 43551.

PUBLIC ENTITY RISK POOLS

Ohio Association of School Business Officials Workers' Compensation Group Rating Plan

The District participates in a group rating plan for workers' compensation as established under Section 4123.29 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Ohio Association of School Business Officials Workers' Compensation Group Rating Plan (the Plan) was established through the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) as a group purchasing pool.

The Plan's business and affairs are conducted by a three-member Board of Directors consisting of the President, the President-Elect, and the Immediate Past President of the OASBO. The Executive Director of the OASBO, or his designee, serves as coordinator of the Plan. Each year, the participating school districts pay an enrollment fee to the Plan to cover the costs of administering the program.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

The San-Ott Insurance Consortium (the Consortium)

The District participates in a shared risk pool, with participants from Sandusky and Ottawa Counties. The Consortium is governed by an Assembly, which consists of one representative from each participant (usually the Superintendent or designee). The Assembly exercises control over the operation of the Consortium. All Consortium revenues are generated from charges for services. Financial information can be obtained by writing to San-Ott Consortium, Jefferson Health Plan, 2023 Sunset Blvd., Steubenville, Ohio 43952.

The Consortium participates in the Jefferson Health Plan (the Health Plan), a claims servicing pool organized under Ohio Revised Code Chapter 167, for the purpose of establishing and carrying out a cooperative program to administer insurance benefits for employees of the participating entities and their eligible dependents. The Health Plan contracts with third-party administrators to process and pay claims incurred by its members.

The Health Plan also purchases stop-loss coverage for claims in excess of a set amount for individual claims and in the pool's aggregate.

Each member of the Health Plan is obligated to pay a fee based on an estimate of the member's share of the Health Plan costs for the fiscal year. Included in this estimate are claims by eligible employees, which are payable by each member, the member's share of the various insurance premiums, and their proportionate share of the administrative costs of the Health Plan. The actual balance of each member's account is determined on a monthly basis. Each member is required to meet or exceed the claims that have been incurred but not reported and to maintain adequate reserves or current funding to meet or exceed their claims fluctuation reserve requirements. If a member is in a deficit position, the participating member has two fiscal years to make up a negative reserve amount or an insufficient incurred but not reported balance and three fiscal years to make up insufficient claims fluctuation reserves.

Members may withdraw from the Health Plan with as much notice as is possible for the termination, allowing the Health Plan time to determine any withdrawal balance owed to or by the departing employer. Any outstanding reserve balances are held by the Health Plan for a maximum period of six months to satisfy the payment of claims incurred before termination. The terminating member has the option to pay all of the claims incurred prior to the termination for membership, so that any reserves could be released sooner. Employers found to be in a deficit position wishing to leave the Health Plan will be required to repay the deficit in full within ninety days of the effective withdrawal date. Additionally, such terminating member will be required to pay any claims incurred prior to termination notification.

B. Fund Accounting

The District uses fund accounting to segregate cash and investments which are restricted to use. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain District functions or activities.

For financial statement presentation purposes, the various funds of the District are grouped into the following generic fund types under the broad fund categories governmental, proprietary, and fiduciary.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

Governmental funds are those through which most governmental functions typically are financed. The following are the District's governmental fund types:

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

Special revenue funds - Special revenue funds are used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources (other than major capital projects and debt service) that are legally restricted to expenditure for specified purposes. The District had the following significant special revenue funds:

Food service fund - This fund is used to account for federal and state monies which assist in cafeteria operations as well as disbursements and receipts related to the sale of lunches and breakfasts to students.

Capital projects funds - The capital projects funds are used to account for financial resources that are restricted or committed for the acquisition or construction of major capital facilities (other than those financed by proprietary funds). The District had the following significant capital projects funds:

Capital projects fund - The capital projects fund is used to accumulate financial resources that are committed to various capital project disbursements.

Permanent improvement fund - The fund is to account for all transactions related to the acquiring, constructing, or improving of such permanent improvements as are authorized by Chapter 5705, Ohio Rev. Code.

PROPRIETARY FUNDS

Proprietary funds are used to account for the District's ongoing activities which are similar to those often found in the private sector. Proprietary funds are classified as either enterprise or internal service. The District has no proprietary funds.

FIDUCIARY FUNDS

Fiduciary fund reporting focuses on net cash position and changes in net cash position. The fiduciary fund category is split into four classifications: pension trust funds, investment trust funds, private-purpose trust funds and custodial funds. Trust funds are used to account for cash assets held by the District under a trust agreement for individuals, private organizations, or other governments and are therefore not available to support the District's own programs. Custodial funds are used to report fiduciary activities that are not required to be reported in a trust fund. The District does not have any trust funds. The District has no fiduciary funds.

C. Basis of Presentation

The District's financial statements consist of a combined statement of receipts, disbursements and changes in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) for all governmental fund types which are organized on a fund type basis.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

D. Basis of Accounting

Although required by Ohio Admin. Code § 117-2-03(B) to prepare its annual financial report in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the District chooses to prepare its financial statements and notes in accordance with standards established by the Auditor of State for governmental entities that are not required to prepare annual financial reports in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. This basis of accounting is referred to as the regulatory cash basis and is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements basis of accounting. Receipts are recognized when received in cash rather than when earned, and disbursements are recognized when paid rather than when a liability is incurred.

As a result of the use of this regulatory 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 this financial statement.

Budgetary presentations report budgetary expenditures when a commitment is made (i.e. when an encumbrance is approved).

E. Budgets

The budgetary process is prescribed by provisions of the Ohio Revised Code and entails the preparation of budgetary documents within an established timetable. The major documents prepared are the tax budget, the certificate of estimated resources, and the appropriations resolution, all of which are prepared on the budgetary basis of accounting. The certificate of estimated resources and the appropriations resolution are subject to amendment throughout the year with the legal restriction that appropriations cannot exceed estimated resources, as certified. All funds are legally required to be budgeted and appropriated. The legal level of budgetary control is at the fund level for all funds. Any budgetary modifications at this level may only be made by resolution of the Board of Education.

Tax Budget:

Prior to January 15, the Superintendent and Treasurer submit to the Board of Education a proposed operating budget for the fiscal year commencing the following July 1. The budget includes proposed expenditures and the means of financing for all funds. Public hearings are publicized and conducted to obtain taxpayers' comments. The purpose of this budget document is to reflect the need for existing (or increased) tax rates. By no later than January 20, the Board-adopted budget is filed with the Ottawa County Budget Commission for rate determination.

Estimated Resources:

By April 1, the Board of Education accepts, by formal resolution, the tax rates as determined by the Budget Commission and receives the Commission's certificate of estimated resources, which states the projected revenue of each fund. Prior to July 1, the District must revise its budget so that total contemplated expenditures from any fund during the ensuing year will not exceed the amount stated in the certificate of estimated resources. The revised budget then serves as the basis for the appropriations measure. On or about July 1, the certificate is amended to include any unencumbered cash balances from the preceding year. The certificate of estimated resources may be further amended during the fiscal year if projected increases or decreases in revenue are identified by the District Treasurer. The amounts reported in Note 10 reflect the amounts in the final amended certificate of estimated resources issued during the fiscal year.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

Appropriations:

Upon receipt from the County Auditor of an amended certificate of estimated resources based on final assessed values and tax rates or a certificate saying no new certificate is necessary, the annual appropriations resolution is enacted by the Board of Education. Prior to the passage of the annual appropriations measure, the Board may pass a temporary appropriations measure to meet the ordinary expenses of the District. The appropriations resolution, by fund, must be within the estimated resources as certified by the County Budget Commission and the total of expenditures may not exceed the appropriation totals at any level of control or the legal level of control. Any revisions that alter the level of budgetary control must be approved by the Board of Education.

The Board may pass supplemental fund appropriations so long as the total appropriations by fund do not exceed the amounts set forth in the most recent certificate of estimated resources. During the fiscal year, all supplemental appropriations were legally enacted.

The appropriations resolution is subject to amendment by the Board throughout the year with the restriction that appropriations may not exceed estimated revenues. The amounts reported in Note 10 as the final budgeted amounts represent the final appropriation amounts passed by the Board.

F. Cash and Investments

To improve cash management, cash received by the District is pooled. Monies for all funds are maintained in this pool. Individual fund integrity is maintained through the District's records.

During fiscal year 2025, investments were limited to negotiable certificates of deposit (negotiable CDs), municipal bonds, U.S. Government money markets, federal agency securities, U.S. Treasury bills, U.S. Treasury notes and investments in the State Treasury Asset Reserve of Ohio (STAR Ohio). In accordance with the cash basis of accounting, investments are reported at cost, except for STAR Ohio.

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

For fiscal year 2025, there were no limitations or restrictions on any participant withdrawals due to redemption notice periods, liquidity fees, or redemption gates. However, 24 hours' notice in advance of all deposits and withdrawals exceeding \$100 million is encouraged. STAR Ohio reserves the right to limit the transaction to \$250 million, requiring the excess amount to be transacted the following business day(s), but only to the \$250 million limit. All accounts of the participant will be combined for these purposes.

Under existing Ohio statutes, all investment earnings are assigned to the general fund unless statutorily required to be credited to a specific fund or by policy of the Board of Education. Interest receipts credited to the general fund during fiscal year 2025 amounted to \$322,157, which includes \$160,505 assigned from other District funds.

For presentation on the financial statements, investments of the cash management pool and investments with original maturities of three months or less at the time they are purchased by the District are considered to be cash equivalents. Investments with an initial maturity of more than three months are reported as investments.

An analysis of the District's investment account at fiscal year-end is provided in Note 4.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

G. Inventory and Prepaid Items

The District reports cash disbursements for inventory and prepaid items when paid. These items are not reflected as assets.

H. Capital Assets

Acquisition of property, plant, and equipment purchased are recorded as cash disbursements when paid. These items are not reflected as assets under the cash basis of accounting. Depreciation has not been reported for any capital assets.

I. Interfund Balances

On the financial statements, the District reports advances in and advances out for interfund loans. These items are not reflected as assets and liabilities under the cash basis of accounting.

J. Accumulated Leave

For fiscal year 2025, GASB Statement No. 101, "Compensated Absences", was effective. GASB 101 defines a compensated absence as leave for which employees may receive cash payments when the leave is used for time off or receive cash payments for unused leave upon termination of employment. These payments could occur during employment or upon termination of employment. Compensated absences generally do not have a set payment schedule. The District does not offer noncash settlements.

District employees earn sick, vacation and personal time that can be used for time off. In certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment or retirement, employees are entitled to cash payments for unused leave.

This GASB pronouncement had no effect on beginning net position/fund balance as unpaid leave is not reflected as a liability under the District's cash basis of accounting.

K. Pensions/Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

For purposes of measuring the net pension/OPEB liability and net OPEB asset, 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.

L. Employer Contributions to Cost-Sharing Pension Plans

The District recognizes the cash disbursements for employer contributions to cost-sharing pension plans when they are paid. As described in Notes 7 and 8, the employer contributions include portions for pension benefits and for postemployment healthcare.

M. Long-Term Obligations

The District's cash basis financial statements do not report liabilities for bonds and other long-term obligations. Proceeds of debt are reported when cash is received and principal and interest payments are reported when paid. Since recording a capital asset (including the intangible right to use) when entering into a lease or financed purchase transaction is not the result of a cash transaction, neither an other financing source nor a capital outlay disbursement is reported at inception. Lease payments and financed purchase payments are reported when paid.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

N. Leases

The District is the lessee in various leases related to equipment under noncancelable leases. Lease receivables/payables are not reflected under the District's cash basis of accounting. Lease receipts/disbursements are recognized when they are received/paid.

O. Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITAs)

The District has Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITAs) under noncancelable arrangements. SBITA liabilities are not reflected under the District's cash basis of accounting. SBITA disbursements are recognized when they are paid.

P. Fund Cash Balance

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

Nonspendable - The nonspendable fund cash balance classification includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are not in spendable form or legally required to be maintained intact. The "not in spendable form" criterion includes items that are not expected to be converted to cash.

Restricted - Fund cash balance is reported as restricted when constraints are placed on the use of resources that are either externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments, or imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

Committed - The committed fund cash balance classification includes amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes imposed by a formal action (resolution) of the District Board of Education (the highest level of decision making authority). Those committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the District 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 cash balance also incorporates contractual obligations to the extent that existing resources in the fund have been specifically committed for use in satisfying those contractual requirements.

Assigned - Amounts in the assigned fund cash balance classification are intended to be used by the District for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted nor committed. In governmental funds other than the general fund, assigned fund cash balance represents the remaining amount that is not restricted or committed. In the general fund, assigned amounts represent intended uses established by policies of the District Board of Education, which includes giving the Treasurer the authority to constrain monies for intended purposes.

Unassigned - Unassigned fund cash 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 only used to report a deficit fund cash balance resulting from overspending for specific purposes for which amounts had been restricted, committed, or assigned.

The District applies restricted resources first when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which restricted and unrestricted (committed, assigned, and unassigned) fund cash balance is available. Similarly, within unrestricted fund cash balance, committed amounts are reduced first followed by assigned, and then unassigned amounts when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund cash balance classifications could be used.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES - (Continued)

Q. Interfund Activity

Exchange transactions between funds are reported as receipts in the seller funds and as disbursements in the purchaser funds. Flows of cash or goods 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. Repayments from funds responsible for particular disbursements to the funds that initially paid for them are not presented on the financial statements.

R. Extraordinary and 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 the Board of Education and that are either unusual in nature or infrequent in occurrence. Neither type of transaction occurred during fiscal year 2025.

S. Total Columns on Financial Statements

The total column on the financial statements is captioned "Totals (Memorandum Only)" to indicate that it is presented only to facilitate financial analysis. This data is not comparable to a consolidation. Interfund type eliminations have not been made in the aggregation of this data.

NOTE 3 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE

A. Change in Accounting Principles

For fiscal year 2025, the District has implemented GASB Statement No. 101, "Compensated Absences" and GASB Statement No. 102, "Certain Risk Disclosures".

GASB Statement No. 101 is to better meet the information needs of financial statement users by updating the recognition and measurement guidance for compensated absences. That objective is achieved by aligning the recognition and measurement guidance under a unified model and by amending certain previously required disclosures. The implementation of GASB Statement No. 101 did not have an effect on the financial statements of the District.

GASB Statement No. 102 improves financial reporting by providing users with timely information regarding certain concentrations or constraints and related events that have occurred or have begun to occur that make a government vulnerable to a substantial impact. As a result, users will have better information with which to understand and anticipate certain risks to a government's financial condition. The implementation of GASB Statement No. 102 did not have an effect on the financial statements of the District.

B. Compliance

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

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 3 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE – (Continued)

C. Deficit Fund Balances

Fund balances at June 30, 2025 included the following individual fund deficits:

<u>Nonmajor governmental funds:</u>	<u>Deficit</u>
Title VI-B	\$ 60,744
Title I	23,412

The deficit fund balances resulted from a lag between disbursements made by the District and reimbursements from grantors and are allowable under Ohio Revised Code Section 3315.20.

D. Restatement of Fund Balance - Error Correction

Fund balances at July 1, 2024 have been restated due to a receipt that was posted in July 2024, which should have been posted in June 2024 and reflected in the June 30, 2024 fund balances. The table below summarizes the effect of this restatement:

	<u>Governmental Fund Types</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Capital Projects</u>	
Fund cash balances at June 30, 2024	\$ 11,224,782	\$ 757,556	\$ 13,679,699	\$ 25,662,037
Restatement - error correction	1,526,202	-	-	1,526,202
Fund cash balances at July 1, 2024	<u>\$ 12,750,984</u>	<u>\$ 757,556</u>	<u>\$ 13,679,699</u>	<u>\$ 27,188,239</u>

NOTE 4 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS

State statutes classify monies held by the District into three categories.

Active deposits are public deposits necessary to meet current demands on the treasury. Such monies must be maintained either as cash in the District 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 that 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.

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

1. United States Treasury Notes, Bills, Bonds, or any other obligation or security issued by the United States Treasury or any other obligation guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States;

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 4 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS - (Continued)

2. Bonds, notes, debentures, or any other obligations or securities issued by any federal government agency or instrumentality, including, but not limited to, the Federal National Mortgage Association, Federal Home Loan Bank, Federal Farm Credit Bank, Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, Government National Mortgage Association, and Student Loan Marketing Association. All federal agency securities shall be direct issuances of federal government agencies or instrumentalities;
3. Written repurchase agreements in the securities listed above provided that the fair value of the securities subject to the repurchase agreement must exceed the principal value of the agreement by at least two percent and be marked to market daily, and that the term of the agreement must not exceed thirty days;
4. Bonds and other obligations of the State of Ohio, and with certain limitations including a requirement for maturity within ten years from the date of settlement, bonds and other obligations of political subdivisions of the State of Ohio, if training requirements have been met;
5. 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 items (1) and (2) above 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, the State Treasury Asset Reserve of Ohio (STAR Ohio);
8. Certain banker's acceptance (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 forty percent of the interim monies available for investment at any one time if training requirements have been met.

Protection of the District's deposits is provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), by eligible securities pledged by the financial institution as security for repayment, or by the financial institutions participation in the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OCPS), 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.

Investments in stripped principal or interest obligations, reverse repurchase agreements and derivatives are prohibited. The issuance of taxable notes for the purpose of arbitrage, the use of leverage and short selling are also prohibited. Except as noted above, an investment must mature within five years from the date of purchase unless matched to a specific obligation or debt of the District, and must be purchased with the expectation that it will be held to maturity. Investments may only be made through specified dealers and institutions. Payment for investments may be made only upon delivery of the securities representing the investments to the Treasurer or, if the securities are not represented by a certificate, upon receipt of confirmation of transfer from the custodian.

A. Cash in Segregated Accounts

At June 30, 2025, the District had \$7,151 on deposit with Croghan Colonial Bank.

B. Deposits with Financial Institutions

At June 30, 2025, the carrying amount of all District deposits was \$9,670,580 and the bank balance of all District deposits was \$11,047,415. Of the bank balance, \$504,942 was covered by the FDIC and \$10,542,473 was collateralized through the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS).

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 4 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS - (Continued)

Custodial credit risk is the risk that, in the event of bank failure, the District will not be able to recover deposits or collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party. The District has no deposit policy for custodial credit risk beyond the requirements of State statute. Ohio law requires that deposits either be insured or protected by (1) eligible securities pledged to the District and deposited with a qualified trustee by the financial institution as security for repayment whose fair value at all times shall be at least 105 percent of the deposits being secured, or (2) participation in the 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 fair value of the securities pledged to be 102 percent of the deposits being secured or a rate set by the Treasurer of State. Although all statutory requirements for the deposit of money had been followed, noncompliance with Federal requirements could potentially subject the District to a successful claim by the FDIC.

C. Investments

As of June 30, 2025, the District had the following investments and maturities:

Investment Type	Carrying Value	Investment Maturities				
		6 Months or Less	7 to 12 Months	13 to 18 Months	19 to 24 Months	Greater than 24 Months
STAR Ohio	\$ 7,370,206	\$ 7,370,206	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Negotiable CDs	2,380,850	249,000	645,850	-	247,000	1,239,000
Municipal bonds	2,659,630	169,577	-	-	484,355	2,005,698
FFCB	299,345	-	-	-	-	299,345
FNMA	1,399,747	-	-	-	1,056,572	343,175
FHLB	4,839,895	500,000	355,000	400,000	1,840,028	1,744,867
FHLMC	1,198,183	-	-	-	-	1,198,183
US Treasury bills	119,149	119,149	-	-	-	-
US Treasury notes	1,239,491	299,070	149,863	-	-	790,558
US Govt money markets	703,141	703,141	-	-	-	-
Total	<u>\$ 22,209,637</u>	<u>\$ 9,410,143</u>	<u>\$ 1,150,713</u>	<u>\$ 400,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,627,955</u>	<u>\$ 7,620,826</u>

The weighted average maturity of investments is 1.53 years.

Interest Rate Risk: Interest rate risk arises when potential purchasers of debt securities will not agree to pay face value for those securities if interest rates subsequently increase. As a means of limiting its exposure to fair value losses arising from rising interest rates and according to State law, the District's investment policy limits investment portfolio maturities to five years or less.

Credit Risk: STAR Ohio and the U.S. Government money market carry a rating of AAAm by Standard & Poor's. Ohio law requires that STAR Ohio maintain the highest rating provided by at least one nationally recognized standard rating service. The federal agency securities, U.S. Treasury bills and U.S. Treasury notes were rated AA+ and Aa1 by Standard and Poor's and Moody's Investor Services, respectively. The municipal bonds are rated AA by Standard and Poor's. The negotiable CDs were not rated but are fully insured by the FDIC. The District's investment policy does not address credit risk beyond the requirements of State statutes.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 4 - DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS - (Continued)

Custodial Credit Risk: For an investment, custodial credit risk is the risk that, in the event of the failure of the counterparty, the District will not be able to recover the value of its investments or collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party. The federal agency securities, U.S. Treasury bills and U.S. Treasury notes are exposed to custodial credit risk in that it is uninsured, unregistered and held by the counterparty's trust department or agent but not in the District's name. The District has no investment policy dealing with investment custodial credit risk beyond the requirement in State statute that prohibits payment for investments prior to the delivery of the securities representing such investments to the Treasurer or qualified trustee.

Concentration of Credit Risk: The District places no limit on the amount that may be invested in any one issuer. The following table includes the percentage of each investment type held by the District at June 30, 2025:

<u>Investment Type</u>	<u>Carrying Value</u>	<u>% to Total</u>
STAR Ohio	\$ 7,370,206	33.18
Negotiable CDs	2,380,850	10.72
Municipal bonds	2,659,630	11.98
FFCB	299,345	1.35
FNMA	1,399,747	6.30
FHLB	4,839,895	21.79
FHLMC	1,198,183	5.39
US Treasury bills	119,149	0.54
US Treasury notes	1,239,491	5.58
US Govt money markets	703,141	3.17
Total	<u>\$ 22,209,637</u>	<u>100.00</u>

E. Reconciliation of Cash and Investments to the Statements of Receipts, Disbursements and Changes on Fund Cash Balances (Regulatory Cash Basis)

The following is a reconciliation of cash and investments as reported in the note disclosure above to cash and investments as reported on the financial statements as of June 30, 2025:

Cash and investments per note disclosure

Carrying amount of deposits	\$ 9,670,580
Investments	<u>22,209,637</u>
Total	<u>\$ 31,880,217</u>

Fund balances per financial statements

Governmental fund types	<u>\$ 31,880,217</u>
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**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 5 - PROPERTY TAXES

Property taxes are levied and assessed on a calendar year basis while the District fiscal year runs from July through June. First half tax collections are received by the District in the second half of the fiscal year. Second half tax distributions occur in the first half of the following fiscal year.

Property taxes include amounts levied against all real property and public utility property. Real property tax receipts received in calendar year 2025 represent the collection of calendar year 2024 taxes. Real property taxes received in calendar year 2025 were levied after April 1, 2024, on the assessed values as of January 1, 2024, the lien date. Assessed values for real property taxes are established by State statute at 35 percent of appraised fair value. Real property taxes are payable annually or semiannually. If paid annually, payment is due December 31; if paid semiannually, the first payment is due December 31, with the remainder payable by June 20. Under certain circumstances, State statute permits alternate payment dates to be established. Public utility property tax receipts received in calendar year 2025 represent the collection of calendar year 2024 taxes. Public utility real and personal property taxes received in calendar year 2025 became a lien on December 31, 2022, were levied after April 1, 2023, and are collected with real property taxes. Public utility real property is assessed at 35 percent of true value; public utility tangible personal property is currently assessed at varying percentages of true value.

The District receives property taxes from Ottawa County. The County Auditor periodically advances to the District its portion of the taxes collected. Second-half real property tax payments collected by the County by June 30, 2025, are available to finance fiscal year 2025 operations. The amount of second-half real property taxes available for advance at fiscal year end can vary based on the date the tax bills are sent.

The assessed values upon which the fiscal year 2025 taxes were collected are:

	2024 Second Half Collections		2025 First Half Collections	
	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Agricultural/residential and other real estate	\$ 331,431,960	86.04	\$ 459,033,440	88.56
Public utility personal	<u>53,786,270</u>	<u>13.96</u>	<u>59,313,340</u>	<u>11.44</u>
Total	<u>\$ 385,218,230</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>\$ 518,346,780</u>	<u>100.00</u>
Tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for:				
General operations	\$40.43		\$38.48	
Permanent improvement	\$1.50		\$1.50	

NOTE 6 - RISK MANAGEMENT

A. Property and Liability

The District is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disasters. For fiscal year 2025, the District contracted with the Ohio School Plan (OSP) for property, crime, general liability, auto liability/physical damage, and educator's legal liability insurances. The limit of liability coverage is \$1,000,000, with a \$3,000,000 annual aggregate under general liability. There is no deductible for any liability loss except under the educator's legal liability, which is subject to a \$5,000 deductible. Settled claims have not exceeded this commercial coverage in any of the past three fiscal years. There have been no significant reductions in insurance coverage from fiscal year 2024.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 6 - RISK MANAGEMENT - (Continued)

B. OASBO Workers' Compensation Group Rating

For fiscal year 2025, the District participated in the Ohio Association of School Business Officials Workers' Compensation Group Rating Plan (GRP) (See Note 2.A.), an insurance purchasing pool. The intent of the GRP is to achieve the benefit of a reduced premium for the District by virtue of its grouping and representation with other participants in the GRP. The workers' compensation experience of the participating school districts is calculated as one experience, and a common premium rate is applied to all school districts in the GRP. Each participant pays its workers' compensation premium to the State based on the rate for the GRP rather than its individual rate. Participation in the GRP is limited to school districts that can meet the GRP's selection criteria. The firm of CompManagement, Inc. provides administrative, cost control and actuarial services to the GRP.

C. Group Health Insurance

The District has joined together with other school districts in the area to form the San-Ott Insurance Consortium (the Consortium), whose purpose is to provide health coverage and benefits to and for the eligible employees of Consortium members and their dependents. The District pays premiums to the Consortium based upon the benefits structure selected.

The Consortium utilizes the Jefferson Health Plan (the Health Plan) (See Note 2.A.), whose purpose is to provide health coverage and other insurance benefits to and for the eligible employees of Health Plan members and their dependents. The District pays premiums to the Health Plan based upon the benefits structure selected. The District's agreement with the Health Plan provides that the Health Plan will be self-sustaining through member premiums and will reinsure through the Health Plan for specific claims in excess of \$150,000.

NOTE 7 - 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.

The net pension/OPEB liability/asset represent the District'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/OPEB 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 these estimates annually.

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

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)

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 8 for the required OPEB disclosures.

Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)

Plan Description - The District's non-teaching employees participate in SERS, a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by SERS. SERS provides retirement, disability and survivor benefits, annual cost-of-living adjustments, and death 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; or 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 will be included in this plan.

Annual retirement benefits are calculated based on final average salary multiplied by a percentage that varies based on years of service; 2.2% for the first thirty years of service and 2.5% 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. Beginning April 1, 2018, 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% and with a floor of 0%. A three-year COLA suspension was in effect for all benefit recipients for the years 2018, 2019, and 2020. The Retirement Board approved a 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for calendar year 2024.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)

Funding Policy - Plan members are required to contribute 10.00% of their annual covered salary and the District is required to contribute 14.00% 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 10.00% for plan members and 14.00% 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, 2025, the allocation to pension, death benefits, and Medicare B was 14.00%. For fiscal year 2025, the Retirement Board did not allocate any employer contribution to the Health Care Fund.

The District's contractually required contribution to SERS was \$416,522 for fiscal year 2025.

Plan Description - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS)

Plan Description - Licensed teachers participate in STRS, 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 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3771, by calling (888) 227-7877, or by visiting the STRS website 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 (CO) 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. The calculation is 2.2 percent of final average salary for the five highest years of earnings multiplied by all years of credited service. Effective August 1, 2023, any member can retire with unreduced benefits with 34 years of services credit at any age; or five years of service credit and age 65. Effective June 1, 2025 - July 1, 2027, any member can retire with unreduced benefits with 33 years of service credit at any age; or five years of service credit and age 65. Effective on or after August 1, 2027, any member can retire with unreduced benefits with 34 years of service credit at any age; or five years of service credit and age 65.

In April 2017, the Retirement Board made the decision to reduce COLA granted on or after July 1, 2017, to 0% upon a determination by its actuary that it was necessary to preserve the fiscal integrity of the retirement system. Benefit recipients' base benefit and past cost-of-living increases are not affected by this change. Effective July 1, 2022, a one-time ad-hoc COLA of 3% of the base benefit was granted to eligible benefit recipients to begin on the anniversary of their retirement benefit in fiscal year 2023 as long as they retired prior to July 1, 2018. Effective July 1, 2023, a one-time ad-hoc COLA of 1% of the base benefit was granted to eligible benefit recipients to begin on the anniversary of their retirement benefit in fiscal year 2024 as long as they retired prior to July 1, 2019.

Eligibility changes for DB Plan members who retire with actuarially reduced benefits effective August 1, 2023, can retire with 29 years of service credit at any age; or five years of service credit and age 60. Effective June 1, 2025 - July 1, 2027, retirement eligibility for reduced benefits is 28 years of service credit at any age; or five years of service credit and age 60. Effective on or after August 1, 2027, retirement eligibility for reduced benefits is 29 years of service credit at any age; or five years of service credit and age 60.

The DC Plan allows members to place all of their member contributions and 11.09% of the 14% 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% of the 14% 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.

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NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)

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

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

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

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 fiscal year 2025 employer and employee contribution rate of 14% was equal to the statutory maximum rates. For fiscal year 2025, the full employer contribution was allocated to pension.

The District's contractually required contribution to STRS was \$1,296,747 for fiscal year 2025.

Net Pension Liability

The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2024, and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The District's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the District's share of contributions to the pension plan relative to the contributions of all participating entities.

Following is information related to the proportionate share:

	SERS	STRS	Total
Proportion of the net pension liability prior measurement date	0.075412700%	0.064315730%	
Proportion of the net pension liability current measurement date	<u>0.075391400%</u>	<u>0.061380390%</u>	
Change in proportionate share	<u>-0.000021300%</u>	<u>-0.002935340%</u>	
Proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 3,856,720	\$ 11,810,579	\$ 15,667,299

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)

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 2137.

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

Key methods and assumptions used in calculating the total pension liability in the latest actuarial valuation, prepared as of June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2023, are presented below:

	June 30, 2024	June 30, 2023
Inflation	2.40%	2.40%
Future salary increases, including inflation	3.25% to 13.58%	3.25% to 13.58%
COLA or ad hoc COLA	2.00% on or after April 1, 2018, COLAs for future retirees will be delayed for 3 years following commencement	2.00% on or after April 1, 2018, COLAs for future retirees will be delayed for 3 years following commencement
Investment rate of return	7.00% net of system expenses	7.00% net of system expenses
Discount rate	7.00%	7.00%
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal	Entry age normal

In 2024, mortality rates were based on the following:

Service Retirement: 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% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

Disabled Retirement: PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 5 years and adjusted 103.3% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

Contingent Survivor: PUB-2010 General Amount Weighted Below Median Contingent Survivor mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 105.5% for males and adjusted 122.5% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)

In the prior measurement date, mortality rates 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% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% 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% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females. Future improvement in mortality rates is reflected by applying the MP-2020 projection scale generationally.

The most recent experience study was completed for the five-year period ended June 30, 2020.

The long-term return expectation for the Pension Plan Investments has been determined by using a building-block approach and assumes a time horizon, as defined in SERS' *Statement of Investment Policy*. Ohio Revised Code Section 3309.15 and the Board-adopted Investment Policy govern investment activity at SERS. 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 a 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.

As of June 30, 2024:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Target Allocation</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return (geometric)</u>
Cash	3.00 %	0.97 %
US Equity	22.00	4.68
Non-US Equity Developed	12.00	4.96
Non-US Equity Emerging	6.00	5.66
Fixed Income/Global Bonds	18.00	2.38
Private Equity	14.00	7.10
Real Estate	13.00	3.64
Infrastructure	7.00	4.80
Private Debt/Private Credit	5.00	5.86
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>	

Discount Rate - Total pension liability for 2024 was calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%. The discount rate determination did 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 20-year amortization period of the unfunded actuarial accrued liability. The actuarially determined contribution rate for fiscal year 2024 was 14%. Projected inflows from investment earnings were calculated using the long-term assumed investment rate of return, 7.00%. 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 2024 was 9.31%.

Sensitivity of the District'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 proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%, as well as what the 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%), or one percentage point higher (8.00%) than the current rate.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)

	1% Decrease	Current Discount Rate	1% Increase
District's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 5,900,247	\$ 3,856,720	\$ 2,136,180

Actuarial Assumptions - STRS

Key methods and assumptions used in the latest actuarial valuation, reflecting experience study results used in the June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2023, actuarial valuations are presented below:

	June 30, 2024	June 30, 2023
Inflation	2.50%	2.50%
Projected salary increases	Varies by service from 2.50% to 8.50%	Varies by service from 2.50% to 8.50%
Investment rate of return	7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation	7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation
Discount rate of return	7.00%	7.00%
Payroll increases	3.00%	3.00%
Cost-of-living adjustments (COLA)	0%, effective July 1, 2017	0%, effective July 1, 2017

For the June 30, 2024 actuarial valuation, post-retirement mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110% 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% for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020. Post-retirement disabled mortality rates are based on Pub-2010 Teachers Disabled Annuitant Table projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020.

For the prior measurement date, post-retirement mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110% 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% for females, projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020. Post-retirement disabled mortality rates are based on Pub-2010 Teachers Disabled Annuitant Table projected forward generationally using mortality improvement scale MP-2020.

Actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2024 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.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 7 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLANS - (Continued)

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 Real Rate of Return **
Domestic Equity	26.00 %	6.90 %
International Equity	22.00	7.70
Alternatives	19.00	9.10
Fixed Income	22.00	4.50
Real Estate	10.00	5.10
Liquidity Reserves	1.00	2.40
Total	100.00 %	

* Final target weights reflected at October 1, 2022.

**10-Year annualized geometric nominal returns, which include the real rate of return and inflation of 2.40% 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% as of June 30, 2024. 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 the rates described previously. 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, 2024. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments of 7.00% was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability as of June 30, 2024.

Sensitivity of the District's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate - The following table represents the proportionate share of the net pension liability as of June 30, 2023, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00%, as well as what the 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%) or one percentage point higher (8.00%) than the current assumption:

	1% Decrease	Current Discount Rate	1% Increase
District's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 19,052,533	\$ 11,810,579	\$ 5,685,129

Assumption and Benefit Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date - The discount rate remained at 7.00% for June 30, 2024 valuation.

Retirement rates were extended to younger ages intended to ensure that the ranges in retirement eligibility impacted participants at such ages.

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

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS

Net OPEB Liability/Asset

See Note 8 for a description of the net OPEB liability/asset.

Plan Description - School Employees Retirement System (SERS)

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

The Health Care program is financed through a combination of employer contributions, recipient premiums, investment returns, and any funds received on behalf of SERS' participation in Medicare programs. The System's goal is to maintain a health care reserve account with a 20-year solvency period in order to ensure that fluctuations in the cost of health care do not cause an interruption in the program. However, during any period in which the 20-year solvency period is not achieved, the System shall manage the Health Care Fund on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Access to health care for retirees and beneficiaries is permitted in accordance with Section 3309 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Health Care Fund was established and is administered in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 105(e). SERS' Retirement Board reserves the right to change or discontinue any health plan or program. Active employee members do not contribute to the Health Care Plan. The SERS Retirement Board established the rules for the premiums paid by the retirees for health care coverage for themselves and their dependents or for their surviving beneficiaries. Premiums vary depending on the plan selected, qualified years of service, Medicare eligibility, and retirement status.

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% of covered payroll to the Health Care Fund in accordance with the funding policy. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, SERS did not allocate any employer contributions to post-employment 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 2025, this amount was \$30,000. Statutes provide that no employer shall pay a health care surcharge greater than 2% of that employer's SERS-covered payroll; nor may SERS collect in aggregate more than 1.5% of the total statewide SERS-covered payroll for the health care surcharge. For fiscal year 2025, the District's surcharge obligation was \$52,545.

The surcharge added to the allocated portion of the 14% employer contribution rate is the total amount assigned to the Health Care Fund. The District's contractually required contribution to SERS was \$52,545 for fiscal year 2025.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)

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. Health care premiums were reduced by a Medicare Part B premium credit beginning in 2023. The Plan is included in the report of STRS which can be obtained by visiting www.strsoh.org or by calling (888) 227-7877.

Medicare Part D is a federal program to help cover the costs of prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries. This program allows STRS Ohio to recover part of the cost for providing prescription coverage since all eligible STRS Ohio health care plans include creditable prescription drug coverage.

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. All benefit recipients 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% of covered payroll. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, 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, 2024, and the total OPEB liability used to calculate the net OPEB liability/asset was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The District's proportion of the net OPEB liability/asset was based on the District'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>	<u>Total</u>
Proportion of the net OPEB			
liability/asset prior measurement date	0.077306600%	0.064315730%	
Proportion of the net OPEB			
liability/asset current measurement date	<u>0.076409100%</u>	<u>0.061380390%</u>	
Change in proportionate share	<u>-0.000897500%</u>	<u>-0.002935340%</u>	
Proportionate share of the net			
OPEB liability	\$ 778,223	\$ -	\$ 778,223
Proportionate share of the net			
OPEB asset	\$ -	\$ (1,164,269)	\$ (1,164,269)

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.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)

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, 2024 and June 30, 2023 are presented below:

	June 30, 2024	June 30, 2023
Inflation	2.40%	2.40%
Future salary increases, including inflation	3.25% to 13.58%	3.25% to 13.58%
Investment rate of return	7.00% net of investment expense, including inflation	7.00% net of investment expense, including inflation
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal (Level percent of payroll)	Entry age normal (Level percent of payroll)
Fiduciary net position is project to be depleted	2059	2048
Municipal bond index rate	3.93%	3.86%
Single equivalent interest rate, net of plan investment expense, including price inflation	4.88%	4.27%
Medical trend assumption	7.00 to 4.40%	6.75 to 4.40%

In 2024, the following mortality assumptions were used:

Healthy Retirees - 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% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% for females.

Disabled Retirees - PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 5 years and adjusted 103.3% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females.

Contingent Survivors - PUB-2010 General Amount Weighted Below Median Contingent Survivor mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 105.5% for males and adjusted 122.5% for females.

Actives - PUB-2010 General Amount Weighted Below Median Employee mortality table.

Mortality Projection - Mortality rates are projected using a fully generational projection with Scale MP-2020.

In the prior measurement date, the following mortality assumptions were used:

Healthy Retirees - 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% for males and set forward 2 years and adjusted 81.35% for females.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)

Disabled Retirees - PUB-2010 General Disabled Retiree mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 5 years and adjusted 103.3% for males and set forward 3 years and adjusted 106.8% for females.

Contingent Survivors - PUB-2010 General Amount Weighted Below Median Contingent Survivor mortality table projected to 2017 with ages set forward 1 year and adjusted 105.5% for males and adjusted 122.5% for females.

Actives - PUB-2010 General Amount Weighted Below Median Employee mortality table.

Mortality Projection - Mortality rates are projected using a fully generational projection with Scale MP-2020.

The most recent experience study was completed for the five-year period ended June 30, 2020.

The long-term expected rate on plan assets of return on plan assets is reviewed as part of the regular experience studies prepared every five years for SERS. The most recent five-year experience study was performed for the period covering 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 long-normal distribution analysis in which best estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected return, net of investment expense and inflation) were developed by the investment consultant for each major asset class. These ranges were combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return, 7.00%, by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and then adding expected inflation. 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 long-term expected nominal rate of return has been determined by calculating a 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.

As June 30, 2024:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Target Allocation</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return (geometric)</u>
Cash	3.00 %	0.97 %
US Equity	22.00	4.68
Non-US Equity Developed	12.00	4.96
Non-US Equity Emerging	6.00	5.66
Fixed Income/Global Bonds	18.00	2.38
Private Equity	14.00	7.10
Real Estate	13.00	3.64
Infrastructure	7.00	4.80
Private Debt/Private Credit	5.00	5.86
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>	

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)

Discount Rate - The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability at June 30, 2024, was 4.88%. The discount rate used to measure total OPEB liability prior to June 30, 2024, was 4.27%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions will be made from members and the System at the contribution rate of 1.50% of projected covered payroll each year, which includes a 1.50% payroll surcharge and no contributions from the basic benefits plan. Based on these assumptions, the OPEB plan's fiduciary net position is projected to be depleted in 2059 by SERS' actuaries. The Fidelity General Obligation 20-year Municipal Bond Index Rate was used in the determination of the single equivalent interest rate for both the June 30, 2023 and the June 30, 2024 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 was 3.93% at June 30, 2024 and 3.86% at June 30, 2023.

Sensitivity of the District'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 proportionate share of the net OPEB liability, what the proportionate share of the net OPEB liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1 percentage point lower (3.88%) and higher (5.88%) than the current discount rate (4.88%). Also shown is what the proportionate share of the net OPEB liability would be based on health care cost trend rates that are 1 percentage point lower (6.00% decreasing to 3.40%) and higher (8.00% decreasing to 5.40%) than the current rate (7.00% decreasing to 4.40%).

	1% Decrease	Current Discount Rate	1% Increase
District's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability	\$ 1,037,733	\$ 778,223	\$ 572,008

	1% Decrease	Current Trend Rate	1% Increase
District's proportionate share of the net OPEB liability	\$ 526,050	\$ 778,223	\$ 1,109,685

Actuarial Assumptions - STRS

Key methods and assumptions used in the latest actuarial valuation, reflecting experience study results used in the June 30, 2024 actuarial valuation, compared with June 30, 2023 actuarial valuation, are presented below:

	June 30, 2024		June 30, 2023	
Projected salary increases	Varies by service from 2.50% to 8.50%		Varies by service from 2.50% to 8.50%	
Investment rate of return	7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation		7.00%, net of investment expenses, including inflation	
Payroll increases	3.00%		3.00%	
Discount rate of return	7.00%		7.00%	
Health care cost trends				
	Initial	Ultimate	Initial	Ultimate
Medical				
Pre-Medicare	7.50%	3.94%	7.50%	4.14%
Medicare	-112.22%	3.94%	-10.94%	4.14%
Prescription Drug				
Pre-Medicare	8.00%	3.94%	-11.95%	4.14%
Medicare	-15.14%	3.94%	1.33%	4.14%

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)

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

For the June 30, 2024 actuarial valuation, for healthy retirees the post-retirement mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110% 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% 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.

For the prior measurement date, for healthy retirees the post-retirement mortality rates are based on the Pub-2010 Teachers Healthy Annuitant Mortality Table, adjusted 110% 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% 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, 2024 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.

Assumption Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date - The discount rate remained unchanged at 7.00% for the June 30, 2024 valuation.

Benefit Term Changes Since the Prior Measurement Date - Healthcare trends were updated to reflect emerging claims and recoveries experience as well as benefit changes effective January 1, 2025. The larger Medicare trends for Years 2027 and 2028 reflect the assumed impact of the expiration of current Medicare Advantage contract on December 31, 2028.

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

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Target Allocation*</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return **</u>
Domestic Equity	26.00 %	6.90 %
International Equity	22.00	7.70
Alternatives	19.00	9.10
Fixed Income	22.00	4.50
Real Estate	10.00	5.10
Liquidity Reserves	1.00	2.40
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 2.40% 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.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

NOTE 8 - DEFINED BENEFIT OPEB PLANS - (Continued)

Discount Rate - The discount rate used to measure the total OPEB liability was 7.00% as of June 30, 2024. 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 as of June 30, 2024. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on health care fund investments of 7.00% was applied to all periods of projected health care costs to determine the total OPEB liability as of June 30, 2024.

Sensitivity of the District's Proportionate Share of the Net OPEB Asset to Changes in the Discount and Health Care Cost Trend Rate - The following table represents the net OPEB asset as of June 30, 2024, calculated using the current period discount rate assumption of 7.00%, as well as what the proportionate share of the net OPEB asset would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (6.00%) or one percentage point higher (8.00%) than the current assumption. Also shown is the proportionate share of the net OPEB asset as if it were calculated using health care cost trend rates that are one percentage point lower or one percentage point higher than the current health care cost trend rates.

	<u>1% Decrease</u>	<u>Discount Rate</u>	<u>1% Increase</u>
District's proportionate share of the net OPEB asset	\$ 946,627	\$ 1,164,269	\$ 1,353,664

	<u>1% Decrease</u>	<u>Current Trend Rate</u>	<u>1% Increase</u>
District's proportionate share of the net OPEB asset	\$ 1,366,458	\$ 1,164,269	\$ 921,110

NOTE 9 - OTHER EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Retirement Incentive

The District has entered into a retirement incentive plan whereby, upon election, teachers or administrators reaching their first year of retirement eligibility (with a minimum of thirty years of service credit with STRS Ohio, and no fewer than ten years of service with the District by the effective date of retirement) are entitled to receive, in addition to the retirement pay currently provided under the labor agreement, the amount of \$10,000.

The retirees are entitled to receive the \$10,000 beginning in January of the calendar year following the year of retirement. The retirement incentive cash disbursements will be paid out of the fund from which the employee was paid.

NOTE 10 - BUDGETARY BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

Budgetary activity for the year ended June 30, 2025 follows:

Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts

Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$ 22,791,413	\$ 25,039,189	\$ 2,247,776
Special Revenue	3,081,789	2,184,027	(897,762)
Capital Projects	2,325,456	4,512,134	2,186,678
Total	<u>\$ 28,198,658</u>	<u>\$ 31,735,350</u>	<u>\$ 3,536,692</u>

Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Disbursements

Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Disbursements	Variance
General	\$ 26,927,076	\$ 25,271,841	\$ (1,655,235)
Special Revenue	2,609,053	2,197,027	(412,026)
Capital Projects	6,723,618	639,267	(6,084,351)
Total	<u>\$ 36,259,747</u>	<u>\$ 28,108,135</u>	<u>\$ (8,151,612)</u>

On the financial statements, the general fund receipts and disbursements include certain special revenue funds activities in accordance with GASB 54. These special revenue funds are included in the general fund activity presented above.

NOTE 11 - CONTINGENCIES

A. Grants

The District receives significant financial assistance from numerous federal, State and local 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 District. However, in the opinion of management, any such disallowed claims will not have a material effect on the financial position of the District.

B. Litigation

The District is not party to any legal proceedings that would have a material effect, if any, on the financial condition of the District.

C. Foundation Funding

Foundation funding is based on the annualized full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment of each student. Traditional districts must comply with minimum hours of instruction, instead of a minimum number of school days each year. The funding formula the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) is legislatively required to follow will continue to adjust as enrollment information is updated by the District, which can extend past the fiscal year-end. As a result of the final fiscal year 2025 FTE reviews, an immaterial intergovernmental receivable was due to the District.

NOTE 12 - SET-ASIDES

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY, OHIO**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

The District is required by State law to annually set-aside certain general fund cash receipt amounts, as defined by statutory formula, for the acquisition and construction of capital improvements. Amounts not spent by the end of the fiscal year or offset by similarly restricted resources received during the year must be held in cash at fiscal year end. This amount must be carried forward to be used for the same purpose in future years. Disbursements and other applicable offsets exceeding the set-aside requirement may not be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

The following cash-basis information describes the change in the fiscal year end set-aside amount for capital improvements. Disclosure of this information is required by State statute.

	<u>Capital Improvements</u>
Set-aside balance June 30, 2024	\$ -
Current year set-aside requirement	312,599
Qualifying disbursements	(441,395)
Current year offsets	(353,285)
Total	<u>\$ (482,081)</u>
Balance carried forward to fiscal year 2026	<u>\$ -</u>
Set-aside balance June 30, 2025	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>

NOTE 13 - INTERFUND TRANSACTIONS

Interfund transfers during fiscal year 2025 consisted of the following, as reported on the financial statements:

<u>Transfers from general fund to:</u>	<u>Amount</u>
District managed student activity fund (special revenue)	\$ 350,000
Capital projects fund (capital projects)	<u>3,300,000</u>
Total	<u><u>\$ 3,650,000</u></u>

Transfers are used to (1) move cash receipts from the fund that statute or budget requires to collect them to the fund that statute or budget requires to disburse them, and (2) to use unrestricted cash receipts collected in the general fund to finance various programs accounted for in other funds in accordance with budgetary authorizations. All transfers were made in compliance with Ohio Revised Code Sections 5705.14, 5705.15 and 5705.16.

NOTE 14 - OTHER COMMITMENTS

The District utilizes encumbrance accounting as part of its budgetary controls. Encumbrances outstanding at year-end are reservations of fund balance for subsequent-year disbursements and may be reported as part of restricted, committed, or assigned classifications of fund balance. At year end, the District's commitments for encumbrances in the governmental funds were as follows:

<u>Fund Type</u>	<u>Year-End Encumbrances</u>
General	\$ 822,501
Special revenue	226,412
Capital projects	<u>15,850</u>
Total	<u><u>\$ 1,064,763</u></u>

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

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 and Workforce</i>		
<u>Child Nutrition Cluster:</u>		
School Breakfast Program	10.553	\$ 76,992
National School Lunch Program	10.555	293,084
Non-Cash Assistance (Food Distribution)	10.555	57,245
Total National School Lunch Program		350,329
Total Child Nutrition Cluster		427,321
Total U.S. Department of Agriculture		427,321
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION		
<i>Passed Through Ohio Department of Education and Workforce</i>		
Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	84.010A	194,238
<u>Special Education Cluster (IDEA):</u>		
Special Education Grant to States	84.027A	361,919
Total Special Education Cluster (IDEA)		361,919
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants	84.367A	54,018
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program	84.424A	29,950
Total U.S. Department of Education		640,125
Total Expenditures of Federal Awards		\$ 1,067,446

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this schedule.

**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
2 CFR 200.510(b)(6)
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

NOTE A - BASIS OF PRESENTATION

The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (the Schedule) includes the federal award activity of Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District, Ottawa County, Ohio (the District) under programs of the federal government for the year ended June 30, 2025. 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 District, it is not intended to and does not present the fund balances or changes in fund balances of the District.

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 District has elected not to use the 15-percent de minimis indirect cost rate as allowed under the Uniform Guidance.

NOTE D - CHILD NUTRITION CLUSTER

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

NOTE E - FOOD DONATION PROGRAM

The District reports commodities consumed on the Schedule at the entitlement value. The District allocated donated food commodities to the respective program that benefitted from the use of those donated food commodities.

NOTE F - TRANSFERS BETWEEN PROGRAM YEARS

Federal regulations require schools to obligate certain federal awards by June 30. However, with Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's consent, schools can transfer unobligated amounts to the subsequent fiscal year's program. The District transferred the following amount from 2025 to 2026 programs:

<u>Program Title</u>	<u>AL Number</u>	<u>Amt.</u> <u>Transferred</u>
Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants	84.367A	\$ 14,761



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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**

Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District
Ottawa County
11685 West State Route 163
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449-1278

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 financial statements of Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District, Ottawa County, Ohio, (the District) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2025, and the related notes to the financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated March 18, 2026, wherein we issued an adverse opinion on the District's financial statements because the District did not follow accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America as required by Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03. We also noted the District restated the beginning fund balance in the General Fund to record a receipt in the proper period.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the District'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 opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the District'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 District'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.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the District'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 matter that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and which is described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2025-001.

District's Response to Finding

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the District's response to the finding identified in our audit and described in the accompanying schedule of findings and corrective action plan. The District'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 District'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 District's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

KEITH FABER
Ohio Auditor of State



Tiffany L. Ridenbaugh, CPA, CFE, CGFM
Chief Deputy Auditor

March 18, 2026



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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**

Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District
Ottawa County
11685 West State Route 163
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449-1278

To the Board of Education:

Report on Compliance for the Major Federal Program

Opinion on the Major Federal Program

We have audited Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District, Ottawa County, Ohio's, (the District) 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 Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District's major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2025. Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District's major federal program is identified in the *Summary of Auditor's Results* section of the accompanying schedule of findings.

In our opinion, Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District 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 year ended June 30, 2025.

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 District 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 District's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above.

Responsibilities of Management for Compliance

The District'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 District'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 District'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 District'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 District'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 District'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 District'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.

Report on Internal Control Over Compliance

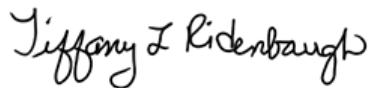
A *deficiency in internal control over compliance* exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement 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
Ohio Auditor of State



Tiffany L. Ridenbaugh, CPA, CFE, CGFM
Chief Deputy Auditor

March 18, 2026

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**BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OTTAWA COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
2 CFR § 200.515
JUNE 30, 2025**

1. SUMMARY OF AUDITOR'S RESULTS

(d)(1)(i)	Type of Financial Statement Opinion	Adverse
(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 Program's Compliance Opinion	Unmodified
(d)(1)(vi)	Are there any reportable findings under 2 CFR § 200.516(a)?	No
(d)(1)(vii)	Major Program (list):	Child Nutrition Cluster
(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

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

FINDING NUMBER 2025-001

Noncompliance Citation

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), which further clarifies the requirements of Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38, requires the District to file annual financial reports which are prepared using generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

As a cost savings measure, the District prepared financial statements in accordance with the regulatory basis of accounting established by the Auditor of State for governmental entities that are not required to prepare reports in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. This basis of accounting is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements basis of accounting. 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 District may be fined and subject to various other administrative remedies for its failure to file the required financial report. Failure to report on a GAAP basis compromises the District's ability to evaluate and monitor the overall financial condition of the District. To help provide the users with more meaningful financial statements, the District should prepare its annual financial statements according to generally accepted accounting principles.

Officials' Response:

See Corrective Action Plan

3. FINDINGS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS

None

Benton-Carroll-Salem

School District

www.bcassd.com



Board of Education Office

11685 W. State Route 163

Oak Harbor, OH 43449

Phone: (419) 898-6210

SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS

2 CFR 200.511(b)

JUNE 30, 2025

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2024-001	Finding was first reported during the audit of the 2012 financial statements. Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38 and Ohio Admin. Code 117-2-03(B) for reporting on a basis other than generally accepted accounting principles.	Not corrected and reissued as Finding 2025-001 in this report.	This issue is due to the District choosing to file on a cash-basis of Accounting, which the Board of Education believes to be in the best interest of the District. The Board annually evaluates the cost-benefit relationship of preparing GAAP statements, and the cost of preparing GAAP statements outweigh the benefit received.
2024-002	Noncompliance and Material Weakness over 2 CFR § 200.318(i) and 2 CFR § 200.320(a)(2) for not following procurement requirements.	Fully corrected.	

HOME OF THE OAK HARBOR ROCKETS

Cathy O. Bergman
Superintendent

Cajon H. Keeton
Treasurer

Benton-Carroll-Salem

School District

www.bcassd.com



Board of Education Office

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CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

2 CFR § 200.511(c)

JUNE 30, 2025

Finding Number:

2025-001

Planned Corrective Action:

Benton-Carroll-Salem Local School District does not have plans to correct the finding. The decision to prepare regulatory cash basis financial statements is a decision the Board of Education believes to be in the best interest of the District. The Board annually evaluates the cost-benefit relationship of preparing GAAP statements, and the cost preparing GAAP statements outweigh the benefits received.

Anticipated Completion Date:

N/A

Responsible Contact Person:

Cajon Keeton, Treasurer

HOME OF THE OAK HARBOR ROCKETS

Cathy O. Bergman
Superintendent

Cajon H. Keeton
Treasurer

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



BENTON-CARROLL-SALEM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

OTTAWA 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 3/26/2026

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