



A New Way; A Better Way

Cost-Savings Roadmap for Local Governments and Schools

Ohio's local schools and governments have reached a critical juncture. Citizen expectations continue to grow, while costs are rising faster than even a vigorous economy can support. Our school systems and local governments must find ways to reduce costs and improve efficiency. The status quo simply can't continue; shared services provide hope.

To help address this challenge, the Kasich Administration has developed an action plan to help schools and local governments become more efficient and take advantage of shared services concepts and opportunities. *Beyond Boundaries: A Shared Services Action Plan for Ohio Schools and Governments* is a comprehensive study of public policy recommendations, potential collaborations and needed changes to the overall way of doing business in Ohio's public sector.

Being Smart with Taxpayer Dollars

The Governor's Jobs Budget (H.B. 153) in 2011 clarified and expanded state laws governing the ways local governments can engage in – shared services and save their taxpayers' money through collaborative strategies. *Beyond Boundaries* is based on a statewide shared services survey, which collected baseline data on existing shared arrangements and identified future opportunities for local schools and governments to share staffing, equipment and facilities across jurisdictions. This roadmap, developed by the Kasich administration in partnership with local officials from across the state, provides additional tools to further remove barriers that stand in the way of saving Ohioans' tax dollars through collaboration. *Beyond Boundaries* presents ten recommendations for action, including:

- Encouraging local government and education leaders to utilize authority established by the Governor and legislators in the Jobs Budget that allows them to enter into simple shared-services agreements;
- Continuing to seek legislative approval, when necessary, to further remove identified barriers to shared services;
- Forming regional shared services centers must become a priority and can be accomplished through coordinating the existing statewide network of Educational Service Centers and Information Technology Centers;
- Applying market forces, not mandates, to ensure positive results;
- Continuing to develop tools to assist local collaboration, such as expanding the Auditor of State's SkinnyOhio.org website and developing an online joint purchasing portal for schools and local government;
- Following the shared services model, outlined in *Beyond Boundaries*, through identification of promising practices and examples that local leaders can emulate; and
- Keeping the momentum of shared services through education, training and establishing a culture of change.

BOTTOM LINE: Community leaders in Ohio increasingly see the value of shared resources and services as a way of reducing costs, improving public services and increasing efficiencies. Expanding on tools provided to local governments and schools by his ground-breaking Jobs Budget in 2011, Governor Kasich offers local leaders new and enhanced opportunities for cost-saving collaboration across traditional boundaries, but this is only the beginning. *Beyond Boundaries* provides information and tools needed by local leaders to help them realize the benefit of shared services opportunities. Local leaders have to take immediate, broad action. This requires leadership and vision from all. The overriding objective of this plan is to provide leaders a roadmap for taking important next steps to succeed.

To access the full report and other materials, visit:

www.beyondboundaries.ohio.gov