OHIO'S TIME

BUDGET OF THE STATE OF OHIO FY 2024-2025

Investing in a Thriving Economy

Ohio is thriving, and the DeWine-Husted Administration recognizes the importance of using Ohio's Time in history to lay the foundation for future economic growth. Programs funded through the new budget focus on ensuring that Ohio remains a magnet for economic development and that our workforce has the skills necessary for evolving job opportunities in the years ahead.

Economic Development

Ohio's new operating budget provides an **historic investment in economic development** in our state. $750 million will go toward the new **All Ohio Future Fund,** an initiative envisioned by the DeWine-Husted Administration, which will support site infrastructure, attract new businesses, and encourage workforce development across the state. Committing to this development plan will support Ohio's position as a go-to state for companies considering relocation or expansion.

To help close the digital divide and ensure more Ohioans have access to broadband, Ohio's new operating budget positions Ohio to be able to use upcoming federal funds for **broadband development and expansion.** Communities with limited internet access will be able to use these funds to create partnerships needed to build the necessary infrastructure for high-speed internet. The Ohio Department of Development will receive $125 million to establish **new innovation hubs** near anchor research institutions. These hubs will increase research and development, create new jobs, preserve existing jobs, and support improved

economic conditions throughout Ohio.

The Ohio State Fair is an annual event epitomizing everything Ohio represents. The budget includes $190 million to **revamp and modernize the 360-acre fairgrounds** by adding exhibition facilities, updating existing buildings, and enhancing the overall guest experience. The enhancement of the site will be guided by the master plan developed by the Expo 2050 Task Force, which was created by Governor DeWine in 2019 to study the long-term strategic vision of the Ohio Expo Center and the Ohio State Fair.

Skilled Workforce

The budget continues the popular **TechCred** program by providing $25.2 million per fiscal year to support Ohio workers in expanding their skills by earning 20,000 technology-focused credentials in each year of the biennium.

The **Industry Sector Partnership Grant Program** is funded at $5 million per fiscal year to strengthen the local workforce by supporting partnerships among businesses, schools, training providers, and community leaders.

In another future-focused initiative, $1 million over the biennium will go toward support for electric vehicle infrastructure through **electric vehicle workforce training**.

Quality and Affordable Childcare

The budget will also increase access to quality childcare by raising income eligibility for publicly funded childcare from 142% to 145% of the federal poverty level ($43,500 per year for a family of four). This will **ease the financial burden on working parents and caregivers** who struggle to find childcare or who risk losing their childcare assistance by taking a better-paying job.

Approximately 15,275 additional children from low-income families will have access to **high-quality early childhood education** thanks to $124.4 million over the biennium that is included in Ohio's new operating budget. Research shows that children who attend quality-rated preschools outperform their peers in both kindergarten readiness and literacy proficiency by third grade.

K-12 Learning Innovation

Funding for $100 million in **Career-Tech Equipment Grants** is included in Ohio's operating budget to support equipment purchases that support career-technical education programs in schools and districts throughout the state. Priority will be given to career-technical education programs that support careers on Ohio's Top Jobs List and establish or expand the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program (IWIP).

A $200 million investment in **Career-Tech Construction Grants** will address waiting lists for career-technical education programs and the need for education and training programs for occupations critical to Ohio's economy. This program will provide grants to city, local, and exempted village school districts designated as the lead of a career-technical planning district to help cover facilities and equipment costs for education and training programs that support Ohio's Top Jobs List or qualify for IWIP.

The importance of **computer science education** is supported with $4 million per year to address the shortage of computer science teachers and continue Ohio's commitment to ensuring all students have access to quality computer science education.

Innovative Colleges and Universities

In addition to investing in Ohio's people by ensuring college affordability and supporting scholarship programs, Ohio's new operating budget supports the DeWine-Husted Administration's focus on the need for higher education innovation that prepares Ohioans to compete in the global workforce.

Ohio's new operating budget expands the **Regionally Aligned Priorities in Delivering Skills (RAPIDS) program** by adding $100 million to support collaborative projects between Ohio's 49 technical centers, 14 public universities, 23 community colleges, and other qualifying institutions in Ohio. This funding will strengthen education and training opportunities that maximize workforce development efforts in defined areas of the state and provide workforce facility upgrades, training equipment, and laboratory resources that will allow students to learn skills for in-demand jobs in the region.

With $10 million per fiscal year, the budget fast-tracks Ohioans seeking new workforce skills with the new **Talent Ready Grant Program** to support short-term certificate programs at Ohio's community colleges and technical centers to quickly

qualify Ohioans to work in growing industries.

Regulatory Reform

The budget includes an initiative that will ultimately **save taxpayers $44 million over the next decade**, as well as at least 58,000 hours of state employee time, through CSI's efforts to "Innovate the Code." The initiative uses AI tools to identify outdated processes and unnecessary requirements to modernize and streamline the Ohio Revised Code.

As part of the Administration's efforts to eliminate one-third of the Ohio Administrative Code by targeting duplicative provisions, outdated sections, and unnecessary requirements, the Budget also helps remove approximately 1.7 million words related to operating procedures for individual lottery games – or about 10 percent of the words in the entire code.

Health Care Workforce and Care Innovation

Ohio's new operating budget will also focus on solidifying Ohio as a national leader in **mental health and research innovation.** With a total of $30 million, the DeWine-Husted Administration will launch a new State of Ohio Action for Resiliency (SOAR) Network to strategically research complex and diverse factors related to mental health and substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery; discover innovative strategies that result in improved recovery, health, and wellness for Ohioans; and deploy those strategies in practice, programs, and policy. The SOAR Network will guide mental health best practices to grow and strengthen this important workforce in Ohio.

A Medicaid provider rate package is included in the operating budget to encourage the development of a **more robust professional health care workforce** to support Ohio's most vulnerable residents. Through this budget, the Ohio Department of Medicaid, in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Aging and Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, will commit to increase provider rates to ensure workforce stability and greater access to care for Medicaid recipients.

Pediatric behavioral health services will expand in Ohio with $50 million to support workforce development, improve infrastructure to increase access to these services (including OhioRISE Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities), and improve integration of behavioral health and primary care services for children receiving these services.

The budget invests $264 million across the biennium in funding for workforce initiatives that support the recruitment, retention and contemporary practice needs of behavioral health professionals through increased rates for behavioral health providers and continued support for Ohio's Centers of Excellence and technical assistance center.

Information Technology and Cybersecurity

Ohio's new operating budget supports the DeWine-Husted Administration's goal of continually positioning Ohio as a leader in technology security and development.

The Ohio Adjutant General's **Ohio Cyber Reserve** is bolstered in this budget through a nearly 50% funding increase to $1.1 million per year to enhance training equipment for missions and vulnerability assessments that support the reserve's mission of protecting government entities, critical infrastructure, businesses, and citizens from cyberattacks.

This budget also establishes the **Ohio Digital Academy**, supported with $2 million in fiscal year 2024 to attract talent for State of Ohio Information Technology (IT) and cybersecurity positions. The program will offer reimbursement incentives to recent college graduates or those pursuing continuing education or specialized certifications in IT-specific areas. The Ohio Digital Academy will also develop a pipeline of talent to enhance the state's cyber workforce to better protect state assets and technology investments.

This summary was compiled by the Ohio Office of Budget and Management. More information is available at obm.ohio.gov.