



# Office of Budget and Management

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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 10, 2012

**Kasich Administration Praises Collaborative Efforts in Summit County to Lower Costs and Improve Efficiency of Local Government Programs**  
*Officials Tout Health District Merger and Educational Technology Network*

AKRON – An award-winning merger of the Summit County Health District with the Akron and Barberton health departments and collaborative efforts to form the Northeast Ohio Network for Educational Technology (NEOnet) are being praised by Governor John Kasich’s administration as prime examples of cost-saving shared services.

“Forward-thinking leaders here in Summit County are showing the rest of Ohio the value of shared services as a strategy for reducing costs and increasing efficiency in school and government operations,” said Randy Cole, state Controlling Board President, who is leading the governor’s drive to encourage shared services at the local level.

Cole said the two local examples are among models presented in *Beyond Boundaries*, the Kasich Administration’s new strategic action plan for Ohio school districts and local governments seeking to benefit from the cost-saving efficiencies of shared services and cross-jurisdictional collaboration. The plan is guide to resources available to local leaders who seek the benefits of shared services arrangements for their own communities.

“As public expectations for government services continue to grow and the cost for providing those services rise even faster, public officials need to become smarter about the ways they spend taxpayer dollars,” he said. “These two examples in Summit County are excellent models for schools and local governments throughout Ohio.”

Summit County Public Health, the new countywide health district, reports that, as a result of the merger, food safety sanitarians have increased the number of inspections from 170 to 300 per sanitarian, while licensing fees charged to restaurants have been reduced. These and other

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benefits of the health department merger led it to be nationally recognized with a 2011 Crown Communities Annual Excellence Award from *American City & County* magazine.

The Northeast Ohio Network for Educational Technology (NEOnet) serves 40 educational entities in Cuyahoga, Lake, Medina, Portage and Summit counties that include a total of 27 school districts, two county offices, three career centers, three digital academies, three parochial schools and two community schools. The Ohio Educational Computer Network estimates that regional coordination of shared technology services such as NEOnet, along with development of regional datacenters and shared “cloud services,” could yield at least \$91 million in accumulated savings on a statewide basis over the next five years.

“The objective of our *Beyond Boundaries* plan is to provide leaders a roadmap for a more cost-effective, collaborative way of doing business, including strategies that reduce costs, improve efficiency and deliver improved government and educational services. Ohioans deserve action. And the time for action is now,” Cole said. “It’s clear that our schools and local governments must find new and more creative strategies to reduce their costs and improve efficiency. The old ways of doing business simply can’t continue. Shared services will provide a new and better way,” he said.

*Beyond Boundaries* provides ten signature recommendations as well as information and tools needed by local leaders to help them realize the benefit of shared services opportunities.

Recommendations include:

- Local government and education leaders need to utilize existing authority to enter into simple agreements;
- The State should continue to seek legislative approval, when necessary, to further remove identified barriers to shared services;
- Formation of regional shared service centers must become a priority; and
- The State should continue developing tools to assist local collaboration and shared services.

The full report is available at: [www.beyondboundaries.ohio.gov](http://www.beyondboundaries.ohio.gov).

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