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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MOESC Holds SLP Mentor & Mentee Celebration Event

Mansfield, OH (May 9, 2025) – The Mid-Ohio ESC held its first High School Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Career Mentor and Mentee Celebration Event on May 8, 2025. The half-day event brought together students, mentors, educators and community partners to celebrate the achievements and future contributions of local high school SLP mentees.

The morning began with breakfast and networking, followed by a warm welcome from Mid-Ohio ESC Superintendent Kevin Kimmel. Attendees then enjoyed engaging presentations from high school participants across Crawford, Morrow and Richland counties, who shared their learning experiences under the guidance of practicing SLP mentors. The program, structured as an internship, provided students with 60 hours of immersive career preparation experiences including 20 hours of job shadowing and curriculum aligned to the Ohio SLP/Educational Aide Licensure which students will be eligible to receive immediately following their high school graduation. Under the guidance of their mentors, students engaged in speech language activities with younger students and created a new play based speech therapy tool that could be used with current and future students receiving these services.

Presentations by Bowling Green State University undergraduate students in Communication Disorders and a virtual keynote from Dr. Charles H. Carlin, Director of the School of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology at the University of Akron further helped students understand the college coursework needed to become an SLP and the job opportunities in the field. The program included a college visit to the University of Akron, where students toured the campus and received detailed enrollment information.

A special recognition ceremony honored each mentee, with honorariums presented by members of the Connections Fund Advisory Committee and the Richland County Foundation. Mentors were also recognized for their vital role in supporting the internship process and shaping the next generation of professionals in the field.

Each Mentee in the 2025 Speech Language Pathology Mentorship Program earned a \$500 internship stipend on behalf of The Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center Board of Governors and the Richland County Community Connection Grant. Congratulations to the following recipients: Emma Graves, Bucyrus City Schools; Emerson Bragg, Highland Local Schools; Elina Gilland, Mansfield St. Peters School; Elyse Belcher, Crestview Local Schools; Emily Bogner, Madison Local Schools; Hannah Markley, Madison Local Schools; Lily Cline, Crestview Local Schools; Sylvia Secrist, Lexington Local Schools.

The event concluded with networking opportunities and interviews, spotlighting the inspiring journeys of mentees and the dedicated professionals guiding them.

The Mid-Ohio SLP Career Mentorship Development Team, comprised of Student Services Director Jennifer Crum, Director of Grants & Special Projects Amy Wood, SLP Mentorship Coordinator Kevin Fourman; SLP Mentorship Consultant Leslie Ried with Highland Local Schools; and Mid-Ohio ESC Regional SLP Consultant Johanna Gilland, developed the SLP Mentorship Program. Structured as a paid internship with individualized career mentoring, this program is aligned to the Mid-Ohio ESC's Business Advisory Council's Quality Practices and is designed to support the growth and career aspirations of the SLP High School Student Mentees.

Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center provides specialized academic and support services to 13 school districts and over 20,000 students in Crawford, Morrow and Richland Counties. Client districts receive services from curriculum, gifted and

special education consultants, speech pathologists, psychologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists and physical therapists.

Support for this program was provided by a grant from the Richland County Foundation. The Richland County Foundation is one of the largest private sources of grant-making in Richland County and administers over 430 charitable funds established by individuals, families, and businesses. The mission of the Richland County Foundation is to improve and enhance the quality of life in Richland County through strategic philanthropy and community leadership. For more information, visit richlandcountyfoundation.org.



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