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COE Staff Strengthen Accreditation Practices Through Professional Collaboration and Regional Training

ATLANTA, GA — [October 15, 2026] — The Council on Occupational Education (COE) continues to advance its commitment to accreditation excellence, professional development, and institutional support through staff participation in industry conferences and the delivery of specialized training for member institutions. Recent activities included participation in a Cognia professional learning event in Alpharetta, Georgia, and Regional Compliance Training in Columbus, Ohio, providing opportunities to exchange knowledge, strengthen accreditation practices, and address emerging challenges in education.

Susie Hill, Administrative Coordinator for COE's Institutional Evaluation Department, recently participated in a two-day professional learning event hosted by Cognia in Alpharetta, Georgia. Cognia, a

fellow accreditor, has supported school improvement and assessment for 40 years. Its primary focus is K–12 schools and districts. Approximately 40 schools are accredited by both COE and Cognia. The event brought together education and accreditation professionals for discussions focused on leadership development, organizational effectiveness, and evolving practices in accreditation. Participants explored practical tools to enhance daily operations, the growing role of artificial intelligence, and opportunities for collaboration across accrediting organizations.

A key takeaway from the event was the importance of viewing accreditation as a continuous process of institutional growth and improvement. Dr. Mark A. Elgart, President of Cognia, emphasized the value of understanding an institution's unique environment and using accreditation to strengthen practices that support learner success.

"Participating in the conference was a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas with fellow accreditation professionals and explore new approaches to strengthening our work," said Hill. "Discussions on leadership, emerging technologies, and continuous improvement provided practical insights to strengthen our processes and better support COE member institutions accredited by Cognia."

Building on this commitment to professional development and institutional support, COE hosted 25 representatives from 16 member institutions within the Ohio Central School System (OCSS), Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), for Regional Compliance Training on October 7–8, 2026, at the Hyatt Regency Columbus in Columbus, Ohio.

The two-day training combined COE's required Compliance Track sessions with additional workshops addressing timely accreditation and compliance topics. Featured sessions included *Learning from the Data: Most Frequently Noted Items of Concern*, which examined common accreditation findings and strategies for avoiding compliance challenges, along with *How to Report a Substantive Change*, *Teach-Out Plans*, and *Completing the Annual Report in EDvera*. Participants also received guidance on Self-Study preparation, responding to accreditation visiting team reports, and requirements for the 2027 accreditation cohort.

The COE training team included Monique Campbell, Director of Membership Services and Training; Dr. Tangela Purifoy, Vice President of Institutional Evaluation; Dr. Tennie McBryde, Assistant Vice President of Institutional Evaluation; and Shelia Luke, Vice President of Institutional Compliance.

Ahead of the training, the COE team visited Sequoyah School at Noble Correctional Institution in Caldwell, Ohio, on October 6. The visit provided an opportunity to tour the school's educational facilities and observe the commitment of students and staff to occupational education. The team was particularly impressed by the pride students demonstrated in their learning environment and the dedication of instructional staff. Additional highlights included the school's pumpkin patch, greenhouse, and bee apiary, showcasing elements of its hands-on learning environment.

"Our visit reinforced just how powerful occupational education can be as part of the rehabilitation process," said Monique Campbell, Director of Membership Services and Training. "I was impressed not only by the students' commitment to their education and the pride they demonstrated in their learning environment, but also by the dedication of the educational staff who support and encourage them. There is a genuine commitment to creating opportunities through occupational education. COE is proud to have OCSS institutions as members and to see their commitment to advancing correctional education."

Together, these activities reflect COE's continued commitment to strengthening accreditation practices through professional collaboration, direct institutional engagement, and responsive training. By investing in staff development and providing practical resources to member institutions, COE continues to support institutional effectiveness and advance quality career and technical education.

For more information about the Council on Occupational Education, visit www.council.org.

About the Council on Occupational Education:

The Council on Occupational Education is a leading accreditor for over 500 postsecondary occupational education institutions in over 40 states. With a commitment to quality and continuous improvement, COE works to assure quality and integrity in career and technical education. For more information about the Council on Occupational Education and its mission, please visit www.council.org

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