

Fulton County Board of DD
Annual update on the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan
January 21, 2019

Our big project in 2019 was the work to develop a new three-year strategic plan for the years 2020-2022. We held forums for individuals and families and sent out a survey to gain feedback from early intervention families. We initiated a survey as well as a forum to gain input from providers. During the June Come Together meeting, we gathered input from the self-advocates. During the summer, Willie Jones, from the Ohio Association of County Boards, facilitated two strategic planning sessions with staff and board members. We sent out our annual satisfaction survey in the fall. In December, the Board was able to approve a new three-year plan.

The early intervention staff continue to provide services to children under age three and their families utilizing evidenced-based practices including a primary service provider model of service. With this model, children receive services through the support of a team of staff. In 2019, a mental health staff person was added to the team and collaboration also occurred with the HMG Home Visitors. Staff continued to provide autism specific services through the PLAY Project. A third staff person has been trained and is now able to provide this valuable service to families. Community playgroups met monthly in local parks and churches and hosted activities for children we serve as well other children in the community.

Our self-advocacy group, Come Together, was very busy in the last year. They met seven times in 2019. They held their annual “snowball fight” in February and were joined by friends from Paulding County who came to join in the fun! We had speakers during the year on topics such as Community Employment, saying “no”, and Community Safety. One individual attended a regional Project Stir training and shared with the group what he had learned; encouraging others to attend the training in the future. The group took a trip to Sauder’s Museum in May. They are also part of a regional group that met twice last year. We were excited that Director Davis from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities was the presenter for the September regional meeting. Individuals from six counties in our region were there with about a total of 60 people in attendance.

Our Service and Support Administrators support individuals throughout the lifespan. In 2019, we developed a position that combined EI Service Coordination with SSA services. The person in this position is providing SSA services for some families of children who have turned three, utilizing methods that she has used with families she serves in early intervention. We believe that this new model may better serve some families whose children have more intensive needs. The SSA staff also put a greater focus on transition from school-age to adulthood. They have become involved in the NW Ohio Transition to Adulthood Meetings, which have provided valuable resources as we strive to expand our supports to individuals in this age group.

The SSA Department leads the way for the Board to provide support to providers. They continued to host provider collaborative breakfasts every other month; meeting with residential, day and independent providers. Along with other NOWAC counties, the third annual provider recognition event was held in October. SSA’s also provide support to new providers as they begin services in Fulton County.

One of goals for 2019, was to reduce the number of individuals on our waiting list. At the fall of 2018, the SSA staff was tasked with completing a waiting list assessment on all individuals on the current

waiting list. To this end, the course of 2019, 45 WL assessments were completed for individuals on the waiting list. This process is almost completed. During 2019, we provided four new waivers for individuals. We also utilized local funding to assist with needs, outside of the waiver process.

We continue to focus on being good stewards of our financial resources. We update our long term fiscal projections on a regular basis and rely on those projections as we plan for both routine expenditures, anticipated future expenses, and those unexpected expenses that may come our way. Our relationship with NOWAC continues as it allows us to share services with other counties; decreasing our overall costs for services we obtain through NOWAC. In the fall, we began utilizing NOWAC for part time business manager functions. Fulton and Henry Counties have shared a Children Services Director for the past couple of years. We have found that this arrangement is cost effective as well as creates efficiencies in both counties in the area of early intervention.