

Our Early Intervention program continued to utilize Evidenced-Based Practices when providing services. Staff met monthly to ensure fidelity to this practice. We have continued to provide autism support for Early Intervention families through two certified PLAY Project Consultants. Staff continued to explore ways to increase community partnerships. The contracted physical therapist has developed a relationship with a local service provider for a gymnastics group. The occupational therapist has been trained to modify battery operated cars so that children who cannot move on their own, can now be in more social situations with their families. Being able to move independently is linked to many other developmental benefits in young children. Staff has worked to increase the use of technology in maximizing the availability of staff for service provision and well as for training purposes. Hearing services are provided via a videoconferencing platform. Vision services are typically provided in person but are available to families through Skype or Facetime. Meetings and trainings are often held using technology to maximize the use of staff time.

We continued our focus on community jobs. Two students moved directly from school to community jobs. The Board provided financial support for ongoing follow-along and/or transportation for four individuals. Several meetings were held with OOD staff during the year, providing updates and looking at processes. Leadership staff met with a Defiance School leader to talk about effective transition services. As of January 1, 2018, 33 people were employed in the community which compares to 36 in 2017 and 35 in 2016. There are currently three in job development. The last year saw several individuals employed by Sauder's and two are still successfully employed. The Wauseon McDonald's also took on several new employees during the last year. While we have not seen an increase in total numbers employed, that number includes individuals who are newly employed over the past year but is also reflective of some long time employees who are no longer employed for a variety of reasons.

Our self-advocacy group, Come Together, grew over the last year. Their elected co-leaders (vs the traditional officers), planned several events over the past year. In March, the group decided to make cards for 20 seniors at Fulton Manor. In July, as part of the Board of DD's Week of Service, they collected items for the cat shelter in Defiance and a group went to Defiance to deliver several boxes including food, toys and cleaning supplies. In December, they held their third annual "snowball" fight. In conjunction with the fun, they collected mittens and food for local food pantries as part of the event. In December, they collected orders for a fundraiser. Earlier this month, the group met and put together almost 50 layered jars that they sold and raised over \$350. The group is also part of a regional group that has meant twice so far. The first was a large group event that hosted Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Director Martin while the second was an information and planning event.

In the past year, we were involved in several different conversations regarding transportation issues both from the county level as well as the regional level. We were a partner in the development of a Coordinated County Transportation Plan. We were part of a group of six counties who met with Liberty Mobility to determine if their transportation options might be a fit for our area. We discussed coordination on a smaller scale with Henry County and their transportation network. Two areas of high need are options for transportation to community jobs as well as accessible transportation to allow for greater community involvement.

Our Service and Support Administration Department continued their efforts to empower individuals through Person Centered Planning, Community Membership and Community Employment. During the course of the year, the SSA staff participated in several training events to help them be better able to assist individuals and make sure the individual is always at the center of all of their efforts. To this end, during the course of the last year, the department has also gone through some changes to be better able to meet needs. We have designated one SSA to focus on transition of students from school to the adult world, and another to focus on increasing community involvement. We held meetings with others, including Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) in conjunction with transition planning. We continue to access DODD consultants to assist us with our focus in these areas.

In May, 2017, we were on the ballot and the community supported us with the passage of a levy to allow us to continue to provide quality support to individuals with disabilities in Fulton County. We have also worked hard to be fiscally responsible. This includes reorganizing and maximizing staff with the retirement of long time staff. We obtain several necessary services through NOWAC, a Council of Government, allowing us to share the cost with several other counties. We are currently also sharing the services of our Children Services Director with Henry County, allowing for greater fiscal efficiency in both counties. We keep an updated five year forecast which assists us in projecting needs into the future. Until August, 2017, we provided Central Coordination services for the Help Grow Program for the four county region which allowed us to combine our limited resources with others to provide a better service. We continually review our waiting list for waiver services and strive to meet the needs of individuals in the most efficient ways possible.

We continued in our efforts to educate the public in a variety of ways. We have monthly advertisements on screens at our local movie theater. We published two newsletters in addition to our annual report. We have a website and Facebook page. We are published for a variety of things in our newspapers in our county.

We celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of county boards in a variety of ways. We recognized Board members who had served over the past 50 years with an event in June. Also in June, we held our annual family picnic where we also focused on the past as well as the present with the over 150 people in attendance.

We strive to have highly qualified staff. All staff are involved in on-going training, both required and optional, in order to grow and develop their job skills. We also encourage staff to collaborate with others in the field at a local, regional and state level. Staff have been involved in statewide committees including rule committees. We meet together with providers every other month. We focus these "Provider Breakfasts" on issues of Fulton County as happenings in the field. We brought in speakers on Trauma Informed Care and other topics the past year. We hosted our first provider job fair last spring. Along with the other counties of NOWAC, we hosted a Provider Recognition Event for providers in the area.

The first year of our 2017-2020 strategic plan saw growth for the Fulton County Board of DD. We are planning for even greater growth in Year Two of plan.