



HOLMES COUNTY
Board of Developmental Disabilities
supporting people in living meaningful lives

2025-2026

Annual Report

Holmes County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

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From left: Kyle Snyder, Mike Palmer, Wilbur Hershberger, Chad Yoder, Michele Snow, Tara Dalrymple. Not pictured: Amos Yoder.

Executive Summary



The 2025–2026 fiscal year was marked by growth, innovation, and meaningful community engagement across Holmes DD programs and services. A significant milestone was the launch of the Community Supports Department (CSD), which has quickly become a driving force in advancing our vision of creating “**A Community Where Everyone Belongs.**”

One of the department’s most notable successes was the introduction of **Buddy Softball**, an inclusive recreational program that welcomed 30 participants and attracted as many as 300 spectators throughout the season. For many individuals, this was their first opportunity to experience

organized softball in a supportive and welcoming environment. The program fostered meaningful connections among athletes, families, volunteers, and community members, creating lasting memories and demonstrating the power of inclusion in action.

Building on the success of Buddy Softball, the Community Supports Department launched **EVERYBODY PLAYS**, an initiative that encompasses a growing range of recreational, social, and community-based opportunities. The initiative reflects Holmes DD’s commitment to ensuring individuals with developmental disabilities have opportunities to actively participate in community life while encouraging community members to engage alongside them. Through activities on the ball field, in the pool, and across a variety of recreational settings, EVERYBODY PLAYS promotes inclusion, relationship-building, and shared experiences that benefit all participants.

The past year also brought exciting developments within the Holmes DD School. Under the leadership of Crystal Payne, Education Director/Principal, the school began implementing **Unique Learning System**, a research-based curriculum designed to enhance instruction through comprehensive lessons, activities, and assessment tools. This evidence-based approach supports improved educational outcomes while providing teachers with effective resources to meet diverse student needs.

Recognizing the value of learning alongside typically developing peers, school staff strengthened partnerships with local school districts to support appropriate student transitions and increase inclusive educational opportunities. Additional enrichment programming, including bimonthly art classes through the Holmes Center for the Arts, further expanded student learning experiences and community connections. The school continues to build on this momentum and will begin an exciting new chapter in Fall 2026 with the introduction of a new school name.

Overall, 2025–2026 was a year characterized by engagement, collaboration, learning, and growth. Through expanded community participation, innovative programming, and a continued commitment to excellence in education and support services, Holmes DD strengthened its impact and advanced its mission of creating opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to thrive as valued members of the community.

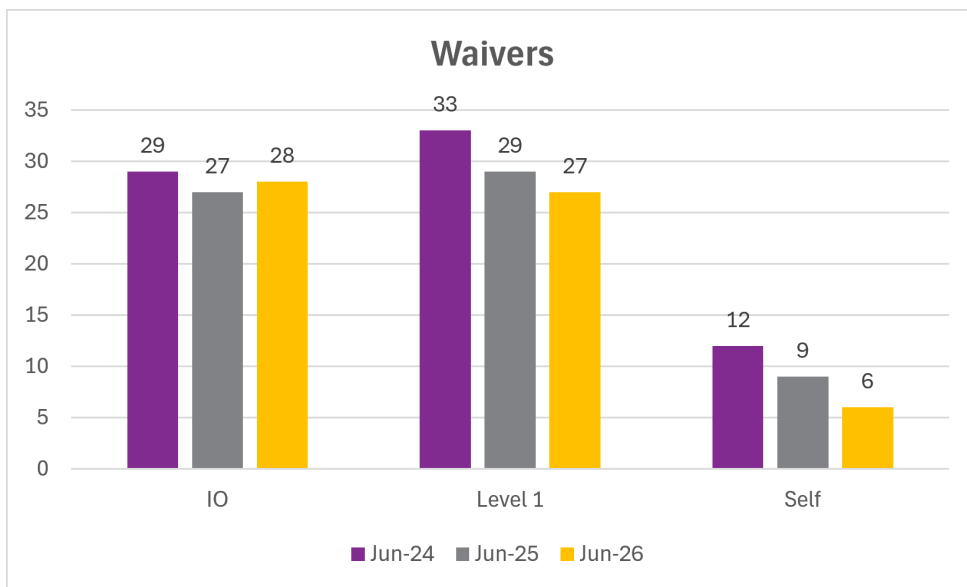
Sincerely,
Marianne M. Mader
Superintendent

Financial Results

A major focus for June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026 was fiscal sustainability by increasing brand awareness and ensuring adequate funding. To accomplish these objectives, Holmes DD focused on waiver allocation and waitlist, improving visibility in the community, community education about the board's services, and exploring funding stream options. Below are some key action steps that were accomplished.

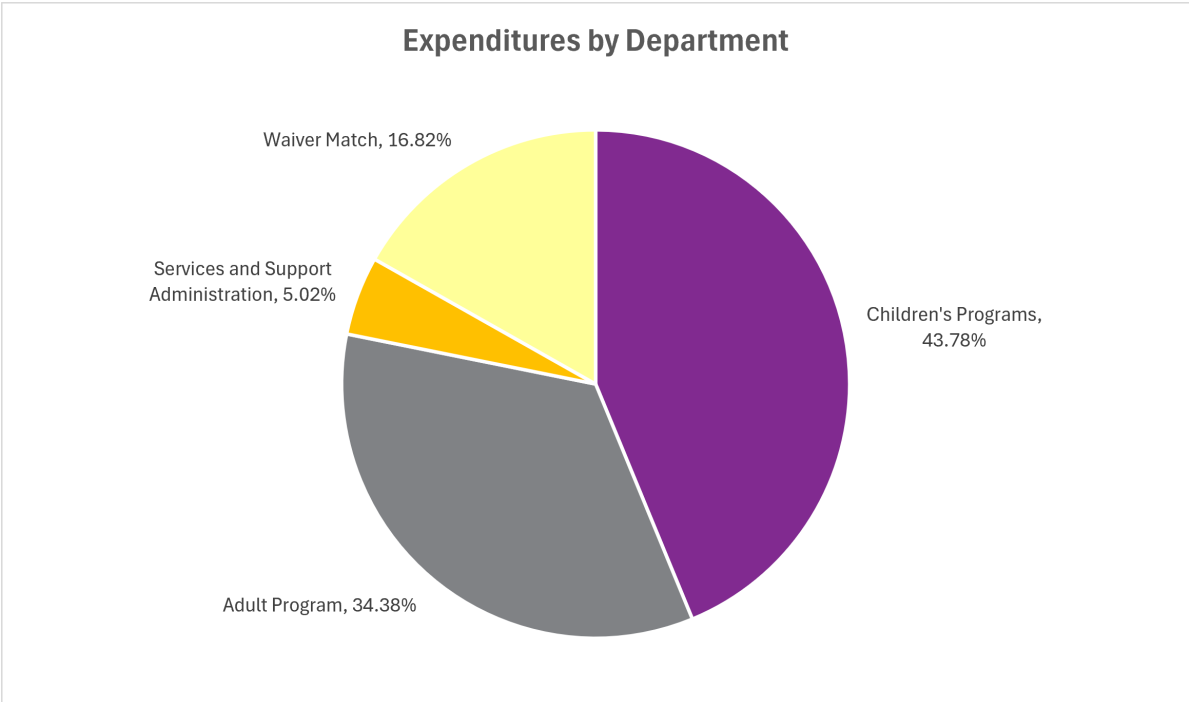
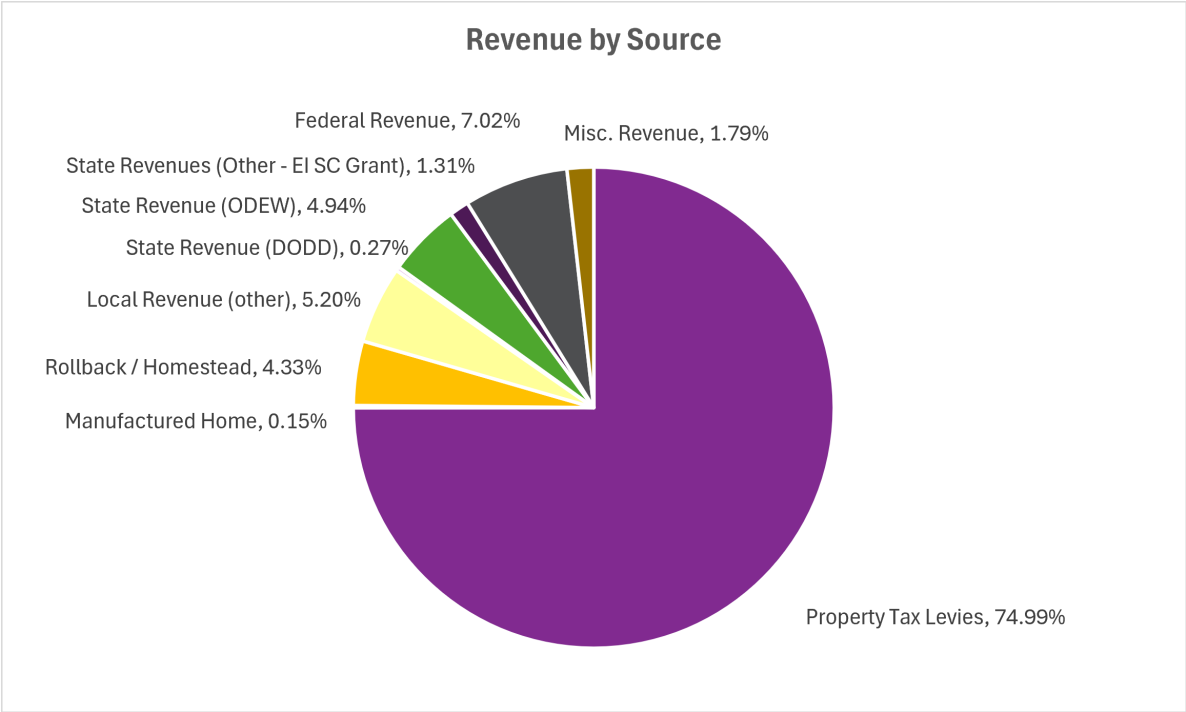
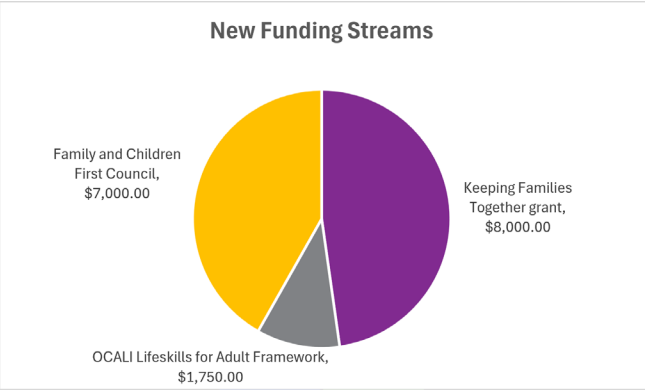
Waiver Allocation and Waitlist

Holmes DD served 328 people last year, using community resources to meet needs when possible. Holmes DD currently has no one waiting for services. During the last fiscal year, Holmes DD had a 15% increase in use of non-waiver, locally funded adult services, 61 individuals are receiving services funded by Medicaid, and Holmes DD completed 17 waitlist assessments with 9 waivers being allocated.



Explore Funding Streams

Holmes DD secured four new funding streams, three listed in the graph to the right. The Home Visiting grant was awarded in 2026 with reimbursement coming in 2027. Below are Holmes DD revenues and expenditures.



Improving Visibility in the Community and Community Education

- Holmes County Fair
- East Holmes Local Schools Kindergarten Registration
- West Holmes Local Schools Kindergarten Registration
- Amish Health and Safety Day
- Midwifery Centers
- Doctor Offices
- Pomerene Hospital
- Holmes DD Provider Fair
- Millersburg Elementary Parent Teacher Conferences
- Thunder Over Holmes County
- Social media was also used to share information, promote opportunities, and increase awareness
- Accessibility Stations at:
 - Killbuck Early American Days
 - The Farm at Walnut Creek
 - Arts Festival in Millersburg



Customer Results

A major focus for June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026 was strengthening relationships by increasing opportunities and improving customer satisfaction. To accomplish these objectives, Holmes DD focused on the self-advocacy program, community employment, provider support, increased assistive technology, and expanded collaborative partnerships. Below are some key action steps that were accomplished.

Community Employment

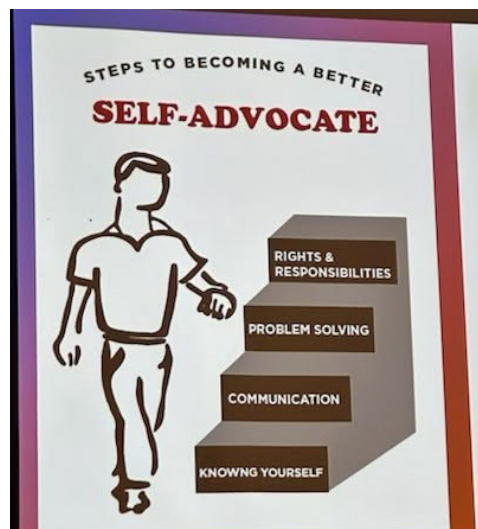
12 people supported by Holmes DD are employed in the community.



Self-Advocacy Expansion



2 additional advocates completed STIR training.



Expand Collaborative Partnerships

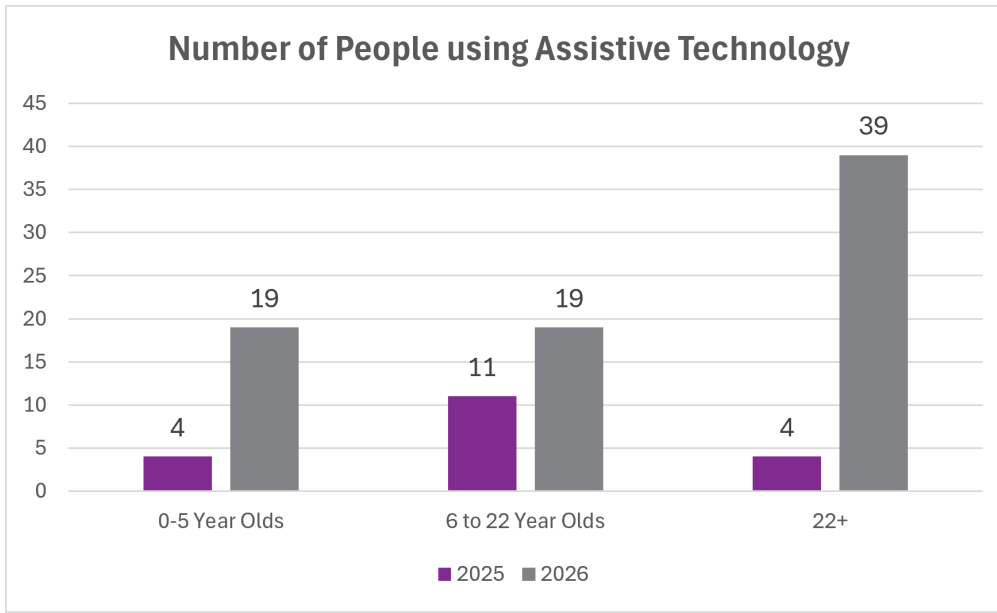
The purpose of expanding collaborative partnerships is to create more opportunities for inclusive and friendly environments for individuals served by the board and their families. Below is list of organizations that partner with Holmes DD.

- Oasis Youth Center
- East Holmes School District
- West Holmes School District
- United Way of Wayne and Holmes County
- Holmes County Jr. Fair Board
- Cardinal Therapies
- Ohio State Extension Office
- Harvest Ridge
- Holmes County Fair
- Holmes Center for the Arts
- Duncan Theater
- Spare Time Lanes
- Historic Downtown Millersburg
- Holmes County Chamber of Commerce
- Paul Laney Softball Tournament
- Millersburg Park District
- Ripley Church of Christ Youth Group
- New Life Fellowship Youth Group
- Village of Millersburg
- Holmes County Health Department
- Holmes County Public Library
- Sacred Ground
- Kissel Amusement Company
- Gentle Brook



Increase Assistive Technology

Holmes DD has a 305% increase in people using assistive technology from 2025 to 2026. Devices include an elevator, modified eating utensils, communication device, remote support watch, Word prediction software, bidet, Echo dot, self-propelled wheelchair, and a walker.



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ACCESSIBILITY
That Comes to You

Holmes DD offers an Accessibility Station with a Universal Changing Table designed for individuals of all abilities, heights, and mobility levels.

- ✓ Clean, safe, private care space
- ✓ Delivered to your event in Holmes County
- ✓ Indoor setup available for colder months

No more rushing home to meet restroom needs.
Stay longer. Participate fully.

Questions or reservations?
Call Sharon Allison • 330.674.8045 ext. 229

Provider Support



Developed a provider hardship policy to support local providers experiencing financial difficulties.

Holmes DD contracts with Mid East Ohio Regional Council (MEORC) to provide support to Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities certified providers in Holmes County. Supports included:



Monthly check-in calls with MEORC's provider support coordinators for 18 independent providers.



Various Services including certification process support and preparing for provider compliance reviews.



Access to a wide range of trainings, both in person and online.

Internal Process Results

A major focus for June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026 was to focus on change by expanding service offerings and continuous improvement. To accomplish these objectives, Holmes DD focused on developing new service offerings, developing a process improvement system, and assessing the organizational structure. Below are some key action steps that were accomplished.

Develop New Service Offerings

New services include:

- Launched Autism Diagnosis Education Project to evaluate and diagnose Holmes County children, under the age of 3 years, suspected of having autism.
- Holmes DD was approved to provide Home Visiting services to at-risk families in Holmes County through the Help Me Grow Program.
- Everybody Plays held 20 events including: softball, swimming, bowling, bocce, cornhole, table tennis.
- Autism and Special Needs Parents Support Group held 6 sessions.
- Sensory friendly activities at community partner organizations included swim times, movies, live theater performances, and an Easter egg hunt.



Assess Organizational Structure

- Holmes DD added a Library Media Aide and a Home Visitor.
- Holmes DD downsized the transportation department as a result of West Holmes School District transporting their preschoolers.
- Bus mechanical repairs were outsourced to a private garage.
- Holmes DD conducted an operational assessment of front office operations to increase efficiency and effectiveness.



Process Improvements

County Board:

- Artificial Intelligence Policy adopted
- 3 Year Accreditation Awarded from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
- New employee check-ins with Human Resources provide valuable information regarding effectiveness of onboarding and orientation

School:

- Unique Learning System Curriculum has been implemented
- Fire Drill and Evacuation process upgraded
- School Attendance Policy was adopted
- School staff evaluation process aligned to Ohio Learning Standards Extended

Learning and Growth Results

A major focus for June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026 was improving operational efficiency by improving infrastructure and improving employee support. To accomplish these objectives, Holmes DD focused on workforce recruitment, succession planning, facility utilization, IT plan, and employee performance. Below are some key action steps that were accomplished.

Workforce Recruitment

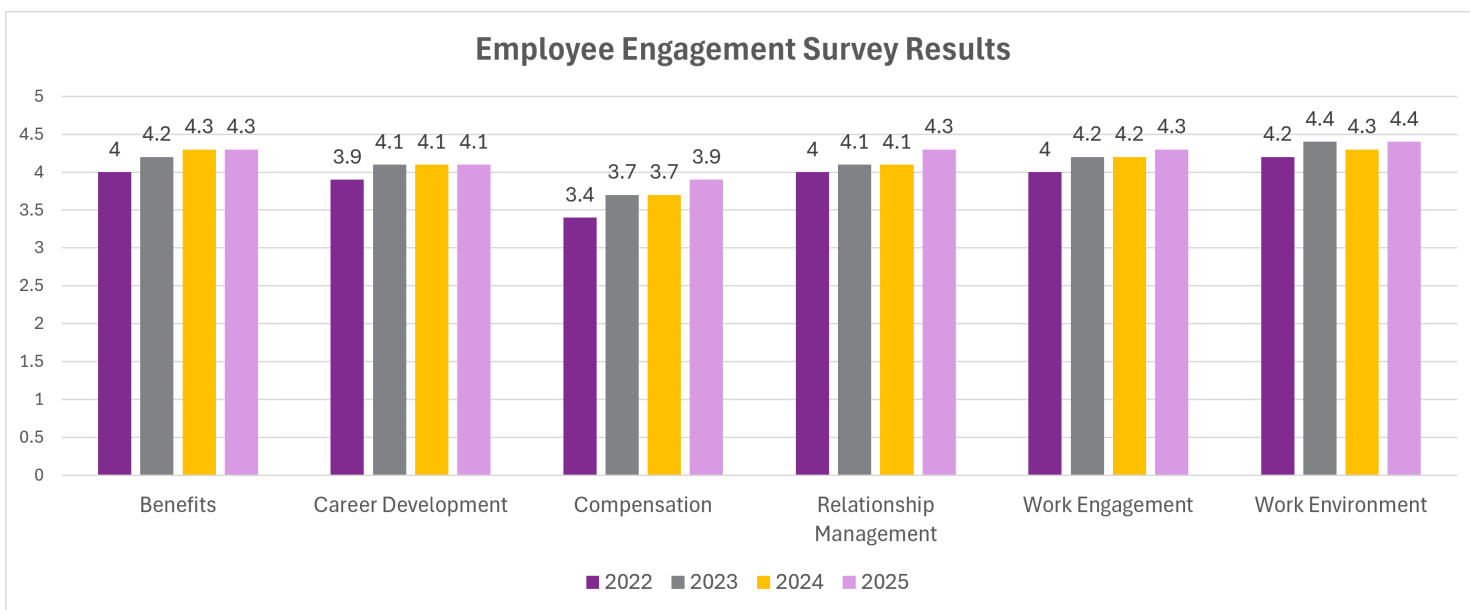
Holmes Recruitment video was completed and is posted on our website and shared at job fairs.

For the annual reporting period, 9 employees resigned and left the organization. Following a workforce review, 3 of those positions (33.3%) were eliminated and not refilled, while 2 new positions were created to support organizational needs.

The organization hired 6 new employees from outside Holmes DD and reassigned 4 existing employees to new or vacant roles, demonstrating a continued focus on strategic staffing and internal career advancement.



Part of successfully recruiting includes knowing what our current staff think about our organization. We are pleased to report that 91% of our workforce are satisfied with the culture at Holmes DD. Strengths were identified in all six areas. Scores across all areas of the Employee Engagement Survey have continued to increase or remain steady over the last four years.



Succession Planning



Implemented monthly learning groups for new supervisors.



Holmes DD is working with MEORC to develop succession plans for 4 key leadership positions.



One staff member attended Holmes County Leadership training through the Chamber of Commerce.

Facility Utilization

Facility upgrades and utilization includes:

- Secured a not-for-profit to provide dental services from the dental clinic vacated by HCTC Dental.
- DDC clinic uses space on a quarterly basis to serve patients.
- A designated private space was created for staff members who are mothers of infants.

IT Plan

- SSA training materials are stored on a shared SSA “One Note.”
- Ten computers were replaced due to Windows 11 upgrade.
- Holmes DD employees participate in annual and monthly trainings to ensure computer systems are secure with 80% of staff scoring in the highest range.
- Holmes DD staff and providers received training on how to use Tableau, Ohio’s data collection platform.

Employee Performance

Employee performance initiatives implemented include:



The annual incentive program which encourages employees to expand knowledge, leadership and participate in Holmes DD sponsored events continues into its second year.



SMART goals for school staff



Holmes DD leadership team read and discussed Brene Brown’s ***Dare to Lead***, and Simon Sinek’s ***Start with Why***.



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