**HOLMES COUNTY BOARD OF DD**

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**

**JANUARY 22, 2025**

**I. Meeting called to order by Mike Palmer**  at **12:16 pm.**

1. **Roll Call**

Chad Yoder - Absent Mike Palmer - Present

Michele Snow – Present Tara Dalrymple - Present

Amos Yoder – Present Kyle Snyder - Present

Wilbur Hershberger - Present

1. **Staff Present:**

Marianne Mader Curtis Goehring Deb Galehouse Evelyn Scott

**Visitors Present:** Jay Sidle, WKLM

**C. Hearing of Visitors**

**II. ADDITIONS/REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­Michele Snow and seconded by Tara Dalrymple to approve the January 22, 2025 meeting agenda*.*

**III. MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made by Amos Yoder and seconded by Wilbur Hershberger to approve the November 27, 2024 Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes as submitted.

A motion was made by Amos Yoder and seconded by Tara Dalrymple to approve the January 14, 2025 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes as submitted.

1. **FINANCIAL REPORTS/BUSINESS MANAGER’S REPORT – Curtis Goehring**

**Approval of Budget Summary, Expenditures by Vendor**

A motion was made by Wilbur Hershbergerand seconded by Amos Yoder to approve the budget Summary and Expenditures by Vendor through December 31, 2024.

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**V. COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION/SHARING**

1. **Administrative Reports/Comments:**
   1. **Staff Updates**: Evelyn Scott and Lisa Hochstettler began their employment with Holmes DD shortly after the November Board meeting as Secretary and SSA, respectively. Deb Galehouse’s resignation and retirement letter has been accepted. Deb has served as Holmes DD’s Administrative Assistant for nearly 10 years. Her last day of employment will be January 22, 2025. Mimi Lawhead was awarded the Five-Star Customer Experience Award at the 2024 OACB Annual Convention held in Columbus in December.
   2. **Employee Engagement survey**: For the 5th year, Holmes DD was assisted by MEORC to conduct an Employee Engagement Survey (A1). Staff completed the survey in November and results will be shared with Holmes DD staff following the January Board meeting. Participation in the survey has increased slightly to 86% of staff (last year it was 83%). Thirty-nine of the forty scores exceeded the national benchmark, with twenty-nine of the scores exceeding the national benchmark by 10% and thus considered a strength. We are proud of the information in this survey and use it in our recruitment efforts.
   3. **School year calendar 2024-25**: Because there have been so many school closures and delays, it is necessary to add make up days to the school calendar should they be needed. The revised calendar will be brought to the Board meeting and will indicate when the make up dates will occur, if needed. If make up days are used, teacher work day will follow the last day of classes. The school calendar and revisions must be approved by the Board. See VII A.
2. **Program Reports**
   1. **Program Statistics** are attached (B1).
   2. **Tim Tebow’s Night to Shine:** This event, sponsored by and held at Berlin’s Grace Church, is scheduled for Friday, February 7. Thus far 70 guests have registered and 118 have registered to volunteer. We anticipate 90 guests and 150 volunteers.
   3. **School update:** In late 2024 it was learned that a daycare serving Amish families of children with special needs was expanding and able to take new participants. Because several Holmes DD students are Amish, we have reached out to their families to learn their plans for the 2025-26 school year. Out of fairness to staff, we would like to hear from families by the end of January so planning can occur in case layoffs are necessary. Before the end of 2024, Jessica Martell, Education Director, and Marianne Mader met with the Superintendent and Special Education Coordinator of West Holmes and East Holmes School districts. The purpose of these meetings was to

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discuss the needs of the districts that Holmes DD could provide assistance. As a result, we are considering a class of older students who are developing independent living skills and another class for students K-3 who need to learn classroom skills in a quiet classroom environment before they are able to participate in a classroom in their home district.

* 1. **Playgroup:** The December playgroup included a sensory-friendly Santa as a special guest. Thirty children and their parents participated. The January playgroup was cancelled because of the weather.
  2. **Bucks Basketball:** The Bucks have played 10 games so far this season. They will be playing in the Special Olympic Regional Basketball Tournament held in Geneva, Ohio, February 7-8.

1. **Superintendent’s Report:**
   1. **Specialized legal counsel:** In the past, the Board has needed to use specialized legal counsel to ensure decisions and operations follow applicable law. Specialized counsel obtained through Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB) has assisted with layoffs, personnel manual, and levy language.

OACB requires the County Board to work with their County Prosecutor prior to seeking specialized counsel. In the event specialized counsel is needed, time can be saved by having an approved resolution allowing the Superintendent or Board President access. See VII B.

* 1. **Reimbursements:** Annually the Board must set staff reimbursement rates for meals, mileage, and tuition. In late December, the IRS announced the 2025 reimbursement rate for business travel has been increased to .70/mile. I would like to increase mileage reimbursement from .67 to .70 effective January 1, 2025. It is recommended that meal and tuition reimbursement remain unchanged. See VII C.
  2. **Medicaid Match:** Annually the Board must pass a resolution regarding the

Medicaid waiver match. The Board approved the 2025 Budget with an appropriation of $331,280 to pay waiver match obligations (including the waiver cost reconciliation and related fees). It is understood that these payments of the nonfederal share represent an ongoing financial commitment of the Holmes County Board of Developmental Disabilities. The amount specified is adequate to ensure that the services for which the Medicaid expenditures are made will conform to all applicable state and federal laws. See VII D.

* 1. **Preschool for 2025-26 School Year.** For the past fifteen years, TriCounty ESC has operated a preschool for East Holmes and West Holmes students with special needs and typically developing students in the Holmes DD building. As a partner, Holmes DD has provided 2 classrooms, office space, an indoor play

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area, telephone service, janitorial service, transportation, and physical therapy services, all without reimbursement. (Holmes DD’s costs are reimbursed for mid-day transportation that started in 2022). In December 2024, the Board of West Holmes School District decided to stop contracting for preschool services from TriCounty ESC. Instead, they have entered into an agreement for preschool services to be provided by East Central Ohio Educational Service Center (ECO ESC) in Tuscarawas County. For the last three years, 70-90% of the students in the preschool housed in Holmes DD are West Holmes students. For the same time period, West Holmes has had a waiting list of 40+ preschoolers wanting to attend. For the past two years, TriCounty was not able to secure enough staff to operate one classroom at Millersburg Elementary and one at Holmes DD. For the 2024-25 school year, TriCounty is “leasing” teacher assistants from Holmes DD in one of their classrooms. West Holmes has asked Holmes DD to allow West Holmes students being served by ECO ESC to receive the same accommodations (2 classrooms, office space, an indoor play area, telephone service, janitorial service, transportation, and physical therapy services) that had previously been provided to TriCounty ESC. East Holmes will continue to use TriCounty ESC for preschool services. However, there is not enough space at Holmes DD to provide a classroom dedicated to 3-4 East Holmes students being served by TriCounty ESC in addition to the 2 classrooms needed by ECO ESC. West Holmes has indicated that East Holmes students could attend ECO ESC’s preschool at Holmes DD through an arrangement with them. Recommendation (see VII E) is to support West Holmes School District’s use of ECO ESC by providing two preschool classrooms in Holmes DD facility. Additional use of the facility and services by ECO ESC will be negotiated and may include financial reimbursement.

* 1. **Strategic Plan Progress Report:** Attached (C1) is the Progress Report for the first 6 months of the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. Board approval is requested (VII F).

**VI. OLD BUSINESS - NONE**

1. **NEW BUSINESS**
2. **Calendar for School Year 2024-2025**

A motion was made by Kyle Snyderand seconded by Wilbur Hershbergerto approve the calendar revised to include make up dates for School Year 2024-2025 as presented.

1. **Specialized legal counsel**

A motion was made by Michele Snowand seconded by Kyle Snyderto approve to authorize the Superintendent and/or the Board President to employ outside specialized legal counsel, as needed.

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1. **Reimbursement rates for 2025:**

**Tuition: $500.00/year**

**Mileage: .70/mile**

**Meals: Breakfast $10, Lunch $15, Dinner $25**

A motion was made by Amos Yoderand seconded by Tara Dalrympleto approve the reimbursement rates of tuition, mileage, and meals for 2025.

1. **Medicaid waiver match.**

A motion was made by Tara Dalrympleand seconded by Wilbur Hershbergerdemonstrates understanding the budgeted nonfederal share of Medicaid expenses, $331,280, represents an ongoing financial commitment of the Holmes County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

1. **Preschool**

A motion was made by Michele Snow and seconded by Kyle Snyder to support West Holmes School District and the East Central Ohio Educational Service Center (ECO ESC) by providing two preschool classrooms in the Holmes DD facility. West Holmes School District shall provide written agreement to allow Holmes County preschoolers on an IEP to attend the ECO ESC preschool program located in Holmes DD facility if the child cannot be served in their home school district due to accessibility and/or disability related issues. Additional use of the Holmes DD facility and services by ECO ESC will be negotiated and may include financial reimbursement,

1. **2024-2027 Strategic Plan Progress Report**

A motion was made by Tara Dalrymple and seconded by Wilbur Hershberger

to approve the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan Progress Report as presented.

**Vlll. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

1. **Discussion Items**
2. **Upcoming Dates**

**Feb 7, 2025 Night to Shine, Grace Church Berlin, 6:30 pm**

**February 17, 2025 President’s Day, Facility CLOSED.**

**March 18, 2025 Bucks vs. All-Stars, WHHS, 7:00 pm**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Michele Snow and seconded by Amos Yoder to adjourn the January 22, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting of the Holmes County Board of DD. Time 1:35 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 26, 2025**

**12:00 P.M.**