**HOLMES COUNTY BOARD OF DD**

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**

**FEBRUARY 26, 2025**

1. **Meeting called to order by President Chad Yoder at 12:07 p.m.**

**A. Roll Call**

Chad Yoder - Present Tara Dalrymple- Present

Wilbur Hershberger - Present Kyle Snyder - Present

Mike Palmer - Absent Michele Snow - Present

Amos Yoder - Present

1. **Staff Present**

Marianne Mader Curtis Goehring Evelyn Scott Lisa Hochstetler

1. **Visitors Present: Jake Sidle, WKLM**
2. **Hearing of Visitors: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
3. **ADDITIONS/REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Tara Dalrymple and seconded by Wilbur Hershberger to approve the February 26, 2025 meeting agenda.

1. **MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made by Kyle Snyder and seconded by Amos Yoder to approve the January 22, 2025 Organizational Meeting Minutes as submitted.

A motion was made by Wilbur Hershberger and seconded by Michele Snow to approve the January 22, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes as submitted.

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

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

 A motion was made by Tara Dalrymple and seconded by Michele Snow to approve the Budge

 Summary, Expenditures by Vendor through January 31, 2025.

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1. **COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION/SHARING**
2. **Administrative Reports/Comments**
3. **Staff Changes:** Sherry Maynard has resigned from the Teacher Assistant position.Jessica Martell, Education Director, has submitted her resignation. Jessica has been employed by Holmes DD for 18 years. She has agreed to stay in her role as Education Director on a part-time basis through the end of the 2024-25 school year. Holmes DD has begun recruiting for the Education Director position. Jacie Westover accepted the position of Secretary and started her employment on February 14.
4. **Employee Engagement Regional Reports:** Attached are the 2024 reports comparing Employee Engagement in County Boards of DD in our region (A1). This year there are 2 different comparisons: All County Boards of DD in our region and County Boards in our region that operate a school. Compared to 10 County Boards of DD in our region, Holmes DD was ranked in the top 3 for 70% of the measures. Compared to 7 County Boards of DD in our region that have a school, Holmes DD was in the top 3 for 95% of the measures.
5. **Technology kit:** Holmes DD joined with other County Boards of DD to assist MEORC in getting a technology grant. The grant was used to purchase assistive technology items for Holmes DD to loan to individuals interested in trying technology. Our Tech kit includes the following items: Apple iPad, Powerlink 4 with 2 jelly beamers, C Pen text to speech reader, AbleNet Little Step by Step, Vibrating Alarm Clock with Bed shaker, Personal GPS tracker, Amazon Echo Dot, Smart Plug, Switch adapted clip on fan, one button switch. EI, School and SSA staff are aware of these items and can invite families to test them. The kit will be displayed during the February Board meeting and at the upcoming Provider Fair that is held in conjunction with the Bucks vs Community All Stars Game on March 18.
6. **Personnel Policy 5.8 Unpaid Leave:** Because of a current situation, Holmes DD has been asked to make a modification to the Unpaid Leave policy. Employees who have been employed less than one year do not qualify for FMLA. According to our policy, it is possible for the employee to request an unpaid leave of absence of up to 6 months. The policy gives the Superintendent the authority to accept or reject the request. Currently, employer paid health insurance ends when the Superintendent approves an employee to go on unpaid leave. Board approval is sought to revise the policy to allow employer N Npaid benefits to continue if the approved leave is less than 6 weeks. A revised policy is attached (A2). This would allow an employee to retain health insurance without having to switch to COBRA only to return onto employer provided health insurance in a short period of time. These types of leaves occur infrequently. See VII A.

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1. **Program Reports**
2. **Program Statistics** are attached (B1).
3. **School Calendar:** Every year the Board must approve our calendar for the upcoming school year (B2). School calendars at West Holmes and East Holmes are consulted as we develop our program calendar. See VII. B.
4. **Night to Shine:** On February 7th the 3rd Holmes County Night to Shine was held at Grace Church in Berlin with 90 Honored Guests walking the red carpet. Holmes County Board of DD once again partnered with Grace Church and The Tim Tebow Foundation to bring this event to Holmes County. The Tim Tebow Foundation’s Night to Shine is a global prom event that honors individuals with a disability aged 14 and older all over the world! Local churches donated food, area businesses provided financial donations or goodie bag items, and many talented individuals donated their time and expertise. This year’s event would not have been possible without the 190 volunteers who made the evening magical from the moment the Honored Guests entered the parking lot. The evening was filled with dancing, laughter, camera flashes, karaoke, red carpet walking, games, shoe shining, hair styling, limo rides, delicious food, and memories that will last a lifetime.
5. **Superintendent’s Report**
6. **DD Awareness month activities:** Holmes DD is presenting each 2nd grade classroom in the County the book A Head Full of Birds by Alexandra GaribalI. There will be a visit with the Holmes County Commissioners to provide an update on our services and witness the signing of the 2025 DD Awareness Month proclamation. The Bucks Basketball team will face the Community All-Stars on March 18 at West Holmes High School. On that same evening, Holmes DD is hosting a Provider Fair with 10 local providers planning to attend. The month will wrap up with something new, a Film Festival and Talent Showcase at the Duncan Theater in Killbuck. Short films highlighting people with developmental disabilities will be shown and samples of art/writing of Holmes DD adults will be on display.
7. **Early Childhood Department:**

As we work toward our vision of a “community where everyone belongs”, Holmes DD has tasked one of our Early Childhood Developmental Specialists to work with local agencies/groups/businesses to create opportunities for children with disabilities. We’re providing support to Holmes Center for the arts (coordinating sensory friendly performances) Holmes County Public Library (sign language classes, upcoming sensory friendly children’s eve nts). Historic Downtown Millersburg (provided support and

Coordination for Sensory Friendly Christmas event). As the Developmental Specialist spends more time developing inclusive events that create opportunities sought by parents, there is less time for Early Intervention. This Developmental Specialist currently works with children in our Learning Bridge (3-5 yrs) program.

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In addition, our Early Intervention team has embarked on a project to help families get their child with suspected autism diagnosed in a timely manner. Currently, families must go to Akron, Cleveland, or Columbus to get their child diagnosed. Because of increased need and few doctors who diagnose, families wait 18 months - 2 years for their first appointment to start the process of getting a diagnosis. In Ohio, there is a process by which Boards of DD can help families through the diagnostic process in a matter of weeks. It is called the Autism Diagnosis Education Project (ADEP). This project has 2 important parts: 1. A series of assessments, including the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and 2. A medical evaluation by a licensed physician or certified nurse practitioner.

Holmes DD’s Early Intervention staff already completes many of the required assessments. Our staff will need to be trained to administer the ADOS. The training is provided at no cost to DD staff by Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI). Holmes DD has identified a Medical Doctor who has committed to the project and will work alongside us to help families get their child diagnosed.

To meet our dual goals of starting the ADEP program and expanding inclusion support, it is recommended to convert the vacant Early Childhood Specialist position (50% service coordination and 50% developmental specialist) on the Table of Organization (C1) to a Developmental Specialist position. Later this year, the Developmental Specialist who is working with Learning Bridge will likely shift full time into Inclusion Support. When that happens, Learning Bridge children will be supported by one of the other Early Childhood Developmental Specialists. See VII C.

1. **OLD BUSINESS -** None
2. **NEW BUSINESS**
3. **Personnel Policy 5.8 Unpaid Leave**

Motion was made by Wilbur Hershberger and seconded by Kyle Snyder to the revised Personnel Policy 5.8 Unpaid Leave as presented.

1. **Program Calendar**

Motion was made by Amos Yoder and seconded by Michell Snow to approve the 2025-2026 Program Calendar as presented.

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**Early Childhood Department**

Motion was made by Michele Snow and seconded by Wilbur Hershberger to approve the modification of the Table of Organization by converting the Early Childhood Specialist position to an Early Childhood Developmental Specialist position.

1. **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**
2. **Discussion Items:** In-Service Training Topics
3. **Upcoming Dates**

March 4 HCAHC meeting, 6:00 pm

March 18 Bucks vs All-Star Basketball Game, 7:00 pm, WHHS

March 18 Provider Fair, 6:00 pm, WHHS

March 29 Film Fest and Talent Showcase, 6:00 pm, Duncan Theater

April 4 Early Childhood Egg Hunt, 10:00 am

May 9-10 HCAHC Spring Festival

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Tara Dalrymple and seconded by Amos Yoder to adjourn the February 26, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting of the Holmes County Board of DD. Time 12:53 p.m.

**Next Board Meeting**

**March 26, 2025**

**at 12:00 p.m.**