

Published by the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities  
"Helping people to live, learn and work in our community"

## It's been quite a year

One thing we can all agree on is that 2020 is a year we will never forget. Whether it was the Pandemic, Racial Justice, Politics or our own day to day events, we have learned from and supported each other, we have greater empathy for others and we have greater appreciation for what was 'normal.'

Here at the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, we say thanks to all for the outstanding work that has been done to keep people safe and engaged wherever possible. Individuals and families have sacrificed by staying safely at home; Providers, especially those staff who provide direct support services, have gone the extra mile to support people in their homes or classrooms or work in the community; Elected Officials and Health Commissioners have worked hard to guide and protect our community through these challenges; and staff have done extraordinary work to support people in creative ways with numerous acts of kindness that no one sees.

There has been no 'playbook' or 'coach's manual' on how to navigate these challenging times. Yet, individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, Providers and staff continue to develop creative ways to adapt. Sadly, we are also aware that some have experienced loss during this time. Our thoughts are with those families.

While the Pandemic will still be with us as we begin 2021, we are encouraged by news of a vaccine and confident that we will be able to return to some of our favorite activities this year. Some say we may return to a 'new normal' where life may be even better after we have learned new ways of doing things through this experience. Certainly, many of us are more proficient with certain technologies such as Zoom!

For now, we must continue to practice preventive measures, including wearing masks and maintaining safe distances from others. We thank you for your continued efforts to support people who have developmental disabilities and extend our best wishes for a better 2021!



## Commissioners re-appoint Board members

The Franklin County Commissioners have re-appointed two Board members to another term on the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

John Bickley, Past President of the Board, was appointed for another four year term. Mr. Bickley, former CEO of the Central Ohio YMCA, has served on the Board for the past eight years. His adult daughter receives services from the Board.

Marie Crawford, current Vice President of the Board, was appointed to another four year term. Ms. Crawford is the parent of three adult children, two of whom receive services from the Board. She has a long history of advocating for other parents and families and will begin her third term.

Jed Morison, Superintendent/CEO, stated "we are very fortunate to have such committed and supportive Board members and Commissioners, providing leadership for our services."

In addition to those appointments, the Commissioners are also expected to appoint a new member of the Board prior to the Board's organizational meeting in January. The new Board member will replace Renée Stein, who has served 12 years and is not eligible for another term due to term limits. The new Board member will be a parent or family member of a child who has a developmental disability.

As required by laws governing County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, each Board must have at least three members who are family members of children or adults who have developmental disabilities.

Board appointments are for four year terms and Board members can be re-appointed twice for a total of twelve years.

The County Commissioners appoint five Board members and the Franklin County Probate Judge appoints two. Board members serve with no compensation.



**FCBDD Past President,  
John Bickley**



**FCBDD Vice President,  
Marie Crawford**

# Accreditation visit

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities conducted an Accreditation visit at the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities in November and is expected to finalize their report within 90 days of the visit.



Based on preliminary reports, state officials offered several nice comments on services and staff and indicated that they expect our accreditation will be renewed. They seemed impressed with the Board's multi-system youth program, housing initiatives, employment supports, staffing, early childhood services, financial stability allowing for Medicaid waivers for close to 6000 individuals, equity efforts, technology mini-grants, financial support for Direct Service Professional wages, Pandemic efforts, Self Advocate Advisory Council and establishment and services of the Guardianship Services Board.

They also offered suggestions on opportunities for improvement which centered around the Individual Service Plans (person centered outcomes, behavioral services, free choice of provider, case notes and assessments matching up with plans). They did not note any health and safety issues in the exit conference. State staff interviewed and reviewed paperwork for approximately 60 individuals. The Board was also cited for not using an updated form for employees hired after July 1, 2019 and not providing evidence that the "Provider Services Management" portal was updated with applicable service locations.

Larry Macintosh, Director of Administrative Services and Lee Childs, Director of Service Coordination, and their staffs worked hard to coordinate and participate in the accreditation process. The final report should be available in February.

## ViaQuest approved for youth services

*Editor's Note: The following article was in a recent communication from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. Congratulations to Rich Johnson, CEO of ViaQuest and all the ViaQuest team for implementing this important service.*

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) is pleased to announce that ViaQuest Healthcare Central, LLC has been approved to receive enhanced reimbursement for providing short-term, intensive behavioral support to youth ages 10 through 17 with a dual diagnosis of mental illness and intellectual disability, violent and aggressive behaviors toward self and others, and a history of significant trauma.



ViaQuest plans to open a new Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID) in Franklin County, which will be used to serve youth from across the state. The facility will be opening in January of 2021. DODD will be responsible for referring youth to the facility and are aware of youth who will benefit from this new intensive support option.

Supporting youth with complex behavioral health needs and their families is a statewide priority. This initiative is a critical component in building a comprehensive system of services and supports for Ohio youth with complex needs, and it is reflective of the budget priorities established by Governor DeWine and the Ohio General Assembly to address the needs of multi-system youth throughout Ohio.

This is one component of a statewide initiative to support this population. DODD is also partnering with the Ohio Department of Medicaid in their effort to launch and implement OhioRISE (Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence), a specialized managed care program for youth with complex behavioral health and multi-system needs. This will provide comprehensive and highly coordinated behavioral health services provided by a specialized managed care organization experienced in and dedicated to serving the unique needs of this population.

Questions about DODD's initiative can be directed to [ICFRateAddOn@dodd.ohio.gov](mailto:ICFRateAddOn@dodd.ohio.gov). More information about OhioRISE can be found on the Ohio Department of Medicaid's website.

## Video call tips

*Editor's note: As more and more people conduct business or contact others on video calls, such as WebEx, Zoom, FaceTime, Microsoft Teams or other platforms, we continue to learn "Do's and Don'ts" on how to make the calls more successful. Thanks to Bruce Hennes, CEO of Hennes Communications, for providing some "Do's" below.*

**Do make sure there is light on your face**

**Do make certain you're not sitting in front of a bright window**

**Do make sure you are looking directly into the camera lens and making eye contact**

**Do be aware of what is behind you**

**Do be aware of your body posture**

**Do make sure the dogs and kids are quiet**

**Do be sure your mobile phone is set to vibrate or off**

## Rita Price joins FCBDD

Rita Price, former reporter for the *Columbus Dispatch*, will join the staff of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities on January 11, 2021.

Rita has built a career as a trusted journalist in central Ohio, providing *Columbus Dispatch* readers with a mix of daily news and in-depth stories for more than 25 years. She is often at her best when telling extraordinary stories about ordinary people.

Much of Rita's work has been rooted in public policy and services, with a focus on vulnerable populations. She has covered issues as varied as mountain-top removal mining to wage inequality to the workforce crisis confronting disability-services agencies.

Rita is known throughout the state for her knowledge of both public and private nonprofit social-service systems, including the disabilities field. Rita also has received numerous awards from the Associated Press, Ohio Society of Professional Journalists and other industry and family advocacy groups.

"We are delighted to welcome Rita to our staff," said Jed Morison, Superintendent/CEO. "Her knowledge of our services and other human services in Central Ohio and her exceptional writing and communication skills will serve our agency well."

Rita will serve as "Communications Coordinator" for the Board, researching and writing stories to help convey the Board's mission. Rita also will develop and implement an agency-wide communication plan and will assist with agency brochures, reports and overall communication efforts.



## Vaccine distribution

Vaccines for COVID-19 virus have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration and distribution has begun.



While vaccine distribution is expected to take several months, the Governor has placed some individuals with intellectual disabilities in the first wave of those who will be vaccinated. According to the plan, Phase 1A includes "people with intellectual disabilities and those with mental illness, who live in group homes or centers, and staff at those locations." Other priorities in Phase 1A include health care workers, residents and staff in nursing homes or assisted living facilities, patients and staff in psychiatric hospitals, EMS responders and residents and staff in Ohio's two homes for veterans.

Both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will require 2 doses, spaced a few weeks apart to be fully effective. Reports suggest that with both shots, the vaccines are up to 95% effective.

Larry Macintosh, Director of Administrative Support Services for the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, will serve as the Board's liaison with Health Officials.

At *Dateline's* deadline, details regarding the next phase of vaccine priorities were not available. More details will be provided as plans move forward.

## Journey Care Kits now available for air travelers with disabilities

The Columbus Regional Airport Authority (CRAA) has recently introduced Journey Care Kits to help passengers with disabilities prepare for air travel.

The kits include sunflower-themed lanyards and wristbands, providing a discreet sign to airport staff that someone might like additional assistance or time when moving through the airport. This can be especially helpful with identifying and assisting travelers with hidden disabilities such as autism, chronic pain, dementia, anxiety or hearing impairment.

The Journey Care Kits also contain: travel preparations checklist and helpful hints, cloth facial coverings, a CMH bag tag, information on TSA Cares, a program that allows a traveler to pre-arrange to have a TSA officer assigned to assist them through the checkpoint screening process, and either a story to help children with developmental disabilities, such as autism, prepare for the sights and sounds of travel or a [Wheels Up! Traveling with a Disability brochure](#) with answers to frequently asked questions.

CRAA is partnering with OhioHealth Neurological Rehabilitation and Autism Society Central Ohio to connect clients with this new resource.



**Journey Care Kits are available by emailing [CustomerService@ColumbusAirports.com](mailto:CustomerService@ColumbusAirports.com) 60 days before a scheduled flight.**

# Qualifying for Social Security Benefits

**Editor's Note:** The following article was submitted by the Disability Benefits Center, an independent organization dedicated to helping people receive Social Security disability benefits. For more information on the Center, go to [www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org](http://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org).

The Social Security Administration has several types of benefits available to help people who can't work because of a medical condition and also to help the parents of a child that is ill and needs extra support.

There are hundreds of medical conditions that qualify someone to receive benefits from the Social Security Administration. Adults who have worked and paid taxes can receive disability benefits to help them pay for living expenses if they can't work. Parents who have children with a serious medical condition can receive Supplemental Security Income benefits to help them pay for extra medical treatments and living costs to make sure that the child has everything he or she needs.

## Qualifying for Disability Benefits with a Developmental Disability

Adults who were not diagnosed with a developmental disability as children but are diagnosed as adults can qualify for disability benefits if they have worked before. Children who have a diagnosis of a developmental disability qualify for SSI benefits. Both adults and children must be able to provide medical documentation showing that they have an I.Q. test score lower than 70 and that they meet at least one of these criteria before their claims for benefits can be approved:

- *understanding, remembering, or applying information (ability to learn term and concepts, follow instructions, solve problems)*
- *interacting with others (ability to understand social cues, cooperate, make and maintain friendships, handle conflicts)*
- *concentrating on tasks and maintaining pace (ability to complete tasks in a timely manner, ignore or avoid distractions, work close to others without distracting them), and*
- *managing oneself (ability to protect self from harm, regulate emotions, control behavior, maintain personal hygiene).*

Parents will need to submit an IQ test along with a diagnosis from a doctor, PET scans or MRI scans, and other proof that the child meets those requirements. Adults need to submit medical evidence along with a recent I.Q. test that shows a score of 70 or lower.

## Financially Qualifying

Adults who apply for disability benefits do not have to meet any additional requirements in order to be eligible for Social Security benefits. But parents must meet a financial qualification before their child qualifies for benefits. Parents must submit W-2 or Federal tax returns for each working adult in the household to show that the combined household income isn't greater than the income cap that the SSA has set. This is to make sure that the benefits are going to parents who truly have a financial hardship as a result of their child's condition.

## Filing a Claim for Benefits

Adults who are filing a claim for disability benefits can apply online or apply in person at the closest SSA office. If you have questions about the paperwork or need assistance filling out the forms the best thing to do is apply in person through the SSA office. Parents must apply in person at the SSA office if they are filing a claim on behalf of a child. If you are applying in person make sure that you bring all of your medical documentation and supporting documents to the appointment with you.

## Resources:

SSI Benefits: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-eligibility-ussi.htm>

Disability benefits Explanation: [https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/disability\\_benefits.shtml](https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/disability_benefits.shtml)

Nearest SSA Office: <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/state-social-security-disability>

## Good For You

*Notable achievements in the FCBDD community*

Congratulations to the Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB) on the recent annual convention. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this year's convention was held virtually on zoom over a total of nine different days. Great job!!



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Congratulations to Mark Seifarth, well regarded advocate, lobbyist and friend to many, for being featured in Hannah News recently on almost 40 years of public policy work in Columbus and Washington D.C.



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Thank you and congratulations to Marci Straughter on an excellent presentation at the OACB (Ohio Association of County Boards) Convention on the topic of racial equity and anti-racism practices.

## Career Milestones

### 30 Years

Carol Middaugh  
Dorcas Sharp

### 25 Years

Tracey Crawford  
Diane Kaiser  
Patricia Wells

### 20 Years

Carolyn Earnhardt  
Erin Kapps  
Jeanne Murphy  
Marsha Rummer

### 10 Years

Carrie Barnhart

### 5 Years

Timothy Wilmer



## Hattie Larlham to provide pre-transition services at West Central School

*Editor's note: The following story was provided by Liz Jones, Hattie Larlham, Director of Day Programming*

Hattie Larlham, formerly known as Add, is looking forward to beginning a new partnership with FCBDD. The partnership aims to enhance West Central School's current transition planning program by providing Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to interested students. Pre-ETS is an Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities service intended to help students get an early start on exploring career interests. Pre-ETS offers a series of programming, which includes training in self-advocacy, job exploration, workplace readiness, and work-based learning. Services will be provided on a one-on-one basis in order to tailor training to the students' specific interests and learning styles.

In addition to Pre-ETS, transition planning seminars will be offered by Hattie Larlham to the parents and stakeholders of West Central School. The staff of West Central School are mindful that a student's transition from school services to adult ID/DD services can be challenging and are striving to make the process as seamless as possible through this interagency collaboration. It is the shared goal of Hattie Larlham and West Central School to see all students go directly into a meaningful work or adult programming option upon graduation.

The project is led by Liz Jones, Director of Day Programming, and Dave Cosart, Employment Services Manager for Hattie Larlham, together with West Central School's Transition Resources Specialists Jill Hicks and Amy Lare.

## Calendars revised

The 2020/2021 School Year calendars for the FCBDD preschools and West Central School have been revised due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In-person services shifted to virtual services on December 7, 2020 due to the community spread of the COVID-19 virus. Winter recess was extended by 5 days and the 5 day Spring recess in April is cancelled.

At Dateline's deadline, virtual services are scheduled to resume on January 7 2021 and in-person classes are tentatively scheduled to restart on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.

## Did you know?



Did you know that Disability Rights Ohio has a resource page on COVID-19 on their website?

The Resource Page provides answers to frequently asked questions about services for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and their families during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

To view this resource click on the following link:

<https://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/covid19>

Or if one has specific questions about Disability Rights Ohio, call 614-466-7264.

# 2021/2022 Calendars Proposed

The program year calendars for the 2021/2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022) will be presented to the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities for consideration in their January 28, 2021 Board meeting.



The Calendars are expected to be similar to the original 2020/2021 calendar until it was changed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Tentative plans are for Early Childhood and School staff to return on August 23, 2021 with classes at West Central School to begin on August 25, 2021. Winter recess would tentatively be from December 21 through December 31, 2021, with a Parent/Teacher Day scheduled for December 20, 2021. Classes would resume on January 3, 2022. Spring break in 2022 would be from April 18-22, 2022 and the school year would end on June 3, 2022. Twelve month staff would be off on Monday, June 20, 2022, recognizing that Juneteenth (June 19) is on Sunday.

For a copy of the draft 2021/2022 Program Year Calendars, contact Amy Magginis at [amy.magginis@fcbdd.org](mailto:amy.magginis@fcbdd.org) or 614-342-5950. Feedback or suggestions for revision can be sent to [amy.magginis@fcbdd.org](mailto:amy.magginis@fcbdd.org) or to Jed Morison, Superintendent/CEO by email at [jed.morison@fcbdd.org](mailto:jed.morison@fcbdd.org).

## Winter weather plans

When winter weather is threatening, it is possible that the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities transportation might have to be cancelled.

On days when FCBDD transportation is cancelled, Administration and Service Coordination locations remain open, unless the weather is severe.

Individuals, family members and providers are also reminded that they can always decide not to send an

individual even if the FCBDD buses are operating. Conditions may vary in different areas of the county. Individual circumstances and health considerations may require that people stay home to be safe.

When transportation is cancelled, television stations will be contacted as soon as the decision is made.



## Dateline

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities

**Beth Savage**, President  
**Marie Crawford**, Vice President  
**Michael Underwood**, Secretary  
**John Bickley**  
**Linda Craig**  
**Renée Stein**  
**William W. Wilkins**

Superintendent/CEO **Jed W. Morison**

*The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities does not discriminate in employment or services on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or disability.*

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Information about the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities is always available on the internet at:

[www.fcbdd.org](http://www.fcbdd.org)

## Calendar

**Editor's Note: The following calendar is tentative due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Call 614-342-5950 before attending any meeting to see if it is still scheduled.**

### January 2021

- 1 Happy New Year!
- 4-6 Winter Recess
- 7 FCBDD early childhood and West Central school virtual services resume.
- 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observed -- all county facilities closed.
- 19 In-Person services tentatively resume for Preschools and West Central School
- 20 Family Support meeting, 10 a.m. via Zoom. Please contact Amy Magginis at 614-342-5950 for details or click the following link to connect:  
[Family Support Meeting Zoom Link](#)
- 28 Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Annual Organizational Board meeting and regular meeting, 11:30 a.m. via Zoom. Please contact Amy Magginis at 614-342-5950 for details. Click on the following link to connect:

[Organizational & Regular meetings of FCBDD Zoom Link](#)