

Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Annual Report 2023





A Message from Our Superintendent

As 2023 came to a close, I was humbled to step into my new role as Superintendent/CEO. During my previous 21 years overseeing financial and business operations at our agency, I developed an appreciation for many of the challenges and accomplishments central to the lives of those we serve. The good news is that the story in recent decades has been one of greatly expanded opportunities: more choice in where to live; school-age services with improved focus on transition-age youth; inclusive early intervention and preschool services; and increased options for community integration, employment and technology.

Many factors contribute to these successes, and three are key: strong relationships with stakeholders, good internal and external communication, and accountability.

Much opportunity lies ahead. We'll strive to emphasize self-determination and advocacy for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, support state-level efforts to better align provider payments with outcomes, and embrace innovation as we address the workforce challenges facing service providers and county boards alike. Our agency will continue making progress in person-centered services and supports, and we'll aim to ensure that our staff has the resources necessary to carry out this work.

The new year began as a time for me to listen and learn even more about our early childhood, school, transportation, service coordination and other direct services. I am enjoying getting "out and about" to visit each of our locations and connect with as many employees and families as possible.

Hope to see you soon,

Dot Yeager
Superintendent/CEO



2023 Board Members



Michael Underwood
President



Marie Crawford
Vice President



Bill Wilkins
Secretary



Beth Savage
Past President



John Bickley



Samuel Davis



Thank You, Jed

Jed Morison retired at the end of 2023 after an extraordinary 54-year career in public service, including 24 years as FCBDD Superintendent/CEO. Along the way, he held positions as a school bus driver, counselor, direct-support professional, teacher and Ohio Special Olympics Director. His contributions are vast and his kindness nothing short of legendary. The developmental disability community throughout Ohio—and beyond—is grateful for his dedication and friendship.



"I was proud to make history in 2022 as the first person with developmental disabilities to join the Franklin County board. Now, Ohio has a law saying that by July 2025, all county DD boards should have at least one person who's eligible for board services. Who better to know how to serve people with disabilities than someone who has lived it?"

Marci Straughter
Advocacy/Equity Liaison



What We Do

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities is a public agency that provides services, support and advocacy to central Ohioans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Since its creation in 1967, the county board has been dedicated to making sure that children and adults with developmental disabilities can live, learn, work, play and participate fully in our community.

We help people realize their visions for living a fulfilling life. That may mean landing a job in the community, using assistive technology to increase independence, joining a recreational sports league or learning how to knit. Our staff and community partners understand that everyone has different needs and goals.

In 2023, we continued to grow our mission, reach and accomplishments:

12,869

Average number of children and adults served each day

+211%

Increase in people using remote support and assistive technology

2,856

People receiving transportation support to jobs or day programs

9,129

People supported by agency service coordinators

666

Agency employees

15,628

Early intervention home and virtual visits

797

Families in our family support program

\$9.7 million

Annual investment in higher wages for direct-support professionals

\$61 million

Funding provided to our community partners

6,040

Medicaid waiver recipients

1,517

Major unusual incident investigations

Early Childhood Services


The Early Childhood Education Program at the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities collaborated with partner agencies to serve record numbers of infants, toddlers and young children in 2023.

More than 3,000 children from birth to age 6 took part in high-quality early intervention and preschool programs designed to give them a better jump start in life.

Each child and family received intervention services tailored to their needs. We're proudly focused on providing young children with the best opportunities to learn and grow in natural, home-based environments as well as early-childhood centers, which are inclusive and creative spaces.

Along with our on-site partners—the Child Development Council of Franklin County, YMCA of Central Ohio and Columbus City Schools—we maintained our 5-Star Step Up to Quality rating and broadened our community reach. We hosted special events and family-engagement sessions, and operated a monthly drive-through produce market that provided free, fresh food to 4,450 people in need. And, with the pandemic mostly behind us, we re-opened our doors to volunteers and college students.

The FCBDD Early Childhood Education program also bid farewell to longtime leader Rebecca Love, who retired at the end of 2023 after more than 50 years of service. We welcomed Dr. Kathy Lawton, an experienced educator with both personal and professional connections to central Ohio's disability and early intervention communities, as our new Director of Early Childhood Education.



"I love playing with kids, I love interacting with the families, I love the relationships that get built. I love seeing the 'aha' moments for parents when they realize the little changes that they've made are making huge progress."

Crissy
FCBDD Early Intervention Specialist



Special Olympics, Recreation & Aquatics



Hundreds of children, teens and adults took part in athletic, leisure and swim activities in 2023 through Franklin County Special Olympics, Franklin County Recreation programming and the Aquatic Center at West Central School.

More than 400 athletes, ranging in age from 11 to 82, and 175 volunteer coaches supported our Flyers Special Olympics program's 14 sports.

Franklin County also continued to contract with the Hattie Larlham organization to operate an evening and weekend social activity program for adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities, offering everything from bowling and dancing to riverboat tours and trips to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

Our Aquatic Center at West Central is an Olympic-sized community jewel. In addition to classes, therapy and open swim nights for FCBDD students and families, the pool and its staff hosted recreational swimming and water-safety activities in 2023 with many local organizations, including Nationwide Children's Hospital, Heinzerling Community, the Ohio State University, SPARK and Open Door Columbus.



School-Age Services

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities offers a unique school-age program to accommodate a continuum of needs, from intensive one-to-one programming to inclusion in a general education setting.

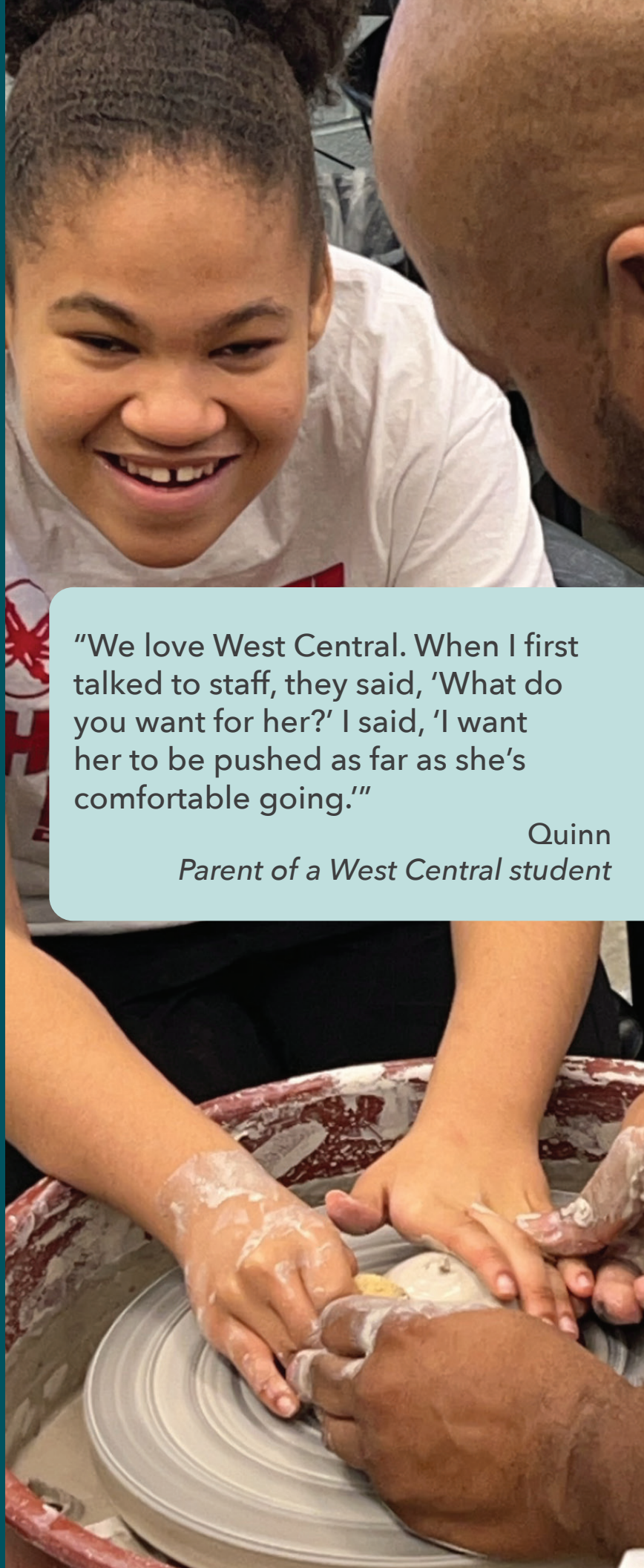
In 2023, the program included 14 classrooms at West Central, our transition-focused school for older students with multiple disabilities. We also staffed seven resource rooms in South-Western City Schools, providing options for more than 150 students from kindergarten to age 22.

The program's whole-child, skills-based approach increases opportunities for each student to enjoy life outside of school with increased confidence and independence.

West Central developed and rolled out a new, functional skills-based curriculum in 2023, enhanced behavior support services, began celebrating students of the month, added Family Night programming and held open houses for local school districts.

In addition to on-site speech, occupational and physical therapy services, students benefited from adaptive physical education, recreational and therapeutic swimming, art and music classes. They participated in school dances, celebrations, prom and graduation ceremonies.

Community exploration—to restaurants, retail sites, parks, museums and more—is a big part of every week at West Central. Inside the building or out, learning experiences are designed to help students and their families plan and prepare for the transition to adult life.



"We love West Central. When I first talked to staff, they said, 'What do you want for her?' I said, 'I want her to be pushed as far as she's comfortable going.'"

Quinn
Parent of a West Central student

Person-Centered Plans for Life

"She's comfortable, and she wants to share her story. It's a very positive story. It helps her to grow and have confidence. There's strength there—and resilience."

Erin
Marcie's Guardian

People receiving services from the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities are at the center of the planning process, making decisions about how they want to live their lives and guiding their support teams.

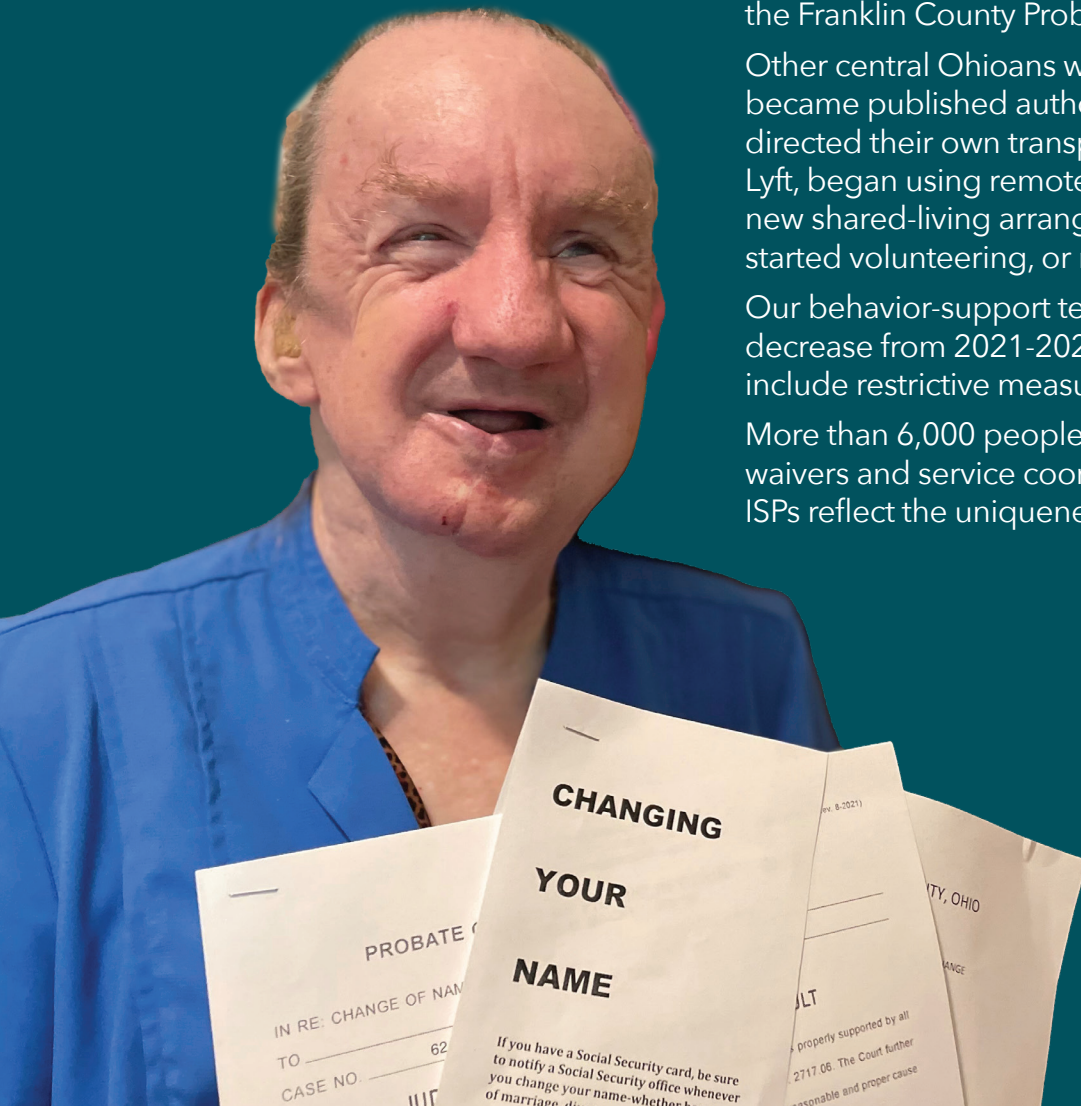
By 2023, all people receiving home- and community-based services had transitioned to the new Ohio Individual Service Plan (ISP)—a statewide, standardized document that was rolled out first in Franklin County. The plans are meant to be living blueprints, open to revisions and changes along the way.

For Marcie, a transgender woman with blindness and other disabilities, one of her most cherished goals was to legally change her name to better reflect her long-held female identity. With help from her guardian and service team, Marcie's petition was approved in June 2023 by the Franklin County Probate Court.

Other central Ohioans with developmental disabilities became published authors, testified at the Statehouse, directed their own transportation needs with Uber or Lyft, began using remote-support services, or chose a new shared-living arrangement. People began new jobs, started volunteering, or moved into their first apartments.

Our behavior-support team oversaw a 17 percent decrease from 2021-2023 in the number of plans that include restrictive measures.

More than 6,000 people in 2023 had Medicaid-funded waivers and service coordinators working to ensure that ISPs reflect the uniqueness of each individual.





Community Partners & Medicaid Waivers

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities provides funding for Medicaid waivers and to partner organizations to pay for services, supports and other community resources for residents with developmental disabilities.

At the end of 2023, our agency had about 6,000 people enrolled in the waiver program, more than in any other Ohio county. We also provided \$61 million in funding to public and private organizations, such as health-care providers, universities, nonprofits and area businesses.

The federal government pays the largest share of Medicaid waiver costs, with local and state governments providing match funds. That means that during the 2023 state fiscal year, Franklin County residents received \$387 million in services at a cost of just \$84 million to Franklin County property taxpayers.

These services enrich lives and allow people with developmental disabilities to live in the community instead of residential facilities. They help people obtain transportation and employment, specialized care and therapy services, or take part in recreational, educational and advocacy activities.

Both agency and independent providers comprise the workforce known as direct-support professionals. They are the backbone of service delivery, making it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live safely in their homes and participate in community life.

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities allocated approximately \$9.7 million in 2023 to help increase the Medicaid-funded hourly wages for these vital workers.

2023 Financials

Receipts

Levy and Other Local Funds	Amount
Tax levy	\$185,741,046
Active treatment	1,124,078
Student services	1,686,631
Sale of personal property	156,360
Insurance reimbursements	8,082
Grants, gifts and donations	10,886
Other, including rental of real estate	1,796,138
Other tax-based reimbursements: Ohio Department of Taxation	17,883,619

State Funds	Amount
<i>Ohio Department of Education</i>	
Preschool	\$1,695,933
School-age	2,582,631
Transportation	1,070,557

State Funds	Amount
<i>Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities</i>	
Other	\$73,112
DODD reconciliation - DSP match	1,998,516
Reconciliation of prior year match	10,013,876

Federal Funds	Amount
Adult day supports	\$2,432,703
Targeted case management	9,384,683
Title XX	847,538
2019/2020 cost settlement	10,413,193
Department of Education	282,105

Federal Funds, continued	Amount
Department of Education COVID grants	135,421
Medicaid administrative claiming	2,690,804
School lunch	24,270

Total receipts: \$252,052,182

Disbursements

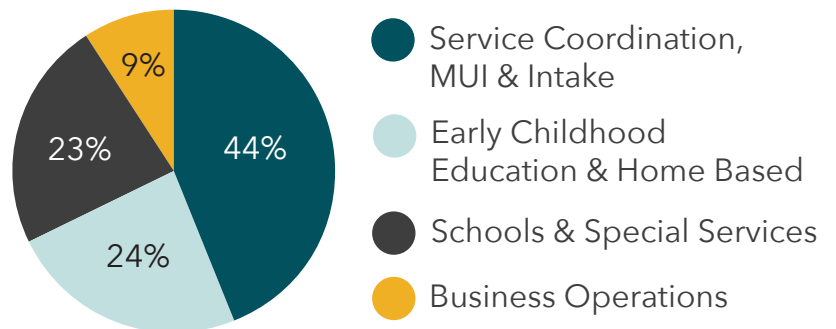
Type of Disbursement	Amount
Personal services	\$43,222,993
Fringe benefits	22,695,715
Social services	153,035,938
Services and materials	11,786,100
Capital outlay	41,059

Total disbursements: \$230,781,805

Consistent with the board’s commitment to the community, receipts and expenditures are balanced with the board’s Medicaid Stability Fund.

FCBDD Staff

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities is a major employer in the community. Our agency had 666 staff members in various service areas during 2023, including early intervention, transportation and provider relations. Nearly 300 employees are based in the Service Coordination Department, providing case management and supports to thousands of people with developmental disabilities.



Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Helping people to live, learn and work in our community

2879 Johnstown Road
Columbus, OH 43219

Phone: 614-475-6440

Fax: 614-342-5001

fcbdd.org

Follow Us



Facebook:
[@FranklinCountyDD](https://www.facebook.com/FranklinCountyDD)



X:
[@FranklinCoDD](https://twitter.com/FranklinCoDD)



Instagram:
[@franklincountydevdisabilities](https://www.instagram.com/franklincountydevdisabilities)



YouTube:
[@franklincountydd1573](https://www.youtube.com/franklincountydd1573)

