

Richland County Youth and Family Council Meeting

April 3, 2025

1:30 p.m.

Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities/Microsoft TEAMS

The following members were:

Present: Darrell Banks, Dan Varn, Lori Bedson, Kevin Kimmel, Sherry Branham-Fonner, Tara Lautzenhiser, Kevin VanMeter, Michele Giess, Joe Devany, Stevanie Brown

Absent: Meghan Wheeler, Hannah Crouch, Lisa Benson, Jodie Perry, Tiffany Ellenberger

Administrative Staff Present: Michelle Miller

Present via Microsoft TEAMS: Molly H, Kelly Pack, Stan Jefferson, Toby Borders, Rico Woods, Shauna Shell, Wendy Thompson, Marissa

Guests: Katie Gatten, Sharonda Wilson, Patricia Dollisch, Jenette Smith, Anne Vermillion, Allison Ross, Breeann Lee, Miles Parsons, Emily Argo-Tate, Kaye Clark, Amanda Soliven, Whitney Lindsay, Brian Hunt, Tracy Franko

1. Call to Order & Introductions

President Dan Varn called the meeting to order at 1:43 PM and began introductions. A quorum was established with 10 voting members in attendance.

2. Approval of March 6, 2025, Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting (March 6, 2025) was made by Kevin K. Toby advised the following correction needed to be made to the minutes: "Toby directed members to the first page of the report which notes expenses paid through the month of December 2024" – December 2024 should read January 2025. The motion was amended by Kevin to include the correction. The motion was seconded by Joe. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

3. Treasurer's Report

Toby advised Council members there is no Financial Report this month as this is a month in which the full Council meeting occurs prior to the Finance Committee meeting. Toby did inform members she is working with Michelle to ensure all Strong Families/Safe Communities expenses are being processed.

4. Old Business and Director's Report

A) Director's Report

- 1) Service Coordination** – Michelle reported there are currently 30 youth involved in service coordination, with 9 youth in pending status. Michelle informed members Rico attended a two-day training regarding service coordination procedures which gave him the opportunity to network with other service coordinators around the state.
- 2) FCSS Funding** – Michelle informed members the Council has expended roughly \$35,000 in FCSS funding, to include two youth in placement.
- 3) Strong Families/Safe Communities Grant** – Michelle reported 100 youth and their families have been supported by this grant.

- 4) **Children's Alliance Conference** – Michelle stated she attended the Children's Alliance Conference on March 31st and April 1st. The purpose of the conference was to reinforce the importance of Youth and Family Council goals and partnerships within local communities.
- 5) **Banks Hair Salon** – Michelle reported Banks Hair Salon has offered to provide free haircuts to 10 youth on April 13, 2025. Please send referrals to Michelle as soon as possible.
- 6) **Service Mechanism** – The Council's Service Mechanism (procedure) has been reviewed and approved at the state level. In keeping with the procedural manual, the Council will continue to use FCSS and MSY funds allocated through the state.
- 7) **Parent Representatives** – Discussion regarding an increase in the parent representative meeting stipend was tabled at the March 6th meeting. Members revisited the suggestion of a maximum or cap on parent representative payments during a fiscal year. Kevin K. made the motion to approve a cap of \$1500 per parent representative per fiscal year to cover monthly meetings and up to twelve events outside monthly meetings to include a daily stipend for conference attendance as well as reimbursement of conference expenses such as hotel accommodations, meals and travel/mileage reimbursement. Tara seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

5. New Business

A) Quarterly Share Report

Michelle asked Council members to approve the quarterly report to be submitted for the previous quarter. Michelle reminded members the report identifies how the county has been successful in meeting shared goals/priorities and areas in which the county has not been successful or needs to build capacity.

A motion to approve the quarterly report to be submitted to DCY was made by Michele and seconded by Kevin V. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

B) SFY 2026 Strong Families/Safe Communities

Michelle informed members the process for receiving Strong Families/Safe Communities funds will be automatic this fiscal year, not a competitive process. Richland County will receive \$80,333 in grant funds for SFY 2026 but will have to respond to a competitive process in SFY 2027. Michelle reminded members the grant funds have been used to provide respite support; kinship closet items; life skills; trauma-informed care activities and training; and assistive technology/equipment.

Lori made a motion to approve the receipt of the grant funding for state fiscal year 2026. Sherry seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

C) Updated Policies

Michelle informed members she has placed updated copies of Youth and Family Council policies in the meeting packet. Michelle asked members to review the policies so the policies can be discussed at the next Council meeting.

D) Library Summer Reading Program

Katie informed members the library will be offering an eight-week summer reading program entitled "Color Your World". The program will begin June 2, 2025 and run through July 26, 2025. Information is available on the library website. Additionally, Katie expressed concern about potential elimination of the library fund in House Bill 96. The library is asking individuals to reach out to their state representatives to provide personal impact stories. She identified Marilyn John and Matt Huffman as representatives to contact. Katie added the local library has levy dollars to help cover operating costs.

6. Council Reports

A) Early Intervention

Michelle included the Early Intervention report in the meeting packet. Julie Litt was not in attendance to review the report with members.

B) Ohio Rise

Kay reported there are currently 400 youth involved in Ohio Rise in the Richland County area, with 60 youth on the waiting list. Kay added they will be moving into their new location soon and will be hiring several managers and a Richland County Executive Director with expected start dates of July 1, 2025.

C) Pre-Natal to 5 Committee (provided during Updates/Announcements)

Wendy informed members the Committee's last meeting was March 17th. The focus of the meeting was awareness month for early care, with target topics to include general education to the public, lead poisoning and healthy eating. Wendy acknowledged Michelle helped the Committee get car seat safety cards which provide the child's identifying information on the seat. Additionally, she acknowledged John Dorsey, Richland County Job and Family Services, assisted by making the car seat safety cards information available through the Healthchek program.

7. Updates/Announcements

Michele (Richland County Board of DD) informed members there was great response to the March events at Newhope.

Kevin V. (Richland/Mansfield Public Health Department) advised members there is a verified case of measles in the county. The Health Department mobile unit is traveling throughout the county to increase awareness about the MMR vaccine.

Kevin K. (Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center) let members know Mid-Ohio will be offering summer school classes to 10-20 youth this summer. The program will run from June 2 – June 30, 2025 at Mid-Ohio.

Stevanie (Buckeye Community School) thanked everyone for the donations provided for the clothes closet. She added they do not need any more baby boy clothes but could use personal care items and laundry soap.

Darrell (Richland County Board of Commissioners) informed members the renovations on the Courthouse are progressing and should be completed in several months. He added Lori is retiring at the end of the year (December 31st) and the position has been posted so she can work with the individual before leaving.

Lori (Richland County JFS) expressed concern regarding the public assistance budget which is basically flat funded in the next biennium but, more specifically, will result in a state TANF "rainy day fund" or carry forward being spent down. She added TANF enables the agency to provide direct services to residents of the community but also enables the agency to contract with other agencies to provide various services to community members.

Tara (Richland County Children Services) stated the agency has had tremendous support from the Board of Commissioners and City of Mansfield regarding child abuse awareness. Tara reminded members to wear blue in support of child abuse awareness on April 9th and send photos to Brigette Coles. She added Buckeye Bakery is offering a free cookie to the first 100 customers on April 9th.

Sherry (Mental Health and Recovery Board) expressed concern about several items in House Bill 96 that will impact mental health and recovery services, one being language that sets similar reimbursement rates for

mental health and addiction services as are currently set for medical providers/services. She added there are proposed cuts to criminal justice that could impact the state emergency help line. Additionally, she anticipates the federal SOS grants will not be available in the next federal fiscal year. Sherry let members know, based on some of the proposed cuts, the Mental Health Board may have to limit the services provided and focus on the severely mentally ill which it is mandated to help. Sherry stated she may ask members to support mental health services by providing a letter to state representatives as well as support putting a levy on the ballot in November which would enable her to shift housing costs to levy funds. As a side note, Sherry mentioned she received notification that all unencumbered ARPA funds are being recouped by the federal government. She added she has encumbered the funds for the housing projects being completed at this time.

Joe (HeadStart/CAC) stated he has completed two national reviews and submitted the grant for the next year. He was informed funding had been included in the continuing resolution only to find out five regions were shut down on Tuesday and one of the regions was Region 5 which is the region affiliated with his HeadStart program. Additionally, he stated fifteen employees involved in the CAC weatherization program were terminated and local CACs are not sure where to seek guidance, send applications, etc. He added he thinks he can continue to draw down funding.

Breeann informed members April is sexual assault awareness month.

Brian (Catholic Charities) stated Catholic Charities is continuing to take applications for its pharmacy program and continues to provide services under a TANF contract through Richland County Job and Family Services to help with transportation for employment. Sherry asked if the cuts in funding to food pantries will impact Catholic Charities. Brian stated the agency receives food items from the Cleveland Food Bank and there have been some shortages.

Tracy informed members applications for the new school year are available. She added transportation is being provided this year but will not be available next year.

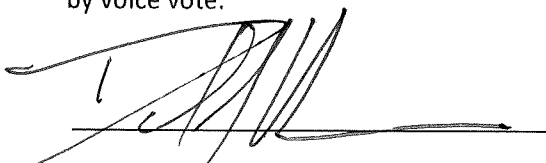
Patricia (OSU Extension/SNAP-Ed) let members know OSU may not have grant funding to continue the SNAP-Ed program after this program year.

Anne (Catalyst Life Services) reminded members May is mental health month and Catalyst will be hosting its Children's Carnival on May 14th.


Dan (United Way) informed members United Way has achieved its goal this year. Additionally, Dan stated focus groups have been convened to assess gaps in services; Dorey Diab/NCSC has been taking the lead on the project.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Sherry and seconded by Darrell. The motion was approved by voice vote.



Dan Varn, Council President



Michelle Miller, Executive Director