



**Warren County
Educational Service Center**

www.warrencountyesc.com



JUNE 2024



Tom Isaacs, Superintendent
1879 Deerfield Road, Lebanon OH 45036
513-695-2900

◆ JIMMY ALLEN COMMUNITY PARTERSHIP AWARD ◆



In 2023 WCESC created the Jimmy Allen Community Partnership Award named after long standing Board Member, Jimmy Allen, who passed away in April 2022. He served as board member at both Carlisle Local Schools and then Warren County ESC for nearly 25 years collectively and was a proud advocate of the Warren County community, school districts, and students.

This award is given to those who have shown positive community support. On April 12th Warren County ESC presented the Jimmy Allen Community Partnership Award to the following 2024 recipients for their continued support of WCESC, our school districts, and surrounding communities.

David Fornshell
Warren County Prosecutor



Matt Nolan
Warren County Auditor



◆ PROJECT EXCELLENCE ◆



The Area Progress Council of Warren County, Inc. seeks to recognize and honor **excellent** teachers within the public schools in Warren County. Sue Myers was recently recognized by Warren County ESC as a 2024 recipient of the Area Progress Council's Project Excellence Award. On May 1st, she, along with her husband, and leadership staff of WCESC attended the annual Project Excellence banquet to honor Sue and other area recipients. Sue is employed at the Western Row Campus as an intervention specialist for the Social Communication Program. The program provides services for children with autism and other low incidence disabilities with significant instructional and behavioral needs. Sue has been a valued contributor to the program and the education of its students since 2021. Thank you for being part of our team and making an impact on students.



CONGRATULATIONS SUE! WE APPRECIATE YOUR COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS!

Pictured:

Top: Sue Myers with DJ, a graduate from her class

Bottom: Sue Myers with Kara Dirksing, Sr. Exec. Director of Special Education Programming

◆ SUCCESS and ACHIEVEMENT! ◆

Kim Gregory, WCESC Lead Board Certified Behavior Analyst recently earned a Doctor in Education from the University of Pittsburgh specializing in Special Education. Her dissertation was titled Promoting Compassionate Care in an Alternate Education Setting: An Application of the Teaching Interaction Procedure. We are extremely fortunate to have employees of this caliber at WCESC and certainly appreciate Kim's quality contributions to our programming, students, and client school districts.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. KIM GREGORY!



◆ WCESC WELCOMES DR. JOSEPH HALL ◆

New Supervisor at John K. Lazares Alternative School for the 2024-2025 School Year



A Warren County native and graduate of Springboro High School, Dr. Hall has been an advocate for youth at risk of school failure for nearly two decades spending his career as a high school business teacher, intervention specialist, career-technical special education teacher, special education administrator, and Assistant Professor of Special Education. He has spent the last four years serving as Director of Educational Services overseeing operations in Ohio's only non-public school system housed within a juvenile court in Montgomery County. Dr. Hall's experience and expertise in curriculum and instruction encompasses inclusive special education (including co-teaching as a service delivery model), content-area literacy, and IEP development and

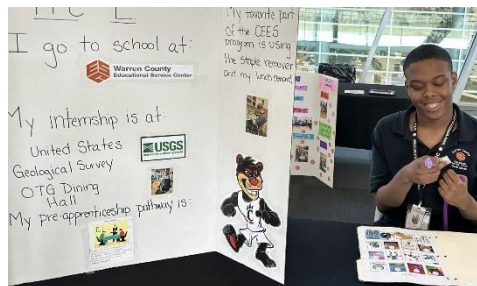
progress monitoring. He lives in Franklin Township with his wife, Heather, five of their six children, and four dogs. He enjoys kayaking and fishing as well as playing piano and singing with his family in their local church.

◆ **SOCIAL COMMUNICATION CLASSROOMS** ◆
Molly Leicht, Supervisor
Rachelle Yakumithis, Assistant Supervisor

The WCESC Social Communications Classroom and Multiple Disabilities program hosted a parent engagement night. Students and their families enjoyed a carnival themed evening complete with games and carnival food. Quarterly parent engagement nights help foster healthy relationships between the home and school and support the learning and development of the students.



Students in our Project Warren County (PWC) transition program participated in posterboard sessions on the University of Cincinnati's campus. Students in this program participate in the CEES program on UC's campus. Students were given the opportunity to present about their internship and social interactions while on campus.



Cool Critters Outreach visits the Social Communications Classrooms at least two times per school year. High school student D.A. composed a report about the Cool Critters program.

Cool Critters is an organization located in Cincinnati, Ohio. They are an interactive and educational way to look at animals. They will come to any event one requests. Programs given by Cool Critters can be adjusted to fit one's needs. On-site programs start at \$215 per program. The programs last approximately 40 - 60 minutes. The process of acquiring Cool Critters' animals starts with rescuing animals in the tri-state area. These animals used to be pets that their owners no longer wanted or couldn't care for. Cool Critters picks up these animals and proceeds to take them in and give them a loving home and good, healthy food.

Cool Critters provides an experience like no other, and they will provide entertainment to both kids and any adults that happen to be in attendance. While not all kids or adults will find enjoyment, most will. The atmosphere tends to be a quiet, more relaxed, and laid-back one where the audience is encouraged to ask questions. Cool Critters' employees love what they do and they themselves have a relaxed, laid-back attitude and have a knack for kids; they will have fun while learning about the animals and what Cool Critters does.

Cool Critters came to the school on 4/22/2024 and were set up in the large conference room in the 300 hall. Two classes were called in at a time. There were four animals in total: one bearded dragon, one ball python, one turtle, and one chinchilla. The bearded dragon's name was Van Winkle, the ball python's name was Fred, the turtle's name was Rocky, and the chinchilla's name was Chip. Bearded dragons are a type of heavy-bodied lizard with flattened trunks and broad triangular heads. They have a spiny pouch, often called a beard, under their chin that can be expanded. They have a characteristic series of spines projecting horizontally from the sides of the body, running from the head to the base of the tail. Full-grown healthy adults can reach 18-22 inches from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail. Color variations can range from tan to dark brown or bright orange.

The chinchilla was my favorite. According to Thomas Donnelly, chinchillas have a rounded body, large mouse-like ears, short legs, and a long tail. Chinchillas have a very thick coat of fur that comes in colors such as black, gray, white, beige, and combinations of each. Their thick fur not only keeps them warm, it also protects them from fleas, lice, and predators. A mature chinchilla's weight ranges from 1 to 1.5 pounds. They can grow to be 16 inches long. They have an average lifespan of 10 to 15 years, although some have lived as long as 20 years in captivity.



High school students at WCESC Social Communication Classroom program at Western Row worked collaboratively to develop a taco bar, called "Tip of the Tongue," as a treat for WCESC administrators. Students worked together to choose recipes, shop for items using an ingredient list, create a menu and invitation, and delegate each task needed for running the taco bar. One of the students shared that she learned to cook different things and used her social skills to work with her classmates. The students were able to work together to develop collaboration skills that are necessary for them to be part of the workforce.



Tuesday May 14th was an exciting day for Social Communications Department. Aidan Marsh a Project Warren County Student graduated. Dr. Cherie Gibson presented his diploma from Lebanon City Schools. Aidan Marsh has attended the Social Communication Program for the past 16 school years. He has been attending Project Warren County for the past three years working on his internships at the University of Cincinnati focusing on his post-secondary education, competitive employment skills, and his independent living skills. Aidan's favorite thing to learn about, engage in, and assist with is mowing grass. He enjoys sharing about different lawn mowers and leaf blowers. It was an exciting celebration for Aidan's graduation where five of his past and current teachers were present who are still working in various positions with Warren County ESC. Congratulations Aidan on all your accomplishments, we all wish you the best on your next adventure.



May 22nd was graduation day in the Social Communications Classroom. Family, friends and WCESC staff celebrated our five amazing seniors for their perseverance and commitment to their education. Congratulations Chloe, David, Gavin, Jacob, and Jimi!



CONGRATULATIONS! 



◆ **WCESC DEERFIELD CAMPUS (WELLNESS CENTER)** ◆
Jared Kaiser, Director

Wellness Center students and staff have a lot to be proud of as the 23-24' school year comes to a close. Students were shining examples of resiliency and perseverance as they weathered every challenge that arose throughout the academic term. The students were able to grow socially and emotionally through their engagement with peers, learning from classroom teachers/supports, engaging with their therapists, and most importantly integrating their learning with their families. They focused their efforts on personal growth and achieved great success. Many students are moving forward and will be attending their home districts to start the next school year.

To Finish the successful year out, the team and students were excited to partake in several fun events and activities scheduled by our resource coordinator, Christy Panzarelladunbar. The team was very happy to welcome back students and their parents to the Wellness Center for a fun filled family engagement night which included games, face painting, mini golf, and great food!



During the students last week of school, students were treated to a visit from Kona Ice and Wellness Center High Schoolers were Book Buddies with our K-3 students. The High School students were able to spend time with the elementary students as they read books to one another. The Elementary students enjoyed their time with the older students as they requested to do Book Buddies again in the future. Our High Schoolers did a great job being positive role models in being Safe, Responsible, and Mindful.



◆ JOHN K. LAZARES ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ◆
 Dustin Goldie, Supervisor
 Dan Baker, Assistant Supervisor



- ★ 1306 VLA courses passed this year
- ★ 653 credits recovered
- ★ 7 OSHA 10 certificates for the year
- ★ 2 students received their STNA certificates

Pictured to the right: Taklyah Redmond (Middletown) and Angela Hill (Lebanon)

**STUDENT
 SUCCESS**

Those same 2 students received the 12 Point Ohio Recognized Credential toward graduation.

Students successfully finished their Sinclair Workforce Development cohorts for the school year.

24 students graduated from JKLAS for 23-24

Graduates by school district:

Carlisle:

Jacob Cox

Kings:

Mathew Dickerson (11th Grade)
Jayden Neal

Lebanon:

Kaylin Bogan (10th Grade)
Colin Gandee
Aiden Rish
Preston Tufts
Emma Winkler (11th Grade)

Little Miami:

Nathan Nauroth

Madison:

Donavan Jones



Middletown:

De'Andre Hoard
Micah Justice
Zoe Rice (11th Grade)
Andre Supersad

Springboro:

Hope Kempf
Madison Kapitanova

Sycamore:

John Bradley
Jaylin Davis
Mariah Parks

Waynesville:

Arianna Adkins
Holt Buford
Brooklyn Crouch
Aiden Griffin
Parker McKeenan



◆ **MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT** ◆
Jessica Woody, Mental Health Supervisor

The Mental Health Department ended our year with Mental Health Awareness month! Each program and staff within districts were able to complete activities and promote mental health in some way.



Additionally, we ended the year with our staff mental health picnic. This is a great opportunity to acknowledge all staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the school year.

During the upcoming school year, we will see growth and more opportunities within the department! Exciting things are happening!

WCESC Mental Health Department-Program Team

Alternative School

During the last quarter, students at the alternative school continued to participate in individual counseling and check ins with the mental health staff (Katie and Emily). Emily led circle groups and facilitated student growth through social skills groups and interventions in the classroom.

Learning Center Campus

To celebrate mental health awareness, Girls Group on did a mental health awareness banner with handprints. This was hung in the hallway at the Laura Farrell Campus.

Additionally, at Laura Farrell, students decorated t-shirts for the last week of school! They practiced mindfulness and focus during this activity in order to demonstrate some of the skills they have been working on in group!





St. Mary's had some goat visitors during the last quarter of school. They participated in goat therapy organized through the resource coordinator. Our Mental Health Behavioral Interventionist sat with some of the students and discussed the benefits of mindfulness practices in their growth at Learning Center.



At the Workforce Development Campus at Western Row, students celebrated graduation. Our mental health therapist, Mary Kate Wirth, has watched as some of these students have grown in the program over the past year. She talked with them about their level of resiliency and how they can always do anything they set their mind to.



Phoenix Academy

Phoenix Academy students participated in a spirit week for mental health. They also provided staff with scheduled breaks and handed out mints for mindful moments to reflect on their intentions for their class. The pictures below show students making tie dye for mental health spirit week.



Social Communications Classrooms

At SCC, mental health prevention work was done with the students regarding how they are adding marbles to the jar. They did an exercise about how to add marbles to the jar and how to trust themselves and others. They also talked about positive self talk by utilizing the "You are..." language!

Wellness Center

At Wellness Center, mental health staff participated in the family engagement night on campus. They practiced mindfulness with students while completing face paintings at their booth!



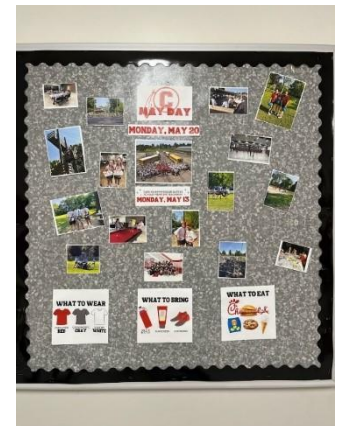
Mental Health Consultant District Team



Carlisle

At Carlisle, Erica is working with kindness club in grades K-6. Kindness Club has had great feedback from students and staff. They received shirts via money they collected for a fundraiser and enjoyed wearing them through the remainder of the year as a group!

At the high school, fitness was the theme for PBIS during the month of May. Students walked with staff, including the mental health consultant as a reminder that mental health and physical health are interconnected! Additionally, the mental health consultant assisted in the end of the school year May Day planning.



Greater Ohio Virtual School

During the last quarter, GOVs had a field day event in which the mental health consultant led a table regarding mindfulness and planting flowers. She had mental health resources for parents and a take home flower as a reminder of how much students have grown during the school year.





Little Miami

During the course of the school year, Hope Squad at Little Miami High School has grown! The older classmen talked with younger students about hope squad and the impact that they believe it is making within the campus. This was facilitated by Hope Squad leaders and mental health consultants, Amy and Meredith.

Waynesville

Liz at Waynesville has been eagerly wrapping up the school year while making plans for the upcoming year. Liz plans on starting some mental health clubs within the district and adding in additional check ins with students. Currently, Liz spreads her time between all grade levels for student check-ins.

SMOY

Jessica has spent time at SMOY working on a boys group with some students. They have worked on social skills and ways to handle big emotions. This has been a positive way to work with students outside of the classroom environment!

Mason

Kalia has spent time during the month distributing mental health resources to staff, parents and throughout the district in both the newsletter and on QR codes placed in the breakroom and in staff mailboxes. She held Mental Health Lunch and Learns for staff to discuss mental health topics as well! Kalia additionally made sure to send graduating seniors and their families mental health packages as they move towards this next adventure!

◆ SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT ◆

Kristie Strittmatter, Lead School Psychologist

It is hard to believe the 2023-2024 school year has come to a close. The last quarter was busy; however, we had time to provide redemptions for engagement in our department's PBIS Rewards program. Two staff members, Mary Kamphaus and Regina Meeker, enjoyed lunches at Don Bigote's in Morrow and Black Horse Tavern in Lebanon respectively. Several other staff members redeemed their PBIS points for things like school psychology "swag" and books related to the field.



The department also engaged in an end-of-year checkout luncheon. It was wonderful to be able to see everyone before they departed for summer break. We have two members of our team who will no longer be with us next year. Farah Alkhafaf, Kings/GOVS, is taking a year leave of absence

to welcome a new addition to her family, and Jenny Gifford, Little Miami Early Childhood Center, took a position in another district. We wish both of them the best of luck! The department looks forward to welcoming and introducing several new psychologists and intern psychologists in the fall.

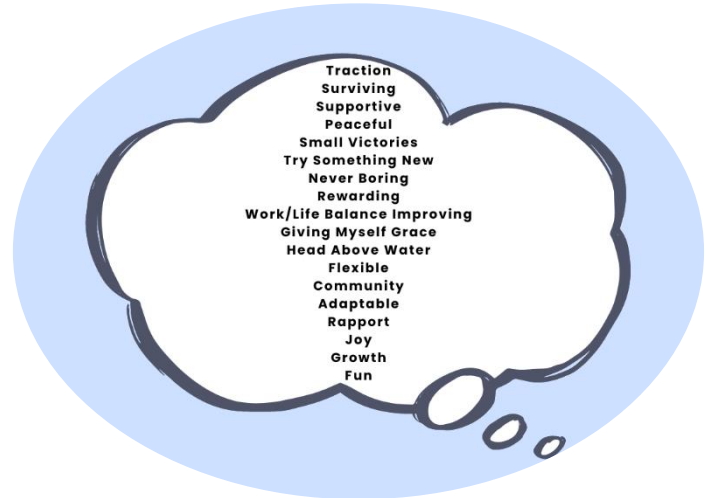
◆ **SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY** ◆

Kari Burris, MOT, OTR/L, Director of Related Services & Preschool Programming

Alana Jacobs, MS, CCC-SLP, Lead SLP

Great things happening in Speech & Language Therapy...

This school year, we had 11 new SLPs participating in our monthly New Hire Bootcamp training series with the OT/PT department. We explored topics ranging from ETR/IEP writing to using evidence-based practices in therapy. When asked to describe their year in review in one word or phrase, the new WCESC therapists provided the following:



Seasoned SLPs mentoring our new SLPs at March's New Hire Bootcamp Training



Feedback from new SLPs:

“ Thankful for the training we received this year!

Treatment ideas were very helpful. The over all support from the leads was amazing!

I really appreciate all you did to support me as a new hire this year. ”

In a New Hire Bootcamp end of year staff survey, the following feedback was received:

23-24 New Hire Bootcamp Graduates:



Thank you
FOR ANOTHER FANTASTIC SCHOOL YEAR!

◆ TRANSITION COORDINATORS ◆
Amanda Pennix, Supervisor

TLC finished the year strong!! Interns were introduced to steel drumming! They absolutely loved it!! Hot Cross Buns never sounded so good!!



TLC interns Aberlin Farm in South Lebanon. They learned about growing food and how to care for farm animals. They even held chickens!!



So many fun outings and time spent with friends!





Transition/Work Force Development Coordinators

Kings High School

Students celebrated with our business partners completing a year of work study. We are thankful for our businesses, Clutter 2 Care, Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Le Peep, River's Crossing, and our very own Kings High School.



Kings students began working on a garden. Their hard work will pay off this fall!!



Little Miami High School

Students celebrated the years' work experiences with their business partners, staff, and family. We are thankful to all businesses for the opportunity. We are growing our program and couldn't do it without the support of the community, families, businesses, and school.





Waynesville High School

Students attended the Daylight Prom sponsored by Little Miami.



A former Waynesville High School student came back to the high school to present on skills needed after high school. Wright State University office of Disability Services also presented on how to access ADA in colleges and universities.

Students celebrated completing a year of work study at Waynesville High School. We are thankful for our partnership with The Bridge, Therapeutic Riding Center, Crayons to Classrooms, and Waynesville Schools.



Carlisle High School



Thank you to Gross Lumber Co. for providing internship opportunities to Carlisle HS students. Through this experience, our students gained valuable employment skills and developed real-world self-advocacy. We are grateful for the support and mentorship that Gross Lumber Co. has provided to our students to help them grow and succeed in their future endeavors.

Social Communication Classroom



Papa John's



Sweet Joy Bakery and Coffee



Animal Friends Humane Society



Matthew 25 Ministries

The Social Communication Classroom students went to various work sites throughout the school year. We want to take the time to thank all of our partners for educating our students and helping them prepare for their career pathways. We also appreciate you so much for allowing our students to participate in the community of giving. Because of you, they could earn their community service hours while gaining employment skills.

MDESC



Warren County MDESC wants to express our sincere gratitude to Joshua's Place, Wall2Wall, Animal Friends Humane Society, SPCA Cincinnati, and James' Third Base for allowing our students to volunteer and participate in community engagement. Your partnership has profoundly impacted our students, providing them invaluable experiences and lessons in empathy, teamwork, and social responsibility. The diverse volunteer opportunities offered by your organizations have allowed our students to grow and contribute meaningfully to the community.

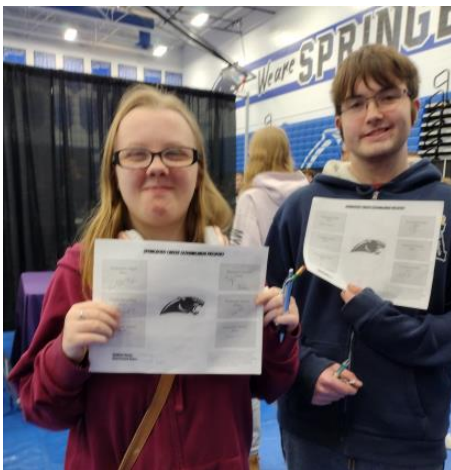
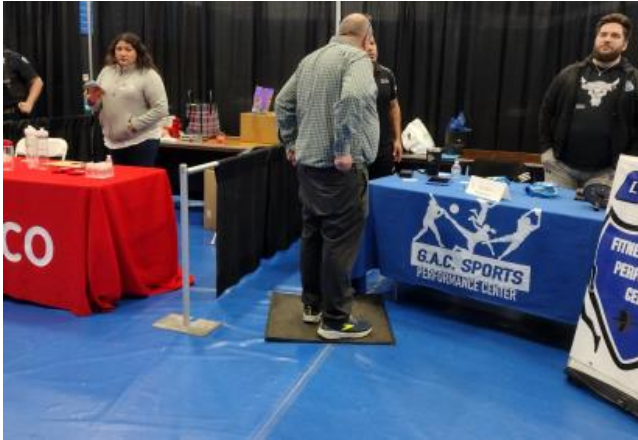
Lebanon High School

The students at Lebanon High School have completed another year of working in the community. Thank you to Skyline, Rural King, Billie's Burgers, Countryside YMCA, Lebanon Electric, Bob Polte, Ruff House and Groceryland – Waynesville for allowing the students to gain work experience. Lebanon students are being exposed to various careers as they attended expos and toured facilities of interest (UC IT Expo and Paul Mitchell). They also participated in the "Construction Days" career exploration opportunity hosted by Warren County Fairgrounds.



Springboro High School

Springboro High School students completed their school year working within their school and community. The students participated in a Career Day to continue their career explorations. Students have made connections with transition programs after high school. Students are being encouraged to practice their talents through classes or clubs.



Mason High School

A Transition Fair was held at Mason High School to support students with the transition into adulthood. Approximately 30 agencies, programs, and groups were in attendance to provide a variety of information to students and families. Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities provided presentations on Eligibility for Services and an Overview of services for families interested in signing up for their services. Special Neat Treats provided yummy treats for those looking for a sweet treat! It was a great evening and a successful event!





Franklin High School

Franklin students attended the Daylight Prom, hosted by Little Miami Student Council, for students with disabilities. Students dressed their best and had a blast dancing and socializing with students from different school districts.



Franklin students earned Industry Recognized credentials by completing a group problem solving project. In this picture students chose to organize football jerseys. The students organized the jerseys and created a system for the football team to carry out this system in the future.



Franklin students weighed and bagged the last bags of cheese for the school year! Students enjoyed their work study site at Skyline where they learned valuable employability skills. At the end of the year Springboro Skyline treated all of the work study students to a celebration lunch!



◆ **MULTIPLE DISABILITIES PROGRAM** ◆

Students identified with Multiple Disabilities – Western Row MDESC
Kara L. Dirksing, M.Ed., OTR/L: Director of Special Education Programs
Jill Buffenbarger, RN: Program Supervisor



Western Row MDESC Students Host Families at Family Engagement Night

On Wednesdays, March 6th & May 15th, students enrolled in the Multiple Disabilities program joined the school-wide programs hosting families during Western Row's seasonal Family Engagement Nights. Participating classrooms were invited to construct a Putt-Putt golf hole to populate a course in the gym. In all, eleven holes were constructed and arranged in the gym. The high school and transition classrooms made two holes. The first hole incorporated a Pop-a-Shot basketball goal. The second hole featured a racecar theme complete with an accessible Putt-Putt green. Families were invited to visit the school from 6:00-7:30. Dinner catered by Wayback Burgers was served in the cafeteria.





Cora Edling is a paraprofessional in the transition classroom. Of the evening event, Cora stated, “Family Night was a great time. I loved the Putt-Putt theme. Fun was had by all who participated.” High school classroom paraprofessional, Angie Wills added, “It is always so nice to have the opportunity to have informal conversations with the parents and families of our students.”

Western Row MDESC Students Explore Jungle Jim’s Fairfield

On Friday, March 8th, students in the high school classroom were led on a tour of the Fairfield grocery store. The lesson focused on explaining that a price is what people pay when they buy a good or service; and what people receive when they sell a good or service. Students learned that eating a variety of nutritious foods and getting enough exercise and rest helps us stay healthy. Upon arriving at the grocery store, the students were led on a tour focusing on the history of the store and were able to sample foods from other countries. They learned about what products come from various countries based on the natural resources available. The students also identified who the workers are and what jobs they are responsible for.



Jungle Jim's International Market
 5440 Dixie Hwy
 Fairfield, OH 45014
 (513) 674-6000
junglejims.com



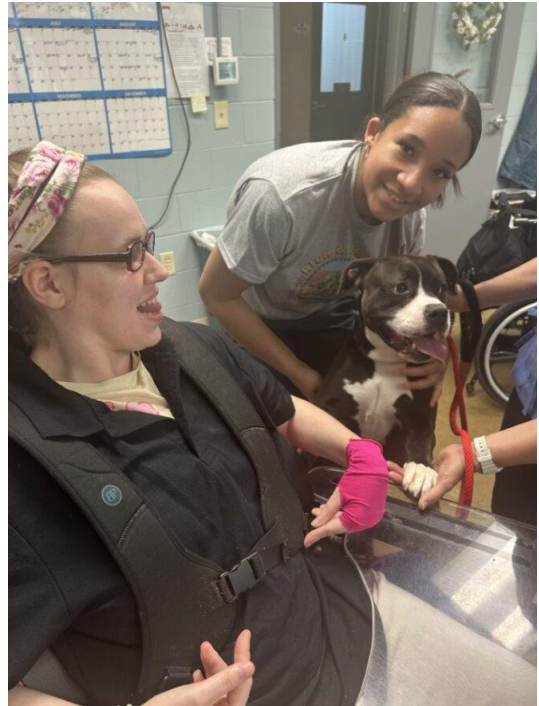
Classroom intervention specialist, Samantha Martin said of the experience, “Jungle Jim’s has anything you want. The tour guide was extremely friendly, knowledgeable, and accommodating. The store layout is very accessible.” Paraprofessional, Connie Jean Smith added, “We always have so much fun at Jungle Jim’s. I look forward to visiting every school year as it is an annual celebration!”

Mason Students Volunteer at SPCA Cincinnati

Mason Students in the Multiple Disabilities Program joined forces volunteering at SPCA Cincinnati. The **SPCA Cincinnati** is your Cincinnati Hometown animal shelter and has been for 150 years. The SPCA offers solutions for everything animal-related — from pet adoptions to vaccination clinics. They provide compassionate care for animals, from food to medical care, exercise, enrichment, and love to get them ready to go to their new homes.

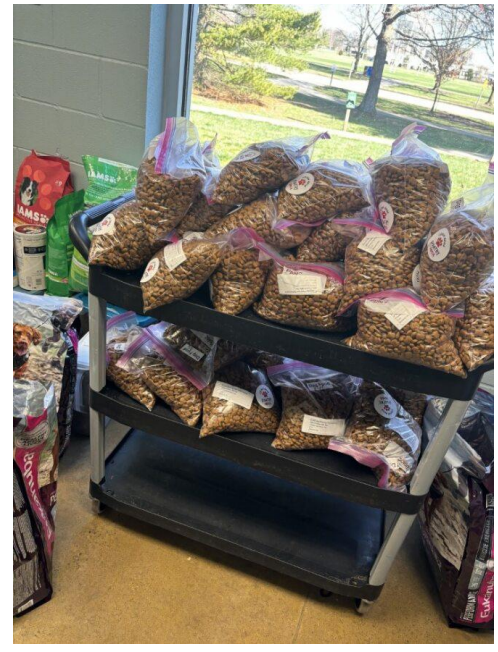


SPCA Cincinnati
 11900 Conrey Road
 Cincinnati, OH 45249
 (513) 541-6100
spcacincinnati.org



SPCA Cincinnati is the pet placement expert locally and across the nation, making it the place to go for adopting cats and dogs, as well as small animals.

SPCA Cincinnati supports people so that pet surrender is a last resort, such as providing pet food donations for those under financial strain and behavioral training. They partner with human social service agencies to keep pets in their current homes and to improve their quality of life; and value innovative educational techniques to keep pets and families together, enrich shelter life, promote the humane treatment of all animals, and prevent pet overpopulation.



Our work is made possible through the compassion and generosity of donors – caring friends like you. Public Relations & Communications Manager, Nyketa Gaffney stated of the partnership with WCESC, “The SPCA Cincinnati is a community built on respect and love for all living beings. We are driven by our passion to improve humanity through animal welfare, with an understanding that animals reveal so much about who we are as people. Working alongside students with disabilities collaboratively empowers our entire organization and strengthens our humane efforts. These students remind us that all things are possible, and that success is in togetherness.”

Director of Community Outreach, Michael Williams added, “At SPCA Cincinnati, our mission is to provide humane education that extends well beyond the classroom setting. The ability to host students from WCESC to experience first-hand what it takes to provide support to not only our animals at the shelter, but to all animals in the community, is a lifelong lesson in service. We are thrilled to be able to strengthen the human-animal bond through education, opportunity and partnership that provides so much for both organizations.”

Mason Students Explore and Learn at the Cincinnati Museum Center

In March, Mason High School students at the Western Row campus visited the Cincinnati Museum Center.

The Cincinnati Museum Center has a legacy of discovery 200 years in the making, from the founding of the Western Museum Society in 1818 to today's award-winning multi-museum complex. Housed in Union Terminal, an art deco train station and National Historic Landmark, Cincinnati Museum Center continues to bring the world to Cincinnati through its more than 3 million artifacts, archival materials, and artworks.

Cincinnati Museum Center is a one-of-a-kind, multi-museum complex housed in Union Terminal, a historic Art Deco train station and National Historic Landmark. Museum Center's major offerings at Union Terminal include the Cincinnati History Museum, the Cincinnati History Library and Archives, The Children's Museum, the Museum of Natural History & Science, and the Robert D. Lindner Family OMNIMAX® Theater. The Museum Center is the largest cultural institution in the city of Cincinnati, with more than 1.4 million visitors per year. Our permanent and temporary exhibits are supported and complemented by a state-of-the-art collections and research facility, the Geier Collections and Research Center, educational programs, professional development programs for teachers, day and overnight camps, public lectures and programs, tours of historic sites and community-wide cultural events. Museum Center's collection encompasses more than 1.8 million artifacts, art works and archives and is incorporated into our exhibition, research, and education programs.



Cincinnati Museum Center
1301 Western Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45203
(513) 287-7000
cincymuseum.org

At the Museum Center, the students' lesson focused on investigating and observing how things move in different ways, such as straight, zigzag, round-and-round, and back-and-forth. Additionally, a learning objective was to demonstrate the ability to apply a decision-making process to problems.

Program Nurse, Rachel Swafford said of the fieldtrip, "The Cincinnati Museum Center is one of the best museums I've ever been to. It is a great place to navigate with wheelchairs as it is so accessible with large floor size ramps ascending and descending from floor to floor as you travel throughout the facility." Paraprofessional Aliyah Narcisse commented, "The museum staff were so helpful and accommodating. They provided a large bin for our belongings and coats. Students and staff were provided wristbands and maps of the facility. Several of our students enjoyed lunch in the cafeteria."

Celebrations & Fond Farewells





Spring is in the air as the 2023-2024 school year winds to a close. In late May, Mason students in the MD program travelled just down the street to Makino Park to celebrate the graduation of three of our students, the retirement of an employee, and the “moving on” of some students and staff. Makino Park is a one-of-a-kind asset for Mason and the entire Greater Cincinnati Region. This park encourages interaction and recreation opportunities that spans multi-generational users of all abilities in a peaceful and welcoming setting. Makino Park includes Common Ground Playground, FCC Field mini pitch soccer, a shelter area for gathering and programming, and restrooms all designed for park users to have an enjoyable experience.





Makino Park
 6100 Kopfler Court
 Mason, OH 45040
 (513) 229-8500
<https://imaginemason.org/about/common->



Common Ground Playground at Makino Park was designed in consultation with local parents of children with disabilities, a leading inclusive playground manufacturer, therapists and other professionals who work with children and adults with special needs. The playground's educational, interactive environment is unlike any other in the region and goes far beyond requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act to bring new social engagement and sensory opportunities for children, veterans, and seniors. It's an all-inclusive place where families can come together and enjoy a place to have fun.

Paraprofessional Cora Edling summed up our school year, "I love all our students and staff. We have had such a great year. My favorite community outing was our trip to Newport Aquarium. I have thoroughly enjoyed all our field trips. Daylight Prom always has a special place in my heart."

Ann Bergh is a paraprofessional in the High School classroom. After visiting Makino Park, Ann commented, "What a great local accessible facility! Most of the students in our classroom use wheelchairs as their primary means of navigation. We especially enjoyed accessible zipline."

Transition classroom paraprofessional, Johnna Childs visited Makino Park with her students. Of the outing, Johnna stated, "I loved our visit. The entire concept of the park is to be fully accessible for kids of all abilities to have a place to come together and play. The various playground features are all ramped to allow access."

Western Row MDESC Students Celebrate the 2023-2024 School Year at The WEB

In May, students from the Multiple Disabilities Program travelled to The WEB Extreme Entertainment in West Chester. We arrived at the WEB and took a tour of the facility, learning what activities are available for the students to partake in. During the lesson, the students learned how the computer is used to keep track of the different displays and to run the various activities. They explored how games have changed over time from simple machines (such as non-electronic pinball games) to arcade games to what we have now. We discussed how these changes are a benefit to them and to others, and cited examples of how technology, such as computers and medicines, has improved the lives of many people.





The WEB Extreme Entertainment
 7172 Cincinnati-Dayton Road
 West Chester, OH 45069
 (513) 860-2882
funattheweb.com

There are so many different activities for the students to choose from including Go Cart Racing, Laser Tag, Interactive Trampoline, Climbing Wall, Mini Golf, Mini Bowling, and Virtual Reality Experience.

Sean Korsnak, Director of Sales The WEB Extreme Entertainment, commented on building community relationships: "As a local business, we love to help build healthy relationships with our community partners. We are proud to showcase how we can help people enjoy life and have fun regardless of challenging life circumstances, and to always be welcomed. At the WEB, we are proud to be a resource that accommodates groups with unique needs."

We Have Spirit Yes, We Do! We Have Spirit How 'Bout You?

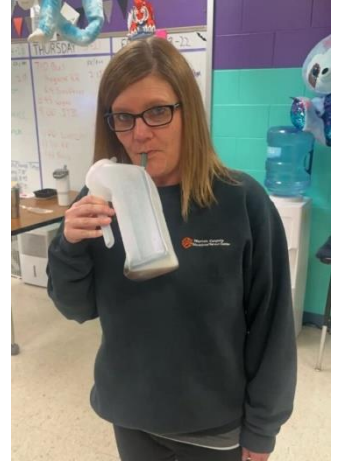
During the last full week of school before Spring Break, students and staff at Western Row Elementary School participated in Spirit Week and some humorous antics.

Please enjoy these photographs of students and staff from the Multiple Disabilities Program celebrating ability!











SCHOOL PRIDE AT WESTERN ROW CAMPUS







Mason Students Show Appreciation for First Responders

The twenty-fourth day of May is designated as "First Responders' Appreciation Day" to recognize individuals who risk their own safety on a daily basis in the execution of their duties to protect the public (Ohio Rev. Code § 5.261). An official bill summary states that the day is set aside "to recognize individuals who risk their own safety on a daily basis in the execution of their duties to protect the public."



Students in the Multiple Disabilities Program worked hard through the last week of April assembling gift bags for 100 local first responders. The bags were filled with such items as water bottles, lip balm, hand sanitizer, snacks, etc. Mrs. Connie Jean Smith commented on the activity, "Our students worked as a true team filling the bags in an assembly line fashion."



Mason Students Cut the Rug at Daylight Prom

On Friday May 3, 2024, high school and transition students from Mason High School attended the Daylight Prom hosted by Little Miami students. Please read below the article that appeared online Monday May 6 from LOCAL 12 News, and paste the link in your browser to see the video coverage:







News Article: Little Miami Schools host prom for special education students

<https://local12.com/news/local/prom-special-education-students-little-miami-schools-kids-high-event-staff-teachers-members-environment-sensory-friendly-raise-funds-locker-signs-business-panther-press-spirit-items-donations-happy-heart-fun-joyful-occasion-heartwarming>

WEST CHESTER, Ohio (WKRC) – Little Miami Schools Hosted its annual Daylight Prom on Friday, an event designed specifically for special education students.

10 schools from three different counties were represented at the Savannah Center in West Chester.

Little Miami freshman Jack Skiba explained what he was most excited for.

"About dancing and feeling the beat," said Skiba.

For some special education students, prom can be an intimidating and overwhelming place.

Little Miami Schools special education aid Jamie Feuerbach said most of these students do not attend the proms planned by their high schools. "Either just for sensory issues like it occurring in the evening, maybe they don't have parent support to get there, maybe they can't navigate their environment on their own."

That is what makes daylight prom so important, a place for hundreds of students to come together in a sensory friendly environment, during their school day.

"I think it's a great opportunity for kids, especially me, to get out into the community and have fun and dance and eat food and get to know one another," said Jacob Carter, a student at Franklin High School.

It is all planned and executed by Little Miami's student government. Emma Pinson is a Little Miami senior who helped organize the event. She said this prom means just as much to the student who plans it, as it does to the students they plan it for.

"You don't even have to worry about being different or anything, it's just everybody, you can dance however you want, you can talk to whoever you want and there's no judgement," said Pinson. "It's amazing."

This is the ninth year Little Miami has hosted the event and they made it a priority to make this year's prom free.

"We set a goal at the start of the school year to pay for every person that attended because in years past it has really limited the schools that could come because of the financial burden," said Feuerbach.

That made this year's prom the most attended one yet, with 350 students and 150 support staff members.

"You leave this day with the happiest heart, it's just a happy occasion," said Feuerbach.

Little Miami's student government partnered with student-led business, the Panther Press, to raise funds for the event.

The Panther Press used a Cricut to make locker signs, t-shirts, and other school spirit items.

That business, fundraising and other business donations made up \$20,000 to pay for the event.



Mason Anglers Catch Their Limit

In April, students in the Transition Classroom travelled to a local pond to try their luck at fishing. Upon arriving at the park, the students unloaded their supplies and found a spot to set up a picnic. They learned how to bait a hook with nightcrawlers and cast a line making sure they check the area around them so they are safe. The anglers did not have to practice patience on this day as they caught about 3 dozen fish in about 90 minutes. They were able to identify them as bluegill and largemouth bass. The fish were safely returned to the water. After catching each fish, they learned the proper way to pose for a photo by holding the fish toward the camera (phone), so the fish appears larger.

After running out of worms, we all found a place to sit in the grass and enjoy a picnic lunch. Of the outing, classroom nurse Rachel Swafford said, "I couldn't believe how many fish we caught. The students were so excited to reel them in and have their photos taken." Speech & Language Pathologist, Ashley Atkinson added, "The day was perfect. It was so much fun because we were "catching," not just "fishing."





Everyone is a Champion at MDESC Field Day!

On Thursday, May 9, students in the Multiple Disabilities Program participated in an Olympics-themed Field Day. The events included: Cheesehead, Target the Teacher, Batter up, Duck Toss, Marshmallow Launcher, and Balloon Toss. A picnic lunch was catered by program nurse Jacqui's stepfather, Pappy Hatfield, and paraprofessional Lesley Staneck.



The opening ceremony began promptly at 8:30 with the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner. Events were announced by our Master of Ceremonies Connie Jean Smith, AKA CJ the DJ! All students in the program participated in the events, won medals, and had their photos taken on the podium.

Paraprofessionals Cora Edling, Connie Jean Smith, Bobbie Steele, and Angie Wills made up the planning committee for the event. Regarding the Field Day, Angie commented, "Everything was spectacular. The decorations, games, and awards were 'next level!'" Bobbie added, "I am proud to be part of this planning team. Seeing the students have so much fun was really rewarding."











Mason Students Find the Beat

During the 4th quarter of the 2024-2025 school year, students in the Multiple Disabilities Program began learning to play steel drums and other various percussion instruments. Weekly lessons are taught by the Greater Ohio Virtual School (GOVS) director, Shawn Lenney. GOVS is an online high school which is housed in the same facility as the Warren County Educational Service Center. It is a comprehensive educational program for students in grades 7-12 who reside in Ohio. GOVS mission is to provide students with a highly personal and continuous connection to learning, by utilizing an internet-based curriculum. Every student has the opportunity to develop the skills of communication, the ability to engage in critical thinking, and acquire building blocks of education necessary for a successful future. Students are provided with a computer to do the coursework and can earn a GOVS high school diploma.



Mr. Lenney is a former high school band director serving 2 years at Huber Heights High School, 7 years at Waynesville High School, and 7 years at Madison High School. When asked why he decided to teach percussion to students with disabilities, Shawn replied, "Every student, whether they have a disability or not, should have access to music as part of their education. Music has the power to reach students in different ways and benefit them in other disciplines. Also, it's just fun, and all students can benefit from having a little more fun in their days!"

Discussing why he chose specifically to teach steel drums, Shawn continues, "I had previous experience with steel drums in college and started a Steel Drum Ensemble at Waynesville High School. Additionally, I took over an established program at Madison High School, so I had a great deal of experience with the instruments. I find steel drums to be incredibly accessible to all students, and you don't necessarily have to be able to read music or have any experience with music to experience success."

Regarding his short/long term goals for teaching percussion with the ESC, Shawn states, "I hope to offer music to ESC students on a regular basis next year with the ultimate goal of staging some type of concert at the end of the year."

CHCA Students Learn & Service with MDESC

Through the last two weeks of the 2023-2024 School Year, 20 students from Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy (CHCA) fulfilled their Side by Side Service Immersion intersession serving the students in the Multiple Disabilities Program at the Western Row Campus of Warren County Educational Service Center (WCESC).

The Side by Side Intersession is an opportunity for students to serve other students. Building a community, helping with education, providing fun and social opportunities for disabled students who want to be accepted and enjoy experiences other students have is a joy-filled way to serve that opens us to new friends. Besides an immersive service experience this is also a direct service opportunity.

During the final 8 days of school, CHCA students accompanied WCESC students through their school day side by side. They assisted students with their studies, created and carried out fun activities, and provided small moments for social connection.

Course goals for the spring intersession include: broadening perspective about who fills our community and how we can build community by reducing stigma and allowing people with disabilities to feel more comfortable in society; accompanying disabled students through their school day and providing them with fun activities, social connection, and help with studies; and creating a plan of action for an annual event CHCA students can use to continue service after our immersion ends.



Faculty sponsor and high school math instructor, Zach Ewen said of the partnership, "The intersession is an opportunity for students to experience something that is not part of their typical, everyday lives. It exposes them to a diverse group of people and a variety of different career opportunities."

High school guidance counselor and faculty sponsor, Kara Ussery added, "Intersession is one of the things that makes CHCA unique. Working with WCESC has been a wonderful opportunity for our students to learn from and about a population that lives differently. They have gotten to show their gifts of compassion while experiencing the love and joy WCESC staff and students show every day. It is a great opportunity for our students to let their non-academic gifts shine."





10th grade student, Avery Kaufman commented, "Our intercession this year is a brand-new experience for me. I haven't had the opportunity to connect with students with different abilities, but I'm really happy I do. It is amazing to see how loving teachers and paraprofessionals can make such an impact on these students where they may otherwise not have this kind of help. I love hanging out with my new peers and am proud to say I have been called a "bestie" by one of the young girls."

Esther Onadoko is another 10th grade intercession student. Esther commented, "this intercession has been a great experience because it has really opened my eyes to what happens in our larger community. I love that we are able to serve this population and it shows me how I can directly impact the lives of others."



Of the experience, 11th grade student, Blake Sisney said, “the intersession has changed my mind a lot. I think this is a unique opportunity to work with students who are very different from me. I’m mostly proud that each student uses their abilities in their own way of learning.”

11th grade Nate Hayes added, “this intersession has taught me a lot about joy. The students at Western Row have a lot of struggles, but they find joy in everything they are a part of.”

12th grade student, Maria Cortina offered some final thoughts, “this experience has been awesome. I have loved learning about all the different students and how they all persist through their circumstances.”

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy
 8283 East Kemper Road
 Cincinnati, OH 45249
 (513) 247-0900
chca-oh.org



◆ **HELP ME GROW and EARLY INTERVENTION** ◆
 Stefanie Post, Program Director



OhioMHAS, in conjunction with Governor Mike DeWine’s Office of Children’s Initiatives, introduced the Ohio Infant Mental Health (OIMH) Credential, the first of its kind for a cross sector multi-disciplinary practice of promoting infant and caregiver mental health. The goal of the OIMH Credential is to implement a set of nationally recognized skills and core competencies. These will be developmentally appropriate and anchored in relationship-based practices that support the needs of infants and caregivers to reach their greatest wellness. Three Early Intervention Service Coordinators have completed all the requirements to receive the Ohio Infant Family Practitioner Level II (OIFP-II). This OIMH level can perform assessments and may begin interventions to enhance the social and emotional development of an infant through attention to the complex relationships and relational health between infants and their caregivers, observe and enhance parenting skills, monitor the infant’s development, assure connections to recommended system services, and follow-up with parents and caregivers on the progress of those identified necessary services and supports. Congratulations to Andrea Bullman, Samantha Appelbaum and Karen Stumpf!!!



IN THE
SPOTLIGHT

There are some amazing families in our community and the Help Me Grow programs have the pleasure of meeting many of them and be a small part of their lives. Here are a few families who allowed us to share.

Hirschhorn syndrome around 3 months old, a rare genetic condition characterized by developmental delays, distinctive facial features, and often severe intellectual disability. Despite the challenges she faces including frequent hospitalizations, vomiting multiple times a day and feeding through a G and J-port, Isla approaches life with an indomitable spirit and contagious enthusiasm. She really enjoys playing with her two older sisters, a wide variety of sensory toys, and is always happy when music is playing.



Isla has touched the hearts of everyone she meets with her infectious smile and unwavering perseverance. We are truly grateful for the Warren County Help Me Grow team for being a constant part of her life and providing encouragement and resources to help her continue meeting her individual milestones (at her own pace of course). Additionally, their assistance in helping us navigate the newfound territory of raising a non-typical daughter has been instrumental in her success so far. Being able to get physical therapy, occupational and speech therapy in the comfort of our home is amazing. Thank you!"



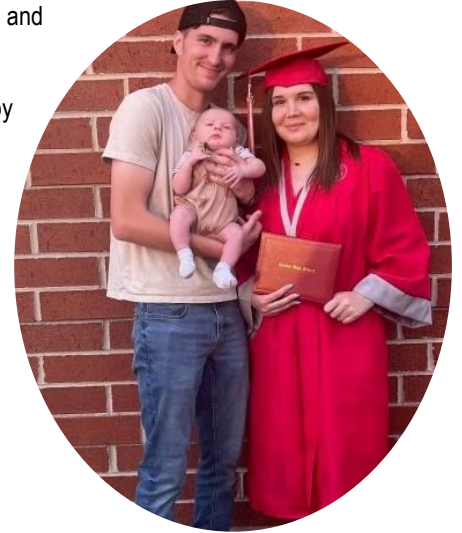
The Owsiany family participated in the Flying Pig Marathon weekend in Cincinnati, Ohio and entered their 2-year-old Molly into the kid's race, The Flying Piglet! Molly has Williams Syndrome, and her family has worked with the Early Intervention program for about 18 months. She has made great progress with her development and her family proudly shared these photos of her exceeding her gross motor goals! Way to go Molly!!



Congratulations!

We are so proud of Amirah for achieving her goal and graduating high school this year! She has been participating in the Help Me Grow Home Visiting program for 8 months and welcomed her first baby Atlas in April. Carlisle schools provided Amirah

with all the tools to finish the requirements for graduation and her family has been so supportive. We are excited to watch this family continue their path to success!



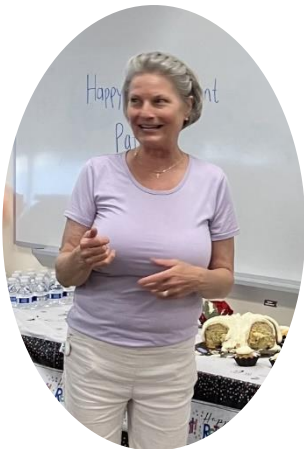
W e l c o m e



Lauren Garrett joined the Early Intervention program in April. She graduated from Cedarville in 2021 and has always had a passion for working with children and meeting families where they are and helping them along their journey to where they want to be. She is married to her high school sweetheart, loves her husky, and enjoys quality time with her family, and enjoy the outdoors. Lauren has proven herself as a quick learner and we are very grateful she is now a part of our team!

◆ **NURSING SERVICES DEPARTMENT** ◆
Terri Elam, RN, LSN, Supervisor
Jill Buffenbarger, RN, Supervisor

Congratulations on Your Retirement, Patty Brandon!



We are delighted for her and a bit sad to see Nurse Patty Brandon retire after she has been such a valued part of the WCESC Nursing Department for 13 years! Patty has enhanced the lives of the students she cared for through the years and has been a joy for classroom staff to work with! She demonstrated so much compassion and a big heart in the work she did every day. Patty's assignments included working with several students 1:1 in the Kings Local School District and with students at the WCESC Multiple Disabilities Program. She is excited to spend her summer boating and spend time with her family. We will miss you, Patty!



A Kings student and his mother say thank you and wish Nurse Patty Brandon a happy retirement



End of School Year Events, Honors, and Transitions are Celebrated at the WCESC!

Students and their well-being in educational and developmental experiences continue to be the focus as WCESC Nursing Staff work with students attending their home district school and those attending WCESC Programs. Here are just some of the fun events, honors, and transitions that occurred before we wrapped up another great year.



Mason students enjoy Makino Park accompanied by WCESC nurses Cody Miller and Katja Pursell



A Kings Preschool student enjoys field day with WCESC Nurse Joy Soper



WCESC Nurse India Ball received STAR STAFF recognition at Kings Junior High



Kings High School graduate at his graduation ceremony (WCESC Nurse Christy Salek)

About WCESC Nursing Services

One on One Care Nursing

WCESC employs nurses who provide 1:1 care to students with complicated chronic health care needs throughout the school day. These nurses meet the student at their home, get report from the family or the student’s at-home nurse in the morning, ride the bus to and from school with the student and spend the day with the student while continuously monitoring their condition and meeting their health care needs while at school. A few nurses meet their students when they arrive at school.

School Clinic Nursing

School clinic nurses are either Licensed School Nurse (LSN) or are directed or supervised by a LSN to provide care for students in their building. Some tasks of the clinic nurse include providing first aid, coordinating care of students with chronic or acute health conditions, administering medications, performing health care procedures, training staff how to recognize and respond to common health-related emergencies, providing vision and hearing screenings, educating families, immunization surveillance, and collecting health data for required reports submitted to the Ohio Department of Health.

WCESC Contacts / Nursing Supervisors:
Jill.Buffenbarger@WarrenCountyESC.com
Terri.Elam@WarrenCountyESC.com



◆ COORDINATED CARE ◆

Kevin Stevens M. Ed., LSW

Supervisor of Coordinated Care & Clinical Committee Coordinator

In January of this year Coordinated Care started providing anger management services to at risk youth. The referrals have come from schools, court, and members of the community. This is a free service to the Warren County community. Each Coordinated Care staff member has completed 40 hours of anger management training and has passed quizzes, online test, and a written final. The training was through Century Anger Management. To date Coordinated Care has received positive responses from community members and participants. The anger management services are not intended to replace therapy. Coordinated Care encourages anyone who has mental health concerns to be evaluated by a qualified licensed individual. To learn more about anger management services or Coordinated Care contact Kevin Stevens at Kevin.Stevens@WarrencoutyESC.com .



In April, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced nearly \$2.5 million in grants to expand access to teen driver training. The Drive to Succeed Scholarship Program awarded grants to thirty-five local school districts and government agencies across Ohio. Warren County ESC and Warren County Family and Children First Council are grant recipients and will use the funding to provide driver training scholarships to eligible teen drivers beginning in July 2024. Teen driver training can cost up to \$850 in Warren County. This cost can be a huge barrier for youth and their families.

By removing the financial barrier to receiving driver training and making it more accessible to families, we can address the needs in our local community and work towards creating safer roads in Warren County. We have partnered with The Safety Council of Southwestern Ohio, Jack's Driving School and Bick's Driving School for online, classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction.

To learn more about Warren County Drive to Succeed program, eligibility and our local partnerships, reach out to Holly Wooldridge, Warren County FCFC Coordinator, at 513-695-2900 x 7653 or by email at holly.wooldridge@warrencountyesc.com.

Resource Coordinators

The Resource Coordinator Department has completed another successful school year. The Resource Coordinator Program is designed to eliminate non-academic barriers a student is experiencing that are hindering their school success. The Resource Coordinators partners with ODJFS in order to help assist families in getting needed services. During the 23-24 school year the Resource Coordinators had 4,472 recorded contacts with students. This is a substantial increase in the number of recorded needs of students. Resource Coordinators assist students no matter if they qualify for ODJFS services or not. To learn more about the Resource Coordinator Program through the WCESC contact Kevin Stevens at Kevin.Stevens@WarrenCountyESC.com.

◆ BCBA DEPARTMENT ◆

Kim Gregory, Lead Board Certified Behavior Analyst

Collaborative Coaching

What a great school year! Our Collaborative Coaches and Behavior Interventionists had a phenomenal year supporting students and teams. The BCBAs have been hard at work providing professional development, coaching school staff and building relationships with students. We are looking forward to another great school year in 2024-2025!



In March, the Collaborative Coaching Department focused on wellness and self-care through a value setting activity. The team identified values that drive their professional and personal lives and identified goals for wellness activities aligned with those values. Values such as joy, integrity, and kindness were common themes. We have enjoyed regular department meetings and gathering as a group for professional collaboration.



◆ OCCUPATIONAL and PHYSICAL THERAPY ◆

Kari Burris, MOT, OTR/L, Director of Related Services & Preschool Programming
Becky Miller, MPT, PT, Lead Physical Therapist
Kim Steele, MOT, OTR/L, Lead Occupational Therapist

SUPPORTING SENSORY NEEDS

Occupational Therapist Cierra Cain worked with her team at Little Miami Early Childhood Center to introduce a new sensory tool for their preschool classrooms. Based on research she gathered on the benefits of using vibration to assist with sensory regulation, Cierra developed a protocol for using vibration plates to provide students with additional sensory input during the school day. These shake plates, traditionally used as a piece of exercise equipment, are now being implemented as a part of the daily sensory diet for many preschool students.



Vibration is a form of somatosensory input that activates sensors (specifically hearing and touch) within the body. Once the brain receives this stimulus, it analyzes, interprets and sends signals to the muscles/joints for a response. This makes it possible for the body to detect various sensory inputs coming from the environment and respond appropriately. Vibration therapy (VT) has been found to be beneficial as this targets the somatosensory system within the body. There is some research that even suggests VT is beneficial for Autism specifically and decreasing excessive stimming and improving overall regulation of the body. Other research indicates VT is effective for those with CP. Because sensory input of every individual is unique, VT equipment (vibration speed) can be adjusted to work accordingly.



NEW HIRE BOOTCAMPS

During the 203-2024 school year, all new OT/PT staff participated in New Hire Bootcamps. These trainings were designed to ensure a smooth and effective transition into their roles. Supports included orientation and integration, skill development, policy and procedure familiarization, role clarity and expectations, building relationships, organizational knowledge, and encouraging engagement and retention. New hires were introduced to the WCESC's culture, values, mission, and vision. This helps new employees understand the larger purpose of their work and how they fit into the organization. Staff were educated on WCESC's policies, procedures, and compliance requirements. Training was provided on specific skills, tools, and technologies that staff will use in their roles. This ensures that new hires are competent and confident in their job functions. Job roles, responsibilities, performance expectations, and metrics for success were clarified, as this helps new staff understand what is expected of them and how their performance will be evaluated. Networking opportunities were facilitated with colleagues, supervisors, and other key personnel. This helps new hires build a support network and feel more connected to the organization. Overall, New Hire Bootcamps aim to equip new employees with the knowledge, skills, and connections they need to be successful and integrated members of the WCESC and the school districts they serve.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

On April 30, 2024, OT and PT practitioners participated in the professional development, “Seating, Positioning & Mobility Considerations for School: Promoting Healthy Positioning Throughout the School Day & Beyond,” presented by Melissa Tally, PT, ATP. Melissa has 25 years of experience with patients with complex neuromotor disorders and Complex Rehab Equipment. Her clinical focus has been on parent coaching, early identification, and 24-Hour Positioning from early intervention through adulthood. Melissa is the President and Clinical Educator for Adaptive Imports, a US Distributor of innovative positioning, mobility,

and safety equipment from international manufacturers. They provide high quality, unique solutions for complex positioning and safety needs. This course included updated definitions, application and evidence based informed knowledge for the assessment, recommendation, and funding of complex rehab equipment for complex pediatric patients. The main components of a 24-hour positioning evaluation were discussed including. implementation of an equipment plan of care to support and educate patients and caregivers regarding long term use of adapted equipment. Specific considerations across the lifespan such as stages of development, school environment and pre/post-surgical intervention were presented. School-based clinicians need to understand the current evidence and practice standards in relation to how these apply in the school setting and coordination with IDEA guidelines and state practice. Case studies were presented to discuss the role of the school-based practitioner in successful positioning programs in the school setting and beyond.

SOLAR ECLIPSE AND FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Creating a fine motor activity that involves both coloring and cutting, while incorporating the theme of a solar eclipse, can be a fun and educational experience. Students at the Warren County Social Communications Classrooms were excited to create “Eclipse Crowns” for the solar eclipse. Occupational Therapist Ellie Winterod incorporated this fun activity into her therapy sessions. This activity can help develop fine motor skills and provide an opportunity to learn about solar eclipses. Students worked on hand-eye coordination, grip strength, scissor skills and hand control, while learning and discussing astronomy concepts (they also enjoyed wearing the special glasses). Students were able to use their creativity and artistic skills with their creations, and handling the various materials also supported their sensory development. This activity was not only fun and engaging but also educational, providing a hands-on way to learn about solar eclipses while developing important skills.



Occupational Therapist Ellie Winterod & SCC students wearing their “Eclipse Crowns”



OT/PT/SLP COMMUNITY GROUPS:

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, Community Groups, consisting of Occupational, Physical, and Speech-Language practitioners, met regularly with the goal of developing materials that could support staff in enhancing the educational experience for students. These groups created tangible resources in the areas of Executive Functioning, Interoception, Preschool, Transition, and AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication). At the end of the school year, these Community Groups presented their materials at the OT/PT/SLP end of year meeting. The presentations included detailed explanations of the resources, demonstrations of how to use them effectively, and opportunities for staff to ask questions and provide feedback. This collaborative effort not only provided useful tools for the department staff but also strengthened the bond between practitioners working within and across various districts and WCESC programs, fostering a supportive and inclusive educational environment.



← Executive Functioning Group:

Rachel Masheck, Shari Hill, Lisa Renock, Katie Moore, Ryan Murphy, Karen Crabb, Catherine Nichols, Caroline Hecker, Melissa Price, Ally Doyle



← Interception Group:
 Sarah Wilguess, Jayden Lee, Madison Hodge, Natalie Kondritz,
 Debra Greutman, Victoria Raver, Cierra Cain, Laura Ellis (not
 pictured: Victoria Hadley)



← Preschool Group:
 Emily Schiele, Diana Batsch, Courtney Febus, John Deardorff,
 Jamie Mider



← Transition Group:
 Kara Miller, Ellen Cole, Janet Gilchrist,
 Sue Bault



← AAC Group:
 Caitlin Coode, Ashley Singer (not
 pictured: Emily Simon)



OT/PT/SLP END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

Members of the WCESC OT,PT, and SLP Departments came together on May 16, 2024 to celebrate the end of the 2023-24 school year and enjoy a yogurt bar with coffee. The meeting featured presentations from OT/PT/SLP Community Groups, highlighting valuable resources that were created to support the departments. Additionally, there were insightful presentations from two

community resources: May We Help and Wilmington College Therapeutic Riding Camp (see information below). This provided an opportunity for staff to learn about the services and support available from these organizations.

May We Help is a game-changer for people with disabilities or disorders who are striving to be more independent or wanting to pursue a desired activity, but current equipment or devices are not configured for their specific needs.

May We Help's clients face challenges pursuing their goals and dreams because they require a device not commercially available, or they require modifications to their existing device.

May We Help's team of volunteers include inventors, engineers, designers, makers, and artisans who create custom solutions and build it for these amazing people! May We Help's services are free for the client and is a non-profit ran by volunteers who deliver hundreds of projects every year.

www.maywehelp.org



7501 Wooster Pike, Cincinnati, Ohio 45227
Phone: (513) 834-6443
Email: workshop@maywehelp.org



Wilmington College Therapeutic Riding Camp

The purpose of camp is to meet the needs of the community by providing increased therapeutic and recreational opportunities for children with disabilities. The camp is led by staff and students from the department of occupational therapy in collaboration with the departments of equine and agriculture. Campers will enjoy a week of therapeutic horse-riding and fun, hands-on agricultural activities.

For more information please contact Erin Bales, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy at erin_bales@wilmington.edu, or Javonne Mullins, Assistant Professor of Agriculture at javonne_mullins@wilmington.edu



◆ **WARREN COUNTY LEARNING CENTER** ◆
Jason Boone, St. Mary Supervisor/Western Row
Wiley Collett, St. Mary Supervisor/Franklin
Julie Hunter, Laura Farrell Supervisor/Franklin

Learning Center: Laura Farrell Campus

Two years ago, the Learning Center organized its first Family Engagement Night, and we were pleasantly surprised to see a turnout of 6 families and 36 attendees. The event was supported by a small group of committed employees and their families. However, fast forward to this year, and we are incredibly excited to share that the event saw an incredible increase in attendance, with over 60 families and 300 individuals participating. This remarkable growth is a testament to all involved combined dedication and backing. Engaging with families is crucial for schools for a variety of reasons. It significantly impacts student outcomes, such as grades, attendance, perseverance, and drive. Extensive research consistently demonstrates strong links between family participation and academic success. Effective family engagement nurtures trustworthy partnerships between home and school, supporting children's learning and growth. We're eagerly looking forward to what next year has in store.



Learning Center: St. Mary Campus

The 9th grade students at the Learning Center- St. Mary Campus had the opportunity to participate in Construction Career Day at the Warren County Fairgrounds. The students learned about different jobs in the field of construction while participating in hands-on activities giving them experience in the field. Students worked with their hands using tools and equipment with the opportunity to earn prizes and grow their interest in the workforce. The students are grateful for the opportunity to attend this event and look forward to attending in the future!





Learning Center: Workforce Development Campus

Our students in the Workforce Development program attended the Junior Achievement Inspire to Hire event at the Dayton Convention Center. They were able to give an elevator pitch to a panel of local employers to receive feedback and constructive criticism so that they can be prepared to enter the workforce with the skills necessary to promote themselves to the best of their ability.



This event also gave students the opportunity to engage exhibitors on a personal level in individual and small group conversations with the possibility of future employment. We also had four students graduate from the workforce development program! With all their hard work, our seniors completed all graduation requirements and received their high school diplomas! The Learning Center staff are incredibly proud of their huge accomplishment and wish them great futures with incredible success!





◆ PHOENIX ACADEMY ◆
Tara Gee, Supervisor

The staff and students at Phoenix Academy had a particularly busy last quarter. Students who achieved their goal for quarter 3 were rewarded with the school's favorite, the Game Truck! They enjoyed some popular video games, and even the staff had the chance to join in on the fun.



This year, we had the chance to observe Solar Eclipse Day. We gave students Solar Eclipse boxes provided by the State, which contained solar glasses and a fun experiment for them to enjoy at home. The front office even made up a cute little goodie bag for the staff to take home and enjoy.



Each quarter, we think of exciting incentives to motivate students to participate in expected behaviors. Some of the incentives we had this year are tie-dye and carnival!



Mrs. Gee is an avid chicken enthusiast! Fun fact – she has a mini farm at home with pigs, chickens, and donkeys. Naturally, we recently welcomed a new batch of baby chicks at Phoenix Academy. The students were thrilled to monitor the egg's development and witness the adorable chick's hatch.



As the end of the year approaches, it can be a bittersweet time for both students and staff. To make it more enjoyable, we organized a fun-filled water day during the final week of school. The students had a blast with water balloons, squirters, and lots of laughter.



We organized various enjoyable Family Engagement Nights during the school year, but our most cherished one was the Family Picnic held on May 23rd. It's always a delight to welcome families to the school. During this event, the staff assisted in serving hotdogs, chips, fruit, popcorn, and cotton candy to the families. Additionally, we had Character Effects join us, providing entertaining outdoor activities for everyone to participate in.



The final quarter incentive for the year featured a Bounce House and Kona Ice. Students had a great time hanging out, savoring a refreshing treat, and releasing some end-of-year energy by bouncing around.

It has been an amazing school year with a fantastic team of staff. While we are sad to see it end, we eagerly anticipate welcoming the next group of incredible staff and students!



THANK YOU!

◆ GREATER OHIO VIRTUAL SCHOOL ◆
Shawn Lenney, Director



2024 Greater Ohio Virtual School Graduation

On Tuesday, June 4th, 2024, the Greater Ohio Virtual School proudly hosted its 20th graduation ceremony, a testament to our enduring commitment to education. The event, held at Lebanon High School, saw 200 students successfully complete their high school journey and earn their diplomas. This significant achievement was made possible by the dedicated GOVS staff and the additional supports introduced over the past three years, including academic coaches, mental health supports, a resource coordinator, and the GOVS student center. These initiatives have played a crucial role in the increased number of graduates. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2024!





2023-2024 Project Excellence Award Winner



Congratulations to Greater Ohio Virtual School math teacher **Melanie Barnes** for receiving the 2023-2024 Project Excellence Award. Each year, the Area Progress Council honors outstanding teachers from each school in Warren County. Teachers are nominated throughout the year, and a committee selects a teacher from each district to receive the award and be honored at a ceremony at the end of the year. Melanie has gone above and beyond the call of duty as an Intervention Specialist and tutor. Her dedication to the staff, students, and parents of the Greater Ohio Virtual School has been a critical component of the school's success! Melanie was recognized as the Greater Ohio Virtual School 6th ever recipient of the award.



WCESC/GOVS Steel Band Performance

On Thursday, May 23rd, Staff and Students from GOVS, The Learning Center, the Transition Living Classroom, and the Multiple Disabilities Classroom combined for a brief steel band performance to show what they have been learning over the past four months. It was a BLAST! A link to the performance is included below. It is about 15 minutes long and begins with the TLC students who have recently learned a brief melody. The conclusion is a full song that the combined groups had been working on since the arrival of the instruments in February. More to come next year!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EJvR6wDcclrc8qSB8qfxaeearsUzCnPR/view?usp=sharing>



◆ FRANKLIN B. WALTER SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS ◆

WCESC hosted the 9th Annual Warren County Franklin B. Walter Scholarship Awards Program and Banquet on April 12, 2024. WCESC, along with family members, school district personnel, elected state and county officials, and county agency leaders celebrated some of Warren County's students with academic excellence. Each student received a \$500 scholarship with the overall star recipient receiving an additional \$500. Recipients chose a mentor educator to recognize at the banquet and awarded them a personal letter of appreciation along with a \$250 stipend from WCESC.

One overall winning star recipient was chosen to be honored at a statewide event hosted by the Ohio Educational Service Centers Association.

Photo includes from left to right:
Rep. Adam Mathews, Kait Tucker (recognized mentor teacher), Ava Vo (overall star recipient), Carrie Hester (Springboro Schools superintendent), and Rep. Scott Lipps



AVA VO
SPRINGBORO HIGH SCHOOL
OVERALL WINNING STAR RECIPIENT



Other honored students include:

Cruz Allison
Carlisle High School



Sophia Aldridge
Franklin High School



Ellen Previts
Greater Ohio Virtual School



Annika Kleinhenz
Kings High School



Noah Thammavong
Lebanon High School



Mackenzie Eans
Little Miami High School



Rishika Jeyaprakash
Mason High School



Alexa Matthews
Warren County Career Center



Elizabeth Nichols
Waynesville High School



**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THESE STUDENTS!
WE WISH YOU THE BEST IN YOUR FUTURE ENDEAVORS!**

