



**Warren County
Educational Service Center**

www.warrencountyesc.com



Tom Isaacs, Superintendent
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513-695-2900

JUNE 2025

◆ **WCESC WELCOMES JENNIFER MAYNARD TO OUR STAFF** ◆

The Warren County Educational Service Center (WCESC) is proud to announce the appointment of **Jennifer Maynard** as its new Director of Career Readiness and Industry Alignment. Jennifer brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to community partnerships, workforce development, and student success.



Jennifer joins WCESC after nearly a decade at Sinclair College, where she served as the Workforce Strategy Partner since 2022. In this role, she led regional collaborations between education and industry to advance talent pipelines, developed innovative career pathways, and fostered strategic workforce solutions across southwest Ohio. With a master's degree in organizational psychology and a proven track record in community engagement, Jennifer is well-positioned to lead WCESC's efforts to align student programming with evolving workforce demands. She will oversee the WCESC Business Advisory Council, expand authentic work-based learning opportunities, and support career exploration initiatives for students across Warren County.

Jennifer will also lead the newly launched **John Lazares Career Exploration Center**, an innovative initiative designed to provide students with immersive, hands-on entrepreneurship experiences. This center will empower students to explore career interests, build real-world skills, and engage directly with industry professionals in a dynamic, future-ready environment.

Jennifer is known for her dynamic leadership, collaborative spirit, and ability to translate vision into action. As Director of Career Readiness and Industry Alignment, she will play a key role in preparing students for future success while strengthening the regional economy through intentional partnerships and aligned career development strategies.

◆ WELLNESS CENTER – DEERFIELD and PHOENIX CAMPUSES ◆

Jared Kaiser, Director

Tara Gee, Supervisor of Student Services and Instruction

Angela Bamber, Program Specialist (Deerfield Campus)

Brooke Rice, Program Specialist (Phoenix Campus)

Wellness Center students and staff have a lot to be proud of as the 24-25' 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.

Deerfield & Phoenix Campus students and staff enjoyed a visit from Dream to Reality Farms' baby therapy goats! Everyone was so excited to hold, pet and learn all about these sweet creatures.



Always Seeking to Learn:

Phoenix Classroom 3 students put on their gardening gloves and gave our front porch an updated look for summer while learning about plants and their needs. They even found a few clock insects along the way! Speaking of insects, Phoenix studens also learned about the life cycle of butterflies. Every student has the opportunity to release one of our butterflies into the wild after observing their amazing transformation!



During the last week of school, students enjoyed a fun-filled field day! Activities included sponge relays, marble painting, balloon toss and more! To top it off everyone made their own delicious snow cone cup from Kona Ice.



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

NURSE CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN NOMINEES

All nurses at the WCESC do amazing work for their students and families. This school year, the department is choosing just one staff member each month who demonstrates a chosen characteristic or attribute that is contributing to their success to recognize and encourage them in their efforts. Below are the Nominees from the Nursing Department for March and April. Congratulations Sheila and Belinda! Thank you for your dedication!



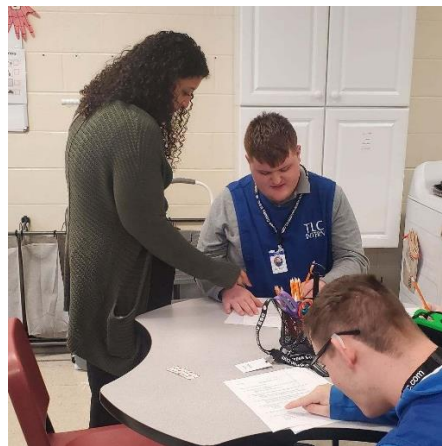
Sheila Hubbard, LPN
Adaptability Mindset



Belinda Carson, LPN
Team Player Mindset

WCESC NURSES IN THE CLASSROOM

Nurses Belinda Carson LPN and Kelly Lackey LPN at the Western Row Campus presented basic first aid training skills to the interns at the Transition Living (TLC) Program. Interns participated in the hands-on first aid class where they learned essential skills to respond to common injuries. They practiced techniques such as bandaging, building confidence in their ability to handle real-life situations with basic first aid knowledge.



Nurse Amy Hidy LPN at the Wellness Center Deerfield Campus demonstrated what goes on during a staff AED practice drill for some curious junior high students to help them understand any sights and sounds they might see and hear if a practice drill happened in the hallway outside their classroom. After the Q & A discussion, each student got a chance to practice performing chest compressions and learned how an AED helps to save lives. They all agreed they are “so glad to have one!” The students were very interested and completely engaged during their time with Nurse Amy. They all did a great job!



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 home, get a 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 a Licensed School Nurse (LSN) or are directed or supervised by an 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

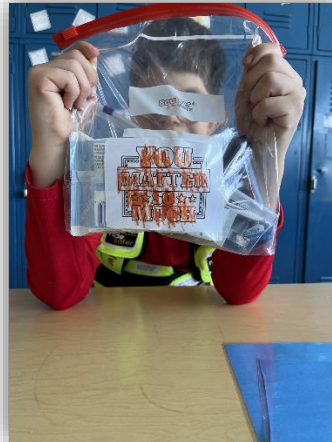
◆ OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ◆

Kari Burris, MOT, OTR/L, Director of Related Services
Kim Steele, MOT, OTR/L, Lead Occupational Therapist

COMMUNITY CARE KIT PROJECT



Students in the SCC program are assembling Community Care Kits with the support of their occupational therapist, Katie Pawlak. This new initiative provides students with the opportunity to develop vocational skills and work toward earning their Citizenship Seals for graduation, all while giving back to the local community. As they prepare the kits, students are building essential skills such as counting, following multi-step directions, self-monitoring, communicating with co-workers, and using fine motor skills to open and close various containers. Written expression is also being meaningfully addressed, as students create encouraging notes to include in each kit. They are starting with hygiene kits for local residents in need and hope to expand the project to include welcome bags for children entering foster care and sensory support kits for first responders.

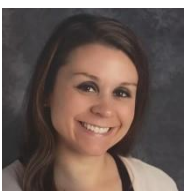


SPECIAL THERAPY VISIT AT MILLER RIDGE

Earlier this quarter, Debra Greutman, Occupational Therapy Assistant, made a special visit to Miller Ridge Elementary (Middletown) on her day off, this time with a furry companion in tow. Deb's therapy dog, Lacey, joined her for the day, bringing comfort, joy, and a few slobbery kisses to the students. One student even requested a few extra kisses after Lacey washed only one of her eyes, saying that her other eye needed to be washed too. This sweet moment is captured below. Thank you, Deb and Lacey, for brightening everyone's day.



A CALMING PRESCENCE AT KME



This school year brought exciting improvements to Kings Mills Elementary, including a meaningful redesign of the motor lab space, thanks to the work of Occupational Therapist, Melissa Miller. Melissa reimagined the room to include clearly defined stations and a dedicated calming area. The space is now available for students throughout the building to use, with staff support, for sensory breaks and self-regulation. The newly structured environment has helped support students' sensory and emotional needs in a calm, purposeful way. Below are photos showing the updated space and the thoughtful changes that are making a positive impact across the school.



HAPPY RETIREMENT DEBRA GREUTMAN

After 15 years of dedicated service to the Warren County Educational Service Center, we proudly celebrate the retirement of Debra Greutman, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant. Deb has been an invaluable part of the WCESC team and will be missed by all, especially her students and teammates in Middletown City Schools. She brought a unique blend of creativity and education-based experience to her role as a school-based OTA. Over the years, she became known not only for her skill and professionalism but also for the encouragement and support she offered to her students and school staff. Whether helping students develop fine motor skills or collaborating with school teams to create supportive learning environments, Deb approached every task with heart and dedication.

Her colleagues describe her as knowledgeable, helpful, supportive, compassionate, creative, and uplifting. Her contributions have left a lasting impact, and she will be deeply missed. As Deb enters her next chapter, we wish her all the best in retirement. Congratulations, Deb, and thank you for 15 incredible years!

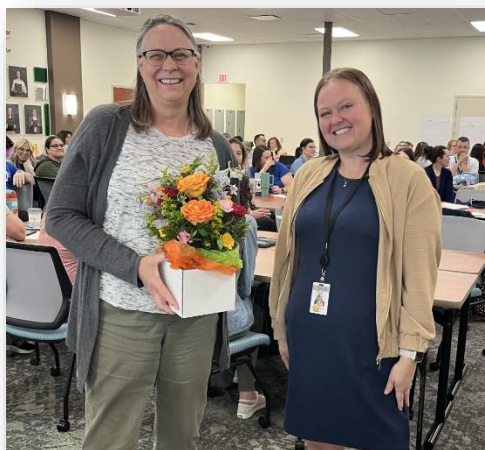


◆ PHYSICAL THERAPY ◆

Kari Burris, MOT, OTR/L, Director of Related Services
Tonya Ellis, PT, DPT, Lead Physical Therapist

Honoring Diana Batsch's Retirement After 10 Years of Dedicated Service

We are proud to celebrate Diana Batsch, PT, as she retires after a decade of dedicated service with the Warren County ESC. Diana has been a cornerstone of the WCESC Physical Therapy department, known for her calm, thoughtful approach and her strong rapport with both students and staff.



Throughout her time with us, Diana consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of her students' needs. She tailored therapy goals to support functional skills across the lifespan, from gross motor development in younger grades to job-related tasks in high school. Her sessions were always purposeful, well-organized, and student-centered, incorporating creative activities such as yoga warm-ups, obstacle courses, and personalized sensory supports. Diana was not only an outstanding therapist but also a collaborative team member and department leader. She regularly mentored colleagues, maintained top-tier documentation practices, and upheld high standards of professionalism and communication. Her ability to foster student independence while advocating for their unique needs has left a lasting impact. We are grateful for Diana's contributions and wish her all the best in her well-earned retirement!

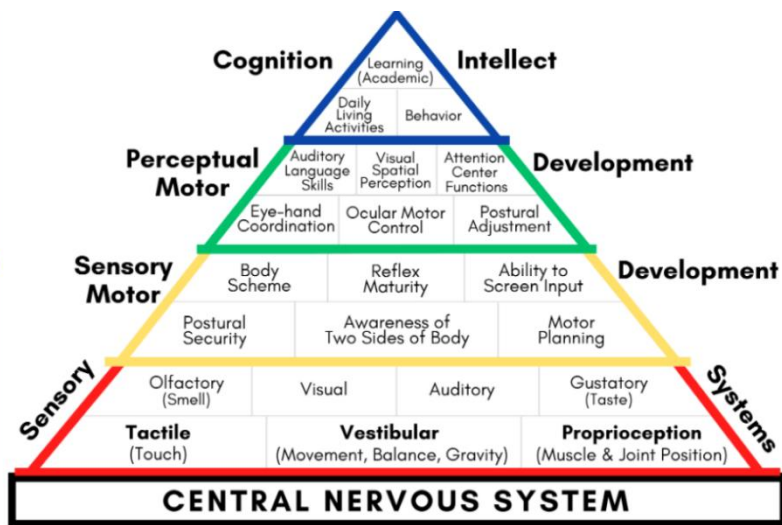
Blanchester Related Services Lead Districtwide Sensory Training

On May 22, members of the Blanchester District Autism Team—Joy Tubbs, PT; Carrie Nowak, OT; and Jenna Englehard, SLP—presented “*Sensory Processing in Education: Understanding and Supporting Students*” to all district staff. The engaging session emphasized the importance of sensory awareness in shaping student behavior and learning outcomes.

Staff explored their own sensory processing patterns through a sensory profile activity and reflected on how sensory input—like sound, touch, and movement—affects both students and educators. The presenters guided staff through foundational knowledge of sensory system development, regulation vs. dysregulation, and the scaffolding model of support.

LEARNING INTENTION

SENSORY PROCESSING IN EDUCATION: UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS



DevelopLearnGrow.com Edited with permission from M. Trott (Original Taylor Trott Learning Pyramid)

Each session included real-world classroom strategies tailored to all grade levels and offered practical self-care tips for staff—ranging from using light filters in classrooms to mindfulness techniques. This professional development helped deepen staff understanding and equipped them with tools to create more supportive, responsive learning environments.

Celebrating Innovation and Inclusion at Edgewood High School

We are proud to share a shining example of how innovation, compassion, and collaboration can break down barriers and empower students. Dewey, a student at Edgewood High School, recently received a custom-designed basket for his power wheelchair. This addition enhances his mobility, independence, and overall school experience. The basket was thoughtfully crafted by Ryan L. from the *May We Help* organization, who even incorporated Dewey's love for the Cincinnati Bengals into the design.

A special spotlight goes to WCESC Physical Therapist Becky Miller, whose leadership, advocacy, and deep commitment to student-centered care were instrumental in making this accommodation a reality. Becky worked closely with the team to identify Dewey's needs and coordinate the support necessary to bring this idea to life. Her dedication reflects the heart of inclusive practice by ensuring every student has the tools and support they need to thrive.



◆ SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ◆ **Kari Burris, MOT, OTR/L, Director of Related Services** **Denise Lacy, MS, CCC-SLP, Lead SLP**

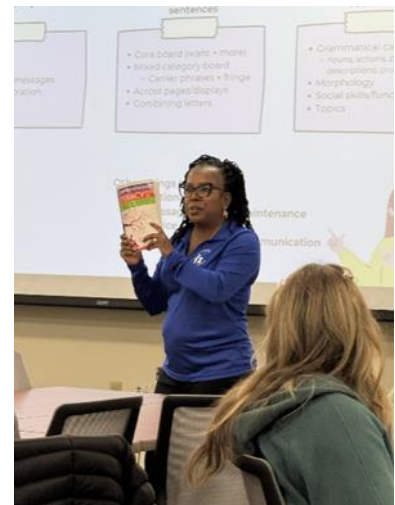
Spotlight on Professional Development: Supporting Complex Communicators

This spring, WCESC had the pleasure of hosting Stephanie Ekis from Dynamic Therapy Associates for an engaging and hands-on professional development session.

Designed as an introductory exploration of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), the session focused on the fundamentals of communication development. Participants learned how to identify appropriate starting points and create effective therapy plans to support both expressive and receptive language skills.

The interactive workshop was packed with practical tools and real-world strategies. Attendees walked away with a full "therapy toolbox" of resources, creative ideas, and actionable approaches to better support students with complex communication needs in a variety of settings.

Thank you to Stephanie for sharing her expertise and to all the professionals who participated with such enthusiasm and curiosity. We look forward to building on this momentum in future learning opportunities!





Rosa Parks Elementary: Multisensory Learning in Action

This spring, MLE students at Rosa Parks Elementary participated in a Mother's Day project designed to support both creative expression and communication development.

In a collaborative effort, the MLE classroom team partnered with the speech-language pathologist to create an adapted craft experience. The SLP provided visual supports, including step-by-step directions and sentence structure prompts to encourage student participation and language use. These tools helped students make meaningful requests and express themselves throughout the activity.

Using paint and art materials, the students created thoughtful Mother's Day cards or gift bags—combining hands-on creativity with purposeful language practice. The result was a joyful and language-rich experience that honored the special people in their lives while building essential communication skills.



Celebrating Speech-Language-Hearing Month at WCESC

May is Speech-Language-Hearing Month, a time to recognize the vital work of speech-language pathologists and audiologists across the country. At Warren County ESC, we took this opportunity to celebrate the incredible contributions of our own team of dedicated speech-language pathologists.

During their final staff meeting of the school year, the SLP team came together to reflect on both professional and personal milestones. Together, they created a vibrant display board showcasing achievements and moments that made this year memorable.

To honor their hard work and commitment, the celebration included a fun beach-themed gathering complete with gourmet popsicles and festive summer vibes. It was a joyful send-off to a year filled with impact, collaboration, and growth.

We are so grateful for our SLPs and all they do to support students and districts across the region. We wish them a restful and well-deserved summer and look forward to welcoming them back, refreshed and ready for another successful year!



◆ SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT ◆

Kristie Strittmatter, Lead School Psychologist

It's hard to believe the 2024–2025 school year has already come to a close. The final quarter was certainly a busy one, but we were still able to celebrate staff engagement through our department's PBIS Rewards program.

Three team members—Mary Kamphaus, Melissa Elam, and Regina Meeker—enjoyed well-deserved lunches out, either in their local school communities or in Lebanon, OH. Mary and Melissa also invited a colleague to join them, which allowed for more conversation and connection. In addition, several other staff members redeemed their PBIS points for a variety of rewards during the fourth quarter.

To wrap up the year, our department came together for an end-of-year checkout luncheon. It was a great opportunity to be together with all department members, and share some final moments together before heading into summer break.

As we look ahead to next year, the following staff members will no longer be with the School Psychology Department.

- **Sam Wolfe**, School Psychologist, Little Miami Local School District, has accepted a new position in another district.

- **Melissa Elam**, School Psychology Case Manager, will transition to a new role as an Intervention Specialist in the Social Communication Classroom Program starting in August 2025.
- **Shayleigh Holbrook**, also a School Psychology Case Manager, will be pursuing new opportunities in the field of education.

We will truly miss them and are grateful for the contributions they made to our team. We wish them all the best in their new roles!

At the same time, we're excited to welcome new team members:

- **Hayley Curtsinger** will be joining us as a School Psychologist at the Little Miami Early Childhood Center, serving preschool. Hayley is already a familiar face, having completed her internship with Little Miami and Wayne Local School Districts.
- **Lisa Acure**, a School Psychology Intern from the University of Cincinnati, will be serving at the Kings Local Early Childhood Center (Preschool) and Waynesville Elementary in Wayne Local.
- We are also excited to begin a new partnership with **Miami University**, through which we will provide experience for three graduate assistants across Kings Local, Wayne Local, and Carlisle Local School Districts.



◆ SOCIAL COMMUNICATION CLASSROOMS ◆

Molly Leicht, Supervisor
Rachelle Yakumithis, Assistant Supervisor
Kelly Buelt, Assistant Supervisor

The fourth quarter of the 2024–2025 school year at SCC was brimming with enriching and memorable experiences. Students participated in a variety of activities, including an educational visit from the Cincinnati Museum Center, an interactive wildlife encounter with Cool Critters Outreach, and a lively Family Engagement Night that brought the SCC, Multiple Disabilities (MD) and Transition Living Classrooms (TLC) programs together. Therapy dogs made special appearances, offering comfort and stress relief during the busy season. The festivities continued with the Daylight Prom, a joyful celebration for all, and culminated in the highly anticipated Senior Class trip, marking a fitting end to a dynamic and fulfilling school year.

Cincinnati Museum Center



Cool Critters Outreach





Family Engagement Night





Therapy Dogs





Daylight Prom Parade



Senior Trip





◆ COORDINATED CARE ◆

Kevin Stevens M. Ed., LSW

Supervisor of Coordinated Care & Clinical Committee Coordinator



Mentor Program

Coordinated Care & Central Clinic Mentoring Program: A Decade of Impact

For over ten years, **Coordinated Care** and the **Central Clinic Behavioral Health Mentoring Program** have worked in close partnership to support at-risk youth across Southwest Ohio. Originally launched under **Beech Acres**, the program transitioned to **Central Clinic Behavioral Health** approximately seven years ago, where it continues to thrive under the dedicated leadership of **Mike Cox**.

Mike has been at the helm of the program since its early days and is widely recognized as a driving force behind its long-standing success. Through his leadership, the program has consistently helped both boys and girls grow into responsible, productive adults.

Serving **Hamilton, Butler, Warren, and Clinton counties**, the program is partially funded by the **Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board** and the **Mental Health Recovery Board Serving Warren and Clinton Counties** and by **Warren Co. Family and Children First**. It is a highly effective, community-based initiative designed for youth aged **7 to 17** who are at elevated risk for:

- Juvenile delinquency
- Negative peer relationships
- Academic failure
- Poor decision-making

Mentors in the program provide structured guidance, coaching, and support to help youth and their families develop essential life skills while addressing behavioral, emotional, and developmental challenges.

Coordinated Care has referred approximately **12–15 youth annually** to the program since its inception. Many of these young individuals have struggled to form meaningful connections, and the mentoring program has been a critical factor in helping them make healthier choices, avoid legal trouble, and reduce the need for psychiatric hospitalization.

Referral Information

Access to mentoring services requires a referral from an approved agency.

For youth residing in **Warren County**, please contact:

✉ **Kevin Stevens**

Kevin.Stevens@WarrenCountyESC.com

Mentor Program Success Story
Submitted by: Jeff Peters, Mentor

I have had the privilege of mentoring a young man through the Central Clinic Mentoring Program for several years. When we began, he struggled significantly with anger and antisocial behavior. He had been placed in residential treatment twice—once for attempting to set his home on fire, and again due to frequent outbursts that made him unmanageable at home and school.

At the time, he was enrolled in a behavioral school placement and later transitioned to a second specialized educational setting. He had difficulty forming friendships and was often disruptive in class. His behavior was manipulative, and he would react dramatically when things didn't go his way—for example, hiding under tables and crying loudly if lunch wasn't to his liking.

Through consistent mentoring and school-based counseling, he gradually learned coping strategies to manage his emotional dysregulation. Over time, and with occasional setbacks, he began to show real progress. I was told that our mentoring relationship provided the stability and consistency he needed to begin healing from a traumatic childhood.

Today, he is back in public school, earning awards for **citizenship and academic achievement**, and maintaining healthy relationships with both peers and family. He has developed strong moral and ethical values and continues to thrive. He is a powerful example of how **positive guidance and mentorship** can transform a young life.

◆ **WARREN COUNTY LEARNING CENTER** ◆
Wiley Collett, Program Supervisor
Jason Boone, Assistant Supervisor
Julie Hunter, Assistant Supervisor

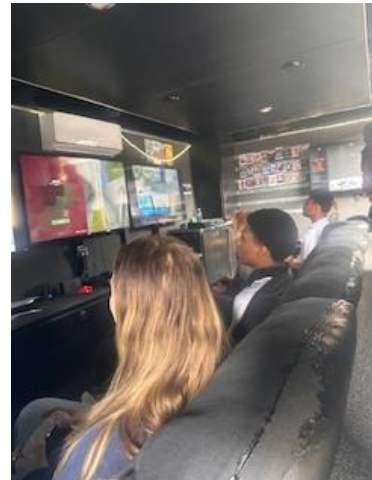
St. Mary Campus-

In the fourth quarter, students earned tickets for demonstrating our core values: being respectful, responsible, safe, and mindful. These tickets were entered into a raffle, featuring a variety of popular food and leisure items. Congratulations to the raffle winners from each classroom!

During the second half of the semester, students also had the opportunity to earn additional tickets to access a special reward: time on a game truck. They were then able to enjoy food items including hot dogs, chips, brownies, and drinks. We are proud to share that all students will participate in this event alongside their peers. A special thank you to Cincinnati Game Truck for bringing this exciting experience to our campus.

Following the completion of state testing, students were also rewarded with a visit from the Mounted Patrol. They had the chance to interact with the horses and engage with the officers, asking questions about their roles and responsibilities. Later that week, the whole class got creative with a tie-dye session—then rocked their colorful masterpieces all on the same day!

We are proud of our students for their hard work and positive behavior throughout the semester, and we appreciate the support of our community partners in making these experiences possible.



Workforce Development-

The Workforce Development Academy had the great privilege of graduating 5 seniors as the class of 2025! Pictured are Wesley Morris (Springboro), William Lovett (Kings), Xander Cate (Middletown), Travis Fox (Springboro) and Daprece Stearns (Cincinnati). We are incredibly proud of these students, as graduation marks a monumental milestone that launches them into the next chapter of their lives. Throughout their journey, they've demonstrated grit—tackling difficult tasks day in and day out with resilience and determination. They've redefined failure, viewing setbacks not as roadblocks, but as stepping stones and valuable learning opportunities. They've embraced challenges, understanding that pushing beyond their comfort zones leads to personal growth. Most importantly, they've embodied a true growth mindset—believing in their capacity to learn, improve, and develop their abilities through dedication, effort, and perseverance. Their accomplishments are a testament to their hard work and their belief in what's possible. **Congratulations, Seniors! You deserve it!**





Laura Farrell Campus-

As the school year comes to a close, we are thrilled to share that we wrapped things up on a high note at the Learning Center- Laura Farrell Campus!

To celebrate the end of the year, our students enjoyed a well-deserved “Spa Day” where they participated in yoga, learned simple meditation techniques, and took time to relax and recharge. It was a peaceful and calming way to reflect on the hard work and progress made throughout the year.



We also turned up the excitement with “Water Day,” a fun-filled event where students teamed up to play water games that encouraged teamwork, laughter, and lots of splashes! A great time was had by all.



As we prepare for next year, it has been all hands on deck! Our team has been busy packing up every classroom in anticipation of some exciting improvements to our building. We are happy to share that the Laura Farrell Campus will be receiving brand-new heating and air conditioning units, a much needed and welcome upgrade!



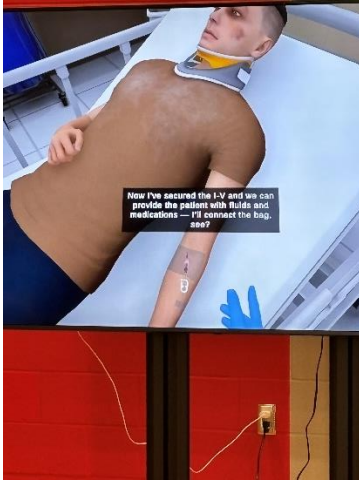
We are excited to see what next year brings! Thank you to all for a wonderful year!

◆ TRANSITION COORDINATORS ◆ Amanda Pennix, Supervisor

Transition/Work Force Development Coordinators

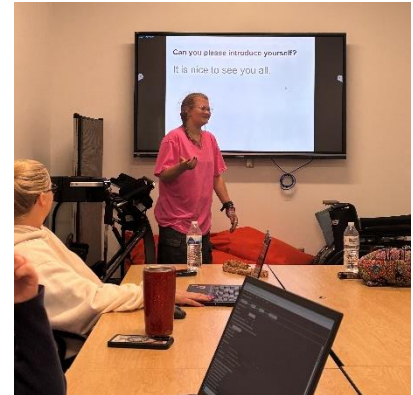
Franklin

Approximately 200, 9th grade students at Franklin High School participated in a College & Career Day this Spring. Students participated in sessions related to employment, post-secondary education, military service, and trade opportunities.



Building Self-Advocacy at Franklin High School

At Franklin High School, students are learning valuable self-advocacy skills by taking an active role in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. With guidance and support, students prepare presentations to share their goals, strengths, and needs. This experience helps build confidence and empowers students to take ownership of their learning journey.



Daylight Prom

Students from Franklin High School and Mason High School recently attended the Daylight Prom, a special event designed for students who may not be able to participate in a traditional prom setting. This inclusive celebration gave students the opportunity to enjoy music, dancing, and fun with their peers—many smiles were shared, and everyone had a great time on the dance floor!



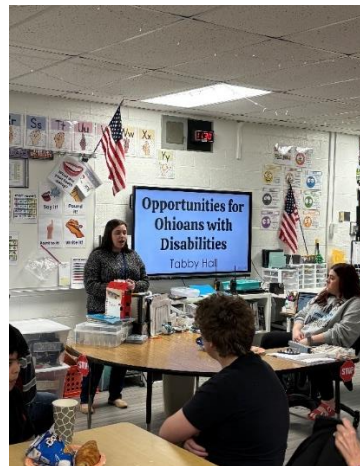


Franklin High School – Hands-On Internship Experience

Students at Franklin High School are gaining valuable work experience through school-based internships. One popular activity is creating and delivering “Fizzy” drinks to staff members—a fun way for students to build employability and customer service skills while engaging with their school community.

Franklin Junior High – Lunch & Learn Event

Franklin Junior High recently hosted a Lunch & Learn for students and families. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from several important community partners, including Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, the Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Project SEARCH, and Sinclair Tartan TOPS. These organizations shared valuable information about services and support available to students as they plan for their future.



Mason High School

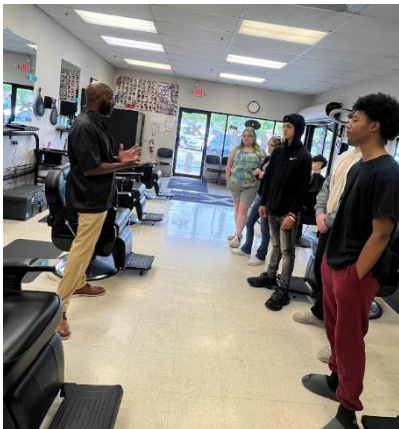
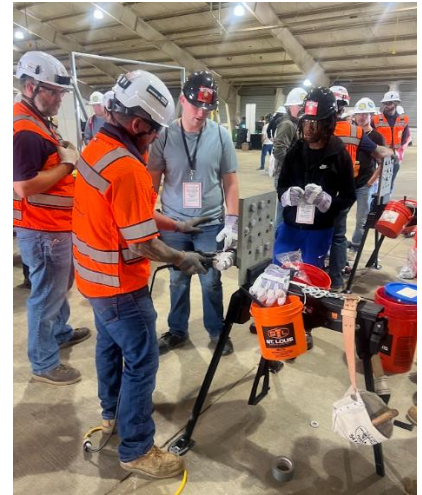
Mason High School – Post-Secondary Transition & Resource Fair

Mason High School welcomed families from across the county to the 3rd Annual Post-Secondary Transition and Resource Fair. This event connected students and families with agencies, transition programs, and post-secondary options designed to support success in employment, higher education, and independent living. Featured presentations from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and Project SEARCH/Great Oaks provided families with insights into valuable resources available after high school.



Lebanon High School

The 2024-2025 school year is coming to an end! The Transition Team worked hard to ensure students were exploring careers, completing transition activities, and touring post-secondary options. Those activities were completed all while still conducting student meetings and providing work study to get out into the community. Students toured colleges, attended the career fair, and participated in Construction Day at the



Western Row Multiple Disabilities Classroom

Western Row Multiple Disabilities Classroom had a great school year. The staff and students seem to love their newest work site, Matthew 25 Ministries. They have toured the facility to see what the ministry does to support various areas of the United States. The students have interacted with other volunteers and helped to prepare items to be shipped out to disaster areas.



Students also participated in the Breakfast Appreciation for our community partners.



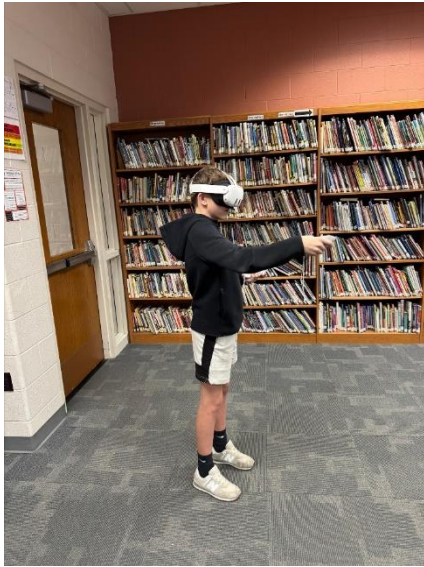
John K. Lazares Alternative School

The students attending John K Lazares Alternative School worked diligently throughout the 24-25 school year. During the last quarter of the semester, students were finalizing applications with employers and agencies for work opportunities. Students interested in nursing/medical field attended a tour of the Atrium in Middletown. Additionally, students participated in the Warren County Construction Day to explore opportunities in the field shown below.



Kings:

As always, the Kings students have been hard at work! The staff wanted to celebrate with our students, as well as our business partners, by throwing an end-of-year celebration. Both students and business partners were recognized for their commitment to our work study program. Take a look at this student receiving his certificate of achievement!



Waynesville:

Students at Waynesville (7th-12th graders) had the opportunity to participate in a career exploration day via virtual reality (VR). Students were able to explore multiple different careers while learning what it is like to work in that field. From knee replacement surgery, to cosmetology, the students had a blast looking into their future!

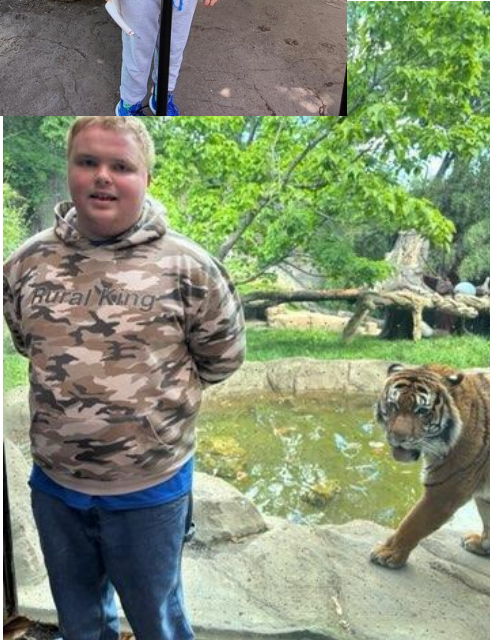
Little Miami:

The transition to employment class at Little Miami has been busy helping others! Twice this year, we have gone to Matthew 25: Ministries to help unpack and organize crucial supplies to areas in need. This quarter, we were able to help unpack, organize, and repack hospital supplies. Because of these students, a hospital in need is getting help!



TLC

PBIS Outing to the Zoo



Students working hard at the end of the year!



Last music class!



◆ **MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT** ◆
Jessica Woody, Director of Mental Health Services
Casie Poore, Mental Health Supervisor

As we wrap up another incredible year, we want to take a moment to reflect on the milestones we've reached together. From meaningful awareness initiatives to fun-filled celebrations, it's been a year of connection, growth, and community spirit.

The mental health team celebrated the end of the year with our annual picnic. Staff participate in games, team connections and celebration of the accomplishments of this year. We reflected on the growth that has occurred in the team during the last five years. In 2020, we started with six people in the department and have moved to over 40, as shown in this picture. We are excited about the continued growth of our department as we serve the mental health needs of the students in programs, districts and within the county.





WCESC Mental Health Department-Program Team

Alternative School

As the alternative school prepared to transition students, they participated in a number of mental health awareness campaigns and end of year fun! This included Wear Blue Day and sidewalk chalk for mental health awareness!



Learning Center Campus



The Learning Center teams celebrated mental health awareness month by participating in a number of themed activities. This included a Wear Blue Day! Students and staff wore blue to raise awareness, spark conversations, and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health. The sea of blue across our classrooms and hallways was a powerful visual reminder that it's okay to not be okay—and help is always available.

Staff additionally participated in the final Family Engagement Night hosted by Learning Center. This has been a great way to connect with families about mental health services and connect to resources!

Social Communications

The social communications mental health team has worked hard throughout the school year to set new systems and processes for engaging in all tiers with the MTSS framework in the building. This quarter, they worked on decreasing their waitlist by increasing case management services for students. Additionally, with data collection they were able to show a need for an additional mental health therapist that will be starting on in the fall!



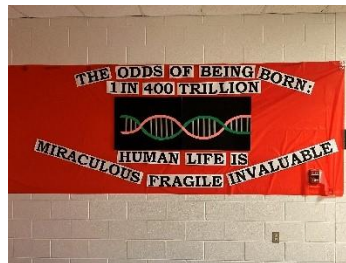
Wellness Center

Wellness Center Campus's also participated in the Wear Blue Event! Wellness Center staff additionally worked this quarter at connecting students to outside services and collaborating with OHRise workers, case managers and outside providers as we begun to head into the summer months. Having services within the summer that help support parents is key to continued success!

Mental Health Consultant District Team

Little Miami High School

The high school does big projects for Hope Week in conjunction with the Hope Squad team in the district. The building is decorated every year reminding each student that they matter!



Little Miami Elementary



One focus of the final quarter was reducing stress and anxiety among students scheduled to transition from one building to another. Staff collaborated with MHC's at the Middle school and Primary school to ensure students experience a smooth transition from one service provider to the next as they advance from one building/grade level to the next. Little Miami facilitates these transitions with field trips on "Bump Day." Staff welcomed third graders into the elementary school and accompanied fifth graders to the middle school with an emphasis on introducing students to each building's MHC.

Little Miami ECC

At Little Miami Early Childhood Center, we celebrated our Kindergarten classes in their graduation ceremony while also supporting our first grade class in "bump up day" as they will transition to a new school. "Bump up day" is an opportunity for our first graders to go to the Primary school and learn about second grade from second graders! They sit in a classroom with them, learn about the school and what to expect for the next upcoming year.



Little Miami Primary

At Little Miami Primary School, our third graders attended bump up day at the Elementary School while our second graders attended a third grade classroom to learn about expectations for next year. On the last day of school, all staff wave to the students as they leave on their last day.

Carlisle

Carlisle's Kindness Club created send off posters while the kids were leaving the building for the last day of school! Kindness Club has grown during the past couple of years thanks to the collaboration of school staff and our K-6 Mental Health Consultant.

GOVs

At Greater Ohio Virtual School, students got to visit different therapy dogs and learned about the importance of enrichment and made enrichment items for local shelter dogs. Our Mental Health Consultant was able to gain feedback about improved moods in both staff and students with the visits!

Waynesville

At Waynesville we have had many hands-on projects during the year! The white boxes represented "coping skill boxes" that each student was created and add items were added so they can utilize them when needing to calm down. These boxes were created in hopes that they have something to take with them to use over the summer.



Prevention Department

Trauma Informed Care Coach-Franklin

Crystal Pergram (TIC Coach) and Jessica Woody (Director) attended the 12th Annual TIC Summit in Columbus, Ohio. This was an amazing event supported by OHMAS and Ohio Children's Alliance. Great presenters discussed the importance of being trauma informed in all the work that we do!

Substance Abuse Prevention

This was the first year for the substance abuse prevention program within our department. As the year has come to a close, it is important to recognize the success and growth that has been made because of the addition of this program! Over the course of the year the program has been able to serve 38 students throughout four programs at the ESC! Our hope is to continue to grow the reach of this service during the upcoming year!

Child Advocacy Center

Warren County ESC is now in full swing providing mental health services to families at the CAC in Lebanon. Two different office spaces have been set up and multiple clients have transitioned into services from the previous provider. Additional referrals have been added, and therapists are now serving more than 50 kids and families! We are excited to join the CAC as the mental health provider in offering trauma-informed care alongside other evidence-based practices!



**Our Mental Health Department wishes everyone a safe and happy summer!
Remember, your mental health matters!**

◆ JOHN K. LAZARES ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ◆

Kari Burris, Director
Jon Kuehnle, Supervisor
Dr. David Vail, Supervisor/Consultant

Celebrating Our Graduates!

JKLAS is proud to recognize **10** students from our program as brand-new high school graduates! Congratulations to Jason B., Angela H., Kadin R., Kalie S., Abraham Y., Obar C., Jonah K., Gavin D., Je'Vaya H., and Gerardo A.! Congrats also to JKLAS staff member Lonzy Addison on earning his Bachelor's Degree in Education!



Miss Gina!

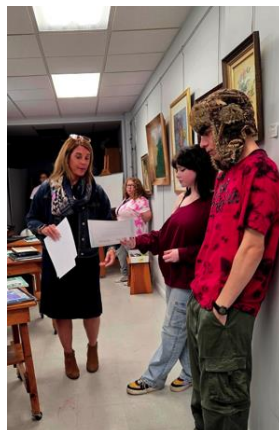


Every Monday, JKLAS students looked forward to the arrival of "Miss Gina," as Gina Perry is known in our school. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of Gina and her husband, Dwight, through their organization, "Waking the Heart," JKLAS students were treated to amazing home-cooked meals. They even served food at our quarterly Family Engagement Nights. Thank you, Miss Gina!

Miamisburg Art Guild



During the 4th quarter, JKLAS students engaged their creative sides through participation in the Miamisburg Art Guild at the Miamisburg Art Gallery. Students Anthony H., Jonathan F., Kacie W. and Preston R. recently showcased their work, received recognition for their talents, and enjoyed lunch at Bullwinkle's. What an amazing opportunity! Thanks to the artists at Miamisburg and JKLAS staff member Mindy Graf for their help and support.

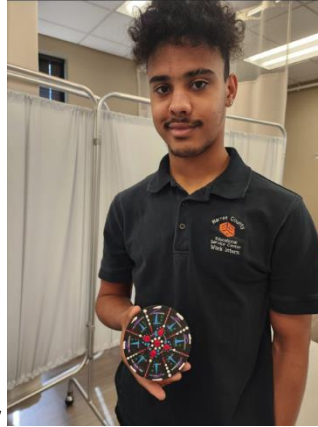


Hope Reins!



JKLAS launched our **Hope Reins** program this spring in partnership with *Miracle Horses, Healing Hearts at Sarajevo Farms*. This impactful equine-assisted learning initiative provides students with a unique opportunity to engage with horses in a safe, nurturing environment. Through guided, hands-on experiences, participants are building self-confidence, healing, fostering growth, and building resilience through the powerful connection between humans and horses. Thanks to JKLAS staff member Kristi Brown for coordinating this experience.





WCESC Pre-Professional Academy (PPA) at Sinclair

During a recent weekly visit to Sinclair Community College, JKLAS students learned the artistic and meditative practice of rock art. Students got firsthand experience painting their own mandalas, which are now on display outside Building A at Sinclair's Mason campus. Students also learned how to face challenging situations collaboratively through the practice of divergent thinking, which they applied to a unique Lego tower-building contest.

Thanks to our partnership with Sinclair, nine students received the Pre-Apprenticeship credential. They had to attend two days of Information Technology and two days of Advanced Manufacturing to qualify. Ten students received the Ohio Means Jobs Readiness Seal. They had to attend the PPA seven days to qualify for this option. These credentials enable our students to meet Ohio's graduation requirements.

Free Haircuts from Paul Mitchell!



JKLAS students (with parent/guardian consent, of course) were treated to free haircuts by students from the Paul Mitchell Cosmetology and Beauty School. Their students learn a trade, and our students come out with a fresh style and a clean cut!



Celebrating Our Staff!

The JKLAS team worked hard and had fun assisting our students this year. We made a great team. Have a great summer!

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



Early Intervention and Home Visiting Programs
Stefanie Post, Director



The Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities hosted its first annual Open House Award Ceremony on March 11, 2025, to celebrate the achievements of local people with disabilities who receive services from WCBDD.

The Early Intervention Program is celebrating Levi for winning the Goal Crusher Award! Levi came to our program at 5 months old and will soon be transitioning out this summer when he turns 3 years old. He was born prematurely at just 24 weeks and weighing only 1 lb 10 oz, faced significant medical hurdles, including surgeries and the need for a G-tube for nutrition. Despite these early setbacks, he has made remarkable progress, now eating independently, walking, running, and forming sentences. With the unwavering love and support of his family, Levi has exceeded expectations and continues to thrive, embodying the true spirit of perseverance and growth!



The Home Visiting program is celebrating 2 of our family's graduations!

What a wonderful milestone for Jalyann! Graduating from Franklin High School through the Warren County Career Center's Pre-nursing program is a great achievement, and continuing her work at Otterbein shows dedication to her career path. Taking the step toward independent living is also a big and exciting next step for her and her baby! Congratulations!



Amazing news for Kirsten! Graduating from nursing school and landing a job close to home is a huge accomplishment. She is now working towards her goal of getting her own house and creating a nurturing home for her children. Her journey has been truly inspiring!



◆ 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

Behringer-Crawford Museum

In late March, the high school class in the Multiple Disabilities Program travelled to Covington, KY to visit the Behringer-Crawford Museum. The “William Behringer Memorial Museum” opened July 5th, 1950, showing off the collections of a late world traveler. Visitors would see a mounted stuffed life-sized black bear, birds, small game, the emblematic two-headed calf, American Indian artifacts and other unforgettable “curiosities.”





The museum meets the standards set by the Americans for Disabilities Act. Newly renovated to better educate and entertain, Behringer-Crawford Museum celebrates 75 years in 2025.

Of the museum, intervention specialist Sam Martin said, “There is an amazing amount of fun stuff to see and do, and there is a great outdoor play and walking area.” Paraprofessional Connie Jean Smith added, “We all loved the model trains and all the interesting information about the Ohio river including the river boats, floods, and how it affected the development of surrounding suburbs.”

Behringer-Crawford Museum
1600 Montague Road – Devou Park
Covington, KY, 41011
(859) 491-4003
bcmuseum.org

Western Row MDESC Students Visit Heritage Village Museum

During the 4th quarter of the 2024-2025 school year, students enrolled in the Multiple Disabilities Program at Western Row Campus travelled to Sharon Woods to tour the Heritage Village Museum. **Heritage Village Museum is a living history museum depicting life in Southwestern Ohio throughout the 19th Century. Homes, out-buildings, and equipment on the museum grounds were moved here from other locations in the region to be preserved and aid in telling the story of our recent past. Interpreters at the museum provide the facts and stories that bring the Village to life with nostalgic glances of days gone by.**

During special events at the Village interpreters demonstrate some of the historic tasks and crafts of the 19th century such as spinning, weaving, candle-dipping, soap making, hearth cooking, carpentry work, herb lore, gardening, printing, trade and bartering, and communication.



Program intervention specialist, Jennifer Car said of the event, “Heritage Village is fantastic in every way. Our interpreter shared so much fascinating information and invited questions. The facilities are reasonable accessible and suited our group well.”

Heritage Village Museum
11500 Lebanon Road
Sharonville, OH 45241
(513) 563-9484
Email: info@heritagevillagecincinnati.org
<https://heritagevillagecincinnati.org>

Celebrations & Fond Farewells

On Friday May 2nd, Mason students in the MD program travelled just down the street to Makino Park to celebrate the graduation of two of our students. 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 span 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.

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.



Three students in the program graduated from Mason High School at the end of this school year. They will walk across the stage at Xavier University's Cintas Center on Sunday, May 18th, as they receive their diploma at Mason's Commencement Ceremony. All three students are fine young men and women who have been with the WCESC staff for years. Every student and staff member of the program celebrated with a grand picnic at Makino Park accompanied by decorations, gifts, and cake. Regarding the celebration, intervention specialist, Jenny Bishop commented, "Makino Park is wonderful! It is huge and every aspect of the design is accessible. This is definitely a destination playground."

Paraprofessional, Cristian Rojas added, "The addition of the adaptive baseball/kickball/softball fields is fantastic. We had such a fun time enjoying the facility!"

Makino Park

6100 Kopfler Court

Mason, OH 45040

[Imagemason.org/about/common-ground-playground-at-makino-park](https://www.imagemason.org/about/common-ground-playground-at-makino-park)

Daylight Prom

On April 25th, Mason students in the MD program attended Daylight Prom 2025 at Savannah Center in West Chester. Hosted by Little Miami High School Student Government, the Daylight Prom celebrated our students with dancing, singing, dining and absolutely having a fantastic time! Students from school districts across Southwest Ohio came together in West Chester for the event and returned home with memories to last a lifetime.

Of the event paraprofessional, Angela Wills said, "The students from Little Miami did such a fantastic job making the day so special. All the students danced, smiled, ate, laughed and were so appropriately celebrated!"

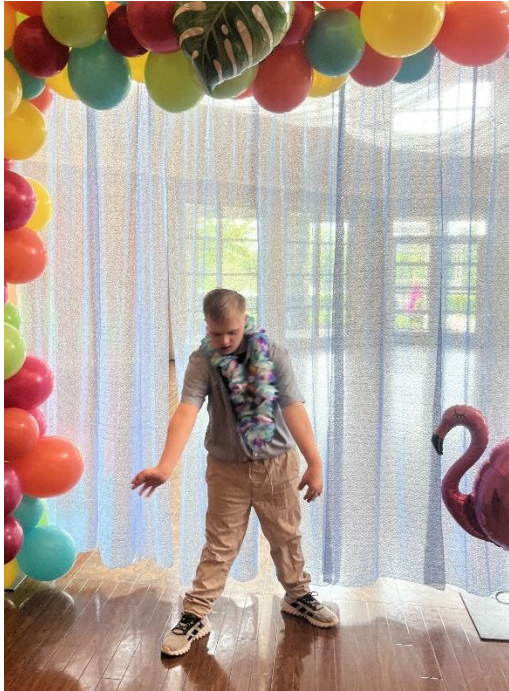












◆ GREATER OHIO VIRTUAL SCHOOL ◆
Shawn Lenney, Director

2024-2025 Project Excellence Award Winner

Congratulations to our 2024-2025 Project Excellence Award Recipient, Julie Burke! Julie is awesome! As a guidance counselor and English Teacher, Julie consistently builds relationships with all the students, parents, and staff members she works with. Our guidance department is a key cog in the path to graduation for our students, and they are in good hands with Julie. Julie will be honored at a banquet in May with recipients from each Warren County District. Julie has been a steady force at GOVS; we are fortunate to have her! Congratulations Julie!



2025 Greater Ohio Virtual School Graduation

On Tuesday, June 3rd, 2025, the Greater Ohio Virtual School proudly hosted its 21st graduation ceremony, a testament to our enduring commitment to education. The event, held at Mason Middle School, saw a record number of 237 students 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 four 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 2025!



◆ WCESC CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN INITIATIVE ◆

CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN CONTINUES AT WCESC...

As our initiative continues, employees from each department of Warren County Educational Service Center, Southwest Ohio Council of Governments, and Greater Ohio Virtual School have been selected to be recognized as they have demonstrated a quality characteristic as part of our initiative for the month. There are many employees who demonstrate numerous qualities, but individuals are selected based on their strong suit. Selected staff members are listed in no particular order.

MARCH:

As we continue to celebrate our WCESC Champions for Children, the month of March was focused on the attribute of **ADAPTABILITY**. **ADAPTABILITY is defined as the ability to effectively respond to changing circumstances, challenges, and**

new demands. In today's educational environment, Adaptability is more important than ever. It is about staying flexible, embracing changes, and finding solutions when challenges arise. Whether it's learning a new skill, adjusting to shifting priorities, or responding to unexpected challenges, being adaptable helps us grow and thrive.

We had an outstanding group of honorees submitted who clearly demonstrate Adaptability in the work they do. **March honorees are as follows:**

DEPARTMENT	NAME	DEPARTMENT	NAME
Collaborative Coaching	Morgan Staverman	Preschool	Jesika Zellers
Coordinated Care	Taylor Hopkins	Physical Therapy	Maureen Schriml
Educational Interpreters	Heather Hamilton	Resource Coordinators	Charlie Hartman
GOVS	Matt Pennington	Social Communication	Tynieka Rickman
Help Me Grow	Candance Greenwood	School Psychologists	Lisa Moore
JKLAS	Lonzy Addison	Speech Therapy	Kate Osborne
Learning Center	Mindy Hortman	Transition Living	Crystal Puthoff
Multiple Disabilities	Connie Jean Smith	Transition Department	Robyn Scott
Mental Health Therapy	Amy Anderson	WCESC Main Office	Kim Cochran
Nursing	Sheila Hubbard	Wellness Center	Teri Powell
Occupational Therapy	Sydney Henry	WCESC Supervisors	Kari Burris

From these amazing honorees, **Mindy Hortman-Intervention Specialist at Learning Center's Laura Farrell Franklin Campus was chosen as the Spotlight Champion for March.** *Her interview and highlights can be found at the end of this article.*

APRIL:

The month of April was focused on the attribute of being a **TEAM PLAYER**. A **Team Player** is an individual who actively contributes to the success of a group by working cooperatively with others through collaboration, support, and respectful communication towards a common goal. A Team Player holds the members of the team accountable to high expectations and themselves to the highest standards.

Once again, we received an incredible group of nominations, each displaying behaviors of being a Team Player in their daily work. **April honorees are as follows:**

DEPARTMENT	NAME	DEPARTMENT	NAME
Attendance	Caitlyn Spears	Occupational Therapy	Beth Mixer
Collaborative Coaching	Carling Daniels	Preschool	Sarah Penwell
Coordinated Care	Tim Howcroft	Physical Therapy	Valerie Szakal
Educational Interpreters	Payton Myska	Resource Coordinators	Teresa Mosely
GOVS	Sharin Green	Social Communication	Emily Harmon
Help Me Grow	Aubrie Patch	School Psychologists	Libby Hagen
JKLAS	Kelly Campbell	Speech Therapy	John Deardorff
Learning Center	Brianna Cogliano	Transition Living	Kelsie Lacy
Multiple Disabilities	Jennifer Bishop	Transition Coordinators	Nathan Ortleib
Mental Health Therapy	Amy Kistler	WCESC Main Office	Jason Byrge
Nursing	Belinda Carson	Wellness Center	Austin McKee
WCESC Supervisors	Jessica Woody		

From this **incredible group of honorees**, we are thrilled to recognize **John Deardorff, SLP assigned to WCESC/Franklin Preschool Program**, as our **Spotlight CHAMPION for April!** John has been an SLP with the WCESC for almost 21 years and provides broad based support to his team daily. He values being a team player and finds joy in working with his incredible colleagues. *His interview and highlights can be found at the end of this article.*



MARCH SPOTLIGHT CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN MINDY HORTMAN



INTERVENTION SPECIALIST-LEARNING CENTER

We are happy to announce that for the month of **March**, **Mindy Hortman**, **WCESC Learning Center Intervention Specialist**, has been selected as our **Spotlight CHAMPION** for embodying the powerful attribute of **ADAPTABILITY**! **Adaptability** is the ability to effectively respond to changing circumstances, challenges, and new demands. Adaptable employees [are able to](#) modify their approaches to optimize outcomes and contribute to a resilient, supportive community.

Mindy has been an integral part of the WCESC Learning Center Laura Farrell Campus since June of 2024! When asked about her position at the ESC Mindy shared that she was, "looking for a change, I wanted a place to fit in and be a valued teacher, where I can teach!"

For Mindy, the best part of her job that brings her the most fulfillment and joy is: **"The Students, the staff, the amazing community that we serve, are all who bring me joy!"**

Laura Farrell supervisor Julie Hunter shared, "Ms. Mindy is a true problem solver, tackling challenges both big and small. She consistently steps up when needed, demonstrating flexibility and initiative. Her exceptional collaboration skills allow her to thrive in different team dynamics, making her an invaluable part of our community. No challenge is too big for Ms. Mindy! She takes on everything with **grace, style, and a heart full of dedication.**"



When asked how she continues to adapt, even on challenging days, Mindy shared: "I love to tackle a problem head on, sometimes relying on others on my team to brainstorm with me in order to solve the problem."

Outside of work, Mindy enjoys traveling with her family, walking outside with her dogs, reading, swimming, and playing football.

Congratulations, Mindy! You are a true **CHAMPION for CHILDREN**, demonstrating your adaptability to make student focused decisions and making a lasting impact every day!

QUALITIES OF CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN
GRIT ★ GROWTH MINDSET ★ REDEFINING FAILURE ★ OPPORTUNITY SEEKING
COMPASSION ★ ADAPTABILITY ★ POSITIVITY ★ TEAM PLAYER



APRIL SPOTLIGHT CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN
JOHN DEARDORFF
Speech Language Pathologist-Franklin Preschool



We are happy to announce that for the month of April, **John Deardorff, SLP Franklin Preschool**, has been selected as our **Spotlight CHAMPION** for embodying the critical attribute of **TEAM PLAYER!**

Team Player was defined as an individual who actively contributes to the success of a group by working cooperatively with others through collaboration, support, and respectful communication towards a common goal.

John has been an integral part of the WCESC SLP department for almost 21 years! He shared that he started working as an SLP in private practice in Columbus but wanted to pursue a position in a school-based setting. At a job fair in Cincinnati, he met a representative of the WCESC, interviewed, and fortunately was offered an invitation to join the speech pathology department.



He shared that he finds the most joy in his work by observing the tremendous progress of students in the WCESC preschool program and working with an amazing team of professionals at Franklin City Schools.

In his 21 years with the WCESC, John has worked with a variety of teams. John describes the role of teamwork in education as follows: ***A willingness to learn and work in different roles as needed to aid team members - helping team members with students in a variety of situations.***

John brings this definition to life on a regular basis through broad based support including aiding staff with students throughout the school day including arrival/dismissal, transitions, on the playground, and at snack time. He also has supported team members during the school year by aiding staff in classrooms when somebody is absent. Further, John collaboratively creates documents and spreadsheets to help staff members with organizing various pieces of information needed in the preschool program.

When asked what advice he would give to someone new about being a team player, John shared the following words of wisdom: ***Observe and listen to other members of your team to learn their needs in your setting – volunteer to learn new roles to support your team – willingness to help your team in a variety of situations in the school environment.***

Outside of work, John enjoys traveling during the summer months!

Congratulations, John! You are a true **CHAMPION for CHILDREN** and a great representation of being a **TEAM PLAYER!**

QUALITIES OF CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN
GRIT ★ GROWTH MINDSET ★ REDEFINING FAILURE ★ OPPORTUNITY SEEKING
COMPASSION ★ ADAPTABILITY ★ POSITIVITY ★ TEAM PLAYER

“Champions for Children”

Congratulations

THANK YOU TO EACH OF YOU! YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN!

◆ 2025 WARREN COUNTY FRANKLIN B. WALTER SCHOLARSHIP ◆
TOP ACADEMIC STUDENTS HONORED

Warren County Educational Service Center hosted the 10th Annual Franklin B. Walter Scholarship Program and Banquet in April. One student from each of ten Warren County school districts was honored for academic achievement excellence and exemplary personal characteristics, achievements, and goals. Participating districts include Carlisle, Franklin, Greater Ohio Virtual School, Kings, Lebanon, Little Miami, Mason, Springboro, Warren County Career, and Waynesville. **Based on the aforementioned criteria, the 2025 OVERALL TOP RECIPIENT chosen was Amanda Tudela, Waynesville High School.** Amanda is the daughter of Mark and Jenna Tudela.



Pictured: Dr. Sam Ison, Wayne L.S.D. Superintendent, Amanda Tudela, Recipient, Lauren Clark, Recognized Mentor, and Chip Will, Waynesville H.S. Principal

Each Warren County student is asked to recognize a mentor/educator who has been instrumental in their school career. **Amanda's recognized mentor was Lauren Clark, her chemistry teacher at Waynesville High School.**

Amanda, her mentor, several family members, and WCESC Superintendent Tom Isaacs attended the statewide program in Columbus on April 14th where Amanda was recognized along with students from all 88 counties in Ohio. Under the direction of Craig Burford, OESCA Executive Director, the organization has sponsored the program for nearly four decades and recognized approximately 2,600 students.



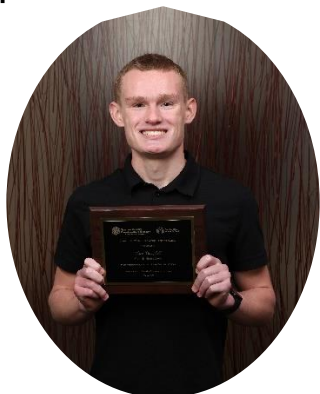
Amanda with her mother, Jenna Tudela



Amanda at the OESCA Statewide Program

In Warren County, each district's recipient is awarded a \$500.00 scholarship from Warren County Educational Service Center. The Overall Winner is awarded a total of a \$1,000.00 scholarship and recognized at a statewide banquet hosted by Ohio Educational Service Centers Association in Columbus, Ohio. Recognized mentor/educators are awarded a \$250.00 stipend to be used for classroom/school use.

Other Recipients and Mentors included:



Ross Campbell
Rachel Castro, Mentor
Carlisle High School



Lillian Cook
Landen Brown, Mentor
Franklin High School



Graci Garber
Jennifer Peterman, Mentor
Greater Ohio Virtual School



Gavin Groff
Jason Shields, Mentor
Kings High School



Callahan Carroll
Tom Hoeffel, Mentor
Lebanon High School



Colin Milligan
Jennifer Lyke, Mentor
Little Miami High School



The story behind the namesake...**Dr. Franklin B. Walter**

The award bears the name of Dr. Franklin B. Walter, who served as State Superintendent from 1977-1991. During his tenure, Dr. Walter worked with three governors, significantly improved public education in the state, and brought Ohio's schools to the fore front of the nation's attention. He received numerous honors and earned the respect and admiration of educators nationwide. His integrity, leadership, optimism, and commitment serve as an example for all. Dr. Walter passed away on September 15, 2010 at the age of 80. He left behind a storied legacy that includes this award.

