



# Lorain County Children and Families First Council Full Council Meeting

## November 6, 2025

### Attendees:

- Chelsea Freeman-Yates
- Franco Gallo
- Mark Adams
- Amber Fisher
- Jeff Riddell
- Kristen Fox-Berki
- Shauna Matelski
- Isaac Young
- Heather Knoble
- Melissa Mack
- Melissa Chernock
- Billie Olsen
- Valerie Gonzalez
- Yacylin Velazquez
- Tammy Taylor
- Guest - Kate Morris
- Guest - Kathryn Perales
- Guest - Ross May

### Opening:

- ❖ The Full Council Meeting of the Lorain County Children and Families First Council was called to order at 9:01 am on July 24, 2025, in Elyria by Mark Adams.

### Welcome and Introductions:

- ❖ Mark Adams welcomed everyone, and Introductions were made around the room.

### Open Business:

- ❖ Early Intervention
  - Isaac Young shared that the time period of January to June 2025 they had 376 new referrals for their program which was a little under the last reporting period, but was on par for the same time period last year which was 387.
  - They have assessed 195 children and of those 185 were eligible for services.
  - 257 are under the age of 2 years old.
  - For the current fiscal year they have had a total of 808 referrals.
  - There has been an increase in Elyria and Lorain referrals, but a decrease in Avon and Sheffield for this period.
  - They currently have 9 service coordinators, himself (EI supervisor) and 2 evaluators and an open position is available.
  - The average case load is 60 to 65.
- ❖ Current Program Update
  - Data Committee information provided by Chelsea Freeman-Yates
    - Caseloads per service coordinator
      - ◆ Chelsea – 5 cases
      - ◆ Jon – 10 cases
      - ◆ Kristen – 10 cases



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- ◆ Denise – 8 cases
- ◆ Jesse – 10 cases
- ❖ Caseloads are down as they have been closing a lot of cases
  - Data Committee information provided by Chelsea Freeman-Yate
    - We currently have 12 children on the wait list. That's the lowest in a long time. We are going to be doing a lot more outreach. Our average wait list times are :
      - ◆ May – 63 days
      - ◆ June – 72 days
      - ◆ July – 60 days
    - Preliminary data from the last fiscal year – 90 families served (50 of those closed at 100%), 20% closed at unsuccessful with the remaining closing at 65% to 90%.
    - We received referrals from every school district this past fiscal year
    - Of those cases, only 4 were in congregate care (either placed in a foster family or residential home)
- ❖ Old Business
  - Shared Plan
    - Historically the shared plan has had one or two shared priorities. The new shared plan has a more in-depth share plan now.
      - Addressing youth and congregate care. We are placing more kids outside of the county and some out of state. Pulled data shows that approximately \$8.5 million was spent on congregate care. The highest daily rate was \$1,800 per day.
      - Addressing infant vitality has been on the shared plan for two (2) shared plans.
      - Addressing services and supports for multi-system youth. We focused on service coordination efforts and worked with the Youth and Family Collaboration. This shared plan portion will change once the Lorain County Kids Summit is completed. The shared plan will be amended.
      - Addressing school readiness for all students in Lorain County. We have been focusing mainly on school truancy.
  - Kids Summit
    - Bi-weekly meetings have been started again.
    - Currently working on putting together the panels.
    - 150 public registrations have been made and 68 of the 200 personal invites have been accepted. Mandated council members should get registered if they haven't already.
    - Some more noteworthy individuals that have registered are Gayle Manning, Kara Wentte, Joel Potts, Katina Bays, and Colleen Tucker, Executive Director of the OFCF, and Aimee Matusik.
  - No Wrong Door
    - This has been paused until after the Kids Summit for capacity reasons
  - Lorain Cares Partnership
    - This is usually paused for the Summer due to so many individuals being off for the Summer
  - Ohio Start Collaboration with LCCS
    - This is going very well. We will have someone come from the Ohio Start program come and present to us at our next meeting.
  - Frosty Five-O Partnership



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- This is a partnership with the Lorain County Sheriff's Office.
- We are going into the community with volunteer officers and LCCFFC staff to give out ice cream and popsicles.
- There are several parades and other events where this will take place.
- This will make better relationships between Council, first responders and officers.
- Outreach and Community Events
  - Crocker Kids
    - We just had our third event on Tuesday and there was a lot of people there. Even though the event is in Westlake, there are a lot of families from Avon, Avon Lake, Elyria and other Lorain County communities.
  - El Library partnership
    - We will have bags made up with developmental milestone information.
  - LCCFFC annual family event
    - This will take place in North Ridgeville on October 11<sup>th</sup> during the Fall Fest.
  - Lorain Early Learning Initiative
    - The historical society reached out about a preschool program where they had lost funding. The information has been provided during this meeting. Chelsea Freeman-Yates believes that we should provide funding as school readiness is on our shared plan. The currently serve about 375 preschool child per year across 17 school classrooms in Lorain and Elyria schools. Funding helps provide field trip opportunities and learn about history and there's tactile developmental milestones. The pricing requested of \$5,000.
  - Youth Leadership Council
    - This has been paused on our end but is still on-going. Achilles from the Urban League is still meeting on a regular basis with youth.
  - Truancy Work Group
    - The Tool Kit completion timeframe is Fall of 2025.
    - Pre-K-3 Truancy marketing education campaign
  - Respite Work Group – 4C through MHARS board is leading
    - The rollover funding was awarded for \$16,402. This money will go to create a respite program in Lorain County. We are meeting on a regular basis.
    - The prosecuting office will be needed to help with this.
  - LCCFFC Share Plan Mini Grant
    - The grant documents were submitted to the prosecuting office and provided feedback with some edits needing to be made. The edits will be rather simple.
    - The applications are set to be released on July 31<sup>st</sup>. It will be a very short window to close. Applications need to be submitted by EOB September 30<sup>th</sup>.
    - The applications would need to be reviewed by council members between the submittal date and the end of October.
    - Five (5) \$5,000 grants will be awarded and need to align with the shared plan initiatives
    - The winners of the grants would need to provide pre and post data which would be shared with the state.
- Committee Reports



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- The budgeting meeting was not held recently due to low attendance, but they have emailed back and forth.
- Mandated members received a copy of the fiscal report.
- Opening balance for January 2024 to the ending balance June 2025 we are spending more money as we are investing in a lot more programming. The incoming revenue was covering all of the expenses for running the agency.
- We have not received our allocation amounts from the state yet for 2026, but was emailed that they would still be the same as before:
  - FCSS - \$64,852.00
  - OCBY - \$30,750.00
  - The state did give us an additional \$11,000 last year (FY 2025) for FCSS.
  - Muskingum County has an additional \$20,000 that they did not expend so we are trying to receive that money.
  - TANF – We have not received the new amount yet, but we did receive an email that we received an increase of \$180,000.
  - MSCY/CPS 13% – This will stay the same at about \$60,000
  - EI/Admin – \$98,000
  - Outreach for Early Intervention - \$27,340
  - Childcare Resource Center contract will stay the same at \$25,000
  - We will not be going back into contract with Catholic Charities as they only expended a little more than \$2,000. We might do an individual MOU basis to pay for services.
  - Neighborhood Alliance contract is \$989,802.77
  - Ohio Start contract is \$5,000 expensed till the end of next fiscal year 2026
  - Family Support Specialist – we are still giving \$6,000
- Program, Data and Evaluation
  - Did not meet this cycle but will start resuming soon
- Early Childhood Committee
  - Did not meet this quarter but will start resuming soon
- New Business
  - ORC changes
    - The superintendent of the largest school district will be able to have a proxy come to the meeting, but it won't take effect until October 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - We may need to relocate the LCCFFC offices. We are having conversations with the County on where we could go, but we've also talked about finding our own facilities.

## Board and Guest Comments:

- ❖ Amber Fisher has a new Community and Provider Education Coordinator that was hired to work with providers within the community who serve people with developmental disabilities, but they are not DD system providers. This includes preschools and adult daycare centers. This person will be providing training with these providers.



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## Approval of Minutes:

- ❖ Mark Adams asked for approval of the meeting minutes from the previous Full Council meeting on April 3, 2025. Billie Olsen motioned to approve, and Kirsten Fox-Berki seconded.
- ❖ The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

## Shared Plan:

- ❖ Mark Adams asked for approval of the Shared Plan that was provided for FSY 26-28. Kristen Fox-Berki motioned to approve, and Billie Olsen seconded.
- ❖ The Shared Plan for FSY 26-28 was unanimously approved as distributed.

## Expenditures for 2025:

- ❖ Mark Adams asked for approval of the Expenditures for 2025 as provided. Franco Gallo motioned to approve, and Billie Olsen seconded.
- ❖ The Expenditures for 2025 were unanimously approved as distributed.

## Lorain County Historical Society program:

- ❖ Mark Adams asked to support the Lorain County Historical Society's program in the amount of \$5,000. Kristen Fox-Berki motioned to approve, and Amber Fisher seconded.
- ❖ The Lorain County Historical Society program was unanimously approved as distributed.

## Next Meeting:

- ❖ The next meetings are scheduled for October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 @ 9:00 am, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 @ 9:00 am, and April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026 @ 9:00 am.

## Comments/tasks assigned:

- ❖ None

## Adjournment:

- ❖ Mark Adams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Jeff Riddell and Billie Olsen. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am by Mark Adams.

Minutes submitted by: Tammy Taylor