



METZENBAUM CENTER
The Geauga County Board
Of Developmental Disabilities

2026

ANNUAL PLAN

Initial Presentation:

November 19, 2025



Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Mission

Helping people Live, Learn, and Earn in our community.

Vision

Through a person-centered approach, we aim to help people of all ages to be Integrated, Accepted, and Achieving their full potential in:

Community Life:

Shopping, housing, recreation, giving back, and building relationships

Education:

Learning with peers, participating in extra-curricular activities, and successfully transitioning to adulthood

Employment:

Working with public, earning minimum wage +, and choosing an occupation



Overview of Annual Plan

The Geauga County Board of DD (Gauga DD) serves approximately 1,150 individuals with developmental disabilities, helping them live, learn, and work in our community. As a taxpayer-funded agency, Gauga DD provides support for people of all ages, from birth through end-of-life. We fund, coordinate, and deliver services in key areas, including:

- Behavior Supports
- Community Integration Programs
- Early Intervention Services
- Employment Supports
- Recreation Programs
- Residential Supports
- School-to-Work Transition
- Service and Support Administration
- Special Education Funding

Our mission is to support individuals in fully participating in their communities. In alignment with our Mission and Vision, we develop services that make this possible, often in partnership with other agencies. With finite resources, the Board must balance the delivery of needed services with long-term financial sustainability. This plan outlines how we will meet community needs while maintaining fiscal responsibility in 2026 and beyond.

The Board understands its responsibility to be careful stewards of taxpayer dollars and is committed to extending current financial resources as far as possible. The Board will not pursue an additional levy until it becomes necessary. Current projections indicate that new levy collections will not be required until at least 2028, which would correspond to a ballot request in 2027. Additional insights into our financial outlook are presented later in this report.

2026 Board Meeting Dates:

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| • January 21 | • April 15 | • July 15 | • October 21 |
| • February 18 | • May 20 | • August 19 | • November 18 |
| • March 18 | • June 17 | • September 16 | • December 16 |

Ethics Council will meet at 5:55pm before Board Meetings if needed.

Please Note: The Board meetings are the third Wednesday of every month at 6 pm. The meetings will take place in person at the Metzenbaum Center building in the Administrative Board Room, 8200 Cedar Rd., Chesterland, Ohio. Board members may attend some of the meetings remotely via electronic means as allowed by ORC and outlined in Board Policy 2.14.



2026 Service Provision

The Board plans to continue offering a wide range of services through partnerships with private providers and other entities. We remain committed to supporting the integration and employment of the individuals we serve.

Early Intervention and Help Me Grow

The Board will remain the primary provider of early intervention services in Geauga County, delivering support in children's natural environments. Referrals have remained steady over the past year, and we continue to receive excellent feedback from families served on the quality of support delivered.

Education and Transition Support

We will maintain our partnership with local school districts to educate students in the least restrictive environment. These collaborations will continue to prioritize transitioning students to employment whenever possible. Our school age coordinator continues to be a valued resource in maintaining connection with districts and their students.

Employment, Transportation, and Adult Day Programming

We continue to prioritize employment as a pathway to greater independence for our clients. Private providers will handle all employment, transportation, and adult day programming services. Assistance with processes such as background checks and provider training continues to be offered.

Metzenbaum Residences

Operations of the Metzenbaum Residences (Intermediate Care Facility) continue by the Jewish Family Service Association, with 13 people presently receiving these service.



Medicaid Waivers



Geauga DD annually reviews the needs of people with developmental disabilities in Geauga County and as well as the available resources to meet those needs. Through that process, Geauga DD has determined that we will support up to 310 Medicaid Waivers in 2026.

As of this writing, Geauga DD supports 288 Medicaid waivers – 188 Individual Options waivers, 98 Level One waivers, and 2 SELF waivers, which means we will be able to enroll 22 additional people. Furthermore, we will be able to fully address our waiting list, which consists of 7 people with current needs and no one with immediate needs.



Once our enrollment target of 310 Medicaid Waivers is reached, we will continue to request replacement IO and Level One Waivers to fill vacancies due to people moving out of the county, moving into nursing homes, passing away, or otherwise vacating their waiver slots.

We will continue monitoring the waiting list, and if an immediate need arises, the Board will request an additional waiver to address that need only if the situation is an emergency. Otherwise, the individual will be placed on the waiting list until a waiver vacancy occurs.



The Board also uses local levy dollars to support 10 individuals with residential services who do not meet Level of Care or are not eligible for Medicaid. 43% of the Board's clients fall into the category of not eligible for Medicaid; all day programming and transportation costs for these people are covered by local levy funding.



Budget

The 2026 Budget shown below was approved by the Board in September 2025. Geauga DD continues to responsibly manage revenue from the 2015 levy, which is projected to remain sufficient through at least 2027.

Despite ongoing efforts to control costs and maximize revenue, 2026 will be our sixth consecutive year of deficit spending. This trend is driven by several factors, including rising client service costs, increased demand for services, and general inflation. Since 2015, revenue has remained relatively flat.

As expenses continue to outpace revenue, an additional levy will be required in the coming years. To postpone this request to taxpayers for as long as possible, the Board has identified and will begin implementing the following cost-saving measures:

- Not filling two expansion positions originally budgeted for 2026
- Replacing two full-time retiring employees at the end of 2025 with one full-time position
- Eliminating capital grants to providers. For example: building and vehicle expenses.
- Restructuring Medicaid Waiver Match payments to improve cash flow

In addition, a priority for the upcoming year is to identify and implement even more cost-saving strategies to further extend current resources.



Financials

Revenue Total	\$17,202,211
Tax Levy	13,477,681
Reimbursements	1,305,000
Federal Revenue	1,244,500
State Revenue	575,000
Leases	370,000
Fees & Services	220,000
Other	7,500
Donations	2,500

Revenue	\$17,202,211
Expenses	\$19,199,542
Surplus (Deficit)	\$(1,997,331)

Expense Total	\$19,199,542
Client Services	12,027,400
Salaries	3,974,000
Hospitalization	981,000
PERS	541,000
Other	446,520
Service Contracts	301,122
Utilities	190,000
Supplies	180,250
Equipment	103,000
Advertising & Printing	100,000
Capital Services Contracts	100,000
Software Subscriptions	85,000
Travel & Training	77,250
Medicare	58,000
STRS	18,000
Workers' Compensation	15,000
Unemployment	2,000



2026 Goals

During the Annual Planning Retreat, the 2025 Goals, the 2025 Vision Paper, and the imminent needs of Geauga DD were reviewed.

The Board acknowledges the good work and conscientious effort by all the employees and private providers who serve our clients. These initiatives assume the normal operation of each department will continue without being listed below. The following areas of concern were discussed as being the primary focus for 2026.

Goal	Who	When
Create tech-related information so employees can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid common problems through standardized practices• More effectively troubleshoot their own issues• Access internal support when needed	Director of Business Operations	January 2026
Identify and implement new cost-saving methods to extend current resources	Assistant Superintendent	March 2026
Identify and implement opportunities to enhance employee appreciation and team-building	HR Coordinator	June 2026
Coordinate external outreach to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand geographic reach• Minimize duplication across departments• Increase opportunities for employee participation• Update and simplify messaging	Assistant Superintendent	July 2026
Update long-range outlook document	Assistant Superintendent	September 2026





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