



Council Members

David Blose, Yukon
Margaret Bond, Broken Arrow
Jeromy Buchanan, Okla. City
Sherri Coats, Oklahoma City
Brett Cunningham, Okla. City
Janie Fugitt, Okla. City
Shelly Greenhaw, Edmond
Heather Hancock, Okla. City
Laura Haney, Tulsa
Jacob Pyle, Norman
Gina Richardson, Okla. City
Susan Rutledge, Broken Arrow
Beth Scrutchins, Okla. City
Melissa Sublett, Tulsa
Kodey Toney, Panama
Lori Wieder, Stillwater
Cynthia Wilkett, Tulsa
Valerie Williams, Okla. City
Bryce Wooten, Edmond

DDCO Staff

Planning & Grants Director

Jennifer Robinson

Outreach & Marketing Director

Alissa Patterson

Advocacy Training Director

Dr. Bradley Mays

Self-Advocacy Training Director

Morgan Davis

Executive Director

Jenifer Randle

State Plan Committee Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 26, 2026 – 10:00 a.m.

Center for Nonprofits, 701 N Lindsay Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Join Meeting:

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1603375568?pwd=NuayxwyuHrrdfz3CuZRJdmbUIC8nC6.1>

Meeting ID: 160 337 5568

Passcode: 8675309

Members attending online:

Kodey Toney, 1507 S. McKenna, Poteau, OK 74953

I.  **Welcome, Call to Order, & Roll Call** – Bryce Wooten, State Plan Chair

II.  **Discussion and Possible Voting** – Bryce Wooten, State Plan Chair

- 1) Review Meeting Minutes of March 13, 2026 - **p2**
- 2) Review of and voting on FY27 Funding Requests - **p8**
- 3) Public Comments on Draft 5 Year State Plan Goals - **p94**
- 4) Q2 Project Reports - **p111**

III.  **Other Business and Possible Voting**

IV.  **Announcements**

- Next Council Meeting is Friday, April 24, 2026, 1:00 pm at the Center for Nonprofits
- Next State Plan Committee Meeting is Friday, May 15, 2026, 10 am at the Sequoyah Building.

V.  **Adjournment**

State Plan Committee Members: Bryce Wooten Committee Chair, Maggie Bond Committee Vice Chair, RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Gina Richardson



State Plan Committee Minutes

Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma



DATE: Friday, March 13, 2026

TIME: 11:00 a.m.











PLACE: Center for NonProfits, 701 N Lindsay Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73104

BE IT REMEMBERED that on Friday, March 13, 2026, at 11:00 a.m., the State Plan Committee met at Center for NonProfits, 701 N Lindsay Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73104 per the Open Meetings Act.

NOTICE of the schedule for all regular and special meetings of the DDCO State Plan Committee for the calendar year 2026 has been given in writing to the Oklahoma Secretary of State and public notice and agenda having been posted on the Council's website at or before 12:00 pm on Thursday, March 12, 2026, per the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act, 25 O.S. Section 311.


- I.   **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Mr. Wooten called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.
Present: RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelly Greenhaw
Online: Maggie Bond, Bryce Wooten
Absent: Gina Richardson
Guests:
Staff: Jennifer Robinson, Jenifer Randle, Morgan Davis, Bradley Mays, Alissa Patterson online

By roll call, having determined there were sufficient committee members in person for quorum, business was conducted. Committee members Maggie Bond and Bryce Wooten had their locations published on posted agenda and are voting members.

- II.  **ACTION:** Ms. Felty moved to approve the minutes from the State Plan meetings on December 8, 2025. Ms. Greenhaw seconded the motion.
 **AYES:** Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Bryce Wooten
 **NAYS:** none
 **ABSTAIN:** Maggie Bond, RoseAnn Duplan
 **Motion to approve the Minutes for December 8, 2025 were approved.**
- III.  **ACTION:** Ms. Felty moved to approve the minutes from the State Plan meetings on December 12, 2025. Ms. Fugitt seconded the motion.
 **AYES:** Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Bryce Wooten
 **NAYS:** none
 **ABSTAIN:** Maggie Bond, RoseAnn Duplan
 **Motion to approve the Minutes for December 12, 2025 were approved.**

IV. FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR FY26 *

The Committee discussed the request from the Oklahoma Family Network for hosting the Youth Expedition. The Oklahoma Family Network will be hosting the Youth Expedition in Poteau and they're asking for \$20,000 to help with this work. This is a reduction of funding from what was budgeted by the Council.


 **ACTION:** Ms. Duplan moved to approve proposal with the \$20,000 budget. Ms. Felty seconded the motion.

 **AYES:** RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Bryce Wooten, Maggie Bond

 **NAYS:** none

 **ABSTAIN:**


 **MOTION was approved,** however an amendment was made.

 **ACTION:** Ms. Duplan moved to approve the project with a \$20,000 budget and the work to be done. Ms. Bond seconded the motion.


 **AYES:** RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Bryce Wooten, Maggie Bond


 **NAYS:** none

 **ABSTAIN:**


 **MOTION was approved to approve the project request for funding from the Oklahoma Family Network for June 2026.**


V. FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR FY27 *

 **DISCUSSION:** The State Plan Committee discussed future the Council budget and funding request totals. The Council typically has received \$912,000. The committee began discussing funding requests they'd heard.

 **DISCUSSION:** The committee discussed the creation of an evaluation rubric/score sheet for members to use on future funding requests to help the process. Discussion included possibly creating a similar process to that of the Invitation to Bid (I.T.B.) evaluation process done through the state.

1. ZARROW CENTER FUNDING REQUEST

 **ACTION:** Ms. Duplan moved to approve the project request of \$101,602 from the Zarrow Center. Ms. Bond seconded the motion.

 **DISCUSSION:** The committee was concerned that the rate of investment of this project would not be high due to limited reach. The approach year one seems narrow and doesn't meet our goals.

 **AYES:** none

 **NAYS:** RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Bryce Wooten, Maggie Bond

🙄 ABSTAIN:

👉 MOTION was NOT approved. 👉

🗣️ **DISCUSSION:** The committee discussed changing the funding application to eliminate specific names of who would be doing the work identified in the project to only the positions needed.

2. VGM STORYTELLING FUNDING REQUEST

🗳️ **ACTION:** Ms. Felty moved to approve the project request of \$25,000 from VGM Storytelling.

🗣️ **DISCUSSION:** The committee is excited about the potential of this project, evaluating the potential outreach and rate of investment. They have also noted the match funding identified is higher than the required 25% as well as the connections the organization has and proven past work.

😊 **AYES:** RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Bryce Wooten

🙄 **NAYS:**

🙄 **ABSTAIN:** Maggie Bond

👉 **MOTION was approved.** 👉

3. THEODORE E. PARKER FOUNDATION

🗳️ **ACTION:** Ms. Felty moved to approve the project request of \$3,750 from the Theodore E. Parker Foundation. Ms. Duplan seconded the motion.

🗣️ **DISCUSSION:** The committee appreciated the concept of this project as well as interest in wanting to learn more about the organization. The committee would like to see this Foundation be more established and organized. The age range for the work was interesting, being only 14-30 years old for this work. They also expressed wanted to understand the trajectory for this work.

😊 **AYES:** Bryce Wooten


🙄 **NAYS:** RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Maggie Bond

🙄 **ABSTAIN:**

👉 **MOTION was NOT approved.** 👉

4. HAR BER VILLAGE

🗳️ **ACTION:** Ms. Duplan moved to approve the project request of \$25,000 from the Har Ber Village. Ms. Greenhaw seconded the motion.

 **DISCUSSION:** The committee believes this project has high potential because it is in a rural area, improves the access of the area, and outreach. As this work continues, a possible connection for further work could be with the Department of Tourism.

 **AYES:** RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Bryce Wooten, Maggie Bond

 **NAYS:** none

 **ABSTAIN:**

 **MOTION was approved.** 

VI.  **Announcements:**

Ms. Robinson announced that the next State Plan Committee Meeting is March 26, 2026 to discuss public comments from the Council's drafted 5-Year State Plan (2027-2031) as well as finishing the discussion of funding proposals.

VII.  **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:17 p.m.

Southeast Region Youth Expedition

Oklahoma Family Network

FY26

Fiscal Year FY26 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Southeast Region Youth Expedition

Organization: Oklahoma Family Network

Proposal Description:

The *Southeast Region Youth Expedition* will continue its successful leadership and advocacy model to reach more youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and their families across rural eastern Oklahoma. Oklahoma Family Network (OFN) will implement a coordinated series of activities designed to strengthen self-advocacy, employment readiness, and community inclusion for youth ages 14 and older. The program will include interactive workshops, caregiver training, and public engagement opportunities that align with the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council’s priorities.

The project will engage at least 50 youth participants and 40 caregivers through both in-person and virtual activities. OFN will partner with the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma, the Choctaw Nation, and local educational and vocational programs to expand access and sustain post-program support. Evaluation will include pre- and post-surveys, attendance tracking, facilitator assessments, and partner feedback to measure progress. Target outcomes include 80% of youth reporting improved self-advocacy and 70% showing measurable growth in leadership and employment readiness skills. The Youth Expedition will strengthen Oklahoma’s pipeline of disability leaders and create more inclusive rural communities.

Council Goal & Objective: Access to Services

Targeted Audience: The Southeast Region Youth Expedition will primarily serve young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), ages 14 and older, living in rural eastern Oklahoma. This includes LeFlore County and surrounding areas such as Sequoyah, Haskell, Latimer, Adair, and Cherokee counties—regions that often face significant barriers to accessing disability-related services.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY26

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$24,500	\$10,925	\$35,425

FY27 Funding Requests

Full Year Projects

Autism Foundation of Oklahoma
AutismOklahoma
Best Buddies
Har-Ber Village
OUHSC OK Autism Center
OUHSC Sooner SUCCESS
Theodore E Parker Foundation
Valentina Guitierrez
Zarrow Center

Job Readiness
LookOut Art Program
OKC Expansion
Sensory Project
Training Providers
Caregiver Retreats, Sibling Camps
Gardening & Life-Skills Program
Blend Ability Episode
Outreach Coordinator

Fy 26 Funding	Council funding	Match funding	NOTES
Pervasive Parenting Center	\$ 24,500.00	\$ 10,925.00	Youth Summit Expedition - funding approved for Fy26, need to approve work
Joining Forces	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,250.00	Supporting Joining Forces Conference, Self-Advocacy, Advocacy, Capacity Building
OK APSE	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,250.00	OK APSE Conference
TOTAL	\$ 34,500.00	\$ 13,425.00	
Fy 27 Funding	Council funding	Match funding	NOTES
Autism Foundation of Oklahoma	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 8,334.00	Job Readiness Workshops for Youth
AutismOklahoma	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 19,000.00	Look Out
Best Buddies	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 8,334.00	Expand Best Buddies into Oklahoma City Schools
Har-Ber Village	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	Creating sensory friendly spaces
Oklahoma Autism Center	\$ 135,532.00	\$ 45,305.00	Building community capacity for care providers
Sooner SUCCESS	\$ 103,253.00	\$ 34,547.00	Care Connection
Theodore E. Parker Foundation	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 1,250.00	Gardening and Life Skills Program
VGM Visual Storytelling	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 8,334.00	Employment Awareness (Blend Ability)
Zarrow Center	\$ 101,602.00	\$ 125,968.00	Inclusive outreach across OU Community
Youth Leadership Forum	\$ 65,000.00	\$ -	Self-Advocacy, Advocacy, Capacity Building
Partners in Policymaking	\$ 45,000.00	\$ -	Self-Advocacy, Advocacy, Capacity Building
Self-Advocacy Trainings	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	Self-Advocacy, Advocacy, Capacity Building
NACDD	\$ 7,600.00	\$ -	Membership
NASDDS: CtLC	\$ 12,000.00	\$ -	Membership and Annual Meeting & Showcase
Recite Me	\$ 5,500.00	\$ -	Website Accessibility
Consumer Involvement / Professional Dev Fund	\$ 5,000.00		Self-Advocacy, Advocacy, Capacity Building
Accessibility / Accommodations	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	translation, interpretation
TOTAL	\$ 629,237.00	\$ 254,072.00	

Fy 27 Funding	Council funding	Match funding	NOTES
Autism Foundation of Oklahoma	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 8,334.00	Job Readiness Workshops for Youth
AutismOklahoma	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 19,000.00	Look Out
Best Buddies	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 8,334.00	Expand Best Buddies into Oklahoma City Schools
Har-Ber Village	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	Creating sensory friendly spaces
Oklahoma Autism Center	\$ 135,532.00	\$ 45,305.00	Building community capacity for care providers
Sooner SUCCESS	\$ 103,253.00	\$ 34,547.00	Caregiver Respite Retreats and Sibling Camps
Theodore E. Parker Foundation	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 1,250.00	Gardening and Life Skills Program
VGM Visual Storytelling	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 8,334.00	Employment Awareness (Blend Ability)
Zarrow Center	\$ 101,602.00	\$ 125,968.00	Inclusive outreach across OU Community
TOTAL	\$ 459,137.00		

Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program

Autism Foundation of Oklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program

Organization: Autism Foundation of Oklahoma

Proposal Description: The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (AFO) seeks funding to expand its Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program, providing youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) essential workplace skills. The program teaches soft skills—communication, relationship-building, appropriate attire, financial literacy, self-advocacy—and supports executive functioning, while also equipping parents and caregivers to reinforce these skills and advocate for inclusive employment. By bridging gaps in existing transition services, this initiative fosters workforce representation, independence, and greater public recognition of the value of individuals with I/DD.

Many youth with I/DD are excluded from state-supported transition services due to eligibility requirements, leaving families without affordable options and perpetuating unemployment and social invisibility. AFO addresses these barriers through accessible, flexible workshops offered in person and online: four sessions for youth focused on job readiness and executive functioning, and four sessions for parents and caregivers emphasizing advocacy, skill reinforcement, and peer networking. The program targets populations in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas, including rural communities where specialized services are scarce.

Expected outcomes include measurable improvements in youth confidence, workplace readiness, and executive functioning, as well as enhanced caregiver knowledge and advocacy skills. By increasing the visibility and representation of individuals with I/DD in workplaces and communities, the program aims to shift public perceptions, reduce stigma, and promote inclusive employment opportunities. Success will be tracked through pre- and post-surveys, attendance, completion data, and participant feedback, ensuring accountability and demonstrating broader impact on equity, access, and inclusion across Oklahoma.

Council Goal & Objective: Representation and Public Attitudes

Targeted Audience: This project serves youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), ages 14–26, along with their parents and caregivers who support workplace readiness and advocacy. Focused on the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas, including rural communities, it targets families who often lack access to affordable transition and job readiness programs.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

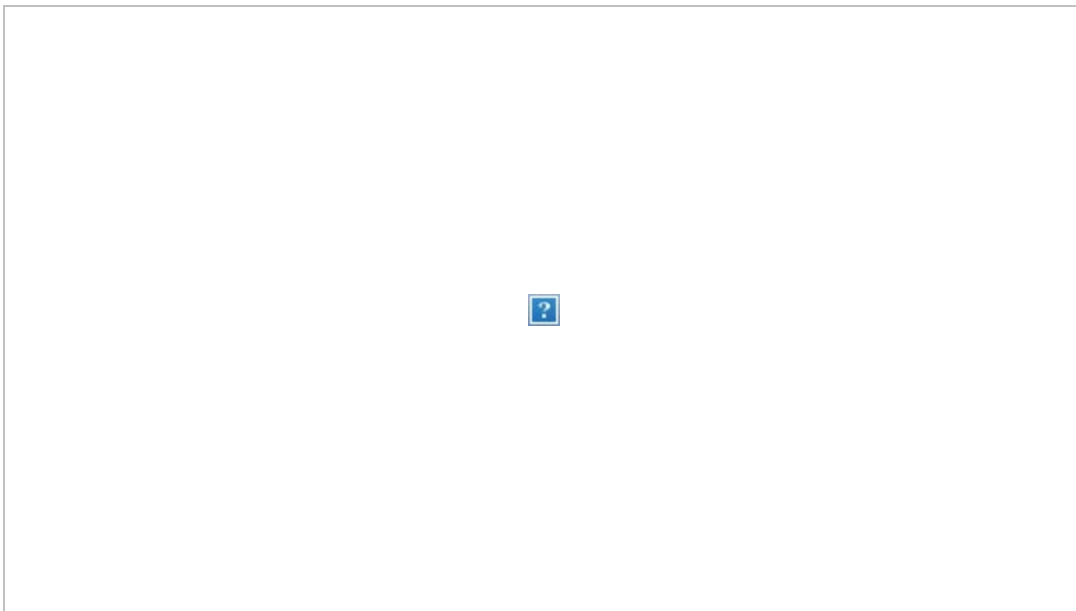
Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,334	\$33,334

From: [Taylor Knooihuizen](#)
To: [Jennifer Robinson](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Randle](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: DDCO Funding Request for FY27
Date: Thursday, January 15, 2026 11:34:09 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Hi Jennifer,

No worries! We will already have a built-in pool of participants through our social attendees, and we can include some of our community partners who have strong networks to help recruit participants. We have worked with them in this capacity before and have no doubt they will be helpful in disseminating project information. They have not been contacted about this project yet, as we have not secured funding and want to be mindful of everyone's time. Emily Scott, our Executive Director, is very familiar with the UCEDD staff and serves as a LEND Family Mentor!

Thanks!



Important: The content of this email is confidential and intended for the recipient specified in message only. It is strictly forbidden to share any part of this message with any third party, without a written consent of the sender. If you received this message by mistake, please reply to this message and follow with its deletion, so that we can ensure such a mistake does not occur in the future.

From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>

Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 10:08 AM
To: Taylor Knooihuizen <taylork@autismfoundationok.org>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>
Subject: RE: DDCO Funding Request for FY27

Hi Taylor,

We have a couple of follow up questions.

- Have you gotten buy-in from any of those entities?
- Have you contacted the Center for Learning and Leadership? The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) is a national organization for the UCEDDs, the Center for Learning and Leadership is Oklahoma's UCEDD.

Thanks!

Jennifer Robinson
Planning and Grants Director
Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma
405-255-5309

[Set an appointment with me](#)

From: Taylor Knooihuizen <taylork@autismfoundationok.org>
Sent: Friday, January 9, 2026 4:37 PM
To: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: DDCO Funding Request for FY27

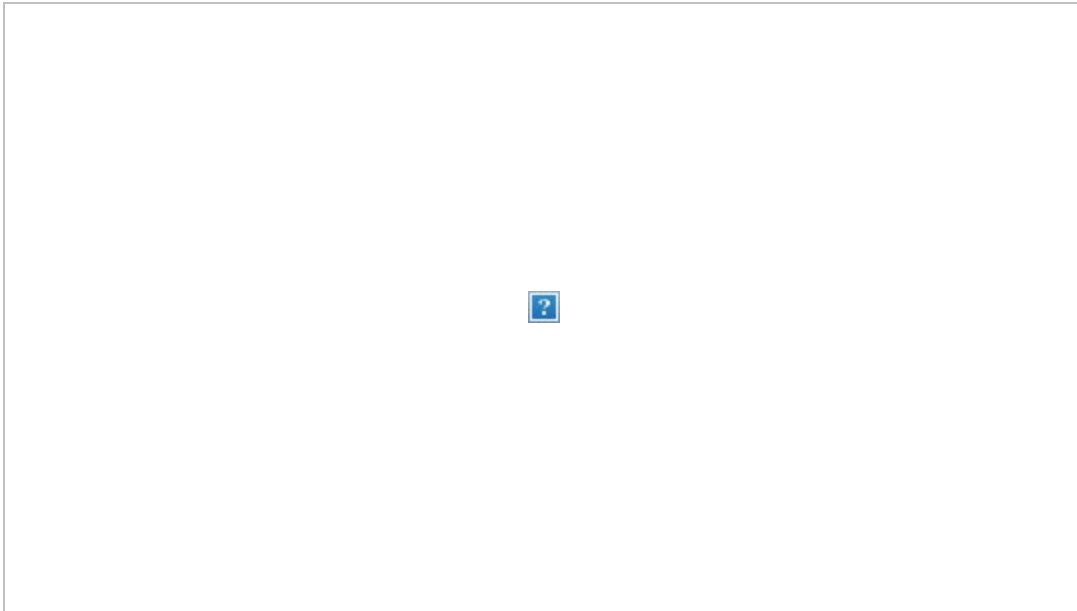
Hi Jennifer,

Great question, and I am happy to clarify further! At AFO, our staff holds membership in 18 disability committees and coalitions. However, I am listing some specific entities below with whom we will be in contact.

- Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma
- The Arc of Oklahoma
- Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
- Association of University Centers on Disabilities
- Oklahoma Inclusive Post Secondary Education (IPSE)

- Oklahoma Works
- Oklahoma Transition Council
- CREOKS
- Pervasive Parenting
- Oklahoma Public Schools Transition Programs- McAlester, Marlow, Duncan, Panama, Sand Springs, Stillwater, and Tuttle

If you have any additional questions, please send them my way, and I will get back to you!



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From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 11:41 AM
To: Taylor Knooihuizen <taylorok@autismfoundationok.org>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>
Subject: DDCO Funding Request for FY27

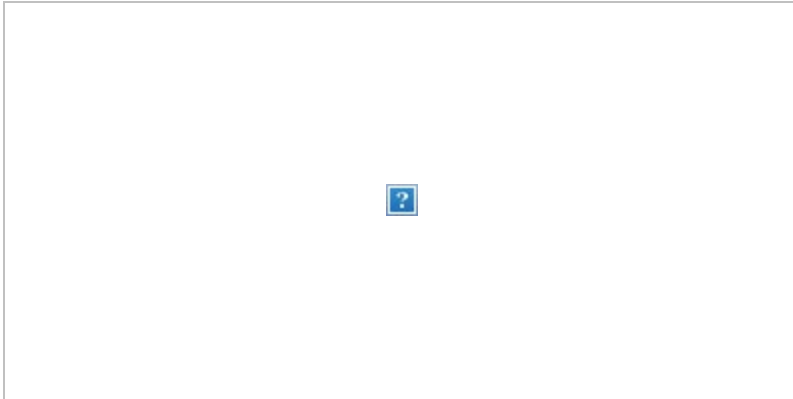
Taylor,
Happy New Year!
The Council has a question regarding your proposal.

- What specific contacts and nonprofits will be included in the outreach to ensure that participants will represent multiple developmental disabilities, rather than just autism?

Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Thank you.

Jennifer



[Set an appointment with me](#)

LookOut Art Program

AutismOklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: LookOut Program

Organization: AutismOklahoma

Proposal Description: This proposal seeks funding to expand an inclusive, community-based art program serving individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. The program integrates adaptive art classes, artist mentorship, and public exhibitions to provide participants with structured opportunities for creative expression, skill development, and social connection. Classes will be led by trained instructors using accessible materials, while mentorship pairs participants with local artists for individualized guidance, portfolio development, and encouragement. Public exhibitions and community events will showcase participants' artwork, increase visibility, and promote inclusion within the broader community.

Planned activities include outreach to 25 new artist participants, three submission events to recruit emerging artists, and the addition of four new art classes in the Tulsa area. At least one major exhibition will highlight the collaborative work of participants and mentors, providing a platform for public engagement and recognition. These program components are designed to strengthen participants' creative abilities, confidence, and sense of belonging, while simultaneously fostering public awareness of the talents of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Expected outcomes include improved self-expression, fine motor and communication skills, social connectedness, and portfolio development that could lead to vocational or entrepreneurial opportunities. For the community, the program will enhance appreciation of diverse artistic abilities, reduce stigma, and expand inclusion in cultural events. Program evaluation will track attendance, mentorship hours, portfolio development, pre- and post-surveys, and community feedback to measure impact and inform ongoing program growth. This expansion represents a strategic opportunity to increase access to lifelong art programming and further embed inclusive practices within the local arts ecosystem.

Council Goal & Objective: Access to Services

Targeted Audience: Our primary audience includes individuals with autism or other developmental disabilities, aged 10 to 50, who are either practicing or aspiring artists and filmmakers, with filmmakers aged 18 and above. While focused on autism, the program is inclusive of all artists with developmental disabilities, emphasizing shared resources, community connection, and opportunities for participants to realize their creative potential.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$15,000	\$19,000	\$34,000

Prior Fiscal Year FY26

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$18,000	\$16,000	\$34,000

Prior Fiscal Year FY25

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$24,000	\$10,000	\$34,000

Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative

Best Buddies in Oklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative

Organization: Best Buddies in Oklahoma

Proposal Description: In the coming year, the Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative will focus on expanding its reach and deepening its impact across Oklahoma City schools. Building on the success of the 2025 Expansion Project, the initiative will establish five new school chapters, recruit and engage at least 100 students, and conduct 20 group activities that promote inclusion and friendship between youth with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). These new chapters will create opportunities for at least 25 students with IDD, including five in leadership roles, to build friendships, develop confidence, and strengthen essential communication and social skills.

Each new chapter will function as a student-led club supported by trained faculty advisors and guided by Best Buddies staff. Student and faculty leaders will participate in multiple training sessions focused on fostering one-to-one friendships, planning inclusive activities, and ensuring chapter sustainability. Throughout the year, Best Buddies staff will provide continued mentorship, online resources, and leadership transition support to ensure that chapters remain active and thriving beyond their first year.

Through these efforts, Best Buddies aims to cultivate inclusive school communities that prepare students with IDD for success in college, employment, and independent living. The organization will measure success through participation numbers, leadership development milestones, and participant feedback—building on survey results showing strong satisfaction and positive school climate impacts. Ultimately, this year’s initiative will strengthen the foundation for long-term inclusion and friendship in schools and communities across Oklahoma.

Council Goal & Objective: Representation and Public Attitudes

Targeted Audience: The target population for the project includes elementary school, middle school, and high school students with and without IDD, aged approximately 11 to 18 years, in the greater Oklahoma City area. We expect that the project will serve a minimum of 100 students with and without IDD.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,334	\$33,334

Prior Fiscal Year FY26

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,333	\$33,333

Prior Fiscal Year FY25

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,333	\$33,333

Retreat Room

Har-Ber Village

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Retreat Room

Organization: Har-Ber Village

Proposal Description: Har-Ber Village Museum seeks funding to create a sensory-friendly Retreat Room—a quiet, calming space where visitors, especially neurodivergent and trauma-affected youth, can regulate and rejoin activities with confidence. Located at the heart of the Village, the Retreat Room will feature soft lighting, acoustic treatments, fidgets, noise-reducing headphones, and nature elements to promote calm and inclusion. The project will also include youth co-design workshops, trauma-informed staff training, and clear wayfinding to ensure the space is welcoming, sustainable, and responsive to visitor needs. This initiative directly addresses increasing reports of sensory overload during school and public visits, ensuring equitable access to informal education for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The project’s first year will focus on design, implementation, and evaluation. Within 12 months, Har-Ber Village will launch the Retreat Room, integrate sensory kits and visual schedules across school programs, and train all staff and volunteers in inclusive, trauma-informed guest care. Additional outreach components—such as resource days and family navigation materials—will connect caregivers to SoonerStart, DDS, and tribal services. Measurable goals include a 20% reduction in early departures due to sensory overload, a 20% increase in teacher confidence when including students with developmental disabilities, and over 150 families receiving navigation assistance.

Beyond serving local visitors, this project will create a replicable model for rural museums seeking to improve accessibility and inclusion. Documented best practices, such as sensory kit contents, staff scripts, and operational workflows, will be shared through a free “Sensory-Ready Venue Starter” guide. By normalizing sensory supports and connecting families to services, Har-Ber Village will strengthen community participation, shift public attitudes toward inclusion, and help every visitor—especially those with developmental disabilities—feel seen, supported, and welcome.

Council Goal & Objective: Equitable Access

Targeted Audience: Visitors with developmental disabilities—especially autistic youth and those with sensory processing differences—plus their caregivers and teachers during school visits and public hours at Har-Ber Village.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$3,000	\$28,000

Training Early Care and Education Providers
Autism Center of Oklahoma – Early Access

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Training Early Care and Education Providers

Organization: Autism Center of Oklahoma – Early Access

Proposal Description: This project expands the Oklahoma Autism Center’s efforts to strengthen early identification, family support, and inclusion for young children with developmental differences. Building on existing success, the initiative will increase access to evidence-based training for early care and education providers using a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) model. The training equips providers to create inclusive classrooms, address behavioral and sensory needs, and partner with families to ensure children under age five have access to high-quality early learning opportunities, with expanded reach to Head Start, Early Head Start, and rural and underserved communities through in-person and virtual options.

The program includes three progressive levels of training and consultation. Level 1 provides universal training on inclusive practices, developmental monitoring, and positive behavior supports; Level 2 offers targeted workshops based on provider self-assessment and classroom needs; and Level 3 delivers individualized consultation for providers serving children with developmental delays or disabilities. Pilot outcomes show strong effectiveness, with knowledge of inclusion strategies increasing from 36% to 75% and confidence using positive behavior supports rising from 36% to 69%, which the expanded project will build on to reduce early childhood expulsions and improve developmental outcomes.

Evaluation will measure changes in provider knowledge, confidence, and implementation of inclusive strategies, along with improvements in children’s participation and classroom outcomes. The project aligns with the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma’s goals for access to services, inclusive education, and system change. By embedding developmental monitoring, screening, and inclusion practices into early childhood systems, this initiative promotes sustainable improvements that ensure children with developmental differences are identified early, supported effectively, and fully included.

Council Goal & Objective: Access to Services, Inclusive Education

Targeted Audience: Level 1 training on autism, developmental monitoring, screening, and positive behavior supports will serve providers working with children from birth to age 18, with emphasis on those caring for children under five. Levels 2 and 3 will provide targeted coaching and consultation to early care providers and families, expanding access statewide—especially in rural and underserved areas—to strengthen early identification, inclusion, and support.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$135,532	\$45,305	\$180,837

FY '27 DDCO Early Access
 PI: Juliana Vanderburg, Ph.D.

Includes 3% cost of living raise

July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027

DDCO BUDGET					
Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total
Juli Vanderburg	0.20	10%	\$11,652.00	\$1,095.00	\$12,747.00
Bonnie McBride	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Seth Kastner	1.00	50%	\$31,768.00	\$11,913.00	\$43,681.00
Gina Bryan	0.75	3%	\$1,748.00	\$656.00	\$2,404.00
Andrea Quillen	1.00	46%	\$21,321.00	\$7,995.00	\$29,316.00
Admin Assist. TBH	1.00	10%	\$3,914.00	\$1,468.00	\$5,382.00
TBH	1.00	18%	\$6,480.00	\$2,430.00	\$8,910.00
TOTAL PERSONNEL & FRINGE		137%	\$76,883.00	\$25,557.00	\$102,440.00

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Travel	\$1,000
Contracts	\$15,500
Materials/Supplies/Printing	\$6,552
TOTAL SUPPLIES & OPERATING EXPENSES	\$23,052

MATCH BUDGET

Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total
Juli Vanderburg	0.20	10%	\$11,652.00	\$1,095.00	\$12,747.00
Bonnie McBride	1.00	5%	\$7,377.00	\$2,449.00	\$9,826.00
Seth Kastner	1.00	5%	\$3,177.00	\$1,055.00	\$4,232.00
Gina Bryan	0.75	2%	\$1,165.00	\$387.00	\$1,552.00
Andrea Quillen	1.00	3%	\$1,391.00	\$462.00	\$1,853.00
Admin Assist. TBH	1.00	20%	\$7,828.00	\$2,599.00	\$10,427.00
Admin Assist. TBH	1.00	2%	\$720.00	\$239.00	\$959.00
			\$33,310.00	\$8,286.00	\$41,596.00

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Materials/Supplies	352
Contracts	\$0
TOTAL SUPPLIES & OPERATING EXPENSES	\$352

Total Direct Costs					\$125,492
Total Indirect Costs			8%		\$10,039
TOTAL COSTS					\$135,532

From: [Kastner, Seth A. \(HSC\)](#)
To: [Jennifer Robinson](#)
Cc: [Jennifer Randle](#); [Vanderburg, Juliana \(OUH\)](#); [Bryan, Gina M \(HSC\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: DDCO Funding Request for FY27
Date: Friday, January 16, 2026 4:54:12 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Jennifer,

Thanks for your patience as I've gathered responses for these questions. Please let me know if any further clarification is needed.

- What experience did you have in the past with the Tribal Community and their Head Start programs?
 - Here are some highlights from past tribal collaborations, with Head Start-specific collaborations bolded:
 - Chickasaw Nation: conducted multiple screenings and trainings starting with their Child Development Centers (Ada, and Ardmore, 2011, 2013, 2017), collaborated with their Pediatric Collaborative to conduct ongoing training in developmental monitoring, screening and assessment (2022-2025)
 - Choctaw Nation, participated in public summits hosted by the Chickasaw Nation Autism Community C.A.R.E.S. (2018), trained childcare and other providers on multiple occasions (2014, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2024), distributed 200 "Let's Play" developmental activity books to the Choctaw Nation Early Steps literacy program (2025)
 - Citizen Pottawatomie Nation: conducted screenings at CPN Child Development Center (2024); partnered to host training at training for Go Kids Childcare in Norman (2025)
 - Otoe-Missouria Tribe: currently in planning discussion to conduct training for Head Start Early providers later this year (2025)
 - **Muscogee Nation: trained to 42 providers with Muscogee Nation Head start (2025);** developmental monitoring materials at a Muscogee
 - Creek Nation Childcare event (2019)
 - Delaware Tribe of Indians: trained 16 child development staff (2018)
 - **Osage Nation: conducted two Head Start on-site consultations (Hominy and Barnsdall) so support children with autism in their programs (2014);** trained the staff of their WELA -Early Learning program (2022)
 - Peoria Tribe Of Indians of Oklahoma: trained child development staff (2019)

- Miami Tribe of Oklahoma: trained child development staff (2019)
 - Intertribal Agencies
 - Oklahoma City Indian Clinic: training 14 clinicians in diagnostic autism assessment (2022), have exhibited at multiple health fairs
 - Southern Plains Tribal Health Board: advised in selection of and provided onboarding and ongoing mentorship of “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” tribal ambassadors (2022-23); assisted in dissemination of culturally adapted Learn the Signs. Act Early.” materials (2023-24); Presented on developmental monitoring at their Tribal Public Health Conference (2022).
 - Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association: presented for 75 tribal childcare directors on Early Access and developmental monitoring (2018)
 - **Presented at a state conference for 90 tribal Head Start Early Head Start directors (2018)**
 - **Central Tribes of the Shawnee Area: trained child care and Head Start/Early Head Start providers (2018, 2024)**
 - We have also regularly presented at the Head Start Region VI Annual Conference (2021-2025) which includes attendees from tribal Head Start/Early Head Start programs.
 - We have provided resources and technical assistance to providers from many tribal including from the Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation, and Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma (most often regarding autism assessment but also other resources and referrals.
- How will you be evaluating this work? Include more information concerning how you will be measuring and reporting both short and long-term outcomes to show the impact on people with various developmental disabilities, not just autism.
 - Since our proposed new activities involve a multi-tiered approach, we will be gathering survey data from provider-participants as they complete the several stages of training and coaching, as well as a follow-up survey to assess implementation and impact at the end of the project period.
 - This is certainly an area where we are very receptive to input as it has been an ongoing challenge, since capacity-building rather than direct-service to people with developmental disabilities has been our focus and these outcomes are more difficult to measure, especially in the long-term.
- In our multiyear projects, we require a reduction in the Council’s funding or an increase in your match (which decreases the Council’s percentage). This should

not reduce your services provided or the numbers served.

- We are happy to plan for DCCO funding reductions and to revise our sustainability plan accordingly. Could we have some, at least general, advisement on scale/rate that we should aim/plan for? We are happy to revise our sustainability plan to reflect these goals.
- Are you including your previous work along with this proposal? Is this just an expansion? Can you split up the budget between the current project and the proposed expansion?
 - From our proposal: " Yes. This proposal is an expansion of work being done under our current contract with the DDCO. We are continuing efforts to maintain and expand screening and diagnostic partners, and we are working to better document and improve assistance and support provided to families during the process of early identification, screening, assessment, and connecting with services. Our new activities, outlined in detail elsewhere in this proposal make our efforts more holistic in building capacity to support children and improve Oklahoma's early childhood systems' ability to serve and include them before, during, and after they have been identified as having a developmental delay or disability. While we have been able to pilot some of the proposed activities with two childcare facilities prior to this submission, we are requesting support from the DDCO to initiate this work with other early care facilities (possibly expanding to include Head Start, Early Head Start, and other early childhood education programs) and to incorporate components tailored to the needs of early care providers across Oklahoma."
 - In splitting the budget, we would essentially be looking at splitting team member efforts/time into sustained and new activities (materials, supplies, etc. would be extraneous to the sustained activities since we no longer need to actively . We may be able to specify this in line with how match vs. council funded time is currently in the budget as this fairly-closely approximates the split of manpower we expect to dedicate to sustained vs. new activities.
- The numbers in the applications should only represent the work being proposed.
 - Understood, and that was indeed our intention. If you'd like revisions of our performance measure to focus only newly proposed activities, we can certainly do that. Our default was to count and report work that is continuing to be done on the basis of previous Council support and with staff time that included as match on this project.
- Our Federal Funder sets the cap for indirect costs at 8% (document attached)
 - I have forwarded this letter along to our budget team who has submitted a revised budget with the lower indirect rate along with the supplied letter to

our Grants and Contracts department. We are also working to adjust our scope of work accordingly. We will keep you updated on that process.

Gratefully,

Seth Kastner

Senior Research Assistant |Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics
Early Access Oklahoma / Early Foundations | Oklahoma Autism Center
The University of Oklahoma Health Campus
3901 NW 63rd St., Suite 100 | Oklahoma City, OK 73116
405-842-9995 |AutismCenterOK.org
@AutismCenterOK

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From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 11:36 AM
To: Kastner, Seth A. (HSC) <Seth-Kastner@ou.edu>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DDCO Funding Request for FY27

External Email

Seth,

Happy New Year!

The Council has a few questions regarding your proposal.

- What experience did you have in the past with the Tribal Community and their Head Start programs?
- How will you be evaluating this work? Include more information concerning how you will be measuring and reporting both short and long-term outcomes to show the impact on people with various developmental disabilities, not just autism.
- In our multiyear projects, we require a reduction in the Council's funding or an increase in your match (which decreases the Council's percentage). This should not reduce your services provided or the numbers served.
- Are you including your previous work along with this proposal? Is this just an

expansion? Can you split up the budget between the current project and the proposed expansion?

- The numbers in the applications should only represent the work being proposed.
- Our Federal Funder sets the cap for indirect costs at 8% (document attached)

Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Thank you.

Jennifer

cid:image001.png@01DC7FD0.045A8AC0



[Set an appointment with me](#)

Administrative Assistant – To Be Hired*

30% Total Effort: 10% paid funds, 20% matching funds (3.6 CM)

Council Funds Requested: \$3,914

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$7,828

The Administrative Assistant will provide general support for the project. They will assist with ordering supplies and materials, data entry, coordinating travel, and any other activities to ensure the project goals are met.

Financial and Contract Support Coordinator - Gina Bryan*

5% Total Effort: 3% paid funds, 2% matching funds (0.45 CM)

Council Funds Requested \$1,749

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$1,166

Ms. Bryan will assist with budget and contract management, purchasing supplies, and provide overall fiscal support for the project.

*To accommodate university-level discretion for yearly cost of living/merit increases, a 3% raise has been included for all full-time staff (not including faculty) that have been employed over a year.

TOTAL PERSONNEL: \$110,195

Council Funds Requested \$76,884

Matching Funds \$33,843

FRINGE BENEFITS

Employee benefits are calculated at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center FY26 rates of 37.5% for professional and full-time staff, 9.4% for part-time faculty and staff, and 33.2% on Matching. Fringe benefit rates will be applied in strict accordance with the University’s approved DHHS rates.

TOTAL FRINGE: \$33,843

Council Funds Requested \$25,557

Matching Funds \$8,286

TRAVEL

In-state travel will be necessary for training and awareness activities. Travel expenses include lodging, mileage, and per diem for faculty, staff, and consultants/partners. Mileage and per diem will be paid at the current federal rate.

TOTAL TRAVEL \$1,000

Council Funds Requested \$1,000

Matching Funds \$0.00

OTHER

Professional Services

To complete the activities of the project the following outside Independent Contractors will be used.

Project Consultant – Kathryn Moore, PhD

Council Funds Requested \$6,000 In-Kind Matching Funds \$0

Dr. Moore is a licensed psychologist with expertise in identifying and supporting young children with developmental delays, including autism. She will support project oversight, implementation, and evaluation given her experience with initiatives that promote the meaningful participation of children with developmental delays in early childhood environments.

Early Childhood Inclusive Education Consultant – Twana Ross

Council Funds Requested \$4,000 In-Kind Matching Funds \$0

Ms. Ross has direct experience supporting children with developmental delays in early childhood settings. She will contribute to training development and provide feedback on content accessibility and relevance.

Project Facilitator - Margaret Bergant

Council Funds Requested \$5,000 In-Kind Matching Funds (Bergant Consulting) \$0

Ms. Bergant will provide professional services to the project in the areas of group facilitation, early intervention, and strategic planning.

TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: \$15,000

Council Funds Requested \$15,000

Matching Funds \$0

Postage

Funds are requested for postage so that classroom materials can be directly mailed and delivered to partnering early childcare centers.

TOTAL POSTAGE: \$500

Council Funds Requested \$500

Matching Funds \$0.00

TOTAL OTHER: \$15,500

Council Funds Requested \$15,500

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$0.00

SUPPLIES

Funds are requested for materials and supplies such as folders, pens, printer supplies, clipboards, paper, post its, staples, binders, jump drives, paper clips, portfolios, ADOS protocols, developmental monitoring and screening tools, laptop/computer supplies, mailing labels, and other desk supplies necessary for project operations. Supplies also include printing and duplication of promotional items for awareness activities, training materials, resources, reports, brochures, posters, and flyers. Funds are also requested for the purchase of a set of classroom materials (e.g., developmentally appropriate toys, visual supports) to demonstrate evidence-based instructional strategies during training.

TOTAL SUPPLIES: \$6,904

Council Funds Requested \$6,552

Matching Funds \$352

Indirect Costs

The Department of Health & Human Services has set an 8% indirect rate for training grants/funds contracted to the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

Total Indirect Costs (8%) \$13,395

Council Funds Requested (8%) \$10,039

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) (8%) \$3,356

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS: \$180,837

COUNCIL FUNDS REQUESTED: \$135,532

MATCHING FUNDS: \$45,305

Proposal: Early Access (Oklahoma Autism Center/OU Health Campus)

Revised Statement of Work, 1/20/2026

Reason for Revision: The lower indirect rate mandated for this project freed up funds in our budget to re-instate a previous plan to include classroom materials as part of our capacity-building for childcare providers participating in the projects. These materials can increase implementation of evidence-based practices in childcare settings to better serve children experiencing developmental delays. Materials will be selected in conjunction with our hands-on coaching to maximize the impact of improved classroom environments and tools.

Revised content: see bolded addition below in the full revised text of the application section.

STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW)

Introduction

This proposal would involve an expansion of Early Access's efforts to address the ongoing need for increasing early identification and promoting inclusion for children with autism and other developmental delays.

Scope of Work

Early Access's primary goal is to continue and expand our systems change efforts to increase early identification of children at risk for autism and other developmental disabilities, while also increasing the capacity of communities and providers to offer effective supports for young children with developmental delays. In particular, we aim to offer training and consultation focused on fostering inclusive classrooms and positive outcomes for young children with developmental delays in early care and education settings. These efforts will build on our existing collaborations with community screening partners, while expanding to build new partnerships with early care and education providers as well.

Our aim is to provide three levels of support to promote belonging in early care and education settings through application of evidence-based practices, aligning with a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) framework, prevent-teach-reinforce for young children, and the Research-Based Units for Intervention (RUBI) coaching model. Selected early care and education centers will progress through receiving each layer of support. "Level 1" involves training early care and education staff on inclusive classroom practices to address the needs of all children, including those with developmental delays; "Level 2" involves facilitated, small-group workshops to provide hands-on practice with inclusive practices; and "Level 3" involves direct and in-depth consultation, integrating strategies from the RUBI curriculum, an evidence-based intervention focused on providing caregivers with tools to navigate challenging behaviors. **In addition, "Level 3" activities will include modification of the classroom environment and direct provision of classroom materials (e.g., developmentally appropriate toys and visual supports) to partnering centers to promote inclusive practices. Use of these materials, and classroom improvements will**

be demonstrated and taught as part of coaching sessions led by our team. Our end goal is to increase access to inclusive educational environments and positive behavioral supports so that children with developmental delays can benefit from access to early care and education settings and peer models who can help support language and social development.

The project will continue the ongoing work of supporting existing Community Screening Partners and families, while also incorporating early care and education providers, by offering trainings focused on developmental monitoring and early identification of children with developmental delays.

Period of Performance

July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027

Place of Performance

The work will be performed at the Oklahoma Autism Center and in community locations to be determined as events are scheduled.

Work Requirements

This proposal will focus on 1) providing training for early care and education professionals so that they can successfully incorporate developmental monitoring and/or autism screening into their daily practice, and 2) providing support to early care and education professionals to better promote belonging for children with developmental differences.

Work to be accomplished to meet project objectives includes:

- Form partnerships with early care professionals
- Provide layered support to professionals within early care settings
- Continue to support the existing CSP network
- Train new CSPs statewide as partners are identified
- Promote parent engaged developmental monitoring in healthcare and other early childhood systems
- Collect and summarize data on the effectiveness of the project

Acceptance Criteria

Both parties will agree upon the acceptance of the following deliverables:

- Partners identified and engaged
- Partners trained in steps of early identification and positive behavioral supports
- Children screened for autism and referred for appropriate services
- Providers trained to work with families in developmental monitoring practices

- Communities' increased capacity for early identification of developmental disabilities
- Early care partners provided with layered supports to promote inclusion for children with developmental differences

Early Access Sustainability Plan, 2026-2031

As the Early Access Project expands its scope beyond developmental monitoring, screening, and evaluation to include training and support to promote belonging and inclusive practices in early care and learning programs, we have highlighted several areas through which to address the sustainability of our efforts:

Leveraging Partnerships

- Capitalize on previous and current partnerships with early childhood systems (i.e., Head Start, private childcare centers, and the Act Early Oklahoma website).
- Develop new partnerships in the early care and education system.

Funding Diversification

- Apply for targeted funding from private foundations and other state or federal funding sources. Specifically, we will utilize our partnership with the Children's Health Foundation to increase funding support for Early Access activities. This partnership has previously helped secure funding for other Oklahoma Autism Center projects. We will focus grant searching and application efforts on Early Access during this project period.
 - Notably, during the last funding cycle, we were successful in our plan to diversify our funding. Specifically, we received two additional grants to expand Early Access activities, supporting the concept and importance of early identification. Accordingly, we have a proven track record of funding diversification.
- We plan to dedicate a percentage of one of our staff members' FTE to assist with grant writing. This staff member has technical writing experience, including experience writing grants.
- We will offer/accept fee-for-service training for organizations with budgets that can accommodate them (see past successes with the Oklahoma State Department of Health and the Chickasaw Nation Pediatric Collaborative).

Activities with Built-In Resiliency/Sustainability

- Develop deliverable resources that will outlive funding streams (e.g. classroom resources, along with implementation and referral guides that can be utilized independently by partner agencies for new staff in the future).
- Seek new opportunities for systems change activities. For our new early care and learning activities, we will promote partnerships with existing public support services for the Oklahoma childcare system, including but not limited to the

Warmline, Child Care Resource and Referral, and Child Guidance at the OSDH. As we have previously done for other early childhood service systems, we will aim to embed training, developmental monitoring, and screening services into existing policies and procedures.

Yearly breakdown of sustainability goals and efforts:

Note: The budget projections described below include our plan to obtain funding from outside sources over the next five years in order to create sustainability.

2026-27

Total Project Costs	Requested DDCO Project Funds	DDCO Match/Cost Share Funds	Total DDCO Contract (Project & Match)	Additional funds (outside sources)
\$180,837	\$135,532	\$45,305	\$180,837	\$0

Sustainability Partners: OSDH, Chickasaw Nation, LTSAE-CDC

Sustainability Activities/Goals: Identify potential funding mechanisms for scaling up Belonging activities (i.e., activities focused on inclusive practices in early childcare settings). Secure preliminary planning meetings with at least one potential partner already providing support to early care providers. Identify and apply to at least one new funding source to help sustain existing Early Access activities.

2027-28

Total Project Costs	Requested DDCO Project Funds	DDCO Match/Cost Share Funds	Total DDCO Contract (Project & Match)	Additional funds
\$180,837	\$135,532	\$45,305	\$180,837	\$0

Targeted Sustainability Partners: Child Care Resource and Referral

Sustainability Activities/Goals: Apply for at least 2 additional funding sources to augment activities. Provide initial training in the Belonging Project model for at least two affiliates or potential partners (e.g., Childcare Resource and Referral, Child Guidance) already serving early care and learning providers. Continue networking and coordination meetings for long-term sustainability efforts, utilizing existing resources available through the AAP and CDC Act Early Ambassador program and Act Early Oklahoma initiatives.

2028-29

Total Project Costs	Requested DDCO Project Funds	DDCO Match/Cost Share Funds	Total DDCO Contract (Project & Match)	Additional funds
\$180,000	\$122,000	\$40,700	\$162,700	\$17,300

Targeted Sustainability Partners: to be determined

Sustainability Activities/Goals: Pursue ongoing training contract with at least one early childhood provider or organization. Obtain or continue at least one additional funding source for sustained activities of the project.

2029-30

Total Project Costs	Requested DDCO Project Funds	DDCO Match/Cost Share Funds	Total DDCO Contract (Project & Match)	Additional funds
\$180,000	\$108,500	\$36,200	\$144,700	\$35,300

Targeted Sustainability Partners: to be determined

Sustainability Activities: Offer fee for service training for specific topics where possible. Continue to use DD Council funds to support trainings for high-need target areas. Develop guides for implementing the Belonging Project model through partner agencies. Obtain or continue at least one additional funding source for sustained project activities.

2030-31

Total Project Costs	Requested DDCO Project Funds	DDCO Match/Cost Share Funds	Total DDCO Contract (Project & Match)	Additional funds
\$180,000	\$95,000	\$31,700	\$126,700	\$53,300

Targeted Sustainability Partners: to be determined

Sustainability Activities: Pilot, revise, and distribute Belonging Project resources for ongoing use and replication. Obtain or continue at least one additional funding source for sustained project activities. Host sustainability planning meetings with major partners and stakeholders to plan for ongoing support of systems change efforts.

Long-term sustainability goals:

Within the 5-year project timeline, we will continually work to develop sustainability solutions and a long-term plan for funding. We have found in the past that efforts to embed new practices into early childhood systems require follow-up support to sustain impact. Accordingly, our ultimate goal is to identify and apply to outside funding sources that can provide ongoing support for our project activities beyond the initial 5 years allocated by this grant.

Caregiver Respite Retreats & Sibling Camps
Sooner SUCCESS

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Caregiver Respite Retreats and Sibling Camps

Organization: Sooner SUCCESS

Proposal Description: This proposal expands respite options in Oklahoma for caregivers of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), regardless of prior access to services. Led by Sooner SUCCESS at OUHSC, the project addresses a critical gap in safe, accessible respite by offering structured opportunities that reduce caregiver stress, improve family well-being, and help caregivers integrate respite into their daily lives. The initiative prioritizes inclusive access for diverse, rural, and underserved families and recognizes caregiver well-being as essential to child and family stability.

The project includes two primary activities: Caregiver Respite Retreats and Sibling Camps. Retreats provide extended respite through vouchers for substitute caregiving, meals and lodging, peer connection, self-care education, and individualized service navigation using ARCH Life Course tools to support long-term respite planning. Sibling Camps—offered as multi-night and day camps at no cost—provide children with and without disabilities meaningful recreational and Sibshop-based experiences while caregivers receive respite, education, and navigation support, strengthening the entire family unit.

Evaluation will use pre- and post-surveys, program metrics, and qualitative feedback to measure reductions in caregiver stress, increased access to resources, and improved family outcomes. The project builds on proven success, with prior participants reporting significant stress reduction and limited access to respite without these services. Supported by strong statewide partnerships and a sustainability plan that diversifies funding and expands community implementation, this initiative offers a replicable, evidence-informed model that increases access to respite, reduces isolation, and promotes long-term health and inclusion for Oklahoma families.

Council Goal & Objective: Stronger support systems for families

Targeted Audience: Statewide, nearly one in four Oklahoma children has special health care needs, and their families often experience high stress, limited respite, and difficulty accessing trained support—challenges that are especially acute in rural and underserved areas. This project serves children, youth, and young adults with I/DD; their caregivers and siblings; and culturally and geographically diverse families across the state. Participation is expected to reduce isolation, expand access to supports, and improve well-being for both individuals with I/DD and their caregivers.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$103,253	\$34,547	\$137,800

Prior Fiscal Year FY26

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$108,502	\$36,359	\$144,861

Prior Fiscal Year FY25

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$117,585	\$39,210	156,795

Prior Fiscal Year FY24

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$108,496	\$47,340	\$155,836

Prior Fiscal Year FY23

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$100,000	\$36,298	\$136,298

Prior Fiscal Year FY22

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$123,750	\$41,750	\$165,500

FY '27 DDCO Sooner SUCCESS

PI: Aietah Stephens

July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027

DDCO BUDGET						
Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total	
505754 Aieah Stephens	1.00	2%	\$1,642.00	\$616.00	\$2,258.00	
523970 Deana Wilson	1.00	9%	\$5,566.00	\$2,087.00	\$7,653.00	
529557 Lori Wathen	1.00	8%	\$4,948.00	\$1,856.00	\$6,804.00	
527049 Lisa DeBolt	1.00	7%	\$4,330.00	\$1,624.00	\$5,954.00	
531677 Eva Smith	1.00	7%	\$4,453.00	\$1,670.00	\$6,123.00	
463427 Samantha Basave	1.00	10%	\$5,123.00	\$1,921.00	\$7,044.00	
612840 Cooper Turman	1.00	5%	\$1,996.00	\$749.00	\$2,745.00	
TOTAL PERSONNEL & FRINGE		48%	\$28,058.00	\$10,523.00	\$38,581.00	

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Travel	TRAVEL	\$14,500
Respite Vouchers	OTHER Category	\$14,950
Respite Retreats/Camps	OTHER Category	\$18,141
Postage/Shipping	OTHER Category	\$100
Printing/Copies	SUPPLY Category	\$700
Materials/Supplies	SUPPLY Category	\$8,633
		\$57,024

MATCH BUDGET

Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total
Aieah Stephens	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deana Wilson	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lori Wathen	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lisa DeBolt	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Eva Smith	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Samantha Basave	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cooper Thurman	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
			\$0	\$0	\$0

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Lease		\$34,547
		\$34,547

Total Direct Costs					\$95,605
Total Indirect Costs			8%		\$7,648
TOTAL COSTS					\$103,253

TOTAL REQUIRED MATCH			25%		\$34,450
TOTAL MATCH					\$34,547
Total Indirect Costs					
TOTAL MATCH					\$34,547

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS					\$137,800
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TRAVEL

Retreat Lodging	\$12,000.00
Sibling Camp Lodging	\$2,000.00
Retreat Mileage	\$250.00
Camp Mileage	\$250.00
	<u>\$14,500.00</u>

OTHER

Retreat Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/S	\$15,000.00
Camp Conference Space/Room Rental	\$500.00
Retreat Meals, Snacks	\$2,000.00
Camp Meals, Snacks	\$641.00
	<u>\$18,141.00</u>

SUPPLIES

Retreat Supplies	\$4,316.50
Camp Supplies	\$4,316.50
	<u>\$8,633.00</u>
	<u><u>\$57,024.00</u></u>

RESPITE VOUCHERS

Retreat Vouchers	\$	13,000.00
Camp Vouchers	\$	-
Admin Fee	\$	<u>1,950.00</u>
	\$	<u>14,950.00</u>

POSTAGE/SHIPPING

Retreat Postage	\$	70.00
Camp Postage	\$	<u>30.00</u>
	\$	<u>100.00</u>

PRINTING/COPIES

Retreat Printing	\$	200.00
Camp Printing	\$	<u>500.00</u>
	\$	<u>700.00</u>

Lodging Rooms*:	15
Region 1 caregivers	2
Region 1 staff	18
Region 2 caregivers	2
Region 2 staff	18
Region 3 caregivers	2
Region 3 staff	15
Region 4 caregivers	3
Region 4 staff	

*Many caregivers bring spouse/partner.

From: [Stephens, Aietah L. \(HSC\)](#)
To: [Jennifer Robinson](#); [Jenifer Randle](#)
Cc: [Marchand, Samantha \(HSC\)](#); [Castaneda, Mayra I. \(HSC\)](#); [Monroe, Carley B \(HSC\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions
Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 3:44:17 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Hello all,

It was great to see you Jen and Jennifer at today's DASCO luncheon.

We went ahead and requested a meeting with you for Monday at 9:20am

I look forward to us meeting to further discussing your questions.

Thanks for your help,
Aietah

Aietah Stephens, MS

Executive Director
Sooner SUCCESS
1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
405.271.4000 ext. 47803
aietah-stephens@ou.edu
<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>
<https://www.facebook.com/SoonerSUCCESS>
[Join Our Email List](#)

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From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Sent: Friday, February 27, 2026 2:37 PM
To: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>; Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>
Cc: Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

External Email

Thank you for your response.

I must say that I am concerned with how much is allocated to room rental for the retreats and how little is allocated for retreat meals.

These numbers are basically opposite of your previous submittals, which raises the question, have you really examined the numbers you are submitting?

This is from your budget justification for FY26:

Other:

Retreat Meals and Snacks are supported at \$13,050.

Printing/ Postage is supported at \$1,000.

Room Rental for retreat space is supported at \$2,800.

This is from the submittal for FY27:

Retreat Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FEES: \$15,000

Camp Conference Space/Room Rental: \$500

Retreat Meals, Snacks: \$2,000

Camp Meals, Snacks: \$641

This does not give me confidence that the group has reviewed what has been spent or budgeted for in the past. Or what you are submitting for FY27.

We gave you a week to respond to give you adequate time to review all the numbers to ensure that they were correct.

If the numbers above for FY27 are correct, please let me know what changed so drastically. In the past you have mentioned how high food process have gotten. From reviewing your past invoices, it seems that \$2,000 might cover meals and snacks for one of the four retreats. If you are getting additional funding to cover the cost of the other meals, please let us know the source of that funding.

Jennifer Robinson

Planning and Grants Director

Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

[Set an appointment with me](#)

**Sooner SUCCESS
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
07.01.26 – 06.30.27**

PERSONNEL

Executive Director: The Executive Director provides administrative leadership to the project. She is responsible for the overall administration of the project, the implementation of the project plan, the supervision of the Regional Coordinators, and the Business Accountant, the Graduate Research Assistant, and fulfilling reporting requirements. The Executive Director is also the Principal Investigator; this position is supported with 2% effort (.24 CM) with no cost share.

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Sibling Support Coordinator: The Sibling Support Coordinator supported on this project will be responsible for implementing the Sibling Support Program. This program is specifically for the typically developing siblings that have a brother or sister with special healthcare needs. Samantha Basave is supported at 10% paid effort for 12 months (1.2CM)

Program Coordinator/Business Accountant/Admin: Program Coordinator/Business Accountant/Admin on this project is responsible to help process project payment expenditures once approved by the Principal Investigator. This position will also assist in providing the budget activity reports as needed. This position is supported at 5% paid effort (.60 CM).

Fringe benefits have been calculated using the SFY26 University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center fringe benefit rate of 37.5% for full-time employees on sponsored projects. Fringe benefits will be applied in strict accordance with the University's approved DHHS rates.

Council Paid Personnel costs total \$38,581 for this project. This amount includes fringe benefits as applicable to the staff on the project.

SUPPLIES/OTHER

Supplies for retreat/camp activities, materials for caregiver self-care bags, retreat evening activity and door prizes, snacks/light food items are supported at \$8,633. Printing is supported at \$700.

Retreat Supplies: \$4,316.50

Camp Supplies: \$4,316.50

Retreat Printing: \$200

Camp Printing: \$500

Other:

Room Rental/Space Rental for Retreats, Retreat Meals and Snacks are supported at \$18,141. Postage is supported at \$100.

Retreat Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FEES: \$15,000

Camp Conference Space/Room Rental: \$500

Retreat Meals, Snacks: \$2,000

Camp Meals, Snacks: \$641

Retreat Postage: \$70

Camp Postage: \$30

Respite Vouchers, Fiscal Agent Vendor: Woven Life will be the Fiscal Agent for Respite Voucher payments will be issued to approved Respite Care Providers and the fiscal agent for the voucher payments. The Administrative Fee is 15% of the allocated Respite Funding Amount. Respite Vouchers is supported at \$13,000 and Fiscal Agent Administrative Fee is supported at \$1,950 totaling \$14,950.

Respite Vouchers: \$13,000

Admin Fee: 1,950

SUPPLY/OTHER COMBINED TOTAL: \$42,524

Lease/workspace (cost share): Sooner SUCCESS state team office is located at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. Sooner SUCCESS will report the monthly costs of \$2,878.91 lease amount to count towards cost share obligations. These lease costs are not covered by federal funding therefore are allowed to be reported towards cost share, this amount to be cost shared is projected to be \$34,546.95.

TRAVEL

Travel will be used to support the Respite Retreats' Lodging costs for the hotels and selected lodging sites for program personnel and family caregivers participating in the Retreats. In-State mileage expenses for Program staff, to travel to and from each of the Respite Retreats to implement the program. The travel will be reimbursed at actual and reasonable costs based on the established State mileage rate. Travel is supported at \$14,500.

Retreat Lodging: \$12,000

Sibling Camp Lodging: \$2,000

Retreat Mileage: \$250

Camp Mileage: \$250

INDIRECT COSTS

Funds contracted to the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center will incur the 26% indirect cost rate. Council requested the reduced IDC rate as set by the Federal funder at 8%. Indirect paid costs are \$7,648.

From: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>
Sent: Friday, February 27, 2026 9:37 AM
To: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>; Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <aietah-stephens@ouhsc.edu>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>
Cc: Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Good morning Jenifer,

Please find attached the revised budget justifications, including the detailed breakdowns for the camp and retreat.

We believe these revisions address the previous errors and allow us to move forward with our partnership with DDCO to continue providing respite retreats for deserving caregivers and to host the Siblings Camp.

Please let us know if any additional information is needed.

Thank you,

Mayra Castaneda, MBA

Lead Grant/ Contract Coordinator

Bilingual Respite Coordinator

Sooner SUCCESS

1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

405.862.5038

Mayra-castaneda@ou.edu

<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>

<https://www.facebook.com/SoonerSUCCESS>

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From: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2026 2:12 PM
To: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>; Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>; Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>
Cc: Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

External Email

Submitted 2/19/26

Travel	BUDGET	\$14,500
Retreat Lodging:		\$12,000.00
Camp Trivera Lodging:		\$2,000.00
Mileage for camp and retreats:		\$1,669.37
not the same as your budget above	total:	\$15,669.37

Respite Retreats/Camps Other	BUDGET	\$18,141
Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FEES:		\$4,214.40
Conference Space/Room Rental for Camp:		\$500.00
Retreat Food:		\$12,421.76
not the same as your budget above	total:	\$17,136.16

Materials/Supplies	BUDGET	\$8,633
Respite Snacks/Light Meal:		\$500.00
Supplies for retreats and camp:		\$6,000.00
not the same as your budget above	total:	\$6,500.00

Submitted 2/20/26

Travel	BUDGET	\$ 14,500.00
Retreat Lodging		\$ 12,000.00
Sibling Camp Lodging		\$ 2,000.00
Retreat Mileage		\$ 250.00
Camp Mileage		\$ 250.00
	total	\$ 14,500.00

Respite Retreats/Camps Other	BUDGET	\$ 18,141.00
Retreat Conference Space/Room Rental/ A		\$ 12,000.00
Camp Room Rental/Conference Space		\$ 500.00
Retreat Meal, Snacks		\$ 2,000.00
Camp Meals, Snacks		\$ 641.00
	total	\$ 15,141.00

Postage	BUDGET	\$ 100.00
Retreat Postage		\$ 70.00
Camp Postage		\$ 30.00
		\$ 100.00

Materials/Supplies	BUDGET	\$ 8,633.00
Retreat Supplies		\$ 4,316.50
Camp Supplies		\$ 4,316.50
	total	\$ 8,633.00

Printing	BUDGET	\$ 700.00
Retreat Printing		\$ 200.00
Camp Printing		\$ 500.00
	total	\$ 700.00

**Sooner SUCCESS
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
07.01.26 – 06.30.27**

PERSONNEL

Executive Director: The Executive Director provides administrative leadership to the project. She is responsible for the overall administration of the project, the implementation of the project plan, the supervision of the Regional Coordinators, and the Business Accountant, the Graduate Research Assistant, and fulfilling reporting requirements. The Executive Director is also the Principal Investigator; this position is supported with 2% effort (.24 CM) with no cost share.

Regional Coordinator: The Regional Coordinators are supported on this project: Regional Coordinators are responsible for project implementation in their respective Regions. This will include the implementation of Respite Retreats. Regional Coordinators will work under the direction of the PI and assist with project requirements in the regions and administering all aspects of the project at the regional level. 4 Regional Coordinators will be on this project, 1 position supported at 9% paid effort (1.08 CM), 2 positions supported at 7% paid effort (0.84 CM), and 1 position supported at 8% paid effort (0.96 CM).

Sibling Support Coordinator: The Sibling Support Coordinator supported on this project will be responsible for implementing the Sibling Support Program. This program is specifically for the typically developing siblings that have a brother or sister with special healthcare needs. Samantha Basave is supported at 10% paid effort for 12 months (1.2CM)

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Fringe benefits have been calculated using the SFY26 University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center fringe benefit rate of 37.5% for full-time employees on sponsored projects. Fringe benefits will be applied in strict accordance with the University's approved DHHS rates.

Council Paid Personnel costs total \$38,581 for this project. This amount includes fringe benefits as applicable to the staff on the project.

SUPPLIES/OTHER

Supplies for retreat/camp activities, materials for caregiver self-care bags, retreat evening activity and door prizes, snacks/light food items are supported at \$8,633. Printing is supported at \$700.

Retreat Supplies: \$4,316.50

Camp Supplies: \$4,316.50

Retreat Printing: \$200

Camp Printing: \$500

Other:

Room Rental/Space Rental for Retreats, Retreat Meals and Snacks are supported at \$18,141. Postage is supported at \$100.

Retreat Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FEES: \$12,000

Camp Conference Space/Room Rental: \$500

Retreat Meals, Snacks: \$2,000

Camp Meals, Snacks: \$641

Retreat Postage: \$70

Camp Postage: \$30

Respite Vouchers, Fiscal Agent Vendor: Woven Life will be the Fiscal Agent for Respite Voucher payments will be issued to approved Respite Care Providers and the fiscal agent for the voucher payments. The Administrative Fee is 15% of the allocated Respite Funding Amount. Respite Vouchers is supported at \$13,000 and Fiscal Agent Administrative Fee is supported at \$1,950 totaling \$14,950.

Respite Vouchers: \$13,000

Admin Fee: 1,950

SUPPLY/OTHER COMBINED TOTAL: \$42,524

Lease/workspace (cost share): Sooner SUCCESS state team office is located at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. Sooner SUCCESS will report the monthly costs of \$2,878.91 lease amount to count towards cost share obligations. These lease costs are not covered by federal funding therefore are allowed to be reported towards cost share, this amount to be cost shared is projected to be \$34,546.95.

TRAVEL

Travel will be used to support the Respite Retreats' Lodging costs for the hotels and selected lodging sites for program personnel and family caregivers participating in the Retreats. In-State mileage expenses for Program staff, to travel to and from each of the Respite Retreats to implement the program. The travel will be reimbursed at actual and reasonable costs based on the established State mileage rate. Travel is supported at \$14,500.

Retreat Lodging: \$12,000

Sibling Camp Lodging: \$2,000

Retreat Mileage: \$250

Camp Mileage: \$250

INDIRECT COSTS

Funds contracted to the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center will incur the 26% indirect cost rate. Council requested the reduced IDC rate as set by the Federal funder at 8%. Indirect paid costs are \$7,648.

Hi Aietah and Mayra,

Thank you for segregating the costs between the Retreat and Camp. We continue to have serious concerns with the accuracy of your response:

1. Calculations in the budget justification do not match the total listed in your budget. Despite our requests for clarification and accurate information, this continues to be problematic.
2. There are significant variances in the documentation submitted. We've expended significant staff time and resources creating an excel document to reconcile errors within the proposal.

The Council takes its fiduciary role for tax-payer funds seriously. Funding decisions are made based on the documentation you submit and it's essential this information be accurate and consistent.

Please review and correct these discrepancies by noon, Friday, Feb 27 or we'll be unable to submit accurate information to the Council for consideration. We are available to zoom to discuss.

--

[Jenifer \(Jen\) Randle](#)

Executive Director

[Make a virtual meeting with me or my team!](#)

Developmental Disabilities Council



From: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>
Sent: Friday, February 20, 2026 8:06 AM
To: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>; Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <aietah-stephens@ouhsc.edu>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>
Cc: Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Good morning Jennifer

Please find the FY27 budget breakdown attached for both camp and retreats.

Thank you,

Mayra Castaneda, MBA

Lead Grant/ Contract Coordinator

Bilingual Respite Coordinator

Sooner SUCCESS

1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

405.862.5038

Mayra-castaneda@ou.edu

<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>

<https://www.facebook.com/SoonerSUCCESS>

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From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 6:08 PM
To: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>; Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>

Travel	BUDGET	\$14,500
Retreat Lodging:		\$12,000.00
Camp Trivera Lodging:		\$2,000.00
Mileage for camp and retreats:		\$1,669.37
not the same as your budget above total:		\$15,669.37

Respite Retreats/Camps Other	BUDGET	\$18,141
Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FEES:		\$4,214.40
Conference Space/Room Rental for Camp:		\$500.00
Retreat Food:		\$12,421.76
not the same as your budget above total:		\$17,136.16

Materials/Supplies	BUDGET	\$8,633
Respite Snacks/Light Meal:		\$500.00
Supplies for retreats and camp:		\$6,000.00
not the same as your budget above total:		\$6,500.00

Travel	BUDGET \$14,500
Retreat Lodging	
Sibling Camp Lodging	
Retreat Mileage	
Camp Mileage	

Respite Retreats/Camps Other	BUDGET \$18,141
Retreat Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FEES:	
Camp Room Rental/Conference Space	
Retreat Meal, Snacks	
Camp Meals, Snacks	

Materials/Supplies	BUDGET \$8,633
Retreat Supplies	
Camp Supplies	

Cc: Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

External Email

Thanks Mayra.

I hate to say this, but the numbers in the justification aren't matching the budget submitted.

Let's start again. I need the budget justification rewritten. Your budget justification should follow your budget precisely, explaining each cost that is listed, and making sure to explain what are caregiver retreat costs and what are sibling camp costs. Please put the justification in the same order as the budget.

PERSONNEL:

This looks described okay.

SUPPLIES/OTHER:

- TRAVEL explanation & divided up showing caregiver retreat costs and sibling camp costs. The total of caregiver travel reimbursement and sibling camp reimbursement should be the same as reflected on the budget.
- RESPITE VOUCHERS explanation with total reimbursement reflected on the budget.
- RESPITE RETREATS / CAMPS explanation & divided up showing caregiver retreat costs and sibling camp costs. The total of caregiver and sibling camp should be the same as reflected on the budget.
- POSTAGE / SHIPPING explanation & divided up showing caregiver retreat costs and sibling camp costs. The total of caregiver postage / shipping costs and sibling camp postage / shipping costs should be the same as reflected on the budget.
- PRINTING / COPIES explanation & divided up showing caregiver retreat costs and sibling camp costs. The total of caregiver printing costs and sibling camp printing costs should be the same as reflected on the budget.
- MATERIALS / SUPPLIES explanation & divided up showing caregiver retreat costs and sibling camp costs. The total of caregiver materials / supplies and sibling camp materials / supplies should be the same as reflected on the budget.

I have attached a spreadsheet showing where the cost breakdown you sent us does not add up to the proposed budget.

**Sooner SUCCESS
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
07.01.26 – 06.30.27**

PERSONNEL

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Council Paid Personnel costs total \$38,581 for this project. This amount includes fringe benefits as applicable to the staff on the project.

SUPPLIES/OTHER

Supplies for retreat/camp activities, materials for caregiver self-care bags, retreat evening activity and door prizes, snacks/light food items are supported at \$8,633. Printing is supported at \$700.

Other:

Room Rental/Space Rental for Retreats, Retreat Meals and Snacks are supported at \$18,141. Postage is supported at \$100.

Based on FY26 expenses

Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FEES: \$4,214.40

Conference Space/Room Rental for Camp: \$500.00

Retreat Food: \$12,421.76

Respite Snacks/Light Meal: \$500.00

Supplies for retreats and camp: \$6,000.00

Respite Vouchers, Fiscal Agent Vendor: Woven Life will be the Fiscal Agent for Respite Voucher payments will be issued to approved Respite Care Providers and the fiscal agent for the voucher payments. The Administrative

Fee is 15% of the allocated Respite Funding Amount. Respite Vouchers is supported at \$13,000 and Fiscal Agent Administrative Fee is supported at \$1,950 totaling \$14,950.

SUPPLY/OTHER COMBINED TOTAL: \$42,524

Lease/workspace (cost share): Sooner SUCCESS state team office is located at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. Sooner SUCCESS will report the monthly costs of \$2,878.91 lease amount to count towards cost share obligations. These lease costs are not covered by federal funding therefore are allowed to be reported towards cost share, this amount to be cost shared is projected to be \$34,546.95.

TRAVEL

Travel will be used to support the Respite Retreats' Lodging costs for the hotels and selected lodging sites for program personnel and family caregivers participating in the Retreats. In-State mileage expenses for Program staff, to travel to and from each of the Respite Retreats to implement the program. The travel will be reimbursed at actual and reasonable costs based on the established State mileage rate. Travel is supported at \$14,500.

Based on FY26 expense

Retreat Lodging: \$12,000.00

Camp Trivera Lodging: \$2,000.00

Mileage for camp and retreats: \$1,669.37

INDIRECT COSTS

Funds contracted to the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center will incur the 26% indirect cost rate. Council requested the reduced IDC rate as set by the Federal funder at 8%. Indirect paid costs are \$7,648.

I have also included in that spreadsheet an example of what we expect.

Because we have explained this to your team multiple times, please start over on the budget justification.

Please contact me with questions

Jennifer Robinson

Planning and Grants Director

Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

[Set an appointment with me](#)

From: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>

Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 4:33 PM

To: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <aietah-stephens@ouhsc.edu>; Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>

Cc: Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Good afternoon Jenifer

I have updated the budget justification to include the breakdowns for both camp and retreats.

Let me know if there is anything else you may need or have a question.

Thank you and have a great weekend.

Mayra Castaneda, MBA

Lead Grant/ Contract Coordinator

Bilingual Respite Coordinator

Sooner SUCCESS

1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

405.862.5038

Mayra-castaneda@ou.edu

<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>

<https://www.facebook.com/SoonerSUCCESS>

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From: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>

Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 9:55 AM

To: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>; Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>

Cc: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

External Email

Thank you Aietah for your responses. We will give the information provided in your answers to our committee. We do still need a better explanation of the specific budget items as our committee continues to ask for it.

What we need from you by tomorrow, February 20, at noon: A budget justification revision to match the budget sheet. Issues we are having are with the budget justification document not separating expenses for retreats and for camps, like you did for us last year.

On the budget sheet you have listed Respite Retreats / Camps for a total of \$18,141. It's explained on the justification that this \$18,141 is only for retreats in the form of room rental/space rental, meals, snacks, and postage. Question for you: Will any of this money be spent on Sibling Camp? If so, we need to know how much for retreats and how much for sibling camps.

- On the budget sheet you have a item as Materials / Supplies for a total of \$8,633. This is explained on the budget justification as both retreat and camp activities, providing caregiver self-care bags, retreat, evening activity, door prizes, and snacks/light food items. Question for you: Will any of this money be spent on Sibling Camp? If so, we need to know how much for retreats and how much for sibling camps.

Understanding expenses for each major activity (Caregiver Retreats and Sibling Retreats/Camp) is crucial for our committee and staff to understand full scale of this project's work completely. This helps us not just in monitoring the work but also in advocating on its importance. It is our suggestion to use this year's budget justification (Fy26) to see how you can do this - as you did this perfectly. You put in red the amounts for retreats and sibling camp in the supplies/ other justification and then broke it up for us in the travel section.

We look forward to your email and new budget justification tomorrow at noon.

--

[Jenifer \(Jen\) Randle](#)

Executive Director

[Make a virtual meeting with me or my team!](#)

Developmental Disabilities Council



From: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 1:47 PM
To: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Cc: Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <mayra-castaneda@ouhsc.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <mayra-castaneda@ouhsc.edu>
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Hi Jen and Jennifer,

Thank you for your feedback. Please see the updated budget. We added Samantha Basave and reduced Lori's time and effort. As you made a good observation we should have included Samantha previously as she too has a core role in this grant.

As for the question regarding sustainability we understand we need to work to reduce long term reliance on Council funding. As already shared we are committed to working on leveraging additional funds to support these efforts. As for 10% we can do our best to incrementally reduce the budget each year not just the last year. Certainly as funding opportunities present we can revisit that amount accordingly.

Thanks again for your continued partnership to increase access to respite.

Aietah

Aietah Stephens, MS

Executive Director

Sooner SUCCESS

1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

405.271.4000 ext. 47803

aietah-stephens@ou.edu

<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>

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**Sooner SUCCESS
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
07.01.26 – 06.30.27**

PERSONNEL

Executive Director: The Executive Director provides administrative leadership to the project. She is responsible for the overall administration of the project, the implementation of the project plan, the supervision of the Regional Coordinators, and the Business Accountant, the Graduate Research Assistant, and fulfilling reporting requirements. The Executive Director is also the Principal Investigator; this position is supported with 2% effort (.24 CM) with no cost share.

Regional Coordinator: The Regional Coordinators are supported on this project: Regional Coordinators are responsible for project implementation in their respective Regions. This will include the implementation of Respite Retreats. Regional Coordinators will work under the direction of the PI and assist with project requirements in the regions and administering all aspects of the project at the regional level. 4 Regional Coordinators will be on this project, 1 position supported at 9% paid effort (1.08 CM), 2 positions supported at 7% paid effort (0.84 CM), and 1 position supported at 8% paid effort (0.96 CM).

Sibling Support Coordinator: The Sibling Support Coordinator supported on this project will be responsible for implementing the Sibling Support Program. This program is specifically for the typically developing siblings that have a brother or sister with special healthcare needs. Samantha Basave is supported at 10% paid effort for 12 months (1.2CM)

Program Coordinator/Business Accountant/Admin: Program Coordinator/Business Accountant/Admin on this project is responsible to help process project payment expenditures once approved by the Principal Investigator. This position will also assist in providing the budget activity reports as needed. This position is supported at 5% paid effort (.60 CM).

Fringe benefits have been calculated using the SFY26 University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center fringe benefit rate of 37.5% for full-time employees on sponsored projects. Fringe benefits will be applied in strict accordance with the University's approved DHHS rates.

Council Paid Personnel costs total \$38,581 for this project. This amount includes fringe benefits as applicable to the staff on the project.

SUPPLIES/OTHER

Supplies for retreat/camp activities, materials for caregiver self-care bags, retreat evening activity and door prizes, snacks/light food items are supported at \$8,633. Printing is supported at \$700.

Other:

Room Rental/Space Rental for Retreats, Retreat Meals and Snacks are supported at \$18,141. Postage is supported at \$100.

Respite Vouchers, Fiscal Agent Vendor: Woven Life will be the Fiscal Agent for Respite Voucher payments will be issued to approved Respite Care Providers and the fiscal agent for the voucher payments. The Administrative Fee is 15% of the allocated Respite Funding Amount. Respite Vouchers is supported at \$13,000 and Fiscal Agent Administrative Fee is supported at \$1,950 totaling \$14,950.

SUPPLY/OTHER COMBINED TOTAL: \$42,524

Lease/workspace (cost share): Sooner SUCCESS state team office is located at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. Sooner SUCCESS will report the monthly costs of \$2,878.91 lease amount to count towards cost share obligations. These lease costs are not covered by federal funding therefore are allowed to be reported towards cost share, this amount to be cost shared is projected to be \$34,546.95.

TRAVEL

Travel will be used to support the Respite Retreats' Lodging costs for the hotels and selected lodging sites for program personnel and family caregivers participating in the Retreats. In-State mileage expenses for Program staff, to travel to and from each of the Respite Retreats to implement the program. The travel will be reimbursed at actual and reasonable costs based on the established State mileage rate. Travel is supported at \$14,500.

INDIRECT COSTS

Funds contracted to the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center will incur the 26% indirect cost rate. Council requested the reduced IDC rate as set by the Federal funder at 8%. Indirect paid costs are \$7,648.

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From: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC)
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 3:19 PM
To: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>
Cc: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Hi Jen, okay we will get the additional questions answered by next Wednesday.

Thanks, have a great weekend!

Aietah

On Feb 13, 2026, at 2:44 PM, Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org> wrote:



Hi Aietah,

Do I understand that if the Council were to approve funding for respite retreats and sibling overnight and day camps for the next 5 years, your reliance on Council funding is estimated to only reduce by 10% (by the end of the 5th year)? This means you will only be reducing the current request by approximately \$10,000. This means at the end of our 5 Year Plan (if the Council approves 5 years of funding) the work will not be sustained. The goal of our Council is to create sustainable work. I know we explained if we could prove the need is there, we could continue work. This doesn't mean we want to continually fund the same work. The goal is always the same - create sustainable work, like Tech Now, OSU Opportunity Orange, and SibShops sustainability after the 5 years we funded it (and let's not forget you have managed to sustain the work started from the Council funding towards supporting parents with disabilities).

The Council, as I'm sure you're aware, has been level funded for a few years now. To see an expenditure line-item increase towards time and salary of one person instead of providing actual respite for families is disappointing. Help me understand this and what this person (Lori) will be doing that is different from the other staff. I am not trying to undervalue the importance of staff in the project, however, couldn't the increase of over \$8,000 in staffing on one person be spent directly for families? If staff support is needed, then wouldn't you want to increase all staff who work on this project including staff who work on Sibling camps. If Lori's time is expanding to do more navigation, then does that mean Lori is attending all the respites?

Please know the questions being asked are not downplaying the importance of any staff. The Council's goal in caregiver retreats remains high. We do understand the need is there. That's why we mentioned the change in proposals could be done. We are coming from the perspective of helping families get the rest they need. Service navigation helps the families, but with our funding not increasing, we need to make sure projects will maximize our funding.

We are meeting with our State Plan Committee on Friday, Feb. 20. **Please respond by Wednesday** so we can help our members understand as they need.

--

[Jenifer \(Jen\) Randle](#)

Executive Director

[Make a virtual meeting with me or my team!](#)

Developmental Disabilities Council

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<Outlook-gftkiqw.png>

From: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>

Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 10:59 AM

To: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Jennifer Robinson
<Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>

Cc: Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <mayra-castaneda@ouhsc.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Hello all,

Please see our responses highlighted below as well as the attached budget with the additional details.

Thanks again for your help with this grant application,

Aietah

Aietah Stephens, MS

Executive Director

Sooner SUCCESS

1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

405.271.4000 ext. 47803

aietah-stephens@ou.edu

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FY '27 DDCO Sooner SUCCESS
 PI: Aietah Stephens

July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027

DDCO BUDGET					
Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total
505754 Aieah Stephens	1.00	2%	\$1,642.00	\$616.00	\$2,258.00
523970 Deana Wilson	1.00	9%	\$5,566.00	\$2,087.00	\$7,653.00
529557 Lori Wathen	1.00	7%	\$9,895.00	\$3,711.00	\$13,606.00
527049 Lisa DeBolt	1.00	7%	\$4,330.00	\$1,624.00	\$5,954.00
531677 Eva Smith	1.00	7%	\$4,453.00	\$1,670.00	\$6,123.00
612840 Cooper Turman	1.00	5%	\$1,996.00	\$749.00	\$2,745.00
TOTAL PERSONNEL & FRINGE	37%		\$27,882.00	\$10,457.00	\$38,339.00

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Travel	TRAVEL	\$14,500
Respite Vouchers	OTHER Category	\$14,950
Respite Retreats/Camps	OTHER Category	\$18,141
Postage/Shipping	OTHER Category	\$100
Printing/Copies	SUPPLY Category	\$800
Materials/Supplies	SUPPLY Category	\$8,775
		\$57,266

MATCH BUDGET

Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total
Aieah Stephens	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deana Wilson	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lori Wathen	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lisa DeBolt	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Eva Smith	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cooper Thurman	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
			\$0	\$0	\$0

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Lease		\$34,547
		\$34,547

Total Direct Costs					\$95,605
Total Indirect Costs			8%		\$7,648
TOTAL COSTS					\$103,253

TOTAL REQUIRED MATCH			25%		\$34,450
TOTAL MATCH					\$34,547
Total Indirect Costs					
TOTAL MATCH					\$34,547

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS					\$137,800
----------------------------	--	--	--	--	------------------

TRAVEL

Lodging	\$12,000.00 for R1, R2, R3 and R4
Lodging for Camp Trivera	\$2,000.00
Mileage for Camp & Retreats	\$1,669.37
	\$15,669.37

OTHER

Conference Space/Room Rental/ AV/Service FI	\$4,214.40 for R1, R2, R3 and R4
Conference Space/Room Rental	\$500.00 for Camp
Food	\$12,421.76 for R1, R2, R3 and R4
	\$17,136.16

SUPPLIES

Respite Snacks/Light Meal	\$500.00 for R1, R2, R3 and R4
Supplies	\$6,000.00 Camp and for R1, R2, R3 and R4
	\$6,500.00
	\$39,305.53

Lodging Rooms*:

Region 1 caregivers	15
Region 1 staff	2
Region 2 caregivers	18
Region 2 staff	2
Region 3 caregivers	18
Region 3 staff	2
Region 4 caregivers	15
Region 4 staff	3

*Many caregivers bring spouse/partner.

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From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>

Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 1:11 PM

To: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>

Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: DDCO - Remaining Questions

External Email

Aietah,

We need the information by this Friday, February 13th.

Thank you,

Jennifer Robinson

Planning and Grants Director

Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

[Set an appointment with me](#)

From: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 10:24 AM
To: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>;
Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <mayra-castaneda@ouhsc.edu>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Hi Jennifer,

We are working on the additional information you requested. When do you need it back?

Thanks for your help,

Aietah

Aietah Stephens, MS

Executive Director

Sooner SUCCESS

1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

405.271.4000 ext. 47803

aietah-stephens@ou.edu

<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>

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From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2026 1:42 PM
To: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DDCO - Remaining Questions

External Email

Good afternoon, Aietah,

Thank you for responding to our questions. There are three questions that need further clarification.

I have included our original question, then your response, then our current responses/questions.

1. Please **separate all the expenses** of the Respite Retreats and the Sibling Camps, to include Personnel and Supplies & Operating Expenses.
 1. The budget justification attached matches the budget provided. We do have to adhere to the current budget categories on the budget. For example, Retreat lodging is listed under the Travel budget category.

-

2/5/26 Response: We understand you have categories to adhere to, and we are not asking you to change your budget categories. We do need to understand the budgeted items, so please break down each category, for example:

Please see the attached with this breakdown. We used the previous/current costs to get the best estimate across both Retreats and Camps.

Travel

Lodging for participants of caregiver retreats and 2 staff members at each retreat -\$12,000.
Mileage for 6 staff to travel to each caregiver retreat - \$2,500

(It looks like you aren't funding any of the sibling camp lodging or mileage for FY27, which is a change from FY26. If this is covered by someone else, then include that. This helps the Council understand the partnerships developed and provides a true picture of the work and funding.)

Supplies

Printing - \$800

Supplies for Caregiver Retreats - \$5,000

(caregiver gift baskets, activities, door prizes, snacks)

Supplies for Sibling Camps - \$3,775

(camp activities, snacks)

Other

Postage \$100

Room/Space Rental Caregiver Retreats - \$8,141

Meals and Snacks for Caregiver Retreats - \$10,000

-

2. Please provide a five-year estimate showing how DD Council funding could be reduced without impacting service levels.
 1. Do you need us to update the section of the proposal or budget to include the other 4 years? We can provide additional details if needed to show a five-year sustainability projection demonstrating how DD Council funding could be gradually reduced without impacting service levels.
 2. The model will include:
 3. Increased diversification of funding sources (state contracts, grants, sponsorships)
 4. Incremental increases in partner and in-kind support

5. Cost efficiencies through shared staffing, volunteer facilitation, and community partner support.

2/5/26 Response:

Yes, we would appreciate you updating the sustainability section of your request. As you develop this, please keep in mind while we want the funding reliance on the Council to decrease, the Council doesn't want the services to decrease. We understand sustainability is a challenge, but we really want the work the Council funds to sustain over time for Oklahomans with developmental disabilities and their families.

Sooner SUCCESS is committed to sustaining Caregiver Respite Retreats and Sibling Camps while gradually reducing reliance on DD Council funding over the next five years without decreasing service levels. We will diversify funding through continued inclusion of respite and sibling supports in our Oklahoma State Department of Health contract, pursuit of Lifespan Respite and foundation grants, community fundraising partnerships, and corporate sponsorships, while increasing in-kind and volunteer support. Through shared staffing, regional partnerships, and community-hosted venues, we will improve cost efficiencies and shift approximately 10% of current Council-supported costs to alternative funding sources by Year 5. This phased approach ensures that services remain stable or expand modestly while building a sustainable, diversified funding structure for Oklahoma families.

3. With the increased project expenses are you increasing services compared to last year? (FY26 at \$86,113 vs FY27 at \$95,605 = over \$9,000 increase) If so, what is being increased?
 1. Yes. Direct costs increased from \$86,113 (FY26) to \$95,605 (FY27) an increase of \$9,492. This increase supports: Expansion to four sibling day camps plus one overnight camp. Increased number of siblings served. Enhanced staffing time for service navigation and coordination. Expanded supplies and materials for camps and retreats. Service reach, activities, and intensity are all increased in FY27 compared to FY26 .

2/5/26 Response:

Can you please note the dollar amount that was increased specifically to help with the expansion of the four sibling day camps to help us understand the request fully? The only place we see direct costs for the sibling camps is in the supplies category. There is no funding listed for camp lodging (funded in FY26). As far as staff costs, we noticed that Lori is the one with more staff time, and Samantha is not provided with any staff time in the budget. Can you help us understand the staff support for the Sibling overnight and day camps? Do regional directors help? What support do the other collaborators provide?

Please reference the breakdown of sibling camp costs attached. Family Caregiver Retreats and

Sibling Camps involve all Sooner SUCCESS staff in some capacity in particularly Regional Coordinators. In an effort to reduce costs we have only listed key personnel to the grant proposal. You are correct Samantha Basave isn't currently listed on this grant. We could add her time and effort if the additional costs would be an option. We tried to do our best to stay within what we had previously requested. Another option is we could revise the budget to add Samantha Basave and reduce other personnel effort if that is preferred. As far as what other collaborators provide it varies across both retreats and camps. We always strive to engage partners and find ways to increase support for families. We have had success at the local level where each of the events have been held.

Thank you!

Jennifer

<image001.png>

[Set an appointment with me](#)

Gardening and Life-Skills Program

Theodore E. Parker Foundation

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Gardening and Life-Skills Program

Organization: Theodore E. Parker Foundation

Proposal Description: The Theodore E. Parker Foundation requests \$3,750 to implement an inclusive, community-based gardening and life-skills program for individuals with developmental disabilities in Tulsa and Wagoner counties. The proposed project addresses a documented gap in accessible, hands-on opportunities that build independence, routine, confidence, and meaningful community participation outside of clinical or school-based settings. Through structured gardening activities and guided life-skills instruction, participants will engage in real-world tasks that promote responsibility, teamwork, self-determination, and inclusion, aligning directly with the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma (DDCO) 5-Year State Plan priorities.

The program will serve at least 20 youth and young adults ages 14–30 with a range of developmental disabilities, including autism and intellectual disabilities. Activities will include garden planning, planting, maintenance, and harvest-based lessons, supported by adaptive tools and accessible materials to ensure full participation. The project will be led by the Theodore E. Parker Foundation, with support from community partners experienced in agriculture, logistics, and hands-on programming. Outcomes will be measured through attendance, facilitator observations, and participant and caregiver feedback, with specific goals focused on increased engagement, confidence, task completion, and participation in inclusive community activities.

This proposal does not duplicate existing services but instead adds value by offering a low-cost, replicable model that emphasizes experiential learning, ability-based participation, and community inclusion. Funding will support program facilitation, gardening supplies, educational materials, outreach, and required reporting, with no funds allocated for transportation. By demonstrating how inclusive, non-clinical, community-centered activities can effectively build practical life skills and self-determination, this project offers measurable impact, sustainability, and alignment with DDCO’s goals for independence, productivity, and inclusion.

Council Goal & Objective: Equitable Access

Targeted Audience: Youth and young adults ages 14–30 with a range of developmental disabilities, including autism and intellectual disabilities

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$3,750	\$1,250	\$5,000

Theodore E. Parker Foundation – Program Overview

About the Foundation

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation is a community-based nonprofit organization focused on access, inclusion, and skill-building opportunities for individuals and families—particularly in rural and underserved communities. The Foundation emphasizes hands-on learning, agriculture-based activities, and community engagement that promote independence, confidence, and quality of life.

Leadership & Governance

The Foundation is led by Founder and Executive Director Chrissy Parker, with oversight provided by a developing Board of Directors consisting of community members with experience in education, agriculture, nonprofit operations, and community advocacy.

Website & Digital Presence

The Foundation's official website and dedicated social media presence are currently under development and are expected to launch within the next month. These platforms will provide detailed information about programming, leadership, and community impact.

Experience with the Developmental Disabilities Community

Foundation leadership has experience supporting individuals with developmental disabilities through education, family engagement, and inclusive community programming. Activities are designed to be person-centered, strengths-based, and structured to support diverse needs.

Gardening Program Locations

Gardening activities will take place at designated rural locations within identified counties. Each county will utilize a consistent site to provide familiarity and routine for participants. Additional locations may be added as capacity allows.

Program Schedule & Structure

Activities will be held one Saturday per month. Each session will last approximately 2–4 hours and will be structured as stand-alone but connected experiences to allow flexible participation.

Participant Groups

The program will serve multiple groups of individuals over the duration of funding. Some participants may attend regularly, while others may participate as schedules allow, maximizing community reach.

Transportation & Accessibility

Recognizing transportation as a common barrier in rural areas, activities are scheduled on weekends, planned well in advance, centrally located when possible, and limited to reasonable session lengths to support accessibility.

From: [Chrissy Parker](#)
To: [Jennifer Robinson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: DDCO funding request
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026 11:51:48 AM
Attachments: [Theodore E Parker Foundation Program Overview.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)

Hello Jennifer,

Thank you for your follow-up email regarding our funding request. Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in providing our comprehensive response.

Our team has thoroughly reviewed your questions and compiled the detailed information you requested, which is included below in this message.

Specifically, regarding our experience within the developmental disabilities community, I want to emphasize my personal commitment and expertise. I hold two Master's degrees, one in Special Education and another in Leadership Management, and have dedicated over ten years to direct, hands-on work with individuals with special needs.

We trust that the enclosed details provide a clear and thorough understanding of the Theodore E. Parker Foundation, its leadership, our approach to programming, and our significant experience supporting individuals with developmental disabilities.

We appreciate your committee's continued consideration of our proposal.

Sincerely,

Chrissy Parker

On Thursday, February 12, 2026, 11:44 AM, Chrissy Parker <chrissyparkermanrrs@yahoo.com> wrote:

About the Theodore E. Parker Foundation The Theodore E. Parker Foundation is a community-based nonprofit organization focused on access, inclusion, and skill-building opportunities for individuals and families—particularly in rural and underserved communities. Our work centers on hands-on learning, agriculture-based activities, and community engagement that promote independence, confidence, and quality of life. The Foundation is named in honor of Theodore E. Parker, whose legacy emphasized service, land stewardship, and lifting up the next generation. While our activities have primarily been shared through community and partner Facebook pages, we are currently formalizing our digital presence. Leadership & Governance: The Foundation is led by Founder and Executive Director Chrissy Parker, with oversight provided by a developing Board of Directors made up of community members with experience in education, agriculture, nonprofit operations, and community advocacy. The board structure is in place and continues to expand as the Foundation grows. Website Availability: Our official website and dedicated social media page are currently in development and are expected to launch within the next month. The site will include our mission, leadership, programming details, and ways for the public and partners to

stay engaged. — Experience with the Developmental Disabilities Community The Foundation's leadership has direct experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities through education, family support, community programming, and inclusive activities. This includes supporting individuals with diverse needs through structured, hands-on environments that emphasize routine, clear expectations, and meaningful engagement. Our approach is person-centered, strengths-based, and focused on creating welcoming spaces where participants feel valued and capable. — Location of Gardening Activities The gardening activities will be held in designated rural counties, primarily at consistent, pre-identified sites such as leased land, community plots, or partner-approved locations. • The intention is to use one primary location per county to ensure consistency and familiarity for participants. • As capacity allows, additional locations may be added, but only when they can be supported safely and reliably. • Locations are selected with accessibility, space, and safety in mind. — Frequency, Schedule & Structure of Activities • Activities will be held one weekend day per month (Saturday). • Each session will last approximately 2–4 hours, depending on the activity and participant needs. • Sessions are designed as stand-alone but connected experiences, allowing participants to benefit whether they attend one session or multiple. This structure allows for routine while remaining flexible for families and caregivers. — Participant Groups The Foundation anticipates serving multiple groups of individuals over the duration of funding, rather than a single closed cohort. • Some participants may attend consistently month-to-month. • Others may participate as their schedules allow. This model allows the program to reach more individuals, especially in rural areas where consistent attendance can be impacted by transportation or caregiving needs. — Transportation & Accessibility Considerations We recognize transportation as a major barrier, particularly in rural communities. To address this: • Activities are scheduled on weekends, reducing conflicts with work and school schedules. • Locations are chosen to be central within the county whenever possible. • Dates and times will be scheduled well in advance and shared clearly with participants and caregivers. • Sessions are kept to a reasonable length (2–4 hours) to reduce fatigue and transportation strain. While the Foundation does not currently provide transportation directly, we design programming to be predictable, consistent, and accessible, allowing families and support providers to plan ahead.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

On Thursday, February 12, 2026, 11:25 AM, Jennifer Robinson
<Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org> wrote:

Hi Chrissy,
We haven't heard back from you regarding the questions below.
If you would still like for our committee to consider your proposal at this time, please respond today. We look forward to hearing from you.
Thank you.

Jennifer Robinson

Planning and Grants Director
Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

[Set an appointment with me](#)

From: Jennifer Robinson
Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2026 1:25 PM
To: 'Chrissy parkermanrrs@yahoo.com' <Chrissy parkermanrrs@yahoo.com>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>
Subject: DDCO funding request

Good afternoon, Chrissy,

Thank you for your funding request.

We have reviewed your application and have the following questions.

- What more can you tell me about your foundation? I only see it mentioned in Facebook posts on other pages, not on a Facebook page for the Foundation. We're not familiar with your organization and want to better understand who you are and what you do! Who leads your Foundation and is there a board? When will your website be available?
- What are your experiences with people with developmental disabilities and/or in the developmental disabilities community?
- Where will these gardening activities be held? I understand in general the counties, but will this be a permanent location where groups come consistently? Will there be more than one location?
- How often are the activities held? Is it a group of sessions for a cohort? How many days? How many hours?
- Is it the same group of individuals who will participate for the duration of the funding? Or will there be multiple groups being served?
- One common barrier, especially in rural areas of the state, is transportation of participants with developmental disabilities to activities. Will the activities be held conveniently for participants to access? (Not just location, but day, time, length, scheduled well in advance, how often..)

Please respond as soon as possible as our executive committee meeting is meeting in February.

Thank you again for reaching out to us!

Jennifer

Blend Ability Episode

VGM Visual Storytelling, Valentina Gutierrez

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Blend Ability Series – One Episode

Organization: VGM Visual Storytelling, Valentina Gutierrez

Proposal Description: *Blend Ability* began as an award-winning short documentary about a coffee shop in Oklahoma employing people of all abilities. Building on that success, this project seeks funding to expand into a six-episode documentary series (10–15 minutes each) highlighting individuals with developmental disabilities and their experiences with employment. Each episode will feature diverse subjects, across gender, disability, and type of work, showcasing both the barriers they face and the unique strengths they bring, challenging misconceptions and promoting understanding that inclusive hiring benefits both individuals and communities.

The series will combine storytelling with practical solutions, featuring in-depth interviews, workplace footage, and authentic narratives that emphasize dignity and ability. Each episode will include a guided framework for HR professionals and business leaders, offering tools, resources, and best practices to advance inclusive hiring. With a budget of \$33,334 per episode, *Blend Ability* will be released progressively online and shared with corporations, HR departments, and diversity programs to maximize reach and impact.

Anticipated outcomes include increased public understanding of employment barriers, stronger representation of people with developmental disabilities, and direct commitments from businesses to expand inclusive hiring. Success will be measured through viewership, engagement, festival recognition, and reported employment actions by participating organizations. Ultimately, *Blend Ability* aims to drive long-term systems change, embedding inclusion into workplace culture, influencing HR practices, and shaping public attitudes toward individuals with developmental disabilities as capable, valuable contributors.

Council Goal & Objective: Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Targeted Audience: The *Blend Ability* series aims to uplift individuals with developmental disabilities by sharing their stories and affirming their value in the workforce. At the same time, it targets HR professionals and business leaders, providing tools and insights to promote inclusive hiring practices. By also engaging the general public, the series seeks to reduce stigma and build a culture where inclusive employment is expected and celebrated.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,334	\$33,334

Outreach Coordinator

The Zarrow Institute on Transition and Self-Determination at the University of Oklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Outreach Coordinator

Organization: Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination at OU

Proposal Description: The Zarrow Institute on Transition and Self-Determination at the University of Oklahoma seeks to expand its inclusive education and advocacy efforts through the creation of a dedicated Outreach Coordinator position. Building on the success of Sooner Works and SPARK360°, which provide individualized academic and social supports to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and autism, this project will extend inclusion beyond program participants to the broader university community. As enrollment and visibility of neurodiverse students increase, there is a growing need for coordinated, university-wide training to equip faculty, staff, and employers with effective inclusive practices.

The Outreach Coordinator will lead a comprehensive inclusion initiative that unites and expands existing efforts across OU's Norman, Health Sciences Center, and Tulsa campuses. This role will deliver workshops on inclusive teaching, Universal Design for Learning, and workplace accommodations; coordinate campus-wide advocacy initiatives such as Inclusion Week and student-led panels; and build partnerships with employers and community organizations to increase inclusive internships, hiring practices, and mentorship opportunities. In Year 1, the project will conduct at least 12 educational sessions reaching over 250 participants and establish or expand partnerships with at least 10 employers and community organizations.

Evaluation will track participation, knowledge gains, confidence levels, and indicators of systems change, such as new departmental policies or increased requests for inclusion training. This project aligns with DDCO priorities in Inclusive Education and Advocacy and Self-Advocacy by embedding inclusive practices into daily university operations and community partnerships. By formalizing outreach under a unified strategy, the Zarrow Institute will strengthen support for neurodiverse students and foster a campus culture where inclusion is a standard part of academic and professional life.

Council Goal & Objective: Inclusive Education, Representation and Public Attitudes, and Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Targeted Audience: The initiative will serve students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism, along with the faculty, staff, student organizations, and employers who support them.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$101,602	\$52,743	\$154,345



January 16, 2026

What is the percentage of students who are in their programs (Sooner Works and Spark360°) that are from Oklahoma. From what other states do the students hail?

Numbers current as of 1/15/2026. Enrollment changed slightly over semester break.

Sooner Works (N=23)

Oklahoma	12	52%
Texas	11	48%

Anticipated 2026-2027 numbers (27-28)

Oklahoma	~ 16	59%
Texas	~ 12	41%

*based upon early admission and current applications

- current senior cohort has 1 OK resident and 3 TX students; anticipated freshman cohort (26-27) includes 5 OK students and 4 TX students.

SPARK360° (N=16)

Oklahoma	12	75%
Texas	3	19%
Colorado	1	6%

Anticipated 2026-2027 numbers (~24; 20 are confirmed)

Oklahoma	~ 13	65%
Texas	6	30%
Colorado	1	5%

*based upon early admission and current applications

How will you measure and report both short and long-term outcomes?

Short Term Outcomes Measures

GOAL 1: Establish Project and hire Outreach Coordinator

- Target data of hired Outreach Coordinator
- 2026 evaluation data of Outreach Coordinator



ZARROW INSTITUTE ON TRANSITION & SELF-DETERMINATION

The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

GOAL 2: Equip OU faculty and staff with practical strategies for supporting SwDD in academic and workplace environments

- September all faculty/staff survey (knowledge of Programs and Resources)
- Attendance logs
- Post training satisfaction and learning survey (anticipated 10 min survey at end of training)
- Data metrics on OU Inclusion Hub website/resources (i.e website hits, downloads)

GOAL 3: Build sustainable partnerships among on-campus internship sites, academic units, and campus-based student organizations. (n=10+)

- Lists of partnerships: 1. Connected with and 2. Partnered with
- End of Year surveys (send May 2027) to partnered organization/units to determine 1. Level of satisfaction, 2. What worked and 3. Recommendations for next year
- Strategic interviews with targeted participants

GOAL 4: Increase student led advocacy (n=3+)

- Documented advocacy materials (available on website)
- Surveys (students in Sooner Works) 1. Satisfaction and 2. Gauge learning
- Surveys (students in SPARK360°) 1. Satisfaction and 2. Gauge learning
- Strategic interviews with targeted participants

Long-term Outcomes (measures after completion of this project)

- Number of applications in Oklahoma vs other states
- Continued: September all faculty/staff survey (knowledge of Programs and Resources)
- Increased partnerships (student organizations, department units, etc)

Our Federal Funder sets the cap for indirect costs at 8% (document attached)

We acknowledge the indirect cost rate of 8%

Column1	
Goal 1:	Make it easier for Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families to find and understand information about services, supports, resources.
Objectives:	
1	By 2031, there will be a user-friendly network of information for Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families across Oklahoma
2	Annually through 2031, support creative community solutions that provide in-person help for Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities through the lifespan.
3	By 2031, there will be improved transportation assistance to Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and families.
4	Annually through 2031, offer at least 20 specialized training workshops for caregivers on topics such as person-centered planning, behavioral support strategies, and navigating service systems.
Comments:	
	<p>This goal addresses a real and urgent need in Oklahoma. Families and individuals with I/DD often face fragmented systems, unclear information, and inconsistent access to in-person support, especially during high-stress or transition periods.</p> <p>To strengthen this goal, I recommend the following clarifications and additions: Clearly define what a “user-friendly network of information” means by including plain-language standards, cognitive accessibility, and active outreach for families in rural areas and those without reliable internet access. Explicitly identify key life transitions where access to information and support often breaks down (early childhood, school-to-adulthood transitions, aging or ill caregivers, and crisis or overload situations). Ensure that in-person support (Objective 2) is available not only for navigation, but also during moments of acute need, when families may not be able to independently seek or understand services. For transportation assistance, clarify whether this includes access to medical, behavioral, crisis-related, and caregiver-support transportation, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Caregiver trainings should be accessible in multiple formats (in-person and virtual) and include content relevant to families supporting individuals with high or complex support needs. Overall, Goal 1 is well aligned with real needs. With greater specificity around accessibility, transitions, and crisis moments, it can have a significant and lasting impact.</p>
	I appreciate this goal. As a mom to a five-year-old with intellectual and developmental disabilities, I have had to learn a lot by trial and error and finding information out on my own. I always feel horrible when I meet another parent and realize they have no idea about any of the resources we have available in our state - TEFRA, DDS waiver, Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship, etc. I am grateful there will be more of an effort to create a network where parents can find this information. A lot of my research has been done simply by connecting with other medical parents in Oklahoma via Facebook groups.
	I am a trainer for ddcancel and I love it yes
	Yes! Great!
	The workforce of direct support professionals remains entry level. However, the qualifications of program coordinators are more strict, which leaves 1 qualified person responsible for two many inexperienced individual direct support workers. There also is not enough oversight or accountability when it comes to coordinators. Too many of those who are vulnerable are able to be manipulated by support workers who portray the image of being a friend. There is a severe lack of professionalism & support workers who remain ethical and want to improve the lives of those they care for are overlooked, underpaid, and limited in what they are trained to be allowed to do. The lack of availability of any career ladder is stunting the overall quality of lives.
	<p>These goals address real and pressing needs in Oklahoma’s disability community. Access to clear information, in-person support, transportation assistance, and caregiver training are all critical gaps that families consistently face across the lifespan. The focus on practical supports—not just systems-level change—is especially appreciated.</p> <p>To make these goals clearer, it would help to define what “user-friendly network of information” and “improved transportation assistance” mean in practice. For example, will the information network include a centralized website, phone support, and in-person navigators? Will transportation improvements include expanded rural access, shorter wait times, or additional funding for non-emergency transportation? Clear definitions and measurable outcomes would strengthen accountability and help the public understand what success looks like.</p> <p>One additional area to consider is intentional outreach to rural communities, Tribal nations, and underserved populations who often face the greatest barriers to services. Co-designing these efforts with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and family caregivers would also help ensure the supports are practical, accessible, and culturally responsive.</p> <p>Regular public updates on progress toward the 2031 goals would promote transparency and trust.</p>
	This goal focus' of most real needs; I also see fine arts and encouragingly social development of home care-givers.
	They all sound interesting. In order to give a more direct and confident answer, I feel like it would be easier as a multiple choice question. There's a lot to remember and to process. Make more plain.
	[#3] Could we advocate for Medicaid coverage of Uber/ Lyft ride sharing [which have special categories for accessibility] when the state's contracted transportation systems are SLOW or unreliable and not simple to use for many occasions? Like a voucher / reimbursement program?

	Better employees at DHS, I agree to educate parents, caregivers, and make stronger support systems for people with ID and their families
	Hybrid (In-person while there also being a virtual option to attend) events for all 3 goals with their respective objective events could increase attendance due to transportation issues with the disability community. That, and/or setting up temporary or one time ride services or funding to provide transportation to said events would be good as well until a permanent solution is provided + this could provide employment opportunities by employing potential drivers if the council decides to do so.
	Yes
	I'm interested in seeing interventions that you anticipate to complete the listed objectives.
	2031??? Extremely disappointed that much of this doesn't already exist!! A number of years ago I thought a directory existed, a flip chart, that covered the state?? I served on multiple state committees at one time and believe the Okla Disability Law center was involved. Frankly, one has to wonder why 2031 for the 3 goals...and how many staff, volunteers, are working towards these goals, how often they meet, who or whom are they accountable to, and funding available to address such goals and availability of funds to print, distribute, etc? Network of resources re goal 1. is this state and/or national? 2. Please define and give examples of "creative community solutions ". 3. Improved transportation? What currently exists vs what is absolutely necessary? Again 2031?? 4. Offer 20 through 2031?? Is this 4-5 a year? Advocacy training not included nor legal?? Pardon me if I'm not current re the Council or OKDHS, but this sounds like extreme regression from what existed in the early 2000's...sounds like a nightmare created by bureaucracy and people that perhaps do not have an interest or passion for this population group.
	Only if a sincere effort of stated items named are actually done by those responsible to implement with actual results in mind.
	One place with "well informed people" would be ideal. Hard to believe Tulsa can put that together without taxing Tulsa residents even more. Biggest problem, employers really don't want disabled employees, believe that.
	I recently talked to an organization in California that created an App to complement the network information website. Glad to see this project on the list.
	It is a good start but I wish it was already in place. I don't see anything constructive about supporting or assisting individuals obtain jobs or job training. That is what we need for our adult son. It is hard to even get companies to give him an interview, then the ones that do give him an interview always say, we will call you, but they never do. It is incredibly discouraging for him and as his parents we know he has the skills, he is just slower.
	Will the network of information include how to apply for benefits once your child is 18 or older? We did not apply for SS thinking our son would be able to maintain a full-time position in fast-food, retail, etc. We were naive. These places don't want to give him full-time hours and he is fully capable. He couldn't live on his own if he wanted or needed to based on his income. His disability is mild, but enough to cause employment issues.
	I think this goal helps address the needs in OK's disability community. I think we need more resources to address self-harm and aggression, especially in teenagers and adults. My child is still young but I have friends with older children that feel very isolated and cannot find resources for the support they need for their child, due to aggression. Having a user-friendly network I think would help with this, but we also need resources for this in our state.
	Many individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families struggle to find clear, accurate, and up-to-date information about available services and how to access them. The idea of a user-friendly network of information is important, but it should be available in plain language and multiple formats, including online, printed materials, phone support, and in-person assistance, especially for rural communities. In-person support should include trained navigators or peer mentors who understand local systems and barriers. Transportation assistance is a critical need and should include rural transportation, non-medical transportation, and coordination with existing transit options. Caregiver training workshops are valuable, and it would help to clearly communicate how families will learn about these opportunities and ensure they are accessible, affordable, and available virtually when possible.
	Assistance in helping people (youth and adults) with invisible, mild, developmental/intellectual disabilities seek employment would be extremely helpful. Services to evaluate a person's strengths and align them with the type of job/work they are most likely to be successful at would enable individuals to focus their job search appropriately. Developing a network of employers who are willing to provide opportunities for those who might need more time to learn a job, or might not be able to work as fast as others, or may need periodic supervision to ensure they're doing the job correctly would be a tremendous accomplishment. What businesses are willing to help / provide meaningful opportunities . . . and commit to a culture of helping those who can be "productive", but not able to climb the career ladder? More seminars/business summits like the Thrive Forum 2024 would certainly help. Contact lists for companies that attend such seminars should be available to those seeking employment. Perhaps a criterion for Top Workplaces awards could be established to recognize efforts to employ individuals of need.
	Yes- the Goal meets the needs. These are all great objectives, especially #3 for transportation services.
	User friendly is a great goal. The basic, everyday workings seem very clearly to be troublesome to accomplish in our experience however. While the quite frequent turnover of case managers has its own category that may need to be addressed, it certainly begs to ask about their (case managers) training and retention. Our current case manager is working on her undergraduate degree for example and while she may be well intentioned, is often unprepared for questions that arise or responding to them in a timely manner.
	Looks good - emphasizing the transportation aspect

	Deaf and hard-of-hearing access is not synonymous with any single communication modality. A modern, legally compliant, and ethically sound system must support a continuum of evidence-based options—including bilingual ASL/English models, listening-and-spoken-language pathways, cued language/oral transliteration, speech-to-text services, captioning, assistive listening technology, qualified interpreters, and robust educational audiology. National best-practice frameworks emphasize language access, literacy, psychosocial development, and long-term independence; consequently, limiting students to a single pathway (e.g., “ASL-only”) is both antiquated and misaligned with 21st-century educational and workforce demands. Families need unbiased navigation and a complete menu of supports so each child can access instruction, peer community (Deaf and hearing), and real-world skill development—including transportation and employment readiness—regardless of socioeconomic
	For the 2nd objective, what do you mean by creative community solutions that provide in-person help? I think changing the wording will help clarify the overall goal of that objective, which is to offer support through the lifespan. Such as, "Annually through 2031, invest in innovative community solutions that deliver in-person support to Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities throughout their lifespan." Unless I'm not reading it correctly, then please disregard my suggestion.
	A user-friendly way to access information for families would be amazing. It seems so confusing and overwhelming to try to educate families on the resources available in Oklahoma. It seems working with the Dept of Ed to get information to families more timely than upon graduation would be so much more helpful.
	Write it in English only, this is America not some foreign country
	This is an amazing goal!!!! I think starting with an advisory committee from each region in OK, made up of people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities would be a great gateway into the transportation need in each area and what trainings and how to provide them. I think this goal should be top priority so you always have this committee to work with on the other goals.
	Open a resource center where you come to access services, employment, counseling, government services access and transportation services if needed. Homeless facilities after hours.
	There is nothing like person to person information. Does “user friendly” mean using the internet? Parents need to talk to someone who can answer their specific questions.
	Consider adding in a goal for individuals to have access to information on publicly funded resources that families may have access to without cost
	It looks ☺
	1. I thought there was already a user-friendly network of information available, I used to get great information from the DD Counsel anytime I needed it, are you talking about internet access? 2. What does that mean "support creative community solutions"? What are the solutions?
	I think number 2 is vague. What does this mean, creative community solutions? Number 3: improved transportation...does this mean public transit? This should be readable and easily understandable for the demographic it will also serve. People who live without higher level reasoning skills may not be able to picture/understand what this means.
	It's sounding like you mean well but not sure if you understand my issue isn't really a disability as much as it's ptsd
	If the goal is for the DD Council to create a tool for providing an explanation of services, supports, and resources how will this tool be maintained as programs evolve over time. As you develop your own tools to explain these systems, your tool may become outdated. Is it appropriate to consider building a set of standards or a set of trainings to present to various entities so they could learn more about the needs of the community you are serving so they can build their websites and pamphlets to meet that standard? For instance, there are a set of standards based on ADA that requires public-facing websites to be accessible. Would the Council be able to build on that to create an Oklahoma standard for websites and pamphlets? Does the Council have the kind of reach that might have an impact across the state?
	I do think this meet OK needs. the PCP and behavior support is much needed. I am not sure how the OK transition council and their Plan Your way OK can weave into this. And Navigating Service System - even learning about all the service systems!
	No, I am in a disability apt, however they placed kids above that run, stay up all hrs, father is alone raising them, he cusses them middle of nite and every holiday. I call police, cps, nothing is done, not even management or the corporation whom owns this place.
	I believe you should have training
	My hope is that the network of information and in-person help includes assistance with applying for TEFRA which is an incredibly difficult application process as well as assistance with applying for SSI, SSDI, and Medicaid. We could provide much more support for families through this. There should also be resources guiding parents through the education system if their child is a minor and the resources that are offered to them to assist.
	Real transportation options are needed. Include education about disability trust funds. Help with financial needs, penalties and restrictions on savings.
	This is an amazing goal. I appreciate improved transportation. Families really need help navigating the system. It is so difficult and complex and often I do not know where to start.
	Yes. The goal does meet a much needed need. I have met so many parents who have no idea how to access services for their family. Also, the amount of paperwork required to receive and continue services has been the most challenging part for me as a mom and EOR for my son who has Down syndrome
	Yes I do we as trainers should be out the others unstated how to act when we hear harsh remarks from others.
	This is very important especially to add in plain language easier to understand for everyone including those with I/DD that are living as independent as possible.

	<p>I am writing to express my full support for the Goal 1 objectives regarding the 2027–2031 State Plan. Specifically, I agree that Oklahoma needs a more user-friendly information network and improved transportation assistance for the I/DD community. These goals address the real-world barriers that families like mine face when trying to navigate complex service systems across the state.</p>
	<p>Use in language where we would understand it</p>
	<p>Focus is much needed on overseeing the homes that our intellectual and/or developmental disabilities loved ones reside in and funding used by the CMS. Some are not living their best daily lives under the care of some Home Health Agencies in Oklahoma. In some cases Agencies providing care under DDS/Community Waiver In House Support for the vulnerable adults are not showing the needed attention and oversight. Legislation and direct oversight board for Home Health Care Agencies are warranted now! Adult Protective Services is a very streamline system that does not allow concerns to be monitored as reported, if the answers do not meet certain standards, the complaint is closed, with no answer as to why or a true appeal process. OCA investigations are backlogged and this could lead to more serious harm as a vulnerable person may need immediate oversight. Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma need to do more than just launch user-friendly networks, support creative community solutions for in-person help because NOT ALL can come IN-PERSON, not just improved transportation BUT also stress the importance that caregivers stay on topics such as person-centered planning for the vulnerable adults, learn behavioral support strategies and require training online and face to face training sessions. The Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma should help our loved ones to stay safe in the DDS Community Waiver Homes that they pay rent in with In House Support Caregiver/Caretakers. Many Home Health Care Agencies are not providing the training needed to caregivers and some caregivers are abusing our love ones right under our nose and no one is doing a thing about it but investigating and because the vulnerable is considered not no totally equal understood and important (only on paper) it continues and they live day to day causing them multifaceted stress. (I have been told by a Home Health Care Agency that they were not sure that he could provide the first and last name of caregivers working and taking my love one out on outings through an Oklahoma Agency called Caremax Inc)</p>
	<p>I believe all items in this objective are important. I believe that number 3 will have the most impact for the people agency's serve.</p>
	<p>Very well thought out with the goals mentioned.</p>
	<p>Parents and individuals with disabilities often still face major challenges when trying to access information and essential resources. Transportation is a significant barrier for many people with disabilities, especially in Oklahoma, where transportation deserts exist even within metropolitan areas. Without an affordable and well-connected transportation system, individuals with disabilities may struggle to access opportunities and live full, independent lives.</p>
	<p>It may be necessary at this point in the process but I do find "network of information" to be rather vague.</p>
	<p>I have reviewed the drafted goals for the 2027–2031 State Plan and I fully agree with the proposed objectives regarding information access, transportation, and caregiver support. I believe these priorities accurately reflect the needs of our community and I look forward to seeing them implemented.</p>
	<p>I love these objectives and feel they are clear and concise. I feel everything was covered.</p>
	<p>I am not sure how these goals were developed, but I think it would be more effective to involved the families of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities to determine what specific needs are. For example, I have a son with Asperger's syndrome. He has a Master's degree in computer programming but has not been able to work for over 5 years because of medical problems associated with Asperger's syndrome. He is very smart, but there is no one to help us find him an appropriate job in the community. We have been to the Rehabilitation Service but they do not actually help to find a job. There is a lot of information out there but no real solutions. I am worried about how he will survive when I am gone. I am now 71 years old. I have been told that he will become homeless. I feel that Oklahomans need a one stop Service to provide for individual needs. We have been trying to get SSI for my son for over 5 years and he is continually denied even though we have doctor's reports that he cannot work at a number of jobs. We are told that he is not disabled "enough". We just need someone to help us. I am at a loss. I think it is also important to include doctors that understand the needs of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities.</p>
	<p>Yes, meets needs. Written clearly. Nothing else needed.</p>
	<p>WONDERFUL! This has been needed for a long time - since OASIS was no longer available.</p>
	<p>YES to the user friendly network of information and YES to improved transportation assistance. Transportation is probably one of the biggest obstacles for employment.</p>
	<p>Include rural tele medicine as an element of provision. Integrate education and follow-up tasks using this.</p>
	<p>There are multiple organizations that already provide resources to meet objective 1 and 4. Does Obj. 2 relate to in-person help to find and understand info about services, supports and resources? Obj. 3 is great, but very broad as well. I would like to see DD Council expand focus in this goal to include equitable access to DDS waivers to all Oklahomans who need the service, not just to those that apply.</p>
	<p>It would be helpful if events/meetings were not mostly in OKC.</p>
	<p>It would also be helpful to have more resources for adults with developmental disabilities instead of school age children</p>
	<p>Objective 1. Why will it take till 2031 to get this in place. Families need help NOW.</p>
	<p>Objective 2. I don't know even know what this means: creative community support????</p>
	<p>Objective 3. It's one thing to offer the training. Its another thing to make it accessible to caregivers who work, can't leave the house, or do not have access to the internet.</p>

Goal 2	Support the creation of community activities that value Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and support them in speaking up and making their own decisions.
Objectives:	Column1
1	Annually through 2031, launch and evaluate a public education campaign that showcases the contributions of Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in the workforce, arts, and community.
2	Annually through 2031, provide formalized training for 150 emerging self-advocates and their family members.
3	By 2029, an alumni network will be established for graduates of our leadership programs.
4	Annually through 2031, Self-Advocate Trainers will create and provide training to 150 self-advocates, local businesses, schools, and organizations.
5	By 2031, a cross-disability coalition will be established to help state-level policy discussions, with at least 50% of its members being people with developmental disabilities.
6	By 2030, a toolkit will be developed to assist businesses and organizations in creating more inclusive environments for employees and customers.
Comments:	
	<p>This goal reflects an important commitment to inclusion, visibility, and self-determination. The focus on leadership development, public education, and self-advocate training meets real needs in Oklahoma’s disability community. To further strengthen this goal, I recommend the following considerations: Ensure that self-advocacy and leadership initiatives explicitly include individuals with high or complex support needs, including people who are non-verbal or who rely on supported decision-making. Inclusion efforts should not unintentionally favor only those who can easily participate in traditional training or public-facing roles. Clarify how family members, trusted caregivers, and support persons can serve as facilitators of communication and decision-making without replacing or overshadowing the voice of the person with a disability. For public education campaigns, consider including evaluation measures that assess not only visibility, but also changes in attitudes, practices, or inclusion outcomes within communities, schools, and workplaces. When establishing the cross-disability coalition, consider safeguards to ensure meaningful participation across different levels of disability, communication styles, geographic regions (including rural areas), and life stages. The proposed inclusion toolkit for businesses and organizations would benefit from practical, low-cost strategies that are feasible for small businesses and rural communities. Overall, Goal 2 is well aligned with the principle of self-determination. By explicitly addressing supported advocacy and representation for individuals with higher support needs, the Council can ensure that inclusion efforts truly reflect the full diversity of Oklahoma’s disability community.</p>
	I am very interested, as a parent, how to be better about amplifying my son's voice and not speaking for him even though he is non verbal. I would love to hear more about this perspective from people with disabilities to help me be a better parent and advocate.
	Yes
	Would love more specifics in terms of working with the business community.

	<p>Fostering inclusion and self-advocacy is foundational to meaningful participation in work, community life, and policy decisions. I appreciate that this goal centers people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as leaders, trainers, and decision-makers—not just recipients of services. To make these objectives clearer and more effective, it would help to define how impact will be measured for the public education campaign (e.g., audience reach, changes in public attitudes, or increased employer engagement). The campaign could also benefit from being accessible across multiple formats and regions, including rural communities, Tribal nations, and non-digital channels. For the training goals, clarifying what “formalized training” includes (length, topics, accessibility supports, and whether stipends or transportation are provided) would strengthen transparency and participation. I strongly support the focus on self-advocate trainers and the cross-disability coalition. To ensure meaningful inclusion, I recommend adding supports such as plain-language materials, paid leadership roles, and accommodations (transportation, technology, communication supports) so that people with developmental disabilities can fully participate in training, leadership programs, and policy discussions. For the alumni network, it may be helpful to outline how alumni will stay engaged (mentorship, peer support, advocacy opportunities). One additional area to focus on is sustainability and long-term impact. For example, how will businesses and organizations be encouraged or incentivized to actually use the inclusion toolkit, and how will its effectiveness be evaluated? It may also be valuable to include youth and transition-age self-advocates as a specific focus to build leadership earlier in life. Finally, ongoing feedback from self-advocates and families should guide updates to these initiatives over time.</p>
	Yes
	Please include the occupational therapy association in the coalition! OKOTA
	Inclusive environments should also have support for parents who needs and want to work but need acomodations as their love one with disabilities does. Workplaces are not flexible and supportive with caregivers either with people with special needs. And FMLA it is like a joke (you qualify after 1400 hours of work) . Do you know how many doctors appointments the caregiver and the disabled person attend per month????
	Self advocacy seminars ran by self advocates for self advocates? Also a public poetry slam and/or open mic with a food truck or banquet being provided could be a good fundraiser and promote understanding of lived experience from poetry and spoken word.
	Yes
	Training advocates for social change in Oklahoma’s approach to, attitude about, inclusion of, our children and adult people with developmental/ or intellectual disabilities is a nice social work project to pursue social change. However, we have many people placed in employment opportunities and their families can’t afford to get them transported to and from work. They are able to make a fair wage with fair increases. Yet, if paying for their own transportation, self-sufficiency is not attainable. Please pursue activities that meet real needs. A group accompanying you to the capital will be impressive. We need tangible outcomes.
	2. Are they going to identify people from all areas of the state or break down into regions? Ages of people being trained?? Children, teens, young adults, adults? 2 & 3 confusing...does 150 = self advocates traning or 150 combined all listed entities? And again, broken into regions across state, & urban, suburban, rural areas covered? 4. Only 50%? Really??? 5. Seriously??? Why so long? Again, smacks of bureaucracy and bureaucratic employees
	Only if a sincere effort of stated items named are actually done by those responsible to implement with actual results in mind.
	Again this will definitely cost Tulsans and people with disabilities cannot afford any further expenses. How many people with real disabilities? How many people are playing it for benefits? How many use a disability to get out of jail free?
	Self-advocacy is essential for all individuals. When inclusion is natural, and not forced, belonging occurs. The toolkit for community businesses and organizations is needed.

	Yes, this goal meets real needs. I wonder if the state would supplement employers to hire people with disabilities. Whatever you do it is more than what we have now, so it is all positive. I just wish it could move faster.
	I think this goal meets the needs of OK's disability community.
	This goal reflects an important need to promote inclusion. Public education campaigns should meaningfully include people with I/DD in leadership and paid roles. Self-advocacy trainings should be accessible to individuals with different communication styles and support needs. Family involvement should support self-advocates without limiting their independence or voice. The cross-disability coalition is a strong objective. It would be helpful to clarify how members will be recruited, supported, and compensated for their time and expertise. The inclusion toolkit for businesses is a positive step and should include practical guidance on hiring practices, workplace accommodations, customer accessibility, and ongoing inclusion efforts.
	#6 is critical - Develop programs that would "incentivize" companies to address this need in a meaningful way (offer tax credit)?
	Yes- this goal represents true needs of the disability community and the objectives are clear.
	Again, these are lofty goals. I would redirect to an area that needs immediate attention in my opinion which is the training modules for residential based programs. Although I am my son's HTS in a self directed waiver, I am required now to complete these modules. As an RN with a bachelor's degree, I am not able to opt out. The content of these modules are profoundly outdated (using RETARDED as a client description) as well as significant problems with basic anatomy and physiology facts and application. This is what I understand is being used for new and current employees which is a huge red flag to me. I spoke with the program director when I pursued the ability to opt out of these modules since they seem clearly to be a waste of my precious time. She explained that I could not opt out and that the updates to these modules are being worked on to improve them. This seems to me to be a rather straightforward way to not only provide credible educational opportunities, but also properly train any employee.
	Differentiate the disability categories to allow for the right type of support
	Deaf and hard-of-hearing access cannot be reduced to a single modality. Modern, lawful, and ethical practice requires a full continuum of options—bilingual ASL/English pathways, listening-and-spoken-language development with appropriate hearing technology, speech-to-text/CART and captioning, qualified interpreters (including CDI when appropriate), and assistive listening systems such as loops/FM/IR. Unbiased navigation resources emphasize that families need accurate information across all communication approaches rather than being funneled into one "program." Limiting Deaf/HoH students to a single option is not accessibility—it is restriction, and it fails to prepare students for education, employment, and community participation in the 21st century.
	I think this goal is very vital and it is most definitely needed. Everything it covers will have a positive impact and help fill the gap of what is missing in giving more validity to inclusion and self-advocacy.
	Will the trainings on self advocacy and person centered practices include peer to peer trainers? #6 is my favorite! historically we've worked to prepare individuals with I/DD to work in integrated settings, but no one has prepared the employers and the potential coworkers!
	What is your definition of inclusion
	Yes. it's clear.
	I think a tool kit is much needed and a way to present it to the businesses so they will use it and not toss it to the side.
	Same facility can showcase the inventions and ideas 💡 of people who have disabilities.
	To me this applies only to persons with DD that is fairly functional in life skills. The individuals who need real advocacy often cannot speak up for themselves.
	Consider the additon of a network that connects individuals to employment opportunities or referrals to programs with accomdations
	Yes as a trainer get more people to train

	I feel like these objectives do meet the needs of Oklahomans with disabilities.
	1. Who are we showcasing to? The public? legislators? 2. What formalized training? In what exactly? what is a self advocate?
	Sounds like a good goal
	the toolkit can be very powerful. I wonder how the toolkit outreach can overlap with Goal 1. Are their good measure for collecting data on self-advocates and emerging self-advocates?
	I am not sure, this Goal is confusing to understand, however I am an intelligent person, I will state this, Lincoln County has poor help for disabled people. We need counselling agencies out here.
	Self advocacy matters. Maybe target scholarships and internships to individuals who have the aptitude and ability to self advocate. Maybe add recognition to businesses that go above and beyond as an incentive.
	Yes it is very difficult to get a job and keep it. Many times business do not know or understand what to do.
	The Public School System has not been able to attract special education teachers. The Boot Camp educators that are put in schools to teach special education needs improvement. In my opinion before you can even begin helping a person with disabilities to advocate they first need to complete Kindergarten to 12th grade and 2 years of transition academy. We as Oklahomans are failing our people with Developmental Disabilities in public school settings. I've tried reaching out to DDS for guidance and help. Especially since I am a PIP graduate and was not able to discuss this with anyone.
	Yesby
	This is all great and much needed. Again, I emphasize that everything needs to be in plain language clear and simplified so that everyone can understand and move forward... I feel there is a BIG need to advocacy mentors to be available for individuals with I/DD who are advocating for themselves and need the guidance and support a seasoned mentor could provide. Furthermore, I feel strongly that partners in policy making graduates should be provided seasoned mentors if the graduate wants one. I feel this is extremely important!
	I disagree with focusing strictly on the quantity of trainees as a measure of success. Simply providing training doesn't guarantee an inclusive environment. We should instead prioritize employment retention rates or specific policy wins as our primary KPIs to ensure we are creating actual integration for Oklahomans with IDD, not just checking boxes.Regarding the 2031 Coalition, I disagree with the 50% representation floor; I believe it should be at least 60-75% to ensure that the voices of those with developmental disabilities are the clear majority. Additionally, the public education campaign should shift focus from 'contributions' to 'rights and systemic barriers' to better align with modern advocacy.
	Tell our stories and let others know
	This is absolutely something that should be focused on. It meets real needs.
	This goal does seem to meet the goals afor mentioned.
	The alumni network is a powerful asset because graduates of PIP have a strong advocacy presence within the disability community across the state. By organizing and engaging this group, we can better focus and leverage their expertise to support both local and statewide advocacy efforts.
	I'd love to see additional inclusion objectives focused on laying the groundwork for self-advocacy earlier in the lifespan (i.e. what can do for young children to set them up for successfully become self-advocates in the future).
	I love each and every one of these.- great job.
	Yes, meets needs. Written clearly. Nothing else needed.
	In the business toolkit include key benefits of hiring individuals with disability.
	These are great. I would suggest offering incentives to businesses who hire individuals with IDD. They will be more inclined if there is a financial reason.

There is a level of function that cannot integrate well into mainstream businesses or organizations. For those who can, this is great. But I don't see how this will help my son who has communication issues.

Goal 3:	Provide caregivers and families with the needed support to ensure the long-term well-being of their loved ones.
Objectives:	
1	Annually through 2031, support creative community solutions that provide respite and training for family caregivers.
2	In the event of natural and/or manmade disasters, the Council may engage in additional activities to support Oklahomans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families.
Comments:	Column1
	<p>This goal addresses a critical and often underestimated reality: the long-term sustainability of families is central to the well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Supporting caregivers is not optional - it is foundational.</p> <p>To strengthen this goal, I recommend the following additions and clarifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explicitly recognize that temporary caregiver overload, burnout, or crisis does not equate to caregiver unfitness. Families often need support during periods of acute stress, and timely, preventive assistance can avoid unnecessary family separation or institutional placement. - Expand the concept of respite beyond short-term relief to include stabilization supports during high-risk periods, such as medical crises, behavioral escalation, or loss of informal supports. - Include planning supports for aging caregivers, single caregivers, and families without extended support networks, focusing on long-term continuity and future care planning. - Clarify how disaster-related activities will include preparedness and continuity planning, not only emergency response, and how these efforts will coordinate with emergency management, first responders, and local service systems. - Ensure that caregiver trainings and respite solutions are accessible and relevant for families supporting individuals with high and complex support needs, including those requiring constant supervision or intensive behavioral support. - By explicitly centering family preservation, crisis prevention, and long-term continuity, <p>Goal 3 can significantly strengthen Oklahoma's support system for both individuals with I/DD and the families who care for them.</p>
	Yes, yes, yes!
	Yes
	Think the disaster work is critical - take it to the next level

	<p>Family caregivers are the backbone of long-term support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and respite, training, and crisis support are essential to preventing burnout and ensuring stability across the lifespan. The focus on community-based solutions is especially valuable because local programs often know families' needs best.</p> <p>To make this goal clearer and more actionable, the objective of "creative community solutions" would benefit from examples and measurable outcomes. For instance, what types of respite (in-home, overnight, emergency respite) and training (behavioral supports, navigating systems, crisis planning) are envisioned, and how many families are expected to be served each year? Clarifying how families can find and access these supports—especially in rural areas—would also improve usability.</p> <p>The disaster-response objective is important, but the language is very broad. Consider specifying what "additional activities" might include (e.g., emergency respite, accessible shelters, continuity-of-care planning, medication access, communication supports) and how families will be notified and supported during emergencies. Proactive planning and coordination with emergency management agencies could strengthen this objective and reduce harm during crises.</p> <p>One additional area to consider is caregiver well-being and sustainability over time. This could include mental health supports for caregivers, peer support networks, and planning assistance for long-term caregiving transitions (such as aging caregivers and future guardianship or supported decision-making). It would also be helpful to center equity by ensuring respite and disaster supports reach rural communities, Tribal nations, and families with limited financial resources or language barriers. Regular public reporting on how many families are served and how supports improve caregiver well-being would strengthen accountability and trust.</p>
	Yes
	Sounds good!
	Create workplaces where caregivers can support each others and being able to know their love ones are supported and care in safe places.
	Along with the other goals and their respective objectives, having good marketing through social media and other entertainment apps & media is important in the entertainment age. Be a part of what the majority loves to use the majority of their time on & they are bound to hear about what your marketing.
	Yesyes
	Please see above statement.
	Omgosh...seriously? This is what was identified & nothing else? Extremely disappointing, Extremely. Plus...I don't see or didn't see, re middle aged or aged clients/families being addressed.
	Only if a sincere effort of stated items named are actually done by those responsible to implement with actual results in mind.
	Again another costs, a real disability like my brother born with a whole in his back, cannot feel from waist down. What big help can your new group provide? Tell me something new!
	Families are in need of positive support.
	During our multiple power outages due to weather disasters, we have to relocate to a hotel because our son requires oxygen at night. That is expensive and disruptive. Providing generators to families with Rx for oxygen may be helpful. I feel like we fall into a gap in the system because our son has a low IQ but not disabled IQ. He has medical needs but (thankfully) not critical medical needs. He is a functioning adult, able to drive, etc. He graduated from Rogers State University, refusing help because he was tired of always dealing with an IEP. It took him almost 8 years but he did it, all on his own. Now he still can't find a good job, because people see him as a medical liability to their company's insurance, or they aren't willing to give him a chance.
	I think this goal meets the needs of OK's disability community.

	<p>Respite services should be flexible, available across the lifespan, and accessible to families in rural and underserved areas. Clear information on how to access respite and emergency or short-notice options would be helpful.</p> <p>Disaster-related support is important and could be strengthened by including proactive planning, coordination with emergency management agencies, and accessible communication before, during, and after emergencies. Additional focus on long-term planning, including housing, financial planning, and future caregiving arrangements, would further support families.</p>
	Yes, this goal meets the needs of the community. An area of enhancement for objective 1 is to consider adding a support group that works for parents- maybe online meetings/groups?
	In our family, it is difficult to find adequately trained caregivers. As a result of our particular situation/needs, there is little respite opportunity. I would refer back to goal 2 response as to training in order to attempt to have a workforce that is prepared.
	Great plan - include power outages if not already included
	<p>When discussing preparedness goals for Oklahoma, there appears to be a significant omission regarding the deaf and hard-of-hearing (Deaf/HoH) population. In both natural and man-made disasters, this group faces disproportionate risk due to reliance on technology for communication, environmental awareness, and safety. For many Deaf/HoH individuals, access to the world is mediated through devices such as hearing aids, cochlear implants, assistive listening systems, captioning platforms, smartphones, relay services, and internet-based communication tools. In the event of a widespread power outage, infrastructure failure, cyber disruption, or environmental catastrophe, these technologies may become inoperable. When that occurs, communication access is not merely reduced—it can be eliminated.</p> <p>Children with disabilities who depend on technology are uniquely vulnerable in disaster scenarios. If power grids fail, charging capabilities disappear. If broadband or cellular networks are disrupted, relay services, captioning platforms, and emergency notifications become inaccessible. Traditional auditory emergency alerts (sirens, PA systems, radio broadcasts) are insufficient for Deaf/HoH individuals. Without intentional planning, this population is effectively excluded from real-time life-saving information.</p> <p>A comprehensive state preparedness strategy must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-based emergency charging stations accessible to individuals who rely on hearing technology. Redundant communication systems that include captioned broadcasts, text-based alerts, and visual emergency notification channels. Pre-designated emergency information streams that Deaf/HoH individuals can reliably access during infrastructure disruption. Integration of qualified interpreters and real-time captioning into emergency press briefings. Targeted outreach planning to ensure families with technology-dependent children are identified and supported. <p>Emergency management cannot assume that universal sirens or auditory alerts constitute universal access. True resilience planning requires multimodal communication design.</p> <p>If Oklahoma’s preparedness goals do not explicitly address Deaf/HoH and other technology-dependent populations, then those goals are incomplete. Disaster planning must account for the reality that accessibility is infrastructure. When infrastructure fails, accessibility must have redundancy.</p> <p>A forward-thinking state should not merely react to vulnerability; it should anticipate it. Incorporating Deaf/HoH-specific contingencies into disaster planning is not a special accommodation—it is a fundamental component of equitable public safety.</p>
	much needed outcomes!
	Parents and partners should not have to fear losing their jobs because of having to take care of their children or spouse with disability
	Yes. This is important to address.
	LOVE THIS!
	In the event of a disaster early warning ⚠️ get to a center that is hopefully storm proof.
	For adults who live in group care situations, there needs to be much more training of caregivers that work in those residences.
	Add current programs that provide respite that are available for individuals and families to utilize
	More groups to train

	<p>1. Totally agree that respite is needed for family caregivers and needs to be easily accessible.</p> <p>2. I agree that additional activities , whatever they may be, would be beneficial for people and their families.</p>
	<p>2. disaster responses: what would an additional activity be?</p> <p>it is my firm belief that when writing goals of this nature that things should be written in such a way that any person of any level of education or intellect should be able to easily follow along. I personally find these purposefully vague, without needed context on what some of these may be.</p>
	Yes
	Is there ever a disability coalition across Oklahoma. One thing I personally struggle with is the who's who and who does what. For example = there are several autism specific organizations. There are multiple parent organizations.
	This area does not focus on people with disabilities during dangerous tornadoes or flooding
	Everyone needs help
	Finance, finances, finances. Programs to provide aids, care for families. Unhoused folks and families need help.
	Great
	I found Partners in Policy making to be one of the most significant opportunities to be a better advocate for people with Disabilities. What I learned from PIP guides us at home, school, community & workplace. I hope this goal somehow relates to PIP
	By using plain language where they will understand. No
	Again, it's important for everything to be in plain language simplified for everyone to be able to understand.
	I am writing to express my full support for the Goal 1 objectives regarding the 2027–2031 State Plan. Specifically, I agree that Oklahoma needs a more user-friendly information network and improved transportation assistance for the I/DD community. These goals address the real-world barriers that families like mine face when trying to navigate complex service systems across the state.
	Just be are self we are no different than any one else
	This goal does meet real needs for our people.
	This goal meets the needs of the community.
	In my professional and personal opinion, we cannot offer enough respite opportunities for families—the need far exceeds the current supply. Families also use these opportunities to strengthen their toolkits by gaining valuable information, resources, and support.
	Possible opportunity for clarification: How does the training mentioned here in 3.1 differ from the training previously mentioned in 1.4?
	Perfect- love it- great job
	This goal does not really address-long term well-being. It may help families while parents are alive, but does not address what happens to a person who is not completely independent when the parents die.
	Yes, meets needs. Clearly written. Please include "through the lifespan" in #1.
	<p>I'm 65 years old, on social security disability for 25 years plus. My daughter was on SSI. Now off SSI, 28 going on 29, unemployed and no longer eligible for SSI because she worked for Walmart for five years. She had a slip & fall injury in Auto center that led to spinal surgery and dismissal from Walmart. Now D.H.S. in OKC want to list her as a caregiver, so she won't have to apply for work. She is borderline I.Q., and went to special education schooling all fifteen years of her life. I'm frustrated because I've been the main caregiver in her life & she does not have the aptitude or ability to care for me and I don't need a caregiver in my life. That is where you and all of you need to make changes and stop committing fraud in the work place against parents and senior citizens doing our best to help these adult children learn how to become independent and free from separation anxiety.</p>
	All caregivers need respite opportunities. Often respite opportunities are only provided for families that meet certain criteria based on income. Respite care is not easy to find for some.

	Definitely need focus on recruiting, training and pay for respite providers, as well as for Direct Support professionals. I would suggest investment in strategies to help families plan to move from being paid to provide care for loved one to transitioning to others providing that care when family member can no longer do so or when it is no longer appropriate.
	Objective 1. Again, I don't know what are creative community solutions are and what does it mean to support them? Funding? Accessibility? Objective 2 the Council MAY engage in additional activities???? What are the activities?

Other Comments:	Column1
	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this draft Five-Year State Plan. The proposed goals reflect strong intent and meaningful community engagement. Together, they create a solid foundation for improving access, inclusion, and family support across Oklahoma.</p> <p>As this plan moves toward implementation, I encourage continued attention to prevention rather than crisis response, family preservation, and continuity of support across the lifespan, particularly for individuals with high and complex support needs and the families who care for them.</p> <p>I appreciate the Council's commitment to listening to lived experience and look forward to seeing how public input is reflected in the final plan.</p> <p>Nancy Kokshoorn Mea Vota Foundation nancy@meavota.info</p>
	Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide feedback.
	Alumni association is a great idea - hope it gets traction!
	<p>In addition, it is important to consider how these initiatives will be coordinated across state agencies and community partners so families are not left navigating multiple disconnected systems. Clear commitments to plain-language communication, accessible formats, and strong privacy protections will help ensure people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can safely engage with new programs and resources. The success of these goals will also depend on a stable, well-supported workforce, particularly direct support professionals and respite providers, and addressing workforce capacity should be part of the long-term strategy. Ongoing feedback from self-advocates and families should be built into implementation to allow continuous improvement. Finally, attention to equitable access across rural and underserved communities and a sustainability plan beyond 2031 would help ensure these efforts lead to lasting, statewide impact.</p>
	That is all I can think of for now.
	<p>I've served on state planning committee and councils such as these. Most were conducted to obtain more funding, justify their existence, etc etc and all conducted by bureaucratic minded people, perpetuating the need for their positions and roles in basically supporting each other with little actual change occurring for ordinary state citizens in need. I would have hoped things change through the years but it appears not. Politics. Yet another example of why we remain in the lowest indicators re health, education, infant mortality, child abuse/death, public health, etc.</p> <p>Thanks for the opportunity to add my comments.</p>
	Only if a sincere effort of stated items named are actually done by those responsible to implement with actual results in mind.
	Ellisonyerri01@gmail.com
	Great job with this plan! Do not forget the individuals with more significant intellectual disabilities, who are still isolated and excluded, along with their families.
	There are some great programs in place already, I hope you are including them in this planning. Like the program at Northeastern State University, in Tahlequah, for students with disabilities to get a degree and New Leaf, in Broken Arrow and Owasso, providing great jobs, skills training and living resources.
	Thanks for sending out the survey!
	tanya.dillard@okdhs.org
	<p>Since our son graduated from college in 2015 we have tried to use the services of DRS, but had no success. His disability was apparently not severe enough to warrant assistance. What he asked for was assistance in finding a job . . . to be given guidance on what employers might be willing to offer him an employment opportunity. He's found jobs on his own, and is now in his 3rd year with a very compassionate employer. He may need help in the future as his "clerical" job is transitioned to AI. Our hope is that the suggestions noted above may become realites.</p>
	<p>Thank you for sharing the insight into the departments proposed goals. I appreciate the ability to have input and do hope that in our journey with DDS that the everyday workings could be a greater focus to work smoothly and in a timely manner.</p> <p>Another area I will mention is Acumen. Their lack of consistent payment to our vendors continues to be a huge concern. We recently had a new service go through becoming a vendor, then decline when he found out about Acumen's lack of reliability. Is there any accountability for Acumen to DDS or are they just another contract with the state of Oklahoma? (Refer back to everyday workings that persistently are problematic and take lots of time to resolve. It seems inappropriate to have very lovely goals when the basic system feels broken.)</p>
	<p>I have parents asking me why it is taking so long to get the approval for the DDS, when the state are basically making them go to DDS. Once they are accepted to DDS the case managers continuously are being changed and the parents feel like they have to start all over with their information when they are contacted by the new case managers....even though the new case managers have this information already but do not read about the clients. Also the case managers have other case managers come in to check on their clients then report back. Parents are not happy with case managers at all and how they preform their jobs.</p>
	<p>I think it would be helpful to improve medical provider awareness of the resources to better support individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families as I feel like right now there are a lot of missed opportunities to get individuals plugged in.</p>

	<p>clinical insight and lived experience into what meaningful access truly requires.</p> <p>For our daughter, remaining in Oklahoma would not provide the depth of opportunity she needs. We have had to look beyond our state to secure an educational environment where she can participate fully in both Deaf and hearing communities. That decision was not merely academic — it was foundational to her long-term autonomy, identity, and future success.</p> <p>As parents, we must ensure she has access to the same developmental milestones and life experiences as her hearing peers. Access is not an abstract educational slogan; it is practical, structural, and measurable.</p> <p>For example, there are currently no structured programs in Oklahoma designed to teach a deaf or hard-of-hearing student how to drive. When we sought assistance through vocational rehabilitation, we were provided with written test materials and answer sheets. That is not access. Providing written materials does not equate to providing instruction. While optional license designations or adaptive vehicle packages may exist, those are meaningless without qualified instruction. We were able to privately secure training, but most families cannot absorb those costs. Equity cannot depend on a family's financial position.</p> <p>Our daughter currently attends a virtual bilingual program that maintains rigorous academic standards. Earlier in her education, she was placed in a public-school setting with supports; however, expectations were significantly lowered. While that model felt comfortable and “easy,” it did not align with our expectations for her intellectual growth or independence. Deaf and hard-of-hearing students are not limited by intelligence. They are limited by access and by expectations.</p> <p>Meaningful development for this population requires interaction with both Deaf and hearing peers. When we attempted to enroll our daughter in high school locally, we were told her only option was the district's ASL program, and that because a “deaf program” exists, no further services would be provided. That approach reflects compliance, not inclusion. Offering a single categorical placement does not constitute comprehensive access.</p> <p>We must examine outcomes honestly. Reading proficiency rates among deaf and hard-of-hearing students should compel us to reconsider current models. If literacy remains chronically delayed, the issue is not student capability — it is system design.</p> <p>Additionally, Oklahoma lacks sufficient educational audiology infrastructure. To my knowledge, there is no statewide network of educational audiologists, and even large districts operate with minimal coverage. Without appropriate audiological oversight, access remains theoretical rather than functional.</p>
	I welcome 🙏 the honor to contribute to conversation.
	I wish I lived in an area that focused on people with severe disabilities good luck with program
	Why did I receive this
	Consider advocating for a form of tax credit for families with disabled kids.
	The Social Security System is so difficult. Would like a workshop on applying for Medicare and how to apply for Snap and income waivers and the waiting list. I am sure you have done a million of these but it would be of great help for those who are new to the system. You all are doing a great job. Thank you so much?
	I highly recommend finding some way to provide help, training, opportunities for the Bootcamp teachers and the aides who are the majority of teachers being placed in Oklahoma's public schools.
	No problem
	Please consider establishing seasoned mentors for any self advocate and all other advocate situations.
	I am a family member/caregiver of a member of the I/DD community.
	Md6301773@gmail.com
	Debra Barnett Gills
	The objectives that the Council is putting in to action will no doubt meet the needs of so many in our community with special needs, and their caregivers.
	Keep up the great work!
	I would like to see one agency that provides solutions for the care of people with disabilities. I have searched for answers for five years and there is no service that I can find that can actually help us.
	Thank you for listening and responding.
	Extreme lack of supportive housing options. Particularly for those who want to stay in their home
	There has been a great effort of inclusion for people with DD. For those who desire to be a part of mainstream society, that is commendable. But there are many individuals who don't have the skills or the motivation to participate in mainstream activities. What is being done for them????

5. Who?

- Person with an intellectual or developmental disability (I/DD).
- Person with a disability.
- Parent of a person with an I/DD.
- Family member (sibling, etc.) of a person with an I/DD.
- Guardian of a person with an I/DD (non-family member).
- Professional in a disability related field.
- I prefer not to answer
- Other

3

14

22

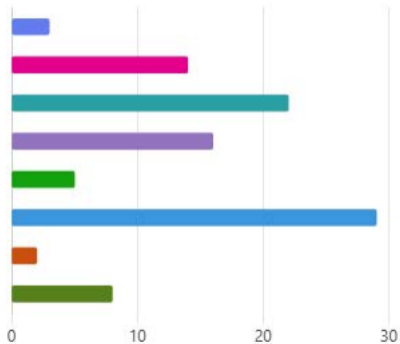
16

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Developmental Disabilities
Council of Oklahoma

State Plan Project Quarterly Progress FY26
July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026
Quarter Two Summaries



Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

AutismOklahoma, LookOut Art Programming

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
# individuals with DD who participated in council activity	60	50		
# of family members who participated in council activity	20	20		
# of others who participated in council activity	200	300		

This was the sixth quarter of the LookOut program (Year 2, Quarter 2), marked by strong community engagement and visible arts programming. Activities included public outreach events, structured art classes, and exhibits. In Tulsa, a pumpkin painting walk-up activity invited community members to engage directly with the program, followed by pumpkin-themed classes and an exhibit at the 7725 location. We also hosted the DDS Leadership team for training, using the opportunity to highlight our arts programming and partnership with the Council. During the holiday season, we held two inclusive Christmas celebrations, one for families and one for young adults, tailored to meet the needs of different participant groups.

Community partnerships continued to strengthen and expand program impact. A local car show provided approximately \$4,500 in support for the Art Commission, and our collaboration with Vantage Point resulted in 85 handmade holiday cards for employees, reinforcing community connection. The Independent Living Program completed production of a professional video with Delta Dental focused on employment and collaboration, giving participants real-world exposure through interviews and on-site filming. DUET teams continued developing artwork for the April 2026 art show at the Paseo Creativity Center, including three teams made up of artists recruited directly through LookOut, highlighting the program's success in cultivating emerging talent.

During this quarter, approximately 30 artists were served through direct programming, with outreach and education reaching at least 300 community members and about 160 hours of training delivered. Collaborations included 7725 Connect, Vantage Point, LifeChurch, the OK Corvette Club, the DDS Leadership team, and Delta Dental, with all timelines met. The program continues to prepare for the April art show, expand sustainability efforts through donations, volunteers, and an online market, and explore new fundraising strategies such as a "Friends of AO" gallery wall. Interest in the program remains strong, and recruitment of new artists continues, reflecting the enthusiasm and pride artists and families feel when sharing their work.



Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

AutismOklahoma Success Story: Turning Vulnerability into Learning Through Film

During this quarter, our film program received a **\$5,000 grant from the Delta Dental of Oklahoma Foundation** to produce a film addressing dental anxiety, with a particular focus on the experiences of people with disabilities. The project provided a powerful opportunity for hands-on learning, professional skill development, and unexpected emotional growth for everyone involved.

The film was produced by a team led by **Sarah and Dillon** and supported by approximately **eight film students**. The students were responsible for setting up the full studio environment, including professional lighting, backdrops, cameras, and sound equipment. Filming took place both in the studio and on location at a dental office, where interviews were conducted with dental professionals, including a dentist and a hygienist. In the video, one student acted as a dental patient.

Knowing that I personally experience dental anxiety, the team asked if I would be willing to be interviewed for the film. Sarah conducted the interview in a highly professional manner, intentionally not providing questions in advance to allow for an authentic and natural conversation. During the interview, she guided me through my personal history, including a childhood experience that led to my extreme dental anxiety.

As I revisited this experience, the emotions became overwhelming, and I reached a point where I was unable to continue speaking without crying. We made the decision to pause the interview and take a break.

During the break, Sarah checked in with me privately to ask what I needed. I explained that I needed time to regain my composure and asked if she could also talk with the students, many of whom are autistic, so they would understand what had happened and not feel distressed by my emotional response. I also suggested that it might be a valuable teaching moment for them as filmmakers, particularly around how to respond when an interview subject becomes emotional.

While I waited in the lobby, I could hear Sarah thoughtfully engaging the group. She asked them questions about what ethical, respectful filmmakers can do when an interviewee becomes upset. The students offered ideas ranging from giving the person space, checking in on their needs, to helping them feel more comfortable. One student even suggested telling jokes to lighten the mood.

Moments later, a couple of students came out to try exactly that—cheering me up with jokes, which genuinely helped. Another participant asked if he could give me a hug, demonstrating empathy, consent, and emotional awareness. After about 15 minutes, I felt ready to return to the studio and successfully complete the interview.



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What could have been a stressful or discouraging experience was instead transformed into a meaningful, real-world learning opportunity. The students practiced professionalism, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and compassion—skills that are essential in filmmaking and far beyond the classroom.

While the experience was personally difficult, I was grateful to serve as the “guinea pig” in a moment that clearly deepened the students’ confidence and understanding. The film is now complete but has not yet been released publicly due to grant requirements. In accordance with the agreement, all acknowledgements on the video will credit the **Delta Dental of Oklahoma Foundation** for their support.

We have since met with Delta Dental representatives to discuss future collaboration, including the possibility of an additional grant to produce another video, reflecting the strength and success of this partnership.



Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

Best Buddies, Expansion

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
# individuals with DD who participated in council activity	1	0		
# of family members who participated in council activity	0	0		
# of others who participated in council activity	25	0		

During this reporting period, Best Buddies in Oklahoma focused on targeted outreach and relationship-building across Osage, Rogers, Wagoner, and Washington counties to support future expansion of school-based friendship programs for students ages 6–18. Outreach to 85 elementary, middle, and high schools increased awareness and generated early interest, including a successful meeting with the Director of Special Education for Bartlesville Public Schools and positive responses from Newman Middle School in Skiatook and Andersen Public Schools in Sand Springs. While no new chapters were launched this quarter, these connections represent meaningful progress and have created strong entry points for future implementation.

Collaboration across education levels and service systems was also a priority this quarter. Best Buddies initiated partnerships with adult service providers, including a productive meeting with Developmental Resources, Training & Counseling (DRTC) to explore linking adult participants with an Oklahoma City–area college chapter. Additionally, early discussions began with Oklahoma Wesleyan University about establishing a college chapter, which would expand programming into a new geographic area and support transition-aged students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These efforts are strengthening a statewide network of inclusion and supporting long-term sustainability beyond the current footprint.

Outreach strategies evolved this quarter to include community-based engagement such as local Facebook groups and forums, resulting in increased parent involvement and identification of parent advocates who helped advance school-level conversations. While response rates remained limited, the team reframed success around long-term impact rather than volume and remains encouraged by the momentum gained. Best Buddies continues to explore alternative program models, including potential school-day implementation to reduce participation barriers, and remains financially sustainable through efforts such as the Champion of the Year Gala. Overall, this quarter laid critical groundwork for future expansion and reinforced the importance of persistence, community voices, and strategic outreach.



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DDS – Smart Home in Tulsa Area

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
# individuals with DD who participated in council activity	0	0		
# of family members who participated in council activity	0	0		
# of others who participated in council activity	0	0		

Soaring on Hope (SOH) is finalizing a Smart Home Demonstration Site designed to educate individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families about enabling technology that promotes independence and autonomy. Over the past three months, SOH has completed most technology purchases, partnered with OK-DDS, ABLE Tech, and vendors for additional equipment, developed a website with scheduling and a virtual tour, and began installing technologies on site. Once established, SOH will maintain the site and provide tours, using the space as a long-term educational resource to increase awareness and adoption of enabling technologies that support greater independence for people with I/DD.

Their open house is Wednesday, February 11th.



Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

Oklahoma Autism Center, Early Access Screenings & ADOS2 Qualified Examiner

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
# individuals with DD who participated in council activity	0	0		
# of families who received screening referrals/screening appts.		19		
# of families who received direct screenings	13	16		
# of families who received resources and referrals	95	37		
# of others who received resources and referrals	9	7		
# of people trained in Autism/Early Identification	14	80		
# of people trained in more in-depth training	8			
# of CASAs trained	10			
# of people trained in Pilot Training	34			

During this quarter, Early Access activities focused on trainings, screenings, and direct support for families and providers. Five trainings on autism spectrum disorder identification and developmental monitoring were conducted across Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and virtually, reaching 80 participants statewide. In addition, the team completed 16 developmental screenings, fielded 19 screening-related referrals, and provided resource assistance to 37 families seeking guidance on accessing assessments and services. Support was also extended to seven providers, and 246 *Learn the Signs, Act Early* books and related materials were distributed to promote developmental monitoring, language, and social communication.

Collaboration and outreach remained central to this work. Partnerships included providing developmental monitoring information to childcare staff at the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma, with additional potential collaborations underway with the Otoe-Missouria Tribe and childcare staff at Tinker Air Force Base. Outreach efforts through social media, community conferences, and training networks expanded awareness beyond Oklahoma City and Tulsa, and Spanish-language *Let's Play* CDC guides were introduced to better reach Spanish-speaking families. Despite staffing transitions and challenges with screening no-shows, the team adapted through flexible scheduling, reminder calls, and increased coordination among remaining staff, allowing timelines to remain on track.

Sustainability efforts focused on integrating Early Access work into broader organizational initiatives, diversifying funding, and disseminating lasting resources. Developmental monitoring activities were embedded into an OAC inclusion project with the YMCA, and new funding from the Oklahoma Department of Health is supporting additional statewide trainings for early intervention providers. The quarter also demonstrated lasting impact, as a training participant initiated plans for a parent support group in Ada, Oklahoma and connected a family to diagnostic evaluation resources. Overall, this quarter strengthened statewide awareness, built provider capacity, reduced caregiver burden, and reinforced sustainable practices in early identification and developmental monitoring.



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Sooner SUCCESS, Family Respite Retreats & Sibling Retreat

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
# individuals with DD who participated in council activity	0	0		
# of family members who participated in council activity	0	0		
# of others who participated in council activity	0	0		
# of retreats held	0	0		

All four regions have now secured their dates and sites for the Spring 2026 Caregiver Respite Retreats, marking an important milestone in the planning process. With venues confirmed statewide, each regional team is moving forward with final contracts, family outreach, and detailed event planning to ensure successful and meaningful retreats for caregivers. Planning includes respite-focused activities, service navigation sessions, partnerships with vendors and speakers, and collection of donated items. These retreats are designed to support diverse caregivers of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), particularly those facing high stress, limited respite access, or barriers related to geography, culture, or complex care needs.

Sibling support programming also remains a major focus. The Fifth Annual Sibling Camp will take place April 24–26, 2026, serving approximately 24 participants, and is supported through strong partnerships with state agencies. In addition, four Sibling Day Camps are being planned across Oklahoma to provide accessible, non-overnight options for families not ready for a full camp experience. These programs offer siblings opportunities for peer connection, emotional support, and relationship-building while providing caregivers with respite. Ongoing interest forms and regular communication have been effective in sustaining engagement with families and volunteers, and past sibling camps have generated strong positive feedback and interest in expanding Sibshops statewide.

High demand for both caregiver retreats and sibling programs confirms the critical need for these services, while also highlighting ongoing challenges. Capacity constraints, rising costs, limited respite availability, and staffing or volunteer gaps continue to limit access. Equity remains a priority when demand exceeds capacity, with efforts focused on reaching families with the greatest need. Sustainability will depend on continued funding, strong partnerships, and support from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma, including assistance with respite connections, resource coordination, outreach, and volunteer engagement. Despite challenges, strong participation and family feedback affirm the value of these programs and the importance of continued investment and strategic collaboration.

Region 1- Roman Nose State Lodge Watonga, April 17-19, 2026

Region 2- Stoney Creek Hotel Broken Arrow, April 26-27, 2026

Region 3- Embassy Suites NW Exp OKC, May 1-2, 2026

Region 4- Chickasaw Retreat and Conference Center Sulphur, March 1-3, 2026