



**Stark County  
Board of  
Developmental  
Disabilities**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2024 - 2026**

It is my honor and privilege to unveil the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities 2024-2026 Strategic Plan—a comprehensive guide that reflects our commitment to meaningful impact and positive transformation in our community.

This strategic plan is the result of an intensive four-month process, during which we actively sought feedback from the people we support, their families, our dedicated employees, providers, and community leaders. This collective effort has shaped a plan with clear and focused goals, centered on the core mission of being the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people.

The plan prompts us to be better, to continuously learn and grow, and to change so we can effectively turn our new vision, mission, and values into action.

The plan's goals include:

**Goal #1:** Supporting the next generation to learn, achieve, and succeed.

**Goal #2:** Helping people of all ages achieve security, equity and belonging.

**Goal #3:** Strengthening supportive connections and community engagement.

**Goal #4:** Building a vibrant culture of excellence, innovation, and accountability.

This strategic plan is not just a roadmap; it is a dynamic call to action. We invite you to join us on this exciting journey as we work towards creating not just good, but great lives for everyone we support.

Welcome to the future we are shaping together.

Sincerely,



William Green



William Green, Superintendent

## Board Members



Daniel Sutter, President

Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang, Vice President

Jennifer Moff, Recording Secretary

James Anderson

Maria Heege

Carmelita Smith

Cindi Sutter



***“I’m not sure how many people in the general public are aware of all the supports Stark DD provides, but I do believe they are highly respected.”***  
- Parent

## **Our Vision**

Stark County is enriched by the people we serve.

## **Our Mission**

Supporting people with disabilities and their families.

## **We Value**

With the shared goal of supporting the well-being of the children and adults we serve, we confirm our commitment to cultivating meaningful relationships and building trust among the families, providers, community partners, and our staff.

### **Committed**

We show our commitment to upholding the dignity of each person by the ways in which we treat them: fairly, truthfully, and with care and compassion. We recognize our employees are our most important asset.

### **Trustworthy**

We are responsible to people we serve and to the Stark County community.

### **Supportive**

We lead with empathy and compassion and strive to make a meaningful difference in the quality of life and overall well-being of the people we support.

### **Person-centered**

We prioritize each person, recognizing their needs, preferences, and aspirations are at the forefront of everything we do.



*“Stark DD should be partnering with schools, identifying kids they could be assisting, teaching parents what they can be doing before the child ages out at 18.”*  
- Stark County Educator

GOAL  
1

Support the next generation  
to learn, achieve, and succeed.



Help children, youth, and their families learn about and access the support they need to have a good life.

Connect with every family in Stark County that has an infant or toddler with a delay or disability.

Prepare transition-aged youth for adulthood.

Learn more about

[Goal 1 - Outcomes and Strategies](#)



***“When conversing with families who feel uncertain about post-graduation options for their child, their primary concern revolves around how their child will become a valued member of the community and find purpose in the next step.”***

- Focus Group Participant

## GOAL 2

Help people of all ages achieve security, equity, and belonging.



Improve the health and developmental outcomes for people with disabilities.

Increase the number of people we support who have competitive, integrated employment.

Transform support for people with disabilities through the use of technology.

Strengthen provider capacity, proficiency, and quality.  
Improve community access and opportunities for inclusion.

Increase access to affordable housing and accessible transportation.

Learn more about

[Goal 2 - Outcomes and Strategies](#)



*“... they have events and dances, strictly for us with disabilities, but could we merge with people in the community who don’t have a disability?”*

- Self-Advocate

GOAL  
3

Strengthen supportive connections and community engagement.



Create opportunities for and encourage the people we support to engage in self-advocacy.

Help people with disabilities, families, and the larger community become aware of available services and supports provided by the Board.

Strengthen partnerships with businesses, civic organizations, and local universities to promote supportive connections for people with disabilities.

Learn more about

[Goal 3 - Outcomes and Strategies](#)





***“Stark DD should offer more trainings on diversity and give employees a voice in the trainings that we want.”***  
- Stark DD Employee

## GOAL 4

Build a vibrant culture of excellence, innovation, and accountability.



Increase capacity to recruit and retain a diverse, high-quality workforce.

Provide employees with the necessary tools to do their best work.

Nurture a workplace culture that positively impacts the Board’s overall performance and success.

Ensure fiscal health and sustainability through continuous improvement and learning.

Learn more about  
[Goal 4 - Outcomes and Strategies](#)



# Our Process

Gretchen Kunkel, President of GHK Consulting, facilitated the Strategic Planning process, including collecting the stakeholder surveys, conducting focus groups and third-party interviews. Ms. Kunkel also led the steering committee through a series of eight, two-hour work sessions beginning in November.

Early in November 2023, the Board requested input from stakeholders on the Board's strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities that may exist, as well as possible threats that could impact our future. By December 1, 161 Stark DD Employees and Board members, 50 Providers and 90 community partners responded to the survey.

In addition, we hosted focus groups with parents/caregivers and self-advocates to get their direct input on what is working, what is not working and what they think Stark DD should focus on in the next three years. Ms. Kunkel also conducted one-on-one interviews with community partners to draw out additional feedback to help us set priorities for the future.

With Ms. Kunkel's guidance, the committee created a new vision and mission for Stark DD's future, as well as four action goals with strategies and measures of success.

***“Stark DD has demonstrated success in delivering community services, offering opportunities for families, and notably improving the early identification of developmental issues in children.”***  
- Community Partner



## The Strategic Plan Steering Committee

Facilitating the strategic plan process was Gretchen Kunkel, President, GHK Consulting. She was supported by Bill Green, Superintendent. The full steering committee included: Jeremy Ballinger, Supervisor, Provider Compliance and Support; Leigh Donatella, CFO; Tiffany Dozier, School Programs; Denise Frangos, SSA Supervisor; Ryan Heckert, CEO, TWi; Farah Jafri, Artemis Care; Edward Lewis, Director, Service and Support Administration; Shelia Meyer, SSA; Julie Palmer, School Programs; Lisa Parramore, Communications Manager; Connie Poulton, Director, Human Resources; Kristen Quicci, Director, Early Intervention and Nursing Services; and Dan Sutter, Board President.





***“Stark DD does a great job connecting and building relationships with the community and those we serve.”***

- Focus Group Participant

## SWOT Analysis

### STRENGTHS

- Committed and dedicated workforce
- Overall financial health
- Abundance of resources
- Legacy of advocacy
- Strong provider network
- Strong partnerships
- Strong community outreach and public awareness

### WEAKNESSES

- Decreasing financial resources over the next 5 years
- Sustainability of services
- Employee retention and compensation concerns
- Complex and challenging processes
- Lack of diversity
- Employee promotional opportunities
- Technology

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Continued efforts for public awareness
- Ongoing efforts for employee training and development
- A systematic effort to address the needs of multi-system youth and children with complex needs
- Direct Support Professional recruitment, retention, and recognition efforts
- Increase competitive integrated employment
- Access capital assistance funding to create more affordable housing
- Taking advantage of new technology
- Waiver modernization may assist the system to be easier to navigate
- Supporting the children and youth in our 17 school districts

### THREATS

- Lack of delegating nurses in the field
- Rules are complicated
- 2028 levy failure when requesting new money
- Societal issues coming into buildings/safety
- Cyber threats
- Ongoing recruitment and retention issues for Direct Support Professionals