

The Evolution of Auglaize DD

1950's

1951: Ohio State legislature passed Bill 157 declaring the state would financially contribute per pupil toward the operation of schools for the mentally retarded.

1953: First parents meeting representing 21 families is held in July. School started in September in the home of a local kindergarten teacher.

1956: The first school bus was purchased.

1956: The former New Bremen Sun Newspaper building on the corner of Walnut and First Streets in New Bremen was purchased for use as the Auglaize School.

1960's

1967: County Boards of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities were created by the Ohio General Assembly. (see 2009)

1970's

1970: New Auglaize School was built on the site of the old McKay Woolen Mill on the corner of 1st Street and State Route 66 and the former school side was remodeled into a sheltered workshop.

1973: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was the first enactment of civil rights protection for people with disabilities under federal law.

- The Act found that disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to: *live independently, enjoy self-determination, make choices, contribute to society, pursue meaningful careers, and enjoy full inclusion and integration* in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American society.

1980's

1980: Auglaize County Group Home built in Wapakoneta adjacent to Auglaize Acres with the ability to house 15 people. With services funded using local levy dollars, the group home provided an alternative to state institutions, especially for those with aging parents as caregivers.

1983: Early Intervention created for children, birth - age 3.

1984: The Auglaize Work Center Board was created and granted non-profit status, leading to the formation of Auglaize Industries, Inc., which eventually moved to West Boesel Street in New Bremen on land donated to the Auglaize County Commissioners by Crown Equipment Corporation.

1990's

1990: President George H.W. Bush signed the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibiting discrimination based on disability.

- Employment, as well as public transportation and public accommodations, were addressed within the Act.

1995: Preschool and school-aged programs transitioned to the Auglaize ESC and the Auglaize County public school districts.

1999: Olmstead US Supreme Court decision found the unjustified segregation of people with disabilities is a form of unlawful discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- This ruling led to significant changes at the federal, state and local levels, especially with increased enforcement over the last 5 years.

2000's

2001: Auglaize DD began accessing Federal dollars through the Federal Medicaid program which previously paid for services only if a person lived in an institution. The approval of Federal Medicaid Waiver programs allowed states to provide services to people in their homes and in their communities, including transportation, day programming and vocational training.

- When someone chooses a Medicaid waiver, they are waiving their right to receive those services in home and community-based settings rather than in an institutional setting.

2009: Ohio Governor Ted Strickland signed a law removing the words Mental Retardation from County Boards.

- This movement was led by self-advocates who viewed the term as insulting and demeaning.

2010's

2012: Ohio Governor John Kasich signed an executive order establishing Ohio as an Employment First State, meaning students in transition planning should be educated on options related to employment and planning should center on vocational training and outcomes whereas previously the majority were automatically steered toward sheltered workshops.

2015: Early Intervention Services are expanded from nine months to year-round, moving from a center based model to an evidence based, best practice model of coaching and support in which services are delivered in the best natural learning environment for the child within the community.

2017: Auglaize DD adopted a new business model with Auglaize Industries, Inc. becoming a private provider of day services and transportation per regulations set forth by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) stating County Boards cannot both administer and provider services.

2017: Project Search began in Auglaize County, offering a 9-month internship opportunity to young adults preparing to transition from school to work. Partnership between: St. Marys City Schools, Otterbein SeniorLife St. Marys, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Capabilities and Auglaize DD.

2018: The 3 remaining residents of the Auglaize Group Home moved into a 3-bedroom home in their community, and possession of the group home was turned over to the Auglaize County Board of County Commissioners.

2018: Ohio Governor John Kasich signed an executive order establishing Ohio as a Technology First state, making Ohio the first state in the country to place an emphasis on expanding access to technology for people with developmental disabilities.

2018: Early Intervention Service Coordination transitioned from the Auglaize County Health Department to the Auglaize DD Board.

2019: A complete renovation of the Auglaize DD building was completed.

2020's

2020: The COVID pandemic increased the ways in which staff was able to work and serve people remotely.