



JEFFERSON COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

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OhioRISE to open office in Bridgeport school district

BRIDGEPORT – OhioRISE’s presence is strengthening in Belmont County and connecting young people with all the available services they need. They are opening an office at Bridgeport Exempted Village School District’s campus.

OhioRISE is a Medicaid managed care program for children and youth with complex behavioral health and multisystem needs in Jefferson, Monroe, Stark, Tuscarawas, Harrison, Columbiana, Belmont and Carroll Counties.

The school district’s board of education met on April 24 to finalize an agreement for OhioRISE to rent office space at the district facilities. Superintendent Brent Ripley said the state initiative is a valuable resource to help families.

He elaborated afterward.

“Our partnership with OhioRISE is just another example of how the district is trying to expand upon the services that are available to families and students. Our goal with this partnership is to continue to be a resource hub for families and students.”

The district campus is located at 55781 National Road, along the Ohio River.

Lindsay Brandon, assistant director of the Jefferson County Educational Service Center’s care management entity with OhioRISE, said this had been a goal of the JCESC Superintendent Dr. Chuck Kokiko and CEO Dr. George Ash.

Ash commended Ripley and Kokiko for their vision to assist young people and their families.

“It is an outstanding opportunity to partner to serve Belmont County and I want to thank both governing boards for their cooperation,” he said.

OhioRISE employs care coordinators who work with young people ages birth through 21, along with parents and families. They coordinate services to “wrap around” children in need of behavioral and mental health assistance. This involves building long-term relationships with families through the member’s stages of life.

“We currently have around 15 coordinators that are working in Belmont County, so this is going to give them a space where they can go to work throughout the day, and then potentially meet with some of the members,” she said. “It’s going to allow them the ability to have a place to come together collectively.”

She said currently OhioRISE is serving approximately 100 young people in the county, and more referrals are being made.

“We’ve got a pretty good presence in Belmont County, and we’re continuing to grow,” she said. Brandon said all the coordinators will not be working in the office at the same time, but the space will allow closer collaboration as their caseloads demand. She said care coordinators will work in the Bridgeport office as needed during school hours.

“It will allow our workers to have a place to land in the county where they can work on paperwork, documentation, etc. in between their meetings,” she said. “It will also give them a place where they can meet with those kiddos that are in that school district, right inside the building.”

Brandon said care coordinators often meet with students and families in their school districts.

“This will give us a place where we can have our own space to be able to work with them, talk with them and be able to ensure that we’re coordinating the services that are appropriate for them across the board.”

In early April, Brandon toured the space with care coordinator supervisors Courtney Mason and Mary Kakascik.

“Mr. Ripley was very kind. He walked us through the space. He showed us where our folks would be able to work,” she said. “They have a wonderful building down there and it’s going to be a good collaboration. We’re really excited to be part of that.”

She said OhioRISE would be utilizing the space by the start of the 2024/2025 school year.

“We’ll be able to help with that new school year transition and we’ll be able to meet with our kiddos during that time period,” she said.

“Our job is to coordinate services, so we are working to ensure they have what they need, and they have access to the services that will help them,” she said. “We work really closely with the schools and other community organizations.”

Brandon said OhioRISE makes use of its connections with agencies and community organizations such as the boards of developmental disabilities and the therapist the child may be seeing.

“We’re facilitating that process so that way they have a direct connection to everything that is going to help them through their journey to more positive behavioral health and mental health,” she said.

Brandon anticipates more coordinators will be needed in the future.

“I think us having a space that we can utilize in the county is a step in a positive direction. We are growing in the county,” she said. “As we grow, we are going to need additional staff members to serve those kiddos, so we’re always looking for high-quality people that are able to help.”

Anyone interested in becoming a Care Coordinator, please apply at

<https://jcescvla.bamboohr.com/careers/23>.

To learn more about OhioRISE, call 740-792-4011, email ohiorise.info@jcesc.org or visit

OhioRISE online at <https://www.jcesc.k12.oh.us/CareManagementEntity.aspx>



Photo Cutline: The OhioRISE program will soon be opening an office at the Bridgeport Exempted Village School District. Care coordinators from the Medicaid managed care program will be able to meet and collaborate at the district campus as they continue to serve children with complex behavioral health and multisystem needs throughout Belmont County. Pictured is Bridgeport Superintendent Brent Ripley, from left, Treasurer Eric Meininger, Board President Karrie Puskas and board member Patrick McConnaughy during an April 24 board of education meeting where they finalized the agreement.