



# HILLIARD & CAYCI-OSU PARTNERSHIP



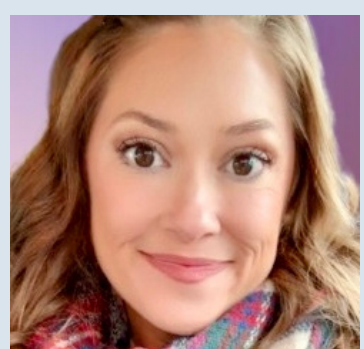
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
COMMUNITY AND YOUTH COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTE

## OVERVIEW OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Beginning in January 2023, Hilliard City Schools began a 3-year partnership with the Community and Youth Collaborative Institute (CAYCI) at The Ohio State University (OSU) to provide additional interventions and support for students and families. Annually, three to four school social work interns have been placed in 6th grade, middle, and high school settings to support the following activities:

- **Attendance and Truancy Support Services:** The primary role of the interns focuses on preventing and intervening around absenteeism and supporting students' overall health and well-being. In addition, interns conduct individual student support sessions focused on mental health/crises, problem-solving, attendance barriers, mentorship, health concerns, life skills, future planning, and support/empowerment.
- **Psychoeducation Groups:** A secondary role is observing and supporting Tier II interventions, such as psychoeducational groups (e.g., social skills, ROX, Coach Beyond for student-athletes) in collaboration with other counselors, social workers, and athletic directors.
- **Promotion of Positive School Climate and On-going Professional Development:** A tertiary role is integrating into the school community and observing climate and culture Tier I activities, including extracurricular activities, clubs/groups, parent/family engagement events, and district-wide professional development (PD) sessions.

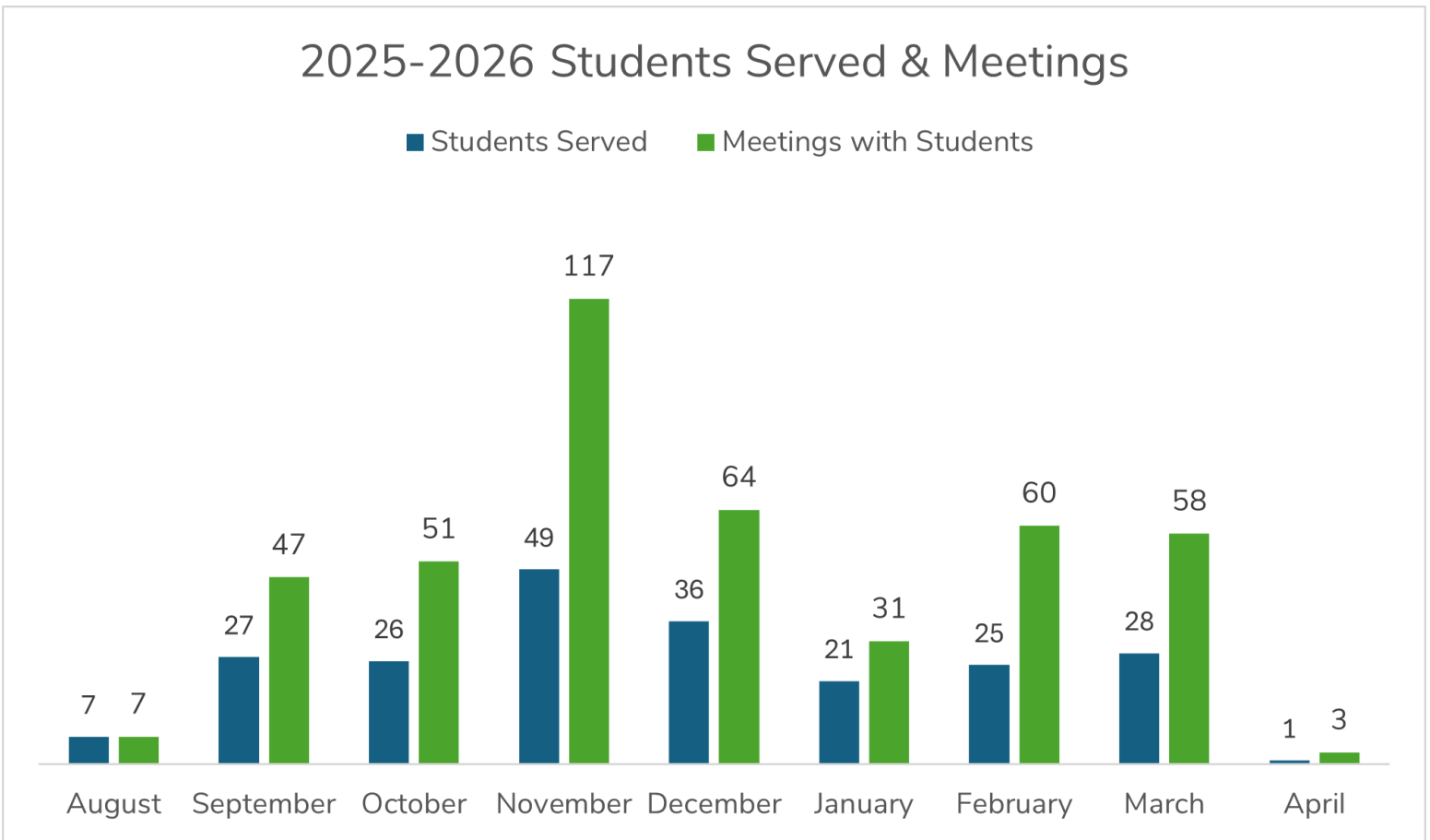
## 2025-2026 SOCIAL WORK INTERNS



Each intern was co-located in Hilliard City Schools 2–3 days per week and received 1–2 hours of weekly supervision from Anne Fogarty, LISW (OSU Field Instructor). Students also participated in monthly supervisory sessions with Samantha Bates (OSU–CAYCI Director) and Alex Beekman (Hilliard Teacher Lead for Wellness). In addition, interns attended quarterly CAYCI learning retreats focused on school social work skill development and completed site visits to local agencies to strengthen knowledge of district supports and referral pathways. Interns included (left to right): Dashah Harris, Holly Dotson, Karsen Marioth, and Melissa Miller. Melissa Miller will return for Fall 2026–Spring 2027 alongside two new interns.

# ANNUAL REACH & IMPACT

This graph summarizes the annual reach and impact of the partnership. This year, across the interns, 220 students were served, and 438 meetings took place to support students in Hilliard's 6<sup>th</sup>, middle, and high school buildings.



Primary concerns of students served by the social work interns included:

- 1
Rapport-Building

- 2
Academic-Related Challenges

- 3
Mental Health Day Check-ins

- 4
Anxiety


- Other Supports and Opportunities Provided via the Partnership:
- ROX and Social Skills Groups
  - Hilliard U Professional Development Sessions
  - Challenge Day
  - Coach Beyond sessions with student athletes focused on wellness and resilience
  - Signs of Suicide (SOS) follow-up meetings
  - Restorative Practices training
  - Shadowing opportunities at other buildings
  - Individual and group supervision sessions

# IMPACT BY END OF YEAR 3

## Grow Your Own - Addressing Behavioral Health Workforce Shortages

Since the partnership began, Hilliard City Schools has hired two OSU social work interns into full-time positions, underscoring both the timeliness of the collaboration and the broader workforce gap in school-based mental health. Because interns trained alongside district counselors and social workers, they were able to transition seamlessly into full-time roles upon graduation and immediately support emerging needs across Hilliard schools. Additionally, one intern was hired for a semester to serve as an intervention specialist while a full-time staff member was on leave.



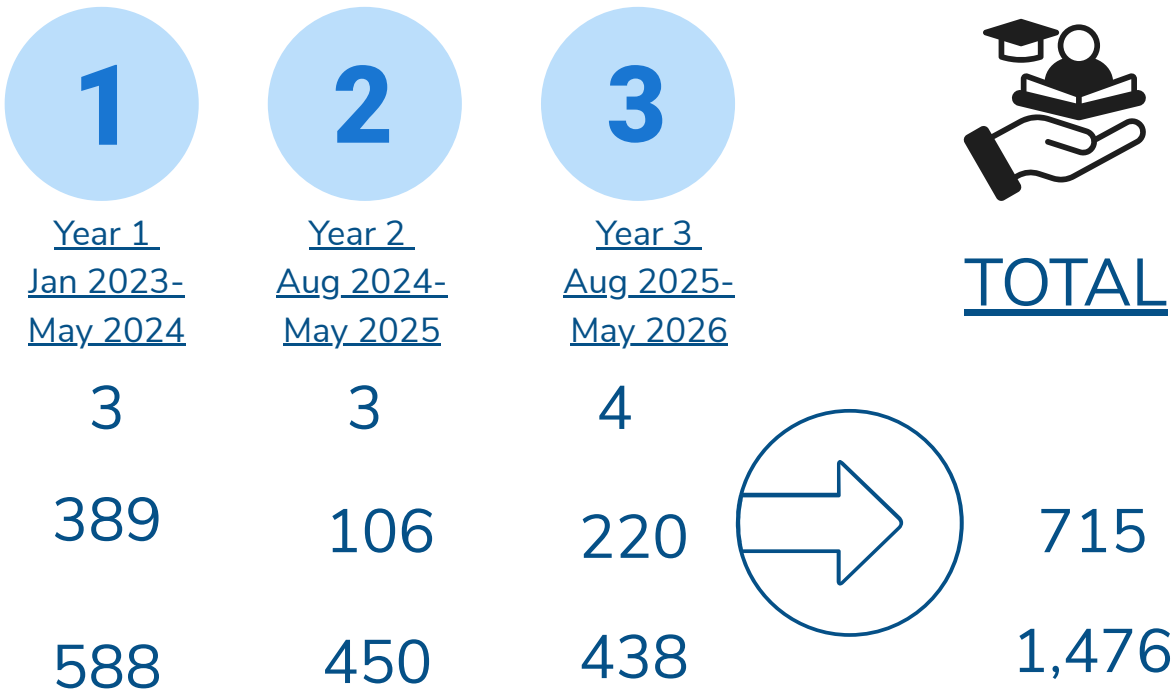
**Carolyn Wood, MSW LSW**



**Bella Chowdury, MSW, LSW**

## More Students Served - Strengthening Student Support Service Delivery

Annually, interns have helped respond to needs and support attendance and truancy efforts in the district. In total, the partnership has helped reach 709 students in Hilliard, providing over 1,400 additional connections with students to support their success in school.



# WHAT WAS LEARNED

## Key Findings from Evaluations of Program and School Activities

Evaluations conducted by interns through the Hilliard and CAYCI-OSU partnership highlight several consistent findings over time and what they suggest about the strength of this model:

**1. A clear “dosage” threshold drives student impact:** Across cohorts, students who engaged in four or more sessions with an intern demonstrated the most consistent improvements in attendance and classroom engagement. These students were more likely to transition from missing multiple periods to attending most scheduled classes, particularly when paired with a consistent check-in and relationship with a “safe person.”  
**What this says about the partnership:** Embedding interns within schools allows for sustained, relationship-based support, not just one-off interventions, making meaningful behavior change more likely.

**2. School-community referrals are effective, but caregiver engagement is the lever for scale:** Students who accessed services through Hazel Health reported high levels of perceived support, indicating that referral pathways can successfully extend care beyond school walls. However, evaluations identified the need to strengthen connections with parents/caregivers to improve referrals and continuity of care.  
**What this says about the partnership:** The model is successfully bridging school and community systems, with a clear next step of deepening family engagement to maximize reach and sustainability.

**3. Strong need for Tier II, skills-based mental health groups, especially in middle school:** Findings point to a growing need for structured, skills-based interventions, particularly Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)–informed groups focused on emotional regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal skills. Middle school students showed high engagement and benefited from these approaches, reinforcing this developmental stage as a key window for intervention.  
**What this says about the partnership:** Interns can help respond to emerging student needs and are well-positioned to scale evidence-informed Tier II supports within a multi-tiered system.

**4. Integrated, in-school training pipelines strengthen both student outcomes and workforce capacity:** Interns not only contributed over 1,000 additional student contacts, but also helped operationalize a coordinated system of Tier I–III supports while training within district practices. This has translated into direct hiring and immediate workforce readiness.  
**What this says about the partnership:** The model addresses student mental health needs and the school-based behavioral health workforce shortage through a “grow-your-own” pipeline.

## Cross-Sector Collaboration Between OSU & Hilliard City Schools

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that the partnership is not only expanding access to services, but doing so in a way that is targeted (right students), sustained (adequate session dosage), and connected (school and community systems): all critical ingredients for meaningful impact. This collaboration exemplifies an effective cross-sector model that integrates university expertise and resources directly into the K–12 setting. In doing so, it enhances student well-being and academic success while simultaneously providing interns with applied, real-world training. The result is a mutually reinforcing system that strengthens school-based supports, builds workforce capacity, and bridges academic and community resources to better meet the needs of students and families.

For questions about this partnership or the content in this report, please contact Molly Walker (mwalker@hboe.org) or Dr. Samantha Bates (bates.485@osu.edu).