

APPROVED LTF Minutes and Proceedings
Wednesday, May 3, 2023
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Local Task Force
475 East Waterfront Drive
Homestead, PA 15120-1144

Members Present

Mr. Regis Charlton
Ms. Haley Dillman
Mrs. Cindy Duch
Mrs. Debra Efke
Ms. Jean Ericsson
Mrs. Mary Evrard
Mrs. Penny Gardner
Mrs. Debbie Garvic
Ms. Amy Guthrie
Mr. Clint Hauser
Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary
Mrs. Leanna Lawson
Mr. Jim Lilley
Dr. Sue Mariani
Mrs. Nicole Meier
Ms. Meredith Peterson, Co-Chairperson

Guests Present

Debbie Efke and Penny Gardner of the Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF #3) called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM on May 3, 2023

I. Welcome, Introductions, Excused Members

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations. The following LTF member was excused from this meeting: Dave Giusti and Brian Welles.

II. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of April 5, 2023

The minutes from the April meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the Minutes. Motion was made by Penny Gardner and seconded by Cindy Duch.

III. Treasurer's Report – Ms. Debbie Efke

Mrs. Efke reviewed the May treasurer's report with the membership.

IV. Consumer Concerns

There was no consumer concerns discussed at this meeting.

V. Informational Items

A. ODS – Mrs. Mary Evrard

Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Developmental Supports (ODS) registers eligible Allegheny County residents with • Intellectual Disability (ID) • Autism • Developmental Disability (DD) prior to age 9 and • Medically Complex Condition (MCC) prior to age 21 to connect them to Supports Coordination and other supports and services. Diagnosis Eligibility Requirements for stakeholders

ODS webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Disabilities/Intellectual-Disability-Autism.aspx

Eligibility requirements at www.alleghenycounty.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6442480654

Please reach Mary at mevrard@alleghenycounty.us or 412-253-1251:

- If you have any questions about supports and services for individuals with an intellectual disability and / or autism.
- Your student is not working with a Supports Coordinator
- You are registered with ODS and working with a Supports Coordinator and do not have waiver funding as you may be able to receive Family Directed Support Services (FDSS) funding. This funding is provided under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).
- If you need information about supports and services for individuals with disabilities, resources for basic needs for everyone or funding sources for various needs.
- To sign up for regular ODS informational e-mails for all stakeholders.

Mrs. Evrard will continue to provide information through periodic emails to the LTF.

B. AIU – Special Education – Mr. Brian Welles

Mr. Welles was not in attendance at this meeting.

C.– AIU – Training and Consultation Program – Mrs. Leanna Lawson

Mrs. Lawson informed the membership that PSSA testing is currently taking place at this time and the AIU Training and Consultation (TAC) Department is starting to wind down their training for the year. They have offered teachers half day virtual training and full day in-person training during the school year.

She also informed the membership that Act 158 is being established and every school district has to identify a pathway to graduation for all students.

D. Superintendent Update – Dr. Sue Mariani

Dr. Mariani did not have any new information to share with the membership.

D. LTF/STF Update – Ms. Meredith Peterson

Ms. Peterson did not have any new updates for the membership.

E. MH Update – Allegheny County MH Children’s Team – Haley Dillman and Clint Hauser

Ms. Dillman and Mr. Hauser informed the membership the Allegheny County Mental Health Children’s Team will be offering virtual summer trainings from July 5, 2023 to August 4, 2023. They will be distributing information soon on these trainings.

They also informed the membership that there will be two new educational liaisons hired soon.

F. Right to Education – Ms. Amy Guthrie

Ms. Guthrie informed the membership about the following items:

Achieva/ Arc of Greater Pittsburgh updates for LTF2 & LTF3, May, 2023

I. Resources from Achieva- <https://www.achieva.info/>

A. Advocacy- Individualized support to assist families in navigating special education and support systems (e.g., Early Intervention, Intellectual Disability, Mental Health, Autism); 412-995-5000 ext. 486.

May 11, 6:30-8PM: All Things Support Coordination

<https://www.achieva.info/events/advocacy-presents-all-things-support-coordination>

B. Achieva Family Trust- information on webinars, long-term planning, and other resources on the [Achieva Family Trust](#) website

1. For information on the Residual grant program: ***The application deadline for funding for summer camps is May 15.***

<http://achievafamilytrust.org/charitable-residual-account/>

2. Webinars/ Presentations:

a. This [Achieva Family Trust webinars](#) link accesses **archived webinars**

C. Achieva’s Empowered Voices Leadership group for self-advocates; it meets on Thursdays from 6-8pm on zoom. [Achieva.info/ EV Meeting](#)

D. The Cecil and David Rosenthal Memorial Fund can provide grants to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live more fully included in their community. [For more information and to apply see this link.](#)

E. Achieva's Compass newsletter [April 27, 2023](#)

F. Autism Connection <https://autismofpa.org/>; News@AutismofPA; **April 28, 2023 II. Special Education Topics/ Resources**

A. PaTTAN (PA Training and Technical Assistance Network)- [Family Engagement newsletter](#)

[PaTTAN Pod](#)

B. Transition;

1. Post-secondary initiatives for students with Intellectual/ Developmental Disabilities (IDD)-

- a. [Think College](#); PA Inclusive Higher Education Consortium <https://pihec.com/>
- b. Achieva Post-Secondary College Planning Project 412-995-5000 ext. 486
- c. US DOE OSEP guidance issued 1-26-22: Postsecondary courses can be included in a student's IEP transition plan. When deemed necessary for FAPE, the LEA is responsible for ensuring that the service is provided.
- d. [PEAT Inclusive Apprenticeship Programs](#)
- e. **For Pittsburgh Public Schools graduates with IEPs:** [Dr. Kaye Cupples scholarship](#)

2. PEAL- <https://www.pealcenter.org/>; [Events](#)

- a. PEAL's Youth Resources for Transition
- b. [Transition Discoveries](#)

3. Rep. Dan Miller's Disability Summit, Thurs. May 11, Beth El Congregation. <http://www.disabilitysummit.com/>

4. Transition Coordinating Council of Allegheny County (TCCAC):

<https://aiu3tac.padlet.org/eringrimm2/april-tccac-meeting-padlet-wcgp328rhffn92cm>

5. Person-centered planning- <https://www.lifecoursetools.com/>

6. Family Supports: a. [PA Parent Alliance](#) [IEP Bootcamp Signup](#)

b. [Allegheny Family Network](#)

C. Assistive Technology:

1. SafeinHome will be taking part in the Virtual Technology Summit on June 15th from 9am-12:30pm.

The summit is free to all attendees. Please feel free to pass the information along.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAode2vpz0rHNLSMmPozu6uTwN-c8E0LKJZ.#/registration>

1. Staying Safe on the Internet

2. Setting up a Smart Home

3. Remote Supports: Staff Are Just a Phone Call Away

4. Using Technology to Get a Job

5. How to Apply for the \$30/mo. Affordable Connectivity Program?

6. Artificial Intelligence and ChatGPT

7. How Can Alexa Voice Assistant Help You?

2. Short-term Online Speech from TechOWL:

Find the Just SO announcement below and a flier here
<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6442480150>

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is excited to announce a new program available for any individual registered with ODP*.

ODP has funded online Speech and Language Pathology services through TechOWL at the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University.

Individuals and their families/teams can receive up to 10 hours of virtual services from a licensed and certified speech-language pathologist (SLP).

If you are interested in this new, free program go to <https://aaccommunity.net/so-speech-odp/>.

For questions, contact TechOWL at 1-800-204-7428 or techowl@temple.edu.

D. OSEP Memorandum Apr. 10, 2023: Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) / Response to Intervention (RTI) Process Cannot Be Used to Delay/Deny an Initial Evaluation [Memorandum link](#)

III. Legislative/ systems advocacy- *Update from Nicole Meier Emery*

A. The Arc Pennsylvania;

In Touch newsletter [April 27, 2023](#)

[TechOWL's free courses on Augmentative and Alternative Communication](#)

1. Include me education resources: <https://includemepa.org/e-learning/>

a. [Includicon](#); June 20-22; Join us for our virtual 2023 Summer Inclusion Institute!

2. Arc Discovery Employment Transitions (ADEPT): <https://includemepa.org/what-we-do/adept/>

3. Policy Information Exchange newsletter: *A Slice of PIE*, [Volume 23, Issue 4- 2022-2023](#) from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council, with information on the state budget, current legislation, and other topics.

1. Legislative Updates:

- Representative Dan Frankel (D- Allegheny) and Nelson Napoleon (D - Montgomery) introduced a package of legislation that would expand and protect hate crime bills. There are a total of 4 bills that have been introduced:
 - HB1024 proposes providing Pennsylvania's law enforcement with the training they need to properly investigate, identify and report crimes of ethnic intimidation.

- HB1025 proposes training educators and school administrators to identify and address hate incidents before they become deadly.
- HB1026 proposes requiring, as a condition of probation or parole, an individual who is convicted of ethnic intimidation to perform community service or complete educational classes relating to the motivating factor of the underlying crime.
- HB1027 proposes strengthening Pennsylvania’s “ethnic intimidation” criminal penalty language and step up civil penalties on those who target individuals or groups because of their race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability of an individual or group of individuals.

PA Whole-Home Repairs program opened on Dec. 12. [Link for more info](#)

B. PA School funding:

1. PA Schools Work <https://paschoolswork.org/resources/webinars/>
2. Advocacy tools- [School district data](#); [Advocacy Toolkit](#)

C. Office of Developmental Programs:

1. Autism and Intellectual Disabilities in PA: <https://aidinpa.org/>; ASERT: <https://pautism.org/resources/>;
2. [My ODP Podcast](#) covers topics relevant to supporting individuals with disabilities. The current topic is self-determination. [AID in PA](#) – a resource collection for Pennsylvanians in the Autism and Intellectual Disability communities.

D. The Arc of the US: <https://thearc.org/>

Medicaid Work Rules in Debt Limit Bill Puts People With Disabilities at Risk

On April 26, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2811, the [Limit, Save, Grow Act of 2023](#), which includes radical new work rules for Medicaid enrollees in exchange for lifting the debt ceiling. Section 321 of the bill requires all Medicaid beneficiaries ages 19 to 55 to meet an 80-hour per month work-reporting requirement unless they can meet an exemption. Failing this test would cut off federal funds for that individual with states having the option of terminating coverage.

The legislation applies to all Medicaid pathways, including for those on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and home and community-based services (HCBS) waivers. People with disabilities would need a doctor or other medical professional to deem them “physically or mentally unfit for employment” to be exempt from the work rules.

In a statement, [The Arc urged](#) Senators and the President to reject this extreme benefit test and other harmful cuts contained in the bill as they work towards a deal to lift the debt ceiling.

[Make Your Voice Heard: Protect Medicaid!](#)

[Virtual Program Library](#)

[Action Center](#) – toolkit for advocacy- factsheets, social media, sample letters to the editor. Congressional districts are changing. Civic action center to register to vote, info on getting out the vote.

[E. Western PA Disability History and Action Consortium:](#) *Using Disability History to Ensure Disability Rights*

F. FISA Foundation: Race & Disability [Recordings of past programs](#)

G. Frick Park Environmental Center- seeking public input for Sensory Classroom proposal:



[Frick Environmental Center Sensory Classroom | Engage Pittsburgh](#)

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, the City of Pittsburgh, community organizations, and other key stakeholders will plan and design a fully inclusive Sensory Classroom geared towards learners of all abilities at the Frick Environmental Center (FEC). The project will create a series of different sensory experiences and teaching moments of various sizes and scales, organized along an accessible ...

engage.pittsburghpa.gov

G. Disability Options Network – Mr. Regis Charlton

Mr. Charlton informed the membership that he is holding a Zoom meeting on the 3rd Thursday of the month from 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM for the Center for Independent Living clients. He would also like to sponsor a movie night and family activities for his clients.

Mr. Charlton also informed the membership that he is looking for employees for his Westmoreland County office and no experience is necessary at this time.

H. Arc of PA – Mrs. Nicole Meier

Mrs. Meier informed the membership that the Arc of PA will be holding a virtual conference this summer called Includi-Con and registration is open now until the end of May and costs \$30 to attend the conference. If you would like to register please go to the following website: <http://thearcpa.org/includicon>

I. OVR – Mr. Jim Lilley

Mr. Lilley informed the membership that OVR is currently getting ready for their summer programs for their participants. They currently have three programs running this summer including:

My Work Initiative – 137 students are registered will be working at municipalities and non-profit organizations and make \$10.35 per hour.

CVS Program – Professional connections program. He currently does not have number of participants registered at this time.

Future Camp – 15 students are registered and will be attending art/music/multimedia camp.

Mr. Lilley also shared that the amount of people that have registered for OVR between July 2021 and July 2022 were 53,721 students.

He also informed the membership that the Citizens Advisory Committee will be meeting virtually on June 13, 2023 from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. If you would like to attend, please contact Jim Lilley at jalilley@pa.gov or Pete Huey at thuey@pa.gov to receive the link to the meeting.

VI. Committee Update

A. Parent Assistance Line

There was one phone call from a parent from Mercer County. They were given the contact information for LTF #4 for assistance at this time.

B. Cyclical Monitoring – Mrs. Debbie Efke

Mrs. Efke informed the membership that Cyclical Monitoring is finished for the 2022-2023 school year. There is a need for parents to be on Cyclical Monitoring teams and they will be paid for their time. Please contact Tyann Neal or Courtney Verner at the Bureau of Special Education if you are interested in this opportunity.

VII. Old Business

There was no old business reported at this meeting.

VIII. New Business

Debbie Efkeman informed the membership that LTF Officer Nominations will be taking place at the June meeting. If you are interested in being an LTF officer for the 2023-2024 school year, please contact Debbie at 412-486-8816 or by e-mail at debbie@efkeman.com

IX. Membership Rounder

Leanna Lawson informed the membership that she recently became a grandmother to her new granddaughter Haddie.

Amy Guthrie informed the membership that her son is graduating from Duquesne University soon.

Clint Hauser informed the membership that his daughter is graduating from high school soon.

Everyone wished each other a Happy Mother's Day!

X. Motion for Adjournment

A motion was made for adjournment.

Motion was made by Debbie Efkeman and seconded by Cindy Duch.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.