**ACCEPTED** Minutes and Proceedings

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

Allegheny Intermediate Unit

Local Task Force

475 East Waterfront Drive

Homestead, PA 15120-1144

# **Members Present**

Ms. Cynthia Grace Devine-Kepner

Mrs. Cindy Duch

Mrs. Debra Efkeman

Mrs. Mary Evrard

Mrs. Penny Gardner

Mrs. Janice Geniviva

Ms. Amy Guthrie

Ms. Sharon Janosik, Co-Chairperson

Ms. Marcie Katona

Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary

Ms. Leanna Lawson

Mrs. Theresa Lydick

Ms. Sue Moyer

Ms. Joanna Patterson

Ms. Cindy Rosentreter

Mrs. Heidi Sasson

Mrs. April Tucker

Ms. Hailey Tucker

Ms. Michelle Walker

Mrs. Susan Wuenstel

# **Guests Present**

There were no guests present at this meeting.

Mrs. Debra Efkeman, Chairperson of the Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF) called the meeting to order at 7:13 PM on November 7, 2018.

**I. Welcome, Introductions, Excused Members**

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

**II. Guest Speaker – Mrs. Janice Fialka and Mr. Rich Feldman**

Mrs. Fialka talked about her experiences with her son Micah who has an intellectual disability. She talked about his elementary, middle, and high school years and how he was fully included in all of his educational activities. Micah is currently 34 years old and is a teacher assistant at Syracuse University. He currently stars in the movie Intelligent Lives ([www.intelligentlives.org](http://www.intelligentlives.org)) and we were shown a preview of the movie at the meeting. Mrs. Fialka informed the membership that they can contact her via her website ([www.danceofpartnerships.com](http://www.danceofpartnerships.com)) with any questions they have regarding the movie or her life experiences.

**III. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of October 3, 2018**

The minutes from the October meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the

minutes with changes. Motion was made by Penny Gardner and Cynthia Devine-Kepner.

**IV. Treasurer’s Report – Ms. Sharon Janosik**

Ms. Janosik reviewed the October Treasurer’s Report with the membership.

**V. Consumer Concerns**

There were no consumer concerns brought up at this meeting.

**VI. Informational Items**

1. **OID – Mrs. Mary Evrard**

Mrs. Evrard shared several resources for support through a binder of handouts, including:

* Down Syndrome Center of Pittsburgh Parent Support Group Kick-Off Meeting December 10th
* Listening Sessions with ODP for Self-Advocates and Families through December (in person and webinars)
* Epilepsy Presentation November 13th
* Transition and Employment Fair open to all November 15th
* Dan Miller Disability and Mental Health Summit March 13th through15th
* Latest ODP newsletter
* Latest ASERT newsletter
* PA Community on Transition webinar series, November 29th, December 5th, February 6th, April 10th
* National Down Syndrome Congress Convention – June in Pittsburgh
* ACHIEVA Family Trust speaker series through April 2019
* Speaking Up family groups December 2018-June 2019
* OVR Save the Dates – Pittsburgh Office, PETS (Pre-Employment and Transition Services) Programming 2018-19 School Year

1. **AIU – Special Education – Mr. Brian Welles**

Mr. Welles was not in attendance at this meeting.

1. **– AIU – Training and Consultation Program – Ms. Leeanna Lawson**

Ms. Lawson did not have any new information to share with the membership.

1. **Superintendent Update – Ms. Sue Moyer**

Ms. Moyer informed the membership that she is currently the superintendent of Duquesne City School District. She currently has 21 years of education experience and worked at York City School District before she came to Duquesne City School District. She is looking forward to working with the LTF for the upcoming school year and hopes to learn new things that she can apply to her school district.

**E. LTF/STF Update – Ms. Sharon Janosik**

Ms. Janosik informed the membership that she attended the State Force Meeting for the month of November and the main topic was Sexual Abuse in the Disability World. There are currently high rates of sexual abuse among people with disabilities. This presentation was given by the PA Coalition Against Rape (PCAR).

She also informed the membership that there is a systematic concern among the State Task Force regarding schools dismissing children early from school that have to catch school buses to keep up with the bus schedule. This concern with be submitted to the State Task Force and PDE/BSE might send out a memo to school districts regarding this issue.

She also informed the membership that the State Task Force will allow district parents to be on district specific sub-committees to approach their school districts regarding specific issues in their district. However the Chair or Co-Chair of their local LTF must also be involved in the sub-committee.

She reported that there are currently six participating school districts participating in the Parent Satisfaction Survey at the state level.

The next State Task Force Meeting will be on January 9, 2019 and the topic will be How To Write a Transition Plan.

**F. MH Update – Allegheny County MH Children’s Team – Ms. Heidi Sasson and Ms. Joanna Patterson**

Ms. Sasson and Ms. Patterson informed the membership about the Stand Together Campaign which is sponsored by the Allegheny County MH Children’s Team. It is a mental health awareness project that school districts, private schools, and charter schools can participate in to promote mental health with their students. At the end of the project in May, school districts present their projects at the Heinz History Center.

**G. Right to Education – Ms. Amy Guthrie**

Ms. Guthrie informed the membership of the following items:

* ARC response to the confirmation of Justice Brett Kavanaugh.
* ARC of PA Newsletter
* Dan Miller Disability Summit – March 13-15, 2019 – Beth El Congregation in Mt. Lebanon.
* 21 and Able Newsletter
* Education Law Center Newsletter

Ms. Guthrie also informed the membership that Jeff Ruder Law will be sponsoring an IEP Clinic at ACHIEVA.

Ms. Guthrie shared with the membership that Cecil and David Rosenthal who were tragically killed in the Tree of Life shooting were remembered by ACHIEVA in their recent newsletter.

**H. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) – Ms. Cindy Rosentreter**

Ms. Rosentreter informed the membership about the 2nd Annual Work Matters Summit sponsored by OVR during National Disability Awareness Month. OVR invited employers to conference and held break sessions for them.

Ms. Rosentreter also informed the membership that OVR now has four Early Reach Coordinators and is currently in need of a Business Services Representative.

**VII. Committee Update**

1. **Parent Assistance Line**

Mrs. Debra Efkeman informed the membership of the following calls to the Parent Assistance Line in the month of September:

A parent with an adult son let Mercy Behavioral Health manage his social security benefits with negative consequences. Mrs. Efkeman provided the parent with Representative Mike Doyle and Senator Robert Casey’s contact information to assist in this matter.

A parent called for assistance in finding an independent evaluator. Mrs. Efkeman provided him with this information.

A mother called regarding her daughter who currently has concussion syndrome. The school district denied the student the opportunity to be on homecoming court because of her GPA. Mrs. Efkeman provided the parent with resources to assist her with this matter.

Ms. Amy Guthrie informed the membership that she had calls from the following schools and school districts for the month of October to the Parent Assistance Line: Gateway SD, Montour SD, Propel Charter School – Hazelwood, West Jefferson Hills SD, West Mifflin SD, and Woodland Hills SD. She provided all callers with the resources they needed to assist them with their issues.

1. **Cyclical Monitoring – Ms. Janice Geniviva**

Ms. Geniviva informed the membership of the upcoming Cyclical Monitoring schedule:

11/12/18 – East Allegheny School District

11/12/18 – Riverview School District

1/14/19 – Plum Borough School District

1/14/19 – Upper St. Clair School District

2/18/19 – Highlands School District

2/25/19 – Wilkinsburg School District

3/4/19 – Propel Charter School – Braddock Hills

3/11/19 – Avonworth School District

4/15/19 – Cornell School District

5/6/19 – Propel Charter School – Homestead

1. **Parent Satisfaction Survey – Mrs. Susan Wuenstel**

Mrs. Wuenstel informed the membership that she is currently talking with Jennifer Johnson from the Woodland Hills School District regarding the distribution of the parent satisfaction survey in her district. A Woodland Hills School District – School Board Member has concerns with the survey and if it will be beneficial to their students. Mrs. Wuenstel has contact Keith Focht from the State Task Force with assistance in answering this concern.

**VIII. Old Business**

Debra Efkeman will be writing a letter to Ann Hinkson-Herman regarding Cyclical Monitoring from the LTF and it will be ready for the December LTF meeting.

**IX. New Business**

There was no new business discussed at this meeting.

**X. Membership Rounder**

Cynthia Grace Devine-Kepner informed the membership that Facebook is providing PTA’s around the US over $200,000 in grants. Each individual PTA is given $1,000 to reach out to parents and hold webinars of their meetings. Please contact her if you are interested in applying for your district’s PTA.

Michelle Walker informed the membership that the University of Pittsburgh will be holding a Disability Disco on 11/17/18.

Janice Geniviva informed the membership that Best Buddies raised over $160,000 at their TasteBuds event that was held on 11/5/18 at David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

**X. Motion for Adjournment**

A motion was made for adjournment.

Motion was made by Janice Geniviva and seconded by Sharon Janosik.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 PM.