# **APPROVED** LTF Minutes and Proceedings

Wednesday, December 1, 2021

Allegheny Intermediate Unit

Local Task Force

475 East Waterfront Drive

Homestead, PA 15120-1144

# **Members Present**

Mr. Regis Charlton

Mrs. Cindy Duch, Co-Chairperson

Mrs. Cynthia Grace Devine-Kepner

Mrs. Debra Efkeman

Mrs. Mary Evrard

Mrs. Penny Gardner

Mrs. Debbie Garvic

Ms. Amy Guthrie

Ms. Marci Katona

Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary

Mrs. Leanna Lawson

Ms. Ursula Lesic

Dr. Sue Mariani

Mrs. Joanna Patterson

Ms. Heidi Sasson

Mrs. Heather Zak, Chairperson

# **Guests Present**

There were two guests present at this meeting.

Mrs. Heather Zak, Chairperson of the Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF #3) called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM on December 1, 2021.

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

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

**II. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of November 3, 2021**

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

minutes. Motion was made by Debra Efkeman and seconded by Penny Gardner.

**III. Treasurer’s Report – Mrs. Heather Zak**

Mrs. Zak reviewed the December treasurer’s report with the membership.

**IV. Speakers – Pittsburgh Occupational Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Team**

The following members of the OVR team talked about their job functions in their organization and the various services they provide at this time:

Marci Katona – OVR District Administrator

Jim Lilley – Pre-ETS Supervisor

Ashley Mullen – Early Reach Coordinator/Pre-ETS

Cindy Rosentreter – Early Reach Coordinator/Pre-ETS

Tricia Timmons – Vocational Rehab Counselor

Beth Traynor – Pre-ETS/Supported Employment Supervisor

Each member explained their function with OVR to the membership and how they support children and adults in the Pittsburgh area.

**V. Consumer Concerns**

There was no consumer concerns discussed at this meeting.

**VI. Informational Items**

1. **ODS – Mrs. Mary Evrard**

Mrs. Evrard shared the following items with the membership:

* If you have any questions about supports and services for individuals with an intellectual disability and / or autism. If you need information for individuals with disabilities or resources for basic needs.: [mevrard@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:mevrard@alleghenycounty.us)  412-253-1251
* Visit the ODS webpage: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Disabilities/Intellectual-Disability-Autism.aspx>
* Find a more organized announcement page here! [https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Disabilities/Key-Communicators.aspx](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.alleghenycounty.us%2fHuman-Services%2fPrograms-Services%2fDisabilities%2fKey-Communicators.aspx&c=E,1,IcO_-J7TGonMoZO4SCUwu9dQgGh3aa0OC7u2GgYrvUTDlsDYBUGV5PQ42kn-5eRV1BOtwr_PAmSZA6a_ZQNoztErPkwoUvwXfrkF3OgQKTsyG2s,&typo=1)

**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 the AIU Training and Consultation Department is sponsoring an Executive Functioning Series and it is open to parents and professionals. If you are interested in attending, please visit [www.aiu3.net](http://www.aiu3.net) to register for this course.

1. **Superintendent Update – Dr. Sue Mariani**

Dr. Mariani informed the membership that the Duquesne City SD is in need of substitute teachers at this time.

**E. LTF/STF Update – Mrs. Cindy Duch and Mrs. Heather Zak**

Mrs. Duch and Mrs. Zak did not have any new information for the membership.

1. **MH Update – Allegheny County MH Children’s Team – Mrs. Joanna Patterson**

Mrs. Patterson informed the membership that there is a staff shortage in mental health because of the increased use of school based therapy by students at this time.

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

Ms. Guthrie shared the following information with the membership:

**Achieva/ Arc of Greater Pittsburgh updates for LTF2 & LTF3, December, 2021**

***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.

***B. Achieva Family Trust*-** information on webinars, long-term planning, and other resources on the [Achieva Family Trust](http://achievafamilytrust.org/) website; to subscribe to the AFT newsletter ***Trust Matters***, see the most recent edition: [Nov 9, 2021](https://mailchi.mp/achieva/trust-matters-july2021-5234312?e=0429402a66)

1. For information on the Residual grant program: <http://achievafamilytrust.org/charitable-residual-account/>

2. [Achieva Family Trust Webinars](http://achievafamilytrust.org/our_services/webinars-and-events/)- this link accesses **archived webinars** such as: **“**Special Needs Trusts and ABLE Accounts.”

***C. Achieva’s Empowered Voices Leadership group for self-advocates*;** itmeets on Thursdays from 6-8pm on zoom. [Achieva.info/ EV Meeting](https://achieva.zoom.us/j/96795009607?pwd=%20WEJPNjR6TUg1bFZqZjBFc3RYRXI0dz09#success)

***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](https://www.achieva.info/cecilanddavid).

***E. Achieva’s Compass newsletter*** [Nov 4, 2021](https://us17.campaign-archive.com/?u=26aa29fbc6030d3b4aa356be3&id=4f371ef126); [Archived newsletters](https://www.achieva.info/newsletters)

**F. Achieva’s podcast** <https://www.achieva.info/caretolisten>

***II. Special Education Topics/ Resources***

***A. PaTTAN (PA Training and Technical Assistance Network)*-**

[PaTTAN Training events](https://www.pattan.net/events/)

[PaTTAN Pod](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCkBP2csbOssi3rUsfM-yQT1DVGUihxg2)

[PaTTAN Conferences](https://www.pattan.net/Training/Conferences) – [PA Dept of Education Conference, March 2-4, 2022](https://www.pattan.net/Training/Conferences/Pennsylvania-Department-of-Education-Conference)

***B. Transition***

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

a. [Think College](https://thinkcollege.net/);

b. PA Inclusive Higher Education Consortium <https://pihec.com/>

c. Achieva Post-Secondary College Planning Project [Koosterhous@achieva.info](mailto:Koosterhous@achieva.info); 412-995-5000 ext. 606

d. [The Arc PA's Transition Tidbits](https://www.smore.com/14vh8-pa-transition-tidbits?ref=email)

**2.**  **PEAL-** <https://www.pealcenter.org/>;

**Family Leadership Institute** (FLI), a multi-session, in-depth training for families will build knowledge and leadership skills related to inclusive special education and health care, offered at no cost to families by the PEAL Center and our partners!  
 Live sessions will be held on Zoom every Tuesday evening, from 5:00-6:30 pm, for 7 weeks between January 11th and February 22nd, 2022. Participants MUST COMMIT to attending all live sessions, in addition to completing "Learning On Your Own" (LOYO) assignments in between.  
 Participation is by application only, which must be completed and submitted by December 3rd, 2021 at this link: [Virtual Family Leadership Institute Application](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PEALVirtFLI2022)

a. [PEAL's Youth Resources for Transition](https://www.pealcenter.org/youth-and-young-adults/); [Youth Development Trainings](https://pealcenter.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ce102732c8968be2cd2e38884&id=743d941c3e&e=5322656350)- Every Other Friday, beginning October 15th, 2021 from 12:00-1:00 pm on Zoom.

[Youth Virtual Coffee Drop Ins](https://www.pealcenter.org/event/youth-virtual-coffee-drop-ins-2/2021-09-02/), every Thursday at 12PM

b. Transition Tuesdays [Archived webinars](https://www.pealcenter.org/transitiontuesdays/#youth_young)

c. [Transition Discoveries](https://www.transitiondiscoveries.org/)

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

**4. Transition Coordinating Council of Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh (TCCAC)** [Register for meetings at this link](https://www.smore.com/jkaz4); **For more information:** Dr. Erin Grimm [erin.grimm@aiu3.net](mailto:erin.grimm@aiu3.net); 412-394-4952

**Meeting dates:** January 18, 2022, March 8, 2022, April 5, 2022, May 10, 2022- 11th Annual Mock Interview

***C. Inclusion and LRE:* Visions and Voices TogetherFacebook page:** [**Six LRE Flaws we've been ignoring**](https://www.facebook.com/VisionsandVoicesTogether/)**Dec. 2, 2pm**: Presentation with Dr. Cheryl Jorgensen on policies and practices that are universally designed for learning**.**

***D. FISA Foundation Disability Inclusion & Access*** [Race + Disability Program](https://fisafoundation.org/disability-inclusion-pgh/race-disability-upcoming-programs/)- upcoming webinar: Mon. Dec. 13, 12:00-1:30- [Race & Disability Action Steps](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/race-disability-check-in-action-steps-tickets-208119720687); [Recorded webinars](https://fisafoundation.org/disability-inclusion-pgh/race-and-disability/)

***III. Legislative/ systems advocacy-***

**A.** [**The Arc Pennsylvania**](https://thearcpa.org/)**;** *In Touch* newsletter [Nov 18, 2021](https://us8.campaign-archive.com/?u=4d3151ca1b38a632a9445b3d9&id=c95925cc34)

**1.**  [COVID-19 resources](https://thearcpa.org/resources/corona-virus-resources/corona-virus-covid-19-resources.html): Call 1-800-424-4345 for assistance

[PA Department of Health](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx); <https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/>

* Disability Rights Pennsylvania is operating a Vaccine Hotline to assist Pennsylvanians with disabilities who are interested in getting the COVID-19 vaccine Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at 1 (833) 377-2829 or vaccine@disabilityrightspa.org.
* When arranging for an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing to receive information via telephone, PA Relay Services are available by **dialing 711.**

**2. Making connections for the 21st century workforce:** [The Arc of PA's youtube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN_3iaU-WYuY_MdO1i5ZWtw/videos)

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

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

**5. Policy Information Exchange newsletter:** *A Slice of PIE,* [Vol. 22, Issue 3- 2021](https://www.paddc.org/slice-of-pie/vol-22-issue-3-2021/) - from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council,with information on the state budget, current legislation, and other topics.

a. [House Bill 2083](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billInfo/billInfo.cfm?sYear=2021&sInd=0&body=H&type=B&bn=2083): legislation would allow the Secretary of Education to have the authority to authorize exceptions to the age cap in public education programs for students with disabilities who turn 21 to remain to 22 through the 2035-2036 school year. This bill has been referred to the House Education Committee.

b. Senate Bill 324, “Fostering a Smooth Transition for Graduation” to ensure additional supports for students who experience instability in education, to help them graduate on time. This bill recently moved out of committee.

c. Many bills address topics relevant to people with disabilities, such as: clarifying how medical excuses are accepted for school attendance records (HB 94); streamlining hiring and promotion of individuals with significant disabilities (HB 114); School Student Mental Health Assistance (HB 407).

**B. PA School funding:**

**1. PA Schools Work** <https://paschoolswork.org/resources/webinars/>

**2. Advocacy tools**- [School district data](https://paschoolswork.org/school-district-data/); [Advocacy Toolkit](https://mcusercontent.com/0a17ee9f29e887a408e1a3de5/files/4a74c95e-0444-44bd-a81f-a72ffb25bb3b/Advocacy_Training_Toolkit_Winter_2021_FINAL_2_.pdf)

**3. Fund Our Schools PA Case Trial** –the trial began on Nov. 12, 2021. <https://www.fundourschoolspa.org/>; Click here for [Daily highlights from the trial](https://www.fundourschoolspa.org/news)

**C. Office of Developmental Programs:**

1. Autism and Intellectual Disabilities in PA: <https://aidinpa.org/>;

2. ASERT: <https://paautism.org/resources/>;

**3.** [My ODP Podcast](https://www.myodp.org/mod/data/view.php?id=28133) covers topics relevant to supporting individuals with disabilities. The current topic is self-determination.

**D. The Arc of the US:**

[The Arc of the US Advocacy priorities](https://thearc.org/covid19recovery/?utm_source=mc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fusion):

* **The Build Back Better Act**- Invest in Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS)- expand access and create more and better direct care jobs [Share your story about why Home and Community-Based Services matter](https://p2a.co/zc2H8lN?p2asource=fb-091021&fbclid=IwAR0oHO0pG-0Ssts2TnjhVuhuLx_VPXODhsOL_L-8dYAZ3HxQGtL9-Bb3jWE)
* Federal Legislation to stop seclusion and restraint in schools and provide funds for training of school personnel in evidence-based proactive strategies: **Keeping All Students Safe Act (KASSA)** (HR 3474/S.1878), the **Protecting our Students in Schools Act** (HR 3836/S.2029), and the **Counseling Not Criminalization Act** (HR 411/S.2125) <https://www.copaa.org/general/custom.asp?page=ProtectStudents3bills11-3-21>; <https://www.stophurtingkids.com/>
* IDEA Full Funding Act- Introduced on Nov. 16, it will require regular increases in IDEA spending in order to fulfill the law’s mandate.
* Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act- introduced on Nov. 18, it would provide funding to transition to new models of employment, and phase out the sub-minimum wage.
* The Senate Committee on Aging held a hearing on Nov. 18: “Inclusive Disaster Management: Improving Preparedness, Response, and Recovery,” to look at gaps in disaster management that impact people with disabilities and older adults.

1. **Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) – Ms. Marci Katona**

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

1. **Disability Options Network – Mr. Regis Charlton**

Mr. Charlton did not have any new information to share with the membership.

**VII. Committee Update**

1. **Parent Assistance Line**

There was one call made to the parent assistance line from a parent of a child in Beaver County. The parent was called and was left a voicemail message.

**VIII. Old Business**

No old business was discussed at this meeting.

**IX. New Business**

No new business was discussed at this meeting.

**X. Membership Rounder**

Everyone wished each other a Happy Holiday and Happy New Year!

**XI. Motion for Adjournment**

A motion was made for adjournment.

Motion was made by Debra Efkeman and seconded by Amy Guthrie.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.