

ACCEPTED LTF Minutes and Proceedings
Wednesday, June 1, 2022
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. Debbie Efkeman
Mrs. Mary Evrard
Mrs. Penny Gardner
Mrs. Debbie Garvic
Mr. Dave Giusti
Ms. Amy Guthrie
Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary
Mrs. Nicole Meier
Ms. Ursula Lesic
Dr. Sue Mariani
Mr. Brian Welles
Mrs. Heather Zak, Chairperson

Guests Present

There were two guests present at this meeting. The following member and was unable to attend this meeting: Cynthia Grace Devine-Kepner, Jean Ericsson, Leeanna Lawson, and Meredith Peterson .

Mrs. Heather Zak, Chairperson of the Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF #3) called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM on June 1, 2022.

I. Welcome, Introductions, Excused Members

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

II. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of May 4, 2022

The minutes from the May meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the minutes. Motion was made by Debbie Efkeman and seconded by Heather Zak.

III. Treasurer's Report – Mrs. Heather Zak

Mrs. Zak reviewed the June treasurer's report with the membership.

IV. Speaker – Mrs. Mary Evrard – Allegheny County Office of Developmental Supports (ODS)

Mrs. Evrard informed the membership about following information:

- Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) and Allegheny County Office of Developmental Supports (ODS) website.
- Timely and helpful information and resources.
- Charting the Lifecourse Framework and Planning Tools.
- Went over the waiver information for parents.

V. Consumer Concerns

There was no consumer concerns discussed at this meeting.

VI. Informational Items

A. 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 412-253-1251

- Visit the ODS webpage here: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Disabilities/Intellectual-Disability-Autism.aspx>

Learn about *Timely and helpful information and resources* here <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6442456626>

And access a *Community and service systems* resource list here <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6442467069>

B. AIU – Special Education – Mr. Brian Welles

Mr. Welles informed the membership that he attended the Dan Miller summit and there was low attendance this year. A new venue is trying to be secured for next year so it brings more participants.

Mr. Welles informed the membership that he attended PAIU Day on the Hill at the Pennsylvania State Capital. A group of representatives from various intermediate units met with senators and state representatives to discuss educational funding. Mr. Welles also presented the proposed governor's budget to the membership.

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

Mrs. Lawson was not in attendance at this meeting.

D. Superintendent Update – Dr. Sue Mariani

Dr. Mariani informed the membership that her school district as well as other school districts around Allegheny County are currently looking into their safety and security plans to make sure all children and adults are safe in their schools at this time.

D. LTF/STF Update – Mrs. Heather Zak

Mrs. Zak did not have any new updates from the State Task Force for this month.

F. MH Update – Allegheny County MH Children's Team

The Allegheny MH Children's Team was not in attendance at this meeting.

G. Right to Education – Ms. Amy Guthrie

Ms. Guthrie informed the membership about the following items:

Achieva/ Arc of Greater Pittsburgh updates for LTF2 & LTF3, June, 2022
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](#) website; to subscribe to the AFT newsletter *Trust Matters*, see the most recent edition: [April 13, 2022](#)

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

2. [Achieva Family Trust webinars](#) this link accesses archived webinars such as: “Future Planning Conference 2021.”

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 28, 2022](#) [May 26, 2022](#)

F. Achieva's [YouTube channel](#) II. Special Education Topics/ Resources

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

[Transition Tidbits, June, 2022](#)

[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. Thus deemed necessary for FAPE, the LEA is responsible for ensuring that the service is provided.

d. **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; Youth Development Trainings-](#)
Every Other Friday, from 12:00-1:00 pm on Zoom.

[Youth Virtual Coffee Drop Ins, every Thursday at 12PM](#)

b. Transition Tuesdays [Archived webinars](#)

c. [Transition Discoveries](#)

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

C. Office of Civil Rights

[Factsheet- FAPE for students during pandemic under 504](#) - Students with disabilities may be entitled to Compensatory Services if they did not receive appropriate evaluations or services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

D. OSERS- US Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services:

[Mar 24 letter to Educators and Parents regarding new CDC recommendations](#)

If students are at higher risk of hospitalization and or death from COVID, that IEP or 504-plan team needs to ensure that they are able to receive FAPE safely. In addition, schools are obligated to make necessary modifications/accommodations to do that without segregating students with disabilities. One option might be, on a case-by-case basis, expecting others who interact with them to wear masks. Another might be to have smaller groups of nondisabled peers for instruction so they can be included in at atmosphere with fewer risks.

III. Legislative/ systems advocacy-

A. **The Arc Pennsylvania; Advocacy & Policy Conference- June 6-7** ** See attached flyer

In Touch newsletter [March 31, 2022](#)

1. Workshops:

[PA Family Network](#) range from: Transition, Waiver, Person-Centered Planning

[Positive Behavioral Supports](#), from ODP

2. Include me education resources: <https://includemepa.org/e-learning/>
INCLUDI-CON- June 21-23 [Register here](#)

3. Arc Discovery Employment Transitions (ADEPT):

<https://includemepa.org/what-we-do/adept/>

4. **Policy Information Exchange newsletter: A Slice of PIE**, [Vol.22, Issue 4, Dec 2021](#) from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council, with information on the state budget, current legislation, and other topics.

- **The Disability Inclusive Curriculum Bill**- Listed as **HB 726** in honor of the date of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it would establish a pilot program to provide instruction to students on political, economic and social contributions of individuals with disabilities. The Special Education Sub-Committee will hold a hearing on February 10, 2022. This hearing is the next step in the process of getting this legislation passed.
- [Senate Bill 924](#), which was introduced by Senator Michele Brooks, would halt the announced closure of Polk and White Haven State Center for at least 5 years. Institutes a task force to review the impact of the planned closure to the residents, staff, and local economy. A closure can only move forward once a majority vote of the task force approves the closure. The bill was voted out of the Senate by a vote of 32-18. It will now go to the House for consideration.
- **The Charter School Reform Act of 2021 (HB 272)**- Fixing Pennsylvania's Charter School Law to protect kids and taxpayers
- **Crisis Standards of Care (HB 1927)**- introduced by Representative Jessica Benham, requiring the Department of Health to develop triage guidelines and procedures that actively address unfair decisional bias in our health care systems, to ensure equal access to critical care.

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/>;

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

3. [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:

[Virtual Program Library](#)

S.4102- The SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act- would raise SSI asset test from \$2,000 to \$10,000 for individual

H.R.4786- Rise, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower Act- would support students with disabilities in college.

The Advancing Integration in Medicare and Medicaid Act- will direct states to develop integration strategies to reduce confusion and complexity, and to advance health equity.

[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.

Biden Administration Releases Executive Order on Criminal Justice

The EO directs federal law enforcement agencies to record use of force incidents, report white supremacist infiltration into law enforcement agencies, and investigations for serious officer misconduct. The EO directs the Attorney General and Secretary of Health and Human Services to consult with nonprofit organizations and issue guidance on best practices for responding to calls and interacting with persons in behavioral or mental health crisis or persons who have disabilities. The Arc is working to identify and support policies that would help communities to shift away from police-led responses to people experiencing behavioral health crises. The EO also addresses identifying services and best practices to support the mental health of officers.

[Read the full text of the EO here](#)

E. Western PA Disability History and Action Consortium: *Using Disability History to Ensure Disability Rights*

F. FISA Foundation Race + Disability series: [Disability Inclusion & Access](#), free virtual programs in April.

G. PA Governor and Senate Candidate Forums:

<https://www.familycareact.com/candidate-forums>

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

Ms. Katona was not in attendance at this meeting.

I. Disability Options Network – Mr. Regis Charlton

Mr. Charlton informed the membership that his organization will be starting Disability Pride Pittsburgh on July 23, 2022. He will be sending more information to Heather over the summer to e-mail to the membership regarding this new organization.

Mr. Charlton also informed the membership that Disability Options Network is planning a press conference to rally at the PA State Capital to rally against the sole provider of attendance services because it is hurting smaller providers. More information will be sent to the membership regarding this rally soon.

J. Arc of PA – Mrs. Nicole Meier

Mrs. Meier did not have any new information to share with the membership.

VII. Committee Update

A. Parent Assistance Line

There were no new calls to the parent assistance line for the month of May 2022.

B. Cyclical Monitoring – Mrs. Heather Zak

Mrs. Zak informed the membership that Cyclical Monitoring is finished for this school year.

VIII. Old Business

It was suggested by several members to contact OVR (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation) to ask them if they are sending any representatives to LTF meetings.

IX. New Business

The LTF Nomination Committee has proposed the following nominations for the 2022-2023 school year:

A motion was made to nominate Meredith Peterson as Vice Chairperson of LTF #3 for the 2022-2023 school year.

Motion was made by Cindy Duch and seconded by Penny Gardner

Motion was discussed.

Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made to nominate Dave Giusti as Chairperson of LTF #3 for the 2022-2023 school year.

Motion was made by Cindy Duch and seconded by Penny Gardner.

Motion was discussed.

Motion passed unanimously.

X. Membership Rounder

Everyone wished each other a great summer!

XI. Motion for Adjournment

A motion was made for adjournment.

Motion was made by Penny Gardner and seconded by Heather Zak.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.