# **APPROVED** LTF Minutes and Proceedings

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

Allegheny Intermediate Unit

Local Task Force

475 East Waterfront Drive

Homestead, PA 15120-1144

# **Members Present**

Mr. Regis Charlton

Mrs. Debra Efkeman

Ms. Jean Ericsson

Mrs. Mary Evrard

Mrs. Penny Gardner

Ms. Amy Guthrie

Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary

Ms. Ursula Lesic

Mrs. Nicole Meier

Ms. Joanna Patterson

Ms. Heidi Sasson

Mr. Brian Welles

# **Guests Present**

There were four guests present at this meeting. The following members were unable to attend this meeting: Cindy Duch, Leanna Lawson, Sue Mariani, and Heather Zak.

Mrs. Penny Gardner, Member of the Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF #3) called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM on March 2, 2022.

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

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

**II. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of February 2, 2022**

The minutes from the February 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. Penny Gardner**

Mrs. Gardner reviewed the March treasurer’s report with the membership.

**IV. Consumer Concerns**

There was no consumer concerns discussed at this meeting.

**V. 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 here: [https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Disabilities/Intellectual-Disability-Autism.aspx](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252fwww.alleghenycounty.us%252fHuman-Services%252fPrograms-Services%252fDisabilities%252fIntellectual-Disability-Autism.aspx%26c%3DE%2C1%2Cc5iHEHpOLUcqj1iNXePxfsbZtMJsWJL4TmFE6AA7-BWqREQLk_Zq4MJCSTOoqJY_QP8gLHprG9ltg0--Ohg6RbkYCiXjn8YR6GjowJJPo-A%2C%26typo%3D1&data=04%7C01%7CMary.Evrard%40AlleghenyCounty.US%7C04cd756d9d3f423f3ff208d9e71914c1%7Ce0273d12e4cb4eb19f708bba16fb968d%7C0%7C0%7C637794917184147120%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=gcYNwl3nJ0gH0owQV%2BfdGIcEhSEEkR508CkyxftEeCo%3D&reserved=0)

Learn about *Timely and helpful information and resources* here [https://www.alleghenycounty.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6442456626](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252fwww.alleghenycounty.us%252fWorkArea%252flinkit.aspx%253fLinkIdentifier%253did%2526ItemID%253d6442456626%26c%3DE%2C1%2ConqYG31Z3yhT7Y6KPFc8Ni6YHdaS3mZQUNEP8hf0iulRUYGUthqnLFtM7-GPOrXCovdRAUCMUmVHTr20AK3pBh2ItigNtAKGfxF0V5UMJK8%2C%26typo%3D1&data=04%7C01%7CMary.Evrard%40AlleghenyCounty.US%7C04cd756d9d3f423f3ff208d9e71914c1%7Ce0273d12e4cb4eb19f708bba16fb968d%7C0%7C0%7C637794917184147120%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=UL7jAJ2EzW1i8dDj%2FEhnKntoMJxMgqVbvU4GkfRxbgI%3D&reserved=0)

* And access a *Community and service systems* resource list here [https://www.alleghenycounty.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6442467069](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252fwww.alleghenycounty.us%252fWorkArea%252flinkit.aspx%253fLinkIdentifier%253did%2526ItemID%253d6442467069%26c%3DE%2C1%2CdldUM2uZSFJFOqs1WexlBcrPvzkubsEtQoGCXNKpCvIWEALSwXb773AxJVy3gWm8HzAYzLcF33eT5Ofx8RrrfIk6PYaWBS66rUl6QEGBWJyGmZhJGep5QQ%2C%2C%26typo%3D1&data=04%7C01%7CMary.Evrard%40AlleghenyCounty.US%7C04cd756d9d3f423f3ff208d9e71914c1%7Ce0273d12e4cb4eb19f708bba16fb968d%7C0%7C0%7C637794917184147120%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=G%2Fgr%2BakwCGNueg%2B6sUKTbN%2Fc4Xm4LPE0rM%2B94LrIylw%3D&reserved=0)

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

Mr. Welles informed the membership about the ESY program at the AIU this summer. The AIU is holding ESY programs at the three center based schools Mon Valley, Pathfinder, and Sunrise. However, they are not taking referrals for ESY camps because they do not currently have the staff members to work at the camps this summer.

Mr. Welles also shared the Annotated IEP information from Pattan with the membership:

<https://www.pattan.net/Forms/Annotated-Individualized-Education-Program-wit-2>

He also informed the membership that there is still a staffing shortage in schools for special education and regular education teachers.

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

Mrs. Lawson was not in assistance at this meeting.

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

Dr. Mariani was not in attendance at this meeting.

**E. LTF/STF Update – Mrs. Penny Gardner and Mrs. Debra Efkeman**

Mrs. Gardner and Mrs. Efkeman informed the membership that the State Task Force Meeting will be held on March 16, 2022 and Heather Zak will send out the meeting link before the meeting to the membership.

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

Ms. Sasson and Mrs. Patterson informed the membership that their office is currently experiencing a staffing shortages at this time and they are trying to hire a fourth educational specialist for their team.

They are also recruiting school districts for their Stand Together Campaign.

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

Ms. Guthrie informed the membership about the following items:

**Achieva/ Arc of Greater Pittsburgh updates for LTF2 & LTF3, March, 2022**

**Celebrating World Down Syndrome Day on March 21!**

***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: [Feb 9, 2022](https://mailchi.mp/achieva/trust-matters-jan2022-5234687?e=0429402a66)

1. For information on the Residual grant program:

[http://achievafamilytrust.org/charitable-residual-account/](http://achievafamilytrust.org/charitable-residual-account/ )

2. [Achieva Family Trust webinars](https://www.achieva.info/family-trust/resources?search=1&search_category=7) this link accesses **archived webinars** such as: **“**Future Planning Conference 2021.”

April 7, 10 AM [Decision Making for Adults with Disabilities](https://achieva.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_rsh6QHsBSA26PiTgyU3vuA)

***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***  [Feb 17, 2022](https://mailchi.mp/achieva/compass2-17-2022?e=0429402a66)

**F. Achieva’s podcast** <https://www.achieva.info/caretolisten> ***II. Special Education Topics/ Resources***

***A. PaTTAN (PA Training and Technical Assistance Network)*-** [Family Engagement newsletter](https://www.smore.com/7w6yh-family-engagement?ref=email)

[Transition Tidbits](https://www.smore.com/d1cyk-pa-transition-tidbits?ref=email)

[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/); PA Inclusive Higher Education Consortium <https://pihec.com/>

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

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. Research and Design Internship for students with Spinal Cord Injury or Spina Bifida- For more information, and to schedule a phone interview, contact Josh Marino, Education & Outreach Coordinator, at [josh.marino@pitt.edu](mailto:josh.marino@pitt.edu)

e. **For Pittsburgh Public Schools graduates with IEPs**: [Dr. Kaye Cupples scholarship](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fforms%2Fd%2Fe%2F1FAIpQLSfJk8lXFPmRHtVH0pE574fiDo5YEGdxiOix3rdNkHulZEL8VQ%2Fviewform%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR07Y-zLXohKA_x0EzixsMDKOebVSt3h07c-h99hvlhsUzMKSIhdWSJsDeg&h=AT2TIM_hQSQe_2SSdVu2MAtmYiq-0WvgOibpTfF_bjhDtEQfr1s4yfGDodo_Ad4MnCfsjPdK6QsBIvU_zVxIh0S_dUVIgKTY5c_xim9jJipf28Hx1BJW5yyDN7mQUScYzA&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT32yy7U8GIxx0tq6a7IbmD6RbDK6vSpUQo9xf3O6S8CeefGlZWTqrH3AwnfsUiU-B8XV5JdS_u4jmenl8o14VnvV8o-4j4kcIqNFvNSCxmBR6BDeljyKBmLJdaaC7aSup0PXRe9Pw_Syt4wqwyDgH2vn7RwOlxCUn1u8ZvXVj2D2g)

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

**a. Keynote & Q&A Presentation by Keith Jones**- Jan. 18. 12-1:30 PM [After 22- Family is the Key to Achieving and Thriving](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/after-22-family-is-the-key-to-achieving-thriving-keith-jones-registration-229439217877)

b. [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, 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

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

d. [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:** March 8, 2022, April 5, 2022, May 10, 2022- 11th Annual Mock Interview

***C. Office of Civil Rights***

[Factsheet- FAPE for students during pandemic under 504](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/factsheet-504.html?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term) – Students with disabilities may be entitled to Compensatory Services if they did not receive appropriate evaluations or services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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

**A.** [**The Arc Pennsylvania**](https://thearcpa.org/)**;** *In Touch* newsletter [Feb 17, 2022](https://us8.campaign-archive.com/?u=4d3151ca1b38a632a9445b3d9&id=28883ad52d)

**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 4, Dec 2021](https://www.paddc.org/slice-of-pie/vol-22-issue-4-2021/) 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](https://thearcpa.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4d3151ca1b38a632a9445b3d9&id=86e83bc7c0&e=dcd71f5f92), 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

**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.  **Closing arguments begin on March 10, 2022,** [Livestream](https://www.fundourschoolspa.org/trial)

**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.

[AID in PA](https://aidinpa.org/) – a resource collection for Pennsylvanians in the Autism and Intellectual Disability communities.

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

[Virtual Program Library](https://programlibrary.thearc.org/browse?utm_source=cc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=cfp)

[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)

Arc update on BBB- negotiations are behind closed doors; need to keep the pressure up.

* ABLE Age Adjustment Act (S.331/ HR1219)- to expand eligibility for people who acquired their disability after age 26.
* BENES 2.0 Act- simplifies enrollment in Medicare for seniors and people with disabilities
* Marriage Penalties for People with Disabilities (Just introduced Marriage Equality for People with Disabilites)
* SGA- Substantial Gainful … needs to be increased so people on SS, SSI can earn more and not lose SS benefits.
* 988= calling for health care services (like 911)
* Preventing Restraint and seclusion at federal level.

[Action Center](https://p2a.co/lRPDZ5C) – 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.

Midterm elections- 2022- nonpartisan non-political role to help people have the resources to exercise their right to vote.

**E.** [**Western PA Disability History and Action Consortium**](https://www.wpdhac.org/): *Using Disability History to Ensure Disability Rights*

**F. FISA Foundation Race + Disability series**: [Disability Inclusion & Access](https://fisafoundation.org/disability-inclusion-pgh/race-disability-upcoming-programs/), free virtual programs in February and March.

G. **PA Governor and Senate Candidate Forums**: <https://www.familycareact.com/candidate-forums>

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

Ms. Katona was not in attendance at this meeting.

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

Mr. Charlton informed the membership that his Peer Support Group meeting was successful and he will be having one the third Thursday of each month from 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM at Panera Bread in Bakery Square.

He also informed the membership that his co-worker Katie passed away recently.

1. **Arc of PA – Mrs. Nicole Meier**

Mrs. Meier informed the membership that the Arc is holding a 3 day virtual training from June 21-23, 2022. She will update the membership once the details are finalized in the future.

**VII. Committee Update**

1. **Parent Assistance Line**

There were no calls to the parent assistance line in the months of February.

1. **Cyclical Monitoring – Mrs. Heather Zak**

Mrs. Zak informed the membership that cyclical monitoring will take place on:

Shaler Area SD - 4/4/2022

South Fayette SD – 4/11/2022

**VIII. Old Business**

The membership will discuss the HB 726 letter on behalf of the LTF #3 written by Sharon

Janosik at the April LTF meeting.

**IX. New Business**

A motion was made to nominate Jean Ericsson and Nicole Meier as new members of the LTF.

Motion was made by Penny Gardner and seconded by Debra Efkeman. Motion passed unamiously.

**X. Membership Rounder**

Debra Efkman informed the membership that her daughter Kate is doing well at this time with her jobs and personal life.

Nicole Meier informed the membership that she will celebrate her first year of marriage this upcoming April.

Brian Welles informed the membership that he ran into one of his past students who he was a mentor to during his time at Baldwin School District. The student is now a special education teacher and said that he inspired he to become one a few years ago.

**XI. Motion for Adjournment**

A motion was made for adjournment.

Motion was made by Mary Evrard and seconded by Amy Guthrie.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.