

ACCEPTED LTF Minutes and Proceedings
Wednesday, November 2, 2022
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Local Task Force
475 East Waterfront Drive
Homestead, PA 15120-1144

Members Present

Mr. Regis Charlton
Mrs. Cynthia Grace Devine-Kepner
Mrs. Cindy Duch
Mrs. Debbie Efke
Mrs. Mary Evrard
Mrs. Penny Gardner
Mrs. Debbie Garvic
Ms. Amy Guthrie
Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary
Mrs. Ursula Lesic
Dr. Sue Mariani
Mrs. Nicole Meier
Mrs. Joanna Patterson
Ms. Meredith Peterson, Co-Chairperson
Mrs. Heidi Sasson
Mr. Zac Stranko
Mr. Brian Welles

Guests Present

There were four guests present at this meeting.

Ms. Meredith Peterson, Chairperson of the Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF #3) called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM on November 2, 2022.

I. Welcome, Introductions, Excused Members

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

II. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of October 5, 2022

The minutes from the October meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the Minutes with changes. Motion was made by Debbie Efke and seconded by Penny Gardner.

III. Treasurer's Report – Ms. Meredith Peterson

Ms. Peterson reviewed the November treasurer's report with the membership.

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

Mrs. Evrard explained the Office of Developmental Services and what services they provide for children at this time.

Mrs. Evrard also explained the ODS Assessment and Resource Team and they services they provide for the public including:

- Supports Coordinator
- Individual Supports Plan
- Prioritization of Urgency Need (PUNS)
- Waivers (3 Different Waivers)
- Service Providers and Delivery

V. Consumer Concerns

A concern brought up regarding a student being bullied on social media and at school and the parents have contacted the school district for assistance in this matter. The school district has offered the family no assistance at this time and the family was wondering where they could get assistance for this issue. Several members of the LTF suggested that the parent check into the bullying policy of their child’s school district and also contact the Pennsylvania Safe to Say program.

A parent was looking for early intervention services in the City of Pittsburgh and was told to contact their Early Intervention Office at 412-529-4000.

A concern was brought up regarding group services being offered for Early Reach OVR instead of individualized services. OVR stated that their Early Reach program service are individualized at this time. Several members of the LTF suggested that the parent put that the child should receive individualized OVR services in their IEP.

A parent brought up a concern regarding her son receiving alternative transportation to his school. Parent is worried that the school district will take the alternative transportation away from her son. Several members of the LTF suggested that the parent put that her son must receive alternative transportation in his IEP and the school district can’t take this away from him. There may be some issues if they can’t find a driver or an aide to provide the alternative transportation but the district should communicate any issues with the parent.

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>

- Please contact Mary to sign up for ODS informational e-mails.

B. AIU – Special Education – Mr. Brian Welles

Mr. Welles informed the membership that the state of Pennsylvania is looking into paying social worker and nursing interns to work in schools to fill open positions.

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 Duquesne City SD is currently collecting coats and hats for needy families during this winter season.

D. LTF/STF Update – Ms. Meredith Peterson

Ms. Peterson informed the membership that she has no new information to report from the State Task Force at this time.

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

Mrs. Patterson and Mrs. Sasson did not have any new information to report to the membership during 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, November, 2022

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

A. Advocacy- 1. **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.

2. Webinar: **The Intersectionality of Race and Disability**, with Alonna Carter-Donaldson; **Wednesday, November 9, 2022, from 6:30 – 8 p.m.** Join with Google Meet - meet.google.com/sdd-nrij-pyj or dial: (US) +1 929-269-1859 PIN: 732 386 456#

B. Achieva Family Trust- information on webinars, long-term planning, and other resources on the [Achieva Family Trust](https://www.achievafamilytrust.org/) website

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

2. Webinars/ Presentations:

a. [Preparing Transition Students for the Workforce and to be Financially Successful](#) Dec. 6, 10:00 AM

b. 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](https://www.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 [Oct. 27, 2022](#)

F. Autism Connection <https://autismofpa.org/>

II. Special Education Topics/ Resources

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

[Transition Tidbits, Oct. 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. When 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. Transition Coordinating Council of Allegheny County (TCCAC): Nov. 16, 9AM-12PM [Meeting schedule & registration](#)

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

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

b. [Allegheny Family Network](#)

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- Update from Nicole Meier Emery

A. The Arc Pennsylvania;

In Touch newsletter [Oct. 27, 2022 Voting and Disability Toolkit from Disability Rights PA](#)

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

1. **Include me** education resources: <https://includemepa.org/e-learning/>
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 3, 2022](#) from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council, with information on the state budget, current legislation, and other topics.
 - [Senate Bill 1333](#) proposes updates to Pennsylvania Guardianship Laws. The legislation is now eligible to be brought forward for a vote by the full Senate.
 - [Senate Resolution 339](#) recognizes October as Disability Employment Awareness Month in Pennsylvania. The bill has been referred to the Senate Rules and Executive Nominations Committee.
 - [H.B. 404](#) / [S.B. 1269](#) Children’s Mental Health Ombudsman; Referred to Aging and Youth, June 14, 2022

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://paaautism.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: The Capitol Insider, Oct. 17, 2022

- [S. 4102 SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act](#)
- **H.R. 4786- RISE Act-** was passed by the House; it will eliminate barriers to accommodations faced by students with disabilities in higher education.
- **H.R. 8863- Words Matter Act of 2022** was introduced. It will update U.S. code with the term “intellectual disability.”

[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 Continuing the Conversation, Nov. 17 1-4:30PM](#); [Recordings of past programs](#)

G. PA Developmental Disabilities Council (PADDC): [Outlooks Newsletter, Fall, 2022](#)

H. Disability Options Network – Mr. Regis Charlton

Mr. Charlton informed the membership that his organization will be holding a peer group at the Panera Bread in Bakery Square the 3rd week of each month.

Mr. Charlton also informed the membership that his organization assists individuals with disabilities with independent living as well as housing services.

I. Arc of PA – Mrs. Nicole Meier

Mrs. Meier informed the membership that the Arc of PA will be holding an after school hangout series from 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM online. The November session will cover Your Identity is Bigger Than You. Please register on the Arc of PA website at: <https://thearcpa.org> if you are interested in attending this session.

J. OVR – Mr. Pete Huey

Mr. Huey was not in attendance at this meeting.

VII. Committee Update

A. Parent Assistance Line

There was one phone call to the Parent Assistance Line for the month of October 2022 and it was from a Pittsburgh Public School parent who has a daughter who is being bullied at an approved private school. The parent was referred to LTF #2 for assistance with this matter.

B. Cyclical Monitoring – Mrs. Debbie Efke

Mrs. Efke informed the membership that the following school districts will be having Cyclical Monitoring on the following dates:

West Jefferson Hills SD – 11/14/22

Hampton SD – 12/5/22

If anyone has any information on these school districts, please contact Debra Efke.

VIII. Old Business

There was no old business reported at this meeting.

IX. New Business

There was no new business reported at this meeting.

X. Membership Rounder

Everyone wished each other a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Cindy Duch congratulated Dr. Sue Mariani on her accomplishments with Duquesne City School District in getting their sports programs started again.

VIII. Motion for Adjournment

A motion was made for adjournment.

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

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.