# **APPROVED** LTF Minutes and Proceedings

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

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, Co-Chairperson

Mrs. Debra Efkeman

Mrs. Mary Evrard

Ms. Penny Gardner

Ms. Amy Guthrie

Ms. Marci Katona

Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary

Mrs. Leanna Lawson

Ms. Ursula Lesik

Dr. Sue Mariani

Mrs. Joanna Patterson

Ms. April Tucker

Mrs. Heather Zak, Chairperson

# **Guests Present**

There were three guests present at this meeting. The following members were unable to attend this meeting: Debbie Garvic and Susan Wuenstel.

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 October 6, 2021.

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

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

**II. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of September 1, 2021**

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

minutes. Motion was made by Debra Efkeman and seconded by Heather Zak.

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

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

**IV. Speaker – Ms. Tyann Neal – Pennsylvania Department of Special Education**

Ms. Neal talked about the following issues with the membership during the meeting and answered their questions these issues:

* Cyclical Monitoring
* Covid – Educational Issues
* Educational Staffing Issues
* Homebound Student/Home Instruction
* IEP Issues
* Disability Issues
* Supports for School Personnel

If you have any additional questions, you can reach Ms. Neal by phone at 412-337-9175 or by e-mail at [tneal@pa.gov](mailto:tneal@pa.gov)

**V. Consumer Concerns**

A concern was brought up by a parent that has a 46 year old daughter with cerebral palsy. She can’t get a caregiver for her daughter and she would like her daughter to get a job. Several members of the LTF suggested that the parent contact Regis Charlton at the Three Rivers Center for Independent Living and Achieva for assistance with this issue.

A concern was brought up by a parent who has a son who wanted to change the fire drill in her district to play music instead of loud drilling noises. The parent has met with the school principal and he seems to be favorable to this change with the fire drill. Several members suggested that the parent meet with school administrators to discuss this plan with them.

**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](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.alleghenycounty.us%2fHuman-Services%2fPrograms-Services%2fDisabilities%2fIntellectual-Disability-Autism.aspx&c=E,1,mLEBWPq7bQw99_2_yv2b5UdR9lPHKEJn9gYw8HYIG0Bdyjo7FoAh3PUG46SNkk9Szy7yDzRnzwM34Yb1ufZ4wr_l1iE-3xm4diZ3PWXHq5Y,&typo=1)
* Find learning opportunities and new announcements about resources 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)
* Mary will continue to share resources and events that may be of interest to the membership through email throughout the month. If you’d like to receive these emails directly reach Mary.

**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 Program now has 12 coordinators and 1 administrative assistant. They are offering training courses in the schools, AIU Central Office, and online via Zoom for teachers and school staff members.

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

Dr. Mariani informed the membership that the Duquesne City SD is fully in –person at this time. They now service students from Pre-K to 7th grade in their district at this time. They did not have any COVID cases last school year but had nine COVID cases this year.

She also informed the membership that Duquesne City SD has received a Jefferson Foundation Grant and will be using it towards Walmart.com grocery deliveries for families.

Dr. Mariani also informed the membership that Duquesne will be opening a Uplift Center for the families of Duquesne for wi-fi and computer use at this time.

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

Mrs. Duch and Mrs. Zak informed the membership about the following State Task Force events:

State Task Force Meeting – 11/12/2021 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – The meeting will be conducted online.

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

Mrs. Patterson did not have any new information to report to the membership at this time.

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, October, 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, see: [Trust Matters, Sept. 15, 2021](https://mailchi.mp/achieva/trust-matters-july2021-5234100?e=a3c18524db)

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/)- a. see this link for **archived webinars** such as: **“**Special Needs Trusts and ABLE Accounts,”

b. **register for upcoming topics**:

Nov. 2, 12:00- 2:00 [register for Successful Strategies for Self Advocacy, part 2](https://achieva.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZsQQ-ScLTH2E5EtIH7eLjw)

***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*** [Sept. 23, 2021](https://us17.campaign-archive.com/?u=26aa29fbc6030d3b4aa356be3&id=e82044e1f2); [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) – HELIX (High Expectations for Students with Low Incidence Disabilities): November 8, 9, 10, 2021

***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 of PA- Post Secondary Education, part 2](https://thearcpa.org/post-secondary-education-discussion-part-2/); Oct. 26, 6-7pm

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

a. [PEAL's Youth Resources for Transition](https://www.pealcenter.org/youth-and-young-adults/);

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

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:** November 16, 2021, January 18, 2022, March 8, 2022, April 5, 2022, May 10, 2022- 11th Annual Mock Interview

**5. Pittsburgh Promise Transition Fair- Oct. 14, 5:30, PPS Obama,** 515 N. Highland Ave. Pittsburgh 15206; <https://pittsburghpromise.org/>

***C. FISA Foundation Disability Inclusion & Access***

[Race + Disability Program](https://fisafoundation.org/disability-inclusion-pgh/race-disability-upcoming-programs/)- upcoming webinar: Oct. 28

[Recorded webinars](https://fisafoundation.org/disability-inclusion-pgh/race-and-disability/)

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

**A.** [**The Arc Pennsylvania**](https://thearcpa.org/)**;** [The Arc PA's *In Touch*, Sept 23, 2021](https://us8.campaign-archive.com/?u=4d3151ca1b38a632a9445b3d9&id=1d26efcda8)

**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/>

* If an individual does not have a direct support professional (DSP) that can provide them with the appropriate COVID-19 vaccine and healthcare provider information, they can call the **PA Health Hotline**at **1-877-724-3258**
* 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. PA State budget- Human Services, Labor & Industry, Education

b. COVID-19 Resources and Information

c. From Education Voters of PA: **HB 1254** would require school districts to offer a tuition voucher to resident students if they don’t offer a full-time in-person educational option to students--for example, if a school district has to close a school **\*for a single day\***to mitigate the spread of COVID. [HB 1254](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/HA/public/HaCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&syear=2021&sind=0&body=H&type=B&bn=1254&pn=1328&ayear=2021&an=02375&aType=DAY)

Although the bill was defeated on Sept. 28, House Republicans filed a motion to reconsider, it could be voted on again at any time. [Find your Legislator](https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/)

d. Many bills address topics relevant to people with disabilities, such as: accessibility (HB547), MH supports (HB 694), caregiver (HB 464) to employment (HB543).

**B. PA School funding:**

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

**2. Fund Our Schools PA Case Trial** –the trial has been scheduled for Nov. 12, 2021. <https://www.fundourschoolspa.org/>

**C. Office of Developmental Programs:**

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

**2.** [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 Better Care Better Jobs 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)
* Create a national paid leave program
* Improve the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program

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

Ms. Katona informed the membership that OVR staff members returned to in-person services on July 19, 2021. The main OVR office is still not open to the public. There is currently no wait list for OVR services as of July 2021.

Ms. Katona also informed the membership that the list of OVR Employment Companies has been sent to Heather Zak to distribute via e-mail to LTF membership.

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

Mr. Charlton shared with the membership his office is currently looking for a coordinator in the Penn Hills area. Please call or e-mail him if you are or anyone you know is interested in applying for this position.

**VII. Committee Update**

1. **Parent Assistance Line**

There were no calls to the parent assistance line in the month of September.

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

Mrs. Zak informed the membership that first cyclical monitoring for the 2021-2022 school year is:

Propel Montour – 11/1/2021

**VIII. Old Business**

There was no old business discussed at this meeting.

**IX. New Business**

There was no new business discussed at this meeting.

**X. Membership Rounder**

Everyone wished each other a Happy Halloween and a great month.

**XI. Motion for Adjournment**

A motion was made for adjournment.

Motion was made by Cynthia Grace Devine-Kepner and seconded by Sharon Janosik.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.