# **DRAFT** LTF Minutes and Proceedings

Wednesday, September 1, 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

Mrs. Debbie Garvic

Ms. Amy Guthrie

Mr. Clint Hauser

Mr. Rusty Hewitt

Ms. Sharon Janosik

Ms. Natalie Krall, Recording Secretary

Ms. Ursula Lesik

Ms. April Tucker

Mr. Brian Welles

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 September 1, 2021.

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

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

**II. Review/Acceptance of the Minutes of June 2, 2021**

The minutes from the May 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 September treasurer’s report with the membership.

**IV. Consumer Concerns**

The following consumer concerns were brought up at this meeting:

A parent wanted to commend Michael Beigay – Travel Trainer from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for his wonderful travel training instruction with her son this past summer.

A parent from the Quaker Valley School District wanted to find out information on programs that can train student for independent living. Several programs were suggested to this parent including:

* The AIU Pride Program at Pathfinder School
* Pittsburgh Public Schools Independent Living Program
* Lifesteps
* City Connections
* Achieva – A Home of My Own

**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 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)

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

Mr. Welles informed the membership that AIU Center Based Schools (Mon Valley, Pathfinder, and Sunrise) are all running in-person learning classes.

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

Mrs. Lawson was not in attendance at this meeting.

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

Mrs. Mariani was not in attendance at this meeting.

**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 – 9/8/2021 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – Local Task Force Rules.

State Task Force Presentation – 9/22/2021 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 AM – How to Deal with the Legislative Process.

1. **MH Update – Allegheny County MH Children’s Team – Mr. Clint Hauser and Mr. Rusty Hewitt**

Mr. Hauser and Mr. Hewitt informed the membership of the following items:

School based outpatient program providers contracted by the Allegheny County MH Children’s Team are now offering telehealth and in-person counseling sessions to students.

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services is now sponsoring a webinar series for Mon Valley schools that covers issues that they may experience throughout the school year.

Jefferson Counseling CHILL Program is now in place at the West Jefferson Hills School District and will provide a mindfulness-informed and preventative school-based behavioral health to students, staff, and families of the district.

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, September, 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, August 11, 2021](https://mailchi.mp/achieva/trust-matters-july2021-5233920?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**:

Sept. 23, 2021, 10:00am-12:00 pm ["Charting the Life Course"](https://achieva.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CsUgfhZjSW-41kb_3URRbQ)

Oct. 5, 10:00am-12:00pm ["Strategies for Self Advocacy- Part 1"](https://achieva.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WXQsraqkRy6_cKEA7VwEPw)

***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***  [August 26, 2021](https://mailchi.mp/achieva/college?e=0429402a66)

**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

**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/>

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

[Race + Disability Program](https://fisafoundation.org/disability-inclusion-pgh/race-disability-upcoming-programs/)- upcoming webinars: Sept. 20, Sept. 28

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

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

**A.** [**The Arc Pennsylvania**](https://thearcpa.org/)**;** [In Touch August 26, 2021](https://mailchi.mp/69a9ba2fe878/the-arc-of-pas-in-touch-7224178?e=dcd71f5f92)

**1.**  [COVID-19 resources](https://thearcpa.org/resources/corona-virus-resources/corona-virus-covid-19-resources.html): The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) has partnered with Rite Aid to provide COVID-19 vaccines to people with an intellectual disability or autism and their caregivers at Rite Aid stores across the Commonwealth. ODP also secured a call center to support scheduling efforts. Call 1-800-424-4345

[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 2, Summer 2021](https://www.paddc.org/slice-of-pie/vol-22-issue-2-2021/)- from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council,with information on the state budget, current legislation, and other topics. <https://thearcpa.org/actionalert.html>

a. PA State budget- Human Services, Labor & Industry, Education

b. COVID-19 Resources and Information

c. Two of many bills of interest: HB 25 Abolishing the No Excuse Mail In Vote

HB 85- would improve transition to post-secondary schools for students with disabilities.

1. **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 Oct. 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
* Create a national paid leave program
* Improve the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program

**E. ReelAbilities Film Festival 2021:**

Film Pittsburgh’s 9th annual 2021 ReelAbilities Pittsburgh Film Festival is coming to the Carnegie Museum of Art theater on September 8–12, 2021!

Along with 12 fantastic features and short films that explore and celebrate the lives of people living with disabilities, the festivities will include filmmaker Q&A's and discussions with local disability advocates and activists, as well as an art exhibit with Creative Citizen Studios.

Our co-presenter, Carnegie Museum of Art is fully accessible, and all films will be presented with subtitles or open captions, audio description, and ASL interpretation.

Join us for five days of Pittsburgh premieres in an inclusive and fun environment! View the lineup and buy tickets at [Film Pittsburgh](https://filmpgh.secure.force.com/ticket/#/)

**F.** **Thornburgh Family Disability Lecture Mon., Sept. 13, 7:00 pm:**

**Sen. Bob Casey, "Disability Policy: Beyond the Pandemic."**

Presented by The University of Pittsburgh Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law & Public Policy, Institute of Politics [Registration link](https://pitt.wufoo.com/forms/my2m3mc0gfg35y/)  
  
Upon registering, you will receive an email confirmation with the ZOOM connection link and pass code to use to connect to this live-stream lecture.

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 shared with the membership that the Center for Independent Living will be holding a virtual conference on December 12-16, 2021. There will be several guest speakers at this conference and it will be very informative for attendees. If you are interested in attending, please contact Mr. Charlton at 724-652-5151 or by e-mail at [rcharlton@disabilityoptionsnetwork.org](mailto:rcharlton@disabilityoptionsnetwork.org)

**VII. Committee Update**

1. **Parent Assistance Line**

There were no calls to the parent assistance line in the months of June, July, and August. If you would like to volunteer for the parent assistance line for the 2021-2022 school year, please contact Heather Zak via e-mail.

A request was also made by several members of the LTF membership to put a survey on the Covid pandemic on the LTF website regarding how they have impacted by this during the last year and a half.

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

Cyclical monitoring for the 2021-2022 school year is back in the school buildings.

1. **Parent Satisfaction Surveys – Mrs. Debra Efkeman**

Mrs. Efkeman informed the membership that discussions on the LTF parent satisfaction surveys will take place at the January LTF meeting.

**VIII. Old Business**

The LTF would like Marci Katona from OVR to send them a list of agencies that they

currently work with at this time.

**IX. New Business**

Jeff Kane is currently updating the LTF website.

A letter was sent by LTF Chairpersons Heather Zak and Cindy Duch over the summer to the Education Law Center to oppose House Bill 1532.

**X. Membership Rounder**

Everyone wished each other a wonderful school year and good health.

Sharon Janosik is involved in a program called Supported Decision Making in PA. If you are interested in attending, please e-mail Kelly King at kking@pealcenter.org

**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 9:06 PM.