

## LOCAL RIGHT TO EDUCATION TASK FORCE #15

### 3/20/23 Meeting Minutes

Recording: <https://caiu-org.zoom.us/rec/share/gR7qvtN6tmxbfmsL9WL-q2erL1c-8IWkeWrHtFiqDDXX1ToBg1zN8elpwCKMMJt.RuArnpnlLDT-aWg>

I.

#### II. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

<i>Attending:</i>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kathy Gingerich, Co-Chairperson	The Arc of Dauphin County
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Beth Light	The Arc of Dauphin County
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Beth-Ann McConnell	CAIU - Interagency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Holly Turner	CPARC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kathleen Haigh	Family Member/PEAL Center
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Megan Johnston	Cumberland Perry MH
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adam Wiener	Dauphin County ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bernadette Jayakumar	UCP
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Laken Wilson	CPARC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lissette Johnson	CPARC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kelly Smiley	CPARC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lynn Pascoa	Dauphin County MH
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Patti Wiedt, Co-Chairperson	Parent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pam Matesevac	Parent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sherry Campbell	Central Dauphin School District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Melissa Bialis	Central Dauphin School District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keith Focht	PDE- State Task Force
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deanne Ryan-Washington	West Shore School District
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mikeisha Mobley	Include Me Arc of PA, Program Specialist
<input type="checkbox"/>	Christine Titih	CT HomeCare Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Morgan Denny	Dauphin County ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Patsy Gilbert	Parent Advisory Council – Derry Township
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jessica Capitani	Parent Advisory Council – Derry Township
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amanda Neidig	UCP Family Support Specialist
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gary Smith	ODP-State Task Force
<input type="checkbox"/>	Irene Reedy	CAIU Student Services Supervisor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emmy Sasala	Family member
<input type="checkbox"/>	Michelle Smithman	Family Member Parent to Parent of PA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gerren Wagner	Family Member, Parent Advocate ABA in PA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Mulle	Family Member, Include me PA
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisa Butler	Family Member/ The Next Step
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cynthia Lamon	Family Member/Lighthouse Human Srvs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Susan Tachau	PATF
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tracy Beck	PATF
<input type="checkbox"/>	Leah Kostelak	CAIU, Transition
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Gombocz	Bureau of Special Ed, Advisor

**DISCUSSION-** Presentation by John Gombocz, Special Education Adviser  
Department of Education | Bureau of Special Education  
333 Market Street | Harrisburg, PA 17126  
Phone: (717) 982-4425 | FAX: (717) 783-6139

[www.education.state.pa.us](http://www.education.state.pa.us)

John Gombocz discussed his role as Special Education Advisor and the work he does with districts on maintaining compliance with regulations. Both Pennsylvania Chapter 14 and Federal IDEA regulation were mentioned. Every 6 years there is compliance monitoring done with all Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Every three years special education plans are due and review of plans is done with John. The Special Education Consult Line was discussed along with procedural safeguards. Consult Line- <https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Special%20Education/Complaints/Pages/ConsultLine.aspx>

**1-800-879-2301**

A discussion was held with families in this meeting about the procedural safeguards and understanding of them. John encourages districts to explain things more clearly to the families. Try not to use acronyms, go over the rights. Spend more time on this with families. Patti Wiedt asked about who you reach out to first with concerns. John encourages the child's IEP case manager and/or District Special Education Director. He stated the Advisor is not typically the first point of contact but he can be a resource. The Consult Line if needed is a resource.

Sue Bower shared that she attended a PEAL family leadership training where they went over the procedural safeguards from a family friendly perspective. She encouraged watching PEAL's The Rights Done Right: The Procedural Safeguards in Plain Language (video found below in John's resources).

John discussed Early Intervention transition meetings, the choices parents have for keeping their children in Early Intervention. Noting the age of beginners to Kindergarten and various policies for admissions. Some of the disability categories provided in Early Intervention evaluations were discussed. Speech and Language is often an identification. Developmental Delay is not one of the 13 categories of Special Education for school age. However, there are some changes due to Covid and there are some differences with these rules at the time being. Please refer to the recording 9:21 minute mark for more accurate information on this discussion. The challenges of having transition meetings being about 20 minutes was discussed. Families and advocates expressed the concern with the quickness of these meetings. John addressed these concerns as well. John shared he would be meeting with LEAs from our CAIU region this Wednesday and will emphasize the need to slow down and talk in understandable terms when meeting with families.

This was a great discussion and more can be heard by listening to the discussion on the recording!

John encouraged reviewing the Early Intervention to School Age BEC from the PDE website:

[Early Intervention Transition: Preschool Programs to School-Aged Programs \(pa.gov\)](https://www.pde.state.pa.gov/early-intervention-to-school-age-bec)

Parent Understanding Resources links below:

1. <https://www.pealcenter.org/>  
Click on Resources  
Click on New to special education
2. [PaTTAN - Parent Guide to Special Education for School Age Children](#)
3. [PaTTAN - Family's Quick Start Guide to Special Education Bundle](#)  
PEAL's The Rights Done Right: The Procedural Safeguards in Plain Language  
<https://www.pealcenter.org/education-rights/#SafeguardVideos>

- **State Task Force Updates** Kathy Gingerich reported that there was 2 presentations at the State Task Force meeting on Compliance Indicator Annual Review. A discussion of the 2 indicators that they are really paying attention to are the suspension and expulsion rates. and the disproportionate representation of groups labeled as disabled disabilities. The other presentation was about peer monitoring. and how we can, if we're interested, become a Peer monitor and according to them, there was just a training in December, and they probably won't have another training for a couple of years. A concern is it is kind of difficult to get involved if you have to wait a couple of years to have get the training.

Kathy noted there was also a discussion about the Intensive Behavior Health Services System and the changes in that, and how for the most part they had very few regulations. and the changes that were put in place now require licenses for the different services. She noted they reported we know no longer need to have an evaluation done by a Psychologist or a Psychiatrist that written or from PCP, Nurse Practitioners, Licensed Therapists can prescribe services. More details on this can be found in the State Task Force meeting recording found below.

ODP encourages going to their website MYODP.org or use this link to subscribe to their resources  
<https://home.myodp.org/resources/subscribe-to-odp-listserv/>

- A. **State Task Force Meeting recording** – [https://zoom.us/rec/play/ZDeDIAUvky-dV3KOYYJiYFHYPuOhgn7NblSg0V2p7tcSdGmkbEl\\_EimATbctHICCG\\_vvn7hmrYxprPA.9iZhHghcUIEdWh0Y?autoplay=true&startTime=1678888666000](https://zoom.us/rec/play/ZDeDIAUvky-dV3KOYYJiYFHYPuOhgn7NblSg0V2p7tcSdGmkbEl_EimATbctHICCG_vvn7hmrYxprPA.9iZhHghcUIEdWh0Y?autoplay=true&startTime=1678888666000)

Passcode: ?i.635wb

- **STF Website Link:** <https://www.pattan.net/about-us/partners/state-task-force/>
- **Topic Points of Discussion and Presentations:**
  - 📌 Wednesday, March 15, 2023 -10:00 am – Barbara Mazino ;
  - 📌 Wednesday, March15, 2023 – 11:30 am – Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS) Courtney Malecki
  - 📌 Wednesday, May 10, 2023- 10:00 am – 12:00 pm - Acronyms and Definitions

- **Parent Satisfaction Survey Update - The two URLs listed below are:**

English URL Parent Satisfaction Survey Hyperlink –

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/22-23LTF-Parent>

Spanish URL Parent Satisfaction Survey Hyperlink-

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/22-23ParentEsp>

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### **LTF Meeting: When Having Your Meetings Remember to:**

- Take attendance of members and others attending the meeting
- Have someone take minutes of the meeting and have the local IU submit this to corresponding STF member assigned to your area (see below).
- Send out your meeting information to your membership of those that attended and did not attend.

- ✓ Mrs. Jessica Capitani is assigned to LTF —1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 ,7, 8, 9,
- ✓ Mr. Gary Smith is assigned to LTF – 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 ,19 ,20, 21,
- ✓ Mr. Keith Focht is assigned to LTF – 10 ,11, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.

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## Want to Meet?

If you want a State Task Force member to attend a get-together or attend a Local Task Force meeting, please feel free to contact us:

- Jessica Capitani - ([cadenrox@verizon.net](mailto:cadenrox@verizon.net)) The Arc of Pennsylvania – (540) 539-6671.
- Gary Smith ([smiga@pa.gov](mailto:smiga@pa.gov)) The Office of Developmental Programs - (717) 934-4948
- Emma Nolan ([enolan@thearcpa.org](mailto:enolan@thearcpa.org))- the new Arc of Pennsylvania liaison to work with the STF - 717-234-2621 ext. 116
- Keith Focht ([kfocht@pa.gov](mailto:kfocht@pa.gov)) – State Task Force Chairman – Bureau of Special Education - (717) 783-6921 or work cell (717) 982-4423.

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## **PA ABLE Savings Program - PA ABLE Savings Program – Updates**

A PA ABLE Savings Program account gives individuals with qualified disabilities (Eligible Individuals), and their families and friends a tax-free way to save for a wide range of disability-related expenses while maintaining government benefits. The state and federal tax-free investment options are offered to encourage Eligible Individuals and their families to save private funds to support health, independence, and quality of life. To help you learn about the important features and benefits of PA ABLE, the Pennsylvania Treasury Department is hosting free webinars. Some of the topics that will be discussed include eligibility requirements for opening a PA ABLE account, the federal and state tax benefits of PA ABLE, and how PA ABLE account interacts with current benefits.

### **Important PA ABLE UPDATES**

<https://www.paable.gov/lib/pdf/PAABLE-IRS-Regulation-Booklet.pdf>

#### ➤ **New Business: State Task Force**

- **Election Process- Next Local Task Force meeting we will hold elections**



Guideline Script For The Election Process  
Election Process For t for the Commonwealth

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## **STATE TASK FORCE AGENCY REPORTS**

### **❖ Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) Update- Provided by Gary Smith, ODP Statewide Employment Lead, DHS State Task Force Representative**

#### **ODP NEWS**

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) distributes news via a weekly digest. [MyODP News Online](#) shares information about the work of ODP and individuals our work supports who are living the Everyday Life. Please visit [MyODP News Online](#) where you can find articles that have been published.

The digest is sent every Friday and contains the week's posted news in abstract. If you have information that you would like to share about ODP's work supporting people with disabilities, please use my contact information [Smiga@pa.gov](mailto:Smiga@pa.gov) to submit it for consideration or readers may send inquiries and/or story ideas to [ra-pwmyodp@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pwmyodp@pa.gov).

### Policy Amendments Waivers:

- Consolidated, Community Living and P/FDS and amended Adult Autism waivers were approved by CMS Centers for Medicaid Services in January 2023 and an announcement has been published in MyODP

### Trainings: Currently working on

- PA Secondary Transition Connecting for Employment- Joint ODP, OVR and Bureau of Special Edu. initiative collaborating with the goal of connecting systems with each other to increase employment outcomes for transition age youths. Held a kickoff event at the Secondary Transition Pre-Conference (**by invite only**). The event pulled together local teams with representatives from intermediate units, OVR, county intellectual disability agencies and supports coordination agencies. The event premiered a connecting **#(hashtag)** connecting4employment video training series (video series on the 101's of each agency) and a secondary Transition Roadmap. Local teams were given time for action planning. A regional follow-up event was held in October of 2022 (virtually). Targeted outreach was done with teams that needed technical assistance from the state team. Three more regional events are scheduled for March 2023. An in-person event will be held again at the Secondary Transition Pre-Conference in the summer of 2023.
- Please visit [pasecondarytransition.com](http://pasecondarytransition.com) for more information.
- **Employer Engagement Regional Symposiums-** In person regional symposiums to provide a platform for networking, sharing resources and learning best practices to employment leaders on how to utilize tools and proven strategies on engaging prospective employers on the benefits of hiring people with an intellectual disability and/or autism.
  - **Two forums at PaTTAN sites (se/ne 5/12, central 4/25 and west 5/4)**
  - **By invite only- Representatives from the Intermediate Units, (IU's) invited along with OVR, Administrative Entities (AE'S) and ODP stakeholders**
  - **Registration is open (MyODP / ODP listservs**
  - **Presentations will be recorded and posted for others to view**

### Data:

- As of November 2022, 18% (7786) of working-aged people (ages 18-64) enrolled with ODP are employed in competitive integrated employment.
- Pre-pandemic: **January 2020** 17% (7216) ---- **January 2021** 14% (6224) --- **January – September 2022** 17% (7329) --- November 2022 18% (7786) which is an increase of 570 jobs
- ODP Annual Comprehensive Employment Report is now available on MyODP.

**If you are not part of ODP's listserv, here is the link to subscribe:**

<https://home.myodp.org/resources/subscribe-to-odp-listservs/>

**If you have any additional questions concerning these updates, please contact Gary Smith or Lisa Rudawski at [smiga@pa.gov](mailto:smiga@pa.gov) or [lrudawski@pa.gov](mailto:lrudawski@pa.gov)**

## ❖ The Department of Education/Bureau of Special Education Update: Keith H. Focht

### PDE Conference

The annual Pennsylvania Department of Education Conference, *Making a Difference: Educational Practices That Work*, was held March 1-3. Over 30 nationally renowned speakers presented on a wide variety of topics – from practical strategies that can be used in the classroom, to how to attract, prepare and retain personnel to the field of special education. An exhibit hall featured over 50 vendors, and a poster session included over 30 presentations by LEA personnel.

## **BSE Bulletin for Educators**

The bulletin will provide monthly updates from the Pennsylvania Bureau of Special Education and PaTTAN. Subscribe at <https://www.pattan.net/Publications/BSE-Bulletin>

## **The Grab and Go Series - Leadership Series -**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCkBP2csbOstt8srzRLe5C1FuHt\\_axHJ8](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCkBP2csbOstt8srzRLe5C1FuHt_axHJ8)

The Grab and Go Series consists of recorded videos, all under 10 minutes in length, designed to provide special education leaders with a succinct synopsis of the mandatory reporting requirements completed through the PA Department of Education (PDE) and Leader Services portals. Leaders and those who hold the responsibility for special education reporting in local education agencies can access the following reporting videos online at any time:

- Act 16 Reporting
- Approved Private School (APS) 4010 & 4011 Reporting
- Comprehensive Plan Reporting
- Contingency Fund Reporting
- Homebound Instruction & Instruction Conducted in the Home Reporting
- Restraint Information System Collection (RISC) Reporting
- Special Education Plan Reporting
- Special Education Students at Home (SES) Reporting

## **Health Matters: Supporting Children & Youth with Disabilities (Lancaster) – Sponsored by PEAL Center**

Wyndham Lancaster Resort and Convention Center, 2300 Lincoln Hwy East, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17602

March 23, 2023, 9:00am -3:00pm. Lunch will be provided. Details will be sent after registration.

PEAL offers this event at no cost!

A one-day conference for parents and professionals, with a unique leadership strand for youth. Event is focused on families living in Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntington, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Northampton, Perry, and York Counties, but all are welcome to attend.

(Spanish interpretation and open captioning will be provided) [https://www.pealcenter.org/health\\_matters\\_march/](https://www.pealcenter.org/health_matters_march/)

## **Cyclical Monitoring Schedule -**

**Below is the Link for the remaining BSE Cyclical Monitoring for Continuous Improvement (CMCI)**

**Cyclical Monitoring Schedule - for the 2022-2023 School Year** PENN\*LINK

**PaTTAN Training Opportunities -** <http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/>

### ❖ **Systemic Concerns Reported: None**

### ❖ **Future Agenda Items-**

- Wednesday, May 10, 2023- 10:00 am – 12:00 pm-
  - *Special Education in Pennsylvania*
  - *Gifted in Pennsylvania*
  - Acronyms and Definitions

### ❖ **Next Year's State Task Force Meetings – ( *Subject to change*)**

- Wednesday, September 20, 2023
- Wednesday, November 8, 2023
- Wednesday, January 10, 2024
- Wednesday, March 20, 2024
- Wednesday, May 15, 2024

➤ **Next State Task Force on the Right to Education Meeting - Wednesday, May 10, 2023, per Zoom**

Conference Title	Date	Location	Future Conference Dates
AAC Talks Web Conference	May 13, 2022	Virtual	May 12, 2023
PaTTAN Literacy Symposium	June 14-16, 2022	PaTTAN Harrisburg	TBD
<a href="#">Pennsylvania Deaf-Blind Project's Family Learning Conference</a>	June 24-25, 2022	Hybrid/State College	TBD
<a href="#">National Autism Conference</a>	August 1-4, 2022	Hybrid/State College	TBD
PA Community on Transition Conference	August 10-11, 2022	Virtual	TBD
<a href="#">HELIX: High Expectations for Low Incidence Disabilities</a>	November 14-16, 2022	Hybrid/State College	TBD

**III. CAIU #15 Local Task Force Elections** - Elections to be held during May 15<sup>th</sup> LTF meeting.

**IV. MEMBER UPDATES**

**Families:** None provided

**Arc of PA:** Mikeisha Mobley reported Include Me has a lot going on over the next couple of months! They will be hosting a three day ½ day virtual conference in June. It is for families and staff members. Mikeisha will be sharing more information to Beth-Ann to send to LTF members. It would be free to those schools in which there are in but \$30.00 for those that they are not.

The connection club for younger children is happening. We are heroes is the theme and starting on 3/21/23. More details and registration info is found here: <https://thearcpa.org/includeme/include-me-connection-club/>  
<https://thearcpa.org/includeme/>  
 Book study/club Ages 5- adulthood <https://thearcpa.org/includeme/bookstudy/>

**Arc of Dauphin County:** Kathy reported they are still settling into their new office space. Continuing to be busy with advocacy. Beth shared transition to kindergarten has been an increase need for support. She reported that it is helpful she was a district representative in the past. She knows what to encourage families to ask for when meeting and to remind the families that they can wait another year if need.

**CAIU** – Nothing to report

**CPARC:** Laken reminded the LTF members of the upcoming Care and Relaxation Workshop being held on April 29<sup>th</sup> 8:30-3:30. Anyone who cares for someone with a disability of any type may attend. There is a 10.00 spot holding registration fee but this amount will be returned at the day of the workshop. The workshop will have mindfulness presentation, Tai Chi, music therapy and much more!  
 Flyer will be attached to the email that is sent out with these minutes.

**Cumberland Perry MH & IDD:** Megan reported that their county office will be hosting three town hall meetings coming up soon. They are entering at the end of this fiscal year. Their fiscal year begins July 1<sup>st</sup>. She noted they are entering into a fiscal crisis. Being 2.5 million dollars short in their budget. They are facing cuts to their services. Their county provides so many services that impact families and supports

schools in so many ways. To name a few of their services: CASSP Elementary which is a free voluntary service for families who are struggling with truancy, homelessness, access to insurance and so much more. This service is for the whole family not just the child. In the past 3 years, they started to develop their elementary student assistance program. It's an unfunded educational mandate for school districts to offer a student assistance program for K. through 12. Megan's staff in the past 3 years have received the necessary training, and now are providing assessments for any elementary student that is, showing struggles academically. And how they can break down those barriers to get supports for the child. Additionally, they are also county funded for the secondary program, 6-12 for the same service. Megan shared a graphic on the data. Please refer to the recording at minute 39:47 for review of this information. John mentioned the reports that he receives with behavioral struggles and needs for these services across his region and beyond. **Please consider attending the townhall meetings when the information is shared!**

Dauphin County MH/ID & CMU: N/A

UCP: N/A

V. LTF MEETING PLANS

**Proposed CAIU #15 Local Task Force Meetings**

2022-2023 <b>STF</b> Meetings (Wednesdays)			2022-2023 <b>LTF</b> Meetings		
Date	Time		DATE	TIME	Location
5/10/2023	10:00-12:00		5/15/23	10:00-11:30	<a href="https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/9396830296">https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/9396830296</a>