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# Local Task Force # 15 Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 1/26/26

**Recording:** [LTF 1-26-26 Meeting Recording](#)

**Facilitators:** Patti Wiedt, Chair and Family Member, Laken Wilson, Co-Chair and CPARC/community agency representative, Candis Chubb, LEA Representative, Beth-Ann McConnell, Intermediate Unit Representative

**Recorder:** Beth-Ann McConnell, CAIU

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## Attendance

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role / Affiliation</b>
Patti Wiedt	LTF #15 Chair and Family Member
Laken Wilson	LTF # 15 Co-Chair and CPARC Advocate
Beth-Ann McConnell	LTF # 15 IU Representative and CAIU Social Worker
Candis Chubb	LTF # 15 LEA Representative, Cumberland Valley SD
Brian Ford	Office for Dispute Resolution, Director
Kathleen Haigh	PEAL Center Family Resource Specialist
Jennifer Sloppy	Family Member – Dauphin County
Ami Healy	CAIU Training and Consultation Program Supervisor
Angie Persing	Assistant Director of Special Education, Derry Township
Megan Johnston	Cumberland Perry CASSP/ESAP, Child Adolescent Mental Health
Ed Bernot	Dauphin County Service Access Coordinator/Supervisor
Mark Evans	Cumberland and Perry County
Jessica Petko	Family Member, Derry Township School District
Terri Shultz	Parent to Parent
Andrew McCrea	Capital Area Intermediate Unit, Director of Student Services
Kelly Smiley	Arc of Cumberland and Perry County Advocate and Family Member
Kellie Coupal	Capital Area Intermediate Unit
David Childress	Family Member, Mechanicsburg SD
Amanda Price	Family Member, Cumberland County, Commonwealth Charter Academy
Sue Bower	Family Member/Capital Area Board
Litza Morales	Technology Assisted Children’s Home Program
Matt Polito	Shippensburg Area School District LEA
Shannon Gay	South Middleton School District Supervisor of Special Education
Lisa Gipe	Family Member – Cumberland Valley SD

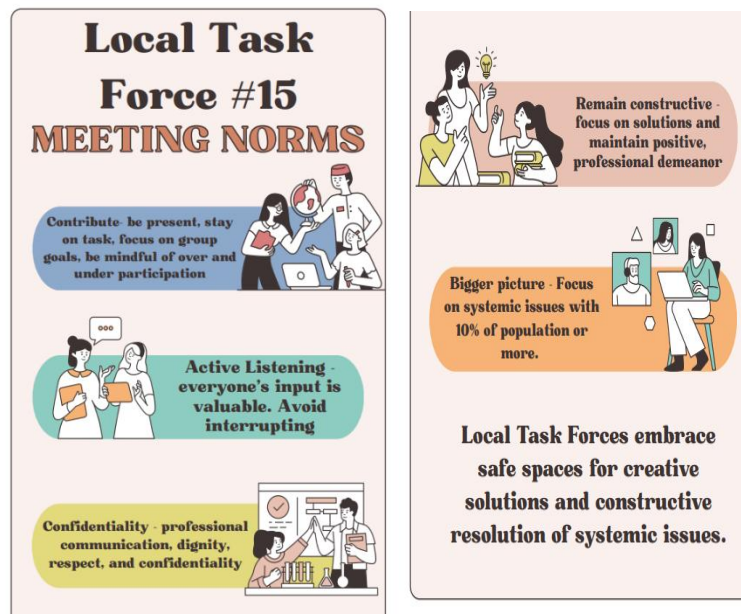
# 1. Welcome and Agenda Overview

LTF Chairperson and Family Member Patti Wiedt opened the meeting with a brief overview of the agenda and oversaw introductions of attendees.

## 2. Meeting Norms and Expectations

**Presenter:** LTF Chairperson and Family Member, Patti Wiedt

- Norms developed during a summer institute hosted by PDE include:
  - Be present and contribute actively.
  - Stay on task and focus on group goals.
  - Be mindful of participation levels.
  - Practice active listening and avoid interruptions.
  - Maintain confidentiality and professional communication.
  - Meetings are recorded; sensitive topics should be discussed separately.
  - Remain constructive and solution-focused.
  - Address systemic issues affecting 10% or more of the population.
  - Foster safe spaces for creative and constructive problem-solving.



**Local Task Force #15 MEETING NORMS**

**Contribute** - be present, stay on task, focus on group goals, be mindful of over and under participation

**Active Listening** - everyone's input is valuable. Avoid interrupting

**Confidentiality** - professional communication, dignity, respect, and confidentiality

**Remain constructive** - focus on solutions and maintain positive, professional demeanor

**Bigger picture** - Focus on systemic issues with 10% of population or more.

**Local Task Forces embrace safe spaces for creative solutions and constructive resolution of systemic issues.**

### **3. Cyclical Monitoring Update provided by Patti Wiedt,**

**LTF Chairperson and family member:** Patti noted that the PA Department of Education does have responsibility to ensure that all PA school districts provide special education services and programs in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, and in order to fulfill this, the PA Department of Education has administrative procedures for monitoring program implementation and evaluating special education services and programs for whether they're appropriate and effective, and also they review them for accountability. And so this year, the following school districts in IU15 that are being monitored are as follow; the first one was Halifax Area School District, and that one may be about complete. It was from November. Then we have Harrisburg City School District, Lower Dauphin School District, and Middletown Area School District.

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### **4. State Task Force Stipend Discussion provided by IU Representative, Beth-Ann McConnell:**

Funding up to \$2,500 is available for any Intermediate Unit (IU) to apply for on behalf of the Local Task Force. Submit application no later than April 15, 2026, Funds must be expended by June 30, 2026. Our Local Task Force will be submitting a request and will follow up with our LTF members to explore options for use of these funds.

### **5. Update: LTF District Representative, Candis Chubb provided the following overview from the 1/21/26 STF meeting**

**1/21/26**

Reviewed last months notes

Families to the Max presentation:

Moving forward with appointing regional leaders

Offering foundational courses

F2Max meet and greet on Feb 26 from 5-6 pm at PDE conf

#### **The ARC of PA, Gov Affairs:**

Bipartisan proposal to allow districts to adopt later secondary start time

Juvenile justice hearings on Jan 23 with spec ed advocacy on Jan 27

Spoke to early intervention and review of policies in k-12 programming/screenings to connect students early with support

#### **Carole Clancy:**

Shared that the purpose of LTF is a place to come for resources or getting people in touch with ways to resolve or find support. The LTF's role is not to resolve the issue itself. Team is trying to help shape this across other LTF's. Making sure to provide families a path to get concerns addressed through a resource connection.

It's hard when we wear different hats. May, for example, be an advocate that is participating in the LTF meeting. Your hat may be different in the LTF.

#### **Ken Oakes:**

Handbook shares role to bring people together around the mission. Collaborative group of parents, school districts, IU. Over time there was confusion - was the LTF an advocacy group or a problem solving group on a systemic level. It really is the latter. Continued to reiterate that you provide resources of where a parent can get assistance.

LTF's are NOT parent support groups. While we support parents by linking them to resources, we are not defined in that way as it sets tone differently.

ARC of US has joined major class action lawsuit with Democracy forward in regards to the dismantling of the USDE and asking court to reverse it. There is a link to a video to share with others - will get it to Tim to put in the notes.

### **Handbook (2017 version):**

1. Each LTF should review handbook and give us feedback as the first level of review/comment. STF will push out feedback form and correct version of handbook. However, this is OPTIONAL. Not every LTF has to provide feedback.
2. STF leads will take feedback and go through handbook for necessary revisions

### **Public Comment:**

Carole asked - what if we did public comment before we get to new or old business? This would give us time for public comment instead of always leaving it last. Towanda and Ken were good with this.

There will still be a link for a public comment. Must register ahead of time.

### **PDE Conference:**

Chair and co-chair of LTF can come to conference and will have STF financial support to attend. Will also provide them dinner from 6-7 on LTF dinner event.

### **PDE Updates:**

Sec Rowe has been officially appointed as Sec of Educ.

1. Budget was passed, but was flat funded. All funds and grants were approved
2. Interoffice agencies have signed agreements to take and move USDE to other agencies. Labor and industry is taking reg ed. OSEP is still at USDE but we anticipate moving to health and human services department. Should not effect how we operate at the PA level. Separating spec ed from reg ed does feel concerning.
3. Continuing to work on flexibility of certification
4. Cyber school funding change - some cybers are responding by increasing class sizes, etc. There are no changes to the expectation of FAPE, so all processes are still in place to ensure FAPE.
5. Goal to increase stipend for school psychologists - more will be coming out from PDE shortly on this
6. PA 529 plan - any child born in 2019 and forward can have \$100 to invest for college or an ABLE related account. [PA529.com](http://PA529.com) Someone can come out to LTF to provide info to parents directly. Will also have a table at PDE conf.
7. Working with process for CTCs to meet para competencies so HS students can graduate having the competencies. Carol Good is the PDE connection for this

8. Interpreter internship - after taking test and before getting scores, can do a paid internship while filling interpreter openings
9. Working on braille cohort to increase instructors that can teach students how to read braille
10. MS learning institute - reg and spec ed working on literacy, transition, exec func. Will be over summer
11. CTC spec ed consultant positions funded by CTC office at state level.
12. PDE conf history gallery. Will be able to take historical tour of IDEA across the last 50 years.
13. LTF Capacity building at PaTTAN with registration link- please make sure you register
14. Facilitator community of practice subgroup led by Rhonda. Dates are upcoming and have been sent out to LTF members that shared interest
15. Shared some follow up that is occurring about transportation concerns and LRE concerns that were brought up at last STF public comment. Carole has not yet been able to find the right path to the right person given the complex system for the Governors office rep that is supposed to be on STF core team.

**ODP:**

1. Received approvals for changes to community support consolidated waivers. Able to contract for supports coordination as of Jan 1. This helps to improve quality of coordination of care to improve outcomes for individuals and align payment with outcomes.
2. Supported employment and advanced supported employment - aligning words that we use and how we work with OVR. The waiver can be enacted while an individual is on the wait list for an OVR service.
3. Resources are available to help explain to individuals that work always results in an increase in income. An individual will not have a total net loss of monthly income related to benefits such as SSI.
4. Assistive Tech in waivers - consolidated waiver can be changed from 10k lifetime to 3k per year.
5. Adult autism waiver effective July 1 - changes in draft are available for public comment on Jan 16. Trying to align with other ODP waivers in relation to limits of funding, transportation, residential hab and life sharing as being two separate items as it is across other waivers.
6. Multiyear strategy to provide access to community services to decrease/eliminate adult service wait list. Have been able to add more waivers to support more individuals. As of Nov 30, 3,205 waiting for services, 30% decrease.

**Tim Krushinski**

Link will be sent to chair and cochair about meeting dates times, etc. Tim is retiring at end of Feb. Working with Lisa Smith to get everything transferred. Lisa will take it from here. All issues discussed will be shared to Lisa following his retirement who will share with Dr. Clancy.

- A recording of the State Task Force meeting is posted online. [PaTTAN State Task Force Recordings Link](#)
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**5. Systemic Issues Discussion-** Kelly Smiley noted that navigating and collaborating school and outside Mental Health outside providers can be a challenge. Jen Sloppy agreed with this as well and shared difficulties as a parent being in this as well. Laken Wilson asked further whether it is communication and not knowing who to relay information to is a barrier. Agreement to this as an issue was provided. Noting that communication and understanding each other is a problem with many things and having better communication could lead to less conflict. Beth-Ann McConnell mentioned how in the past we had provided a presentation on navigating mental health services and had Megan Johnston and Lynn Pascoa from local counties join in this. Group expressed interest in this again. Additionally, understanding who is responsible for releases for agencies and communication is sometimes not clear. Kelly would like to learn more about that as a family member but also as a professional advocate for families. Candi Chubb asked for clarification, and it was said that its less about resources and more about communication. Local Task Force Core Team will consult and determine potential further training opportunities surrounding this need.

Additionally, Jen Sloppy expressed the importance of getting IEP and other upcoming info in a timely manner to be better prepared as a family member. Recognizing the school may have been discussing this but its new information potentially to the parents and having more time to review would be beneficial.

**State Task Force** Until Tim Krusinski's retirement in February, issues will be sent to him. Following retirement, Lisa Smith will be who we share these with in the future who will make sure they are sent to Dr. Clancy.

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## 6. Community Updates and Highlights

**Facilitator:** Laken Wilson, Local Task Force #15 Co-Chair and CPARC Advocate

- **Families:** Jen Sloppy asked family members to think of our LTF and if they are getting what they hope to obtain from this LTF. She encouraged them, if they are not, to take their concerns to leadership. Our LTF Core Team members welcome and ask for feedback and we appreciate this discussion.
- **District Updates:** CV Consortium (Eastern Cumberland County Districts- East Penn, CV, Camp Hill and West Shore) will be held Wednesday, January 28<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7:30 pm at Mountain View Middle School 30 Bali Hai Rd
- **Cumberland/Perry MH:** Nothing to update
- **Cumberland/Perry IDD-** Mark Evans noted 3 new Supports Coordinators. Continuing to use external Supports Coordinators Organizations to assist with their growing need. Feel Free to reach out to Mark for more information.  
[mcevans@cumberlandcountypa.gov](mailto:mcevans@cumberlandcountypa.gov)
- **Dauphin County IDD –** Ed Bernot noted that their county has a record number of inquiries for services and completion of intakes. They recently added their 5<sup>th</sup> supervisor and also additional Supports Coordinators. For Mental Health side, there were short staffed but they have additional staff adds as well and full staff now.

- **CPARC Cumberland Perry Counties** – Laken Wilson shared upcoming training opportunities. March 7<sup>th</sup>- Connections Conference- May 2, Caregiver Training. More details will be sent via our LTF email for these upcoming training opportunities.
- **Parent to Parent: Terri Shultz shared upcoming training opportunity. Additional Information has been added to our [Local Task Force # 15 Padlet](#)**

**VIRTUAL Parent Café Series:**  
**Winter Reflections: Strength in Every Season**

Join us for this networking event for PA families with children receiving Early Intervention Services and/or Home Visiting Family Supports. Connect with other parents and caregivers and share your parenting journey!

**Join us**

- ❖ February 10, 2026  
6-8pm
- ❖ March 10, 2026  
11am-1pm

Seats are limited to this event. Register soon!

- Cafes are virtual. A Zoom link will be sent after registration.
- Registration survey provides an opportunity for ADA accommodation requests.
- Questions? Contact Maggie Parke: mparke@parenttoparent.org

Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/WinterParentCafe> to register.

**BE STRONG FAMILIES**

**For more information about Parent to Parent, please see this link <https://www.parenttoparent.org/>**

- **Capital Area Intermediate Unit: Beth-Ann McConnell**  
 Padlet resource hub includes: [Local Task Force # 15 Padlet](#)
  - Meeting materials, infographics, and forms.
  - Archived and upcoming meeting info.
  - Family engagement and early intervention resources.
  - Educational and behavioral tools.
  - State Task Force and other State resources  
[https://map.pattan.net/pa\\_resource\\_map](https://map.pattan.net/pa_resource_map)

## 7. Presentation:

LTF IU Representative, Beth-Ann McConnell introduced Office for Dispute Resolution’s Director, Brian Jason Ford. Brian provided an overview of their work. In addition, Brian highlighted the Consult-Line as well as touched on the difference of facilitation vs mediation and due process. To list to the presentation, please go to minute 25:41 on the [LTF 1-26-26 Meeting Recording](#)

Additionally, information on ODR can be found on their website <https://odr-pa.org/> and our [Local Task Force # 15 Padlet](#) Much Thanks to Brian for this great interactive conversation.

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**Future topics:** The Local Task Force Core team will discuss concerns noted today surrounding communication and find presentation that best captures the needs expressed.

**Next meeting will be held on 4/20/26 at 10:30-12:00 pm**

<https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/91625334040>

## Local Task Force # 15 Meeting Dates and Zoom Information:

2025-2026 LTF # 15 Meetings

9/29/25	10:30 to 12:00	<a href="https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/97015199466">https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/97015199466</a>
11/10/25	10:30 to 12:00	<a href="https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/95538288480">https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/95538288480</a>
1/26/26	10:30 to 12:00	<a href="https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/93311648147">https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/93311648147</a>
4/20/26	10:30 to 12:00	<a href="https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/91625334040">https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/91625334040</a>
5/18/26	10:30 to 12:00	<a href="https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/96770479471">https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/96770479471</a>

## 9. State Task Force Meeting Dates

2025-2026 Meetings	Date	Time
State Task Force Meeting- September	09/24/2025	10AM to 12PM
State Task Force Meeting- November	11/05/2025	10AM to 12PM
State Task Force Meeting-January	01/21/2026	10AM to 12PM
State Task Force Meeting-April	04/15/2026	10AM to 12PM
State Task Force Meeting-May	05/20/2026	10AM to 12PM

