LOCAL RIGHT TO EDUCATION TASK FORCE #15

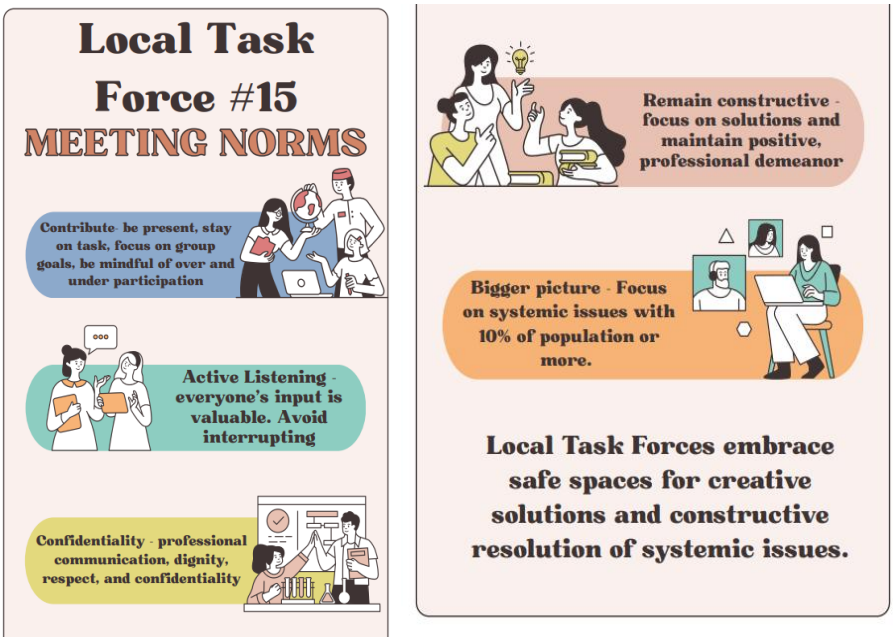
September 28, 2026
Meeting Recording

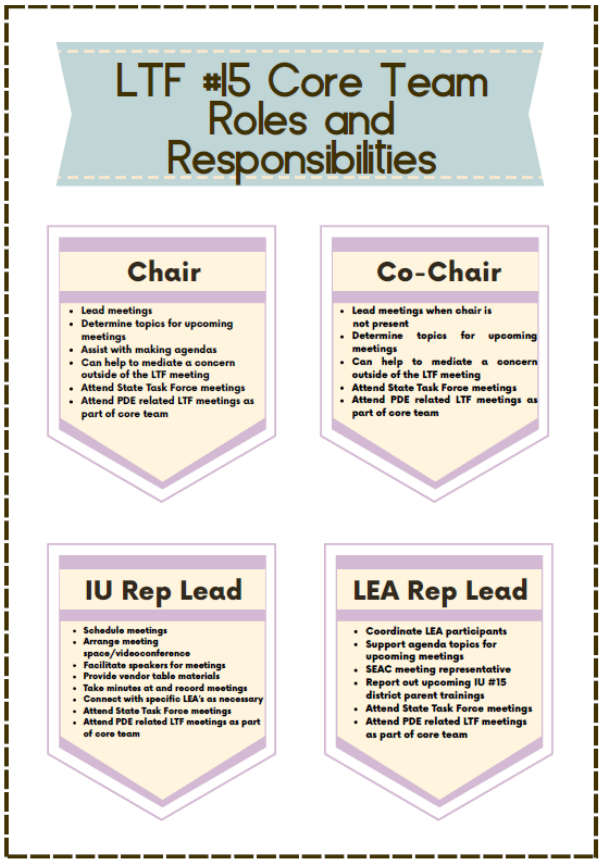
I. **Welcome and Introductions and Planning for 2026-2027 LTF meetings-** Patti Wiedt, Chair and Family Member oversaw this process.

In attendance:

Patricia Wiedt	LTF # 15 Chair and Family Member
Kelly Smiley	LTF # 15 Co-Chair (newly appointed) Family Member and Arc of Cumberland and Perry County Advocate
Beth-Ann McConnell	LTF # 15 IU Representative and CAIU Social Worker/Interagency Coordinator
Candis Chubb	LTF # 15 LEA Representative, Cumberland Valley SD
Kathleen Haigh	PEAL Center Family Resource Specialist
Jennifer Sloppy	Family Member – Dauphin County
Terri Shultz	Parent to Parent
Ed Bernot	Dauphin County Service Access Coordinator/Supervisor
Mark Evans	Cumberland and Perry County, IDD and Early Intervention Director
Andrew McCrea	Capital Area Intermediate Unit, Director of Student Services
Paula Jones	Coordinator of Student Services, West Perry SD
Catherine Siris	Family Member
Jennifer Martin	Director of Curriculum, Halifax SD
Lisa Gipe	Family Member – Cumberland Valley SD
Raelin Jones	Arc of Cumberland and Perry County
Sue Bower	Family Member, Capital Area Intermediate Unit Board of Directors
Angela Persing	Derry Township School District, Assistant Director of Special Education
Nicole Irish	PaTTAN's Schools Engaging Families Educational Consultant
Tracy Adams	Family Member/Grandparent
Michelle Olivieri	Family Member

Beth-Ann shared Meeting Norms and LTF # 15 Core Team Roles and Responsibilities agreed upon last LTF year. A request for any input on these norms was made of the group as well as providing access to the State Task Force Handbook- Noted p. 14-18 to review role and function of the LTF.





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II. Election- Patti Wiedt shared the following: Laken Wilson, Co-Chair, has left CPARC and will not be returning to the Co-Chair position this school year. Laken has shared that she would like to say thank you for everyone's time and dedication to the group over the years. Kelly Smiley will be the new senior

special education advocate and will continue to do her part moving forward. It was nice getting to know everyone, and she always looked forward to the conversations. It was great being a part of LTF. She hopes everyone has a great school year

With this vacancy, we held an election today. Patti Wiedt oversaw the election along with Nicole Irish, PaTTAN
The following email was sent on 9/16/26 regarding the election for the co-chair position.
With this vacancy, we will hold a **re-vote for the Co-Chair position at our upcoming Local Task Force #15 meeting on September 28th**.
If you are interested in being considered for the Co-Chair position, please email me directly to express your interest. To be eligible for consideration, individuals must have attended **at least two previous Local Task Force #15 meetings**.
It is important that anyone considering this role understands that the Co-Chair position is intended to support the Local Task Force's work around **educational systemic concerns and broader issues affecting children, youth, and families**. The individual serving in this role must be willing and able to dedicate time to this work and to approach concerns from a systemic perspective, rather than using the position to address individual or personal matters. The individual will have opportunities to attend trainings that the State Task Force provides throughout the year focusing on growing our knowledge about Local Task Force duties. Additionally, this person meets with the core team before each Local Task Force meeting to help plan upcoming meetings. They assist during meetings in a variety of ways, helping oversee different sections of the meeting.
If you have questions about this role, we are happy to talk with you further. Please note our scheduled Local Task Force meetings are as follows:

9/28/26	10:30 to 12:00 am	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/91777290226
11/23/26 (Evening Meeting)	6:00-7:30 pm	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/99458165076
12/14/26	10:30 to 12:00 am	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/94097837083
4/26/27 (Evening Meeting)	6:00-7:30 pm	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/95292645222
5/25/27 (Tuesday)	10:30 to 12:00 am	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/98746607684

ELECTION TIME:

PaTTAN Consultant Nicole Irish assisted Chair Patti Wiedt during the meeting with voting and utilized a confidential voting poll based on the nominees. Patti requested that any additional nominees be added to the poll. None were noted. Nominees were noted as Jennifer Sloppy and Kelly Smiley. Sue Bower seconded Jennifer Sloppy. Dr. Andy

McCrea seconded Kelly Smiley. Angie Persing moved to close the nominations. This was seconded by Candi Chubb. Nicole explained the voting process and provided the link and QR code to the attendees. Nicole announced the Co-Chair based on the results. Kelly Smiley was named Co-Chair for LTF #15. Patti Wiedt moved to close the election process, and Dr. Andy McCrea seconded.
After the results were provided, Beth-Ann shared them with the State Task Force so they could update the Resource Map.

III. **State Task Force Meeting Update:** Beth-Ann McConnell shared some updates from the State Task Force meeting held on September 23, 2026. Key points included: James Sawor, Manager of Government Affairs, discussed Department of Justice policy changes coming to the Medicaid and SNAP programs in January that may affect the 300,000 families receiving benefits. Some of these families have members with disabilities and could be impacted. Additionally, this could affect Direct Support Professionals or others receiving Medicaid in their ability to receive financial and food support if they do not update their financial information in a timely manner. Additionally, Office of Developmental Programs' Tawanda Jackson shared that ODP is working on helpful one-pagers for families regarding the changes, and these will be shared soon. Dr. Josie Badger, Governor's Advisory Commission, presented on elopement safety and the prevention toolkit being created. She noted that they would like input from schools and families on this toolkit. Her email is disabilities@pa.gov. Please consider reaching out to her. Dr. Badger also mentioned bus transportation safety training that is being considered. This training would be for van drivers and others who work with children with disabilities. Again, Dr. Badger would like feedback from schools and families on this training. For additional information shared at the State Task Force, such as the minutes and recording from this meeting, you would want to access the State Task Force Website
You can hear Beth-Ann's updates at minute 24:00 on the Meeting Recording

Catherine Siris shared the following in response to a request from the LTF team regarding Dr. Badger, the newly appointed State Task Force Governor's Advisory Commission.
Governor Shapiro's Press Release on Commissioin Appointment

IV. **Systemic Concern:** Meeting Recording 00:35:47 Candi Chubb shared the systemic concern process. Noting this is not for individual concerns, but patterns and solution-based. Candi explained that this is a place, in these meetings, where we'll have conversations, where we might ask questions to dive a little bit deeper into a concern, and we might discover that it may sound like a concern that is only being experienced by one individual but may discover that it is a more systemic concern; we will then investigate it a little bit further and then put it on the agenda to discuss at the next meeting. So, we might be asking questions to dive a little bit deeper into it. Hopefully, as members of the local task force, we can ask each other questions to learn from different perspectives. We likely won't be problem-solving it in the meeting.
For further understanding of the systemic concern process, the Revised 2017 STF Handbook Procedural expectations found on page 17 are a resource for "Anyone wishing to have an item placed on the agenda for a Local Task Force meeting".

Systemic concerns noted:

Lisa Gipe noted a concern about accessing support from county case management for support while updating her child's insurance. She has been having trouble getting responses from this individual. Additionally, she was able to access the Compass site to update the information but hasn't heard back. She noted how this could be a concern with families trying to update their information for Medicaid/Medical Assistance. Ed Bernot shared steps to contact someone in their county if they continue to be unable to reach someone. He noted that families can reach out to supervisors as well if

there continue to be challenges. Additionally, for the Compass site, the family may need to leave the site once completed and enter the system again to check for updates. Beth-Ann McConnell shared a statewide number that can be a resource for families if they cannot get in touch with their local county assistance office personnel. The number is 1-877-395-8930. The concern here is with changes coming to Medicaid in January 2026, there could be problems for families that have these challenges with the system being updated and with struggles hearing from their support persons. Kathleen Haigh provided a contact as a resource. Kelly King, kking@pealcenter.org for any health insurance/behavioral health/waiver information needs.

Jennifer Sloppy noted language used by professionals, can be very confusing such as Autism Support and Emotional Support Classroom language and trying to determine differences. Angie Persing provided a PaTTANs Annotated IEP resource for additional understanding. Pages 59 to 60 have descriptions of the type of support.

Kathleen Haigh mentioned common trends of parents not getting evaluations for their child and agreeing with schools jumping to 504 plans.

Also mentioned were transportation concerns and how families were reaching out to PEAL regarding this, and it was noted this was more in the beginning of the year. Jennifer Sloppy noted that training for the drivers about students with disabilities could be helpful. Beth-Ann McConnell mentioned that the State Task Force meeting discussed this with Dr. Badger, and it is in the works as a resource for districts.

V. **Old Business:** This was an opportunity for the Core Team to update members on previous concerns shared with STF. It also showed how our systemic concerns are shared with the State Task Force team for consideration as a systemic issue and to receive a response. At 01:12:30 on our Meeting Recording, Nicole Irish discussed the PSSA question raised at the May 2026 meeting. Additionally, it was shared links that families can find the public PSSA results such as
→ PDE Assessment Reporting
→ Future Ready PA Index:

VI. **Member Updates:** Beth-Ann oversaw this section

Families: No updates noted

School Districts: Cumberland Valley School District, East Pennsboro School District, and West Shore School District are having an event for families that includes pizza, bingo, and training related to anxiety in school and attendance, as well as creating routines at home on 9/30/26. Information was shared to families.

Cumberland-Perry MH: Mark Evans reported that Mental Health Director, Annie Strite retired. Kristi Parthemore has moved into this role. Mark is the Administrator but will still maintain his Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Early Intervention director responsibilities.

Cumberland-Perry IDD: See above

Dauphin County Mental Health: No Updates noted.

Dauphin County Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities/Pathways Forward: Ed Bernot reported that they are down one person in their ID Autism Intake Eligibility Department. They are working on

filling this position.
The Arc of Cumberland & Perry Counties: Kelly Smiley reported upcoming events. On October 23rd, they will have a Halloween dance for individuals 18 + and their caregivers at Otterbein United Methodist Church in Boiling Springs. On November 13th, there will be an Adulthood 101 conference. Emails have been sent out to Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry County school transition coordinators. Kelly supplied her email address in the chat but can be found here: ksmiley@cparc.org. Kelly also shared that on March 13, 2027, there will be a Caregiver's Workshop for parents and professionals of anyone with a disability. Flyers will be shared with Beth-Ann McConnell for distribution in the near future.

The Arc of PA: Not present today.

CAIU:

LTF #15 Padlet: Please note new Padlet has been created for this school year. All minutes will shared on this Padlet as well as any resources provided from this meeting.
Local Task Force # 15 2026-2027 Padlet

Local Task Force # 15 2025-2026 Padlet

CAIU LTF #15 Website
https://www.caiu.org/community/opportunities-for-everyone/local-right-to-education-taskforce

What is LTF video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXcngq-4D-s

Pamphlet/Brochures- Beth-Ann McConnell will be reaching out to LTF member regarding input on our brochure. Please note that CAIU Marketing and Communication will have input on final submission.

Stipend- The State Task Force has provided an opportunity for all LTF's to receive a stipend of 2500.00 to help with building the capacity of our Local Task Force. Beth-Ann McConnell is submitting this application and will update on this at the next meeting.

Not mentioned at the meeting but of interest: October Fall Fest
Join the Capital Area Intermediate Unit for Fall Fest on Saturday, October 24, from 11 AM to 3 PM at 55 Miller Street, Enola! This free family event is all about having fun together, with a trunk-or-treat, scavenger hunt, inflatables, crafts, food trucks, and local artisan vendors. Costumes welcome! Learn more at bit.ly/3ZZOwjC. This event also benefits the children Served by Champions for Children. Please share this event!!

UCP: Not present for update.

Other: Please feel free to share your resources to our team members in future groups. If they were missed these minutes, please email them directly to Beth-Ann McConnell at bmcconne@caiu.org

VII. This year's meeting schedule

2026-2027 Local Task Force Dates	Time	Zoom Information
9/28/26	10:30 am to 12:00 pm	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/91777290226
11/23/26 (Evening Meeting)	6:00 pm-7:30 pm	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/99458165076
12/14/26	10:30 am to 12:00 pm	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/94097837083
4/26/27 (Evening Meeting)	6:00 pm-7:30 pm	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/95292645222
5/25/27 (Tuesday)	10:30 am to 12:00 pm	https://caiu-org.zoom.us/j/98746607684

VIII. End of meeting survey- Beth-Ann McConnell shared the end of meeting survey. Please feel free to add to this upon reading these minutes!