



**State Task Force on the Right to Education
November 7, 2017 Meeting Minutes
(Final)**

Members in Attendance:

- Mr. Keith Focht, PDE, Bureau of Special Education, (717-783-6921), kfocht@pa.gov
- Mr. Devon Grant, Governor’s Designee (717-783-4287), dgrant@pa.gov
- Mr. Philip Rosenbauer, The Arc of Pennsylvania, (724-282-6215), philipros@embarqmail.com
- Mr. Kevin Burrell, Office of Developmental Programs, (717-425-5698), kburrell@pa.gov

Guest Speaker – Kerri Smith - Office for Dispute Resolution

Audience Members

Lisa Hampe, PDE / BSE Advisor	Mari Pizur, The Arc of NEPA, LTF #19 Organization Chairperson
Hadley Radlowski, The Arc	Roseann Polishan, LTF #19 Chairperson
Kathy Gingerich, Chairperson LTF #15 / The Arc of Dauphin County	Jackie Bartek – IU 20
Sharon Kennedy, PaTTAN Hbg. – STF	Anne Yanikov, The Arc of PA
Suzanne Mulhern, The Arc	Debra Arnold, Special Education Director, IU #29
JoAnne Eggleston, IU 26 Liaison	Bonita McCabe, The Arc of Philadelphia
Judy Zetts, IU #9 Liaison	Mina Muhammad, Chairperson LTF #26
-Additional viewers were Live Streaming-	

❖ **Call to Order:**

Keith Focht called the November 7, 2017, STF meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

❖ **Welcome:**

Keith Focht welcomed all for joining in on the State Task Force September Meeting. The State Task Force members explained how this meeting was reaching out to the different down-linked sites. Additionally, the State Task Force (STF), reached out to those that could not travel; a connection to ZoomLink was made

available for interested parties to view our meeting from their own computers and utilize a chat room to communicate with us. All new members and first-time participants were acknowledged.

❖ **Old Business:**

1. **September 27, 2017 Minutes** – Mr. Focht asked the STF members for a motion to accept the September Minutes as written. A few corrections such as Kevin Burrell’s name, email and telephone number were amended. An additional correction on where the PADES conference would be held this year was also acknowledged and corrected. A motion to accept the September minutes was made by Philip Rosenbauer, and seconded by Devon Grant. The September 27, 2017 State Task Force Minutes will be posted to the State Task Force website –
STF Website Link: <http://www.pattan.net/category/About/Partners/Single/?id=12>

2. **Dates of the 2017-2018 STF Meetings** -Mr. Focht shared the dates and times for the 2017-2018 State Task Force Downlink / Zoom Meetings for the 2017-2018 School Year:
 - Wednesday, September 27, 2017 – 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
 - Tuesday, November 7, 2017 – 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
 - Tuesday, January 9, 2018 – 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
 - Wednesday, March 21, 2018 – 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
 - Wednesday, May 16, 2018 - 10:00 am- 12:00 pm

3. **The Download site** to log into our State Task Force Downlink Meetings **was** <http://tiny.cc/statetaskforce>. Please note that because of switching to a ZoomLink format every meeting hereafter will have its own link. Next November 7, 2017 meeting, Zoomlink is <https://paiu.zoom.us/j/160175822> . We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause yet have weighed each side and recognized the State Task Force can reach more individuals using the ZoomLink format.

5. **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:
 - Philip Rosenbauer (philipnros@embarqmail.com) - STF representative from The Arc of Pennsylvania (724) 679-1955
 - Devon Grant (dgrant@pa.gov) - Executive Director - Governor’s Cabinet and Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities, Phone: (717) 783-4287 | Fax: (717) 772-2062
 - Kevin Borrell (kburrell@pa.gov) - The Office of Developmental Programs - State Task Force Liaison (717) 425-5698
 - Anne Yanikov (ayanikov@thearcpa.org)– Director of Advocacy and Government Affairs – The Arc of Pennsylvania (717) 234-2621
 - Keith Focht (kfocht@pa.gov) – State Task Force Chairman – Bureau of Special Education (717) 283-6921

6. **Parent Satisfaction Survey Update** - The Parent Satisfaction Survey URLs are listed below:
Mr. Focht shared the Parent Satisfaction Survey links will be up and running as soon as the regulatory hyperlink references are updated. He also explained the Parent Satisfaction Survey provides another avenue for districts to utilize in attaining parent input via the survey on what success and shortfalls parents see within their district. The Parent Satisfaction Survey provides this avenue of collaboration and discussion; providing a common goal of helping children. The STF acts as a conduit, taking the data and report that PaTTAN puts together and passes it along to the LTF who in turn discusses it with the district.

Note: The Hyperlinks on the Parent Satisfaction Survey has been completed. The STF is waiting for the hyperlinks to be added to the documents and a Http address to be assigned. Once this occurs, a notice will go out to all LTF chairpersons.

7. **LTF Meeting Reminder** - 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).

- ✓ **Philip Rosenbauer** - assigned to LTF: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
- ✓ **Devon Grant** - assigned to LTF: 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14,
- ✓ **Kevin Burrell** - assigned to LTF: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21,
- ✓ **Keith Focht** - assigned to LTF: 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.

Note: area assignments subject to change this year per STF discussion

8. **PA ABLE Savings Program**

Mr. Focht shared that the STF will continue to post the PA ABLE Savings Program information on our agenda and minutes.

The PA ABLE Savings Program through the PA treasury department is an exciting tax savings program that allows people with disabilities to save money while maintaining their benefits. They can save money while at the same time achieve more independence. The PA Able offers people with disabilities a new way to build financial security. To access the PA website visit: <http://www.paable.gov>. To get an overview of the PA ABLE program visit: <http://www.paable.gov/overview/>

It is the hope of our STF for the Treasury Department to come to a State Task Force meeting and provide a mock process on how to manipulate the system in setting up an account. Contact information has been given to the STF.

9. **Conferences for 2017- 2018 School Year** - The State Task Force shared out these conferences that are coming up in the 2017-2018 school year. PADES was added to the conference list.

- **Pennsylvania Department of Education – Bureau of Special Education Annual Conference** – Making a Difference: Educational Practices That Work!. Hershey Convention Center; February 26-28, 2018. http://pattan.net-website.s3.amazonaws.com/images/2017/03/07/PDE2018_DateSvr_0217.pdf
- **Pennsylvania Disability Employment and Empowerment Summit 2017- (PADES)** – Discover “Hire” Potential – Save the State – December 6 and 7, 2017 – Valley Forge Event Center, King of Prussia, PA - <http://pades-summit.org/>
- **HELIX Conference** – High Expectations for Students with Low Incidence Disabilities – November 13 -15 -2017 at the Penn Stater - <http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/HELIX%20Conference>
- **2018 PA Community on Transition Conference** - Pathways to Success: Transitioning into Tomorrow Together – July 25, 2018 – July 27, 2018- The Penn Stater Conference Center – <http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/PA%20Community%20on%20Transition%20Conference>

- **2018 Pennsylvania Positive Behavior Support (PAPBS) Network Implementers' Forum** – May 22, 2018 – May 23, 2018; Hershey Lodge and Convention Center - Audience: PAPBS network facilitators; School and program-wide PBIS coaches; District and school level leadership teams; Educators, including early childhood educators; Behavioral specialists (school counselors, school psychologists, special educators); Behavioral and mental health providers; District and state policy makers; Family members and caregivers; and SBBH Community of Practice members.
<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/PAPBS%20Network%20Implementers%20Forum>
- **20th Children's Interagency Conference**. "We Are Better Together" – April 30, 2018 – May 3, 2018; Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College. <http://www.paautism.org/training-events/Event-Details/itemid/7648/20th-Childrens-Interagency-Conference-Save-the-Date>
- **ODP's Everyday Lives Conference**: January 9 - 11, 2018, Hershey, PA; Save the Date! More information to come.

***Please mark / clear your calendar for these events ***

❖ **New Business: State Task Force**

1. **PDE Conference - Hershey Lodge and Convention Center –February 26-28, 2018 – Making a Difference: Educational Practices That Work!**. – Mr. Keith Focht shared information on the upcoming PDE / BDE Information. The State Task Force Committee will be sharing more information on the process of registration, room reservation and the Local Task Force Appreciation Luncheon in the month of December. Below is the hyperlink for the BSE Registration. This internet site will become active in December as well.
http://pattan.net-website.s3.amazonaws.com/images/2017/03/07/PDE2018_DateSvr_0217.pdf
 - **Please mark / clear your calendar for this event if you can make it**
 - **Currently the BSE 2017 Conference Site is not active. This will occur early December.**
 - **LTF Chairpersons and Vice –Chairpersons are complemented their room and their conference registration cost.**
 - **Parent scholarships also available to LTF general members yet they have to submit a registration request to determine eligibility.**
 - **The State Task Force members will keep you comprised of the process of registering to attend and room reservations, once the registration window opens.**
 - **This year we will have an Appreciation Luncheon with the Intermediate Unit Special Education Directors and selected BSE staff;**
 - **Additionally, there will be a meet and greet social for the Chairpersons and Vice-chairpersons of each Local Task Force and parents that are attending the conference via the Parent Scholarship Registration Process.**
2. **Update on Encouraging LEAs to Place Information on their Websites About the LTF in Their Area**
Mr. Focht share via attachment and handouts the letter and sample form that were shared out from BSE advisors to the LEAs encouraging the LEAs to post information on their websites on information and contact of their Local Task Force. This aligns to the theme of our Local Task Force Appreciation this year of "It's Time"

3. Local Task Force Meetings / Schedules / Officers / Contact Information:

Please let the STF have these corrections as soon as possible. 2017 – 2018 contact information sheet is attached. If there are any discrepancies in this contact information please email this corrected information to kfocht@pa.gov. There have been a few corrections made since September. The State Task Force will continue to update these changes within the posted contact information on the State Task Force Website.

4. Updates (if any) – No Updates

➤ **Office of Developmental Programs Update – Provided by Mr. Kevin Burrell**

ODP NEWS – ANNOUNCEMENTS (ANN)

1. ODP Information and resources:

a. Community Living Waiver:

- i. The proposed Community Living Waiver has been developed in accordance with the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 budget, which provided funding for the development and implementation of a new intermediate waiver that will provide services to approximately 1,000 individuals with an intellectual disability or autism, as well as children under age 9 with a developmental disability who have a high probability of resulting in an intellectual disability or autism. The waiver is anticipated to be effective on January 1, 2018, for a three year period with a renewal date of January 1, 2021.
- ii. It will support individuals to live more independently in their homes and communities through the provision of a variety of services that promote community living, employment, communication, self-direction, choice and control.
- iii. It is modeled on ODP's Person/Family Directed Support Waiver with differences that include:
 1. There will be a \$70,000 per person per fiscal year total limit for all Community Living Waiver services with an exception for supports coordination services.
 2. Vehicle accessibility adaptations will be limited to \$20,000 during a 10-year period.
<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/learnaboutdhs/waiverinformation/communitylivingwaiver/>
- iv. The Fee Schedule Rates are developed using a market-based approach whereby the Department establishes the Fee Schedule Rates to fund services at a level sufficient to ensure access and encourage provider participation, while at the same time ensuring cost effectiveness and fiscal accountability. The Fee Schedule Rates represent the maximum rates that the Department will pay for each service.
<https://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol47/47-34/1425.html>

b. CPS Training

- (i) The Commonwealth added the Community Participation Service to its Consolidated and P/FDS Waivers to support the individual to develop and keep relationships with community members by experiencing meaningful community participation and inclusion as a valued member of the community.
- (ii) ODP has directed providers to offer meaningful community activities for the individuals they support at a minimum of 25% of the total time the individual receives the Community Participation service.
- (iii) All direct support professionals, program specialists, and supervisors of direct support professionals who provide Community Participation Supports are required to complete the Community Participation Supports training by July 1, 2018. After 7/1/18, all new hires must

complete the Department-approved training on Community Participation Support within 60 days of hire and during that time they must be supervised by someone who has completed the training.

1. Each of the 7 modules is approximately 30 minutes long and available on MyODP
2. Providers can also assign training staff to take the "train the Trainer" version of the CPS Training, customize it to the practices within their own agency and in turn train agency staff.

c. PCT Mini-modules

- (i) Person Centered Thinking underlies and guides respectful listening which leads to actions resulting in people who have positive control over the life they desire and find satisfying; are recognized and valued for their contributions (current and potential) to their communities; and are supported in a web of relationships, both paid and non-paid within their communities.
- (ii) Combining text, material to print-out and videos to watch the PCT Mini-modules on MyODP provide a foundation to understanding the (5) key PCT concepts of:
 1. Know and Do or what others need to "Know and Do" to make sure a person with a disability has more good days.
 2. Like and Admire" which provides resources to create a positive picture of who someone is and help us acknowledge that person's positive characteristics
 3. The Understanding Communication module helps us to focus on what someone communicates whether words are used to communicate or not.
 4. The "Important To" "Important For" module shows that what people communicate with their words or behavior must balance against what is "Important For" them in areas of health and safety along with what others see as important for them to be a valued member of the community.
 5. The What Makes Sense / What Doesn't Make Sense module gives instruction on how to analyze a situation from multiple perspectives to capture what is working or making sense within that situation, as well as what is not working.

<https://www.myodp.org/course/index.php?categoryid=392>

d. Announcement 105-17 Sexual health

- (i) To announce that the draft *Sexual Health, Personal Responsibilities and Sexuality Guidelines bulletin* is available for public review and comment until November 10, 2017.
- (ii) In 2016, the Office of Developmental Programs contracted with the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University to form a cross-system, statewide committee of individuals with disabilities, professionals, family members, provider organizations, educators, medical professionals, and direct care staff to review and update the 1996 Guidelines Concerning Sexuality. The committee has developed Sexual Health, Personal Relationships and Sexuality Guidelines to support men, women, and children and those who support them address this important natural aspect of life.
- (iii) Comments may be submitted at RA-odpcomment@pa.gov before midnight on November 10, 2017 will be reviewed and considered for revisions prior to official publication of the bulletin.
- (iv) Copies of the Sexual Health, Personal Relationships and Sexuality Guidelines bulletin may be obtained at the Office of Developmental Programs in the corresponding regions:
 1. Western Region: Piatt Place, Room 4900, 301 5th Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, (412) 565-5144
 2. Northeast Region: Room 315, Scranton State Office Building, 100 Lackawanna Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503, (570) 963-4749
 3. Southeast Region: 801 Market Street, Suite 5071, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (215) 560-2242 or (215) 560-2245
 4. Central Region: P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105, (717) 772-6507
- (v) All Announcements are available via MyODP <https://www.myodp.org/>

2. ODP's Everyday Lives Conference: January 9 - 11, 2018, Hershey, PA

- a. No general exhibitor area for 2018 except ODP Training partners sharing resources and trainings they are developing as part of their formal collaboration with us (ASERT—Autism, Services, Education, Resources and Training, HCQU, PA Family Network, etc.)
- b. No scholarships to individuals or families
- c. Registration will be in December probably.
- d. 2018 EDL to address the EDL recommendations and strategies and create an event relevant for all ODP stakeholders.
- e. There will be 4 regional conferences to provide greater access after this initial state-wide event.
- f. Pre-event: 01/08/18 Experiencing the College Years
https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/palms-awss3-repository/Communications/ODP/EDL+Conference2018_Save+the+date.pdf

➤ **Governor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities - Provided by Devon Grant**

The last 2017 meeting of the Governor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities (GAC) is scheduled for November 30th at the Department of Education's Heritage Room, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA. All meetings are open to the public. If you would like to be added to our list to receive meeting notices and other information, please contact Devon Grant at 717-783-4287 or dgrant@pa.gov. 2018 meetings have not been scheduled yet.

Please visit the web page for the Governor's Cabinet and Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities at www.dhs.pa.gov/communitypartners/GovCommitteeforPplwDisabil.

Employment First Policy and Plan

In March, 2016, Governor Wolf signed Executive Order 2016-03, entitled "Establishing 'Employment First' Policy and Increasing Competitive-Integrated Employment for Pennsylvanians with a Disability." The goal of the executive order is to make Pennsylvania a model state when it comes to creating a climate hospitable to workers with a disability. Under the executive order, competitive, integrated employment becomes the first consideration and preferred outcome of publicly funded education, training, employment, and long-term supports and service programs for working-age Pennsylvanians with a disability.

Pursuant to the executive order, the Governor released an Employment First Plan on September 15, 2016. The Plan makes 69 recommendations under 12 priorities. The Governor's Cabinet and Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities are responsible for the priority: Implement, monitor, and provide accountability.

Quarterly progress reports can be found at www.dhs.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_260888.pdf. These reports list accomplishments that have occurred, or are in the process of occurring, as a result of the goals and priorities set forth in the executive order.

Pennsylvania Disability Employment and Empowerment Summit (PADES) 2017

This year, the Pennsylvania Disability Employment and Empowerment Summit (PADES) 2017 will be held on December 6 and 7 at the Valley Forge Event Center in King of Prussia, PA. If you are a student or a person with a disability seeking employment, an individual who works with students or people with disabilities seeking employment, or an employer dedicated to inclusion, PADES is for you. Visit our website at <http://pades-summit.org/> for more information and to "opt-in" to receive additional email notifications about this event. This information was provided to the school districts in the Southeast region, and the

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is working to assist those schools that would like to bring their students to PADES.

Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFLMP)

For a fourth year, Pennsylvania will be participating in a program offered by the US Dept. of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). The program assists states to develop and implement a state plan to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. Through this program, Pennsylvania has access to technical assistance from national subject-matter experts (SMEs). This year our focus will be Employer Engagement in addition to continuing work under Provider Transformation. We are in the process of putting together our technical assistance plan, but expect the activities to include ways to encourage businesses to hire workers with disabilities.

ODEP also offers a monthly national Community of Practice webinar structured to augment the technical assistance areas of primary focus in Employment First systems change (Capacity Building, Provider Transformation, School-to-Work Transition, Employer Engagement, and Policy/Funding Alignment).

heredgrant@pa.gov if you are not a current subscriber to ODEP's EFLMP mailing list, you can register , or contact Devon Grant at (717) 783-4287 or .

PRESS RELEASES:

Wolf Administration Announces Education Department Receives \$ 7.2 Million Grant to Assist Students with Behavior Needs (September 18, 2017)

“Pennsylvania must do everything we can to ensure every student is able to succeed, no matter the circumstance,” said Governor Wolf. “This grant is critical to helping teachers, administrators and faculty to provide the critical services and resources to schools and students.”

More than 24,000 Pennsylvania students are currently identified as having behavioral needs, which could lead to chronic absenteeism and inhibit post-graduate or career success. To better help students, school districts across the commonwealth will receive funds to aid in ongoing professional development to ensure that every student can succeed.

“The Wolf Administration and the Pennsylvania Department of Education have made a commitment to preparing students for success, whether in college and career,” said Secretary Rivera. “This grant aligns with that mission and will provide more resources to ensure that our important work continues.”

Through evidenced-based instructional practices, P2G will help local educational agencies address the academic and behavioral needs of middle school students with disabilities and students with emotional and behavioral needs. This will result in:

- School personnel will be better equipped to implement intervention methods and support at-risk students.
- Resources will be developed to provide parents and guardians with educational materials.
- Middle school building teams will utilize an early warning system to implement action plans for at-risk students.
- Institutions of Higher Education will partner with PDE to prepare preservice teachers to analyze critical data that impacts graduation and dropout rates.

The P2G grant will begin in October and extend over the course of the next five years. For more information about Pennsylvania’s education policies and programs, or to read PDE Secretary Rivera’s budget testimony, visit the Department of Education’s website at www.education.pa.gov.

Pennsylvania Honors Winners of Third Annual Statewide Contest for Artists with a Disability

(September 25, 2017)

On September 25, 2017, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) celebrated the winners of the third annual statewide art contest, “Art: The Universal Language,” during a ceremony and exhibit in the Capitol Rotunda.

“The love and appreciation of art and creativity are shared values that connect us as human beings—stretching beyond age, gender, culture, language, or abilities,” said First Lady Frances Wolf. “I applaud the participants in this year’s Art: The Universal Language contest and encourage all of them to keep cultivating their creative spirit in the years ahead.”

The statewide contest was open to artists of all ages and disabilities. Artists submitted more than 440 drawings, paintings, photos, 3-D works, and mixed media pieces.

The art contest is a collaboration among DHS, The Arc of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers' Association, Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

“The Arc of PA is proud to be a partner in a contest that showcases the diverse talents of the disability community,” said Maureen Cronin, executive director of The Arc of Pennsylvania. “We were particularly impacted by the stories shared by the artists; how art is the universal language that connects us all.”

A piece of 3-D work by 12-year-old Johnathan Perry of Cheltenham entitled House of Love and Diversity was named the Best in Show.

Winning entries were displayed in the rotunda during the ceremony and online at www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/artcontest.

The winners in each category are:

Painting

Age 12 and under - Tahlulah Sahara Bravo
Age 13 to 17 - Nelisurabe Corona
Age 18 and Older - Kathy Michels

Drawing

Age 12 and under - Eleanor DeCoursey
Age 13 to 17 - Nicholas Polaski
Age 18 and Older - David Vasquez, Jr.

Photography

Age 13 to 17 - Corey Smith
Age 18 and Older - Timothy Pfautz

3-D

Age 12 and Under - Johnathan Perry (Best in Show)
Age 18 and Older - Monique Dennis

Mixed Media / Other

Age 13 to 17 - Newport High School Life Skills Art Students
Age 18 and Older - Russell Achilles

Governor Wolf Nominates Acting Secretaries of Health, Human Services, and Drug and Alcohol Programs, and Acting Commissioner of Insurance to Serve Permanently (October 12, 2017)

Governor Tom Wolf today nominated Acting Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine, Acting Secretary of Human Services Teresa Miller, Acting Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs Jennifer Smith, and Acting Insurance

Commissioner Jessica Altman to serve permanently in their respective roles, pending approval by the Pennsylvania Senate. “Each of these leaders, in their respective agencies, is dedicated to furthering the goals of their departments, working together as a team on many initiatives with the shared goal of serving and protecting Pennsylvanians,” Governor Wolf said.

Dr. Rachel Levine, in addition to serving as Acting Secretary of Health since June, is also the state’s physician general, and a professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at the Penn State College of Medicine. As physician general, Dr. Levine has made significant strides combating the opioid epidemic and advocating on behalf of the LGBTQ population. She spearheaded the efforts to establish opioid prescribing guidelines and establish opioid prescribing education for medical students. She has also led an LGBTQ workgroup for the governor’s office, which has worked to create programs and processes that are fair and inclusive in healthcare, insurance, and many other areas. Recently, Dr. Levine was recognized as one of NBC’s Pride 30, a national list of 30 people who are both members of and making a difference in the lives of the LGBTQ community. Her previous posts included vice -chair for Clinical Affairs for the Department of Pediatrics and chief of the Division of Adolescent Medicine and Eating Disorders at the Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital-Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. Dr. Levine graduated from Harvard College and the Tulane University School of Medicine. She completed her training in pediatrics at the Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York City, followed by a fellowship in adolescent medicine there. She then practiced pediatrics and adolescent medicine in New York City and was on the faculty of the Mt Sinai School of Medicine. She came to central Pennsylvania in 1993 as the director of Ambulatory Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at the Polyclinic Medical Center. She joined the staff at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center in 1996 as the director of Pediatric Ambulatory Services and Adolescent Medicine. In addition to her teaching role at the Penn State College of Medicine on topics in adolescent medicine, eating disorders and transgender medicine, she has lectured nationally and internationally and has published articles and chapters on these same topics.

Teresa D. Miller assumed duties as acting secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services in August. Previously, Miller served as Pennsylvania’s insurance commissioner since January 2015, where she worked on a range of issues, including the administration’s top priorities – fighting the heroin and opioid epidemic and helping seniors. Under her leadership, Miller made it clear that one of her top priorities at the Insurance Department was enforcing mental health parity laws, ensuring consumers have access to the mental health and substance use disorder treatments they need. Teresa has been a leader in the Wolf Administration’s efforts to protect seniors. Her work to ensure seniors in Western Pennsylvania were protected and would not lose access to their doctors helped prevent disruption in care for 180,000 by ensuring UPMC providers continued participation in Highmark’s Medicare networks through the end of the consent decrees, which expire in 2019. In 2017, Teresa was named chair of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) Senior Issues Task Force. Also at the NAIC, Teresa has been a leader in taking on the current challenges of the long-term care insurance markets. At her request, the NAIC created the Long-Term Care Innovation Subgroup, which she chaired, to work to increase long-term care funding options for consumers, including increasing the number of affordable asset protection options. Prior to coming to Pennsylvania, Miller served as acting director of the State Exchanges Group, the Oversight Group, and the Insurance Programs Group in the federal government’s Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in Washington, D.C. Before her work with the federal government, Miller worked in Oregon where she fought for state adoption of mental health parity legislation, representing drug and alcohol treatment providers, social workers, the Arc of Oregon and other advocates for people with disabilities. Then, as the insurance regulator in Oregon, she worked to ensure consumers received the benefits of that law. Miller received her J.D. from Willamette University College of Law, and her B.A., magna cum laude, from Pacific Lutheran University.

Jennifer Smith was appointed Acting Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs in January 2017. Prior to this, she served as Deputy Secretary for the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP). Smith began her career with the commonwealth in 2004 in the Office of the Budget, beginning as an accountant and eventually becoming the office’s Director of Planning and Management in 2012 before beginning as DDAP’s Deputy

Secretary in 2015. Since assuming the role of Acting Secretary, she has continued the Wolf Administration's initiative to increase drug take-back opportunities, expand access to naloxone in communities around Pennsylvania, and, alongside the Pennsylvania Department of Health, released guidelines and protocols for "warm handoffs" that help overdose survivors transition into substance use disorder treatment. Smith has also worked alongside Governor Wolf and other Wolf Administration Officials to ensure that fighting the opioid crisis remains a priority on the federal, state, and local levels. In 2017, the Wolf Administration secured a \$26.5 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as part of \$1 billion included in the 21st Century CURES Act to fight the heroin and opioid epidemic and will be used by DDAP to expand access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT).

Jessica Altman was appointed Acting Insurance Commissioner in August. Prior to this, Ms. Altman served as Chief of Staff for the Pennsylvania Insurance Department alongside former Insurance Commissioner Teresa Miller, beginning in June 2015. In this position, Ms. Altman served as the top aide to former Commissioner Miller, oversaw policy initiatives for the agency, and coordinated policy with other state government agencies and external groups. Altman represented the department in a number of statewide initiatives, including coordinating aspects of Health Innovation in Pennsylvania, which leverages funds from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' State Innovation Model Initiative and sitting as a board member for ABC-MAP, the commonwealth's initiative to implement a prescription drug monitoring program. She is also an active member of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), and is vice-chair of the NAIC's subgroup evaluating the definition of quality improvement activities for the medical loss ratio. Prior to joining the Pennsylvania Insurance Department, Altman worked at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, where she developed policy and facilitated implementation of the Affordable Care Act. In addition, she served as a policy analyst for the health division of the White House Office of Management and Budget while completing her master's degree. Altman has a Master in Public Policy from the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government and a Bachelor of Science in Policy Analysis and Management, with a concentration in Health Care Policy, from Cornell University.

Governor Wolf Will Consolidate Department of Corrections, Board of Probation and Parole Functions (October 19, 2017)

Governor Tom Wolf today announced that his administration is moving ahead with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) that results in the combining of the agencies' similar, shared and overlapping resources and functions. The consolidation will be effective immediately upon signing of the MOU by all involved parties, including the chairman of the PBPP, the secretary of the DOC, the respective agencies' chief counsels, and the deputy general counsel of the Office of General Counsel. The Administrative Code authorizes commonwealth agencies to enter into agreements for cooperation and coordination of work and the elimination of duplicating and overlapping of functions and allows the respective parties to share in the use of employees, land, buildings, facilities and equipment. 71 P.S. § 181.

"On June 30, both the House and Senate passed a \$31.83 billion budget that decreased spending while still prioritizing funding for important government functions like schools, health and safety," Gov. Tom Wolf said. "That budget was passed based on the bi-partisan agreement that the DOC and PBPP's parole supervision duties be consolidated under one agency. This MOU puts Pennsylvanians first by respecting their finances and their security while shrinking the size of state government," Gov. Wolf said. "We are moving forward in our efforts to eliminate bureaucratic redundancies and to do so while still allowing these agencies to continue to serve their individual missions. This is government that works. We are giving legislators exactly what they have been calling for – taxpayer savings through the restructuring of state government; and we're doing so in a way that continues to provide for public safety while eliminating duplication of efforts."

Under the MOU, both agencies – the DOC and the PBPP – will remain separate from each other; however, the community supervision of parolees and all other reentry services will be combined under a new, centralized

chain of command that everyone in those areas will report to and follow. It will involve reentry tasks, such as but not limited to inmate/reentrant records, inmate/reentrant reentry planning, reentrant placement and supervision and parole violation management and return process.

“Today is an important day in Pennsylvania’s criminal justice history,” DOC Secretary John Wetzel said. “By combining similar reentry and parole supervision duties and responsibilities, officials now can fine-tune and focus their efforts as they relate to reentry. This move, while saving taxpayer dollars, also allows for better and more timely record-sharing, allows for consistent delivery of reentry programming, better employee communications and training, and better transition via a smooth handoff to community parole agents and supervisors. We look forward to a close and productive partnership with our Parole Board coworkers.”

DOC and PBPP personnel combined within the new organizational structure will fall within direct supervision of that new structure, but shall remain employees of the respective agencies. Employees will continue fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of their respective agencies and there will be no changes in salaries or collective bargaining agreements. “Employees from each agency should report to work as normal on their next scheduled shift/work day,” Secretary Wetzel said. “There should be no disruption in services staff provide to individuals, nor should employees themselves encounter any disruptions where their employment statuses or duties are concerned.”

“The MOU does not change the independency of the Parole Board,” PBPP Chairman Leo Dunn said. “The Parole Board will continue to exercise its exclusive and independent decision-making role with regard to decisions to parole, re-parole, commit and recommit for violations of parole and to discharge persons sentenced by any court at any time to imprisonment in a correctional institution.”

In addition, the Office of Victim Advocate and the Sex Offender Assessment Board will continue to be independent from the DOC.

Finally, this MOU will consolidate the agencies’ business administration offices, internal affairs and investigative offices. The communications/public information offices will also be combined. The MOUs that DOC and PBPP had previously entered into to consolidate information technology, management of data and research functions will continue and not be affected by this new MOU.

“We look forward to working with our PBPP coworkers to enhance public safety by streamlining community supervision of parolees, and we will hold a number of leadership meetings soon to help reinforce this positive relationship,” Wetzel said.

Realizing that change may give rise to questions, officials encourage employees to send their questions, comments and concerns about the MOU to: Ra-crdocpbppunificat@pa.gov

Wolf Administration’s Food Security Summit Brings Partners Together, Highlights Progress to Combat Hunger (October 20, 2017)

Today, Department of Human Services (DHS) Acting Secretary Teresa Miller and Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding hosted a food security summit to update stakeholders, advocates, and federal partners about Governor Wolf’s Blueprint for a Hunger-Free PA. Since the release of the blueprint, the Wolf administration has completed key steps in eliminating food insecurities by:

- Allowing easier access to benefits and WIC through myCOMPASS PA mobile app;
- Increasing knowledge of summer feeding programs by mailing summer feeding postcards to all SNAP recipient households;
- Expanding access to healthy foods with 160 Healthy Corner stores throughout the state;
- Making access to employment and training services easier by establishing five 50/50 SNAP training sites;

- Reducing food waste to landfills by 74% and reducing greenhouse emissions by 52%;
- Distributing more than five million pounds of food to more than 850,000 low-income households through the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System;
- Growing food security programs in the Medicaid system; and
- Educating individuals and families on the necessary nutrition needed for a healthy life.

“Food insecurity is an issue that has overwhelming impacts on so many parts of our society. The social determinants of health are too powerful for us to ignore,” said Miller. “The work that has been done to accomplish necessary steps in the blueprint is a testament to a government that works together to provide our constituents the necessary resources to live a healthy and happy life. Everyone should be proud of the work that has been accomplished to date, while realizing there is still work to be done to ensure no Pennsylvanian lives with food insecurities.”

The blueprint was released in September 2016, to address hunger in PA, and as a response to Governor Wolf’s executive order establishing the Governor’s Food Security Partnership. The Partnership includes the departments of Aging, Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, Education, Health, and Human Services.

“Today’s meeting is proof of the power of partnerships, and it showcases the commitment of the Wolf administration and our partners to combat food insecurity across the commonwealth,” said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding. “Even as we acknowledge the tremendous progress of the past year, it will take the continued collective effort of partners across the state to reach our goals. We have an incredible opportunity before us though as we look ahead to the next federal Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is critically important to the viability and capacity of our food systems. This is a critical time for all of those who have a role in the charitable food system to be informed and engaged in moving forward to improve our support of all Pennsylvanians.”

The progress reported at today’s meeting is part of a plan that, by the year 2020:

- Every county and/or region in Pennsylvania will have a local food alliance to combat hunger in their local communities.
- The SNAP participation rate will increase from 90 percent to 98 percent or higher.
- The number of children benefiting from free and reduced price meals during the school year (linked to nutrition programs in summer) will increase from 20 percent to 30 percent.
- Sixty percent of students benefiting from free and reduced priced school meals will participate in school breakfast. This is an increase from 47 percent in 2014-15.
- The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program redemption rate will increase from 308,000 to 340,000 checks annually.
- Double SNAP Bucks will be available at all highly accessible, high-need farmers' markets, and additional SNAP recipients will have access to SNAP employment and training and SNAP education.
- Pennsylvanians will have streamlined access to food security information and benefits.
- The average number of people participating in WIC programs will increase from over 245,000 to 260,000.
- Pennsylvania will improve access to healthy, nutritious food. <http://dhs.pa.gov/ending-hunger/index.htm>

Wolf Administration to Announce Partnership with CVS Health to Create ‘Jobs that Pay’ for Pennsylvanians with Disabilities (October 24, 2017)

Governor Tom Wolf announced today a partnership between CVS Health and OVR’s Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC) in Johnstown to create ‘Jobs that Pay’ for individuals with disabilities at CVS stores across Pennsylvania. The Department of Labor and Industry and CVS Health will hold a formal announcement at HGAC, 727 Goucher Street, Johnstown, at a 3:00 PM press conference today.

“When people with disabilities hold jobs and earn competitive wages, they can achieve greater independence and inclusion in the community,” Governor Wolf said. “However, far too many Pennsylvanians with disabilities are not working. Part of my administration’s Employment First initiative aims to address that disparity.

Establishing partnerships between service providers and employers, such as the one that will be announced today between HGAC and CVS Health, will help individuals with disabilities find meaningful, sustainable employment.”

The Employment First initiative underscores the commonwealth’s commitment to helping individuals with disabilities find competitive, integrated employment, making Pennsylvania a model state when it comes to creating a climate hospitable to workers with a disability.

Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Executive Director for the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) David DeNotaris will be joined by Leslie Reis, senior advisor for CVS Health’s Workforce Initiatives team to announce the new program, as well as members of HGAC management, representatives from the Cambria Chamber of Commerce and Johnstown Area Regional Industries, and Cambria County commissioners. In addition, HGAC will be hosting the National Consortium of State-Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers annual conference, and administrators from several rehabilitation centers across the U.S. will be in attendance.

The partnership between CVS Health and HGAC will provide a direct link to employment for individuals successfully completing the training program. The program will commence at the beginning of 2018. CVS Health is the largest pharmacy health care provider in the U.S. The company has 9,700 retail locations, more than 1,100 walk-in medical clinics, and is a leading pharmacy benefits manager with nearly 90 million plan members.

The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation provides vocational rehabilitation services to help persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, or maintain employment. In 2016, OVR helped place 8,438 OVR customers into employment, and connected with 6,000 Pennsylvania employers to achieve hiring results. OVR’s Hiram G. Andrews Center provides a comprehensive program of services featuring the integration of pre-employment transition services, education on campus at the Commonwealth Technical Institute in Johnstown, counseling, evaluation, and physical restoration in a barrier-free environment.

Governor Wolf Kicks Off Study to Level the Playing Field for Small Diverse Businesses with State Contracts (October 25, 2017)

Governor Tom Wolf today launched the first in a series of public meetings as part of a Commonwealth Disparity Study to hear from small and small diverse businesses about the barriers they face when attempting to get a state contract.

“There must be a level playing field for all companies – from big corporations to small and small diverse businesses – to have the opportunity to compete for a state contract,” said Governor Wolf. “We want those small businesses to know that we’re listening to them and we will use the results of this study to modernize the procurement process to remove disparities and give every talented business a fair chance.”

In September 2015, Governor Wolf signed an executive order solidifying the administration’s commitment to improving the participation of small and small diverse businesses in state government contracting and the commonwealth’s overall economy. Small diverse businesses are those owned by minorities, women, LGBT, veterans and people with disabilities.

The Governor’s Advisory Council on Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunity was created by the executive order to develop policy and programmatic recommendations to increase state contracting opportunities for small and small diverse businesses. Their work led to the commonwealth’s first-ever statewide disparity study, which was recently expanded to include PennDOT’s transportation and infrastructure contracting. The study’s results will provide information about whether small diverse businesses face discrimination in the state contracting process.

Prior to the Wolf Administration, contracts for legal services were rarely, if ever, awarded to small or small diverse businesses – even as a subcontractor. Since Governor Wolf directed the implementation of a competitive process for legal services, 68 percent of all contracts awarded have a commitment to small and small diverse businesses.

“Since becoming Governor, I have worked hard to broaden the commonwealth’s emphasis on diversity, inclusion and fairness as a guiding principle for how our economy works,” said Governor Wolf. “To keep our progress on track, we need the input and support of small diverse businesses to ensure that when the commonwealth does business, we attract the full range of talent that Pennsylvania has to offer.”

During the public meetings, small and small diverse businesses can provide public or private testimony on their experiences with the commonwealth’s contracting process. More meetings will be scheduled throughout the commonwealth.

Interested individuals can attend the next meeting: Thursday, Oct. 26, 2017; 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM at The Enterprise Center 4548 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19139. No registration is required. For more information, contact the Bureau of Diversity, Inclusion and Small Business Opportunities at 717-705-5865.

Wolf Administration Announces New Apprenticeship for Certified Nursing Assistants to Provide Care to People with Disabilities (October 26, 2017)

Today, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development Eileen Cipriani and the Department of Aging’s Quality and Compliance Specialist Michelle Glidden continued the ‘Jobs that Pay’ tour at Transitional Paths to Independent Living (TRPIL) Community Services in Washington.

Following a tour, Deputy Secretary Cipriani announced approval of the Certified Nursing Assistant in a Home Care Setting (CNA/HCS) apprenticeship to assist individuals with disabilities by providing competent personal care and promoting healthy living and safe environments in homes and communities. The program is a partnership between TRPIL Community Services, the Fayette County Career and Technical Institute and SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania.

“The Wolf Administration supports the growth and expansion of apprenticeship programs as a tool to create a pool of high-skilled, qualified talent for employers,” said Deputy Secretary Cipriani. “The apprentices we met today have a unique opportunity to train in a home-care setting and gain valuable hands-on experience that will provide them with the necessary skillset to meet the regional employment needs of employers upon program completion.”

The Wolf Administration established the Apprenticeship and Training Office last year to support and expand apprenticeships. Programs registered through the office provide employer-driven training to create a more productive, diverse, highly skilled workforce for employers and to help reduce employee turnover. Job seekers received increased skills, and a nationally recognized credential to support future career advancement and increased wages.

Since the office was created, 2,606 new apprentices and 77 new registered apprenticeship occupations statewide have been created.

Deputy Secretary Cipriani and Ms. Glidden were joined by representatives from the Department of Human Services, SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania, the Fayette County Career and Technical Institute, the Westmoreland Fayette Workforce Development Board and the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board.

“Direct care workers of any kind are the hands, the voice, and the face of long-term care for many older Pennsylvanians and persons with disabilities who rely upon this particular workforce in order to live and age well

in their homes and communities,” said Secretary of Aging Teresa Osborne. “The Wolf Administration is committed to supporting partnerships like this so that we can create opportunities for Pennsylvanians to receive the training and support needed to either further their career path or reenter the workforce.”

“The CNA apprentices will gain invaluable hand-on training and the skills needed to provide quality community support services to consumers in a home care setting,” said Kathleen Kleinmann, CEO of TRPIL a Center for Independent Living and is a licensed home care provider. “This training will help our nurses to safely perform their job duties and provide people with disabilities with a vital service to help them transition from care facilities to living independently in their homes.”

For more information about the ATO Office, visit [ATO](#).

Governor Wolf Visits Webjunto, Highlighting the Importance of Apprenticeship (October 31, 2017)

Today, Governor Tom Wolf visited Webjunto to meet with employees and apprentices from the Urban Technology Project (UTP) to highlight the importance of workforce training and job creation.

“It’s a proven fact that apprenticeship programs give job seekers a competitive edge by providing them with practical, hands-on job experience,” Governor Wolf said. “Today was a great opportunity to visit an employer that understands the benefits of supporting targeted training opportunities by employing apprentices of the UTP program and to hear firsthand how both the employer and employee benefited from this great program.”

UTP is a pre-apprenticeship /apprenticeship model that promotes an IT career pipeline and is supported through the Department of Labor and Industry, Communities in Schools of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Works, the School District of Philadelphia, private companies, and donations. Webjunto currently provides an on-the-job apprenticeship position to UTP.

Approved through the Department of Labor & Industry’s Apprenticeship and Training Office, apprenticeship programs are used to provide employer-driven training to create a more productive, diverse, highly skilled workforce for employers and help reduce employee turnover. The program provides job seekers with increased skills, and a nationally recognized credential to support future career advancement and increased wages. It’s estimated that for every dollar spent on apprenticeships, employers get an average of \$1.47 back in increased productivity.

The Wolf Administration established the ATO last year to be responsible for providing outreach, education, and technical support to current and prospective apprenticeship program sponsors and apprentices. To date, the ATO has added 15,023 new apprentices and 746 new registered apprenticeship occupations statewide. For more information on the Apprenticeship and Training Office, visit [ATO](#).

Wolf Administration Kicks Off the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Season (November 1, 2017)

Today, Department of Human Services Acting Secretary Teresa Miller, along with Department of Aging Secretary Teresa Osborne, joined by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) Chairman Gladys M. Brown, and representatives from local utility companies kicked off the start of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) application process for the 2017-18 season at the United Way of Lancaster County.

LIHEAP provides assistance for home heating bills to keep low-income Pennsylvanians warm and safe during the winter months. Assistance is available for renters and homeowners. Crisis and regular LIHEAP applications begin November 1, 2017 and end April 6, 2018.

“This federally funded program provided hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania’s families with a warm place to live during last winter,” said Acting Secretary Miller. “That number includes thousands of the commonwealth’s most vulnerable citizens - children, older Pennsylvanians, and individuals with a disability.”

During the 2016-17 LIHEAP season, 348,672 households statewide received \$116,494,464 million in LIHEAP cash benefits. These households received an average benefit of \$334.

“This is the time of year when heating costs begin to rise, and many of our older Pennsylvanians are trying to stretch every dollar to make ends meet,” said Secretary Osborne. “This funding is critical to ensuring that those who are experiencing financial hardships retain utility services and remain in a warm home.”

“LIHEAP is an important tool for helping Pennsylvania families stay warm and safe during the winter, and the PUC has a long history of supporting this important service,” said Chairman Brown. “Now is the time for consumers to enroll in LIHEAP, as well as to also explore the programs that are available from their utilities or from various non-profit groups.”

Eligibility for the 2017-18 LIHEAP season is set at 150 percent of the federal poverty income guidelines. The chart below shows the maximum income allowed for eligibility based on household size.

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Maximum Income</u>
1	\$ 18,090
2	\$ 24,360
3	\$ 30,630
4	\$ 36,900
5	\$ 43,170
6	\$ 49,440
7	\$ 55,710
8	\$ 61,980
9	\$ 68,250
10	\$74,520

➤ **Arc of PA Update: Provided by Philip Rosenbauer, The Arc of Pennsylvania**

Burden of Proof

In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Schaffer vs Weast reassigned the burden of proof from special education hearings to the party seeking relief (generally the parents/family) but allowed that individual states would have the ability to legislate a change and put the burden of proof back onto the school districts. SB 541 would reverse the U.S. Supreme Court decision and put the burden of proof onto the school district instead of the party seeking relief. The Senate Education Committee is planning to hold a hearing on the bill after the Pennsylvania budget process is complete.

Employment First

HB 1641/SB 21 Employment First would codify Governor Wolf’s Employment First Executive Order into a statute. Act 26 of 2016 started the process to help students with disabilities learn skills to obtain employment after high school. HB 1641/SB 21 would be the next step in this process to help individuals with disabilities obtain employment, and would create an independent Oversight Commission. Such Commission would be responsible for preparing an annual progress report to the General Assembly and to provide recommendations to strengthen the implementation of Employment First in Pennsylvania. The House Labor & Industry Committee may put HB 1641 on the Committee agenda later in the Fall.

Paul's Law

At a Press Conference on October 16, Senator John P. Sabatina, hosted a Rally requesting the General Assembly's support of SB 108. This legislation, known as Paul's Law, would amend Chapter 6 (Anatomical Gifts) of title 20 of the Consolidated Statutes (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries) to prohibit the discrimination of any potential organ transplant recipient on the basis of a physical or mental disability. The legislation is modeled on similar laws in California and New Jersey. While there are a set of national standards for transplant candidacy some institutions consider criteria such as mental developmental and physical disabilities. This legislation is meant to eliminate highly subjective factors from influencing clinical decision making. SB 108 passed the Senate Judiciary Committee and full-Senate unanimously and is awaiting consideration in the House Judiciary Committee.

Hate Crimes

HB 505 and Senate Bill 96 are companion bills that, if enacted, would add mental and physical disability to the definition of hate crimes under Pennsylvania's Hate Crimes Statute. SB 96 is in the Senate Judiciary Committee and HB 505 is in the House Judiciary Committee.

Weapons Policies

On May 1, 2017 the Commonwealth Court in Pennsylvania issued an Order affirming a decision by the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County in S.A., a minor, by her father N.O. v Pittsburgh Public School District. In S.A vs Pittsburgh Public School the court held that a pencil is not a weapon within the definition of the School Code or the Pittsburgh Public School Code of Conduct. The Court agreed with the Education Law Center's attorneys, who argued that Pennsylvania law limits the scope of such definition to objects that are similar or comparable to the expressly-listed weapons, including guns and knives. The Court concluded that a weapon is "self-defined" by its inherent capabilities and that the manner in which a student uses an object cannot convert an otherwise non-weapon, like a pencil, into a weapon. Nancy A. Hubley, Pittsburgh Director of the Education Law Center and Cheryl Kleiman, Education Law Center staff attorney, were co-counsel for S.A.

Public School Funding

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ordered the Commonwealth Court to hold a trial on whether Commonwealth officials are violating the Commonwealth's Constitution by failing to adequately and equitably fund public education. The lawsuit – William Penn School District, et al v Pennsylvania Department of Education et al. – was filed in 2014 on behalf of parents, school districts, and statewide organizations in response to inadequate funding for public education. In the decision, the Court agreed that it has a clear duty to consider the case and ensure legislative compliance with the state's Education Clause, which requires the General Assembly to "provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education" for Pennsylvania's schoolchildren. The Court also found no basis to deny consideration of claims by parents and school districts that the legislature's unequal funding discriminates against children based on where they live and the wealth of their communities.

Pennsylvania Budget Fiscal Year 2017 – 2018

On October 30, the Governor signed the revenue bill that reflects the following Line Items relevant to education:

	<u>2016-2017</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>
Early Intervention (Birth 3)	\$129,211,000	\$136,545,000
Early Intervention (3-5)	\$252,159,000	\$263,878,000
Special Education	\$1,096,815,000	\$1, 121,815,000

There were also significant increases for community services to adults with intellectual disabilities and autism. According to Maureen Cronin, Executive Director of the Arc of Pennsylvania, this is the best budget for people with intellectual disabilities and autism in ten (10) years.

Discovery Training

The Arc of Pennsylvania held a three (3)-day training on Discovery (an alternative to traditional vocational assessments) at the Best Western Central, Harrisburg PA, November 1-3, 2017. For people seeking to become certified providers of Discovery through Marc Gold and Associates, it is the pre-requisite face-to-face training for certification. Individuals not seeking certification can gain valuable information and insight and can attend such training as auditors of the course.

Systematic Instruction

The Best Western Central was also the site of a training program, by the Arc of Pennsylvania relevant to an evolved form of Marc Gold's "Try Another Way." Attendees learned how to analyze complex work tasks and develop a specific teaching plan to guide job coaching and teach work skills. Participants in such trainings, who are seeking certification, are expected to commit approximately 40 hours of fieldwork with / on-behalf of a learning partner under the guidance of Marc Gold and Associates over the course of four (4) months. This training was held November 2-4.

2018 Congressional Budget and Tax Cuts

This year's Congressional budget process is particularly important for people with disabilities and their families. The recently-passed House and Senate fiscal year 2018 budgets set overall spending and revenue targets for the next ten (10) years. But, beyond this basic function, Congressional budget writers have been clear that an underlying goal of the 2018 budget is to set the stage for a massive tax cut bill. The Arc is concerned that significant loss of federal revenue will result in cuts to programs for people with disabilities. At this point there are many unknowns, but here are five things The Arc will be watching out for:

1. Cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or other Critical Programs to pay for Tax Cuts.
2. Loss of Revenue that sets the Stage for Cuts to Essential Programs.
3. What happens with Tax Breaks?
4. Basic Fairness – should primarily benefit the majority.
5. Mainstream Economics – Real numbers and real issues – should be based on generally accepted economic theory and methodology.

Class Action Lawsuit

The Arc of the United States, through The Arc of Georgia, recently joined a class action lawsuit alleging that the State of Georgia has unlawfully discriminated against thousands of students with disabilities by providing them with a separate and unequal education in a statewide system of segregated schools and classrooms operated by the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS). The suit claims that Georgia relegates thousands of students with disabilities to "a network of unequal and separate institutions and classrooms". Those students, the suit says, "Are denied the opportunity to be educated in classrooms with their non-disabled peers." The suit also alleges the state disregards its own regulations that restrict GNETS to students who cannot

be educated elsewhere, citing a 2016 investigation by The Atlanta Journal Constitution. The suit claims that by assigning a disproportionately high number of African-American children to GNETS, that state violates Fourteenth Amendment guarantees of equal protection under the law. The suit is Georgia Advocacy Office et al v. the State of Georgia et al.

U.S. Department of Education

Politico, a Washington news outlet, recently reported that the United States Department of Education is considering delaying or withdrawing a rule designed to ensure that children from certain backgrounds are not unnecessarily placed in special education. The rule was finalized late last year by the Obama Administration in an effort to prevent overrepresentation of minorities in special education. According to Politico it has obtained an unpublished draft of a Federal Register notice from the U.S. Department of Education that would ask for comments on delaying the rule for two (2) years and potentially changing, replacing, or doing away with the rule altogether.

Under the Individual With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), states are required to identify school districts with a “significant disproportionality” on high rates of students from particular racial or ethnic groups that are placed in restrictive settings or are subject to discipline. This rule - set to take effect in July 2018 – was designed to address this by creating a uniform standard across the country. According to Politico, the Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos is now considering delaying implementation until 2020.

➤ **Pennsylvania BSE Update: Provided by Keith H. Focht**

Secondary Transition:

Career Readiness Skills Development for Students –

In collaboration with the Office for Safe Schools, the Bureau of Career and Technical Education, and designates from Department of Labor and industry, the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) / PA Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) is partnering on the development of resources that support career readiness skills development for students. The resources under development include a guidance document and toolkit for educators. The resources map career readiness skills against the PA Core Standards, including but not limited to, the Career Education and Work Standards and the PA Early Childhood Standards. It is anticipated that the resources will be fully developed by the end of the 2017-18 school year.

Legislation Impacting Secondary Transition Webinar –

Recent legislation at the federal and state level has greatly impacting secondary transition requirements. During this session, presenters will share the core tenants of recent legislation and policy specific to secondary transition including: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Final Rule (CMS Final Rule), Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act/ & Section 511 (WIOA), Act 26 of Pennsylvania, and PA 339 (Comprehensive Guidance Plan). This session will explore the relevancy of the legislation as it pertains to secondary transition planning within the educational setting.

This one-day webinar, being held on November 29, 2017, is designed to enable participants to: 1) identify major legislation impacting secondary transition for students with disabilities, 2) distinguish between the intent of the various legislation, and 3) situate the relevance of the legislation in relation to preparing students with disabilities for integrated competitive employment.

<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/event/event.html?id=4d202ea0-43af-4295-b2ee-4fb82fdec5c0>

Leadership

Special Education Leadership Initiative – PFP

The Pennsylvania Fellowship Program, or PFP goal is to develop a network of special education administrators and to support them in gaining the knowledge and skills they need to oversee special education programs and services so they remain in special education leadership roles. For the school year 2017-18, we begin the eighth cohort year of the PFP.

In September, 73 special education leaders from across the commonwealth participated in the opening two-day session which included topics such as:

- Planning for required PFP projects that are tied to the PA State Performance Plan
- Review of landmark court cases
- Update of the PA State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
- Updates from Office of Dispute Resolution
- Review of recently decided due process hearings
- Review of the Federal Rehabilitation Act (504)
- Extended School Year Requirements
- PaTTAN resources

Throughout the upcoming year, fellows will come together again as a full group, and also for smaller regional sessions, to increase knowledge and skills needed for leading special education, as well as building collegiality and networking.

School Improvement – How to help the LEAs

The Bureau of Special Education continues to work with different districts across the commonwealth on school improvement initiatives such as graduation rates, school-wide positive behavior support plans, behavior techniques, literacy structure, and instructional practices and interventions to name a few. In addition to professional development initiatives in these areas, individualized education program writing and strategies related to instruction for students with disabilities as it relates to PA Core Standard is also being offered. This additional support is offered to many districts as it relates to providing a comprehensive support structure in serving the varied children with a disability.

Compliance Monitoring LEAs – 2017-2018

2017-2018 Compliance Monitoring Schedule for the LEAs – Listed below is the hyperlink of the listed LEAs to go through the cyclical compliance monitoring for the 2017-18 school year.

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Special%20Education/Compliance/Special%20Education%20Compliance%20Monitoring%20Schedule%202017-18.pdf>

PaTTAN TRAININGS

Preparing Transition Age Youth with Autism for Employment Train the Trainer Sessions - Wednesday

November 8th, 2017 9:00AM — 3:00PM -

<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/event/event.html?id=e2a8a7e3-38bb-408f-a8a9-9c13fc7fc79c>

National Network of Partnership Schools: Establishing a System of Support –

Wednesday November 8th, 2017 9:00AM — 3:00PM –

During this session, school teams will gain an understanding of the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) to organize and strengthen their existing family-school partnerships. Team will be introduced to the

NNPS framework of Six Types of Involvement, discuss challenges associated with the six types of involvement, and learn of resources available through the NNPS to overcome barriers. In collaboration with PaTTAN consultants, teams will develop a one-year action plan for partnership that will be linked to their current school improvement plan.

<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/event/event.html?id=838c150a-fe0e-42ff-9c4e-5150386766a7>

Functional Behavioral Assessment: Addressing the Behavioral Needs of Individual Students

Thursday November 16th, 2017 9:00AM — 3:30PM

Thursday December 7th, 2017 9:00AM — 3:30PM- When a student's behavior is interfering with his/her learning or the learning of others, a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is used to identify problem behaviors and develop interventions to improve or eliminate those behaviors.

<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/event/event.html?id=9b7218a3-81c1-47a2-95ce-8908643080e8>

Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

PaTTAN - Online Course

Friday December 1st, 2017



Friday December 29th, 2017

This online course provides a foundation for early intervention and early childhood staff for the understanding of social and emotional development in infants and toddlers. The first module provides an overview of social and emotional development within the context of relationships. Attachment, temperament, self-regulation and the context of family, community and culture are emphasized. The second module provides an overview of responsive routines, environments, and strategies to support social emotional development in infants and toddlers. Observation, responsive caregiving, emotional literacy and development of social skills are explored. The third module looks at individualized interventions for infants and toddlers through determining the meaning of behavior and developing appropriate responses. Behavior as communication and responding to challenging behaviors are highlighted.

<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/event/event.html?id=f6af742f-0d46-4e06-a40f-a01dcba31b0f>

Please feel free to visit and view further training opportunities on the PaTTAN website at:

<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/>

- **Guest Speaker – Office of Dispute For Resolution Presentation by Kerri Smith - Director**
- **Systemic Concerns Reported:** No systemic Issue Reported to the State Task Force
- **Future Agenda Topics:**
 -  **ABLE ACT – the Process**
 -  **Community of Practice Supporting Families throughout the Lifespan, the LifeCourse Framework**
- **Next State Task Force on the Right to Education Meeting – January 9, 2018**
at PaTTAN Sites and IU 4, 19, 20, 27, 28, & 29 - 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM and Individual Zoom sites

****Below is the link for the Zoom Downlink for the last State Task Force Meeting. Currently opening this last zoom link <https://pau.zoom.us/j/160175822> will direct you to our last STF meeting. Yet on the day of the meeting you will need to access the below link to participate in that current Zoom meeting. This will allow the sites to be interactive while at the same time allow individuals that cannot attend the interactive downlink sites to sign in with their personal computers and communicate on a side bar within the chat option****

Zoom link for the upcoming State Task Force meeting on 01/09/2018:

<https://pau.zoom.us/j/638735552>

- **Adjournment: Keith H. Focht requested for a motion of adjournment**
- Adjournment: Motion for Adjournment made by Devon Grant; seconded by Kevin Burrell**