

Right To Education Local Task Force 21
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AGENDA: OCTOBER 25TH, 2023

1. Welcome Visitors

2. Roll Call

The Local Task Force 21 wants to grow! We would like to encourage Parents to become more involved with the LTF21. If you are interested, after attending two LTF meetings, you can represent your child's school district! The LTF is a safe, judgment-free place that was created by parents, for parents who have children with disabilities. We are here to help with education issues and to make sure every child receives F.A.P.E. (A Free and Appropriate Public Education). By attending the Local Task Force meetings, you are opening the door to new possibilities for you, your family and your student(s). Together we can do great things!

3. Correction/Approval of Minutes from September 20th, 2023

4. Agency Reports:

- a. The Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties: Updates and Legislation
- b. The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA)
- c. The Arc of Pennsylvania
- d. Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21
- e. Lehigh County Developmental Programs
- f. Carbon County Developmental Programs (CMP)
- g. Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)
- h. Superintendent's Report: We are looking for a new school district to provide updates!
- i. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
- j. Other Agency/Provider Information

5. Committee Reports:

- a. Membership
- b. Compliance Monitoring
- c. In-Service
- d. Legislation (listed in minutes)

6. Chairperson's Report:

- a. State Task Force Update
- b. Upcoming Training and Event Info. (see newsletter: <https://www.smores.com/u/local.task.force.iu21>)

7. Presentation:

This presentation is intended to provide information on *Eleni Burd and Tierra Brown; IncludeMe: Arc of PA, Accommodations and Modifications and Jason Savenelli; CLIU21 Behavioral Health Supervisor, Project AWARE.*

8. Discussion

9. Adjournment

Dates of Interest:

1. Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21 Board Meetings for 2022-2023 School Year @ 6:30PM: 10/16/2023, 11/20/2023, 12/18/2023, 1/24/2024, 3/18/2024, 4/15/2024, 5/20/2024, 6/16/2024
For more information visit: <https://www.cliu.org>

2. State Task Force Meeting: STF 2023-2024 bi-monthly Meeting Schedule:

Meeting ID: 991 9413 4883

For more information visit: <https://www.pattan.net/about-us/partners/state-task-force/>

MINUTES: September 20th, 2023

1. Amanda Robbins called the May 24th, 2023 meeting of the Right to Education Local Task Force 21 to order at 10:01 AM.

Members Present:

Amanda Robbins; LTF21: Chairperson and Parent Rep., East Penn SD
Jessica McKenty-Nuttall; Director of Advocacy: Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties
Dr. Deborah Ohmacht; Advocate: Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties
Kodi Berry; Intake/Resource Coordinate, Arc of Lehigh Northampton Counties
Eleni Burd; Include Me Program Specialist, Arc of PA
Tierra Brown; Include Me Program Specialist, Arc of PA
Mandy Colville; Advocate for the Arc of NEPA; LTF20 Chairperson
MaryJo King; CLIU21: Assistant to the Director of Special Programs and Services
Kendyle Mills; CLIU21: Education Consultant and Presenter
Heather Shirk; Lehigh County Developmental Programs
Mark Bottos, Office Manager, Therapeutic Arts Groups, LLC
Mimi Ludwig; Autism Society Lehigh Valley Founder
Theresa LaFavor; Catasauqua SD Consumer Representative
Steve Behr, Parkland School District

Visitors Present:

Angela Uliana-Murphy, Murphy and Murphy: Presenter
Kerri DiDario: Executive Director at EPDSC, Parent Palmerton SD
Rebecca Brunetti, Parent
Katie Spaziani; Nazareth SD Parent
Andrea Anfuso
ESSO; Parkland SD Parent
Tasha Ward, Aveanna Healthcare
Valerie Baber
Jonathan Walter, CLIU21
Andy Weber
484-705-7718 (Phone In)

Members Absent:

Dr. Mark Scott; CLIU21: Director of Special Programs and Services
Jessica McKenty-Nuttall; Director of Advocacy: Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties
Susan Kluge; Advocate: Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties
Roseann Polishan; Advocate for Arc of NEPA; LTF19 Chairperson
Maureen Timlin; ODP: Northeast Region's Supporting Families Lead
Sandra D'Alessandro; Parent, Salisbury SD
Tracey Jacobi; Salisbury SD Special Education Director
Jessica Ruckel; Eastern PA Down Syndrome Center, Parkland SD Consumer Representative
Kristy Fogle; SC Supervisor, Quality Progressions
Kelsey McElvar; SC, Quality Progressions
Kristen Benway; SC Supervisor, SAM, Inc.
Jaime Flammer; SC, SAM, Inc.
Katerri Beachum; The PEAL Center
Deb Penn; PA Elks Home Care Nursing Services
Suzanne Rentschler; Palmerton SD Special Education Director
Kelly Theophile; CLIU21 Representative
Keith Focht; State Task Force Chairperson
Christine Piripavel; Allentown SD Supervisor
Karina Castillo; Corazones Unidos para el Autismo; Allentown SD Consumer Representative
Erika Christofaro-Melton; Lehigh County Integrated Services
Mara Wolfe; MS CRC Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
Kaitlynn Tretter; Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
Andrea Edmonds; Northwestern Lehigh SD Special Education Director
Lisa Mendoza; Parkland SD Consumer Representative
Michelle Dotta; Northern Lehigh SD Special Education Director

2. Welcome Visitors:

Amanda Robbins, Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the Right To Education: Local Task Force 21 May Meeting and gave thanks to everyone for attending. I'm Amanda Robbins, Chairperson. If you are new to LTF21 meetings, please put your name, district your child attends or agency you represent, with your email address in the chat. We are glad you could join us today.

3. Roll Call:

The Local Task Force 21 wants to grow! We would like to encourage Parents to become more involved with the LTF. If you are interested, please email localtaskforce21@gmail.com and after attending two LTF meetings, you can represent your child's school district! The LTF is a safe, judgment-free, place that was created by parents, for parents who have children with disabilities. We are here to help with educational issues and to make sure every child receives F.A.P.E. (A Free and Appropriate Public Education). By attending the Local Task Force meetings, you are opening the door to new possibilities for you, your family and your student(s). All things are possible because together we can do great things!

4. Correction/Approval Of Minutes:

Amanda asked members if there are any corrections to the January minutes. If not, next is the approval of the minutes from the February 22nd, 2023 meeting. Would someone please make a motion to approve the minutes? 1st motion; Dr. Deborah Ohmacht 2nd; Eleni Burd. Motion passed.

5. Agency Reports:

a. The Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties:

<http://arcoflehighboroughton.org/>

Kodi Berry reported:

Questions related to Advocacy can be directed to me at jmckenty@arcoflehighboroughton.org and questions regarding FD/FSS can be directed to Mike Paulik: MichaelPaulik@lehighcounty.org

Upcoming Webinars:

Please see attached for updated information with active links!

If you are interested in getting disability-related resources or looking for more specific advocacy assistance, please contact the Department through our online intake form, <http://arcoflehighboroughton.org/> , or by calling 610-849-8076 ext. 321

In addition to our Advocacy Department, The Arc has 2 additional programs: SPARC & AWC. Our SPARC program is operating in both community & facility-based services! Questions and referrals can be directed to the Department's Director, Dayna Allinson at 610-849-8076 ext. 315.

The Arc's Agency with Choice (AWC) program continues to operate at full capacity and is expanding personnel. Questions regarding the program can be directed to The Arc's Chief Program Officer (CPO) Patrick Kreshock at 610-849-8076 ext. 351 or pkreshock@arcoflehighboroughton.org . Welcome to Lisa, the new agency with Choice Director.

Visit our website to see the complete list of our current & upcoming webinars, <https://arcoflehighboroughton.org/events/> .

You can submit training requests to us, and join our mailing list, https://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/manage/optin?v=001X5d-paIA6QUdtkkFN2z2ZyyzOvXG9Z3p8qPmPpQZv-m0lbbhQ0NghfeOn2FloQ8UGaC_Lg90RAaCpb0YpHuMG_Tbg4GXQJn9_qDXzOhrqSYM%3D , to receive email updates on our trainings & events!

b. ARC of Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA):

<http://www.thearcnepa.org/>

Mandy Colville reported via email:

9/26: 10am Sensory Integration and Sensory Processing

9/28: 10am Making a Sensory Toolkit

10/12: 10am School Discipline and the Manifestation Determination Process with McAndrews

10/24: 10am Effective Communication Strategies for Advocacy

IEP Mini Series:

10/5; 12PM: NOREP, following dates include: 11/2, 12/7, 1/4/24

Carbon County:

Individual Advocacy services available

Presentations available to Providers/Agencies/schools/Groups

The Arc of NEPA is available for advocacy for those in Carbon County. They can be reached with any questions at: mcolville@thearcnepa.org or rpolishan@hearcnepa.org for further information.

The Arc of PA offers families the opportunities to sign up for Action Alerts: <https://thearcpa.org/action-alerts/>. Action Alerts is a good way of notifying families of critical legislation or upcoming government action. Your legislator can be identified to allow you to call or email them.

c. ARC of Pennsylvania:

Tierra Brown and Eleni Burd reported:

- First we have some new dates for our student-focused state-wide Virtual Inclusive Programming.
 - Disability Acceptance Through Literature Book Studies- copy of the book(s), access to audio recordings, and Zoom sessions filled with age-appropriate discussions and activities centered around a book.
 - 18+YO
 - Mondays 5 weeks starting Oct 2
 - Sitting Pretty by Rebekah Taussig
 - 8-12 YO
 - Tuesdays 8 weeks starting Oct 3
 - Get a Grip Vivy Cohen by Sarah Kapit
 - Story Tour 5-8 YO-
 - Thursdays 3 weeks start Oct 5
 - Imogene's Antlers by David Small
 - Mel Fell by Corey R. Tabor
 - Coaster by Paula Kluth
 - The Include Me Connection Club returns with our Adventure Series starting September 19th! This month's theme is all about Time Travel, past and future! For all interested 3-5th graders in PA, this club is inclusive, virtual, and NO COST to attend.
 -
- Next, we wanted to share the upcoming dates for our ACRE and ADEPT certification courses, which we have scholarships available for parents to attend:
 - ACRE Basic Certification will teach you the essentials of providing quality employment services for people with disabilities. Completing our course qualifies you for Supported Employment and Community Participation Services in Pennsylvania.
 - Sept 20-22
 - Oct 18-20
 - Customized Employment: Discovery, Customized Job Development, Systematic Instruction

- Attendees will meet for 10 days of Zoom classes over the span of 5 months and complete field assignments between meeting dates in order to reinforce skills and concepts learned during class. This course structure meets the qualification requirements for Customized Employment/Advanced Supported Employment in Pennsylvania.
- Group 1 starts October 26-27 with meeting dates through February 22
- Price Drop \$3600 down to \$650

Thank you for reaching out! I've attached our clickable PDF summary (with registration links) as well as some small graphics for our upcoming programs included in the LTF21 Smore.

PD Guide and links:

Include Me: <https://thearcpa.org/includeme/>

Program Links: <https://thearcpa.org/includeme/bookstudy/> ,
<https://thearcpa.org/includeme/after-school-hangout-series/>

d. Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21:

<https://www.cliu.org/>

Dr. Mark Scott, Director of Special Programs and Services at CLIU21; No Report.

Kendyle Mills, Education Consultant, CLIU21:

Kendyle provided Google Drive information.

Folder for upcoming events and information:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1T52LySyzYH4NdLIJ_7kTuOSwztYmFd3V

The Mission of CLTCC is to promote effective transition services for students with disabilities, their families, educators, and community service providers from school to adult community life. The meetings consist of presentations geared towards transition age students, networking time and resource sharing regarding transition.

CLTCC is composed of parents, representatives from agencies, employers, educators from the Intermediate unit, school districts, vocational technical schools and Higher Education.

To join us please contact: Kendyle Mills; Millsk1@cliu.org

Google Drive for CLTCC:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bzqvXQIMnNKloNxeMxaFjL_692gf4y73

Google Drive:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pQEN8Upzffw47PeN5eJ9XmE1BR-MDxNAQ3hB9jAtWFw/edit>

Transition Google Drive for Families:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zWfiG7Eo1Sq8HJI1-Fq3cKVkLjHSZcx6>

Google Drive for CLTCC:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bzqvXQIMnNKloNxeMxaFjL_692gf4y73

e. Lehigh County Developmental Programs:

Heather Shirk reported:

There is a LV Supporting Family Collaborative Webinar (Virtual) on 6:30-8PM ;*How to Read /SP*. Please reach out to Meranda Hess for further details: merandahess@lehighcounty.org

The provider fair will be held in the Spring, date TBD

Still working on intakes and if anyone has one, they can call 610-782-3200 and make a referral.

f. Carbon, Monroe, Pike County Developmental Programs (CMP):

Emma Furiosi: No Report

g. Office of Developmental Programs (ODP):

Maureen Timlin was absent. No Report

h. Superintendent's Report:

The LTF21 is looking for a new school district superintendent that would like to join the Local Task Force. By joining us we would be pleased to share up-to-date information about the wonderful happenings in your district and the offerings to the students within their community. Please notify me if you have an interest in this opportunity. You can attend our monthly meetings or send monthly reports via email to Amanda Robbins at: localtaskforce21@gmail.com .Thank You!

i. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR):

Kaitlynn Tretter : No Report

Below is information on what OVR does and how to contact them:

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) provides vocational rehabilitation services to help persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, or maintain employment. OVR provides services to eligible individuals with disabilities, both directly and through a network of approved vendors. A wide variety of services are provided on an individualized basis.

<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/ovr/Pages/default.aspx>

It is important to have the time to navigate the needs of each applicant. If you are in need, please reach out to OVR.<https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Common/Registration>

j. Other Agency Reports:

Easter Seals:

<https://www.easterseals.com/>

Jill Glose; No Report

Therapeutic Arts Group, LLC:

<https://www.therapeuticartsgroup.com/>

Mark Bottos, Manager, Therapeutic Arts Group, LLC, reported:

Therapeutic Arts Group, Lehigh Valley based Music Therapy Associates, LLC was established in 1990 by Director, Kathy Purcell, MT-BC. After years of providing in-home and on-site services, MTA became the premier provider of music therapy services in the greater Lehigh Valley area, including Philadelphia, Kutztown, Reading, Poconos, and Western New Jersey.

Recognizing the varied needs of the area clientele, MTA expanded in 2018 and created its sister branch Art Therapy Associates. Shortly after, the two were formally joined under the Therapeutic Arts Group umbrella and a new facility in Whitehall, Pennsylvania was opened in 2022 to provide individuals the most conducive environment for music and art therapy sessions.

Now with over 30 board certified music therapists and art therapists, TAG is committed to finding the perfect client-therapist pairing in order ensure client comfort, time, and location flexibility, as well as the best therapeutic outcome possible.

For more information and resources, please visit us at:

www.therapeuticartsgroup.com

Catch our the live-streaming music enrichment program called Music Made Mobile on our Facebook page:www.facebook.com/TherapeuticArtsGroup Live streaming Mondays and Fridays at 9:30AM. Fridays at 10:30AM there is a sing along.

Quality Progressions:

<http://www.qualityprogressions.org/>

Kelsey McElvar ; No Report.

SAM, Inc.:

<https://www.sam-inc.org/>

Jaime Flammer and/or Kristen Benway; No Report

Parent To Parent:

www.parenttoparent.org

Niole Lindsay, Parent and Parent, Northeast Regional Coordinator reported:

We are hiring a new Northeast Regional Coordinator, that would be great! The information can be found here: [Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 - Frontline Recruitment \(applitrack.com\)](https://www.tuscarora.org/intermediate-unit-11-frontline-recruitment)

NE Region offers year round free support to families. Just reminding people to send referrals or request a match via our website www.parenttoparent.org under "get matched", follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/parenttoparentpa>, and that agencies can request rack cards (physical or digital) through our website, as well, under "communications". You can also share my contact information!

Her contact information is listed below:

Nicole Lindsay; Northeast Regional Coordinator, can be reached by email at nlindsay@parenttoparent.org or phone at 570-780-0109.

The PEAL Center:

<https://www.pealcenter.org/>

Katerri Beachum; No Report.

Autism Society of Lehigh Valley:

<https://www.asalehighvalley.org/>

Mimi Ludwig reported:

The New Children Meet Ups and Teens groups were a success! The volunteer organizations are off to a great start. Email: Mimi Ludwig: autismsocietylv@gmail.com for updates!

5. Committee Reports:

a. Membership:

We are looking for parent representatives for all of the 14 school districts and 10 charter schools in Lehigh and Carbon County that the LTF represents. Please provide our information to the families in your districts and to anyone you know who would benefit from being a part of our amazing organization. Please reach out to Amanda Robbins for more information or if you have an interest in joining us! localtaskforce21@gmail.com . Thank you!

b. Compliance Monitoring:

Cyclical Monitoring for the 2022-23 School Year is completed.

c. In-Service:

Nothing to Report

d. Legislation:

There was nothing reported by the Arc for September.

Unless otherwise noted, The Arc may not actively support any bills.

Visit <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/> to locate and contact your local legislators on issues important to you & your family!

6. Chairperson's Report:

a. State Task Force:

The STF has bi-monthly meetings that will resume in the 2023-2024 school year. All STF meetings begin at 10AM. All State Task Force meetings are held virtually and in-person at this time. Meeting ID: 991 9413 4883

State Task Force Meeting - November: 11/08/2023

State Task Force Meeting - January: 01/10/2024

State Task Force Meeting - March: 03/20/2024

State Task Force Meeting - May: 05/15/2024

The STF will be increasing their presence within the 29 Local Task Forces to help improve relationships between IUs and LTFs.

<https://www.pattan.net/about-us/partners/state-task-force/>

b. Upcoming Trainings and Events:

Please visit Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/localtaskforce21>

The Local Task Force 21 Newsletter Links for 2023-2024:

The month of September 2023: <https://www.smores.com/6ujz9>

The month of October 2023: <https://www.smores.com/fhvn0>

1. Geisinger and the Autism Collaborative Centers of Excellence are offering a pre-recorded webinar course for families and those who care for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Register at: <https://glearn.geisinger.org/admi/learn> There is no start or end date listed.

Contact Information:

- Rural PA: Health Access Network for People with Disabilities: <https://www.pahealthaccess.org>
- PA Able, Field Representative, contact Diane Fishlock: dfishlock@patreasury.gov to learn about PA ABLE and its benefits for those with disabilities www.PAABLE.gov
- PA Families: <http://www.pafamiliesinc.com/>
- If you're struggling with any mental health concerns, please reach out for assistance by dialing 988.
- Join the Conversation. For anyone feeling anxious or stressed. If you feel you need support, join our Wednesday evening group at 6 PM-7 PM. For more info, Please contact Heather McLean at hmclean@mhaswpa.org or (724) 433-1359 for the Zoom link and password. (This is not a clinical/therapeutic group, but here to offer social support.)
- Mental Health Group. Experiencing mental health symptoms? Then you can find support in the Tuesday afternoon Mental Health group from 1 pm to 2 pm. For more info, Please contact Heather McLean at hmclean@mhaswpa.org or (724) 433-1359 for the Zoom link and password.

7. Presentation:

Angela Murphy Presenter: Special Education Law

Angela has been practicing Special Education Law attorney for 25 years. 2022-2023 was probably the most difficult year for special education law mailing coming from post covid developments. These developments consist of lack of staff and lack of inclusion with the special education classrooms.

How do we Support Families:

- The Time to Seek Help
 - Child is struggling at school and unable to obtain help
 - Has an IEP and not making progress
 - Child has significant anxiety and can't get them to school
 - Displays behaviors at school

- Disciplined regularly or has been suspended
- Big Picture
 - FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)
 - Evaluation
 - Evaluation is supposed to lead to the development of an education plan that provides the child with support and services to meet their needs.
 - IEP
 - LRE (Least Restrictive Environment)
- Ways to Secure Help
- What is an IEP
 - Individualized Education Plan
 - The word *individualized* is the most essential word
 - The plan is tailored to meet the child's unique strengths and weaknesses
 - Team process between parents, school and students
 - Important to include the child at least by the age 14 or earlier
 - Watch out for set programs, class wide behavior plans and anything that is available to the whole class but does not meet your child's needs.
- 504 Plan: Confident the participants know the difference between 504 and IEP
- Where do we start
 - 1st step must be an evaluation
 - Need to know exactly what the child needs to develop the IEP, starting with the initial evaluation
 - Reevaluations will also be conducted
 - Data collection and progress monitoring also guide the IEP process
- FBA: Functional Behavior Assessment
 - There appears to be a huge disparity within districts in regards to FBA's
 - Data collection of child's behavior
- Discipline
 - Disciplinary referrals, suspensions and detentions hinder education
 - Juvenile courts do not understand disabilities.
- Children and Youth
 - It is disturbing to a family to find out they are being reported by a mandated reporter
 - Reporting creates a lack of trust for parents.

The recording of this and previous presentations can be found on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/localtaskforce21>

8. Discussion:

If there are any questions regarding the LTF21 or any of the presentations held, please contact Amanda Robbins @ localtaskforce21@gmail.com.

9. Adjournment:

Amanda Robbins asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting: 1st; Deb Ohmacht. 2nd; Steve Behr. This meeting is adjourned at 11:44AM. I look forward to everyone in October! Thank you for your continued and much appreciated support of the Local Task Force 21.