

Minutes of the Pittsburgh/Allegheny County LICC
March 24, 2026
Microsoft TEAMS Meeting

In Attendance

Emma Martin, PPS EI; Betsy Gamza, PPS EI; Ashley Timko, PPS EI/EC;
Becky CzekajDangler, Early Learning Resources Center; Ashley Harland,
Trying Together; Kelly Nee,
Stacey Trocheck, Diamond Davis, PPS EHS; Marsha Androsik, AIU; Brandi
Binakonsky, Vonna May-Miller, Lynn Cochran, Jenny Deering, Christine Yost;
Kandis
Mason, ACHD; Nicole Zilli, Parent to Parent Southwest Regional Coordinator
– Guest Speaker

Welcome and Introductions

Stacey Trocheck welcomed everyone. Stacey also reviewed the LICC Mission Statement.

Christine Yost accepted the minutes for January 27, 2026, and Vonna May-Miller seconded the motion.

Committee Updates

Child Find Committee

Betsy Gamza reported.

We continue to monitor our initiative for this year, which was to ensure that all school districts in Allegheny County have up-to-date Early Intervention information to share with families of students in all grades, should it be applicable to them.

Family/Professional Involvement

Stacey Trocheck reported.

We continue to recruit new members and welcome any ideas on how to engage caregivers during upcoming meetings. The trifold brochure is available

for any agency or individual who would like to share it. We are also researching a landing page for the LICC.

The
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No
report
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Inclusion Committee

Betsy Gamza reported.

We have had great attendance and participation this year from multiple agencies and are working through OCDEL's Embedded Instruction Model and Coaching Across Settings, and how it aligns with inclusion. We plan to present at the May ELRC Director's Roundtable Meeting to begin sharing information around this topic and hope to expand upon it as the idea takes hold across the field of Early Childhood.

Issues and Public Policy

Ashley Harland reported.

The sub-committee met on March 19th. We discussed the 7% rate increase for Infant/Toddler EI. We also discussed how some EI programs are currently piloting the new provider monitoring tools. Our next and final meeting of the school year is May 21st at 9am. New members are welcome!

Training Committee

Stacey Trocheck reported.

We are seeking an individual to chair this committee and are working on scheduling a presenter for the May meeting.

Transition Committee

Vonna May-Miller reported.

Our committee last met on February 26, 2026.

1. Annual review of the Transition Interagency Agreement was completed. All changes were completed, the final copy is out for review, and signatures are being obtained. Next meeting is coordinated for Monday, June 15, 2026 at 9:00 AM via Teams.

Department Updates

A. Allegheny County Department of Health

No report.

B. Allegheny County Department of Human Services

- **Office of Behavioral Health**

No report.

- **Office of Developmental Supports (ODS)**

Mary Evrard reported.

We are happy to provide presentations for families and helping professionals. Mary.Evrard@AlleghenyCounty.US

www.alleghenycounty.us/Services/Human-Services-DHS/DHS-Offices/Office-of-Developmental-Supports

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Developmental

Supports (ODS) registers eligible Allegheny County residents with

- Intellectual Disability (ID)
- Autism
- Developmental Disability (DD) prior to age 9
- Medically Complex Condition (MCC) prior to age 22 to connect them to Supports Coordination and other supports and services. Supports and services information and resources can be shared with all, regardless of eligibility. Refer to the Resource Lists under ODS Fact Sheets and Informational Documents below. You can also contact the ODS Community Liaison or call 412-253-1251. Interested in registering for Supports Coordination? Use the ODS intake and registration online portal on any internet

connected device including a tablet or smart phone. Begin there by signing up for a password protected account. Learn more and access the portal on this Frequently Asked Questions document. Reach an Intake Specialist at 412-253-1250. To receive regular informational emails from ODS email the request to mevrard@alleghenycounty.us. Recent emails addressed SNAP / nutrition assistance and LIHEAP / utility assistance. If you want those sent to you please email Mary.

Additionally:

Local Task Force (LTF) on the Right to Education

For families that are transitioning to school age this is a great opportunity to connect with other families, school personnel, and community partners! I'm happy to usher in those interested. Both LTFs offer regular meetings during the school year and parent/caregiver hotlines.

LTF 3, www.ltf3.org/.

LTF 2, www.pghschools.org/academics/pse-special-education/pse-special-education/pittsburgh-local-task-force-on-the-right-to-education

PA Family Network Family Advisors are located across Pennsylvania and are all people with disabilities or family members. Through our peer-peer workshops, mentoring services, and systems navigation we help families learn what they need to know and do, across the lifespan, to develop the supports and services needed to achieve an Everyday Life for the WHOLE family. www.visionforequality.org/programs/pa-family-network/

- **AFIT - Early Intervention Birth to 3**

Stacey Trocheck reported.

We are VERY excited about the rate increase! We are currently hiring one Service Coordinator and distributing the Family Survey through the end of May.

- **CYF**

No report.

C. Pittsburgh Public Schools

- **Early Intervention, EHS, Head Start/EC Programs**

For PPS EI

Betsy Gamza reported.

We will have staff openings coming up for EI Teachers, as we fill positions for those that are retiring. There may be other openings as well. Please spread the word if you know any professionals that may be interested! Referrals continue to come in. We made it through February Transition to Kindergarten, and will be getting ready to wrap up the school year and prepare for summer.

For PPS EHS, Head Start/EC,

Ashley Timko reported.

Early Childhood:

Our Head Start FA2 Review wrapped up the first week of March.
Our 2026-2027 PreK Application is Live on the Pittsburgh Public Schools website for children interested in enrolling next school year. We are currently still enrolling for this school year if you have an interested families.
We are working with Early Intervention to determine ways forward in rolling out the Embedded Instruction Model with more fidelity. Plans and processes are in the works for how to inform and support this more program wide next school year.

Early Head Start:

We are in the process of planning our summer programming as our classrooms switch to a home visiting model throughout the summer. We conduct weekly home visits and offer socialization for our families to attend.
Our classrooms are currently receiving TPITOS observations with the help of Healthy Child. This data will support decision making on professional learning and necessary resources to best support the social emotional development in our classrooms.

D. AIU

- **Preschool Early Intervention(PEI)/Head Start**

AIU/Preschool Early Intervention Program

Reported by Marsha Androsik

3/27/2026

AIU PEI has finished up with kindergarten transition meetings with the 42 school districts. Gearing up for summer services. Continue to recruit for open positions. Continue to be working on QEP.

- **AIU/Head Start**

No report.

E. COTRAIC

- **Head Start/Early Head Start**

No Report

F. OCD Early Head Start

No report.

G. SICC

No report.

H. EITA

Brandi Binakonsky reported.

EITA portal updates:

- ***Edits to the coloring and flow of information on the EITA portal to support accessibility including color changes and slight reorganization/flow of content on pages to support screen readers for low vision, etc.***

Focus on Early Language and Literacy (found under Topic of Interest:

<https://www.eita-pa.org/early-language-and-literacy/>

- ***Links to LENA, Sesame Street, Conversation Cards, and Emergent Writing from Head Start***

Social Emotional Resources (found under Topic of Interest:

<https://www.eitapa.org/seddevelopment/>

- *Tools and strategies to support children's emotional well-being and development*
- *Anita Zucker Center for Excellence in Early Childhood* <https://ceecs.education.ufl.edu/atoz/s-social-emotional-development/>

Upcoming Training Opportunities: <https://www.eita-pa.org/highlighted-trainings/>

- *March 25, 2026: Assistive Technology (AT) for Young Children – An Essential Conversation! (repeat session from December 2025)*
- *April 1, 2026: The 5 R's of Healthy Brain Development: Repetition*

I. **Early Learning Resources Center**

Becky Czekaj-Dengler reported.

ELRC Update for LICC provided by ELRC Region 5 Director Becky Czekaj-Dengler:

- ELRC family staff are currently supporting families in finding and enrolling in Summer Care

[Caregivers Should Start Thinking Now About Registering Children for Summer Camp — Early Learning Resource Center Region 5](#)

- ELRC staff are administering the distribution of CCSRR Grants to eligible Allegheny County Certified Child Care Providers
- ELRC Wood Street Office will be closed for the NFL Draft April 23 and 24 ○ Our Satellite Offices will be open ○ We will include information on our website for families to find alternate Diaper and Formula Bank locations

[Early Learning Resource Center Region 5](#)

J. **Trying Together**

Reported by Ashley Harland.

Trying Together is preparing to celebrate on April 30th. New this year, ***Celebrating Together***, will include a VIP Reception followed by the *30th Annual Celebration of Early Childhood Educators Dinner*. Learn more [here](#).

Trying Together's Policy & Advocacy team is preparing for a busy spring as we mobilize early educators and advocate for increased funding in our state budget. You can show your support by signing your name to an [action alert](#) urging elected officials to invest in the child care workforce. To learn more about future EI advocacy opportunities, sign up for updates from Thriving PA [here](#).

Share Out

New Business

May 26, 2026 Meeting will be on Microsoft TEAMS

Christine Yost adjourned the meeting. Ashley Harland seconded the motion.

Minutes submitted by Emma Martin, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Early Intervention Program.