

FINAL Meeting Minutes July 2024

Interagency Committee on Autism

Meeting Agenda

July 16, 2024

11:00 – 12:30

This meeting will be conducted virtually and in-person

Virtual meeting link: <https://udel.zoom.us/j/97657860612>

In-person location: Center for Disabilities Studies, Room 101,
461 Wyoming Road, Newark, DE 19716

ICA Representatives Present:

Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (DPBHS): Meredith Tavani

Delaware Autism Workgroup: Mary Whitfield

Parent Representative: Crystal Thawley

Parent Representative: Andrea Creed

Center for Disabilities Studies: Beth Mineo

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR): LaShonta Mitchell

Autism Delaware: Brian Hall

Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS): Mary Carol Beard

C/Birth to 3 System: Erin Rich

Nemours Swank Autism Center: Laura Dewey

ICA Representatives Absent:

Delaware Department of Education

Parent Information Center of Delaware

Delaware Family Voices (DEFV)

Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH)

Ability Network

Division of Public Health

DNEA Staff:

Sarah Mallory: ICA Administrative Chair

Alisha Fletcher: DNEA Director

Ashley Steinbrecher: DNEA Staff

Katie Booz: DNEA Program Coordinator

Additional Attendees:

Samantha Wootten: Birth to 3 Early Intervention

Taylor Young: Autism Delaware

Dafne Carnright: Autism Delaware

Mia Wilson: Autism Delaware

Heidi Mizell: Autism Delaware

Ivanka Carbajal: Autism Delaware

Tomara Williams: Autism Delaware

I. Motion to Approve Agenda

1. Motion: Crystal Thawley
2. Second: Andrea Creed
3. Motion Carried

II. Motion to Approve Minutes

1. Motion: Beth Mineo
2. Second: Andrea Creed
3. Motion Carried

III. DNEA Funding and Training Update

1. CDS Team Updates
 - Funding and Staffing
 - Funding
 - The application process was moved forward 6 weeks, so the DNEA just submitted their funding application yesterday for FY2025.
 - Funding was approved last year for FY2024, so that contract begins on October 1st, 2024.
 - In FY2024, the DNEA activities touched 14,056 Delaware professionals and families.
 - Nearly a 40% increase from FY2023, when DNEA activities touched 10,117 Delawareans.
 - Provided training to 2,284 individuals.
 - Disseminated professional development resources to 9,316 points of contact.
 - Autism Delaware, which receives a portion of DNEA funding to provide direct support to families, had 2,456 individual client support contacts statewide last year.
 - Staffing
 - Nicole Garrity, who was an implementation coach at the DNEA, has accepted a faculty position within the School of Education at UD and is leaving the DNEA.
 - The DNEA has been conducting a search over past few weeks for a new hire to fill this open position.
 - Compassionate Champion Award
 - The DNEA First Responder training was the recipient of the Compassionate Champion Award from the Governor's Office.
 - The award was presented on May 7th on behalf of the Family Services Cabinet Council, Trauma Matters Delaware, and the Office of Governor Carney to recognize exceptional trauma-informed care provided by individuals and organizations in Delaware.
 - Tier Two Training Numbers Snapshot
 - First Responder Trainings:
 - Disaster Preparedness Training Delaware Department of Safety & Homeland Security (32 trained)
 - Wilmington Police Department (90 trained)
 - Middletown Police Department (18 trained)
 - Department of Delaware Natural Resources Police (29 trained)
 - Organizations & Agency Trainings:
 - Winterthur Museum (37 trained)
 - Pediatric Health Choices at the Children's Secret Garden (14 trained)
 - Claymont Boys Girls Club (30 trained)
 - Delaware Association of School Psychologists Conference (105 trained)

- Understanding Autism and Strategies for Child Care Providers (En Español) DNEA training
 - Where: Virtual (over Zoom)
 - When: Monday, August 5, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - The presenter will speak in English with a Spanish interpreter.
 - The slide presentation will be in Spanish.

2. Autism Delaware Team Updates

- Autism Delaware is seeking volunteers and have various activities and opportunities available. Contact their main office if you are interested.
- They are always recruiting staff. Check their website “Work With Us” page or email them at job@autismdelaware.org.
- Parent Coffee Hours and Grandparent Coffee hours are held every month around the state.
- Social recreational activities are held around the state- check their website calendar or social media for information.
- In the next few months, they will be initiating their Adult ACT Program.
- Trends in educational advocacy
 - Difficulty accessing school evaluations
 - Heidi Mizell highlighted the ongoing issue of a lack of continuity in the evaluation process due to staffing and training concerns, and the shortage of trained professionals for evaluations.
 - It was agreed to revisit the blueprint goals for improving the evaluation process, given the changes that have occurred since its original formulation.
 - There is a need for clearer communication from schools regarding evaluation capabilities.
 - Families are welcome to reach out to Mary Whitfield about issues at autism.resources@doe.k12.de.us
 - Dale Matusевич was unable to make it to the meeting today, but he is aware of this conversation. The DNEA will make sure he gets these notes, and that this conversation continues.
- Heidi Mizell raised the point that it seems that in the school settings the students are either getting autism services or mental health services.
 - Sarah Mallory stated that there has been a lot of work statewide about this issue across the lifespan. She proposed that this topic be added to the Education Subcommittee meeting coming up and then bring that discussion to the larger ICA.

IV. Education Subcommittee Meetings

1. Education Subcommittee meetings will be resuming. They will be on the second Tuesday of each month, with the next meeting being on August 13 from 11:45 to 12:30.
2. Please reach out to Katie Booz (boozkp@udel.edu) if you would like to be added to this group.
3. All meetings will be added to the Public Meeting Calendar.

V. Peer-to-Peer Exchange Conference Update

1. The DNEA and Autism Delaware were invited to participate in this conference last week. Brian Hall and Dafne Carnright from Autism Delaware and Ashley Steinbrecher from CDS attended.

2. Brian Hall highlighted Delaware's advanced approach in providing sustainable, ongoing support programs and emphasized the potential for peer-to-peer work.
3. A common thread throughout the conference was HRSA's [Blueprint for Change](#).
4. Brian shared that the work that happens with the DNEA and Delaware is further ahead than other states (e.g., family navigation and training work). He feels that it is clear that the next piece is peer-to-peer work with individuals with IDD.
5. Dafne Carnright shared that there were great presentations from other states. She also shared that the panel of young adults was awesome and very informative.
6. Ashley Steinbrecher shared that the poster the DNEA and Autism Delaware presented gave broad strokes about what they are doing.
 - Ashley also presented a 30-minute break out session about the DNEA's supported decision-making work, specifically the *My Life, My Decisions: A Supported Decision-Making Summit*.
 - During this presentation, it was shared who the DNEA was able to reach, as well as sample resources that are a part of the health promotion hub of work.
 - Ashley was able to embed snippets of the panel discussion from *My Life, My Decisions: A Supported Decision-Making Summit*, which got a lot of positive remarks.
7. Andrea Creed asked "are there similar conferences with states who are ahead of the curve that DE can learn from? I agree the DNEA has great trainings. I would love to see more people attending them. We could possibly learn from other states in this area."
 - Sarah Mallory replied that the DNEA goes to other conferences similar to this one, such as the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) Conference.

VI. ICA Member Announcements & Updates

1. Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (DPBHS): Meredith Tavani
 - Through one of PBH's many grants, DPBHS will be providing training to their DE providers in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy specific to the IDD population.
 - Mary Whitfield asked that this update be shared directly with her so that she can help push it out.
2. Sarah Mallory shared that the Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) is partnering with Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH)
 - They are creating a training series about crisis response and better understanding IDD and mental health supports.
 - CDS has a new staff member, Alexis Ambrose, who is a mental health specialist. Alisha Fletcher from the DNEA is supporting this work, and Ashley Steinbrecher is leading the health promotion arm of this project.
 - This work is adjacent to the DNEA, but it is a larger project within CDS.

VII. Public Comment

VIII. Meeting Adjourned