



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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Transition and Education Committee Meeting Minutes December 2, 2025, from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM

Members Present (P) Not Present (NP)

Julia Barol (P)
Michelle Mitchell (NP)

Christie Cyktor (P)
Andrew Pennington (P)

Cindy Duch (NP)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present: Chris Harbert, Krista Sloan, Melissa Wert-Thrush, Chris Zakraysek

Guests Present: Tim Krushinski, Bureau of Special Education (BSE), Carol Good, Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), Natasha Kara, York Youth Ambassador Program

PaRC Staff Present: Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Julia Barol called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM after quorum was established.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

MOTION was made by Mr. Andrew Pennington for approval of the meeting agenda and past meeting minutes. Ms. Christie Cyktor seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

Determine Committee Vice Chair for Remainder of Current Fiscal Year 25-26

- Mr. Andrew Pennington volunteered to serve as Committee Vice Chair for the remainder of the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year.

MOTION was made by Ms. Christie Cyktor to elect Mr. Andrew Pennington as Committee Vice Chair for the remainder of the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year. Mr. Pennington seconded the motion. All were in favor.

OVR updates

Pre-Employment Transition Services

- Ms. Melissa Wert-Thrush, OVR, provided updates on Pre Employment Transition Services, statewide partnerships and priorities, Bridging Knowledge to Know-How Conference, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services (BJJS) and Bureau of Special Education (BSE), Connecting for Employment (C4E) program, Pathways to Partnership (P2P), Act 26 Report, Youth Ambassador Program relaunch, Quarterly Technical Assistance meetings with District Offices (DO), College Training and College Resources for Success (CRS) guidance, provider agreements for Project SEARCH, and other OVR internal initiatives regarding personnel development and consistent communication.
- Ms. Julia Barol inquired if the Philadelphia Intermediate Unit will be involved with C4E activities. Mr. Andrew Pennington inquired what changes are anticipated for the MOUs as they have not been updated in approximately 15 years. Regarding the Act 26 reports, members inquired about low performing schools and goals to improve results, IEP data for the Philadelphia area, data regarding job referrals made to employers on behalf of students with disabilities while still in high school in Philadelphia and Norristown areas. Ms. Krista Sloan and Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, reported that they will follow up on these inquiries for the next Committee meeting scheduled for March 3, 2026.
- Ms. Sloan provided updates on commitments and activities regarding the relaunch of the Youth Ambassador Program which include the Washington DO, Harrisburg Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) DO, HUNE, Erie BBVS DO, and others.

Updates from the Commonwealth Technical Institute at Hiram G Andrews Center (CTI at HGAC)

Feedback / Discussion on Full Inclusion

- Mr. Chris Zakraysek, CTI at HGAC, provided updates on fall graduation, spring term, programs, admission numbers, articulation agreements, and accreditation efforts.

Updates from the Bureau of Special Education

- Ms. Carol Good, PaTTAN, presented on features of the <https://www.pattan.net/> website including different areas to locate transition resources, publications, conference information, signing up for an account, training calendar, IEP information, and BSE forms. Information about <https://www.pasecondarytransition.com/>, Pennsylvania's Secondary Transition website was also provided.

Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities Act (Act 26) Report

- Members explained that Act 26 data regarding Philadelphia and surrounding areas including Norristown shows a need for improvement. An MOU can set a standard for outreach ability creating seamless transition and many other improvements in collaboration with the Philadelphia School District.

Conference Information

Pennsylvania Department of Education 2026 PDE Conference, Making a Difference: Educational Practices that Work, February 25-27, 2026, in Hershey, PA

- Mr. Pennington confirmed that he would be interested in representing the PaRC at the PDE Conference. Other members will follow up to confirm availability to attend. PaRC personnel agreed to follow up regarding questions and concerns with the different options available to host an exhibition table during the conference.

Public Comment

- There was no Public Comment provided.

Adjourn

MOTION was made by Mr. Andrew Pennington to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Christie Cyktor seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.