



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Voice: (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175 TTY: (717) 737-0158 Fax: (888) 524-9282

Email: parc@parehabilitationcouncil.org Website: parehabilitationcouncil.org

Transition and Education Committee Meeting Minutes June 2, 2026, from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

Julia Barol (P)
Michelle Mitchell (NP)

Christie Cyktor (NP)
Andrew Pennington (P)

Cindy Duch (P)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present: Chris Harbert, Anna Griffiths, Krista Sloan, Jill Moriconi, Jim Whitonis, Cheryl Novak, Melissa Wert-Thrush, Michael Vore

Guests Present: Dr. Carole Clancy, Bureau of Special Education (BSE), Kirsten Wolfe, Wolfe's Youth Employability Solutions (YES), Joseph Trost, OVR Youth Ambassador

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. Cindy Duch seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

Committee Chair and Vice Chair for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027

- Mr. Andrew Pennington nominated Ms. Julia Barol for Committee Chair and Ms. Cindy Duch for Committee Vice Chair of FY 2026-2027. Ms. Barol and Ms. Duch

accepted their nominations.

MOTION was made by Mr. Andrew Pennington to approve Ms. Julia Barol as Transition & Education Committee Chair for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Ms. Cindy Duch seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MOTION was made by Mr. Andrew Pennington to approve Ms. Cindy Duch as Transition & Education Committee Vice Chair for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Ms. Cindy Duch seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Committee Goal to Attend HGAC Graduation Annually

- Members agreed to open the attendance of Hiram G Andrews Center (HGAC) graduation ceremonies to all members of the Full Council. Members suggested this be made available to all members on a rotating basis. HGAC graduation ceremonies are held in Johnstown, Pennsylvania each year in April, August, and December. PaRC staff agreed to provide an estimated cost for travel expenses.

MOTION was made by Mr. Andrew Pennington to move forward to Executive Committee with the goal of inviting all PaRC members to attend Hiram G Andrews Center (HGAC) graduation ceremonies on a rotating basis at least once per member term, preferably at the beginning of their term on the Council, depending upon budgetary concerns and availability. Ms. Cindy Duch seconded the motion. All were in favor.

OVR Updates

PY 2026-2027 State Plan Performance Indicators

Pre-Employment Transition Services

Youth Ambassador

- Ms. Anna Griffiths, OVR, provided updates regarding OVR Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre ETS), OVR's memo regarding expanding Pre ETS access to students and youth with disabilities, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Bureau of Juvenile Justice Services (BJJS), upcoming conferences, and outreach efforts. The expansion of access includes staff clarification feedback providing driver's training options.
- Members shared concerns regarding the fidelity model of statistics collected regarding Project SEARCH (PS). Ms. Anna Griffiths and Ms. Melissa Werth-Thrush, OVR, provided information that Project SEARCH's definition of competitive employment when they looked at annual outcomes based on PS criteria includes at least 16 hours per week, pays the prevailing or typical wage for that position, is non-seasonal, is held in an integrated setting among coworkers with and without disabilities, and that the job does not have to be at the host business. OVR staff will follow up with Ms. Kim Robinson regarding members' concerns on staff training and clarifying language on data collection.
- Ms. Kirsten Wolfe explained that her organization Wolfe's Youth Employability

Solutions (YES) has partnered with the Oil City YMCA, for the Erie District Office Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS) Youth Ambassador program.

- Mr. Joseph Trost, OVR Youth Ambassador for the Erie BVRS, provided information about his experiences which included hosting the NWPA Empowerment Exchange, a community-focused resource fair designed to unite residents of Venango County with local agencies, economic opportunities, and community-driven support. Mr. Trost also provided the logo, flyers, and other outreach efforts. Ms. Wolfe and Mr. Trost thanked Dr. Carole Clancy, BSE, for her support in connecting them with additional staff and community leaders that participated in the event. Members inquired about the impacts of OVR's program and Mr. Trost explained that his experiences as YA have helped him greatly broaden future work and career considerations.
- Ms. Krista Sloan, OVR, provided additional updates for OVR's YA program that has relaunched updated materials for structured guidance. The program has secured partners and authorization with multiple District Offices including York, Washington, Pittsburgh, Allentown, Erie Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS), and Harrisburg BBVS.
- Mr. Jim Whitonis, OVR provided report on the State Plan Performance Indicators for Program Year 2026-2027. Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit) numbers are impacted by the state's minimum wage, which is much lower than neighboring states, high school students that have just acquired their first job, employees that work part time rather than full time, and other factors that may lower these numbers overall. Earnings vary across different regions of the Commonwealth, occupation types, and customers that are employed earlier in their chosen profession compared to professionals that have been in their careers for a long period of time. Members agreed that additional data regarding these factors as follow up may help to better understand the indicators including a determination of whether the median earnings are before or after taxes. Mr. Whitonis provided the following link to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) newest Statewide Performance Report which provides information about age demographics for median earnings. [ETA-9169 AnnualReport-PY2024-.xlsx](#)

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

- Ms. Jill Moriconi, CTI at HGAC, agreed to provide a report in writing following the meeting in the interest of time.

Updates from the Bureau of Special Education

- Dr. Carole Clancy, BSE, provided updates regarding the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) collection packages, impacts to graduation rates due to updated requirements for states that provide different diploma types, and other changes to indicators.

Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities Act (Act 26) Report Philadelphia Region Data and Collaboration with School District

- Due to time limitations members requested additional agenda items to be tabled until the next Committee meeting. PaRC staff agreed to place tabled items at the top of the next meeting agenda.

Conference Information

Bridging Knowledge to Know-How: Empowering Pennsylvania Educators and Partners, scheduled for August 4-7, 2026, Location: The Lancaster County Convention Center, Lancaster, PA

- Members requested that PaRC staff provide an email to determine committee attendance of the upcoming conference and staffing of the potential PaRC exhibit table at the Bridging Knowledge to Know-How Conference scheduled for August 4 to 7, 2026 at the Lancaster County Convention Center.

Public Comment

- There was no Public Comment provided.

Adjourn

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