

**Interagency Committee on Autism**

Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2025

11:00 – 12:30

This meeting will be conducted virtually and in-person

Virtual meeting link: <https://udel.zoom.us/j/99922335340>

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

UD Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS): Beth Mineo

Parent Representative: Crystal Thawley

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR): LaShonta Mitchell

Parent Representative: Dawn Maloney

Parent Representative: Andrea Creed

Autism Delaware: Brian Hall

Delaware Autism Workgroup: Mary Whitfield

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

Nemours Swank Autism Center: Brian Freedman

**ICA Representatives Absent:**

Division of Public Health

Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH)

Parent Information Center of Delaware

Ability Network

Part C/Birth to Three System

**DNEA Staff:**

Sarah Mallory: ICA Administrative Chair

Alisha Fletcher: DNEA Director

Katie Booz: Program Coordinator

Ashley Steinbrecher: Implementation Coach

**Additional Attendees:**

Tomara Williams: Autism Delaware

- I. Motion to Approve Agenda
  - a. Motion: Brian Hall
  - b. Second: Beth Mineo
  - c. Motion carried.
- II. Motion to Approve Minutes
  - a. Motion: Brian Freedman
  - b. Second: Mary Whitfield
  - c. Motion carried.

III. ICA Updates

- a. SB93 is being updated
  - i. The current structure of the ICA is unconstitutional. We will be removing the duplication of DAP and DDOE. The list is being updated to include constitutional appointments and governor appointments.
  - ii. DDOE, UD, and DDDS teams are aware and working with DAGs and Rep. Williams's team to address.
- b. Brian Freedman asked if this means that other organizations could become a more formal part of the ICA? Will the list change, or will it mainly remain the same?
  - i. Sarah Mallory answered that the list will remain the same. This is mainly going to be cleaning it up. It does not change anyone's participation, the goal is just to have names be listed formally.

IV. DNEA Update

- a. Practice Traffic Stop – new date! May 6<sup>th</sup> from 3-7pm at Lums Pond State Park. Registration is open on our website.  
<https://www.delawareautismnetwork.org/practice-traffic-stop/>
- b. A snapshot of what the DNEA has been doing:
  - i. DNEA trainer Chuck Sawchenko has been working his way through the Department of Corrections (DOC) with the DNEA's first responder training. The DOC has made the DNEA's first responder training mandatory for their staff to attend. Chuck has had 5 trainings and trained over 100 people so far.
  - ii. DNEA trainer Nicole Ferrara provided training at the Delaware Historical and Cultural Affairs. She trained individuals from all the museums in Delaware.
- c. Mental health work that the DNEA contributed to related to a contract between CDS and DSAMH.
  - i. Professional training and resources that the DNEA has developed
  - ii. Overview of project activated:
    - 1. Resources created: 8 unique trainings; 12 grab and go resources; 4 discipline-specific curricula; 3 tutorials; and 4 family access resources.
    - 2. Professional training:
      - a. Training content that is practical, DE specific, and cross promotes project resources.
      - b. A focus on implementation: evidence-based practices and grab-and-go resources.
      - c. They are on training platforms: Relias (DSPs and RBTs) and DLC (call center/mobile crisis, DFS staff, mental health professionals).
      - d. Offered as DNEA statewide trainings.
    - 3. Resources for families: who to call in a crisis decision trees, crisis care plan, and communication board.
    - 4. Online resources
      - a. <https://www.delawareautismnetwork.org/professionals/mental-health-professionals/mental-health-crisis-resources/>

5. Please reach out to the DNEA if you have any questions or are interested in a training or resources.
  6. DNEA recently shared this information at the DSAMH conference where over 200 people attended.
- d. Autism Delaware Update
    - i. Upcoming events: Smart Cookie Day (April 8 at Legislative Hall); Walk for Autism (April 12); and Parent and Grandparent coffee hours.
    - ii. The Adult Family PEER support group is working on developing materials and processes to be able to offer this to families.
- V. Continuation of Blueprint for Collective Action Discussion
- a. Katie Booz shared a google document with ICA members only to review the Blueprint for Collective Action.
  - b. ICA members were asked to review Improvement Area 2 and to add comments on the document for what has been achieved, partially achieved, or not achieved before the meeting.
  - c. Questions from Education Subcommittee
    - i. Outcome C: *All students with ASD who are eligible for special education will be classified for the provision of appropriate educational services and support including and beyond the academic assessment areas.*
      1. How is it included as an improvement area?
        - a. This is legislatively mandated at the federal level.
    - ii. Outcome E(1): *Develop a workgroup of the Interagency Committee for Autism (ICA) reflecting representation of physicians, health and mental health professionals to address and outline method for making therapeutic recommendations to families and relationship to the education system.*
      1. Did the ICA have a subcommittee for this already?
        - a. Brian Freedman shared that the work of the Diagnosis workgroup has specifically focused on diagnostic protocols and making sure people know the difference between medical and educational classifications and using the right instruments. So far, they have not focused on treatment recommendations.
        - b. Sarah Mallory asked if the ICA would create a new workgroup. Or should it be addressed in the subcommittees already in place.
        - c. Brian Freedman said that the work could be addressed under one of the current subcommittees.
      2. Mary Whitfield suggested that this discussion be brought back to the Education and Diagnosis subcommittees to see how it will fit in and bring back to larger ICA.
- VI. ICA Member Announcements & Updates
- a. Meredith Tavani: DPBHS
    - i. One of DPBHS's grants is being used to fund a training on behavioral therapy for individuals with IDD and trauma. They have started registration and will keep the ICA updated.

## DRAFT Meeting Minutes March 2025

- VII. Public Comment
  - a. There is no public comment.
- VIII. Next meeting will be May 20<sup>th</sup> at 11 am
  - a. Discussion on July 15<sup>th</sup> meeting date: we will be canceling this meeting.
- IX. Motion to adjourn
  - a. Motion: Mary Whitfield
  - b. Second: Brian hall
  - c. Meeting adjourned.