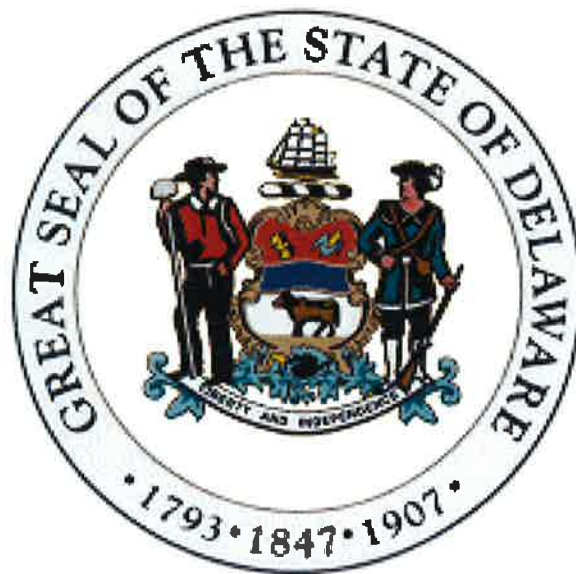


**SENATE CONCURRENT Resolution #65  
Creating an Autism Educational Task Force**

**Final Report to the 147th General Assembly**

**March 31, 2015**



*A report of findings and recommendations regarding the initiation of Educational and Technical Assistance Teams and a statewide Autism Resource Network including the identification of appropriate funding streams to enable the creation and implementation of these two programs.*

## Table of Contents

Task Force Members	3
Executive Summary	4
Historical Context and Summary of Need	7
Intention and Spirit of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 65	8
Overview of Approach to Task Force Implementation	8
Summation of Task Force Findings and Recommendations	11
Appendices:	
A Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 65	
B Recommendation #1 DNEA	
C Recommendation #2 Chapter 14 Code Revisions	

## Task Force Members

---

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 65 identified the required Task Force representation that included the following members:

	<b>Task Force Membership</b>	<b>Member</b>
1	A Private Service Provider Appointed by Secretary of HHS	Allie Marcus
2	The Secretary of DHSS or Designee	Rita Landgraf
3	The Secretary of DDOL or Designee	John McMahan
4	Director of the DDDS or Designee	Jane Gallivan
5	Director of the Delaware (B-3) Early Intervention System or Designee	Carol Ann Schumann
6	Director of UDs Center for Disabilities Studies or Designee	Annalisa Ekbladh
7	The Secretary of DDOE or Designee	Mary Ann Mieczkowski
8	Senator Appointed by Pro Tem	Margaret Rose Henry
9	Representative Appointed by Speaker	Earl Jaques
10	Individual with ASD Appointed by Pro Tem	Shane Mizell
11	Individual affected by ASD Appointed by Speaker	Kathie Cherry
12	Parent of an Individual w/ASD Appointed by Senate Education Chair	Kathleen DeNight
13	Parent of an Individual w/ASD Appointed by House Education Chair	Melissa Stansell
14	The Secretary of DSCYF or Designee	Rich Margolis
15	ED of Autism Delaware or Designee	Marcy Kempner
16	ED of the Delaware Parent Information Center or Designee	Marie-Anne Aghazadian
17	Director of the DDPH or Designee	Leah Woodall
18	Statewide Director of the Delaware Autism Program or Designee	Vincent Winterling
19	Chair of the Delaware Autism Program Review Board or Designee	Todd Harris

The Autism Education Task Force was facilitated by Dr. Jerry G. Petroff, a consultant identified and supported through the Delaware Department of Education. In addition, the Task Force wishes to express its appreciation to the members of the public who participated in providing commentary during the Task Force meetings. Other contributors to the information contained in this report include Teresa Avery, Executive Director of Autism Delaware, Alex Eldreth, Policy & Community Outreach Director of Autism Delaware, and Dr. Peter Doehring, ASD Expert.

## Executive Summary

---

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 65 (Appendix A) was sponsored by Senator Henry & Senator Townsend with additional sponsorship from Sens. Blevins, Ennis, Hall-Long, Lopez, Poore, Venables; and Reps. Baumbach, Bennett, Brady, Briggs-King, Dukes, Gray, Hudson, Jaques, J., Johnson, Kowalko, Osienski, Ramone, B., Short, D., Short, and Smyk. The Resolution created a Task Force to prioritize the central educational-related activities of the statewide strategic plan to improve services and supports for individuals with autism spectrum disorders, which was created through a federal grant initiative of the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies and documented within the *Blueprint for Collective Action* (2013).

Specifically, the Task Force was intended to make recommendations regarding the initiation of Educational and Technical Assistance Teams, and a Statewide Autism Resource Network to include the research of appropriate funding streams to enable the creation and implementation of these two programs. The Task Force was primarily initiated in response to the needs of the growing number of children identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and an impression that the current educational system and support services are not meeting this increased need. Once a national leader in the education of students with ASD, there is general agreement that the current Statewide Delaware Autism Program model as established over three decades ago requires revision to meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs of this growing population of students. The fundamental impetus of the creation of this Task Force was to assure that Delaware's local school districts are appropriately positioned to meet the educational needs of their students with ASD. In 1991 there were 152 students with an educational classification of autism in Delaware's public schools; in 2014 there were 1,512 – that's a 895% increase over 23 years

Task force members were identified in the summer (2014), and the first Task Force meeting was held on September 20, 2014. Senator Margaret Rose Henry served as Chairperson for the Task Force and was joined by Representative Earl G. Jaques, Jr. Although eight meetings were scheduled, the Task Force conducted only six meeting across a six month period due to inclement weather. One of the meetings (12/9/14) was a working session that combined the DE Interagency Committee on Autism with the Task Force. The Interagency Committee on Autism (ICA) is an executive group of state decision makers who represent the stakeholders and a small group of parents who are not linked to any specific organization. This committee was established as a result of the *Blueprint for Collective Action* as a key to the implementation of the statewide strategic plan contained in that document. With a small contract from the Delaware Department of Education, the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies has lead this group in which members volunteer to participate in an effort to implement outcomes and activities identified in the strategic plan.

The Delaware Department of Education was directed to provide staff and fiscal support for the Task Force, which included a professional facilitator. The formal Task Force meetings were designed with evidence-based group processes, and the necessity for between-meeting workgroups that included both Task Force members, as well as members of the professional and parent/advocacy community. These workgroups were designed to address the emerging recommendations of the Task Force for the purposes of maximizing time and effort. A record of each of the meetings was documented through a PowerPoint presentation format that can be found in Appendix E.

### **Task Force Recommendations**

Through a series of group processes at the initial meetings of the Task Force, two overall recommendations emerged. These recommendations were in concert with overarching themes of both the Task Force members as well as the commentary of the public. The following are a summation of the recommendations:

1. *Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (DNEA) which is advised by the Interagency Committee for Autism (ICA)*

The Task Force reframed the original recommendation contained in the *Blueprint for Collective Action* to establish an Autism Resource Center to the creation of a Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (DNEA). This reframing supports a concept that recognizes the collaborative efforts of all stakeholder groups to provide training and technical assistance on behalf of Delawareans with ASD. Although the DNEA is suggested to be administered by the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies in conjunction with Autism Delaware, its primary mission must include the facilitation and leveraging of resources, expertise, and efforts of all agencies and organizations that are mandated to provide services and support to individuals with ASD within the State. The DNEA will be responsive to the advisory role of the Interagency Committee for Autism. This Task Force strongly recommends that the legislature provide funds to establish the DNEA and to include support for the formal establishment of the Interagency Committee for Autism. This structure is additionally established to help make certain that duplication and/or gaps in services are not realized. (See Appendix C for a Detailed Description and Suggested Legislative Language regarding the DNEA and ICA). Lastly, it should be noted that the Task Force requested that the represented state agencies which included Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS) and the Division of Public Health (DPH), Delaware Department of Labor (DDOL), Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), and the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families (DSCYF), consider supporting DNEA staff to provide expertise within their respective areas, if appropriate. As a result, both DDOE and DDOL suggested that they would be willing to contribute to this initiative with the understanding that they would direct the efforts toward their agencies' needs and coordinate with their mandates and specific charges.

## 2. *Changes to Delaware Code Title 14§1332*

Delaware Code Title 1414§1332 addresses the Program for Children with Autism and its “Special Staff.” Enacted nearly three decades ago, these regulations established a network of educational programs initially within a separate school structure known as The Delaware Autism Program (DAP). Today, this network continues as a combination of both separate school programs and within local school district support services. In addition, the code designates a Statewide Director who primarily has provided direction, training, and technical assistance within the DAP. However, current practices in special education, especially regarding inclusive education and parents’ desire to have their children educated within their local communities, seem to be incongruent with this older model of service delivery. In addition, the increase in the number of students identified with ASD has clearly created difficulty for the Statewide Director to provide the level of services/support that once was offered.

Therefore, the recommended code changes also revise the concept of DAP toward a system in which the Statewide Director would work in collaboration with a team of experts to provide technical assistance and training to districts and educational entities. This recommendation reconstitutes the regulations to neutralize the distinction between DAP approved programs and other in-district options, thereby, allowing and providing adequate resources to serve on behalf of all student with ASD in Delaware. The number of technical/ training experts has been identified as one expert per 100 students statewide. It is suggested that the fiscal mechanism to support these changes should be through mandated district participation that is congruent with the current needs based funding system in Delaware. Lastly, the current mandatory committee structure is enhanced to include a Parent Advisory Committee, in addition to the Peer Review Committee and Statewide Monitoring Review board. (See Appendix D for Code Change Language)

### *Association between these Recommendations*

It is suggested that the Education Specialists who are generated by the numbers of students identified with ASD, and work to support the efforts of the Statewide Director, should become a component of the DNEA at the University of Delaware. This would enable the blending of these two recommendations to create a comprehensive system for support of educational programs for students with ASD without duplication of services, as well as the coordination of efforts across a system. It should be noted that the educational technical assistance and training staff would be staff of the DNEA at the University of Delaware; however, they would be contracted through the office of the Statewide Director who would establish a collaborative system to deploy services to school districts.

## *Autism Educational Task Force Member Agreement*

With the exception of two abstentions, the Autism Educational Task Force voted to approve the recommendations presented at the last meeting on March 10, 2015. It should be noted that the members did not have an extensive review of the DNEA/ICA document nor the Suggested Code Language Changes, which were each developed by established workgroups. However, a vote was elicited from a review presented by representatives of each of those workgroups and the documents reflected in Appendices C and D. The abstentions had specific concerns that included the following:

The Division of Public Health represented by Leah Woodall voted against any agreement to mandate funds from DPH to provide a technical assistance / training expert to the DNEA initiative without further discussion; and

The Department of Education represented by MaryAnn Mieczkowski expressed concerns regarding the Title 14 Code changes that would not be congruent with the current needs based funding formula and/or in the absence a further discussion on mandatory dedicated district funding of the technical assistance / training specialists. However, she was in agreement with the concept that additional training and technical assistance staff are needed.

## **Historical Context and Summary of Need**

---

The Delaware Autism Program has been in existence for over thirty years, beginning with a network of separate educational programs and a community-based residential program (within the Christina School District). However, the sharp rise in the numbers of students identified with ASD over the past decade or more, coupled with the shift to inclusive education and desire of families to have their child educated within their home school districts and communities, has presented challenges to the original model. Since the inception of the program, the DAP has added support to an array of in-district programs especially designed to meet the educational needs of children with autism; however, there is a growing number of students being supported in local schools outside of the DAP system. Central to these challenges are insufficient accessibility to educational autism specialists, and a lack of training and technical assistance that is available to local school districts.

In 2011-2013, the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies, with the support of Autism Delaware, initiated and completed a Statewide Strategic Planning process which focused on needed improvements in services to individuals with ASD. This initiative was funded by a grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration under CFDA 93.110/HRSA-11-081 and entitled the *Blueprint for Collective Action*. Over a year of deliberations across three workgroups representing education, medical/mental health, and adult life/employment, were conducted to identify needs in the following areas: Identification, Diagnosis and Classification, Training and Technical Assistance, Pre-Professional Training, Self-Determination, Self-Advocacy

and Social Network Development, Transition to Adult Life, Family Support and Stakeholder Engagement, and Systems Coordination. This plan established the Interagency Committee for Autism (ICA), which is a group of state decisions-makers and key stakeholders. This group has been meeting across the past year to initiate the activities reflected in the statewide strategic plan to improve services/support to individuals with autism in Delaware. A component of the Blueprint for Collective Action was the provision of appropriate educational services to students with ASD. With the exception of a very small contract from the Delaware Department of Education to support the limited functions of coordinating the ICA, the Blueprint as not realized any funding. Within this report/plan, the need for the development of a resource center for autism was identified for the purposes of providing specialized technical assistance and training on behalf of Delaware's children with ASD.

In 2014, the need for technical assistance and training for teachers within school districts and other educational programs serving students with ASD was further recognized in the establishment of a legislative Task Force led by Senator Margaret Rose Henry. In addition, this Task Force was charged with the establishment of a statewide Autism Resource Center which was reframed as the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (DNEA). This report is a summary of this Task Force findings and recommendations.

## **Intentions and Spirit of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 65**

---

The intention of the Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 65 was initiated to address the specific needs of teachers, regardless of where they work, to meet the needs of Delaware students with ASD. It was a response to information contained within the *Blueprint for Collective Action* that identified improvement needs across the state in the provision of appropriate education to students with ASD. The language within the resolution was “to study the Blueprint to prioritize and make recommendations regarding the initiation of Educational and Technical Assistance Teams, and a statewide Autism Resource Center, and to research appropriate funding streams to enable the creation and implementation of these two programs.” The spirit of this resolution was to establish a means to begin making improvements in the lives of individuals with ASD and their families that were established within the *Blueprint for Collective Action* by providing concrete action within the educational system. It was reported within the context of Task Force meetings that the intentions were to positively influence the education of children with ASD so that they may begin to make progress toward a successful adult life. The assumptions were that the current DAP system is no longer meeting the needs of this increasing population of youngsters.



## Overview of Approach to Task Force Implementation

---

A professional facilitator for the Task Force was hired by the DE Department of Education upon agreement with the Chairperson Senator Henry. This was to assure that the group would establish outcomes and meet their goals to the extent possible. Therefore, a formal structure to the meeting was implemented and review of each past meeting was summarized and processes were implemented to move the group forward toward recommendations. Central to the process toward outcomes was the need to establish workgroups that would address the emerging recommendation areas. These workgroups elicited both interested Task Force members and members of the professional, advocacy, and parent communities. Workgroups began as a result of the October, 2014 Task Force Meeting when it became apparent that recommendations were emerging from the Task Force members as supported by public comment. Because the Task Force did not need to conduct any original research, due to the fact that the *Blueprint for Collective Action* contained the needed direction, the concept of workgroup (small group processes) was the best solution to moving toward achieving the goal of the group.

The following is a synopsis of the formal task force meetings and the content addressed:

### September 30, 2014

*The first meeting of the Task Force was conducted and the initial parameters of the resolution were outlined. Task Force members were introduced, the normative structure was established and Annalisa Ekbladh, Program Manager, (University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies) reviewed the Blueprint for Collective Action. Chairperson Senator Henry and Representative Earl Jacques provided insight and direction as to the legislative process.*

*During this meeting the following themes were presented by the Task Force and public:*

*There is a strong need to provide support to families, schools, adult agencies, health care providers, and employers through a specialized team of professionals*

*Review Models for the development of a system of technical assistance and training from other states (e.g. Ohio, Indiana)*

*Review the structure of Delaware's Deaf-Blind Statewide Services and its supporting legislation*

*Parents have a role in the design and implementation of a Resource Center on Autism*

*There is an overall concern regarding the provision of specialized services / support across the full life span of individuals with ASD*

## **October 21, 2014**

*The objective of the second meeting was to provide an up-to-date review of initiatives within different states across the country. Dr. Peter Doehring (autism expert) conducted a presentation of his research in the implementation of activities that are addressing the growing necessity in every state to meet the needs of individuals with ASD, and specifically, K-12 students. It was at this meeting that the workgroup structure began to be formed. A summary of the second meeting included the following:*

*The existing systems of awareness, technical assistance and training are varied in the states that have formal models; these models range from simple awareness activities through anchored professional technical assistance. (Dr. Doehring's Presentation)*

*It is suggested that at the basic level, Delaware could benefit from a website where people (parents, professionals, etc.) could access information and request contact with someone knowledgeable about autism.*

*There is strong agreement that the proposed Autism Resource Center should be represented by all the areas reflected within the Blueprint to include Health (Public Health), Education, Labor / Vocational Rehabilitation, Developmental Disabilities (DDS) and Parent/Self Advocacy. However, it was strongly noted that this Task Force was established to focus on education.*

*Once again there was discussion regarding the overall concern for the provision of specialized services / support across the life span of individuals with ASD*

## **November 18, 2014**

*At this meeting the Task Force further refined the parameters of the Resource Center and expanded its definition as a Network through a review of the relevant activities of the Blueprint; agreeing to the general concept of collaboration across lifespan areas regarding structure and general purpose.; Senator Henry, Chairperson of the Task Force substituted the December 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Task Force for a combined meeting with the Interagency Committee for Autism so that a framework could be established for the recommendations of the Task Force, and funding streams could be identified. In addition, the specific activities from the Blueprint for Collective Action were discussed to influence the narrowing of the Task Force recommendations.*

## **December 9, 2014**

*A combined meeting of all interested Task Force members and the Interagency Committee for Autism was conducted with the purpose of gaining consensus regarding a specific direction for recommendations and the actions needed. A summary of this meeting includes the following:*

*There was additional overall agreement that there is a need for expertise to provide training and technical assistance that far exceeds current capacity in education, transition to adult life, healthcare (including behavioral health), family support and independent/community living.*

*Resource Center / Network for Autism was discussed using a model which was modified from an original schematic that was developed by Dr. Peter Doehring.*

*State Educational Regulations establishing Autism Services was discussed with agreement that these regulations need revising to meet the current needs of students with autism, and the developing trend to establish in-district programs. It was discussed with agreement that the Statewide Director of Autism must have sufficient resources to support the identified and growing needs of school personnel regarding the education of students with autism.*

*Due to the fiscal constraints it appears that the Autism Resource Center must be supported through agreements with the associated Departments of State so that all areas or categories of the project are represented and the fiscal burden is shared. A small dedication of funds may be necessary from the Legislature which may include the support of developing and implementing an interactive website for awareness activities across the categories / areas of concern.*

*New state positions dedicated to expertise in autism is highly unlikely; however, the allocation of multiple state department funding (state/federal funds) for technical assistance and training may be accomplished through a joint / collaborative effort through a Request for Proposal Process.*

*The Center for Disabilities Studies and Autism Delaware were identified as the agencies that can join in a collaborative effort to support the Autism Resource Center, since they function across all categories involved in this project (Education, Health Care, Family Support, Adult Services, Employment) – Discussion and Agreement*

### **January 6, 2015**

*During this fourth meeting (not including the combined ICA and Task Force meeting) the findings from the December ICA meeting were discussed and subsequent work group outcomes were presented. In addition, the specific recommendations that the Chairperson requested were articulated and reviewed for agreement with the Task Force members. These included the following:*

- #1 Formal recognition of the Interagency Committee on Autism and the creation of the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism*
- #2 Changes to the Delaware Title 14 Code that reflect the reorganization of the Delaware Autism Program to include the Expansion of the Office of Statewide Director*

### **March 10, 2015**

*During this most recent Task Force meeting, a detailed report from the two workgroups (DNEA/ICA & Title 14 Code Changes) were presented to the members. The proposal to support*

*these two overall recommendations and the outcomes they present toward moving the Blueprint agenda forward were voted on by the Task Force members. The result was a significant majority agreement with the understanding that there was a great deal of work to be completed to refine and implement these recommendations in the upcoming months.*

## **Summation of Task Force Findings and Recommendations**

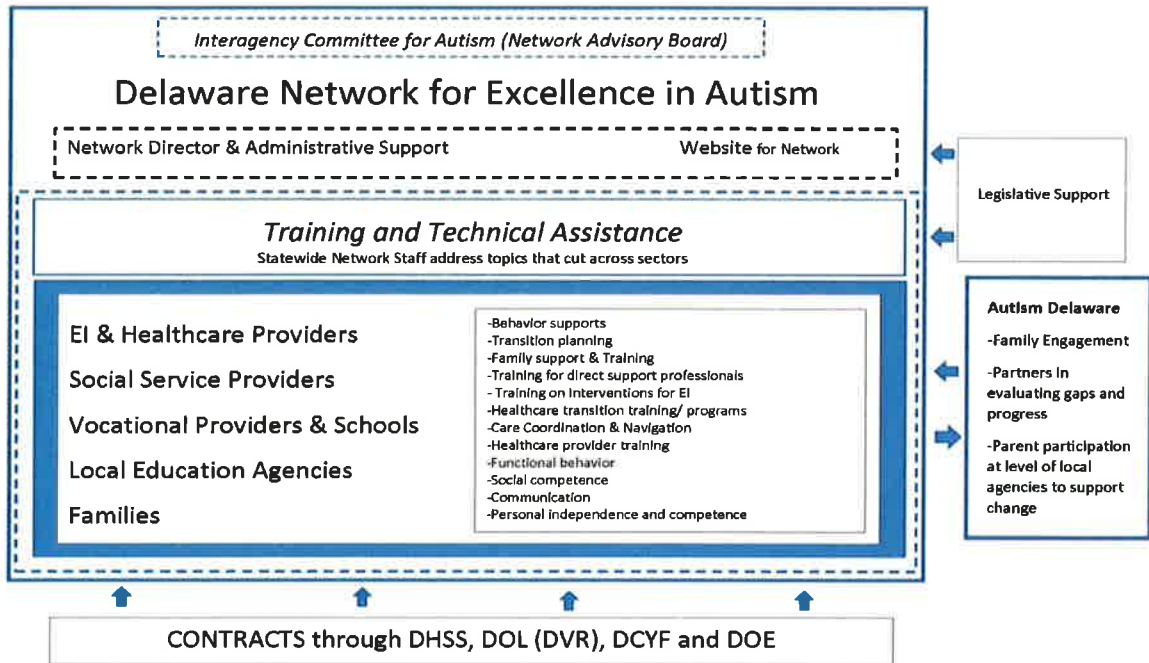
---

The Autism Educational Task Force established by the Delaware SENATE CONCURRENT Resolution #65 completed its work on March 10, 2015. The Task Force, recognizing that the rapid and growing incidence of Autism Spectrum Disorder, coupled with the inability of the current specialized services established by Delaware statute, has created a significant need for improving educational and other services. Therefore, the Task Force has developed the following recommendations to be initiated through the legislative process:

- #1** Formal recognition of the Interagency Committee on Autism and the creation of the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (See Appendix C)

The Task Force is recommending that the state legislature formally recognizes the Interagency Committee on Autism, established as an outcome of the *Blueprint for Collective Action* (Statewide Strategic Plan to Improve Services and Supports for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders). This Committee comprised of state-level decision-makers and other interested parties has convened over the past year to attempt to implement the recommendations of the Blueprint. It is suggested that this body is formally established within code, as an advisory council to the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (DNEA).

The Task Force further recommends the establishment of a Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism as a collaborative effort between the University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies (<http://www.udel.edu/cds/>) and Autism Delaware ([www.autismdelaware.org](http://www.autismdelaware.org)) with the DNEA Director located at the Center for Disabilities Studies. It is further recommended that this initial, formally established network be funded by a legislative initiative with state line item funds, as well as other funds that are to be identified by the departments of the state. In addition, the educational technical assistance teams funded by the second recommendation regarding code changes should be contracted to the DNEA so that there exists a coordinated system of specialized services and support for individuals/students with ASD.



**#2** Changes to the Delaware Title 14 Code that reflect the reorganization of the Delaware Autism Program to include the Expansion of the Office of Statewide Director (See Appendix D)

The Task Force is recommending specific changes to the Delaware Code Title 14§ 1332 regarding the Program for Children with Autism; Special Staff. These changes include articulation of the qualifications and duties of the Statewide Director for students with ASD; the addition of a technical assistance team of educational autism specialists numbering a ratio of 1 for every 100 students with ASD (currently estimated at 15 positions); and the further clarification / additions to the committee structure for family input, monitoring, and protections under human rights. This recommendation recognizes and supports the need for specialized technical assistance and training staff to be available to build capacity for teachers in all districts and other programs educating students with ASD. These changes essentially expand available supports so that excellent, evidence-based training and technical assistance can be made available to all Delaware schools and the students within them.

# Appendix A



SPONSOR: Sen. Henry & Sen. Townsend  
Sens. Blevins, Ennis, Hall-Long, Lopez, Poore, Venables;  
Reps. Baumbach, Bennett, Brady, Briggs King, Dukes,  
Gray, Hudson, Jaques, J. Johnson, Kowalko, Osienski,  
Ramone, B. Short, D. Short, Smyk

## DELAWARE STATE SENATE 147th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 65

#### CREATING AN AUTISM EDUCATIONAL TASK FORCE.

1 WHEREAS, the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies conducted a comprehensive statewide  
2 appraisal of the ongoing needs of Delawareans with autism spectrum disorder (hereinafter "ASD"); and

3 WHEREAS, a summit was held inviting a diverse group of stakeholders involved in the lives of individuals with  
4 ASD that provided the opportunity to express individual perspectives or concerns regarding the Blueprint; and

5 WHEREAS, the Delaware Department of Education (hereinafter "DDOE") provides valuable education  
6 opportunities and services to students with disabilities; and

7 WHEREAS, the state of Delaware has a history of providing a groundbreaking and innovative, evidence-based  
8 education program for students with ASD; and

9 WHEREAS, students who have an ADS function at many different and individual cognitive levels; and

10 WHEREAS, the conclusions found in the Blueprint regarding the educational needs of students with ASD show  
11 that there are areas needing improvement.

12 NOW THEREFORE:

13 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 147<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of  
14 Representatives concurring therein, that an Autism Educational Task Force (hereinafter "Task Force") is established to  
15 study the Blueprint to prioritize and make recommendations regarding the initiation of Educational and Technical  
16 Assistance Teams and a statewide Autism Resource Center, and to research appropriate funding streams to enable the  
17 creation and implementation of these two programs.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

19 (a) One member of the Delaware State Senate appointed by the President Pro Tem; and

20 (b) One member of the Delaware House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

21 (c) Two parents of an individual with ASD, from a variety of age groups and geographic areas, one to be  
22 appointed by the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, one to be appointed by the Chairman of the House  
23 Education Committee; and

- 24 (d) Two individuals personally affected by autism one to be appointed by the President Pro Tem, one to be  
25 appointed by the Speaker of the House; and
- 26 (e) A private service provider for Delawareans with ASD to be appointed by the Delaware Secretary of Health  
27 and Human Services; and
- 28 (f) The Secretary of the Delaware Department of Education or a designee thereof; and
- 29 (g) The Secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) or a designee thereof; and
- 30 (h) The Secretary of the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families (DSCYF) or a  
31 designee thereof; and
- 32 (i) The Secretary of the Delaware Department of Labor (DOL) or a designee thereof; and
- 33 (j) The Executive Director of Autism Delaware or a designee thereof; and
- 34 (k) The Executive Director of the Delaware Parent Information Center or a designee thereof; and
- 35 (l) The Director of the Delaware Division of Developmental Disability Services (DDDS) or a designee thereof;
- 36 and
- 37 (m) The Director of the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) or a designee thereof; and
- 38 (n) The Director of the Delaware Birth to Three Early Intervention System or a designee thereof; and
- 39 (o) The Director of the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) or a designee thereof
- 40 (p) The Statewide Director of the Delaware Autism Program or a designee thereof; and
- 41 (q) The Board Chair of the Delaware Autism Program Peer Review Board or a designee thereof.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall convene its first meeting no later than 60 days after  
43 enactment. The member of the Delaware State Senate appointed by the President Pro Tem shall serve as the chair of the  
44 Task Force, and shall convene the first and subsequent meetings.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education shall provide staff and fiscal support for the  
46 Task Force.

47 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to  
48 the General Assembly to be reviewed by the Senate Education Committee and the House Education Committee on or  
49 before March 31, 2015.

#### SYNOPSIS

This resolution establishes an Autism Educational Task Force.

Author: Senator Henry

## Appendix B

# **Information Concerning the Suggested Creation of the Interagency Committee on Autism and the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism**

*a work product of the Autism Education Task Force  
(Jerry Petroff, facilitator)*

September 2014 – March 2015

*Including:*

- *summary talking points,*
- *purpose statement,*
- *historical perspective,*
- *network diagram,*
- *bullets for proposed legislative language, and*
- *four year implementation budget with source suggestions.*

*Draft of March 12, 2015*



## **About the Task Force, the Network, and the ICA:**

1. The autism education task force was signed into legislation during the 2014 legislative session as a combined effort by many legislators and advocates and led by Senator Margaret Rose Henry and Representative Earl Jaques.
  - a. The intention of the task force was to design structures and find funding for the creation of educational training and technical assistance teams and an autism resource network, as imagined and presented in the Blueprint for Collective Action.
    - i. Reminder: The Blueprint for Collective action is the result of a 1.5 year wide collaborative effort, led by the Center for Disabilities Studies, in which parents, advocates, caregivers, state agencies and organizations like Autism Delaware worked together to create a plan for serving all individuals with ASD in Delaware, across functional areas, ages and abilities.
  - b. The task force has been meeting since September with subgroups created and meeting in order to maximize the available work and the ultimate outcome.
  - c. The Task Force (whose report will be available April 1, 2015) has two specific recommendations:
    - i. Title 14 of the Delaware code must be enhanced in order to assure that all students with ASD in all Delaware schools have access to high-quality, evidence-based educational practices through the implementation of training and technical assistance to teachers from the Office of the Statewide Director of the Delaware Autism Program.
    - ii. The Delaware legislature must establish the Interagency Committee for Autism and the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism in order to provide evidence-based training and technical assistance to state agencies, provider organizations and others in areas ranging from education to healthcare and beyond.
2. The Interagency Committee for Autism is charged with overseeing the work of the Network and with minding the full breadth of services and support for individuals with autism in Delaware, paying particular attention to those areas where there may be duplication or (perhaps more importantly) gaps. The ICA is further charged with the implementation of the Blueprint for Collective Action.
  - a. Membership in the ICA includes a wide range of parents and caregivers, advocates, organizations and state agencies.

3. The Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism will be housed at the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies, but will be a true Network – leveraging the capabilities of agencies, hired staff and contracted staff in order to achieve its goals.
  - a. The Network will provide training and technical assistance services.
  - b. The Network is funded through a combination of line item funding from the Delaware state budget, the budgets of participating agencies (e.g. DOE, DOL, etc.), and LEAs for educational supports.

## **What is the purpose of the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism?**

*Simple answer:* The Network is a wide collaboration that provides training and technical assistance to all kinds of professionals – from educators to physicians – to improve services for our citizens affected by autism.

*Expanded answer:* The purpose of the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism is to build Delaware's state- and system-wide capacity to improve outcomes for individuals with autism through providing the highest quality, evidence-based technical assistance and training for professionals in the areas of education, healthcare, vocational services and social services.

The Network will seek to harness the existing expertise within the system in order to create maximum efficiency, with the least possible duplication of services. It will use collaboration, contracts and the hiring of new staff in order to achieve its goals.

The Network will focus its primary attention on areas of service where multiple systems overlap, understanding that these are often the places most at risk for gaps in services and where the most can be gained from system coordination.

The Network will not seek to directly provide services, but rather to be a resource and to improve the ability of multiple school districts, state agencies, organizations and others to provide high quality services within the state of Delaware.

## **How did we arrive at the creation of the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism?**

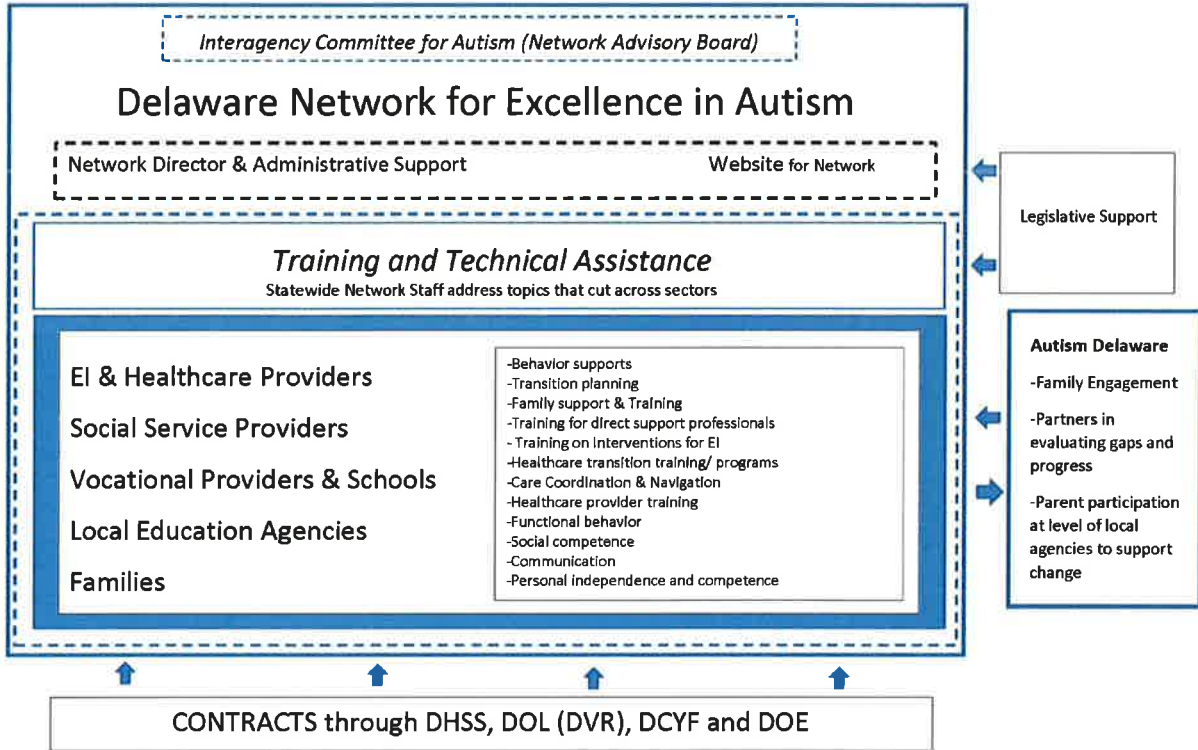
**2011:** The University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies, supported by Autism Delaware, received a grant to facilitate the creation of a statewide plan for improvements in services to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the State of Delaware.

**2011 – 2013:** For more than a year committee meetings were held throughout the state in the areas of education, adult services and medical in order to create a widely supported plan. Stakeholders present and participating in these meetings included parents, self advocates, caregivers, the Delaware Department of Education, the Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, the Division of Public Health, the Department of Health and Social Services as well as multiple non-profit and advocacy organizations.

**2013:** The plan was completed, published and announced. Called The Blueprint for Collective Action, it represented a comprehensive vision for improvements in state systems and services in all categories associated with serving individuals and families affected by autism. The Blueprint's suggestions included the creation of a Network to provide a multitude of training and technical assistance supports needed throughout the state system.

**2013:** After the Blueprint was completed, the Interagency Committee for Autism (ICA) was formed in order to determine how best to move forward on the mandate of the Blueprint with limited or no funding available. The ICA is made up of representatives from parents, state agencies and non-profit/advocacy organizations.

**2014 – 2015:** Led by Senator Margaret Rose Henry, a legislative task force was established to look into how to provide more resources for training and technical assistance for teachers of the rapidly rising number of students with autism in Delaware's public schools. The task force also included a mandate to begin the creation of the Network, as it was envisioned in The Blueprint for Collective Action. Membership on the task force included State Senator Henry, State Representative Earl Jaques, as well as multiple state agencies, non-profit/advocacy organizations, parents and self advocates.



## **Suggestions for Legislative Language Concerning the ICA and the Network**

### **The Interagency Committee for Autism (ICA)**

An Act, To create the Interagency Committee on Autism; to provide for the membership and duties of the Committee; to allow the Committee to adopt rules for its internal operations; and to establish the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism to assist in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations

- The legislature establishes the Interagency Committee on Autism (ICA) with the charge to
  - Utilize evidence-based practices and programs to improve outcomes for people living with ASD and related developmental disabilities in Delaware by sharing information, initiatives, data and communications among both public and private agencies providing services and supports for individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorder in the state of Delaware.
  - Implement the recommendations outlined in the 2013 Delaware Strategic Plan entitled "Blueprint for Collective Action: Final Report of the Delaware Strategic Plan to Improve Services and Supports for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder". This may include assisting state agencies and partner agencies to develop more detailed implementation strategies and timelines, and to track progress towards specific goals.
  - Monitor services currently provided by state agencies to people with Autism Spectrum Disorder, with the goal of identifying gaps and avoiding duplication of services
  - Provide oversight for and development of goals and priorities for the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (Network), created to assist in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.
  - Advise the legislature on legislation that is needed to implement these recommendations. The committee may develop and recommend legislation to the legislature or comment on pending legislation that affects those persons.
  - Submit a report annually to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives summarizing the
    - Progress towards all recommendations adopted by the Committee and the activities of the Network and the Committee
    - Major categories of expenses and that includes all public, private, and in-kind support
  - Members of the ICA shall not be compensated directly for their service on the ICA
  - The ICA shall be chaired by the Network Director, who shall be responsible for coordinating quarterly meetings of the ICA with the locations of those meetings moving between state counties regularly
  - The Network Director shall not be a voting member of the ICA
  - Members of the ICA in existence at the time of this legislation's passage shall maintain their membership.
  - New members of the ICA not specifically mentioned below shall be appointed by a majority vote of the existing ICA members.
  - The ICA shall adopt rules for the conduct of its meetings.
  - Any actions taken by the ICA must be approved by a majority vote of the members present.
  - The ICA shall establish policies and adopt rules to carry out its duties.

- Voting members of the ICA shall consist of, but not be limited to:
  - The Statewide Director of the Delaware Autism Program
  - A representative appointed by the Department of Education
  - A representative appointed by the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services
  - A representative appointed by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
  - A representative appointed by the Center for Disabilities Studies at the University of Delaware
  - A representative appointed by Autism Delaware
  - A representative appointed by the Nemours network
  - A representative appointed by the Division of Public Health
  - A representative appointed by the Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
  - A representative appointed by the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
  - A representative appointed by Family Voices
  - A representative appointed by the Parent Information Center of Delaware
  - A representative of Part C/Birth to Three System
  - A representative appointed by the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services
  - A parent or caregiver of a child or adult with autism spectrum disorder from each Delaware county
  - An individual with autism spectrum disorder
  - Administrative staff support for the ICA shall be provided by the Network

### **The Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (Network)**

- The legislature establishes the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (Network) in order to provide a resource for training and technical assistance for Delaware state agencies, organizations and other private entities operating in the state of Delaware who provide services and supports to individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorder
- The Network shall be run by a Director, who shall be hired by the Center for Disabilities Studies, with representation on the hiring committee by the Interagency Committee for Autism.
- The Network Director shall be housed at the Center for Disabilities Studies at the University of Delaware, who shall be responsible for supervision of the Director
  - The Director of the Network shall be responsible for the creation of an annual report and submission of such to the legislature
- Network staff members shall possess experience in autism spectrum disorders and shall administer training and technical assistance in all cases utilizing accepted evidence-based practices
- The Network shall maintain at least one administrative support staff position, who shall be responsible for supporting the day-to-day operations of the Network and shall be overseen by the Network Director
- The Network shall consist of at least four Team Leader Network staff positions, to ensure adequate training across the areas of healthcare, education, vocational services and social services.
  - Team Leaders shall be overseen by the Network Director
- The Network shall include at least 2 FTEs Family Trainer/Navigators, who shall be responsible for assisting families in learning about and gaining access to needed

services, including those from the state system. These services shall also include community training opportunities for individuals and families.

- Family Navigators shall be contracted through Autism Delaware and shall provide a quarterly report on the number of families served and major issues encountered to the Network Director and the Interagency Committee on Autism
- The Network shall develop and maintain a website that offers public visibility to the activities of the Network, the ICA and tracks progress on attaining the goals of the Blueprint for Collective Action, as well as offering links to key autism services within Delaware
- The Network shall support the operations of the ICA through the maintenance of the website, maintenance of reports created by the ICA and minutes of ICA meetings, as well as other support as needed.
- The Network shall consist of additional staff specifically designated to provide training, technical assistance and coaching to all local education agencies across Delaware. The funding for these positions is designated in Delaware Code (citation). Equivalent funds will be designated through a contract to the Network to provide said positions and services
- The Network shall also administer additional contracts for training and technical assistance
- This bill and its related funding shall be reviewed and reauthorized by the legislature 5 years after its initial passage
- The Network shall have the authority to contract with outside individuals and agencies in order to provide needed training and technical assistance consistent with the Network’s goals
  - Contracts shall be overseen by the Director of the Network.
  - Contracted individuals shall adhere to similar standards of professional qualifications and demonstration of accepted, evidence-based practice as Network staff.
- The Network Director shall be empowered to seek and administer outside grant funding as appropriate to fulfill the mission of the Network

**Definitions**

- (1) Autism Spectrum Disorders: For the purposes of this chapter, “Autism spectrum disorders” or ASD shall include the following, as defined in the current edition of the “Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders” published by the American Psychiatric Association. This shall also include related developmental disabilities, whenever people with these disabilities can also benefit from the improvements and enhancements identified for people with ASD
- (2) People living with ASD: Shall include the person with ASD and their legal guardian(s)
- (3) Agencies: Shall include both public and private agencies and associations

**Budget - Year 1**

***Legislative Commitment***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Director	\$80,00 + 34% benefits	\$107,200
Program Coordinator	\$52,500 + 34% benefits	\$70,350
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2 staff, \$75,000 salary + 34% benefits	\$201,000



Family Navigators	2 at \$50,000	\$100,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile);	\$6,750
Printing, copying & supplies		\$3,750
Program overhead	20% of year one program total of	\$97,810
<b>Total Year One Legislative Commitment</b>		<b>\$586,860</b>

***Non-Legislative Commitments***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2 staff, \$75,000 salary + 34% benefits (LEAs/agencies)	\$201,000
Family Navigator benefits	Grants/in-kind from Autism Delaware	\$14,000
Website development	Agencies	\$25,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile); (all LEAs)	\$2,250
Hardware and equipment	Start up costs for needed items; grant funding	\$10,000
Printing, copying & supplies		\$1,250
Program overhead	20% of year one program total by agencies/LEAs	\$50,700
<b>Total Year One Non-Legislative Funds</b>		<b>\$304,200</b>

**Budget - Year 2**

***Legislative Commitment***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Director	\$82,400 + 34% benefits	\$110,416
Program Coordinator	\$53,075 + 34% benefits	\$72,460
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2 staff, \$77,250 salary + 34% benefits	\$207,030
Family Navigators	2 at \$50,000	\$100,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile);	\$6,750
Printing, copying, supplies		\$3,750
Program overhead	20% of year two program total of \$1,107,750 = \$221,550; 50%	\$100,081
<b>Total Year 2 Legislative Commitment</b>		<b>\$600,487</b>

***Non-Legislative Commitments***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2 staff, \$77,250 salary + 34% benefits 50% LEAs/agencies	\$207,030
Family Navigator benefits	Grants/in-kind from Autism Delaware	\$14,000
Network Technical Assistance Education	4 staff, \$70,000 salary + 34%	\$375,200

Specialists	benefits; DOE United Count	
Website upkeep/upgrades	Required for more complex/developer work; agency and unit count split	\$5,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile); 50% split with LEAs	\$6,750
Hardware and equipment	Needed for staff expansion; DOE Unit Count	\$12,000
Printing, copying and supplies	Agency & Unit Count Split	\$3,750
Program overhead	20% of year two program total	\$121,946
<b>Total Year 2 Non-Legislative Funding</b>	Agencies: \$254,635 DOE Unit Count: \$477,041 In Kind: \$14,000	\$745,676

### **Budget - Year 3**

#### ***Legislative Commitment***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Director	\$84,872+ 34% benefits	\$113,728
Program Coordinator	\$54,667+ 34% benefits	\$73,253
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2 staff, \$79,567salary + 34% benefits	\$213,240
Family Navigators	2 at \$50,000	\$100,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile)	\$6,800
Printing, copying and supplies	Agency & Unit Count split	\$3,750
Program overhead	20% of year three program total of \$1,492,950 = \$298,590; 50%	\$102,154
<b>Total Year 3 Legislative Commitment</b>		\$612,925

#### ***Non-Legislative Commitments***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2staff, \$79,567salary + 34% benefits Agencies	\$213,240
Family Navigator benefits	Grants/in-kind from Autism Delaware (no overhead)	\$14,000
Network Technical Assistance Education Specialists	8 staff, \$70,000 salary + 34% benefits; (DOE Unit Count)	\$750,400
Website upkeep/upgrades	Required for more complex/developer work; grants	\$5,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile); 50% split with LEAs	\$11,330
Hardware and equipment	Needed for staff expansion	\$16,000

Printing, copying and supplies		\$6,250
Program overhead	20% of year three program total	\$200,444
<b>Total Year 3 Non Legislative Funds</b>	Agencies: 266,107 DOE Unit Count: 992,557 In Kind: 14,000	\$1,202,664

## **Budget - Year 4**

### ***Legislative Commitment***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Director	\$87,418+ 34% benefits	\$117,140
Program Coordinator	\$86,307+ 34% benefits	\$75,451
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2 staff, \$81,954 salary + 34% benefits	\$219,637
Family Navigators	2 at \$50,000	\$100,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile);	\$6,800
Program overhead	20% of year four program total	\$1103,805
<b>Total Year 4 Legislative Commitment</b>		\$622,833

### ***Non-Legislative Commitments***

<b>Items</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Network Technical Assistance Staff Leads	2staff, \$81.954 salary + 34% benefits 50% LEAs/agencies	\$219,637
Family Navigator benefits	Grants/in-kind from Autism Delaware (no overhead)	\$14,000
Network Technical Assistance Education Specialists	12 staff, \$70,000 salary + 34% benefits; funding from LEAs **Note staff total is an estimate; actual amount should be equivalent to 1 in 100 ratio	\$1,125,600
Website upkeep/upgrades	Required for more complex/developer work;	\$5,000
Staff travel	Estimate for local mileage at state reimbursement rate (40 cents/mile)	\$15,862
Hardware and equipment	Needed for staff expansion	\$16,000
Printing, copying and supplies		\$8750
Program overhead	20% of year four program total	\$278,169
<b>Total Year 4 Non-Legislative Funds</b>	Agencies: 273,783 DOE Unit Count: 1,395,235 In-Kind: 14,000	\$1,683,019

<p>Existing Legislation</p> <p>Delaware Code Title 14 § 1332</p> <p>Program for children with autism; special staff.</p> <p>(a) <i>Director-specialist.</i> — Whenever the Department with the approval of the State Board of Education designates a particular school district to administer the statewide program for children with autism, that district may employ a statewide director-specialist for a period of 12 months per year. The director-specialist shall hold a doctorate degree in psychology or exceptional children and shall possess such other qualifications for certification as are required by the Department with the approval of the State Board of Education. "Years of experience" in determining salary shall be in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Department with the approval of the State Board of Education in this respect. The director-specialist shall be paid the amount for which that director-specialist qualifies under § 1305(a), (b) and (d) of this title plus an amount for administrative responsibility determined in accordance with § 1321(c) of this title.</p>	<p>Proposed Amendments to Delaware Code, Title 14 § 1332 --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DRAFT</p> <p>Statewide services for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD); Special staff</p> <p>a) <i>Director of Autism Education Services.</i> — The Department of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, shall designate a particular school district to administer the statewide program for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and that district shall employ a statewide director (the Director) for a period of 12 months per year. The Director shall be hired in consultation from the Peer Review Committee (see subsection (d)) The Director shall hold a doctorate degree in psychology, exceptional children, or Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and shall demonstrate expertise with ASD, such expertise being defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) <i>At least five years experience working with individuals with ASD;</i></li> <li>(2) <i>Graduate-level training in evidence-based practices in curriculum, instruction and behavioral support such as ABA instructional strategies;</i></li> <li>(3) <i>Experience planning and/or leading skill development in communication and social skill training programs for individuals with ASD;</i></li> <li>(4) <i>Experience as a consultant to teams and an understanding of basic principles related to performance management;</i></li> <li>(5) <i>At least one successful experience leading the development and implementation of an autism services program;</i></li> <li>(6) <i>At least one successful experience leading the development and implementation of a structured professional development program and a performance management plan;</i></li> <li>(7) <i>Successful direction and management of similar autism projects</i></li> </ul> <p>Further, the Director shall possess such other</p>
---	--

## Autism Education Taskforce

qualifications for certification as are required by the State Department of Education with the approval of the State Board of Education. The Director shall be authorized by the State Department of Education to:

(1) Identify those practices specifically relevant to the education of students with ASD that are established as evidence-based through the best available outcome research or otherwise by expert consensus;

(2) Promote utilization of these practices by leading training and technical assistance activities specifically relevant to students with ASD,

(3) Assist with implementation of all aspects of training and technical assistance for all Delaware school districts, for students with an educational classification of ASD from birth to age 21 in each school district throughout the state;

(4) Be consulted by the Department of Education and work collaboratively with the Department of Education on all aspects of education programs related to Autism Spectrum Disorder; and

(5) Serve as a primary liaison between the Department of Education and other state departments, committees, and programs on questions regarding programs for children and adults with ASD.

"Years of experience" in determining salary shall be in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Department with the approval of the State Board of Education in this respect. The Director shall be paid the amount for which that director qualifies under § 1305(a), (b) and (d) of this title plus an amount for administrative responsibility determined in accordance with § 1321(c) of this title.

(b) Whenever the Department, with the approval of the State Board of Education, designates a particular school district to administer a statewide program for children with autism that district may employ specialists as herein authorized to serve the entire

b) Training and technical assistance on behalf of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) shall be administered through a contract by the State Department of Education in collaboration with the Director to allow for the provision of such

## Autism Education Taskforce

statewide program.

Specialists so employed shall be paid according to the salary authorized for teachers in § 1305 of this title. The school district authorized to employ such specialists and the director may provide additional salary to such personnel according to § 1304 of this title and shall recover funds so expended from the school districts of residence of the children with autism by levying a fee against those school districts, including the administering district, whether or not the child with autism is a resident of that district, that is proportional to the number of persons served from a particular district. The fees so levied may be paid by the local school districts from funds collected according to Chapter 6 of this title.

training and technical assistance across all school districts within the state. The contract shall require that educational programming shall be comprised of high quality instruction based on research and evidence-based practice. The contract shall also ensure for the following staff:

- 1) The Director as specified in section (a) above
- 2) Training Specialists – at least one (1) training specialist per 100 students with an educational classification of ASD.

The total number of positions shall be determined annually through the September 30 count of students with an educational classification of ASD. Such training specialists shall serve eligible students within all school districts.

i) Training specialists shall include qualified speech-language pathologists, behavior analysts, and other personnel with expertise in evidence-based instruction such as ABA strategies and in classroom, community and home-based consultation.

ii) All training specialists will have a minimum of a Master's degree and three (3) years experience of demonstrated consultative experience with students with ASD

iii) Duties of training specialists may include but not be limited to: Training and technical assistance for staff working with students with an educational classification of ASD, including classroom consultation, plan development and performance feedback; parent training; and training for regular education staff on ASD and evidence-based strategies for inclusion practices

c) Funding of the contract shall derive from a combination of funds from the State Department of Education and from all school districts based on total enrollment. Training specialists so employed shall be paid according to the salary authorized for teachers in § 1305 of this title. The Director may provide additional salary to such specialists according to § 1304 of this title and shall recover funds so expended from the students' school

## Autism Education Taskforce

(c) The administering school district may purchase specialized services for any such categories shown in this section rather than employ a staff person to serve that function. If the option to purchase services is exercised, then the dollar value of each full-time equivalent shall be the number of dollars set in the state supported salary schedule for a teacher holding a master's degree with 10 years of experience and employed for 12 months. The calculation of this funding shall be for the current school year. Expenditures of this nature may be used for the purchase of personal services. The administering school district wishing to use funds under this option shall first make application to the Department of Education for such use and proceed to exercise the option only after approval by the Department of Education; provided, that the State Board may review any objection to the Department's decision.

(d) The Department with the approval of the State Board of Education shall adopt such rules and regulations to establish and provide for parent advisory committees, a peer review committee which, at the request of the Department of Education, may also review procedures, in accordance with the regulations of the Department of Education, for children with educational classifications other than autism, a human rights committee, and appropriate liaisons with the Department of Health and Social Services. The Department with the approval of the State Board of Education shall adopt such rules and regulations to establish and provide for an Autistic Program Monitoring Board, to be composed of no less than 7 members and which shall include 1 nonvoting public representative nominated annually by the statewide parent advisory committee. Such representative shall not have any child enrolled in the program. The statewide Autistic Monitoring Review

districts of residence by levying a tuition fee against those school districts, including the administering district, whether or not the student with ASD is a resident of that district, that is proportional to the number of persons served from a particular district. The fees so levied may be paid by the local school districts from funds collected according to Chapter 6 of this title.

d) The office of the Director may purchase specialized services for any such categories shown in this section rather than employ a staff person to serve that function. If the option to purchase services is exercised, then the dollar value of each full-time equivalent shall be the number of dollars set in the state supported salary schedule for a teacher holding a master's degree with 10 years of experience and employed for 12 months. The calculation of this funding shall be for the current school year. Expenditures of this nature may be used for the purchase of personal services. The office of the Director wishing to use funds under this option shall first notify the Department of Education for such use and proceed to exercise the option only after approval by the Department of Education; provided, that the State Board may review any objection to the Department's decision.

e) Committees - The Department, with the approval of the State Board of Education, shall adopt such rules and regulations to establish and provide for: Parent Advisory Committees (PAC); a Peer Review Committee (PRC), which at the request of the Department of Education, may also review educational procedures and programming for students with an educational classification of ASD and related disabilities; a Statewide Monitoring Review Board (SMRB) to be composed of no less than 7 members and which shall include 2 nonvoting public representatives nominated annually by the PAC. Such representatives shall not have a child with a current educational classification of ASD enrolled in a Delaware public

## Autism Education Taskforce

Board shall review at least annually the education of and provision of related services to students with autism throughout Delaware to ensure best practices are being used and opportunities for continuous improvement are afforded all such students. Disputes within or between districts or agencies shall be resolved by this Board. Procedural safeguards guaranteed to children with autism, their parents or guardians and to local school districts or agencies shall not be diminished by this provision.

63 Del. Laws, c. 177, § 3; 63 Del. Laws, c. 322, § 11(f), (g); 64 Del. Laws, c. 90, § 11(d)(xiv); 64 Del. Laws, c. 220, § 6(a); 64 Del. Laws, c. 334, § 11(j)(15); 64 Del. Laws, c. 381, § 3; 65 Del. Laws, c. 87, § 11(k)(9); 65 Del. Laws, c. 230, § 4; 65 Del. Laws, c. 348, § 12(r)(14); 66 Del. Laws, c. 85, § 12(p)(15); 66 Del. Laws, c. 303, § 12(m)(13); 66 Del. Laws, c. 421, § 1; 70 Del. Laws, c. 186, § 1; 71 Del. Laws, c. 180, §§ 82-85; 73 Del. Laws, c. 265, § 1; 78 Del. Laws, c. 5, §§ 32-36.;

school program. The SMRB shall review, at least annually, the education of and provision of related services to students with an educational classification of ASD throughout Delaware's school districts to ensure the application of evidence-based practice and opportunities for meaningful and measurable progress and inclusion as appropriate are afforded to all such students. The findings and recommendations of the SMRB will include data measuring these specifications that shall be submitted to the Department of Education and to the Delaware Legislative Education Committees at least annually, for review and recommendations for corrective action to ensure consistent quality and equity of services throughout the state. These reports will further be made available to the public, annually, through each school district website. Disputes within or between agencies shall be resolved by the SMRB. Procedural safeguards guaranteed to children with an educational classification of ASD, their parents or guardians and to local school districts or agencies shall not be diminished by this provision. If a school district is found to be out of compliance with the above specifications, the State Department of Education and the Director of Autism Education Services shall allow the district the opportunity for technical assistance and progressive implementation of a corrective action plan for improvement agreed upon by the school district and the Director.