

ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON AUTISM
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 16, 2015

The Arkansas Legislative Task Force on Autism met Friday, October 16, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., in Room 151, State Capitol, Little Rock, Arkansas. Senator Uvalde Lindsey and Representative Mary Broadaway, co-chairs, presided.

Task Force members present were: Senator Uvalde Lindsey, Representative Mary Broadaway, Ms. Linda Wilson (*for Mr. Jim Brader*), Dr. Richard Frye, Ms. Lisa Haley, Ms. Diane Holitik, Ms. Camille Johnson, Dr. Steve Kahler, Ms. Karen Massey, Ms. Veronica Myers, Dr. Tyra Reid, Ms. Suzie Baker (*for Ms. Linda Rogers*), Ms. Dianna Varady, and Ms. Nancy Wells. Ms. Julie Meyer (*for Dr. Charlie Green, Advisory member*) also attended.

Senator Lindsey called the meeting to order.

Adoption of Minutes from August 21, 2015 [Exhibit C]

The August 21, 2015, minutes were revised to remove federally from the discussion on ADE SPED Rules Options.

Adoption of Task Force Rules and Procedures [Exhibit D]

Senator Lindsey made the motion to adopt the Legislative Task Force on Autism Rules and Procedures. Ms. Holitik seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Consideration of a Motion to Authorize Chairs to Approve Special Expenses Incurred by the Task Force [Exhibit E]

Without objection the motion was adopted authorizing the chairs to approve special expenses incurred by the task force.

Update on Research at the Arkansas Children's Hospital Research Institute [Handout 1]

Senator Lindsey recognized Dr. Richard Frye, pediatric neurologist at Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH), Director of Autism Research at Arkansas Children's Research Institute (ACHRI), and Associate Professor at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), and Dr. Stephen Kahler, biochemical geneticist at ACH and Professor of Pediatrics at UAMS. They gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the complexities, etiology and multiple physiological abnormalities associated with autism spectrum disorder, and the link between autism and genetics, oxidative stress, and body chemistry.

Dr. Frye explained that children with autism have multiple genetic and physiological abnormalities that affect their cognitive and coping skills. He cited a study conducted on a group of children with autism in which, after three months of vitamin B12 injections and folic acid treatments, many began showing signs of improvement in social and behavior skills that continued to improve through twelve months of treatments. He explained that although Arkansas Children's Hospital Autism Multispecialty Clinic faces future monetary challenges, ACHRI and UAMS continue to work together with research centers in other states with the common goal of developing the most effective approach to diagnosing and treating children with autism.

The task force discussed creating a subcommittee to develop and prioritize task force goals for 2016.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.