

**ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON AUTISM**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**MAY 15, 2015**

The Arkansas Legislative Task Force on Autism met Friday, May 15, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., in Room 151, State Capitol, Little Rock, Arkansas. Senator Uvalde Lindsey and Representative Mary Broadaway presided.

Task Force members present were Senator Uvalde Lindsey, Representative Mary Broadaway, Mr. Jim Brader, Ms. Karan Burnette, Ms. Tina Davis, Ms. Lisa Haley, Ms. Camille Johnson (for Glenda Higgs), Dr. Steve Kahler, Ms. Leslie Henson-Kita, Dr. Randall Hundley (for Dr. Michael Martin), Dr. Tyra Reid, and Ms. Dianna Varady. Advisory member Dr. Charlie Green also attended.

Senator Lindsey called the meeting to order. Senator Lindsey announced Representative Broadaway is replacing former task force co-chair, Representative Hank Wilkins, IV.

Senator Lindsey welcomed Phyllis Bell and Zack Harper, liaisons to the Governor's office.

The minutes from the November 21, 2014 were approved by acclamation.

Ms. Karan Burnette was recognized and gave an update on the Arkansas Autism Partnership (AAP) program. Ms. Burnette distributed packets to the task force members that contained information about the AAP Medicaid waiver program and many success stories from parents who began seeing their child's social skills and speech improve after receiving the AAP services. The waiver is a three year program for kids 18 months through 6 years of age. Expenditures were 60% below the minimum dollar amount of the original projected cost to fund the program.

Ms. Jessica Beel, Attorney, Bureau of Legislative Research, was recognized to present a PowerPoint on legislation that passed during the 90<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 2015, Legislation Session. Ms. Beel said two task forces were created from the 2015 Legislative Session; the Legislative Task Force on the Best Practices for Special Education and the Behavioral Health Treatment Access Legislative Task Force.

Senator Lindsey recommended inviting members of the General Assembly to a future task force meeting to listen to parents share their success stories. Senator Lindsey also encouraged task force members to look at how to involve regional outreach centers to implement evidence based interventions.

Ms. Dianna Varady would like the task force examine how to continue improving on the training programs being offered to developmental professionals and school personnel who work with autistic children and other developmental disabilities.

Meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.