



University of Pittsburgh

# THE FORUM

The Tri-State Area School Study Council Newsletter

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### See related newsletters:

- **Education Law Report, prepared by Tucker Arensberg Law Firm**
- **Special Education Alert, prepared by Andrews & Price, LLC**

### TRI-STATE AREA SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL

Seeking ways to increase organizational capacity in schools through problem solving, technical service, and staff development so all students will be better prepared to make contributions to both our democratic society and the world community

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## 2019-2020 Workshop Calendar

### Principal Leadership Workshop Series

All workshops from 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

- October 10 - *Technology and Innovation*, Elizabeth Forward School District
- December 5 - *Legal Updates for School Administrators*, Upper St. Clair High School
- March - *School Safety*
- April - TBD

### NCAA Update Workshop

- Supporting Student Athlete Success: College Transition Readiness*
- October 22 | 7:30-11:45 a.m.
- Petersen Events Center

### Special Education Workshop

- A Comprehensive Effort to Improve Graduation Rates for Students with Disabilities in PA*
- November 6, 2019 | 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- Edgewood Country Club

### Trauma Informed Practices Workshop

- Connections, Compassion, and Classroom Strategies: Trauma-informed Approaches to Education*
- November 7, 2019 | 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- Edgewood Country Club

### Title IX Update

- Toward a Culture of Safety, Respect, and Equity: Ending Sexual Harassment in Schools*
- December 10, 2019 | 8:30-11:30
- Edgewood Country Club

### School Board and Distinguished Educator Banquet

- March 5, 2020 | 5:00-9:00 p.m.
- Edgewood Country Club

### PASA & PSBA Workshop

- March 6, 2019 | 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- Edgewood Country Club

### Dr. Jean E. Winsand Institute for Women in School Leadership

- April 2, 2020 | 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
- Edgewood Country Club

### Dr. Samuel Francis School Law Symposium and Special Education Workshop

- June 24, 2020 | 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
- Edgewood Country Club

Please check our website, <https://tristate.pitt.edu/events/>, for new events!

Thank you to the law firms who contribute to the *The Forum* newsletter each issue:

- **Andrews & Price, Special Education Alert**
- **Tucker Arensberg Attorneys, Education Law Report**
- **Weiss Burkardt Kramer LLC, In Brief: School Law Update (Located on pages 6-7 of The Forum)**

# Tri-State Research Brief



## Tri-State English Teachers Contribute to Study of Teacher Talk

By: Sarah Capello (Judson University)  
Meghan Dale, Amanda Godley, & Sean Kelly  
(University of Pittsburgh)



What features of teacher talk are most common in high school English classrooms? Are these features of teacher talk connected to student engagement? Tri-State English teacher recently participated in a University of Pittsburgh study to answer these questions using new, computerized data collection methods. In recent years, research on school improvement has focused on how observational measures of teachers' instruction can provide information to drive professional development. Many frameworks for teacher observation stress the importance of classroom talk. Do teachers use questions effectively? Are student ideas at the center of instruction? Does teacher talk encourage open exchanges of information and extend student talk?

Beginning in the fall of 2017, Tri-State launched a study of teacher talk in secondary English language arts classes, focusing on 16 English language arts teachers in two Tri-State Districts. In this research brief, we describe how teachers collected and submitted their own classroom data *autonomously*, without a researcher present in the classroom. We also discuss our pioneering work in using speech recognition software and automated methods of analysis, and the connection between teacher talk and teachers' own independent reports of student engagement.

After receiving a brief training from the research team, teachers in this study were equipped to collect and submit their own classroom data independently over the internet. To do so, the teachers wore a wireless headset microphone while teaching. This worked well except for the teachers who wore eyeglasses (We subsequently pilot tested a lapel microphone with a belt clip, which showed promise for additional comfort, but did pose a problem if the teacher wore a dress.). The microphone recorded all teacher talk and simultaneously and transmitted it via a receiver to a classroom laptop with recording software. Following each recorded class session, the teacher saved the audio file to a secure website for the researchers to access. In addition, the teachers completed a brief student engagement survey following each recorded class session, which sought information regarding the lesson focus, activities, and the teacher's perception of their students' engagement. Teachers themselves chose which classes they would record, looking for classes where high amounts of teacher-student interactions were planned, so that we could examine the teachers' discourse within those interactions.

The classroom audio recordings were transcribed using IBM Watson speech recognition software and moved to an Excel template for researchers to label features of the teachers' talk. The research team both examined high quality features of teachers' questions from our prior work (see *The Forum*, Fall 2014) and pioneered a new analysis of ELA teacher discourse by examining a much more comprehensive set of discourse features, including features of teacher statements. Features of teacher discourse in our analysis included: conveying a high cognitive level of intellectual work, taking up student ideas, evaluating student responses, using ELA terms, and specifying goals and procedures for activities. We also examined the proportion of teacher discourse that was "disciplinary," related to the literacy content of the lesson as opposed to the introductions, warm-up talk, and generic procedures and directions.

The majority of teacher statements (70%) and questions (73%) were disciplinary, indicating that the bulk of teacher discourse was focused on teachers' lessons. Our study also found rates of high quality discourse features that are consistent with prior research, which are listed in Table 1.

(continued on page 3)

**Table 1**

Discourse Feature	Percent <sup>a</sup>
Authentic Questions	26%
Talk included an ELA term (questions & statements)	22%
High Cognitive (questions & statements)	19%
Statement including Goal Specificity	16%
Talk included Uptake of Student Ideas (questions & statements)	7%

<sup>a</sup> Percent calculations for these features based on eligible utterances (instructional, disciplinary utterances), and includes questions and statements, only questions (for authentic), or only statements (goal specificity) in the denominator as relevant.

# Tri-State Brief & Local News

## Tri-State Research Brief (cont.)

While these prevalence rates may appear low at first glance, it is important to note that these results must be interpreted carefully for two reasons. First, these results compare quite favorably to what has been reported in prior research; it is not necessarily easy for even the most experienced teachers to consistently use these discourse features. Second, we would not always expect to find certain features prevalent in every class session, as the goals of lessons shift. For example, one or two authentic questions could guide an entire discussion-based ELA class.

Next, we investigated whether there was a connection between high quality discourse features and teachers' own perception of students' interest, concentration, and enjoyment. Were students engaged in the ELA lessons? Through surveys that recorded teachers' perceptions of student engagement, we found a consistent and strong relationship between three high quality discourse features—authentic questions, high cognitive questions, and high cognitive statements—and the teachers' perception of their students' engagement in the lesson. In other words, teachers themselves reported that high quality talk seemed to be associated with student engagement.

Moving forward, this research shows promise for developing cost-effective ways for teachers to collect personalized data on their own instruction independently. We hope that by using automated methods, teachers will soon be able to collect their own discourse data and receive non-evaluative feedback on this aspect of their instruction almost immediately! In fact, the research team is now working with Tri-State teachers on an app that teachers can use on their computer or phone to further streamline this process. ▲

Thank you to the districts who volunteered to take part in this study. This study was done with the support of Tri-State Member Districts Upper St. Clair School District and Quaker Valley School District.

## Teaching About Islam and World Religions

University of Pittsburgh Greensburg is hosting a free workshop for K-12 PA Teachers which will cover constitutional framework for teaching about religion in public schools.  
November 7 | 4:15-8:30 p.m.



[Click here to learn more and to register.](#)

## Classrooms Without Borders

Classrooms Without Borders is a premier provider of experiential, extended-term professional development for teachers and educational leaders. Offering unique travel experiences, conferences, and curriculum. Upcoming events include a professional development conference on November 10-11 titled: *Antisemitism, Hate and Social Responsibility*. Register today!

[Click here to learn more!](#)



## National Blue Ribbon School

Congratulations to Tri-State member districts who have schools named a 2019 [National Blue Ribbon School](#). Schools granted this award are recognized as demonstrating high levels of excellence and innovation.

**Central Elementary School**—Elizabeth Forward SD  
Category: Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools

**Dutch Ridge Elementary School**—Beaver Area SD  
Category: Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools

**Mars Area High School**—Mars Area SD  
Category: Exemplary High Performing Schools

**Sunset Valley Elementary School**—Norwin SD  
Category: Exemplary High Performing Schools

[See all schools awarded here.](#)

The University of Pittsburgh's School of Education offers a variety of degree and certificate programs for educators looking to advance in their careers. If you are interested in any programs, follow the link below. Application deadlines for most programs are December 1, 2019.

[Click here to learn more!](#)



# 22nd Annual Dr. Samuel Francis School Law Symposium and Special Education Workshop

## Event Recap

Tri-State hosted the 22nd annual Sam Francis Workshop on June 20, 2019. This years attendance was higher than ever, with 185 attendees from 61 organizations from around the region.

To accommodate this record number of participants, we moved from the University Club on the University of Pittsburgh's campus to the Edgewood Country Club, allowing for space and parking for our guests.

Our presenters included experts from Beard Legal Group, ACLU of Pennsylvania, Weiss Burkardt Kramer, LLC, PSEA, Tucker Arnsberg, Fanelli Willett Law Offices, Andrews and Price, LLC, Bethel Park School District, Peacock Keller, PDE, and PaTTAN/Pittsburgh.

Next year, we will return to this larger space and have even more rooms available for presentations.

For a full recap of the event, visit:

<https://tristate.pitt.edu/school-law-and-special-education-conference/>

Save the Date for the 23rd Annual Sam Francis!

Wednesday, June 24, 2020  
Edgewood Country Club

## Event Photos

Thank you to all of the speakers and guests that were made this event a success!



# Green Building Alliance

Green and Healthy Schools Academy (GHSA) is a program of [Green Building Alliance](#) (GBA), a Pittsburgh-based, non-profit which seeks to advance innovation in the built environment by empowering people to create environmentally, economically, and socially vibrant places.



Following our [Inspire Speaker Series](#) on October 3rd, we invite educators to join us for a day long [workshop](#) on Friday October 4th featuring [2019 MacArthur Fellow](#), Mel Chin. Chin's art spans over multiple mediums, but often evokes social responsibility and awareness by drawing attention to unlikely places—an abandoned home, a toxic landfill. Educators get a front row seat to hear directly from Mel Chin about his message, the Fundred Dollar Bill project, and discuss how themes of his art can be used to advocate for healthy school environments. Scholarships are available-reserve [your spot](#) today!

We are seeking educators who wants to gain resources, support and guidance in integrating climate change solutions into their existing curriculum! Classroom K-12 teachers of any subjects and grade level are [invited to participate](#) and no prior experience in teaching climate change or environmental subjects is necessary.

The GHSA Teacher Cohorts were designed to empower teachers in all content areas to address climate change in their classroom. Climate change is often relegated to science classrooms only, meaning that many non-science teachers feel that this work is outside of their scope and they don't have the appropriate resources to teach about it. Climate change is challenging because it often carries a lot of emotional weight—how do you find age and subject appropriate ways to teach students about climate change without causing disengagement or panic?

According to a recent poll conducted by NPR/Ipsos, more than 80% of parents in the U.S. support the teaching of climate change and 86% of teachers agree that climate change should be taught. GHSA proposes to help educators gain professional confidence around this daunting topic and provide them with the tools to teach about climate change in a developmentally appropriate way that is aligned with state standards.

In spring of 2019, GHSA launched the first Teacher Cohort around Paul Hawken's book *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever to Reverse Global Warming*, commonly referred to as Project Drawdown. Teachers created five lessons around climate change solutions presented in Project Drawdown that aligned with the state standards in their subject areas. Through the cohort meetings, teachers were guided to approach this topic with curiosity, rather than fear.

Through GHSA programming, educators see themselves as part of the solution and begin to tackle large topics like climate change education through a lens that makes this content digestible and relevant to their daily work. GHSA encourages K-12 classroom educators to choose "solution-based" methods of climate education, which inspires action and personal agency in climate action. This method of education is a tool of powerful change within our planet and our communities.

In Fall 2019, GHSA is launching two Teacher Cohorts centered around Project Drawdown and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). Interested educators should apply [here!](#) ▲

## Act 44 Requirements

Act 44 of 2018 focuses on school safety and security. Under Training, school employees must attend training on school safety and security for a minimum of three (3) hours every five (5) years. This can be done remotely or in person.

Tri-State is offering a workshop on Trauma-informed practices on November 7, 2019 | 8:30-11:30 a.m. at the Edgewood Country Club, presented by Dr. Mary Margaret Kerr and Dr. Melissa Nelson. This session focuses on helping school

administrators in the implementation of Act 44.

Registration and further information can be found at:

<https://tristate.pitt.edu/trauma-workshop/>

## Tools to Address School Avoidance and Anxiety

By Aimee R. Zundel, Esq.

**Schools understand there is no quick cure for school avoidance, particularly if a student's avoidance stems from a larger mental health or trauma history.**

An anxious child may present with symptoms that don't "look anxious" – such as lashing out over a project deadline or complaining of physical pains that are not observable. It's difficult for both the child and adults in the school setting to measure anxiety, as an internalizing behavior. Anxiety is the most common mental health condition in the U.S., affecting 18.1% of the total population and 25.1% of children ages 13-18<sup>1</sup>. Fortunately, the Pennsylvania legislature and recent case law provide some guidance for schools to consider.

All Pennsylvania children, from enrollment until the age of 17, are subject to compulsory school attendance. Act 16 of 2019 extends compulsory school age from 6 to age 18, starting next school year. School districts of the first, second, and third class are required to employ an attendance officer or home and school visitor. This individual is primarily responsible for enforcing compulsory school attendance, but when it comes to eligible students with anxiety or related conditions, the responsibility extends to the student's Section 504 Team or IEP Team.

Compulsory attendance processes are directly linked with an eligible student's right to a free appropriate public education. Students with disabilities are about 50% more likely to be chronically truant<sup>2</sup>. According to PDE's Compulsory School Attendance BEC, "If a student with a disability is truant or chronically absent, the school should convene the student's IEP team to determine whether revisions to the student's IEP are necessary or appropriate." The same goes for 504 teams.

Keeping lines of communication open between staff responsible for the student attendance improvement process and the IEP/504 team is important for legal compliance. A student's IEP must establish a plan for academic and functional achievement in light of the child's particular circumstances. If the programming is not yielding a better



Aimee R. Zundel

Anxiety is the most common mental health condition in the U.S., affecting 18.1% of the total population and 25.1% of children ages 13-18.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Anxiety & Depression Assn. of Am., Facts & Statistics, <http://adaa.org/about-adaa/press-room/facts-statistics> (accessed Sept. 19, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Source: U.S. Dept. of Ed., Chronic Absenteeism In the Nation's Schools, <http://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html> (accessed Sept. 19, 2019).

## Overhaul of Alternative Education (AEDY) Programs in Pennsylvania

By Lynne P. Sherry, Esq.

**The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), in response to a complaint filed by the Education Law Center (ELC), recently entered into a settlement agreement (Agreement) with the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) that significantly impacts AEDY programs statewide.**



Lynne P. Sherry

AEDY programs are for students who are currently and persistently "disruptive," as defined by PA law. 24 P.S. § 19-1901-C. The ELC's 2013 complaint challenged discriminatory practices and the substandard quality of education in PA's AEDY programs across the state. The culminating Agreement mandates significant changes to AEDY programs generally and, in particular, affects the way in which AEDY programs educate students with disabilities and English learners (ELs).

Pursuant to the Agreement, students with disabilities and ELs cannot be placed in AEDY programs unless the programs are approved by PDE. Students with disabilities cannot be placed in an AEDY program prior to a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) and districts cannot place students in AEDY programs if the student's behavior in question was caused by or related to the student's disability, with limited exception. Students with disabilities that are placed in AEDY programs must receive all necessary supports and services, including those contained in the student's IEP, and must be educated by teachers certified to teach students with disabilities. A "transition team" must convene within five (5) days of AEDY placement for students with disabilities to plan for a timely return to school. AEDY programs must have a "presumptive exit date" for students with disabilities, not to exceed forty five (45) days in most circumstances. In addition, all students placed in AEDY programs must have measurable behavior goals and clear exit criteria, and must be reviewed at least every semester to determine eligibility for return to the sending school.

Per the Agreement, Districts must establish an "EL Service Plan" for submission to and approval by PDE prior to referring ELs to AEDY programs. The purpose of the EL service plan is to ensure that ELs placed in AEDY programs will receive instruction by certified ESL teachers, using materials that are appropriate for the EL's age and level of English proficiency while in AEDY. AEDY programs must provide information to parents in the language they understand.

PDE will also develop a complaint process at the local and state level concerning any aspect of a student's AEDY

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## School Avoidance and Anxiety, *continued*

result for the student (i.e., increase in attendance, increase in skills), then teams must go back to the drawing board to look at aids, services, and accommodations.

A recent 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals case outlines several strategies that helped one school district prevail in the face of federal litigation. In *S.C. v. Oxford Area Sch. Dist.*, 751 F. App'x 220 (3d Cir. 2018), the parent of a high school student with specific learning disabilities and anxiety filed suit, claiming the student's IEP was inappropriate in relation to his mental health needs. Among other supports, once the district learned about student's anxiety diagnosis, staff provided positive feedback for on-task behavior and self-advocacy. The school also provided as-needed access to the emotional support classroom and permitted student to skip classes that "troubled him." Will these exact accommodations work in every case? The answer is "no," since the law requires programming that meets each student's unique disability-related needs. Nonetheless, implementation of the above strategies was pivotal to the district's success in litigation.

When facing a school avoidance challenge with an eligible child, schools must ensure they have fully assessed the behavior leading to school avoidance and have arranged supportive services aimed at increasing school attendance. Teams must consider related services that are needed in order to cope with and eventually overcome school avoidance, such as counseling or social work services. Further, schools have a continuing responsibility to assess students in all areas of need, including that of school and classroom attendance if chronic absence is an issue. In *R.W. v. North Hills Sch. Dist.*, 19185/16-17 (SEA PA 2/6/18), the school district prevailed in part due to its appropriate functional behavioral assessment (FBA) of a student with generalized anxiety disorder. The assessment piece is critical to documentation of FAPE.

While in-school strategies must be explored first, know that in extreme cases, home-based programs have been found appropriate for students with school phobia, after less restrictive options are considered and rejected as inappropriate by the IEP/504 team.

With the passage of Act 18 of 2019, the Pennsylvania legislature recognized that ACEs – Adverse Childhood Experiences – can trigger school related anxiety and avoidance, as well as other barriers to academic success. The Act mandates training for professional employees on trauma-informed approaches, recognition of the signs of trauma in students, and best practices – including use of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). Training must also discuss how to connect students with appropriate services. Trauma-informed educational approaches are just one more way that schools can add to their tool belt for responding to school avoidance and anxiety.

Lastly, if school avoidance has been prompted by an event of bullying or harassment, schools must implement their policy and investigation procedures with fidelity. A frank discussion on "how can you get to school safely and remain in school safely" goes a long way toward both legal compliance and positive attendance outcomes. ♦

## AEDY Overhaul, *continued*

program including the decision to transfer a student, the length of stay in AEDY, and the quality of education delivered.

The AEDY overhaul mandated by the Agreement went into effect at the onset of the 2019-20 school year. While PDE's official guidance on this topic is forthcoming, PaTTAN will host monthly webinars and has convened AEDY stakeholder meetings statewide to address the components of the Agreement. Attorneys at WBK are available to consult with school districts on issues surrounding AEDY programs, compliance with the Agreement, and the requirements that went into effect at the beginning of this school year. ♦

## We're Speaking...

- Attorney Lisa Colautti will be speaking at PSBA's Navigating Charter Authorization workshop on October 15, 2019 in Hershey, PA.
- Attorneys Aimee Zundel and Lynne Sherry will be presenting at the Exceptional Children Conference in Philadelphia, PA on October 25, 2019. Attorney Zundel will present on the topic of Anxiety and School Phobia. Attorney Sherry will present on the topic of Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY).
- In November 2019, Attorney Rebecca Hall will co-present with Dr. Jessica Dirsmith and Dr. Eric Bieniek on "To Tier 3 and Beyond! From Intervention to IDEA Identification" at the Association of School Psychologists of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University Annual Fall Conference in State College, Pennsylvania.
- Attorney Hall will also be presenting on the topic of "Emotional Disturbance: Stay Calm and Break it Down" in January 2020 for LRP Publications in New Orleans, LA.
- Attorney Hall will co-present with Dr. Jessica Dirsmith in May 2020 for LRP Publications in New Orleans, LA on the topic of "Emotional Disturbance: Legally Compliant Intervention, Assessment, and Identification Practices."
- Attorney Zundel will conduct a legal breakout session for the Pennsylvania Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (PBIDA) conference, on April 25, 2020 at Carlow University.
- *Unlocking Emotional Disturbance: A legally aligned guide for assessment and identification of students with emotional and behavioral needs*, a book authored by Attorney Hall and Dr. Dirsmith is scheduled for release in January 2020.

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*This issue of In Brief: School Law Update is meant to be informational and does not constitute legal advice. Should districts wish legal advice on any matter, they should contact their legal counsel or request a legal opinion from Weiss Burkardt Kramer LLC.*

# Women's Law Project

## Gender Equity Commission examines “Pittsburgh’s Inequality Across Gender and Race.”

A new publication of the Pittsburgh Gender Equity Commission finds a persistent pattern of gender and racial inequality in health, income, employment and education in Pittsburgh. While these findings are not new, the report is a helpful tool because it analyzes these patterns through both a gender and racial lens.

The report finds serious gender and racial disparities in educational opportunities and achievements:

**“a persistent pattern of gender and racial inequality in health, income, employment and education in Pittsburgh”**

- White residents are three times more likely to have a college degree than Black residents.
- Across all groups, boys are more likely to drop out of school than girls, but of the students who finish high school, men are more likely to attend college.
- Despite being more likely than their White boy peers to pass advanced math, Black girls are enrolled in advanced math at half the rate.
- Pittsburghers are more educated than most people, except for Pittsburgh’s Black women, who have less education than Black women elsewhere.
- Pittsburgh’s high schools rank in the bottom 20% for students taking ACT/SATs.

The recently released report also shows startling disparities in school disciplinary practices:

Pittsburgh’s public schools refer more students to police than 95% of school districts in similar cities. Black children in Pittsburgh’s public schools are three times more likely to be suspended and five times more likely to be referred to the police than their White peers.

The report is the first component in a city-wide Gender Analysis which is being undertaken collaboratively by a research team from the University of Pittsburgh and members of Pittsburgh’s Gender Equity Commission. The Commission was created by local ordinance in 2016 and is made up of an executive director and 13 volunteer commissioners who live or work in Pittsburgh. The Commission is tasked with identifying and overcoming barriers to gender equity in local government.

The report contains recommendations for eliminating gender and race disparities to make Pittsburgh “a city that is livable for all residents.” The recommendations section applauds the Pittsburgh Public Schools for recently transforming the process for administering ACT and SAT tests, increasing the percentage of students taking the exams. It likewise notes that Pittsburgh’s Black girls are less likely than Black girls in other cities to drop out of high school or college once they begin. However, the low number of college-bound Black girls in Pittsburgh cries out for new interventions to encourage and equip them to enter college after they graduate. The report urges Pittsburgh’s schools to “consider new policies that reduce police referrals and severe discipline across the board,” and encourages the use of “targeted efforts to address racial and gender biases in the schools’ disciplinary practices.”

The full report is available here: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6417271-Pittsburgh-s-Inequality-Across-Gender-and-Race.html>.



[www.womenslawproject.org](http://www.womenslawproject.org)  
[infopitt@womenslawproject.org](mailto:infopitt@womenslawproject.org)



## Tri-State Changes:

### New Office:

Tri-State has moved to a new, temporary office:

Tri-State Area School Study Council  
University of Pittsburgh  
5219 Wesley W. Posvar Hall  
230 South Bouquet Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Rachael: Room 5219, Dr. Kirk: Room 5126

Mail can still reach us if is addressed to our old office number. Email and phone is the same.

### Welcome to our New Administrative Assistant:

Kelsey Cole accepted a different position in April 2019 at the University of Pittsburgh. Rachael Savage has replaced her in this role and is responsible for all administrative tasks related to Tri-State.

Rachael is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with undergraduate degrees in the History of Art and Architecture and Mathematics. Rachael also has her Master in Library and Information Science from Pitt with a concentration in academic libraries. She will be your first point of contact with the organization, so please reach out to her with any questions.

### New Website:

In June 2019, Tri-State created a new, updated website. New pages, links, and registration are now available on our site. Going forward, any material from workshops approved for public distribution, can be found in the associated workshop page.

Please send us any vacancies and we will be happy to post to our job board.



## 2019-2020 Executive Committee Members

### President

**Heidi Ondek**, Executive Director and Superintendent,  
Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children

### Vice President

**Michelle Miller**, Superintendent, Hopewell Area

<b>Darby Copeland</b>	Director, Parkway West CTC
<b>Matthew Curci</b>	Superintendent, Apollo-Ridge
<b>Michael Daniels</b>	Superintendent, Canon-McMillan
<b>Timothy Gabauer</b>	Superintendent, Mount Pleasant Area
<b>Joseph Guarino</b>	Superintendent, New Brighton Area
<b>Jill Jacoby</b>	Superintendent, Fort Cherry
<b>Rosanne Javorsky</b>	Executive Director, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, IU3
<b>David Lehman</b>	Superintendent, Forest Hills
<b>Janell Logue Belden</b>	Superintendent, Deer Lakes
<b>Michael Loughead</b>	Superintendent, Hampton Township
<b>Donald Martin</b>	Executive Director, Intermediate Unit 1
<b>Scott Martin</b>	Superintendent, Bentworth
<b>Donna Nugent</b>	Superintendent, Big Beaver Falls Area
<b>Gennaro Piraino</b>	Superintendent, Franklin Regional
<b>Thomas Ralston</b>	Superintendent, Avonworth
<b>Janet Sardon</b>	Superintendent, Yough
<b>Robert Scherrer</b>	Superintendent, North Allegheny
<b>Brian White</b>	Superintendent, Butler Area
<b>Tracy Vitale</b>	Superintendent, Seneca Valley

**Diane L. Kirk**, Director

**Rachael Savage**, Administrative Assistant

**The Forum** is a publication of the Tri-State Area School Study Council. Your comments and suggestions of topics for future publications are always welcome. You may contact us at:

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*The information in The Forum is for the general knowledge of the reader. For more specific information, rely on the advice of your solicitor.*