

DISABILITY TASK FORCE MEETING—JUNE 10, 2021  
SUMMARY

On June 10<sup>th</sup> the Disability Task Force met. Brief policy updates regarding COVID – 19 were provided and a panel discussion was held addressing *COVID – 19 Lessons Learned Regarding Disability and Technology*. Thank you to the speakers that provided updates as well as to all that attended and asked thoughtful questions, adding depth to the discussions.

Brief policy updates regarding COVID-19 and the disability community were provided by:

- Maura Sullivan of the Arc discussed vaccine status, the ARC's DDS budget priorities, legislation priorities and the Federal stimulus funding for adult services. (See slides below)
- Julia Landau of MAC provided an overview on special education during COVID-19, the re-opening of schools, what is expected in the summer and fall, compensatory services, turning 22, and widening racial inequities experienced by students with disabilities. (See slides below)

A panel convened to address "*COVID-19 Lessons Learned: Disability and Technology*". Panelists included:

- Kerry Davis of Spaulding Rehabilitation discussed working remotely with youth who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices. She addressed the challenges and benefits of conducting evaluations and providing AAC services remotely, and the implications moving forward. (See slides below)
- Liz Offen of Yachad New England talked about identifying and addressing the higher rates of cyber safety problems impacting youth and adults during the pandemic who are relying on remote connection for services, socialization, and recreation. Remote participation was beneficial for many individuals and raised concerns and vulnerabilities for others.
- Dania Jekel of the Asperger/Autism Network (AANE) talked about the organizational implications of transitioning to remote and hybrid programming, and strategies implemented to effectively meet the needs of the population they serve. (See slides below)
- A question-and-answer period followed.