

# **Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism Related Needs (ASGARN)**

FY25 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Meeting  
February 11, 2025

Victoria M. Rodríguez-Roldán, J.D.  
Coordinator of State Autism Strategy



# Meeting Guidelines 1

**Goal 1:**

To create a safe, positive, and inclusive environment for the advisory group, participants, staff, and the public.

**Goal 2:**

Create a safe space for diversity of contributors, thoughts, and ideas.



# Meeting Guidelines 2

- **Assume positive intent** on the part of advisory members, moderators, participants, and staff.
- **Listen actively.** Allow others to complete their thoughts, listening to listen, and not listening to respond.
- **One speaker at a time**, prioritizing those who haven't spoken yet.
- Default to **"both/and" thinking** instead of "either/or" thinking.
- **Members and public**, please wait for the appropriate open forum section to speak.



# Ethan Saylor Alliance

Guest Speakers



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# Remarks by Chair



**Victoria Rodríguez-Roldán** (she/her)  
Statewide Autism Coordinator



# Roll Call

**Governor Appointed:**

Adam Shafer Jones  
Christy Russell  
Devan Southerland  
Emily Arker  
Lisa Wiederlight  
Nicole Christine LeBlanc  
Peggy Ann Pugh  
Roger Thibaudeau

**Coordinator Appointed:**

Elizabeth Benevides  
Gregory S. Robinson  
JaLynn Prince  
Jess L. Wilcox Cowing, PhD  
Lydia X.Z. Brown, JD  
Melissa Rosenberg  
Nancy Forsythe, MA, EdS.  
Nikki Stokes  
Rachel Leah Kraus, LCSW-C  
Ryan T. Roddey, PhD  
Yoreidy Vasquez-Tavarez, PhD, ABPP

**MGA Appointed:**

Del. Julie Palakovich Carr  
Del. Michele Guyton

**Ex-Officio**

Ami Taubenfeld  
Fatima Salem  
Rachel London  
Raymond Marshall  
Rebecca Rienzi

**Government designee:**

Carmen Brown  
Courtney Thomas-Winterberg  
Janet Furman  
Anne Blackfield  
Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan, JD



# Autism Strategic Plan

- Currently have a graphic design draft.
- Will be released at an event in the coming months once we have the final graphic design returned to us.



# Year One

- Overarching activities for 2025 include
  - Autism Resource website (creation)
  - Data collection, focused on existing data
  - Identifying opportunities
  - Developing partnerships
  - Participating in the legislative process





# Current ASGARN vacancies

## Ex Officio

- Representative from the Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

## Governor's Appointment

Qualified candidates encouraged to apply with the [Governor's Office of Appointments](#)

- Physical therapist
- Pediatrician



# Upcoming Meetings

- Tuesdays from 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM
  - June 10, 2025
  - Email for 2026 dates to be sent out by June meeting



# ASGARN Comments



# Public Comments



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# Closing Remarks



# Contact Us



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Statewide Autism Coordinator

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