



# State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education  
301 Centennial Mall South • PO Box 94987 • Lincoln, NE 68509

## State Rehabilitation Council Meeting

Nebraska State Capitol #1510

Lincoln, NE

February 11, 2020

### Meeting Minutes

*Public notice of upcoming meetings will be available on the Department of Education website under "Master Calendar" at least 5 days prior to each meeting.*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lonnie Berger, Crystal Booker, Jerry Bryan, Micael Bursaw, Kim Davis (substitute for Carly Weyers), Lindey Foley, Christine Gaspari, Tobias Orr, Diane Owen-Downs, Sandy Peterson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Gayle Hahn, Deanna Henke, Susan Madsen, John McNally, Jonathan Moeller, Vicki Newman, David Scott, Alice Senseney, Adriana Springer, Cassidy Wall, Camie West

**VR STAFF PRESENT:** Sarah Chapin, Angela Fujan, Brigid Griffin, Ashley Hernandez, Mary Matusiak, Victoria Rasmussen

**VISITORS:** Margie Propp, Ben Sparks

*The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:00 a.m. public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.*

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Sandy Peterson asked for any public comments or announcements.

No public comment was shared.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Crystal Booker moved and Chris Gaspari seconded the motion to approve the agenda as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

#### **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 8, 2019 MINUTES**

Chris Gaspari moved and Crystal Booker seconded a motion to approve the October 8, 2019 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

#### **SRC MEMBERSHIP**

Angela Fujan shared a new special education representative will be joining the council in May. Members discussed current council vacancies and the continuing need for new council members.

Lonnie Berger discussed a potential new council member who could potentially visit a future meeting.

### **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR**

Sandy Peterson asked if any feedback was brought to council members.

Chris Gaspari shared she has heard a lot of hope with individuals being taken off the wait-list and more individuals being able to receive VR services.

Sandy Peterson discussed in her experience it is rare to see a VR representative at an IEP meeting stating this is typically because they are not invited. Sandy shared she is working at increasing the understanding of the need and usefulness of having VR representation. Brigid Griffin shared they are regularly working with staff to be sure they are touching base with school staff and parents to make them aware of their ability to attend and support IEPs.

Brigid Griffin shared when visiting VR offices she can definitely see the uptick of public in offices and increased interaction with clients.

No additional feedback was shared.

### **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS**

Members were asked for feedback on the written reports provided from ATP, NYLC and the Client Assistance Program.

Jerry Bryan reviewed the CAP report. Jerry summarized the two cases from the past quarter and asked for any member questions on the cases. Jerry shared the general average of CAP requests are around two a quarter per agency; stating this number is low. Sandy Peterson shared she appreciates the work and communication of the Client Assistance Program. Lindy Foley stated the need to celebrate VR staff and their great work and communication in difficult situations with clients. Lindy shared that CAP is also a resource for VR staff offering support for both clients and staff members. Kim Davis discussed her experience on another state's SRC sharing she finds CAPs work outstanding here, discussing her appreciation for their neutrality to serve both clients and staff. Kim discussed the great services that can be collaborated with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Kim discussed some challenges she has worked with clients on with OTJs (on the job training coaches).

Tobias Orr reviewed the ATP report. Tobias shared there has been an uptake of VR cases. Tobias reported the ATP education program is moving along and moving in a great direction. Sandy shared assistive technology seems to be another area that is not given much attention during IEPs. Tobias shared the first set of trainings they are developing are to assist conversation with schools and IEP information as well as webinars are being developed. Chris Gaspari asked how educators and individuals who are not aware of ATP and its services can work with students wanting ATP services. Tobias shared the staff is limited in reach and unable to assist every student but work with a team model and building a network of professionals that can assist different districts at a local capacity.

Brigid Griffin shared the NYLC had a very good winter meeting with high attendance which formed goals and began making progress on those goals. Brigid shared they are currently planning the summer conference in Kearney. Brigid reported membership is up on the NYLC.

Kim Davis reported on the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Kim discussed the successfully passed bill which approved ASL as an officially recognized language. Kim discussed LB165 to establish a language acquisition program.

No additional feedback was provided.

## **STATE PLAN & DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Lindy Foley provided members a copy of the Nebraska's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) 2020-24 Combined State Plan Draft Overview. Lindy reviewed that each state is required to have a state plan in place under WIOA, sharing this is the second state plan created. Lindy discussed the Needs Assessment completed in Fall 2019 and the analysis completed by the consultant, which is required every three years. Lindy shared they have drafted all of VR's sections of the State Plan discussing the plan is written in collaboration with the partner programs within the workforce system. Lindy thanked the program team for doing a great job outlining VR programs and services currently in place for the plan. Lindy reported VR's portion of the plan has been drafted and is open for public comment. Lindy stated the plan highlights where VR wants to go over the next four years. Lindy encouraged members to review the state plan and provide any feedback. The Draft State Plan can be accessed at:

<https://dol.nebraska.gov/employmentandtraining/lcrwp/wioa/manualsplansreports>. Lindy shared a statewide meeting was held yesterday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, with only one commenter whom mainly addressed the Department of Labor in regards to economic growth. Lindy stated they can receive written comment on the state plan through February 29<sup>th</sup>. Lindy discussed now that the draft plan is in place she will present it to the State Board of Education in March for their approval. Lindy shared the entire combined state plan will be reviewed and approved by the Governor. Lindy reviewed the last page of the handout summarizing the needs assessment results. Members discussed the needs assessment data summary data from clients, stakeholders and staff members. Crystal Booker discussed employers need awareness regarding accommodating individuals with disabilities as it goes beyond just a Human Resources team. Crystal stated there is a lack of knowledge with employers how to hire and retain employees who require accommodations. Mary Matusiak shared VR regularly provides ADA and accommodation trainings to employers sharing they are open to sharing these training with those interested. Lindy discussed it is important to continue with a dual customer approach. Members reviewed response summaries of stakeholders, staff members, businesses and pre-employment transition services parents and guardians. Members discussed the number of respondents particularly in the business section was disappointing. Lindy shared the needs assessment was used to develop possible goals for the state plan. Lindy reviewed the themes and 5 key goals of the plan. Goal 1: Increase the number of individuals who exit VR supported employment with competitive integrated employment. Goal 2: Increase the number of students/interns completing Project SEARCH and obtaining competitive integrated employment. Goal 3: Improve quality and consistency of supported employment services through the development and implementation of best practices for service providers. Goal 4: Improve communication with clients, businesses, stakeholders, service providers, core partner programs, SRC, educators, and staff members. Goal 5: Develop cultural competencies to ensure equitable access to Nebraska VR services. Lindy shared this is the beginning of the conversation and they will need the council's help in creating action steps and movement forward. Lindy discussed being intentional about this plan to develop a working and evolving document. Sandy Peterson asked what the next step will be once the plan is approved. Lindy stated they will continue discussing what specific strategies VR has in place to improve as well as how they will measure progress. Lindy discussed all partners have common performance measures within the state plan. Lindy stated the finalized state plan will be submitted no later than April 1, 2020. Lindy summarized a lot of effort has been put into the plan to receive input and be intentional in planning.

***Council members in attendance shared unanimous support for the plan and had no objections to its implementation.***

## **SENATOR OUTREACH**

Sarah Chapin provided members thank you cards created in collaboration with Chris Gaspari and Michael Bursaw for Senator Outreach. Sarah discussed they decided the many talking points for senators which can be intimidating were condensed into two words, “thank you”. Members discussed splitting into three groups with two groups sharing the thank-yous directly to senator offices and the last group manning the information table in the rotunda to share thank-yous and VR service information. Chris shared they decided on this route of outreach to connect on a different level of thanks versus everyone asking for something. Members broke into groups and divided to share the thank-yous.

## **NEXT MEETING**

May 12, 2020 – Nebraska VR Office, 3901 N. 27<sup>th</sup> St., Lincoln, NE.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

## **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Council Membership
- Review Senator Outreach Response