



State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education

301 Centennial Mall South • PO Box 94987 • Lincoln, NE 68509

State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Vocational Rehabilitation Office May 13, 2014

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: Barb Benes, Jaime Galloway, April Isaacs, Seamus Kelly, Tim Kolb, Leslie Novacek, Kipp Ransom, Vicki Rasmussen, Mark Schultz, JD Simmons, Joni Thomas, Gayle Hahn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sharon Bloechle, Robert Danner, Sherri Kelley, Brad Meurrens, Rita Hammitt, Vicki Newman

VR STAFF PRESENT: Angela Fujan, Sarah Chapin

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:05 a.m. public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

No public comment was given.

The meeting was an open meeting and the Open Meeting Law was posted on the back table.

April Isaacs reported they have been utilizing the UbiDuo and stated it has been a wonderful piece of equipment. She stated the UbiDuo has opened and expanded the possibilities for those with hearing impairments. April wanted to thank Assistive Technology for the loan and has been very impressed with what the technology can do.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Tim Kolb moved and Gayle Hahn seconded the motion to approve the agenda as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 11, 2014 MINUTES

JD Simmons moved and April Isaacs seconded a motion to approve the February 11, 2014 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

NEW SRC WEBSITE

Sarah Chapin shared updates that are currently being made to the SRC website. Sarah reported that the main note regarding the new website is that it is set up to be compatible with mobile devices. The website is working to add more visual media to the page including photos and video. The text that was previously on the site will still be in place including the “about” pages and how to become a member. Sarah is able to add any additional information if the council wishes to submit it. Sarah stated a new addition to the site is the google calendar, which can be utilized to share meeting dates and where agendas and meeting minutes can be accessed. There is also a contact page for those inquiring about SRC. Color options for the website logos were discussed and light blue for the logo was chosen. No content from the original SRC webpage will be changed without council approval currently only the appearance of the website is being changed. The client service committee will review the current website content.

ENTREPRENEURS OF DISTINCTION AWARD

Kipp Ransom stated that the Entrepreneurs of Distinction Awards has typically been awarded in July. The council discussed moving the award to October to coincide with disability awareness month. April Isaacs mentioned by moving the award away from July it would eliminate an opportunity of additional visibility. Council members discussed the pros and cons of the award being in July versus October. Kipp Ransom stated the impact of the heat in July has varied depending on the location of the awards ceremony. It was reported that the Project Search national convention will be held this July presenting a conflict. The council decided the awards will be held in October this year with the exact date to be determined.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR

Kipp Ransom stated that he believes that due to attendance issues and challenges reaching a quorum, additional members need to be added to the council. Kipp stressed that due to the council only meeting quarterly and the importance of a quorum, attendance is very necessary and should be a priority to council members. Angela Fujan reminded council members that they are able to appoint a backup in the case they may miss a meeting. Angela stated that those who have been absent repeatedly will be given some outreach through letters etc. Kipp stated that applications will be distributed to those who may be possibilities to join the council.

CAP REPORT

Vicki Rasmussen submitted a written report to the council. Vicki reported she has been working with independent living centers to have CAP added as a reference. Currently numbers have gone down so Vicki stated she is increasing her visibility and getting out to agencies to increase referrals. Vicki reported she is currently working with the VR placement committee and the deaf and hard of hearing VR committee.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS

No comments were made.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Mark Schultz provided a VR Director’s Report.

- Mark reported that there will be action regarding the Workforce Investment Act before the end of this month. The bill is expected to go to the floor of the senate later this month and is expected to pass. The final language of the bill is not known, but Mark shared they believe that RSA will stay in the Dept of Education and there will still be a big focus on transition services. There is also a focus on collaboration with businesses and having a business specialist to verify that employers are meeting requirements. Sheltered workshops language

will make it clear that the purpose of those workshops is to help move workers to the competitive workplace. Qualified Rehab Counselors requirements may become open to individuals who have a bachelor's degree and 1 year experience to qualify for the credentials. This change to the law would negate the current guidelines that require a master's degree. The federal law would move the entire independent living department over to DHHS from the VR. SILC members would then be approved by the governor versus the board of education. Mark stated the bill would likely go into effect in October, but at this point nothing is certain. Mark stated he believes the RSA Commissioner will continue to be a presidential appointment.

- CSAVR is the national council of the VR. Mark reported he was elected the president elect at the last meeting. This appointment will offer an opportunity for Nebraska SRC voices to be heard at a national level.
- CSAVR is requesting input regarding the international rights of people with disabilities from the UN. This was turned down by the US Senate. Senator Johanns released a press release following his vote "no" to the treaty. The press release was shared with the council. CSAVR is requesting that groups and individuals reach out to their senate offices to discuss their opinions on the convention on rights with people with disabilities. SRC members discussed if reaching out to Senator Johanns regarding this issue is something the council should do. If members want to research the treaty they can go to UN.org where you can access the convention on the rights of people with disabilities which lists the 50 articles. It is also easily accessed by "googling" the convention on the rights of people with disabilities. 145 countries have ratified the treaty at this point.
- Nebraska VR has been under corrective action since the federal monitoring due to how supported employment services are paid for. As a result, in October VR will be moving to a blended milestone payment system to better account for the services that are using federal dollars. VR provided an assurance to RSA that it will be changing the payment process in October 2014 and is no longer under a corrective action plan.

VR STATE PLAN

Mark Schultz shared the top ten trends impacting employment services for the council to review for discussion of how those trends impact the services provided to those with disabilities.

The ten trends include: 1) The Graying of America 2) The Browning of America 3) The Clustering of America 4) The Changing Consumer in America 5) The Fragmenting of America 6) The Stagnant Economy in America 7) The Dumbing Down of America 8) The Mobility of America 9) The Changing Job in America 10) The Changing Workplace in America

FY 2015 State Plan has four goals: 1) Increase the Rehab rate (to meet or exceed federal standards) 2) Increase the Timeliness of Services 3) Increase Consumer Satisfaction and Engagement, and 4) Establish Effective Community Partnerships

Members were asked to discuss the State Plan Goals as well as the top ten trends and provide feedback on the State Plan Goals during their Committee reports.

The State plan hearing will be held May 29th at 10:00 am.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Client Services Committee

Joni Thomas reported.

- Committee felt that the four goals of the new state plan addressed the trends of employment well.
- Programs like Project Search and the certificate programs increase opportunities for students and those receiving services to increase and hone their skills for the work place.
- Stressed importance of surveys that are currently given to help gauge how they are meeting the needs of clients.
- The deaf and hard of hearing committee has been moving forward and is increasing involvement with the VR.

Employment Services Committee

April Isaacs reported.

- The committee agrees that the trends and new state plan goals are on point.
- Soft skill training has been discussed and the committee is questioning if these skills are being trained and emphasized including things like being on time and attendance. Committee believes a big reason people are not receiving or getting jobs is due to the lack of these soft skills.
- Partnering with the employer so those receiving services is very important to prepare those directly for their field

Transition Services Committee

Seamus Kelly reported.

- Noticed transition was somewhat absent from the trends and goals.
- Discussed engagement and continuing relationships with staff of schools.
- Committee is working on establishing the school as a partner when working with transitioning students.
- Would like to see more emphasis of the SRC regarding those who have gone through the transition process.
- Partnering is important not only with students but with their parents as well.

INFORMATION

National Project Search is scheduled in Nebraska for July 21-25, 2014.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:42 p.m.