



STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
301 CENTENNIAL MALL SOUTH • PO BOX 94987 • LINCOLN, NE 68509

State Rehabilitation Council Meeting
Nebraska VR Office
3901 N 27th St. Lincoln, NE
May 9, 2017

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: Shari Bahensky, Michael Chittenden, Tobias Orr, Sandy Peterson, Kipp Ransom, JD Simmons, Joni Thomas, Carly Weyers

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gina Geiger, Rita Hammitt, John McNally, Jon Moeller, Vicki Newman, Mark Schultz, David Scott

VR STAFF PRESENT: Lindy Foley, Angela Fujan, Brigid Griffin, Ashley Hernandez, Paige Rose, Judy Vohland

VISITORS: Kelly Brakenhoff, Margie Propp

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:10 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.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

JD Simmons moved and Michael Chittenden 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 14, 2017 MINUTES

JD Simmons moved and Joni Thomas seconded the motion to approve the February 14, 2017 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

SRC NEW MEMBERS

Kipp Ransom reported that a new member representing the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Carly Weyers, will be arriving later today. Angela Fujan stated that new member

Michael Reed will be joining the council next meeting as the SILC representative. Kipp reported that Gayle Hahn will be rejoining the council in the Fall.

FOLLOW UP OF LAST MEETINGS ACTION ITEMS

Senator Outreach

Michael Chittenden reported the senator outreach went very well. Approximately 25 offices were represented. A lot of continuous dialogue occurred and the information regarding the federal match was very well received by the senator office representatives. Michael reported some of the more fiscally conservative senators were very responsive. Michael shared he thinks it is a great idea to do something similar again next year but moving it up to March as it will be a short legislative session. Michael shared additional improvements to make for next year would include having more SRC representatives present to visit with senators as well as more print materials available. Kipp shared having a slideshow or video during the breakfast would be helpful. Paige Rose shared that a couple senators' aides did reach out following the breakfast requesting additional information. Sandy Peterson asked if after responding to any initial question from senators if VR and SRC could continue to reach out to those offices with a next step to continue supplying new information to keep them invested. Council members discussed the constant contact emails that are being shared with senators. Members noted it will be most productive to add planning senator outreach to the August meeting agenda in order to have plans in place by October for a March event.

Annual Report SRC Application

Kipp Ransom reported per the recommendation of the NCSRC the SRC application was added to the Nebraska SRC Annual Report.

Annual Report Committee

Kipp Ransom discussed in past years there have been challenges with getting information for the annual report in a timely manner. Angela Fujan stated last year's annual report submittal was successful when members were given time to work during the October council meeting's committee reports portion to compile and submit their portions during the meeting. Kipp shared that per last meeting's council discussion the council determined they do not wish to change our annual report as it is cost efficient, concise and very useful.

NCSRC

Kipp reported there were no volunteers from the council to attend the NCSRC.

Client Satisfaction Survey

Shari Bahensky reported that the client satisfaction survey link was added to the SRC website per last council meeting's recommendation.

DD & SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Judy Vohland reported herself and Paige Rose have been working together to complete ten trainings across the state including service coordination, DD service providers and VR staff. Judy reported they are working to update and finalize service agreements with service providers and independent providers. Paige shared they started in Lincoln the end of March, followed by trainings in Omaha, Columbus, Kearney, North Platte, Scottsbluff and Fremont with a total of 357 people in attendance.. Paige share the two main points covered were the limitation of subminimum wage employment and supported and customized employment.. Paige and Judy will be supporting the staff in any way they can as this is a new process for everyone. Paige stated the expectation from DHHS is that anyone from age 16-66 will explore employment opportunities with VR even those who are medically

fragile. Lindy Foley asked Sandy Peterson from a PTI perspective what type of feedback is coming from parents. Council members discussed outreach to organizations to provide information for parents. Sandy stated all the advocacy agencies in her building would be great to reach out to. Michael Chittenden shared that reaching out to the Arc and framing the discussion with the emphasis of normalization would be very useful. Paige stated that 2,026 individuals are currently needing services through VR, creating the need for additional staff that is currently being added to increase support. Judy reported that “competitive integrative employment” is the key term and requirement that needs to be met. Judy stated this shift will improve the quality of jobs but meeting the integrative piece will be an additional challenge. Paige shared that Omaha which has begun the process has reported a lot of positives, although it is easier in larger communities such as Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island versus more rural areas where there are less employment opportunities. Joni Thomas stated she thinks it will take more creativity to identify the employment opportunities in rural areas. Judy reported they will be looking to expand their training outreach to also include schools and other individuals.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR

Kipp Ransom asked council members if any feedback was brought to council members. No feedback was shared.

ENTREPRENEUR OF DISTINCTION AWARDS

Angela Fujan summarized the Entrepreneur of Distinction Awards and how award winners have been selected. Angela reported Judy will provide the Employer Services recommended applications for those to receive the award. Angela stated the logistics of the award ceremony need to be determined for October if the council prefers it held at the Capitol, state office building or VR office. Tobias Orr shared he feels holding the awards at the Capitol makes it seem more official and significant. Michael Chittenden suggested inviting senators in particular members of the Business and Labor Committee and Health and Human Service Committee as well as the Governor for additional outreach. Angela stated nominees will be presented to the Employer Services Committee in August when they will vote to determine a winner. Angela noted that an alumni winner will also be determined.

Tobias Orr moved and Joni Thomas seconded the motion to hold the awards at the Capitol during October to coincide with Disability Awareness Month and then holding the SRC meeting to follow at the state office building. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS

Members were provided written reports from VR Statistics, ATP, NYLC and NSILC. Members did not share any additional feedback.

CAP REPORT

A written CAP report was provided to members. Shari Bahensky summarized some of the key topics of the report. Shari reviewed the four cases that occurred over the past months. Council members did not share any additional feedback on the report.

CSAVR & DIRECTORS REPORT

Lindy Foley reported sharing visuals received and used from the Bethselda CSAVR where herself and Mark Schultz attended. Lindy reported they met with Senator Sasse staff, Senator Fisher, Fortenberry’s senior advisor, and Congressman Adrian Smith. Lindy stated they shared the VR

factsheet utilized by the SRC during their representative meetings. Lindy shared with the council the Investing in America materials provided by CSAVR for outreach. One of Nebraska VR's clients was featured in the materials. Microsoft was reconized as the National Employment Team business of the year. The Hershey Company was also reconized due to their large partnership with Pennsylvania's VR. Lindy shared the spring conference was based upon meeting with represtatives versus the Fall conference which is a more typical conference setup. Lindy reported she felt the meetings with representatives were positive and very useful. Interpretation of WIOA by RSA was discussed and its restrictions for pre-employment transition services.

Lindy Foley shared the director's report on behalf of Mark Schultz who is attending a Career Pathways grant planning session in Virginia. Lindy reported legislation LB149 passed which includes the green light to accept DD funds and is currently waiting for the Governor's signature. DD is transferring a little over 1.7million dollars that will be utilized as a federal match for up to 6.2 million dollars as an effort to support those individuals coming to VR from DD services. Lindy shared although more federal dollars may become available, additional funds will need to be set aside to meet the 15% for pre-employment transition services. Lindy discussed there will be new performance measures in regards to WIOA that will be in effect as of July 1st. Lindy shared with council members the data dashboard system utilized by VR. Lindy highlighted many of the dashboard's features and types of VR data can be viewed in the program. Lindy stated that with the new performance measures the emphasis will need to be on quality of service versus quantity. Lindy shared there will be some changes to the dashboard as well. The new performance measures will be discussed with the VR offices during the upcoming Team Tour. Angela Fujan shared that prior to WIOA, VR focused on successful outcomes. Angela stated there will now be several outcomes that can be measured adding additional goals with measures to the final 90-day measure, there will be second and fourth quarter measurements which will positively focus on the long-term. Tobias asked if wage will be reported as a measurement.. Sandy Peterson asked if SRC can access the data from the dashboard program. Angela stated the data changes daily but the council is provided that information through the VR statistics report which is provided at council meetings. Lindy discussed some of the current data is the dashboard. Sandy shared some of the data shared from the dashboard was surprising and new knowledge she would have not guessed. Members discussed the data regarding employment areas of VR clients. Kipp Ransom questioned is there has been a philosophy change from training to getting employment prior to offering training. Council members discussed exposure and training as part of VR client goals. Angela shared that individuals getting work experience is a crucial component to client success. Implementation of measures will continue to be shared with the council.

Lindy also shared information about the WIOA work with core partners. Currently MOUs are being negotiated with the local area workforce boards and partners. Agreements will cover our collaborative efforts and infrastructure costs. We will negotiate any shared costs for additional costs (such as navigators or help in the resource center) in the next several months. The core and collaborative partners are working on an information technology infrastructure to be the common intake and common communication repository. An RFP has been jointly developed and we should be going out for proposals soon.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Members broke into subcommittees for a working lunch.

Client Services

Shari Bahensky reported the committee discussed question #6 of the Client Satisfaction Survey, which was receiving many selections of the “other” category and then the written reply of not enough hours although “not enough hours” is a selection choice for that question. Shari reported this was due to a glitch requiring clients to type something into the other column before moving on to another question. Shari reported the glitch has been corrected. Shari shared the committee also discussed the question regarding if you would refer a friend or family member to VR. If they answer no they would not refer someone to VR, they will be given the follow-up question, why? Tobias Orr suggested also adding the clarifier to the question “with a disability” to the question. Shari reported the changes will be made in October.

Employer Services

Lindy Foley reported the committee discussed the recent Project Search job fair which was held in Lincoln during March. Lindy stated over 200 students and 40 employers participated. The job fair included skills assessments such as grocery bagging, menu ordering, car detailing and concrete work. Lindy reported the businesses were outstanding. There was also an interviewing station at the job fair which Tobias Orr managed. Tobias shared that every attendee went through the interview station and they are working on improvements for next time. Brigid Griffin stated they had four mini sessions including: dress for success, self advocacy, social media and job application. Lindy reported there was also news coverage of the event. Lindy stated if you visit the Nebraska VR facebook page there are photos of the job fair posted. Committee members discussed with the council the many practical skills and teachable moments that occurred throughout the entire day for participating students. Tobias reported the committee is looking into additional employer council members using BACs out of Lincoln and Omaha to recruit a representative with a national company with a Nebraska presence.

Transition Services

JD Simmons reported the committee discussed the 15% pre-employment transition restriction has created a lot of innovation and a learning process for schools and VR counselors which is an advantage for the student. JD reported they discussed work experience and soft skills of individuals in transition. Sandy Peterson and Bridgid Griffin are attending the Transition Capacity Conference being held in Kansas City next week. Bridgid shared that the transition service guide was created out of that conference last year. JD reported the committee discussed some misunderstandings regarding exiting seniors who are required to have a summary of services report and this has not occurred in some cases. Brigid reported the transition service planner has been redone, reporting this is a partnership form. Brigid shared there are 21 summer programs across the state and ScottsBluff has five. There are still 3 outstanding contracts for potential programs. Brigid reported that next year they should move up the RFP deadline even sooner to increase programs. JD stated there was a joint letter sent out to the schools from VR and the Dept of Special Education with information on WIOA and impact on students discussing pre-employment transition services, which has prompted schools to follow up on VR services.

INFORMATION

- NCSRC teleconferences held second Tuesday every other month. SRC has not participated but are eligible, agendas can be found on the NCSRC website
- NCSRC Fall Conference – who wants to go as a representative for the council? (Jon, Joni, Tobias)

NEXT MEETING

August 8, 2017 at 10:00am

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:08pm.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Senator outreach, preliminary March planning
- Annual report – committee reports
- Entrepreneur of Distinction Awards selection & Capitol event – Employment Services Committee
- Client Satisfaction Survey question updates – Shari Bahensky
- NCSRC Fall Conference council representative needed.