



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
October 11, 2016

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, Brenda Chappell, John McNally, Jon Moeller, Vicki Newman, Tobias Orr, Kipp Ransom, David Scott, JD Simmons, Joni Thomas

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Chittenden, Gina Geiger, Rita Hammitt, John Hogue, JaToya McIntosh, Sandy Peterson, Mark Schultz

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

VISITORS: Kelly Brakenhoff, Ben Sparks

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:11 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 John McNally seconded the motion to approve the agenda as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 9, 2016 MINUTES

JD Simmons noted that the acronym PETS should not be used and instead should be listed as pre-employment transition services. JD Simmons moved and Joni Thomas seconded a motion to approve the August 9, 2016 meeting minutes as amended. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

FOLLOW UP OF LAST MEETINGS ACTION ITEMS

Senator’s Briefing Packets

John McNally shared that there are twenty-five legislative seats up for election with twelve new runners. John stated he visited with the clerk in regards to providing materials to the twelve potential new Senators. John reported if the SRC can be tied with a state agency it will have easier access to distribute materials. If the council can show the tie to the Department of Education materials can be hand carried to the clerk who will distribute the materials. John shared he feels a cover letter needs to be drafted with links to videos and websites as well as a hard copy of VR information. Kipp shared that the marketing team could be of assistance as they have done similar work in the past. John stated the best time to get the materials to the clerk would be the week following elections. John shared the Employer Service Committee will discuss this further and team with Sarah Chapin in marketing to fine tune the details.

Pathways to Employment Videos

A Pathways to Employment video which will be shared with Senators via email was shown to the council. Angela shared that the person featured in the video was this year's Self-Employment Award winner. Vicki Newman shared her personal experience working with a self-employment specialist. Lindy Foley shared that state board members were able to view the video and offered positive feedback.

Client Satisfaction Survey Progress

Shari Bahensky reported regarding the council's requested updates to the client satisfaction survey. Shari stated that updates to question six as discussed last meeting were made as well as the addition of the selection choice of "not enough hours". Shari stated this year 1,013 surveys were completed, an increase from last year. Shari reported participants responded that employment services and encouragement and support as the most helpful to them.

Letter to RSA

Kipp Ransom reported that the discussion of drafting a letter in response to WIOA will be tabled for a short time until after the National SRC conference. Kipp stated he wants to wait for more guidance and information which he will gather during the San Diego conference. Kipp stated he will follow up with the council with a presentation providing information from the Fall National SRC conference.

SUMMER GRANT PROJECT

Brigid Griffin reported she has contacted all the programs and is awaiting final reports from a few programs. Brigid reported that three of the grant participants: Goodwill Omaha, ESU 13 Scottsbluff and ESU 16 from North Platte reported at the state board. Brigid summarized the summer grant project. Brigid shared there were a lot of successes and they plan to run the program again next year. Brigid shared results from the Omaha program were accommodations were given where needed and students were paid for the work time but also spent classroom time learning skills including interviewing practice. Brigid shared there is a story link that the Omaha World Herald ran on the program which would be nice to share at the end of the day. Brigid reported ESU 13 based their program from the Hampton Inn of Scottsbluff where 9 students participated. Students worked 4-6 hour shifts and were paid for their hours. Brigid shared their program included increasing skills in teamwork, independence and leadership. ESU 16 also served 9 students which had a morning classroom session with afternoons spent in the community working. Students worked on developing resumes and practicing interviews. A job Olympics with job tasks was conducted for participants. Various job sites across the community were utilized for participants. Participants in this program were also paid for their work hours. Disability Rights Nebraska partnered with an area law firm and non-profit organizations serving 17 students and also offered sessions for professionals and family members. Autism Center of Nebraska served 27 participants in Omaha and Lincoln. They focused

on financial literacy, social media appropriateness, and life skills like getting a driver's license, etc. York schools held a steps academy serving 6 students emphasis on exploring job opportunities and post-secondary opportunities. JD Simmons shared the participants visited the Grand Island VR office during the academy. Kipp Ransom inquired if any individuals were hired from the programs. Brigid shared programs where a few participants were hired or applied for employment but also the majority of participants were returning to school but gained the knowledge the employment is possible. Joni Thomas shared that Independence Rising had a program focusing on soft skills of employment. Joni shared they also purchased and utilized equipment where students could learn to utilize technology to take orders etc. which was a very successful portion. Brigid shared she will report on the additional programs at the upcoming meeting after their final reports are received. Council members viewed a video of a participant from Goodwill's summer work experience program created by the Omaha World Herald. Brigid stated they would love to double participation in the summer programs next year and possibly also partner with the University.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR

Kipp Ransom asked council members if any feedback was brought to council members. Kipp shared in regards to the state staff meeting which was held that it would be nice to have a bio read for presenters as well as having a tech specialist available to assist presenters get their presentation loaded as well as additional signing or individuals to help guide individuals. Lindy shared that feedback can be shared with the committee who worked on the meeting during a debriefing in preparation for the next meeting in two years. Members shared no additional feedback.

CAP REPORT

A written CAP report was provided to members. Shari Bahensky summarized some of the key topics of the report. Shari shared there were six CAP cases over the past three months. The VR policy for release and privacy was worked on and updated with improvements. Shari stated that one case was resolved by being appointed to a new counselor. Another case was resolved by re-evaluating wants with their counselor. Angela asked for further information in regards to a client who did not get his application signed. Shari described the challenges and then the decision to wait until he is ready for employment and resumes work with his therapist due to aggression issues.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS

Members were provided with written reports from VR Statistics, ATP, NYLC and NSILC. Members discussed the fun event, Partner Up Rodeo, in North Platte put on by ATP. Members did not share any additional feedback.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Members broke into subcommittees for a working lunch to work on their committee's annual reviews.

Client Services

Angela Fujan reported the committee worked on the client satisfaction survey over the last year to provide better information of why jobs did not work out. This amended form will be used for the next fiscal year (October 2016 – September 2017). The committee discussed being sure to add to the meeting agendas a report from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing group which meets quarterly. Angela summarized the progress the committee made over the past year to include: coordination of activities, feedback on the pathways videos and the addition of the VR Welcome Wall in Lincoln, Omaha and Grand Island. Brigid Griffin stated she has been asked to join the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Task Force where she will be a VR representative.

Angela shared the Latino Project has also been completed. This project involved having the local VR offices across the state self-identified for the cultural training and assessment of their services to the latino population in their areas. The offices that participated included: Kearney, Lincoln and Norfolk/South Sioux City. Recommendations include: updating spanish brochures and terminology used and targeting bilingual applicants for open VR positions. Members discussed terminology used in job postings and how to make them more universal. Specifically, listing the job skills first rather than recommended education. There is a need for Nebraska VR to be more effective in its outreach and marketing to diverse populations to improve minority referrals. Due to the possible order of selection and potential limited ability to serve all referrals to VR, we will not be actively participating in outreach at this time. Instead the focus will be on employers rather than increasing referrals sources.

Paige Rose reviewed the new rules for sheltered workshops sharing that individuals must now come through Nebraska VR. Paige shared that individuals not wanting VR services must complete a refusal form and shared that document with the council. Paige also shared that individuals refusing VR services are not eligible to work in a sub-minimum wage workshop, Paige shared that refusal document with the council. Paige shared that an orientation team meeting should always occur before any refusal documents are presented. Paige also stated if an individual refuses VR services they are still able to apply for services later. Paige also shared with the council the transition services checklist. Paige stated digital options are available for all of the forms. Paige also shared with the council the client summary document. An updated customized and employment services plan milestone page was also shared. David Scott Motioned to approve the intent of the draft copies of the presented forms for use by the VR following service provider feedback, Jon Moeller seconded the motion. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

Employer Services

John McNally reported the committee discussed Senator outreach further. John reported the committee discussed reaching out to Senator Kate Bolz for additional guidance. The committee also discussed participating in another Senate outreach breakfast. John reported the committee will be doing additional work between meetings in regards to breakfast plans. David Scott shared their main objective is to reach the potential twelve new senators to inform them of VR services. Tobias Orr shared they discussed what is a VR counselor's role at a Project Search site.

Transition Services

JD Simmons reported the committee discussed their work over the past year, stating their main focus has been on the transition planner and the transition guide. JD reported the definition of who a student it needs to be revised in the transition guide. Brigid Griffin reported they have developed a pre-employment transition service consent form which she shared with the council. Brigid shared the committee also discussed assessments. Brigid stated they really need to be looking at partnership and collaboration with the schools.

NEXT MEETING

February 14, 2017 at 10:00am

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 pm.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Senator outreach – Employer Services Committee/John McNally
- Letter to RSA – Kipp Ransom