

WIOA Youth Workgroup

May 29, 2015

Meeting Notes

Members in Attendance: Christine Abramowitz (REB of Hampden County), Bob Bower (AFL-CIO), Lynne Courtney (South Shore WIB), Pricilla Golding (Metro North REB), Katy Gentile (The Career Place), David Hoff (Institute for Community Inclusion), Susan Lange (Commonwealth Corporation), Tricia Lucier (Employment and Training Resources), John Oliveira (Mass Commission for the Blind), Joan Phillips (Mass Rehabilitation Commission), Larry Smith (Jobs and Community Services), Olivia Steele (Adult Community Learning Services), Shailah Stewart (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

Non-Members in Attendance: Katie Crower for Mary Sarris (North Shore WIB), Jason Hunter for Vicky Palantzas (Brockton Area WIB) Sharon McLaughlin (North Central), Sacha Stadhard (Department of Career Services)

DISCUSSION TOPICS:

Open Meeting Laws:

The WIOA Youth Workgroup is a subgroup of both the MA WIB and the WIOA Steering committee which are both public bodies and subject to the Open Meeting Laws. Because the Youth Workgroup is a subgroup of the WIOA Steering Committee it is also subject to the open meeting laws.

Members of the group received the Open Meeting Laws materials and were asked to sign the Certificate of Receipt that they received the Open Meeting Laws materials.

Shared Vision of a Career Pathway model:

WIOA places an emphasis on Career Pathways. Workforce Development Boards must lead efforts to develop and implement career pathways within the local areas. Members of the WIOA Youth Workgroup will develop a shared vision of career pathways that can be used as the model for serving WIOA youth in Massachusetts.

The initial brainstorm of a shared vision of a career pathway began at the WIOA Youth Workgroup meeting in March and included the following components:

- A Broad Range of Transferable Skills
- Foundation skills
- Career Exploration Opportunities
- Opportunities for Contextualized learning
- Work Experiences that Allow for Job Shadowing
- Multiple On and Off Ramps

The group was split into groups and discussed the WIOA definition of career pathways and reviewed the Center for Law and Social Policy's (CLASP) model of a career pathway. The group brainstormed to determine if additional features should be added to the CLASP model based on the WIOA definition of career pathways.

The shared vision of a career pathway that is developed through the Youth Workgroup will be forwarded to the WIOA Steering Committee and may be expanded on as needed to include a common definition of career pathways for all individuals served by WIOA.

Group discussion on changes and additional features to the CLASP career pathway model:

- Counseling and multiple year career pathway planning should be added to the first feature of the CLASP model. Multiple-year and Counseling need to stand out – youth will accelerate at different paces so career pathways really need to be individualized.
- Multiple Entry Points for both well prepared students and targeted populations with seamless transitions between points and providers.
- Change language in blue arrow –*Concurrently increasing knowledge, skills, workforce preparation and academic skills, competencies, and credentials informed by and aligned with industry/ employers skill needs.*
- Career exploration is a key component of a career pathway and needs to be included in the model.
- High school equivalency certificate should be included on certificate, diploma green arrow.
- High school equivalency certificate should be included on high school or CTE red arrow.
- Educating youth about available career options should be included in counseling.
- On-The-Job training fits on the blue arrow under workforce preparation along with other workforce preparation activities such as career exploration, job shadowing, and internships.
- Career Pathway model should include a braided model that shows how academic skills and workforce preparation are happening concurrently.
- Include benefits planning with counseling – youth need to understand how employment may impact their benefits.
- Multiple re-entry points for youth who find themselves on the wrong path.
- Heavy focus on soft skills to ensure transferable skills
- Add a feeder system to the model which includes all points of entry.
- Graphic appears too linear, it should include multiple directions in which the youth may progress.
- Should be mindful of accelerating youth along a career pathway faster than they are ready.
- Youth who receive a learning experience with an employer may move through the career pathway at an accelerated pace.

A couple of models for the Massachusetts vision of a career pathway will be developed based on the input from the group and discussed at the WIOA Youth Workgroup meeting in June.

Update on meeting with Vocational Rehabilitation:

A meeting between the Mass Commission for the Blind, Mass Rehabilitation Commission and members from the WIOA Youth Workgroup occurred on May 20th. The purpose the meeting was to discuss how the

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and the Workforce Development System (WDS) can best work together to increase services to youth with disabilities.

Key Topics discussed at the meeting were:

- A need for coordination of Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) which are a required activities under WIOA.
- Information sharing of available resources between Voc Rehab and the WDS.
- The need for a set of policies and protocols for working with youth with disabilities that are consistent across the local areas.

As a result of the meeting - David Hoff agreed to develop an outline of potential collaborations and approaches between VR and the WDS to discuss with the Youth Workgroup.

Discussion on Collaborative Approaches to Serving Young People with Disabilities:

David gave an overview of the document he developed titled *Collaborative Approaches to Serving Young People with Disabilities*. A major change to Vocational Rehabilitation is that 15% of Title I funds must be used for Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS). PETS are services that prepare people for work and include:

- job exploration counseling;
 - work-based learning experiences;
 - counseling on post-secondary education opportunities;
 - workplace readiness training;
 - instruction in self-advocacy.
- Language in the WIOA regulation says that any students who are potentially eligible for Voc Rehab services must receive PETS. A high bar has been set by WIOA which says that states must make sure that funding is available for any individual who is in need of PETS.
 - Schools have responsibilities as to what is required under WIOA for career planning for students. Schools still have responsibilities under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
 - Critical piece is to support what education needs to provide and who will do what. How can we best support what education is already providing and meet the requirements of WIOA?
 - There is a need to leverage resources within the local areas to provide PETS to youth with disabilities.
 - Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has a Special Education Planning and Policy department that focuses on transition services for youth. There are discussions happening relative to IDEA and the relationship with WIOA.
 - The Workforce Development System is going through changes – youth with disabilities become highly eligible. How does the Youth program meet the needs of the broader population which includes youth with disabilities?
 - Concern that PETS are being focused on work readiness and not enough on actual work experiences.
 - MRC has strong relationships with employers and partners, also has a counselor in every public high schools – this structure works well with the WIOA requirements.

Overview of collaborative strategies for serving individuals with disabilities:

- Good staff training.
- Youth programs need to have a welcoming culture and having clear policies and proactive approaches for requests for accommodations.
- A need to access external disability expertise in serving youth with disabilities?
- A referral system between the WDS and Voc Rehab and vice versa where staff can work together to support the needs of the youth – a collaborative process.

Discussion on Resource Mapping:

- There was a general consensus from the group that the demand for services is out-stripping the capacity to serve youth. How can the youth best be supported with limited resources?
- It was suggested that the WIOA Youth Workgroup map out what the mandated WIOA partners currently offer to determine where programs and resources intersect. Mapping out resources will allow for a better understanding of resources available to support the full scope of what WIOA is mandating. Resource mapping will also provide a visual of the populations each partner serves and determine if there are connections that can be made as well as identify gaps in services.
- Resource mapping will also be a reality check to determine the workforce system's capacity to serve youth.
- Model MOU's are helpful to set clear parameters around the different roles and referral systems that are in place and can create the context for how collaborations can work.
- Learning from each other and raising awareness of the resources and services within the workforce system that the youth can be connected to is key.
- Connecting Activities is an example of a program that can be tailored to serve a target population of youth.
- Resource mapping will look different in the local areas.

Question: Can an in-school youth transition to an out-of-school youth in MOSES? It makes sense to transition ISY to OSY while they are still enrolled in MOSES.

Answer: MOSES does not allow this for reporting and tracking purpose. Youth who are enrolled as an ISY must wait 90 days before they can exit the MOSES system and then be enrolled as an OSY. It was suggested that a question be posed to the Notice of Proposed Rule Making comment process as to whether ISY who are still high risk can be re-categorized as OSY and not need to go through the 90 day exit period in MOSES.

Next Steps:

The next WIOA Youth Workgroup meeting is:

- Friday, June 26th from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at the Central MA WIB in Worcester

Topics discussions for the next meeting will include:

- Shared Vision of a Career Pathway model in Massachusetts

- Resource Mapping