

## WIOA Youth Workgroup

October 30, 2015

### Meeting Notes

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**Members in Attendance:** *Tricia Lucier (Employment and Training Resources), Susan Lange (Commonwealth Corporation), John Oliveira (Mass Commission for the Blind), Vicky Palantzas (Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board), Barbara Dulin (EBNHC), Christine Abramowitz (Hampden REB), Larry Smith (Office of Workforce Development), John Niles, (Commonwealth Corporation), Kamaria Moore ( Department of Transitional Assistance), Shailah Stewart (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education), Lynne Courtney (South Shore WIB), Mary Giordano (ACLS), Sacha Stadhard (Department of Career Services)*

**Non-Members in Attendance:** *Ed O'Sullivan (for Mary Sarris from the North Shore Workforce Investment Board), Cassie White (Office of Workforce Development), Jolanta Conway (Adult Basic Education), Leslie Leslie, (Federation for Children with Special Needs), Amanda Green (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)*

#### **Agenda Topics:**

#### **Conflict of Interest:**

DCS General Counsel Tim Dooling gave an overview of the Conflict of Interest Laws. WIOA Youth Workgroup members must be in compliance with the Conflict of Interest Law. A summary of the Conflict of Interest Laws were sent ahead of the Youth Workgroup meeting scheduled on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Members of the Youth Workgroup were asked to sign an Acknowledgment of Receipt as evidence of receiving a summary of the Conflict of Interest laws. Members of the Youth Workgroup are obligated to take an online Conflict of Interest course if they have not already done so in another capacity within the past 2 years. A certificate of completion of the Conflict of Interest course must be forwarded to Tim Dooling, Department of Career Services General Counsel.

#### **September 25<sup>th</sup> WIOA Youth Workgroup Notes:**

The following corrections were made to the notes:

- Change to the date to reflect September 25, 2015
- The age range for student who have a 504 plan or an IEP is 14-22.
- Public schools are required to conduct outreach to youth who have 10 consecutive days of unexcused absence before they are dropped from the attendance.

#### **Update from the OSY Subgroup:**

Three priority issues have been identified:

- Program models within Massachusetts and elsewhere that serve OSY which have been funded by WIA and other funding streams. A range of program models were looked at.

- WIOA expects that partnerships will be developed to meet the needs of youth. The programs that have been identified in WIOA and where there is an expectation of collaboration are referred to as Core programs which include, ABE Title II, Wagner-Peyser Title III, Vocational Rehabilitation Title IV. There are other workforce partners that serve youth and are necessary to engage with include TANF, DYS, Community Colleges, Career Technical Education, etc.
- More discussion is needed on the system capacity to provide career pathways particularly to serve out-of-school youth. The gaps in the system need to be identified in order to align programs and services necessary to deliver services in a career pathways design.

Two other issues have come up: The first is how to inform the unified state plan of state policies developed around implementing strategies for OSY career pathways. The delivery of career pathways needs to happen at the local level and planning needs to happen in order to implement a service strategy for serving OSY. How do we inform state policy and how do we support the role of the Workforce Development Boards as well as organizations that are procured by the Boards to deliver services to OSY.

Also there are a larger number of OSY who are eligible for WIOA services but only a small portion of the youth are actually receiving services. The discussion of targeting priority populations for services have come up because number of eligible youth out strips the available services. There is a need for career planning around the different pathways and strategies that will lead to sustainable careers. The OSY served under WIOA are not necessarily ready to embark on a career pathway and will need supports in place to get them to a level where they will be ready to participate in a career pathway.

WIOA is different from WIA in the sense that there is less focus on broader youth development and more of a focus on training for older youth who can benefit from earning credentials and going directly into the labor force. More technical training driven by employer demand is needed for the older population of older youth.

Continued discussion on recruiting OSY. Overall theme will be a smaller population of youth that are served with more intensive services over a longer period of time in order to get the expected outcomes that WIOA requires. Less of broad supports and more technical outcomes – this is shift in strategy to serve OSY.

Mapping the resources that are available through the Core programs and the logistical techniques of accessing the Core program populations and coordinating on a shared service strategy.

How do we address the missing pieces of career pathways?

Question: Does it make sense to recruit from the Core Programs to serve youth who are WIOA eligible?

There needs to be a concerted effort to align services particularly for career pathways.

The challenge with the OSY is that if they are referred to too many places you may lose them. The youth service providers need to manage the referral process. The relationships with the partners on the local level need to be tightly coordinated. Policies would need to be developed to allow the local level to develop relationships with local partners. Partnerships are critical.

Mary Giordana students get priority but they can get lost if the referrals are not happening timely enough.

Partnerships need to be strong.

Waiting lists are an issue with ABE partners. Are there examples of ABE providers are both DESE funded and WIOA funded? Waitlists are an issue but sometimes it is a space issue.

Integrated education and training is a new requirement under WIOA and there are opportunities to align the workforce system with ABE.

Question: Prioritize youth for Core program services if they are eligible? Would recommend leaving the decision up to the local level to decide who they are prioritizing based on their populations in the local level.

Collaborating with Core programs and partners will allow for braiding and leveraging dollars and resources which will allow for more comprehensive services for youth. Because of additional leveraging the workforce system can start to think about specializing in terms of what we can do better in terms of providing specific services such as occupational skills training, work experiences, OJT, etc. We should get better at how that can be done. It is possible that if collaboration with Core programs to leverage resources is successful than we will get better outcomes with less WIOA money.

There are a large number of youth who need to have barriers addressed before they are ready to participate in education or training programs.

It is important to reach out to the youth who are not connected. How do we reach out to youth who are not connected?

It is difficult to track hard to serve youth who choose not to participate in education and training programs. A lot of effort and case management is needed to keep the youth engaged in services.

WIOA requires that the hard to serve populations received services, however WIOA also requires that performance measures are met. A combination of hard to serve youth as well as motivated youth should receive services.

### **TANF Overview**

Kamaria Moore from the Department of Transition Assistance gave an overview of the TAFDC Youth Programs.

- Young Parents Program – Primary goal is to increase educational attainment levels and skill set. Youth 14-24 years of age are eligible.
- High School Equivalency Testing
- Competitive Intergraded Employment Services – Provides education, training, and employment through a contracted service provider. Vendors become providers through an RFR process. Youth need to have a high-set to be eligible to receive services. Different models are designed to serve youth based on barrier level.
- Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants (MORI) – Job skills and training for refugees and immigrants.

- DTA Works – Interview process to be enrolled in the internship program. Eligibility TAFDC participants need to be in good standing and pass a CORI. Participants receive a 75 a week program.
- Support Services - Transportation reimbursement and childcare vouchers.

Populations served through this program are both TANF recipients as well as children who live in a household where the parent or guardian who receives benefits.

How do youth gain access to services? Full engagement workers refer youth to the available programs and services.

Are the contracted providers contracting with employers for job placements? Some providers work with employers for placements other providers have their own worksite models in house.

Is the CIES program a work experiences with subsidized wages or are these permanent positions?

Earning for youth who are 14-18 years of age will have little or no impact on their family's food or cash assistance benefits.

What would an ideal alignment of services between TANF and the Core programs look like? Working with the DTA workers to provide the coordination of support services. It is a common goal that both systems are working together.

What about challenges or barriers to access services? A majority of the services are automated which can pose a challenge. Location of offices are also a challenge because some offices cover a broad area.

Partnerships will be key in supporting youth.

### **Standing Youth Committee**

Youth Councils are no longer required under WIOA. The Board may decide to establish a standing youth committee to provide information and to assist with planning, operational, oversight, and other issues related to youth services. If the Board chooses not to establish a standing youth committee then the Board is responsible for all aspects of the youth program.

The Workforce Development Board Certification Workgroup is also establishing new elements for Board certification and one on the new elements will be whether the Board will establish is Youth Committee. The state can assess if the Board is high performing and one of the elements that can be taken into consideration is whether the Board has a standing youth committee.

Should a recommendation be put forth from the Youth Workgroup that would require local Boards to establish a youth committee? No, it should be left up to the local Board to decide whether to establish a standing youth committee.

The state should ensure the local areas are operating high quality youth programs that meet the performance standards.

The state could decide to document effective models for youth standing committees and recommendations for practices that Board could use to provide oversight. The state could develop best practices for establishing youth committees.

How do you ensure Core programs are connected with the youth committees to inform the strategy and planning of program services to youth?

The Board's MOU would include the partnerships with the Core programs. The Local Plan will also describe partnerships with the Core programs.

If local Boards do elect to have a standing youth committee then the state could elect that local Boards provide a list of the youth standing committee membership.

The membership of the standing youth committee will vary by area based on the Core Programs and partners who are available in the local area.

The state doesn't have authority over the WIBs to mandate what is happening at the local level.

### **Youth Requires Additional Assistance Policy**

A small group of individuals from the WIOA Youth Workgroup meet to review and revise the WIOA Youth Requires Additional policy based on the new WIOA requirements. The next step for the Youth Requires Additional Assistance policy will be for it to go out to the local areas for review and comment.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next WIOA Youth Workgroup will meet Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 – 12:00 pm. Location TBA.