

WIOA Youth Workgroup

June 26, 2015

Meeting Notes

Members in Attendance: Christine Abramowitz (REB of Hampden County), Lynne Courtney (South Shore WIB), Barbara Dulan (East Boston Neighborhood Health Center), Mary Giordano (Lawrence Adult Learning Center), Pricilla Golding (Metro North REB), David Hoff (Institute for Community Inclusion), Susan Lange (Commonwealth Corporation), Tricia Lucier (Employment and Training Resources), John Oliveira (Mass Commission for the Blind), Larry Smith (Jobs and Community Services), Olivia Steele (Adult Community Learning Services), Shailah Stewart (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

Non-Members in Attendance: Bill Noone for Joan Phillips (Mass Rehabilitation Commission), Jennifer Stewart (Federation for Children with Special Needs)

DISCUSSION TOPICS:

Welcome and Introductions:

Jennifer Stewart from the Federation for Children with Special Needs was present at the Youth Workgroup to learn more about the work the state is doing regarding the implementation of WIOA relative to youth. Jennifer gave a brief overview of the Link Center which is a centralized hub for families and professionals to learn about transition resources and services available throughout the state.

Review of Youth Workgroup Scope and Deliverables:

- The Youth Workgroup has had a number of meetings regarding the changes in WIOA relative to the youth program.
- The WIOA Youth Workgroup Scope and Deliverables document outlines the work of the Youth Workgroup.
- The Youth Workgroup will identify state level policy changes to create effective outcomes for youth
- New WIOA Youth Provisions include:
 1. Increasing Services to Youth with Disabilities (Collaborative Approaches to serving youth with disabilities)
 2. Career Pathway Development and Implementation
 3. Serving 75% OSY
 4. Increasing Work Experiences ISY and OSY
 - On-The-Job Training
 - Summer Employment
 - Internships and Job Shadowing
 - Pre-Apprenticeship Training Programs
- Question: What constitutes a viable work experience?
- Answer: Paid or unpaid work experiences for a limited time that include academic and occupational education.

- Members of the group discussed the pros and cons of job shadowing
 - Job shadowing can often be seen as a sequence as services and not its own stand-alone component of work experience
 - Job shadowing can be of real benefit for the youth especially younger youth and youth who have no real work experience. Job shadowing can also be of benefit to employers because it allows the employer to provide learning experiences without making a major commitment to the youth.
- Work experience will be tailored towards regions relationships with businesses.
- Deliverables: ISY should be added to - *Identification of new program models for OSY and older*
- TANF and DYS should be included as members of the Youth Workgroup. Youthbuild and Jobcorps should also be contacted for member participation as well.
- Question: How will Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Department of Mass Health (DMH) be engaged in this process?
- Linkage to Medicaid office on the VR side – there is a waiver in the commonwealth for people to participate in employment.
- Special Education Planning and Policy department at DESE. Amanda Green from this department may provide valuable input to the group relative to increasing services to youth with disabilities.
- Integration bullet on WIOA Youth Workgroup Scope and Deliverables document – could be used to site new initiatives that will be rolled out.

Discussion on Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility:

Free and Reduced lunch eligibility is an allowable method of determining low-income status for ISY. The schools currently document whether a student receives free and reduced lunch eligibility by using the free and reduced lunch application. The USDA has authorized the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) which provides an alternative approach to collecting free and reduced lunch applications. Schools who predominantly serve low-income students can apply for the CEP status which enables the school to provide free lunch to all students in their schools through the National School Lunch program. Many schools are already operating under the CEP status designation and no longer require students to submit free and reduced lunch applications, thus it may be difficult to document whether the individual students receives free or reduced lunch.

A question was submitted to DOL through the Notice of Proposed Rule comment and review period asking whether DOL will accept documentation of schools participating in the CEP programs as proof that all students within that school receives free lunch and are thus considered low-income for WIOA eligibility purposes.

Career Pathway Model Upgrades and Resource Mapping:

- Discussed the proposed vision statement for a career pathway model that was developed by the group
- The vision statement is: *Concurrently increasing knowledge, skills, workforce preparation and academic skills, competencies, and credentials informed by and aligned with industry/ employers skill needs.*
- Statement should also include language which for assisting youth in making informed career choices and career plans – this can go under counseling.

- Vision statement should indicate that the learning is ongoing - language could be incorporated to say a continuum of learning.
- Enhancing informed choices should be included in language.
- Experiential activities in real work experiences are important to include in language.
- Career Pathway vision statement will be floated to the group for endorsement.

Career Pathway Partner Models

Economic development and employers need to be engaged in the discussion regarding career pathway development. EOWLD and the three secretariats will be key in employer engagement. Trade should also be engaged in partnerships for career pathway models. Community colleges also need to be engaged for knowledge on educational requirements for the workforce. Career Technical Educational should also be a partner. Career Pathways should be connected not to just the community college level but to four year colleges as well.

The transformation agenda places College Navigators in the career centers and have been a resource for helping to connect youth into postsecondary education opportunities.

Department of Higher Education has connections to career pathways in the schools.

Resource Mapping:

- A different way of looking at gap analysis might be looking at what resources are offered in the local regions.
- The group is focusing on the larger WIOA requirements across Core partners and the requirements that need to be met.
- Core partners are required to deliver consistent services across the state.
- A resource mapping tool would be useful for the local areas to use to map resource relative to what is required for WIOA.
- Resource mapping should be structured to show what Core partners are required to do.
- Resource map should also include requirements in Federal and State statute and the amount of funding.
- Resource tool – put Core programs horizontally and the requirements under WIOA vertically on resource map chart.
- Include target populations on the resource map.
- Complete resource mapping exercise and provide a level of detail such as contact information to access services. This information can be shared with the regions locally.
- New initiative that we have identified to address the gaps in services should be a deliverable of resource mapping exercise.
- Schools provide a variety of services to students and there should be resource mapping done to identify those services so they can be shared.

Proposed Time-line for Future Agenda Items:

- Template of the state plan would be useful to determine future agenda items.
- Timeline will be tight to come up with required information for the state if the template is released in November.
- The Youth Workgroup will work to draft recommendations for language to be incorporated into the state plan.
- DESES has commissioned Commonwealth Corporation to create a curriculum that will teach individuals how to access and best use Labor Market Information data. – *Future Agenda Item*
- Look at MOU's that need to be put into place or modified for youth.
- Use MOU's as a framework for recommendations of services that need to be put into place
- A working document should be shared with the Youth Workgroup that calls out issues that would warrant recommendations from the Youth Workgroup.
- Next meeting members should come prepared to discuss potential recommendations relative to youth provisions.

Sub Workgroup Discussion

Members agreed that a subgroup of the WIOA Youth Workgroup would meet before the next Youth Workgroup meeting on July 31st. The purposed of the sub group is to draft recommendations for increasing services to youth with disabilities based on requirements in WIOA.

The following is a list of individuals who agreed to participate on the WIOA Youth Workgroup Subgroup:

- David Hoff, (Institute for Community Inclusion)
- Shailah Stewart/ Amanda Greene, (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)
- Bill Noone, (Mass Rehabilitation Commission)
- Jennifer Stewart, (Federation for Children with Special Needs)
- John Oliveira,(Mass Commission for the Blind)

A meeting date for the Youth Workgroup Subgroup is TBA.

The next WIOA Youth Workgroup meeting is:

Friday, July 31st from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at the ETR in Framingham