

## WIOA Youth Workgroup

August 21, 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), Joan Phillips (Mass Rehabilitation Commission), Mary Sarris (North Shore Workforce Investment Board), David Hoff (Institute for Community Inclusion), Barbara Dulin (EBNHC), Christine Abramowitz (Hampden REB), Sacha Stadhard (Department of Career Services)*

**Non-Members in Attendance:** *Ed O'Sullivan (for Mary Sarris from the North Shore Workforce Investment Board).*

### DISCUSSION TOPICS:

#### Overview of WIOA Steering Committee and Workgroups:

As part of the WIOA Stakeholder Engagement Process members of the WIOA Steering Committee are meeting to discuss how to foster a demand-driven system through service delivery models, staffing, professional development, performance measures, and culture.

The Youth Workgroup informs the WIOA Steering Committee and eventually the state plan of recommendations for effective outcomes for youth.

#### Cross Cutting Workgroup Themes

**Performance Measures Workgroup** – The Performance Measures Workgroup is looking at statewide performance measures and the system changes that will need to be made to implement the WIOA Performance indicators.

#### *Discussion*

- How will performance goals be negotiated to adjust for hard to serve populations such as individuals with disabilities?
- Need to be careful not to screen people out – we need to screen people in.
- Is there anymore clarity from DOL regarding the performance indicators specifically the measureable skills gains and the employer measure? Sacha will share additional guidance recently released from DOL with the group.
- Somewhat unclear who the employers are that will get measured for the employer measure. Is it the employers that are participating in work experiences with the youth or is it the employers who are measured after the youth are placed.
- Does this group have a recommendation for ways to measure performance other than the required measures? For instance measuring positive youth development or setting benchmarks for positive behaviors that reduce risky behaviors.

- Would want to wait and see what the performance measures are once the final rules are released. If the performance indicators are too narrow in scope, then we may want to expand on the performance measures required by DOL.
- Possible use of the MWBLP as part of the Skills Gain Measure as a way to introduce additional measures.
- It was suggested that a crosswalk of the required performance measures for each of the Core partner programs be developed to determine where alignment can be made as well as to identify if there are additional performance indicators that should be measured.

**Career Center Standards and Process** – Career Centers will need to be competitively procured and this workgroup is developing a set of standards that career centers will need to meet during the RFP process.

*Discussion*

- Keep in mind that local areas are structured differently around serving youth. Some career centers do not receive any money to serve youth.
- Are strategies in place for the service delivery of youth workforce activities incorporated into Career Center Standards?
- Career centers should be an access point for information about youth programs.

**Business Workgroup** – Business engagement workgroup is identifying ways to engage businesses as well as developing a customer flow system.

*Discussion*

- We want the group to consider ways to encourage businesses to be engaged so they are actively participating in the workforce development's systems skilled talent pipeline of youth.
- Commonwealth Corp has done work to engage employers. Employer advisory group focuses on how decisions are made when deciding to hire youth as well as pipeline strategies.
- Look at the BSR in regards to involvement with local businesses. The youth component should be included in the package of services that are available to businesses within the career centers.
- At MCB employer specialists are engaging with employers – over 300 business partners where a relationship is maintained. A coordinated effort between BSR's and MCB/MCR employment specialist would be beneficial.
- Approaching the businesses with a single voice is more effective
- It was suggested that a meeting between Voc Rehab and Career Centers to discuss outreach to businesses in an effort to learn what each other's strategies.
- There should be an emphasis made to employers that youth are also considered adults as the population of WIOA youth is 18-24 years of age.
- Career Center staff and youth staff can work closer together for job placements.
- Better placement results will be achieved when the staff takes the time to understand the business.
- MRC uses account managers as the single point of contact. When positions become available the account manager for the employer distributes the available positions to employment specialists.

**WDB Certification Workgroup** –DCS is looking at existing Board Certification Standards and incorporating the new standards as defined by WIOA.

*Discussion*

- Do the Boards have Youth Standing Committees to inform them of planning, oversight, and other issues related to the provision of youth services?
- What role do employers play in the design and implementation of youth programs and services?
- Boards also need to follow the new procurements requirements for youth.

Sacha agreed to bring these cross cutting themes back to the respective workgroups.

**Increases Services to Youth with Disabilities:**

At the Youth Workgroup meeting in July, there were two main topics of discussion relative to increasing services to youth with disabilities. At the Youth Workgroup meeting in July, it was suggested that youth with disabilities would benefit from an established referral process between the Vocation Rehabilitation and the Workforce System. An established referral process would be of benefit to staff in determining the steps that should be taken when a youth discloses they have a disability. A referral process will also outline a coordinated and collaborative relationship between the career centers and vocational rehabilitation.

The second item that was discussed was to develop a simple referral form that could be used to help facilitate a discussion between the youth and the staff. The intake form would include information regarding assessment, income, and contact information for the referring agency.

It was proposed that the Increasing Services to Youth with Disabilities subgroup of the Youth Workgroup work to develop these two products and report back to the larger Youth Workgroup.

Sacha will reach out to a career center member of the Youth Workgroup for participation on the Youth with Disabilities subgroup to round out the composition of the group.

*Increasing Services to Youth with Disabilities Subgroup Membership: Amanda Green (DESE), David Hoff (ICI), Susan Lange (Commonwealth Corp), John Niles (Commonwealth Corp), John Oliveira (MCB), Joan Phillips (MRC), Sacha Stadhard (DCS), Jennifer Stewart (Federation for Children with Special Needs)*

**Career Pathways:**

At the last Youth Workgroup meeting in July revisions to the WIOA Youth Career Pathway Model and the Massachusetts Career Pathway Blueprint Model were discussed. Two new versions were presented to the Youth Workgroup for discussion, agreement, and approval.

*WIOA Career Pathway Model* – Revisions made included adding occupational skills training, as well as youth service providers, and walk-in's as additional entry points.

The group was in agreement with revisions made and agreed to adopt the WIOA Youth Career Pathway Model as a framework for a career pathway in the WIOA system.

*Discussion:*

- It was suggested for next steps to design career pathway models with industry specific information.

*MA Career Pathways Blue Print* – Revisions made included adding counseling, case management, and wrap around services to the career pathways available to youth. The group also reviewed the *Alignment between Massachusetts Learning System and WIOA Career Pathway Definition* document which serves as a cross walk between WIOA Career Pathway Elements and the Massachusetts Career Pathway Blueprint.

The group was in agreement with the revision to MA CP Blueprint model and agreed to adopt the model as the state level framework which depicts pathways available to youth as well as other target populations.

*Career Pathway Vision Statement Approved - Concurrently increasing knowledge, skills, workforce preparation and academic skills, competencies, credentials, and assisting youth in making educated career choices informed by and aligned with industry/ employers skill needs.*

**Program Resource Survey Mapping Tool:**

John Niles, Shailah Stuart, and Sacha Stadhard met to develop a list of survey questions to map youth programs and resources available across the Commonwealth. The survey will be conducted in two phases. Phase I will focus on state level youth programs and initiatives. Phase II will focus on youth programs and resources available at the local level. The results of the survey will provide a clear understanding of the programs and services available to youth as well as gaps in programs and services. Results of the survey will also be organized and published to serve as a resource guide for accessing youth programs and resources on a state level as well as locally. The survey will be sent out via the survey monkey.

*Discussion:*

- The WIOA definition of youth should be added to the preamble
- The definition of youth across Core Partner Programs should be added to survey question number 5
- Survey will go to all of the state level programs
- Check-off slots should be added to survey instead of many open ended questions
- It was suggested that going through the state budget to identify youth serving programs would be a good method of identifying survey recipients
- More thought will need to be given to how the survey is distributed during Phase II

**Overview of Scope of the OSY Subgroup:**

The OSY subgroup will convene to focus on the OSY issues. The main topics focused on will include the following:

- Outreach / Recruitment Strategies
- Identifying Best Practices
- Leveraging Existing Resources
- Identifying Service Provider and Technical Assistance and Support Needs

*Discussion:*

- In an effort to minimize the amount of travel time to meetings, it was proposed that OSY subgroup meet on September 25<sup>th</sup> after the larger WIOA Youth Workgroup from 1:00 – 3:00 pm.
- Christine Abramowitz said she would reach out to Ana West from New England Farm Workers Council to serve on the OSY subgroup.
- Barbara Dulin from East Boston Neighborhood Health Center volunteered to participate on the OSY subgroup.

*OSY Subgroup Membership:* Tricia Lucier, Mary Giordano, Barbara Dulin, Ana West, Christine Abramowitz, John Niles, Susan Lange, Sacha Stadhard

**Next Meeting:**

The next WIOA Youth Workgroup will meet Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 – 12:00 pm at the Central MA WIB in Worcester.