

Human Services and Home Health Workers Student Loan Repayment Board

Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2022
3:00 – 5:00pm

Date of meeting: Monday, October 24, 2022

Start time: 3:00 pm

End time: 5:00 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members participating remotely		Vote 1*	Vote 2*
1	Tammy Mello (<i>chair</i>) – The Key Program, Inc.	X	X
2	Jule Gomes Noack – Horace Mann Educational Associates (HMEA)	X	X
3	Diane Gould – Advocates	-	-
4	Michael Weekes – Providers' Council	-	X
5	John Yazwinski – Father Bill's & MainSpring	-	-
6	Lisa Gurgone – Mystic Valley Elder Services	X	X
7	Lois Nesci – Gándara Center	X	X
8	Lisa Parent – Community Nurse Home Care	-	-
9	John Feehan – YWCA	X	O

* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Proceedings

Lois Nesci made a motion to accept the 10/11/2022 meeting minutes. Lisa Gurgone seconded the motion. All five of the present board members voted in favor.

Michael Weekes joined the meeting at 3:05pm.

Tammy Mello began the discussion with the topic of loan repayment assistance levels. The group discussed work commitment requirements and assistance levels for different degrees. Michael Weekes raised that the amount of assistance should be significant. John Feehan suggested a smaller amount for a broader group of workers.

Lois Nesci suggested a tiered scale for the work commitment and allocation of funds to each degree level. The board further discussed this topic based and the corresponding feedback submitted by the board prior to the meeting.

Tammy Mello raised that the board could make additional recommendations in a final report, including a recommendation for tuition reimbursement.

The board discussed working with educational institutions at their organizations and the intersection with loan repayment.

The board discussed the inclusion of some college completion for loan repayment. The board further discussed work commitments by degree level, and alignment with the other loan repayment programs. The board determined that some college completion may not be suitable for this program.

Lois Nesci discussed her organization's loan repayment program as an example of a potential model and the corresponding impact on employees.

The board voted on the work commitment amounts by degree level, with the proposal of: Master's level degree (up to \$30K for a 3-year commitment), Bachelor's level degree (up to \$20K for a 2-year commitment), and an Associate level degree (up to \$6K for a 1-year commitment). Five of the six present board members voted in favor. One board member voted against.

The board then discussed worker prioritization. Suggestions included workers who have been in the field for 5+ or 10+ years, workers who are racially or ethnically diverse, and workers who have a lower income.

John Feehan suggested the use of a points system in the prioritization. Jule Gomes Noack agreed with the points system and raised that over 60% of frontline managers have 2-3 jobs.

The board discussed the definition of low-income. Suggestions by the board included a cutoff of income under \$50K or a calculation of Individual salary / area median income less than 50%.

The board discussed if the prioritization categories would be weighted. The board determined that an equal weight between all prioritization categories would be most beneficial.

The board discussed best ways to promote diverse candidates with the program. Suggestions by the board included using the Vaccine Equity Communities, language skills, and cultural competency as possible strategies. The board agreed to think about different options and bring ideas to the next meeting.

The board agreed that for the next meeting, they will decide on the final prioritization list and recommendations for the final report.

At 5:00pm the meeting concluded.