

Governor's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)
Full Council Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2018

Members Present

Dan Martinez, Chair
Danita Applewhite*
Sheri Carparelli
Jill Pleasant
Melissa Wotjak
Scott Lindbloom*
David Cheeseman*
Judith Castro*
John Gutierrez*
Carol Carr*
Paula Seanez*
Kathy McDonald*
Kristen Mackey

Members Absent

Brandon Dale
Joshua Auer
Ana Nunez

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Council Liaison
Teleconferenced*

Guests Present

Brandi Coffland
Susan Voirol

Call to Order and Introductions

Dan Martinez, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:07 pm in the RSA Videoconference Room, 515 N. 51st Avenue, Phoenix, and in the RSA Video Conference Rooms located in Tucson, Flagstaff, and Yuma, AZ.

Approval of February 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Carol Carr moved to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2018 SRC Full Council meeting. Danita Applewhite seconded the motion. The council approved the meeting minutes by unanimous voice vote.

WIOA Presentation

Brandi Coffland stated the purpose of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Brandi Coffland noted the major changes within WIOA focus on competitive integrated employment, extend the timeline for supported employment, and allow Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to provide Extended Supported Employment (ESE) to youth. She added that WIOA also creates new services: customized employment and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and introduces Section 511, or the limitations on the use of subminimum wage. Ms.

Coffland stated that Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) referred to full or part time employment that meets or exceeds federal, state, or local minimum wage and was not less than the customary rate for similar positions. Brandi Coffland stated that individuals should be eligible for opportunities for advancement similar to individuals without disabilities. Brandi Coffland stated that Supported Employment (SE) helped individuals with disabilities achieve and sustain CIE through intensive on-the-job support services, could be provided by the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program for up to 24 months, and could be extended up to four years or until 25 years for youth. Brandi Coffland stated that Customized Employment (CE) referred to competitive integrated employment, was based on the individual's determination of unique strengths, and was designed to meet the needs of the individual.

Susan Voirol stated that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) defined who was a youth with a disability and aimed to provide services to youth eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. Melissa Wotjak inquired whether a student eligible for VR services would already be receiving services. Brandi Coffland stated an individual eligible for VR could receive Pre-ETS, although the counselor would determine whether the individual needed Pre-ETS or parts of Pre-ETS. Melissa Wotjak stated her school district offered summer classes and inquired whether those services would be considered work experience. Brandi Coffland stated summer classes could potentially be considered work experience, although there were Pre-ETS that offered more one-on-one experience for individuals. Danita Applewhite inquired whether the Pre-ETS services included outreach to community-based organizations as partners. Kristen Mackey stated that Pre-ETS contract was open to all organizations and she noted that the Centers for Independent Living (CIL)s did not bid on the contract, although the CILs could provide self-advocacy services to individuals receiving Pre-ETS. Kristen Mackey noted that the organization offering Pre-ETS would be required to provide the five required service areas. Dan Martinez inquired who was managing the collaboration between the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and VR. Susan Voirol stated the ADE provided the announcements and collaborated with the other state agencies. Ms. Voirol noted that the school districts were responsible for meeting with the counselors and VR. Susan Voirol stated the CILs could subcontract with an awarded contractor and provide additional education.

Susan Voirol stated the five required services of Pre-ETS were to provide job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling or opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition programs, workplace readiness training and instruction in self-advocacy. Susan Voirol stated the Section 511 indicated that youth with disabilities may not begin work paying subminimum wage unless the individuals received Pre-ETS or Transition services, had applied for VR and was determined ineligible or the IPE had closed, and had received career counseling or information and referral services. Susan Voirol stated individuals working in subminimum wage employment may not continue unless the individuals received career counseling and information and referral and information on self-determination, self-advocacy and peer mentoring training. Susan Voirol stated there was information regarding Pre-ETS on the RSA website and the Employment First website, which was to provide guidance and the steps to take. Dan Martinez stated there would be changes to Pre-ETS and inquired how agencies would identify the best practices. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA received technical assistance from the beginning regarding the implementation of Pre-ETS. She added that

RSA was also working with several stakeholders and agencies on how to train staff, implement the changes, and to move the system forward. Susan Voirol stated agencies were encouraged to begin developing curriculums and to support each other as state agencies. Susan Voirol noted that Employment First was providing information to organizations as a neutral entity. Dan Martinez inquired how the agencies would measure success of the program. Susan Voirol stated success would be an increase in employment outcomes and referrals, although each agency would have their own metrics. She added that all agencies had been working well together and were aiding the school districts and partners. Kristen Mackey stated that ultimately VR would drive the Pre-ETS as the goal was for individuals to obtain employment. Susan Voirol stated all agencies were figuring out how to work together and were responsible for an attitude shift and to raise expectations. John Gutierrez inquired whether certain counselors would be responsible for WIOA specifically. Brandi Coffland stated there were Transition School to Work (TSW) counselors and Pre-ETS staff that were responsible for tracking the incoming referrals and the services received. Susan Voirol stated that WIOA reauthorized the Rehabilitation Act, and it was the law, so all counselors needed to be aware of the requirements. John Gutierrez stated that some counselors were unsure regarding the youth that could receive Pre-ETS. Brandi Coffland stated there was still confusion regarding Pre-ETS and Transition services and all agencies had been invited to attend training regarding the programs. Paula Seanez stated that tribal VR programs were not required to set aside 15% for Pre-ETS, although Transition services were a priority. Danita Applewhite inquired how she could refer a veteran for Pre-ETS. Kristen Mackey stated that a veteran would not be eligible for Pre-ETS and noted that VR was not responsible for offering priority to veterans under Title 4. Ms. Mackey stated that VR did have individuals that worked directly with veterans. Paula Seanez inquired whether RSA still had an agreement with the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Kristen Mackey stated RSA had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the VA and both agencies were able to provide services to veterans. Paula Seanez inquired whether the agreement with the ADE was current. Kristen Mackey stated the current MOU had been extended, and the new MOU was currently waiting final approval from the Attorney General.

SRC Chairperson's Report

Dan Martinez stated the ADE posted a notice of proposed rulemaking, that would address the VR program and WIOA. Dan Martinez stated on April 26, 2018, individuals representing individuals with disabilities met with the state administrators in a Town Hall meeting. Dan Martinez stated the meeting focused on the community's relationship with VR and how to enhance that relationship. Kristen Mackey stated the meeting was part of the national effort to increase understanding of employers needs. Kristen Mackey stated the President and Chair of CSAVR were registered lobbyists and were interested in learning how VR could work better with community partners. Ms. Mackey stated CSAVR had a Vision 2020, where the law could be reauthorized, and how they could have those conversations with the Legislature. Carol Carr stated there still needed to be community engagement from businesses and organizations needed to create relationships with businesses. Sheri Carparelli stated that individuals with disabilities seeking employment needed to be able to perform the jobs. Ms. Carparelli stated that employers wanted a skilled workforce and that individuals with disabilities needed to focus on their skills when seeking employment. Sheri Carparelli stated that several

individuals were also unaware of the types of employment they would be interested in and would benefit from some assessments that would help the individual identify career goals. Judith Castro stated that individuals with disabilities had to compete for jobs against individuals without disabilities and noted those individuals benefitted from on the job training. Jill Pleasant stated that Untapped Arizona was part of the US Business Leadership Network (BLN) and could provide guidance on how organizations could network with employers. Susan Voirol stated Debra Pryor with Untapped Arizona's mission was to connect employers with individuals with disabilities. Susan Voirol stated Untapped Arizona distributed a survey, asking employers regarding the individuals that applied for employment. Dan Martinez noted that some individuals with disabilities did not have the technical or soft skills to become employed, although some qualified individuals do not obtain employment due to employers' reluctance to hire individuals with disabilities.

RSA Administrator's Report

Kristen Mackey, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Administrator stated she was pleased to report that counselors had received a raise. Ms. Mackey stated RSA developed a career ladder so that Bachelor level counselors receive \$42,000, Intermediate level counselors would receive \$46,000 and Senior level counselors would receive \$48,000. Kristen Mackey stated that RSA did not receive additional funding but was able to offer raises through the implementation of the Arizona Management System (AMS) to counselors, supervisors and the program managers. Kristen Mackey stated that RSA would also review the Older Individuals Blind (OIB) and the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) programs and reallocate funds accordingly. Kristen Mackey noted that state employees had not received a raise in over a decade and were unlikely to receive raises, and that individuals were welcome to advocate for raises during their own time. Kristen Mackey stated RSA underwent a Sunset Audit and received one finding and twenty-three recommendations in which RSA had completed 98% of the recommendations. Kristen Mackey stated that RSA would receive a pre-test audit in September or October to test those recommendations and ensure that RSA would pass the next audit.

Kristen Mackey stated RSA was in the process of large projects revolving around system changes that required RSA to collaborate with DDD and community partners. Ms. Mackey stated RSA was partnering with several entities such as DDD and Northern University of Arizona. She added that RSA would implement a pilot program in the Chandler office in June, where DDD and VR were co-located. Kristen Mackey stated that staff would gather that data, develop the relationships and identify the methods to switch an individual from DDD to VR, and then back to DDD for long term services. Kristen Mackey stated that RSA would continue to review the data and track the incoming information. Kristen Mackey stated she attended a National Governors Association meeting with Arizona, Alaska, Wisconsin, and Indiana which included Christina Corieri, Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Ducey and Ashley Wilhem, the Coordinator for the Workforce Arizona Council. Kristen Mackey stated the states were able to connect and incorporate some practices from other states. Ms. Mackey stated some of the goals were to connect with employers, develop a universal design, access systems and services and have the state be a model employer for individuals with disabilities.

Kristen Mackey stated the Department of Economic Security (DES) was in the second year of Strategic Planning and had developed breakthrough objectives and high-level goals. She added that RSA had an annual improvement plan of reducing the Order of Selection (OOS) Wait List to 1900 individuals, which would be surpassed by the end of fiscal year to 1700 individuals. Kristen Mackey stated RSA continued to see a retention rate of 80% individuals. Kristen Mackey stated the DES high level objectives were to develop a high-quality workforce, timeliness and quality. Ms. Mackey stated SB 1290 required that VR offer a new contract for VR procurement services. Kristen Mackey stated the current contract rules within procurement limited contracts to five years and SB 1290 allowed an exemption to those rules with a Managed Service Provider. Kristen Mackey stated the information was currently solicited and individuals could obtain more information on the State Procurement Office website.

Kristen Mackey stated RSA had the best IPE compliance and eligibility compliance ratings of 96-98% and 98%. Kristen Mackey stated RSA made 120-125 individuals eligible for VR services each week. Dan Martinez inquired regarding the method for increasing the statistics. Kristen Mackey stated RSA began tracking the statistics down to the office level and the counselor, which were distributed to the supervisors. Kristen Mackey stated RSA began reviewing the clients co-enrolled in DDD, which was 108 individuals. Kristen Mackey stated there were 208 job placements in April, which was approximately 50-60 job placements a week. John Gutierrez stated he was pleased to hear that counselors had received a pay raise and he stated his hope that counselors would retain their employment with RSA. Kristen Mackey stated she intended to track staff retention and would begin to offer more staff training and review the quality of service delivery.

Dan Martinez inquired whether RSA staff still attended huddle meetings and whether those metrics had changed. Kristen Mackey stated four offices had weekly huddles and noted that the offices would change the metrics tracked according to the change in processes. Paula Seanez inquired whether Federal RSA's requirement for approval on services over \$5000 would impact client services. Kristen Mackey stated fiscal regulations differed from program regulations, which changed when the program regulations were combined into the super circular. Kristen Mackey stated due to the combined programs, Federal RSA was required to obtain prior approval for services over \$5000. Kristen Mackey stated RSA was working with Federal RSA to obtain a blanket approval for VR equipment over \$5000. Dan Martinez inquired whether RSA continued to track client case costs. Kristen Mackey stated that client case costs were down 16% due to savings in efficiencies and RSA would continue to review those practices. Carol Carr inquired whether the change to the Request for Proposal (RFP) would impact the role of the SRC. Kristen Mackey stated the role of the SRC would remain the same, and she would encourage SRC members to report any positive or negative feedback from the community. Carol Carr inquired whether the Managed Service Provider contract would change the role of the counselor. Kristen Mackey stated the role of the counselor would not change, although the counselor would access the vendor differently. Carol Carr inquired whether the provider would continue to work with the counselor. Kristen Mackey stated there would be communication between the service provider and the counselor. Carol Carr inquired whether any providers would lose their contract with VR. Kristen Mackey stated she was unsure, although that was not the goal of the Managed

Service Provider system. Sheri Carparelli inquired regarding the purpose of the Managed Service Provider. Kristen Mackey stated that Procurement rules dictated how often contracts could begin and end. She noted the Managed Service Provider would allow for one contract in which service providers could begin and end contracts to better serve the needs of clients.

SRC Membership Development

Dan Martinez stated there were several council members, whose memberships would end in October and those members were encouraged to apply for reappointment. Dan Martinez stated those members were Sheri Carparelli, Jill Pleasant, John Gutierrez, Brandon Dale, Joshua Auer, and Kathy McDonald. Danita Applewhite stated the SRC Executive Committee recently reviewed several outreach brochures and had agreed to further modify those materials. Danita Applewhite stated that she had invited an individual to attend the SRC Full Council meeting and would continue recruitment efforts. Dan Martinez stated that individuals joined groups when asked to join, they were recognized for their efforts, and felt the goal of the group was important. Danita Applewhite suggested the council recruit individuals with disabilities. John Gutierrez stated he would be interested in inviting former VR clients to become members of the council. Danita Applewhite inquired whether there would be a conflict for a VR counselor to serve on the council. Kristen Mackey stated there were currently two VR counselors on the council and she would advise the council not have too many individuals from one agency. Dan Martinez agreed and noted the public perception would be that the council was no longer objective. Judith Castro inquired whether a client of the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and VR could become a member of the council. Dan Martinez stated the council would welcome clients receiving services. Danita Applewhite suggested the council offer an SRC training or online training materials to council members.

Committee Reports

Employment and Community Partnerships Committee

Judith Castro stated the Employment and Community Partnerships Committee had been reviewing the Self-Employment Policy and offered some recommendations to RSA. Ms. Castro stated the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Planning Council was running a pilot program regarding self-employment. Judith Castro stated the committee discussed inviting Michael Leyva from the DDD Planning Council to attend a meeting and discuss further collaboration. She noted that the pilot was under the approval process currently, although she hoped the program would be successful. Brandi Coffland stated she anticipated sending out the updated Self-Employment Policy to the committee soon.

Program Review Committee

Sheri Carparelli stated the Program Review Committee met recently and proposed the WIOA presentation to the SRC Full Council. Ms. Carparelli stated the committee would meet shortly to discuss which aspect of WIOA the committee would review.

Membership Organization Updates

SILC

Scott Lindbloom stated the Youth Leadership Forum would continue to lead the self-advocacy efforts. Danita Applewhite stated the Youth Leadership Forum was scheduled to meet in Flagstaff in June and in Phoenix in July. Dan Martinez inquired whether the Youth Leadership Forum was accepting applications. Danita Applewhite stated she would forward the application to Dan Martinez if the application process was open. Dr. Applewhite stated a Public Forum was scheduled for May 25, 2018 at the Arizona Developmental Disability Planning Council.

American Indian VR Projects

Paula Seanez stated all the tribal VR programs received technical assistance and developed a plan on how to collaborate. Ms. Seanez stated tribal VR programs also received an overview of Pre-ETS and Transition services. Paula Seanez stated she continued to review the MOU with RSA. Paula Seanez stated the CANAR Conference was scheduled at the end of June. Paula Seanez stated there was concern as some programs were in the fourth year of five-year grants, and there were no RFPs currently. Paula Seanez stated there were 21 tribes in Arizona, and only six tribes were funded under a 121 grant. Dan Martinez inquired whether any grants were available. Paula Seanez stated each year Federal RSA would designate grants, although some tribes were in their fourth year of the five-year grants. She noted that an RFP had not been released yet. She added that tribal leaders were encouraged to contact their congressional leaders.

Client Assistance Program

This item was tabled.

AzTAP

Jill Pleasant stated that Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) Conference hosted by the Institute for Human Development would offer three tracks. Ms. Pleasant stated the conference would include an Assistive Technology, Evidence-Based Practices in Disability Disciplines, and an American Indian VR Training and Technical Assistance Center Track. Ms. Pleasant stated there were consumer rates available as well as scholarships to attend the conference. Jill Pleasant stated the IHD would offer the training to begin training regarding customized employment.

Agenda Items and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SRC Full Council will be on August 9, 2018 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. in the Video Conference Room, at 515 N. 51st Avenue, Phoenix, AZ.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call to the public was made with no responses forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Danita Applewhite motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jill Pleasant seconded the motion. The meeting stood adjourned at 3:55 pm

Vocational Rehabilitation Scorecard – April 29, 2018 – May 5, 2018

Measure	Goal for "Green"	Actual
Total Number of Individuals in VR program	N/A	14,976
Total Number of Individuals in OOS Priority 2 and 3	N/A	1692
Total Number of Individuals in Priority 2	N/A	1277
Total Number of Individuals in Priority 3	N/A	415
Number of Applications VR	115-143	157
Average number of days from application to eligibility	Less than 60 days (Federal requirement)	31 days
Median number of days from application to eligibility	Less than 60 days (Federal requirement)	25 days
Eligibility Determination Compliance – within 60 days	96-100% compliance (Federal requirement)	97.6%
Number of New plans written	24	75
Average number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation	Less than 90 days (Federal requirement)	68 days
Median number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation	Less than 90 days (Federal requirement)	53 days
IPE Implementation Compliance – within 90 days	96-100% compliance (Federal requirement)	89.0% within 90 days
Average hourly wage of successful employment outcomes	\$10.06	\$11.18
Number of Job Placements	32-39	48
Number of Clients Closed Successful	25-30	32