

Governor's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

Full Council Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2021

Members Present

Scott Lindbloom, Chair

Adam Robson

Dave Cheesman

Jill Pleasant

Melissa Wojtak

Lisa Livesay

Ceci Hartke

Twyla Bowman

Members Absent

Judith Castro

Paula Seanez

Diana Meza

Kristen Mackey

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Mathew Nevarez

Linda Fischer

David Carey

Call to Order and Introductions

Scott Lindbloom, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. Introductions were made, and a quorum was present.

Approval of August 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Scott Lindbloom moved to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2021 SRC Full Council meeting. Lisa Livesay seconded the motion. Jill Pleasant requested the minutes be corrected to indicate that the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) was a project of the Institute for Human Development (IHD). The amended minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

SRC Chairperson's Report

Scott Lindbloom stated the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) would increase by 5.9% in January 2022, and the monthly maximum Federal amount would go up to \$841 from \$794. Mr. Lindbloom stated he had been in contact with the ADA Coordinator from the Navajo County, who would be involved in the ADA Advisory Committee. Scott Lindbloom stated he would inquire whether the ADA Coordinator would be interested in

participating on a SRC committee. Scott Lindbloom stated he was also the Chair of the Employment and Community Partnerships Committee, which hoped to collaborate with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). Adam Robson stated the committee invited the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator to attend a meeting to discuss the relationship between DDD and VR and she indicated the relationship between the 2 agencies had improved. Adam Robson stated the committee had also discussed potential additional education for VR counselors regarding Self-Employment plans so counselors would be less hesitant to develop the plans. Linda Fisher stated both areas would be good to focus on and noted the Client Assistant Program (CAP) saw clients experience challenges in those areas.

RSA Administrator's Report

Mathew Nevarez, Ombudsman, stated RSA recently submitted the 722 reports, and he was pleased to see improvements in the 3 years that he had submitted the report. Mr. Nevarez stated there were 16 informal reviews, in which half were upheld and half were overturned. Mathew Nevarez stated there were 11 new mediation requests for the year, although he reported 15 due to some that rolled over. Mathew Nevarez noted of those, 6 were resolved, 7 were not resolved, and 2 were pending. Mathew Nevarez stated there were 14 new Fair Hearing requests and 21 total for the reporting year in which 6 resolved without the ALJ, 1 was resolved in favor of the client, 3 were resolved in favor of the agency and 6 were pending. Mathew Nevarez stated there were 3 direct review requests in which 1 was in favor of the individual, and 2 favored the agency's decision. Mathew Nevarez stated there 34 Fair Hearings in 2020 and 70 the previous year, which showed a decrease. He noted there were 2 upcoming workshops for staff on November 16th and 19th, to continue to provide additional training.

SRC Officer Elections

Scott Lindbloom stated the Officer roles of Chair, Vice Chair and Sergeant at Arms positions were up for elections. Mr. Lindbloom stated he would be interested in serving as the Chair again if the council approved and inquired whether any council members were interested in serving in any of the Officer roles. Adam Robson stated that Scott Lindbloom was interested in serving as the Chair and inquired whether any council members wanted to be considered for that role as well. Mr. Robson noted that he would not be able to be the Vice Chair again due to his current workload. Twyla Bowman stated she was willing to serve in an Officer role, although she would prefer to not be in a higher position as she was still a newer member. Lisa Livesay stated she would be willing to be considered for the Vice Chair position. Adam Robson inquired whether Melissa Wojtak would be interested in remaining as the Sergeant at Arms.

Melissa Wojtak motioned that Scott Lindbloom be elected as the SRC Chair. Twyla Bowman seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. Twyla Bowman motioned that Lisa Livesay be elected as the Vice Chair. Adam Robson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. Scott Lindbloom motioned that Melissa Wojtak be elected as Sergeant at Arms. Adam Robson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. Scott Lindbloom thanked Lisa Livesay for stepping into the Vice Chair position and thanked Adam Robson for all of his contributions as the Vice Chair.

SRC Annual Report Vote

Scott Lindbloom inquired whether council members had the opportunity to review the draft SRC Annual Report or had any questions. The council members indicated they had reviewed the report. Scott Lindbloom motioned to approve the SRC Annual Report for submission. Melissa Wojtak seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Council Recruitment and Membership Discussion

Adam Robson stated that his membership term would be ending soon, and he would be reapplying for another term with the council. Mr. Robson stated that since he would be reapplying for a second term, he hoped that he would be reappointed quickly. Adam Robson stated David Carey had applied for membership as the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) representative. Mr. Robson stated Ceci Hartke had been officially appointed as a Parent Training representative. He added that Britt Carlson has also applied for membership and noted that she was an Employment Administrator as well as the Workforce Development Administrator for Molina Healthcare. Adam Robson stated that Jill Pleasant would be retiring and would not be seeking reappointment to the council. The council thanked Jill Pleasant for her contributions to the council and congratulated her on her retirement. Adam Robson stated he had previously developed an SRC recruiting document, which was still with the DES Public Information Officer. Mr. Robson stated that once the document had been finalized, SRC members were encouraged to circulate it widely to recruit more members to the council.

Transition Program Questions/Answers

Lisa Livesay stated the Program Review Committee had some questions regarding the Transition Program and wanted to share those answers with the council. Lisa Livesay stated the committee requested insight into the delivery of transition related services and how they were provided in a virtual or hybrid format. She noted the committee also inquired how TSW counselors were navigating the environments to continue providing services to transition-aged clients. Lisa Livesay stated that Abel Young, Statewide Transition Coordinator, indicated that staff continued to connect virtually to their clients, and also had opportunities to meet with them during their school day, observe their work in TSW classes or connect with them outside of the school day. He noted that the service providers (such as the Pre-ETS Contractors) were mainly providing services in-person, but virtual formats remained an option. Ms. Livesay stated the committee inquired regarding the number of students with disabilities that received Pre-ETS the previous year, and whether that was an increase or decrease from previous years. Mr. Young stated that he would need to review the data to confirm. Lisa Livesay stated the committee inquired regarding which Pre-ETS workshops were provided the most, to which Able Young stated that he would review the data to confirm.

Lisa Livesay stated the committee inquired whether Pre-ETS were being provided throughout Arizona, and whether there were any regional gaps in service delivery. Abel Young indicated that every county of the state had contracted Pre-ETS vendors or coverage through VR staff, which was accessible through the Pre-ETS contractor

directory from the Pre-ETS website and listed each county and which contractor serves it. Lisa Livesay stated the committee inquired whether the outcomes of provided Pre-ETS tracked. Abel Young stated that currently, there was no method to track outcomes for potentially eligible students who had participated in Pre-ETS, but never actually applied to become VR clients. He noted the majority of the Pre-ETS recipients who had received Pre-ETS through the contract were 'potentially eligible'. He added that while students who had received Pre-ETS through their TSW program or from VRCs directly were clients, and he hoped to be able to utilize post-school outcome data from the ADE to eventually track outcomes for students who received Pre-ETS. Lisa Livesay stated the committee inquired regarding the number of students with disabilities who received Pre-ETS that became VR clients, and if possible, to provide a 3-year trend. Mr. Young stated he would review the data to confirm.

Ms. Livesay stated the committee inquired whether any Pre-ETS funds were available to improve the transition of students with disabilities to post-secondary education as required by 34 CFR 361.48 (a)(3). Abel Young indicated that he believed that was a reference to authorized activities, which were not currently accessed. He noted the Transition Program was required to focus on the required Pre-ETS activities and coordination activities before they could move to authorized activities and needed to show that they offered Pre-ETS to all the students who would qualify before they could be moved to authorized activities. Lisa Livesay stated the committee inquired whether a decision was made on whether a portion of Pre-ETS funds could be spent on the purchase and delivery of Assistive Technology services. Abel Young indicated that the purchase of auxiliary aids or services for a student with a disability to access Pre-ETS was an allowable cost. Ms. Livesay stated the committee inquired regarding the Pre-ETS contracted vendors to which Mr. Young indicated the contractor directory was available on the Pre-ETS website at <https://des.az.gov/services/employment/rehabilitation-services/vocational-rehabilitation/pre-employment-transition>. Linda Fischer stated that anyone could apply for VR services and there was no minimum or maximum age to apply for services. Lisa Livesay stated the committee would be interested to invite Abel Young to a committee meeting to further discuss some of the questions and would share that information with the Full Council.

Membership Organization Updates

SILC

David Carey stated that SILC continued to offer monthly emergency preparedness webinars and invited speakers from different disability populations to present. Scott Lindbloom inquired regarding Melissa Santora's retirement. David Carey stated Ms. Santora would still be participating on the council but would be resigning from her position as the Chair of the council.

AzTAP

Jill Pleasant stated the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) was beginning to plan for the next AzTAP/Institute for Human Development (IHD) Conference, which would potentially be planned for June. Ms. Pleasant stated the conference would hybrid and would offer some in person and some virtual sessions. She noted that AzTAP was

actively recruiting to fill her position, and anyone could contact her for more information, or go to the NAU employment page. Jill Pleasant stated the IHD 5-year grant would likely be due in the winter, and anyone was welcome to provide feedback. Scott Lindbloom stated that Clayton Guffey would be welcome to apply for council membership to fill Ms. Pleasant's position on the council.

Client Assistance Program

Linda Fischer stated the CAP Federal report was due at the end of the month, which would include the number of clients served and the outcomes. Ms. Fischer noted the new CAP advocate would start at the beginning of December.

Agenda Items and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SRC Full Council will be on February 10, 2022 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

Announcements

Scott Lindbloom stated that he would be attending the ADA Advisory Council meeting and any council members were welcome to attend.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Adam Robson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lisa Livesay seconded the motion. The meeting stood adjourned at 2:25 pm.

Vocational Rehabilitation Scorecard – April 1, 2021 – June 30, 2021

The total number of individuals in VR program was 766

The total number of Veterans in VR Program was 24

The total number of individuals in OOS was 0

The total number of individuals in Priority 2 was 0

The total number of individuals in Priority 3 was 0

The total number of VR applications were 41

The average number of days from application to eligibility was 34.2

The median number of days from application to eligibility was 14

The eligibility determination compliance within 60 days was 94.1%

The number of new plans written was 208

The average number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 107.2

The median number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 70.5

The IPE implementation compliance within 90 days was 81%

The highest hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$25.00

The lowest hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$12.00

The average hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$15.32

The average days from job-ready to placement was 81

The number of clients placed was 14

The number of clients closed successful was 13