

SRC Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 14- Thursday, June 15, 2023

June 14, Mandatory Session

Gateway Center, Mississippian Room, 1 Gateway Dr. Collinsville, IL 62234

2:30-3:00: Approvals

Quorum was not met, voting could not occur to approve June Agenda or March Minutes.

3:00--4:00 DRS Staff and Liaison Reports

Chief of Staff- Andy Losasso

Chief Losasso provided an update on hiring. We currently have 160 vacancies, which is down from 180 in April. Requisitions have tripled with the bulk being in Field and blind services.

Chief is working on handout for SRC to provide more consistent delivery of information

Residential schools just held graduations. Parent and Infant camp “opening doors” is currently underway at Illinois

Bureau Highlights

Bureau of Customer & Community Services (BCCS)--Erik Hansen,

Erik reported we currently have 4000 CIE placements just shy of our 4500 goal for FY23. This is down 5% from this time last year. We have 30K vocational rehabilitation customers and 42K Home services customers. WE are currently serving 3500 Colbert class members.

Field offices are open for reception,. Counselors are meeting customers in the field.

MOU with ISBE is being finalized.

DRS is working in collaboration with UIUC to develop a transition guide; Board member Erin volunteered to review. Guide should be finalized in the coming months-

Kristin Wagner- TCRS Contracts

Kristen reported hiring new staff and adjusting roles and responsibilities of her team. The team is analyzing the billing process to determine where delays are happening and developing a plan of action to remedy

Bureau of Support Services (BSS)-- Cassie Laird

Cassie provided Fiscal highlights. DRS currently has 400 contracts, has spent \$31M to date and has a contract utilization rate of 72%. Contract utilization is in line with previous year-end utilization which averages 80%. DRS exceeded the \$1B mark in total allocation. Cassie provided the council with a full report comparing FY 23 funding to FY 24. Cassie announced Guidehouse Inc as being awarded the Bid for our adult rate setting RFP. DRS is applying for a 5year DIF grant opportunity in collaboration with ISBE and CIL.

Cassie further defined appropriation as the authority to spend, not actual cash.

Bureau of Engagement & Support Services (BESS)--Christi Pean

NTID- working collaboratively to connect customers and set up a task force to see how to better support VR customers. They are developing a apprenticeship toolkit in partnership with UIUC. SS Providers can provide Auditory Cues to assist individuals with independent living and employment.

Bureau of Planning & Strategic Management (BPMS)--Sybil Nash

Announced the addition of new staff: QA manager and Auditing Manager along with two data specialists. DRS is currently doing a refresh of computer equipment to ensure DRS staff has current technology to complete their work.

Bureau of Customer and Community Support for Blind (BCCBS)-- Kim Borowicz

Kim reports ICRE-Wood welcomed 31 new customers to their three month summer program. Field staff are supporting 3, 198 individuals and have placed 176.

Blind Vendors held an election on May 5 to select new committee members.

Working with a contractor to work with grants

Blind Services Planning Council (BSPC)

Nothing to report

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)--Shelly Richardson

A transportation form was disseminated throughout DRS counselors and she wishes for individuals to continue sending their transportation stories so she can gather evidence to illustrate the transportation problem across the state. Her next meeting is July 12.

Equip for Equality—Megan Sorey

EFE has created an ASL brochure in collaboration with Chicago Institute for the deaf. They will have a read aloud version in English with captions.

They have resolved several cases that involve secondary education and payment for educational services

Working with DRS to identify systemic issues and working to increase access with those leaving incarceration

Policy Updates--Robyn Lewis

Questions

4:00-4:30 Old Business (time permitting)

The Illinois Department of Human Service Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) subcontracted with Craig Williams Finance and Management Group (CWFM Group) to conducted concurrently: 2023 Satisfaction with Customer Service and 2023 Needs Assessment Survey. Distributed 180,000 emails; 21,062 responses.

Customer Satisfaction Survey Summary:

The Satisfaction with Customer Service Survey Results were overall positive. Respondents indicated they like the services received. The Division of Rehabilitation Services provides unbiased services to all “special populations,” age groups, gender, and disability types across the state of Illinois. The demographic data reveals a potentially disproportionate response to the survey which may indicate a disproportionate engagement with DRS for services based on race demographics. Gaining access to services and the receipt of services are two vastly different experiences. African American sector accesses the Division of Rehabilitation Services at disproportionately higher rate than larger minority groups (Hispanic/Latino) within the state. The Satisfaction with Customer Service Survey greatest learning is the largest percentage of all respondent populations were not aware of which DRS office aided them in obtaining disability services and support and the corresponding relationship to lower satisfaction scores.

Needs Assessment Summary of Strengths

Strong Pre-Employment Transition Services (PTS), organizational Website, Leadership Supports, Customer service: Both the Director and the State Rehabilitation Council.

The Division was provided licensed access to a solid Customer Service platform in Qualtrics. Provider and Employer groups selected the exact same order for the top three programs with the greatest success: Workplace readiness training: Including social skills training and independent living skills. Work-based learning-Employer paid work experiences: Learning while earning money at a job. Job exploration counselling: Information and guidance on types of job and careers.

Both disabled and provider respondent groups identified the following priorities for needed improvements in the “Support Services” area: Transportation: Help getting from home to school or work; Benefits Planning Services: Help to manage Social Security Benefits and plan to begin working.;

Assistive Technology Services and Support: Special Equipment and electronic devices to help with reading, speaking, or using a computer.

Leadership demonstrates success initiating positive change: e.g., Reorganization of Bureaus and Regions. Leadership is focused on the future and are committed advocates of the disabled. Mature data sets for measuring performance.

Needs Assessment Summary of Opportunities

Increase engagement with the Hispanic/Latinx minority group. Implement a formal Customer Service program. Leverage potential of the Qualtrics Platform for the customer service program. Develop skills acquisition metrics for the Senior Disabled “special population”. Employ workload analytics to assess workflows and staffing numbers.

Weighted Priorities

1. Making the referral process easier
2. Virtual access to counselors
3. Online access to applications
4. Cross-training of staff on services provided by the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)
5. Information about transition programs on DRS website
6. Better accessibility to other state workforce programs
7. Coordinating funding and staffing
8. Disability awareness training
9. Increased DRS presence in the Illinois Workforce development Systems
10. Extended hours at in-person offices
11. Accessible equipment in Workforce Development Centers
12. Interpretation services for primary languages

SWTCIE Grant update

2023 Mandatory SRC Training review

Website update; Brochure Review;

Website and brochure updates are needed. Expecting a committee to take charge of brochure revisions. Robyn will manage website updates

June 15, 2023 (HYBRID)

Zoom Attendees:

In-Person Meeting Location:

In-Person Attendees

Impact Cil (impactcil.org); 2735 E Broadway, Alton, IL 62002

DRS: Rahnee Patrick, Andy Losasso, Robyn Lewis, Kim Borowicz

SRC: Deb Einhorn, Dave Friedman, Kelsey Thompson, Erin Compton

Public: Diane and Greg Compton

9:00-9:15 Welcome

Introductions and recap of Day 1

9:15-9:30 Director's report

Director provided a brief history of CIL also describing the core services of the 22 centers. Shelly Richardson added: Each Center is unique and provides services needed by their individual communities.

Director's vision is to decrease the unemployment rate for persons with Disabilities. The unemployment rate reported is inaccurate due to people in nursing facilities being uncounted. All we can do is report on the number of people we are getting CIE. We as a division are focusing in on those who are in nursing facilities and working under Subminimum Wage Certificate.

Question from Dave Friedman: Can you comment on the Workforce restructure.

Director: We have participated in learning sessions and learned that the GO will be leading the development of the Unified State Plan and all the Titles will be working together. That's all I know from the commissions report.

Question from Kelsey: Is there anything the SRC can to do better collaborate and support DRS that we are not currently doing?

Director: Continue to communicate as disabled people our power and value. Disability is a valuable human experience and workforce partners should recognize that value and promote the disability experience even for those that cannot communicate their value themselves.

9:30-9:45 Year-to-date Data Update

Report presented by Wolfgang Arterberry

Referrals are up 13%; Certified through eligibility up 6 %; New plans up 5%; IPE is up 7%

Closures are down from last year. We are unclear as to why. WIOA requires data Employment 2nd quarter, Employment 4th quarter, median earnings, measurable skills gain, and credential attainment rate.

Director will Share the WIOA dashboard with the SRC as part of her next quarter report. We have hit all our WIOA negotiated metrics for FY23. Audit on the RSA 911 is forthcoming; Our case management system has not been updated in many years which causes us to underreport. Our push for quality, long-term careers and appropriate career is showing through in the data

9:45-10:00 Old Business (if required)

None to report

10:00-10:45 Public Comment

Angels for Hire- Robert Hinderhot

Robert shared the story about his son who has Down Syndrome. His son was hired by the Angels to be the greeter and over 10 years has worked for multiple professional sports teams.

2018 developed Angels for Hire. Three steps:

- 1) presentation to promote DEI to the professional or university sporting facility,
- 2) reach out to the local Down Syndrome to select candidates. Looking for candidates that are committed, energetic, and interested in working at a sports stadium
- 3) Set up employment interviews with the teams. Want to establish long-term employment opportunities.

Have a parent volunteer at each site as support for the workers.

Want to set up franchises in cities that have at least two Angels for hire programs. Looking to expand throughout the Midwest and into Performing Arts centers.

Angels for Hire is here to solve the problem of lack of exciting and interesting jobs for people with disabilities. Letters and emails received from families, teams, and the individuals with disabilities that express how life changing the opportunity.

www.Angelsforhigher.org

roberth@angelsfh.org

11:00-11:15 Council Appointments Updates

The SRC has multiple Current Vacancies:

Business, Industry, and Labor (3)- one pending appointment Lee Reese

Parent Training center (1)- New director Megan Mutti will replace current member

Blind Services Planning Council (1)- no pending applicants

Statewide Independent Living Council (1)- Grace Tsao has applied

Disability/Advocacy groups (4)- Lily Diego, Jackie Sundquist, Ladona Henson- pending applicants

Secondary Education (1)- Shakira Pleasant- pending applicant

Former VR recipient (1)- Earl Jones- pending applicant

Community Resource Provider (1)- Alici McNeal—pending applicant

11:15-12:00 SRC Committee Reports

Operations

Nothing to report; Need to reorganize group and get on track

Policy and legislation

Nothing to report; Need to reorganize group and get on track

Member engagement

Nothing to report; Need to reorganize group and get on track

12:00-12:15 State Plan Review (Kelsey)

State Plan obligations were discussed. DRS is participating in a WIOA work planning group and will develop preliminary goals. A special session to review the Comprehensive Statewide Needs assessment will be held in early August. In Late September, there will be an additional special session to meet the state plan requirements.

12:15-12:45 New Business

DRS DIF grant application plans (Update)--DRS applied for a DIF grant from the Department of Education and Rehabilitation Services Association; The grant is to offer Pre-Employment Training Services to youth in collaboration with Local CILs and High school programs.

2023 Meeting dates

Quarterly Meeting: September 13, Northern IL TBD

Quarterly Meeting: November 15, Central IL TBD

1:00 pm Adjourn