



State Rehabilitation Council

Summer Quarterly Meeting - June 12, 2024

In Person: Freer Hall, UIUC Champaign	Zoom Link: https://illinoisstate.zoom.us/j/98650280615
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Online Participants: Calvette Brown | Christina Pean | German Cutz | Jackie Sundquist | Kimberly Pinckney | Kristin Wagner | Louis Hamer | Rebecca Hawkinson | Shakira Pleasant | Sybil Nash | Lee Reese | Sharon Howerton | Wolfgang Arterberry

Support Staff: Coryn Barger | Elizabeth Yotter | Brittany Boston

Online Interpreters: Amy Bordean | Sabrina Bailey

Time	Item	Presenter
9:00 am	Call to order and Introductions. David Friedman called the meeting to order and took roll call.	How We Work Together - guidelines - send a draft of community agreements
9:25 am	Approval of Agenda and Minutes A quorum was not determined to be present. The March 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes could not be approved at this time. Ms. Robyn Lewis noted that she asked for approval to have the requirement of a quorum to be removed from the bylaws.	
9:30 am	Learning From Leadership Director Rahnee Patrick and Mr. Andy Losasso addressed the public comments from the last meeting. Director Patrick addressed the feedback that was received at the previous meeting. Director Rahnee noted that there is a 4% vacancy rate overall, which is very competitive. Director	Director Patrick and Kim Borowicz

Rahnee has been working with HR to ensure that the positions are being filled.

Kim Borowicz has resigned from the Division of Rehab Services. Director Rahnee noted that Ms. Borowicz has done wonderful work helping those who are blind and vision impaired. Interviews will soon be conducted for an Assistant Director to fill Miss Borowicz's position.

- The Superintendent position has been filled.
- The Business Enterprise Program for the Blind Manager role has been filled via a short-term contract by the individual who previously filled it.

Mr. David Friedman asked if the Blind Service Council had been easier to work with since the last meeting. Ms. Kim Borowicz noted that they had been more collaborative.

Director Rahnee Patrick presented a high-level review of...

- There are 170,000 students currently in transition.
- Director Patrick would like to call on everyone in the state to work with people with disabilities... including non-profits and other government agencies.
 - Ms. Alici McNeal agreed that there needs to be an intentional task force to get every student possible. Every outlet possible to get the information out needs to be utilized and shared. Parents and guardians also need to be targeted and educated, not only students.
 - Director Patrick noted that Mr. Erik Hansen and Ms. Robyn Lewis have shown interest.
 - Mr. Erik Hansen and Ms. Kristin Wagner work closely with ISBE... they are getting input from national leaders through the National Technical Assistance Center on this point.

Mr. David Friedman asked about the fundamental elements of the IGA. Mr. Erik Hansen noted that....

Ms. Kristen Wagner noted that they are working to create and distribute documents that will allow a better understanding of the agency agreement within the next fiscal year. Ms. Wagner noted that they also plan on scheduling listening sessions, etc.

Mr. David Friedman asked about changing the accreditation requirements...

- Mr. Robin Lewis noted that previously, agencies that earned more than \$20,000 in employment contracts/or

	<p>served more than 2 customers had to become accredited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The threshold has been changed to \$100,000 so that it is no longer a one-time pass. Depending on the type of contract, this could allow up to 10 customers. This change will help address the rural issue for smaller providers in smaller places. • An 'Appendix A' has also been created, to allow providers to see what they are being evaluated on. • Ms. Kristen Wagner noted that this is a wonderful opportunity for smaller providers who are not currently earning enough to qualify for accreditation and pointed out that providers without accreditation are still being reviewed to allow a full-scope picture. <p>Ms. Jackie Sundquist noted a potential barrier.... Funding through DD.</p>	
<p>10:00 am</p>	<p>Policy Update - What are the initiatives in the pipeline?</p> <p>SWTCIE Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55 engaged, 16 competitively employed. • Focusing on benefits planning and how to address that need. • How can the work in this project be translated statewide? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include benefits planning as a pre-employment transition service. ▪ Develop a public-facing website that gives the link and lets the community know what rules are being revised. • FY'25 grand budgets have been approved, and agency employment contracts have been established. • Will be working with self-employment cases statewide. • Added a new policy person to the team. • A rule revision request form has been added to gain input from the community. • Robyn would like to add the following members to a task force... <p>Needs Assessment Update</p>	<p>Robyn Lewis</p>
<p>10:30 am</p>	<p>DRS Bureau Liaison Reports</p>	
	<p>Bureau of Customer & Community Services (BCCS)</p> <p>Mr. Erik Hansen noted recent changes within BCCS.</p>	<p><i>Erik Hansen and Kristin</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offices are all open to see customers in the field offices. This includes both VOC rehab and home services. • Field offices on average are staffed at 50%. • Another project that the field has been involved with is the website payment modernization efforts and the web-based management system. This allows counseling staff to process things quickly and also allows vendors to be paid quickly. • The Council of the Central Management Systems manages all the facilities that BCCS works out of. The governor's direction has been looking to streamline and consolidate. They have been working with DHS staff to accomplish this. <p>Ms. Kristen Wagner highlighted the rate-setting study that is being finalized for this fiscal year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New rates have been approved for the next fiscal year. • Next year they will be beginning micro sessions. These will be set topics for one hour every month. Time for questions and feedback will be allowed. <p>Mr. Friedman asked about rate changes... Kristen noted that there were about 16% increases across the board.</p> <p>Bureau of Support Services (BSS) -Ms. Rebecca Hawkinson was unable to present due to a medical appointment.</p> <p>Bureau of Engagement & Support Services (BESS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Louis Hamer noted that Mr. Marcus... has retired, creating a vacancy in the ... position. • The position of Bureau Chief has been posted and is expected to be filled soon. • Aside from those two positions, the bureau is fully staffed. • Two new workforce development staff have been added in the last quarter. • In terms of deaf services, managers held a week-long conference for Rehab Councils for the Deaf. • The Hispanic services group has come together and was able to pull together a committee to work on specific issues. • IPS focuses on getting people in nursing homes back into the community with employment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A contract was initiated in August for IPS service. ▪ <p>Ms. Kelsey Thompson asked if the work incentives counseling is only available to clients of the DRS.</p>	<p><i>Wagner</i></p> <p><i>Rebecca Hawkinson</i></p> <p><i>Louis Hamer, Marcus Deamer</i></p> <p><i>Sybil Nash</i></p> <p><i>Kim Borowicz</i></p>
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Bureau of Planning & Strategic Management (BPMS)

- Ms. Sybil Nash noted that the Illinois unified plan I now published after multiple rounds of revisions.
 - There is a renewed focus on the plan being a guide to where BPMS needs to be going and the services that need to be provided.
- Two new employees, Shimarkis Bottomayo and Sally Fritz, have been added to work along with Mr. Wolfgang Arterberry. This will allow Mr. Arterberry to do more research.
- The Rehabilitation Services Administration will be visiting for a monitoring and technical assistance visit from August 6th to August 8th.
 - BPMS is focused on preparing for that review and on doing a thoughtful pursuit of ensuring that the agency is providing good services.

Mr. David Fridman asked Ms. Nash to expand on what The Rehabilitation Services Administration will be asking for and what the SRC can do to help BPMS prepare. Ms. Nash noted that they will be looking at funds and spending as well as a programmatic review and will also be looking at services provided. They are particularly interested in services being provided to youth with disabilities. She noted that BPMS is currently processing suggestions and things that were provided by Veritech...BPMS will get back to SRC about assistance needs.

Mr. Friedman asked what the outcome of this review would be. Ms. Nash noted that outcomes may take a while, but a report should be received about 18 months later.

Bureau of Customer and Community Support for the Blind (BCCBS)

- Ms. Kim Borowitcs noted that she is leaving her position as of Friday, June 28th. She will be going to the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C. Erik Hansen will be acting in that role in her absence.
- Efforts to fill Assistant Bureau Chief roles are going well.
- The Superintendent position has been filled by Ms. Latisha Houston.
- The role of Assistant Bureau Chief for field vocational rehabilitation services will be interviewed for at the end of June.
- The posting for the program administration position for the blind vending program should be posted soon.
- BCCBS is almost fully staffed with counselors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all rehabilitation case coordinator positions are filled. • The Illinois committee of blind vendors has created a workgroup and brought on a consultant to help revise the blind vending rules under the Illinois admin code. • Concerning the procedural manual, the rules packet is ready to go to RSA for review and then will move on to JCAR. 	
11:00 am	<p>Blind Services Planning Council (BSPC)</p> <p>Ms. Sharon Howerton provided her update for the BSPC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last September, BSPC heard a letter that the BEG presented to everyone concerning the issue of vacancies. <p>The council is concerned with how they are involved with the selection process for the new bureau chief. This group hopes to come together and work and be as much of a part of the state system as possible.</p> <p>Mr. David Friedman asked for a response on how to get the BSPC involved in the bureau chief selection process.</p>	<i>Sharon Howerton</i>
11:15 am	<p>Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)</p> <p>Grace Tsao was unable to attend.</p> <p>Mr. Dave Friedman noted that the number one issue for SILC is a need for additional funding and asked the group how they are funded.</p>	<i>Grace Tsao</i>
11:30 am	<p>Equip for Equality (CAP)</p> <p>Mr. Christopher Garcia provided the update for CAP, noting that they have hit a wall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAP has received two opinions from DRS legal concerning reimbursement issues for tuition and housing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ They needed a hearing order, stating that they could never negotiate any sort of settlement on those cases regardless of how long it took. ▪ The second was that whatever the hearing officer ordered would not have to comply with DRS because of a lack of authority. ▪ There is no other choice but further litigation. ▪ Mr. Garcia has asked for the basis of the litigations for continued dialogue. 	<i>Sujatha Branch</i>

	<p>Ms. Shakira Pleasant noted that it is possible that DRS legal does not have a full interpretation of how the rules are meant to operate. There may be an opportunity to bring all lawyers to the table. She would be willing to be a part of the conversation because of her past legal experience.</p> <p>Ms. Kim Borowitz clarified that DRS does not have lawyers, it is DHS legal council. Those attorneys are assigned.</p> <p>Ms. Shakira Pleasant asked if it would be possible for two lawyers to stay consistently assigned. Mr. Losasso noted that this would not be impossible. Mr. Garcia expressed concern that the hearings will not produce change and that they will be in the same place by the next SRC meeting.</p> <p>Ms. Erin... noted that accountability is necessary and that CAP is not able to help people with disabilities. She stated that she was forced to go to mediation with her school and is now on nondisclosure and is unable to share her specific issue. Mr. Christopher Garcia asked Ms. Erin to contact him directly, and he will address her concern immediately.</p> <p>Ms. Ladonna... asked for clarification on the process once someone has contacted CAP. Mr. Garcia noted that the claim will be evaluated and brought to his desk.</p>	
<p>11:45 am</p>	<p>DRS Data Report</p> <p>Mr. Wolfgang Arterberry gave an update on the DRS Data Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRS does not have the RSA dashboard yet, it is internal only. • DRS is doing well overall on case growth, referrals, apps, and new IT. • Timelines have gone down. The average is 37.7 days for referral. • Eligibility is down to 25 days. The increase in customers is taking a toll. • Top employers are Jewel Oscar, Walmart, McDonald's, goodwill, Marianas, culvers, and Amazon. • Wages continue to grow. • There is still some concern about smaller services like SNAP. • Measurable skills gains are at 73.9% internally, which is above the negotiated target. 	<p>Wolfgang Arterberry</p>

	Mr. David Friedman asked about closure numbers. Mr. Erik Hansen noted that awareness/bringing it to the field counselor's attention is the biggest issue.	
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch On Your Own	
1:00 pm	<p>David Strauser Presentation</p> <p>Professor Strauser from the University of Illinois gave a presentation about the Illinois Model, which was developed at the University of Illinois.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who will be using the model are looking to apply practice in a basic and comprehensive manner. • The model teaches medical and second social aspects of disability. <p>1) Centrality of work</p> <p>How important is work to overall health and well-being, both physical and psychological?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is closely tied to meeting basic needs and increasing health and well-being. Career development and meeting the demands of work is a behavioral, cognitive, and affective process influenced by contextual variables (family, socioeconomic, status, cultural background.) • It is important for Voc rehab to hit all three of these points when they are connecting with individuals in need of services. The three phases of career development are awareness, acquisition, and maintenance. <p>The professor also spoke about the effects of unemployment and underemployment. These issues can lead to decreased mental health, increased mortality, decreased physical health, scarring-long lasting physical and psychological effects, and vicarious unemployment/impact on the family.</p> <p>2) Illinois Model - Illinois Work and Well-Being Model (IW2M)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conceptual basis -Model Illustration (contextual domain, career domain, participation domain) - Application in vocational rehabilitation services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines a pathway to conceptualize the career development process for people with 	Professor David Strauser

disabilities to achieve participation outcomes that lead to well-being.

- Empirically supported model that has been used in vocational rehabilitation research with a wide variety of populations.
- The model is grounded in the ICF.
- The model provides structure and process for vocational analysis.
- The model is designed to give key benchmarks to pay attention to.

A rehab counselor is there to increase well-being.

Awareness equals vocational identity. Vocational identity gives people a way to feel connected to who they are as well as their purpose/skill set. This allows for better clarity and better decision-making.

Acquisition equals job-seeking skills, impression management, and job-seeking self-efficiency.

Maintenance equals work adjustment and ability to carry out required job tasks, meet production demands, conform to the social demands of work, and engage co-workers.

Ms. Kelsey... asked Dr. Strausser why career advancement was not included as well. Dr. Strausser noted that it is technically 'work adjustment'.

3) Application of the Model

Employability: identity, educational skills, content skills

Placeability: Motivation, work propensity, job-seeking skills

Maintenance: Work adjustment (context and capacity), adaptive skills, functional skills

Professor Strausser introduced the interview format and the numerical values associated. This would be given to the counselors to "score" as they interview

	<p>individuals. Counselors will be able to look at scores within domains to target where resources/interventions need to be invested to strengthen scores.</p>	
2:30 pm	Illinois Model Discussion	
3:00 pm	<p>Strategic Planning Discussion</p> <p>David Friedman spoke on the Strategic Plan within the SRC, where they want to work, begin today to start addressing priorities and partnership with DRS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robyn Lewis asked the attendees what the goals for the SRC are as a council overall. What does it look in practice? • Kim Borowicz reported the Blind Council has done similar processes and plans. <p>David asked for attendees to write thoughts and opinions on what they would like to see moving forward in relation to the priorities of the committee.</p> <p>Attendees took several minutes to write down their goals and priorities.</p> <p>David called on participants for their input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ladonna Nelson: being more involved in assisting DRS with Federal expectations. Does not want to lose information that was included in the SRC Needs Assessment. Would like to work toward goals, reach those goals then add new goals. • Robyn Lewis: tracking DRS responses to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and working toward the next Needs Assessment. • Alici McNeal: collaborations and intentional collaborations. Setting milestones with assessment after a period. Making sure with strategic thinking to gather information from every provider; don't wait until the end to assess annual progress. • Erin Compton: Ensure students have access to transitions, and have services needed for successful transitions. • Lee Reese: Would like to see SRC work more closely with DRS to put more emphasis on working with local workforce systems for better sustainability and better business engagement. • Kelsey Thompson: Internal work with SRC to have more timely and meaningful reports. Strong engagement of 	David Friedman

	<p>committee members and input. Would like to set strong work in place now when terms expire in the future. Would like to represent strong diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robyn noted the initial plan will take additional work so making the next quarterly meeting longer in order to address the above ideas and comments. <p>David asked for additional commentary. No additional commentary.</p>	
<p>3:55 pm</p>	<p>Public Comment David Friedman opened the floor for public comment and new business.</p> <p>Ladonna Henson asked about open spaces within the SRC noting David Friedman leaving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robyn Lewis gave membership update. • Robyn asked participants what anyone would like to do with members who have not been active. Will this be an upcoming charge? • Robyn’s personal assistant will send out follow ups for Board training updates. <p>David moved to discuss OMA, specifically discussing reasons for not attending meetings and how this relates to the SRC. David suggested Aimee Julian with ICSPS discuss the OMA expectations further at their next meeting.</p> <p>David Friedman reported he is working with the IWIB to find replacements as his time has expired for three responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsey Thompson will send an email to the council regarding David’s departure. Kelsey encouraged anyone who would like to step up to the Vice Chair position to do so. <p>David opened the floor to public comment.</p> <p>Online: Joe from the Business Enterprise for the Blind discussed having several open positions they would like to fill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim Borowicz responded to Joe’s outreach by explaining the positions have been written and will be posted later in the week and open until June 27, 2024. Kim will make sure the position is sent to the appropriate individuals. <p>Dave asked for additional public comment. No additional public comments.</p>	
<p>4:00 pm</p>	<p>Adjournment</p>	

	<p>David Friedman moved to adjourn the meeting.</p> <p>Ladonna Henson second to motion.</p> <p>All agreed.</p>	
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