

WV DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL
Quarterly Meeting
January 23, 2018
Four Points by Sheraton, Charleston, WV

MINUTES

Members present: Kenneth Accord, Doug Auten, Brandy Beery, Rhonda Blosser, Angie Breeden, Cali Brill, Patty Combs, Lesley Cottrell, Delmar Davis, Marc Ellison, Dawn Embrey-King, James Gallaher, Susan Given, Christina Mullins, Patricia Nisbet, Kristin O'Neal, Jacqueline Proctor, Wanda Proffitt, Tara Roush, Jon Sassi, and Rebecca Stone.

Members absent: Greg Bilonick, Julie Dial, Richard Hammons, Beth Morrison, Laura Sperry-Barno, Matthew Wink, and Sheila Zickefoose

Guest: Steve Brady and Travis Kline

Staff present: Christy Black, Jim Cremeans, Linda Higgs, and Steve Wiseman.

Call to Order, Welcome: Angie called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Introductions and Announcements by Members: Angie asked all Members to introduce themselves. Christy reported that the West Virginia ABLÉ (Achieving a Better Life Experience) Act program will officially roll out on February 9, 2018 with a ceremony at the State Capitol Rotunda at 9:00 AM. The ABLÉ Act allows people with disabilities to set up savings accounts without jeopardizing their eligibility for Medicaid and Social Security benefits. Angie said that she will invite Christy Pritt of the State Treasurers Office to the next Council meeting to discuss how West Virginia will administer ABLÉ accounts.

Linda reported that the WV CAN (Child Advocacy Network) has published its 2017 Annual Report, which lists the Council as one of its partners. Linda said that the Council has partnered with WV CAN to bring nationally recognized educators and trainers to the State. Linda also said that she is a member of the WV Children's Justice Task Force where she is the Chair of a committee that will develop a training curriculum for first responders on how to appropriately handle abuse situations involving children with disabilities. She reported that she also represents the Council on the Kids' Health Partnership and the Council will have its display at

The Year of the Child kick-off on February 28th. The date on the flyer in the packets indicates the date is February 14th, but we received notice it has been changed.

Susan said that Disability Rights of WV is developing a web-based App, based on the “WV I Transition” program, that guides students in developing transition goals and ideas for life after high school for IEP (Individual Education Plan) development.

Christy mentioned that she, Jim C. and Erin Snyder, staff attorney at Disability Rights of WV, are holding meetings to develop ideas for instructive web-based videos for families on chapters or key issues described in the Parent Advocacy Guide to Special Education.

Mission Statement Reminder: Doug Auten read the Council’s *Mission Statement*.

Public Comment: None

Approval of July 25, 2017 Meeting Minutes: Council members reviewed the minutes. **Delmar moved and Jacqueline seconded** the motion to approve the *Minutes*. **Motion carried.**

New Business:

Council Chair Recommendation for New Member to fill vacancy due to resignation: Angie informed Members that Trina Clark resigned following the July, 2017 meeting. She is recommending JaQue Galloway of Morgantown fill Trina’s spot as a parent Member. JaQue has a young son with an I/DD. Angie said that she is a learner in the current PIP class and a member of a Down Syndrome parent group in Morgantown. Linda clarified the Council By-Laws allow the Council Chair to suggest replacements for appointment when a Member resigns. **Patty moved and Rebecca seconded the motion to recommend appointment of JaQue as a new Council member. Motion carried.** Angie also advised Members that Jonathan Chaffin and Melvin West have also recently resigned.

Election of Nominating Committee: Angie instructed Members to take out the Nominating Committee Ballot list of four (4) names for a vote for the Nominating Committee. Tara Roush asked to have her name added to the ballot at the meeting. **Brandy moved and Christina seconded** a motion for five (5) Members to participate on the Nominating Committee. **Motion carried. Dawn moved and**

Jon seconded a motion that Tara Roush, Patty Combs, Lesley Cottrell, Julie Dial and Sheila Zickefoose be approved as Members of the Nominating Committee.

Motion carried.

Updates: Angie called Members' attention to the listing of 2018 meeting dates and locations in their folders. The upcoming dates/locations are as follows: April 17, 2018 - Bridgeport Conference Center, July 24-25, 2018 – Canaan Valley Resort State Park (meeting and retreat), October 23, 2018 – Blennerhassett Hotel, Parkersburg, WV

Legislative Statements: Christy referred Members to the copy of the Council's *2018 Legislative Statements* in their packets and spoke about the work she does at the Legislature. She said that she is tracking 70 bills, including some carry-over bills from the last session. She said that programs that we are most concerned about looks to be level funded. She also said that she monitors all legislation that affects people with disabilities, and some issues may be worked on that are not described in the *Legislative Statements*.

Employment First Workgroup Update: Kristin reported on behalf of the Workgroup and referred Members to copies of notes from Community Conversations in their packets. She said that three (3) Community Conversations on employment for youth with I/DD were held last fall in Beckley, Huntington and Calhoun County. Fifty (50) people in total attended the meetings including parents, teachers, DRS staff, and representatives from a range of local agencies. Kristin recognized Marc Ellison who facilitated the Huntington meeting and Rebecca Stone who assisted in Beckley. Kristin said that several themes emerged from the Conversations: families need more accessible information and support concerning employment, especially around school to work and Social Security benefits; parents need to hear and learn from other parents; communities have a variety of assets and resources that can provide opportunities for youth with I/DD to develop relationships, social skills and good self-image; work exploration programs in schools need to be looked at and improved as needed; and the business community needs to be involved. Jim said that all the information from the public meetings will be put together in a report by Debra Luecking, consultant for the Workgroup.

Angie emphasized the need to have high expectations as early as when children are in Birth to Three programs. Patty discussed the importance of social skills and said that she is part of a social skills group of parents in Doddridge County. Susan said that DR of WV is exploring a variety of web-based options to reach families and people with disabilities about work and other issues. She said that Jennifer Tenney

of WVU CED has a Facebook-based training that teaches people how to protect their income and assets and keep benefits. Rebecca said she had offered to develop a class for parents at New River Community College.

Delmar described his experience of being underestimated from an early age. Important people around him could not see what he could do – only what he could not do. Delmar asked that family members and others encourage their children with disabilities to have high expectations for themselves.

Grants/Contracts: Steve said that current grants (People 1st of WV, Fair Shake Network, Community Access, Inc. and Mountain State Centers for Independent Living) are going well.

He said the State offices of Grants Management and Purchasing determined the three new projects that were approved by the Council last July would need to follow the Contract, rather than Grant, procurement method. Either a Request for Quotation (RFQ) or Request for Proposal (RFP) would need to be developed, advertised, and awarded for each of these projects. Steve read some draft specifics that would be included for a Toolkit for families and people with I/DD to educate them on accessing Competitive Integrated Employment. The project will include the development of videos and web-based tools. Jacqueline recommends there be a marketing plan to get the word out about the Toolkit when it is completed.

Education Related Information: Christy updated the Members on the status of the federal ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) law in West Virginia. Christy said that all states require stakeholder input and assistance in developing a state plan for implementing ESSA. The Council, DR of WV and the Arc of WV have all reached out to the Department of Education to become more involved in ESSA planning, and were only invited to stakeholder forums after the plan was developed. Christy said, however, the Council has a good relationship with the Department personnel, especially Dawn who has been very helpful in answering key questions about the law (e.g. WV's plan to reduce the percentage of students on an alternate diploma track). Patty said that she was told that if a child had to have a curriculum modification that he or she would have to be placed on the alternate diploma track. Dawn said that was not correct.

Christy also mentioned Education Savings Accounts (ESAs). She referred Members to a fact sheet in their packets. She has serious concerns about ESAs as the accounts are set up to pay for private school education, but without the rights and safeguards from IDEA. Christy said she attended a meeting in October with

Senator Kenny Mann (Chair, Education Committee), Dr. Steven Paine (State Dept. of Ed. Superintendent), Steve Wiseman, Jeremiah Underhill (Legal Director, Disability Rights of WV), Christina Smith (Executive Director of the Arc of WV), and Department of Education personnel: Dr. Lou Maynus, Pat Homberg and Susan Beck. Dr. Paine agreed to meet three times to discuss issues that we could work on together.

Diversity and Cultural Competency: Angie led the Members in an exercise to examine the Council's current and potential relationships with diverse groups and organizations related to gender, race, socio-economic or other characteristics. Angie divided the Members into 4 groups and gave each group a set of discussion questions. Part I of the discussion asked two (2) questions: 1) identify current groups that Council Members and staff have with diverse groups or groups with possible links to diverse organizations; and 2) identify who is missing. Part II of the activity asked groups to list next steps the Council can take to develop more relationships with diverse stakeholders.

Grantee Presentation – Travis Kline, Job Squad, Inc. (JSI): Travis Kline provided a presentation on Customized Employment based on the Council funded full day workshops held across the State in 2017. Travis began the presentation with an overview of some of the barriers facing people with I/DD who try to get work in West Virginia. They include the rural nature of the state (e.g. lack of transportation, lack of work in isolated communities), and restrictive and burdensome job application rules by some major employers (e.g. Walmart). Some employers, like Kroger, have restrictions due to union rules; the disability workforce is untrained in customized employment methods; and employment services are under-funded (e.g. lack of fee-for-service structure for customized employment). Travis said the West Virginia's largest employer is the WVU Hospital system, surpassing Walmart.

Despite barriers, Travis said that JSI has been able to blend funding and programs (DRS and I/DD Waiver) to provide Customized Employment services and help people with I/DD obtain integrated employment at minimum wage and above. Travis reviewed the Discovery Process, the foundations of Customized Employment, and provided case studies of people that JSI has helped get work in the community. Travis said that a provider can bill \$40 per hour up to 90 hrs. for Discovery through DRS. He emphasized that a successful employment program includes not only trained staff but also staff who can negotiate jobs with employers. Travis said that the workshop evaluations were very good (88% reported that could demonstrate knowledge of the major components of

Customized Employment after training). Travis said that JSI would like to continue the training.

I/DD Waiver personal budget determination, BMS policy changes, State

Transition Plan update: Pat Nisbet presented on the new I/DD Waiver budget methodology and service authorization process. Pat stated the new methodology is highly researched and more transparent than the old budgeting methods. Pat also said that the new budget determination procedure is more individualized. She said that the I/DD Waiver will add 50 new slots on July 1, 2018. Pat presented several examples of how individual budgets will be created based on living arrangements and ICAP (Inventory for Client and Agency Planning) scores. She also talked about flexibility within the methodology to increase initial budget estimates by using the Exceptions Process which replaces the previous Second Level Negotiation Process

Completion of Feedback Forms: Members were requested to complete the feedback form about the meeting prior to leaving.

Adjourn: Jacqueline moved the meeting be adjourned.