

**NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
STATE PLAN COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation

January 11, 2011
Approved Amended Meeting Minutes
(4.29.2011)

Vocational Rehabilitation
1325 Corporate Blvd.
Reno, NV

MEMBERS PRESENT

Steve Chartrand
Maureen Cole
Jane Gruner
Robin Hall-Walker
Kevin Hull
Edina Jambor
Jack Mayes
Kate Osti
Joan Rachmel
Chris Syverson, Chair
Scott Youngs

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ellen Koivisto

GUESTS:

Katherine Edwards, Interpreter
Gerianne Hummel, Interpreter
Megan Maxey, Assistant to Kate Osti
Denise Phipps, Transcriptionist

STAFF:

Robert Whitney, Deputy Attorney General (via phone)
Janice John, Deputy Administrator, Program Services
Melaine Mason, Deputy Administrator, Operations
Mechelle Merrill, Rehabilitation Chief
Pamela June, Chief, ODEP
Melissa Starr, Management Analyst I
Beth Talcott, Administrative Assistant

EXHIBITS:

- Rehabilitation Current State Plan,
- Statewide Needs Assessment Report, June 2007
- San Diego State University, Scope of Work
- UNR General Client Satisfaction Survey 2010, report
- UNR Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) Satisfaction Survey 2010, report
- UNR Transition Student Satisfaction Survey 2010, report
- General Client Executive Summary
- OIB Executive Summary
- Transition Student Executive Summary
- UNR Customer Satisfaction Survey, Power Point Presentation
- 2010 State Plan Goals and Outcomes, report

I. ROLL CALL AND CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM:

Chris Syverson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Pamela June read the roll call and verified that a quorum was present.

II. VERIFICATION OF POSTING:

Pamela June verified that the posting was accomplished on time and per requirements.

III. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chris Syverson welcomed everyone. She thanked the Committee for their attendance, stating that though the meeting exhibits were lengthy she hoped everyone read through all their materials and were prepared for discussions.

IV. DISCUSSION/REVIEW OF STATE PLAN AND REHABILITATION ACT/REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (RSA) REQUIREMENTS

Maureen Cole said there are three types of analysis to the Vocational Rehabilitation and other support needs of the departments of the State of Nevada;

- Analysis of consumer service data
- Review of census data and available data sources
- Analysis of focus groups and interview data

Maureen said there are differences among the three regions of Nevada with regard to how applicant disability severity ratings of applicants. This is something staff is working on to ensure some consistency that will involve some uniform manner and decisions based on the same kind of criteria.

It was noted, case expenditures for white participants were higher than almost all other race ethnic groups. This finding suggests a need to assist consumer from all racial ethnic backgrounds to navigate the rehabilitation system and secure the services they need to be successful. The Division is watching this very closely and making adjustments as needed.

The provision of intensive work supports for associated with higher than average case costs. These types of supports were often associated with successful case closures. There is a need to ensure a sufficient number of providers who deliver intensive work related supports and future planning which should accommodate the high costs.

The number of services provided to the consumers was generally consistent, the average plans costs for all service types increased substantially from federal fiscal year (FFY) 2005 to FFY 2008. Future planning should accommodate the life of increased cost that the Rehabilitation Division will incur during the next three years. Persons who achieved employment outcomes demonstrated consistent increases in hours worked and wages earned. This finding provides evidence of continued need to assist more consumers to reach their desired employment outcomes. Maureen stated this information can be used very successfully as the Division moves forward in this legislative session.

Maureen continued it is important to realize that these investments pay off, and they pay off well in the census data. Other data resources revealed some persons with disabilities in Nevada may be less likely to connect with the Division if they are not affiliated with other referral sources. Therefore, they may need more information about what the division has to offer them community outreach is always a focus. We will be doubling our focus.

The general population and that of persons with disabilities in the state are expected to increase over the next twenty years. This is where the Division's future planning to anticipate increased personnel programmatic and vendor services, which is difficult with the shrinking economy and resources.

V. **DISCUSSION/REVIEW OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT SCOPE OF WORK AND REHABILITATION ACT/RSA REQUIREMENTS**

Maureen Cole related background for a state to receive a grant under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the final regulations, the Rehabilitation Division must submit to the U.S. Department of Education and obtain approval of the commissioner for the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) a state plan that contains a description of the State's Vocational Rehabilitation Services programs, the plans and policies to be followed in carrying out the program in accordance with 34 CFR part 361. The Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) and the Designated State Unit (DSU), which is the Division, jointly develop a state plan reporting to the federal government making agency U.S. Department of Education RSA a plan that identifies information regarding program services, goals, system of personnel development, performance indicator, policies and planning activities, reports of progress activity and achieving goals from prior fiscal year and the planning activities for the upcoming federal fiscal year.

Chris asked about the Rehabilitation budget for the upcoming year.

Maureen responded it is fair to say the Division will be seeing more reductions in their budget.

Jack Mayes asked about the plans to submit a Waiver request for the Maintenance of Effort Requirement that was indicated at last years' State Plan meeting. Maureen replied "no" the Division found out after preparation the request for the waiver requires state match and the Division did not have state match. She said the Division has never had state match and expects to be in the same predicament this year with another possible Failure of Maintenance of Effort against the Division.

Chris asked about the possibility of going onto an Order of Selection process.

Maureen said that was an absolutely undesirable situation. With Order of Selection those with the most significant disabilities would be selected first and those other individuals who need assistance as well would not be accomplished. The Division would be unable to meet anybody's needs except by this very rigid categorization process. She said many

states have fallen into the Order of Selection process and have found the process is really a hindrance to accomplish positive employment outcomes.

Mechelle Merrill stated on the Order of Selection not only is it the most severely disabled clients that would be served but there would also be complexity in most every case that would lead to taking longer to deliver the same amount of services. It grinds everything to a halt creating a very bad situation.

Melaine Mason reiterated the need to collaborate with state agencies is a possible key to make sure funding is not spent on the same or similar cases as several agencies are trying to meet the same goals and similar needs. To collaborate with other agencies would assist in keeping everyone's budgets focused and not all going to the same things or issues.

Goal #1:

Emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities and improve transition from school to work and school to post-secondary education.

- Fiscal year 2008 successful with 14% of the students, 14% of the Division's total applications were student applications
- Fiscal year 2009 the Division gained 2%, making 16% total student applications and successes.
- 2008 Of all student closures 30% were closed as rehabilitated
- 2009 of all students closures 29% were closed as rehabilitated
- 2008 15% of the students going onto post secondary educations
- 2009 13% of the students going onto post secondary educations

Goal #2:

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities.

- All closed clients, 2008 53%
- All closed clients, 2009 56%
- 2008:
 - 193 with developmental disabilities
 - 1,118 with cognitive disabilities
- 2009:
 - 860 with all other mental health disabilities, a slight decrease in developmental disabilities

Goal #3:

Extend outreach efforts toward ethnically diverse populations, specifically minority populations with disabilities represented in Nevada's workforce.

- 2008 non-white minority client closures were 37%
- 2009 non-white minority closures were 35%

Goal #4:

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, retention of competitive employment and self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services.

- 2008 & 2009 Supported Employment closures 4%
- 2008 Supported Employment closures closed as rehabilitated 89
- 2008 81 of the closed rehabilitation closures received Assistive Technology
- 2009 Supported Employment closures closed as rehabilitated 65
- 2008 Other types of closures 46
- 2009 Other types of closures 65

Maureen stated all closed rehabilitation clients, 112 with rehabilitation closures received Assistive Technology and there were 2,244 other types of closure. Kevin Hull interjected the numbers for individuals receiving Assistive Technology should be higher when including individuals who are blind from both Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) and Bureau of Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI).

Goal #5:

Emphasize the employment potential of applicants and eligible persons receiving services and Supported Employment.

VI DISCUSSION/REVIEW OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY INSTRUMENTS AND REHABILITATION ACT/RSA REQUIREMENTS

Chris Syverson along with the Committee decided that this agenda item has already been discussed throughout the meeting and does not need to be discussed any further.

VII. DISCUSSION/REVIEW OF FFY 2012 STATE PLAN GOALS

Maureen Cole read through the current 2011 State Plan

Goal #1:

Emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities and improve transition from school to work and school to post-secondary education.

Strategies:

- Communicate with consumers, advocates, service providers, education authorities, disability service delivery system providers and Division staff to foster a cultural shift that emphasizes the value of employment.
- Serve more transition students by developing referral mechanisms with secondary schools and post-secondary institutions.
- Comparison to states with similar population and demographics, and in accordance with the recommendations of the Needs Assessment.
- Identification of students that have fallen out of Vocational Rehabilitation programs
- Creative marketing to schools and students.

- Continue Statewide “Transition Connect” Expansion Project.
- Counselor phone calls with follow-up.
- Increased communication between Vocational Rehabilitation counselor, special education teachers and 504 coordinators.
- Educating teachers and parents regarding the Vocational Rehabilitation process, programs and referral services
- Vocational rehabilitation representatives to participate with parent/teacher Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) conferences.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by transition students in the Program Services of the DSU. The DSU’s performance regarding increased enrollment in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.
- Increase competitive employment outcomes for transition students. The DSU’s performance regarding increased competitive employment outcomes in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.
- Increase post-secondary educational services for transition students. The DSU’s performance regarding increased post-secondary educational services in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.

Goal #2:

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities.

Strategies:

- Increase marketing efforts with mental health hospitals, mental health service providers, the Social Security System Administration, and the State of Nevada’s Division of Welfare and Supportive Services.
- Partner with mental health service providers and Community Training Centers (CTC’s).
- Partner with Department of Health and Human Services, State commissions related to populations concerned with autism, developmental disabilities, cognitive and mental health disabilities.
- Partner with advocacy groups.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities. The Division’s performance to increase enrollment by eligible individuals with autism and mental health disabilities in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.

Goal #3:

Extend outreach efforts toward ethnically diverse populations, specifically minority populations with disabilities represented in Nevada's workforce.

Strategies:

- Recruit bilingual and/or bicultural staff.
- Increase marketing efforts with ethnically diverse populations and media.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by minority populations representative of Nevada's minority workforce. The DSU's performance regarding increased enrollment by minority populations in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.

Goal #4:

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, retention of competitive employment and self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services.

Strategies:

- Work with youth with disabilities, the Nevada Department of Education, local education authorities, parent organizations and families to encourage early discussions with students about the expectations of employment and their skills, abilities, and talents that will empower them to achieve self-sufficiency
- Support peer mentoring of people with disabilities that encourages employment and empowers individuals to risk leaving the benefits system.
- Support assistive technology services that enhance employability.
- Identify and support best practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment.

Indicators:

- The Division's performance regarding the numbers of individuals rehabilitated who achieve competitive employment in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.

Goal #5:

Emphasize the employment potential of applicants and eligible persons receiving services and Supported Employment.

Strategies:

- Partner with public and private State entities that provide Supported Employment.
- Develop a brochure for Supported Employment.
- Expand communication and training to staff, Nevada State Rehabilitation Council members and consumers on Supported Employment.

Indicators:

- Increase the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully, earning at least the federal minimum wage. The Division's performance regarding an increase in the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.

VII. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION TO ESTABLISH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FFY 2012 STATE PLAN GOALS

Chris Syverson and the committee went through each and every goal, strategy and indicator to make the appropriate changes and decide what to keep working on. The following was decided upon and voted on by the Committee members for proposing to the full Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC).

Goal #1:

Emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities, and improve transition from school to work and school to post-secondary education.

Strategies:

- ~~Communicate with consumers, advocates, service providers, education authorities, disability service delivery system providers and Division staff to foster a cultural shift that emphasizes the value of employment.~~
- ~~Explore the utilization of social and Web-based media as a communication tool.~~
- ~~Include all Transition Students in special outreach efforts, i.e. camps, Transition Summit Leadership trainings.~~
- ~~Encourage participation of successful transition students in the referral and outreach activities of other students (peer support mechanism).~~
- Serve more Transition Students by developing referral mechanisms with secondary schools and post-secondary institutions.
- Comparison to states with similar population and demographics, and in accordance with the recommendations of the Needs Assessment.
- Identification of students that have fallen out of Vocational Rehabilitation programs.
- Creative marketing to schools and students.
- Continue Statewide "Transition Connect" Expansion Project.
- ~~Counselor phone calls with follow-up.~~
- Increased communication between Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Special Education Teachers and 504 Coordinators.
- Educating teachers and parents regarding the Vocational Rehabilitation process, programs and referral services.
- Vocational rehabilitation representatives to participate with parent/teacher Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) conferences.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by Transition Students in the Program Services of the Division. The Division's performance regarding increased enrollment in FFY 2012 will equal or exceed FFY 2011 performance levels.
- Increase competitive employment outcomes for Transition Students. The Division's performance regarding increased competitive employment outcomes in FFY 2012 will equal or exceed FFY 2011 performance levels.
- Increase post-secondary educational services for Transition Students. The Division's performance regarding increased post-secondary educational services in FFY 2012 will equal or exceed FFY 2011 performance levels.
- Consider Assistive Technology in relation to this goal.

Goal #2:

Extend outreach efforts toward diverse populations, specifically, eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities.

Strategies:

- Continue marketing efforts with Mental Health hospitals, Mental Health service providers, SSI and State Welfare.
- Partner with Mental Health service providers and Community Rehabilitation Training Centers (CTC's).
- Partner with Department of Health and Human Services, State commissions related to populations concerned with autism, developmental disabilities, cognitive and mental health disabilities.
- Partner with advocacy groups.
- Consider Assistive Technology in relation to this goal.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities. The Division's performance to increase enrollment by eligible individuals with autism, developmental, cognitive and mental health disabilities in FFY 2012 will equal or exceed FFY 2011 performance levels.
- Report indicators by region.

Goal #3:

Extend outreach efforts toward ethnically diverse populations, specifically minority populations with disabilities represented in Nevada's workforce.

Strategies:

- Recruit bilingual and/or bicultural staff.

- Increase marketing and participation efforts with ethnically diverse populations and media.
- Consider Assistive Technology in relation to this goal.

Indicators:

- Increase enrollment by minority populations representative of Nevada's minority workforce. The Division's performance regarding increased enrollment by minority populations in FFY 2012 will equal or exceed FFY 2011 performance levels.
- Collaborate with minority groups for program development and program referrals.

Goal #4:

Work together and share resources with state, private, non-profit agencies to leverage resources and coordinate benefit opportunities in order to maximize the overall employment outcomes.

Assist individuals to transition into work by the provision of quality employment outcomes, retention of competitive employment, and self-sufficiency through accessible and equitable services.

Strategies:

- Document dollars utilized as comparable benefits.
- Identify sources of benefits on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
- Identify federally matched dollars.
- Formalize third-party In Kind match.
- Strengthen relations to maximize matching fund opportunities.
- In-service opportunity in-house on matching funds and In Kind Funds.
- Work with youth with disabilities, the Nevada Department of Education, local education authorities, parent organizations and families to encourage early discussions with students about the expectations of employment and their skills, abilities, and talents that will empower them to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Support peer mentoring of people with disabilities that encourages employment and empowers individuals to risk leaving the benefits system.
- Support assistive technology services that enhance employability.
- Identify and support best practices that encourage high wage/career track employment.

Indicators:

- Document dollars captured in collaborative efforts and document that the training is held.
- The Division's performance regarding the numbers of individuals rehabilitated who achieve competitive employment in FFY 2011 will equal or exceed FFY 2010 performance levels.

GOAL #5:

Emphasize the employment potential of applicants and eligible persons receiving services and Supported Employment.

Strategies:

- Partner with other public and private State entities that provide Supported Employment.
- ~~Develop a brochure for Supported Employment~~
- Expand communication and training to staff, State Rehabilitation Council members and consumers on Supported Employment.
- ~~Consider Assistive Technology in relation to this goal.~~
- ~~Identify and support best practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment.~~

Indicators:

- Increase the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully, earning at least the federal minimum wage. The Division's performance regarding an increase in the number of supported employment consumers that close successfully in FFY 2012 will equal or exceed FFY 2011 performance levels.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jack Mayes asked Maureen Cole about some contracting issues that came up over the summer. Maureen replied this issue was problematic for the Division. She said State Law is very restrictive, when you contract with former or current State employees a time limit is imposed. There is a restriction as to how much money you can pay contractors. The pool of professionals is small. She mentioned the contract with Kevin Hull a past Rehabilitation Counselor who after retirement, runs a rehabilitation office and assists the Vocational Rehabilitation department meet the needs of clients in very rural areas. Counselors, psychologists, physicians, neurologists all factor into the business particularly in the Bureau of Disability Adjudication. She said it is difficult to find practicing physicians in good standing in the State that are willing to work for the fees provided. She continued; to some degree many of our contractors work through an employment service such as Manpower or Ageon which is a medical contractor. The state law you can only do that under certain circumstances. She said she hopes someone will suggest to the Legislature to take another look at the dollar and interject a little reality into it. She understands the repugnance of double dipping, individuals working for multiple employees simultaneously that is not appropriate. Contracting for the purposes of making sure the public has the necessary services with the Rehabilitation not double dipping, is appropriate.

Jack asked Maureen if she knew when the Rehabilitation budget presentation would be given to the Legislative committee. Maureen responded a schedule has not been given she would let the Council know when the Rehabilitation Division is scheduled.

Jack stated that one of his clients recommended having a process component. Said there were too many steps to becoming a Vocational Rehabilitation client with too much time between steps.

Maureen said the Division was interested in eliminating bottlenecks when assisting individuals.

Kevin Hull commented that the bottleneck is not always a problem with the Rehabilitation system but in the obtaining of documentation for making the individuals eligible especially when contacting other states.

Jack said the Vocational Rehabilitation Division is held up as the bad example of why we need to have matching funds. It is the advocates believing the state is not doing a good job at matching funds. Maureen responded it is not equitable when the state dollar is chopped, that aids to the elimination of the receiving for the 4 to 1 federal match funds. That is not an equitable reduction of the budget. If your actual intent as a legislator and executive body, is to reduce Vocational Rehabilitation by a million five, then do the math to see how many state dollars you need to get to that result.

Chris Syverson thanked everyone for being prepared for the meeting, all their hard work, and being patient with the process of creating the State Plan.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chris Syverson, Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.

Recorded By:



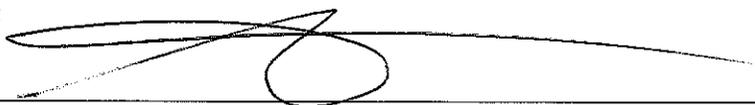
Captions Unlimited

Edited By:



Pamela June, Chief, ODEP

Approved By:



Robin Hall-Walker, Chair