

MINNESOTA SHARED VISION FOR YOUTH



SHARED VISION FOR YOUTH STATE TEAM MEETING

Wednesday, August 26, 2015

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Junior Achievement, Maplewood, MN

MEETING NOTES

Welcome and Introductions

The following team members and guests attended the meeting: Cate Smith Edlund (Humphrey Job Corps Center); Steve Vonderharr (MN Department of Human Services-Adolescent Services); Arielle Johnson and Hollis Emery (Conservation Corps); Michelle Kamenov (MN Department of Education – College and Career Readiness); Jayne Spain (MN Department of Education-Special Education); Julie Neitzel Carr and Lauren Ryan (MN Department of Health); Kate Tobin (The Link); Andrea Simonett (MN Department of Human Services-Office of Economic Opportunity); Jessica Espinosa (MN State Colleges and Universities-P-20 and College Readiness); Cammy Lehr (MN Alliance with Youth-GradMinnesota); Joe Timmons (University of MN-Institute on Community Integration); Deborah Leuchovius (PACER Center); Eva Scates-Winston (MN State Colleges and Universities-Office of the Chancellor); Kay Tracy, Larry Eisenstadt, and Lynn Douma (MN Department of Employment & Economic Development-Youth Development); Joani Werner (Social Security Administration); Mike Newman (MN Department of Employment & Economic Development-State Services for the Blind); Jenny Javitch (Big Brothers Big Sisters); Carrie Wasley (MN Department of Public Safety-Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee); Mayjoua Ly (MN Department of Transportation); Liz Guimont (Junior Achievement); Kari Denissen Cunnien (Ignite Afterschool); Alyssa Klein (MN Department of Employment and Economic Development-Vocational Rehabilitation Services)

Federal Youth at Risk of Homelessness Application

Steve Vonderharr has been overseeing a two-year planning grant that DHS received from the Department of Health and Human Services to prevent homelessness among youth who age out of foster care. A review of Minnesota data shows that about 20 percent of youth who age out of foster care become homeless within three years. In addition, youth who become homeless have been in an average of 10 different foster placements during their time in care, compared to an average of five placements for those who do not become homeless. Minnesota has now applied for an implementation grant to put strategies in place to address these findings. Seventeen applicants are competing for five grants; Minnesota has requested \$1.9 million over 3 years.

Steve also reminded the group that Minnesota now has state legislation allowing youth to remain in foster care up to age 21 if they choose and they can also continue to receive Medical Assistance during that period. Youth over 18 who are deemed mature enough by the court can use the funds that would have gone to a foster care provider on their behalf to pay for housing in other settings, such as a dorm or apartment – they are not required to live with a foster care provider.

Office of College and Career Readiness

Michelle Kamenov gave a brief overview of their work at the Department of Education. Their office oversees Career and Technical Education, MN Career Information System, Adult Basic Education, High School Initiatives (including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Alternative Learning Centers, online education, dual credit/enrollment options). Their work ties into the World's Best Workforce legislation, including the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) requirement. One key focus of the PLP is the expansion of experiential learning so every student has at least one meaningful experiential learning experience prior to graduation and also documenting these experiences. A recent inventory of Minnesota Career and Technical Education programs, equipment and services found that only 8 percent of students had work-based learning opportunities through these programs and only 2 percent participated in youth apprenticeship. Only 2 percent of students with disabilities had work-based learning opportunities. Michelle's team has been partnering with other units within MDE, including special education policy, and having conversations around common definitions and collaboration.

Financial Literacy Training

Liz Guimont led a brief tour of the Junior Achievement (JA) BizTown facility where youth in grades 4-6 come from all over the state for a one-day simulation exercise of running a town and the responsibilities and opportunities for businesses and consumers. JA offers financial literacy, college and career readiness, and entrepreneurship education to 161,000 K-12 students each school year. She gave a brief overview of the range of programs available, all of which address seven key content areas: financial literacy, business, citizenship, economics, entrepreneurship, ethics/character, and career development. The programs are delivered primarily in the classroom by teachers and volunteers from the community. JA is also embarking on a campaign to build a second facility in St. Paul to be able to reach more students with new and enhanced programs. Go to the [Junior Achievement website](#) for more information about their programs.

P-20 and College Readiness

Jessica Espinosa gave a summary of some key initiatives in the P-20 and College Readiness area at MN State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU). MNSCU is the state's open access post-secondary education system, accepting all students with a high school diploma or equivalent. Many students come to MNSCU institutions needing to take remedial courses (also called developmental education). MNSCU is working to engage school leaders around the topic of college readiness, and is promoting the idea of dual enrollment, where students earn college credit while still in high school. An Early and Middle-College initiative is focusing on students in alternative schools who aren't college ready to allow them to take developmental/remedial courses while still in high school, with wraparound support provided. The high school and college work together on what the course sequence will look like. Twenty-six high school/college partnerships will be implementing this initiative in the fall. MNSCU is bringing high school and college leadership together to find ways to increase the number of students in the "academic middle" who take advantage of the dual enrollment options available. MNSCU is also working to improve the outcomes of students in developmental education classes, increasing completion rates and reducing the time it takes for completion.

The month of October is College Knowledge month in Minnesota. One of the goals of this effort is to encourage underrepresented students to complete the college application process. Each participating school will have specific activities planned to promote college application and enrollment. During the last week of the month many MNSCU schools will waive their application fees. Volunteers are welcome and encouraged. The [Office of Higher Education website](#) has more information about this event.

Olmstead Plan

Jayne Spain gave an update on Minnesota's Olmstead Plan. The plan was developed as a result of a federal law suit in Georgia in 1999 and an Executive Order by Governor Dayton in January 2013 requiring eight of Minnesota's state agencies to work together on a plan to ensure the integration of people with disabilities in the most appropriate setting. The state agencies have been working together for the last several months to develop a plan acceptable to the judge overseeing Minnesota's settlement, by including more measurable goals and specific work plans to achieve the goals. The revised plan was submitted to the judge on August 10. More details will be provided to the team after the plan is approved. The [Minnesota Olmstead Plan website](#) contains more information about the plan.

GRADMinnesota

Cammy Lehr gave an update on GradMinnesota, an initiative hosted by the MN Department of Education, Office of the Governor, and Minnesota Alliance with Youth. The GradMinnesota strategic plan calls for increasing Minnesota's four-year graduation rate to 90 percent from the current 81.2 percent by 2020. Minnesota continues to have one of the worst achievement gaps in the country between white students and students of color, and major differences in graduation rates based on special needs and socio-economic factors as well. Key strategies to accomplish the identified goals include legislative advocacy, designing and implementing a communication plan, designing and compiling an electronic resource library for the dissemination of best practices, and maintaining and developing an alliance of entities working together to achieve and sustain the goals through collective impact. More information on GradMinnesota can be found on the [Minnesota Alliance with Youth website](#).

Minnesota Youth at Work Competitive Grants, Disability Employment Initiative/Partners for Youth, WIOA Young Adult Program

Kay Tracy distributed copies of a new DEED Workforce Development Resource Guide which provides a compact summary of Workforce Development Division programs and services. The guide is intended as an information source for businesses, community agencies and non-profit partners. Kay also reported that Minnesota Youth at Work Competitive Grants were awarded to 22 organizations, totaling \$3.18 million per year for SFY 2016-17. Forty-one proposals were submitted, requesting over \$14.7 million. Information on the Youth at Work grants can be found from the [DEED Youth Grant Funded Project webpage](#).

Lynn Douma updated the team on the progress of the Partners for Youth/Disability Employment Initiative (DEI), funded by U.S. Department of Labor to improve the transition outcomes for youth with disabilities who are served by the workforce system. The three-year grant ends on 9/30/15, and the three implementation sites have already exceeded the target of 360 youth served (378 youth served as of 6/30/15). Positive outcomes to date include: 81 percent have attained work readiness or education goals outlined in their individual service strategy; 33 percent have earned academic or service learning credit; 58 percent have remained in school or returned to school from dropout status; 31 percent have earned a high school diploma, GED, certificate or degree; 21 percent have entered post-secondary education, occupational training or apprenticeship; 38 percent have entered unsubsidized employment. The implementation sites have incorporated the key strategies used during the DEI project (integrated resource teams, Guideposts for Success, and partnerships and collaboration) into their broader youth programming. All three sites successfully competed for Youth at Work Competitive grants and are including these strategies in their funded projects. PACER Center is coordinating development of a white paper outlining lessons learned from the DEI project and this document will be shared with the SVY state team when it is completed. More information is available from the [DEI webpage](#).

Larry Eisenstadt provided an overview of key changes to youth eligibility under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), successor to Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Under WIOA, 75 percent of youth funds must be spent on out-of-school youth, whereas under WIA up to 70 percent of funds could be spent on in-school youth. The age range for eligibility under WIOA is now age 14-21 for in-school youth and 16-24 for out-of-school youth. New required program elements under WIOA include financial literacy training, entrepreneurial skills training, services that provide labor market and employment information in the local area, activities that help youth transition to post-secondary education and training, and education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. In addition, under WIOA, at least 20% of local WIOA Youth formula funds must be used for work experience activities such as summer jobs, pre-apprenticeship, on-the-job training, and internships. This is not expected to present a problem in Minnesota as our youth programs have traditionally placed a strong emphasis on work experience. Additional information is available from DEED's [WIOA Young Adult Program webpage](#).

Adolescent Health Coordinator and Safe Harbor Coordinator Update

Julie Neitzel Carr, Adolescent Health Coordinator, gave an update on the process of creating a statewide Adolescent Health Strategic Plan. Listening sessions have been held around the state and draft priorities and recommendations have been developed. Now Julie is collecting examples of specific practices and strategies to highlight what is already being done in the priority areas. The information collected will be incorporated into an online resource directory. Contact Julie for more information at julie.neitzelcarr@state.mn.us.

Lauren Ryan updated the team on the Safe Harbor Legislation which passed in 2011. The Safe Harbor Law treats youth under age 18 who engage in commercial sexual activity as victims rather than delinquents and increases the penalties for commercial sex abusers or purchasers. Under this law a No Wrong Door service model was established making services and resources available for sexually exploited youth. This model includes regional navigators, housing and shelter, comprehensive services, and training and protocol development for professionals working with exploited youth. For more information, visit the [Safe Harbor Minnesota webpage](#).

Minnesota Conservation Corps

Hollis Emery shared information about the Conservation Corps' Youth Outdoors program, a school-year program for St. Paul, suburban Ramsey County, and Minneapolis youth from households at or below 80% of the city's median income. The youth participate in hands-on conservation and neighborhood beautification projects after school and on Saturdays, about 12 hours per week. Within the last year the program has had a stronger emphasis on college and career readiness, as a result of partnerships with the University of Minnesota and Department of Natural Resources. More information about Youth Outdoors and the other Conservation Corps' programs is available from the [Conservation Corps website](#).

Legislative Changes Impacting Low-Income Youth

Eva Scates-Winston summarized legislative changes from the 2015 session that will impact low-income youth and families. Highlights include the following: tuition at MNSCU state colleges will remain frozen for the 2015-16 academic year and will decrease by one percent for 2016-17 academic year. The State Grant Program received an additional \$7 million for the biennium which will increase awards and number of students who can receive grants. Various enrollment support programs such as College Possible also received funding which will help increase access to postsecondary for underserved students.

Eva also encouraged team members to consider attending the CTE Works! Leading the Way conference scheduled for November 5 at the Sheraton West in Minnetonka. More information and registration is available online at the [CTE Works! webpage](#) .

Ignite Afterschool

Kari Denissen Cunnien introduced the team to the work of Ignite Afterschool, Minnesota's statewide afterschool network. There is a significant opportunity gap in access to quality afterschool programs. She presented data on the impacts of afterschool programs on youth, and showed the team *Believe It. Build It.*, Minnesota's Guide to Effective Afterschool Practices. This guidebook is a user-friendly document which includes "We Believe" statements, "Building Blocks" and "Continuous Program Improvement" elements. There will be a STEM addendum to the guide coming out next year. The guidebook is available free of charge from the [Ignite Afterschool website](#).

Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC)

Carrie Wasley distributed the JJAC 2014 Annual Report. This report is also available from the [JJAC website](#). Carrie also reported that reauthorization of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJCPA) is pending in Congress, and the appropriation for next fiscal year is unknown at this time. The House has proposed zeroing out funding for the federal juvenile justice programs. Federal funds have decreased by about 90 percent in the last decade due to reductions in youth crime. State funds for the Youth Intervention Program increased slightly during the last legislative session.

Institute for Community Integration

Joe Timmons announced that the Institute for Community Integration (ICI) at the University of Minnesota is celebrating its 30th anniversary this fall. The Check and Connect program is also celebrating its 25th anniversary with a national conference on the U of MN campus on October 7-8. For more information and to register, visit the [Check and Connect conference website](#). ICI is also supporting Department of Human Services efforts related to the Olmstead plan and person-centered planning/thinking, and has trained over 3,500 professionals on person-centered thinking. For more information about person-centered thinking/planning training contact Joe at timmm0119@umn.edu.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Alyssa Klein reported that VRS has been working on transition to WIOA, which places more emphasis on Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to in-school youth (ISY) with disabilities. VRS is required to spend at least 15 percent of federal funding on PETS for in-school youth. The VRS target for services to ISY is \$5.8 million per year, and current expenditures will have to increase by about \$1 million for ISY to meet this target.

State Services for the Blind

Mike Newman reported that State Services for the Blind has also formed a WIOA transition core team to address issues relating to the implementation of WIOA. A transition coordinator has been hired related to WIOA youth. SSB is using the Post-Secondary Resource Guide that was developed by MDE and MNSCU as a tool in working with students. This guide is available online from the [Normandale Community College Office for Students with Disabilities website](#) .

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Jenny Javitch reported that Big Brothers Big Sisters has created a College and Career Retention position to provide support to "Littles" who have graduated from high school and moved on to college and/or jobs.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Shared Vision for Youth state team will be held later in the fall and hosted by the Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center.