

## SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES COMMITTEE

April 12, 2017

2:30 P.M.

TST BOCES Board Room

**Present:** J. Matteson, D. Barr, C. Crisell, M. Gold, Khaki Wunderlich, TC3

**Excused:** A. Tunison, ACCES-Vocational Rehabilitation; B. Allen, Local 267 Plumbers & Steamfitters

**Staff:** J. Mattick, J. Luu

### Call to Order

Chair Matteson called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m. and introductions followed.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES – DECEMBER 21, 2016

The minutes of December 21, 2016 were accepted as submitted. It was noted the February meeting was an informal discussion because quorum wasn't present and minutes were not prepared.

### REPORT OUT ON 2016-2017 WORK PLAN - CONNECT ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO RESOURCES BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Ms. Crisell reported out on the technology that she and Jennifer Goodman from TST BOCES have trained all of the CSE Chairs on how to make assistive technology accessible in their buildings. All of the information is available online on the TST BOCES website. Ms. Wunderlich had also referred them to an individual at TC3 and Jennifer met with them to talk about what is happening in high schools and what technology wise students are being met with and the expectation of TC3. This was helpful discussion on how to help districts move away from some of the technology. For example, human voice for tests read when it might be something completely different. Ms. Crisell stated that all of the Ithaca schools and all of the South Seneca schools students have a Chromebook so everything is technology driven. It is more about getting more districts on board and do the teachers know how to help the students with those things. They started at the bare minimum and moved on to the more advanced things. Jennifer was also asked to create a continuum of where students can go next if they have mastered a skill. She was also asked her to create it by disability category, ie., if a student has autism, these items would be good options for them. Jennifer is working on this piece currently. There was also a discussion about funding and one of the struggles is insurance won't pay for technology unless it is a medical necessity. They discussed teaming up with local colleges and organizations such as FLIC to see what resources are potentially available. Chairs were also encouraged to sign up for Human Services List Serv that does the "Item of the Week" because it is very simple and it talks about things that aren't necessarily thought of as assistive technology.

Ms. Gold stated that if a student is eligible for OPWDD services or ACCESS VR they can get funded. Ms. Crisell stated that if the data shows that the technology is a viable piece then they can get funded by OPWDD and ACCESS VR before they go off to college.

Ms. Gold stated that ACCESS VR is well established in schools, but OPWDD is not and families are not getting those connections to start services earlier. Ms. Crisell stated that individuals with more severe disabilities are well connected and have the resources they need. The individuals who are in a resource room setting are not as well connected and those are the individuals who have the greatest need.

Ms. Mattick suggested that by September the group should identify what activities from the work plan need to be done annually. Mr. Barr stated that at the next Chairs meeting there will be updates on activities as well. Ms. Crisell stated that every student must take economics prior to graduation. She stated she would like to see Ms. Bradac go into each of those classes as a guest speaker to learn about the One-Stop Center and the services that are available to everyone, not just those individuals with disabilities. Mr. Barr stated that a field trip to the One Stop was hoped for this year, but was not successful.

## **REVIEW DRAFT 2017-2018 WORK PLAN**

### **INITIAL CONVERSATIONS RELATED TO NEW WORK PLAN GOAL – INCREASING THE NUMBER OF PAID WORK EXPERIENCES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Committee reviewed the work plan for 2017-2018. Two activities are planned, conduct outreach with local employers with open positions to gather data on if they are able to hire individuals with disabilities, would they do so; and identify and support multiple avenues for accessing job coaching services.

Ms. Crisell stated that both paid and unpaid experiences are important. Currently, unpaid experiences have been identified and this takes liability away from the business and places it on the schools. Mr. Barr stated that CDOS does not state whether it needs to be paid or unpaid. Ms. Gold stated she would like to see work based learning to extend beyond where youth currently are and expand to jobs that they can see doing as they get older. Ms. Mattick stated she sees a tiered approach. Her concern is if it's unpaid it equals "less than", if it's paid and subsidized it's "less than", if it's paid it's "real." Her concern is the employer's standards and how those change from when they have an individual who is being subsidized versus when they are paying the full wages. Young people have expectations of what it will be like when they get to a completely paid job that might not be realistic. Whenever possible it should be a completely employer paid experience to prove their worth and only use subsidized employment when absolutely necessary.

Ms. Gold stated that work based learning occurs during the school day or during the summer. Paid employment might occur after the school day. What role can the school play in that? Ms. Crisell stated that if the school were to contact that employer and tell them that if there are issues to contact them, the hours can count toward the CDOS credential. Work based learning for the credential must be overseen by the school.

### **FOCUS GROUPS W/EMPLOYERS REPORT OUT**

Ms. Mattick stated she isn't sure focus groups are the right approach. She knows that employers are fearful, but it isn't clear what they are fearful of. She does know that many fear ADA as it relates to accommodations and how will they terminate employment if the individual doesn't work out. She stated that to ask a group of employers to reveal their concerns among one another may change their behavior. She believes a better approach would be to ask them anonymously or one-on-one with someone they trust. A neutral party needs to be identified that can help to facilitate this. Once the fears are identified the best parties to help dispel those fears is businesses that hire individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Gold stated she can go back to the employment staff at Challenge and see why some employers work with Challenge and some don't.

Ms. Crisell stated using a Google or Survey Monkey survey can be used to get anonymous feedback from businesses.

### **CSE CHAIRS – JOB COACHING COSAR**

Mr. Barr stated the job coaching cosar is a work in progress and something needs to be built up to get buy-in and sustainability is also an issue.

### **OPWDD – MARTY GOLD**

Ms. Gold stated that people know about OPWDD but referral and eligibility doesn't occur timely enough unless the individual has a severe disability. OPWDD does not have staff providing training. Youth need to be referred and connected earlier.

### **STRETCHING SYEP WAGES – 50% REIMBURSEMENT**

Ms. Mattick contacted the State asking if it was possible to do 50% reimbursement with employers. She has not received an answer. This is not something that would be possible this summer but certainly next summer if it's an option. This would help with increasing buy-in with employers.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m. The June meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. in the Board room located in the Dexheimer Administration building at TST BOCES.