

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RI
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (YDC)
March 28, 2008**

Minutes

Members Present: Brandon Melton, Chair, Sharon Moylan, Sandra Powell, Martin Trueb, Commissioner Jack Warner

Members Absent: Robert Paniccia, Lorna Ricci

Staff Present: Michael Koback, David Francis, Nancy Olson

Others Present: John O'Hare, Lori Norris, Susan Bowler, Christine Grieco, Dottie Miller, Nick Ucci, Ann Walsh, Maureen Palumbo

Chair Brandon Melton called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed everyone. He asked those in attendance for introductions.

Minutes of 2/21/08 Youth Development Committee meeting

Chair Melton asked for a review of the meeting minutes of the 2/21/08 Governor's Workforce Board Youth Development Committee (GWBRI – YDC). He then asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Vote: S. Moylan motioned to approve the minutes of the GWBRI-YDC meeting as presented. M. Trueb seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; the motion passed.

Apprenticeship Update-Coffey Consulting, LLC- Statement of Work

C. Grieco reported on the statement of work for Coffey Consulting, LLC, the consulting firm selected to work on the restructuring of the Apprenticeship Program. She noted their vast experience with apprenticeship programs nationally. The statement of work for Coffey Consulting is a handout in the meeting packets.

C. Grieco provided an overview of the key components of the proposal which includes an environmental scan and a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) of RI's current apprenticeship model. The consultants will review the program to determine a baseline, and identify changes and improvements based on the best practices of apprenticeship programs in other states.

S. Powell emphasized the importance of connecting the Apprenticeship Program to the Industry Partnerships as well as the strategic initiatives undertaken by the GWB.

C. Grieco concurred that the industry partners are a valuable resource in the restructuring of the apprenticeship program. She noted that other key goals include a review of best practices of other states, a revamp of the technology (or lack of) in the current apprenticeship program and a recommendation for compliance in the monitoring of the apprenticeship program.

C. Grieco mentioned a meeting scheduled for 10:00 a.m. to review the apprenticeship steering committee member list. This list will be provided to the consultants to develop a stakeholder taskforce and to facilitate designated focus groups. She reported that the consultants will recommend a marketing strategy for the expanded and restructured Apprenticeship Program.

M. Koback pointed out that page 10 of Coffey's statement of work addresses the task of aligning the Apprenticeship Program with the Industry Partnerships. He noted that the approaches of the consultant's marketing plan are listed on page 10 and that a major focus is to bring youth and school guidance counselors into the apprenticeship program, along with the career and tech centers. He noted that other innovative approaches would include a pre-apprenticeship program and school-to-apprenticeship programs.

M. Trueb noted it is critical to look at models outside of the United States to assist in the integration of academic careers into the trade curriculum, incorporating this as part of the school process. This would provide an opportunity for leverage in the school system aiming to keep youth interested as well as ensuring they will get the training they need. This would also be a source of encouragement in keeping the youth engaged.

J. Warner stated he wanted to build on a point that M. Trueb raised earlier in the meeting. He mentioned there are some experiences that are credit worthy both at the secondary and post secondary level, depending on the fields that are chosen. He indicated that many post secondary certificates and associate degrees could be developed around the core combination of skill building, academic skill building and skill building relating to the trade in question. He indicated that certificates can be packaged very quickly, if given the authority, without having to go through a lengthy approval process.

A general discussion followed on LPN and RN training and licensing and how this could tie into the apprenticeship program.

Youth Workforce Program 2008 RFP Status Report

B. Melton turned the meeting over to L. Norris for an update on the RFP process. L. Norris indicated the report information includes summer programming. L. Norris noted the RFP process is complete but she does not yet have the information on the higher risk categories that are generally presented since contract negotiations are still underway. She hopes to be able to present the data about at-risk youth at the next meeting.

L. Norris referred to the hand-out in the meeting packet entitled: "Rhode Island's Youth Workforce System 2008-2009 Program Year Deliverables". She noted that the vendors italicized on the list are the vendors with WIA contracts. Any organization who had multiple components are grouped together to get an idea of how many vendors applied as opposed to programming. The handout provides information on where the impact and services occur in RI geographically. The 2nd page lists a key that indicates the services to be delivered by the organizations as well as the numbers to be served. Collectively there are 31 vendors who will be providing 42 different programs which is an increase from last year. L. Norris also noted the addition of 3 youth centers bringing the total to 12.

L. Norris noted the data leads to the subtotal of 3454 as the number of youth served which is a very solid number. She reminded committee members of the goal of serving 3500 youth this year. She noted that the Institute for Labor Studies breaks out a separate number of 560 youth they intend to serve. She explained that the reason for the separation of this number is due to a possible duplicity of youth services and that she did not want to misrepresent the numbers. In addition to this, she separated the carry-in numbers for youth served through the job development funds for the same reason. In summary, if you use the total youth served within the system, the number is approaching 5000. She explained that as we continue to review the data from quarter 1 and quarter 2, that we will better understand the outcomes. She acknowledged her caution with the numbers in general, but indicated she wanted to provide the most realistic snapshot of the year ahead to committee members.

S. Bowler was complimentary of the process and noted the inclusiveness. She also offered her opinion that the numbers are understated and do not reflect the connections established that are generating opportunities for youth. She emphasized the importance of linking the youth system with CCRI and the apprenticeship model. She also inquired if there would be a way to structure a clinical apprenticeship experience for youth after the completion of their academic course work.

L. Norris mentioned the tremendous progress of the youth initiative which began in July of 2007. She acknowledged the work accomplished in establishing a variety of partnerships, philosophies and approaches as well as connecting these components to the core competencies. She noted that C. Ribeiro and M. Palumbo are continuing to frame up the work of this all- youth agenda by encompassing their ideas and experience to add value to youth programs. Ideas include developing summer programming in the youth centers not only by increasing the number of opportunities available but by incorporating an educational component to these programs as well as occupational skills training. M. Palumbo has suggested the possibility of instituting on the job training models for youth.

J. O'Hare noted that the accomplishments achieved have not been done with difficulty. He stated that the model set up by the GWB allows providers to participate within their area of expertise. He did mention a few challenges including revising the data for the case management system, creating a system to link every job opportunity within the state (and including school systems) and the continual effort to align resources which will result in generating more opportunity. J. O'Hare emphasized that with the linkages and funding leveraging that has occurred within the youth system, he does not foresee coming back to the board for future funding requests.

D. Miller indicated that both LWIB's are pleased with the expansion and quality of programming for youth services. She reported that part of the Industry Skills Development Initiative requires the providers identify the opportunities available for youth. She noted the important strategic approach of the youth system and the Industry Skill Development Initiative.

Updates: Lori Norris

Youth Centers- Management Evaluation Team

L. Norris reported on the processes in place to address the need to manage the vendors. The first is that C. Ribeiro has scheduled a day long session to meet with

vendors to discuss the changes in the new youth system as well as provide information on such topics as data collection, expectations and other related vendor issues.

L. Norris reported that the second piece is the recruitment of a statewide manager to manage the 12 youth centers. She noted that D. Miller and B. Ricci have agreed to jointly fund this position which will ensure that there is equity and access to all services as well as consistency in the programs. The manager will also work to ensure the quality of the data entry and case management systems providing accurate and timely quarterly reports. It will be the manager's role to ensure through assessment, that appropriate and consistent services and referrals exist within the system.

L. Norris introduced Maureen Palumbo who will be assisting with youth services programs. She noted that M. Palumbo is a long time employee of DLT with prior experience in the Employer Service unit as well as with on the job training programs. She has experience with outreach and marketing thus her first initial work assignment is providing outreach to the recreation centers.

L. Norris briefly mentioned the progress made with the youth portal and that 11 youth have viewed the portal and indicated an opinion. They will now be looking for a larger sample size. Once the youth portal is operational, the department's role in hosting a job bank on it's own versus linking into other businesses will be determined. This will determine the future direction of the youth portal.

B. Melton inquired about the number of proposals received and if the funding requests were still in process. L. Norris responded that there were 73 proposals in total and that over the past week, the contract negotiations were concluded.

B. Melton indicated he would like to see how the monies were distributed to the different agencies.

Youth Provider Professional Development Initiative

L. Norris reported on the professional development training which began this past October. She presented a Statewide Training Plan handout which lists the training offered from October 2007- June 2008. She indicated the importance of the training in assisting organizations in the process of learning about each other regarding core competencies, alignment and avoiding duplication of services. She noted that the April 9th Youth Provider Resource Fair came about from the review of evaluations from organizations from previous trainings. A copy of an evaluation questionnaire was provided in the meeting packet as an example.

L. Norris reported that after the last training session in June, an RFP will be issued to bring in an evaluator who will analyze the training data, hold discussions with vendors and youth served and provide a comprehensive report on this past year's training.

B. Melton suggested an idea for a future session could include sharing best practices within the state which would address part of the quality issue previously discussed.

Other Business

L. Norris provided a brief update on linkages with the educational system and noted she participated with the Smithfield School committee to review portfolios for proficiency based graduation requirements.

J. Warner discussed briefly the RI Department of Education's (RIDE) 9-12 grade standards on graduation achievement which indicates if they will be college ready.

John O'Hare reported that Congress may release an economic stimulus package which includes a major youth summer job component. He mentioned this package may be released late. He noted that due to the large number of vendors associated with the youth system, we are in a good position to add a summer component into the vendor contracts.

S. Powell asked committee members and staff to consider codifying the process and progress surrounding the youth system. She noted that in general we do not codify the work we are doing, but we must write about it and market it in such a way that shows the ultimate value. For long range purposes we must work to identify the impact of all of our work on RI's economy. This can be accomplished in many ways, but one way is to consider the evaluations and outcomes associated with programs and to consider the ultimate outcomes not always measured in employment terms. Equally important we must add an evaluation piece to incorporate progress and identify more specifically the linkages and connections we are making by serving more than 3200 youth.

A discussion followed on the ability to generate solutions to problems in a visible, directed way in order to provide examples and learning opportunities. It was discussed that the next important step is considering how to connect the opportunities available.

M. Koback acknowledged that due to the current budget crisis, programs are scrutinized and resources are diminishing. He agreed that the analysis of the work accomplished with GWB initiatives is the piece that is missing. He concurred that the message to convey is the impact of the programs.

B. Melton suggested that this topic be discussed further at the next Youth Development Committee meeting. He also suggested there may be some value in inviting one of the vendors to a future meeting to further discuss this evaluation piece.

With no further business to discuss, Chair Melton asked for a motion to adjourn.

Vote: S. Moylan motioned to adjourn the meeting of GWBRI-YDC. M. Trueb seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mooney