



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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Transition and Education Committee Meeting Minutes for October 13, 2022 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

Jeanette Alexander (P)
Lynn Heitz (NP)

Julia Grant Barol (P)
Paul Fogle (NP)

Andrew Pennington (P)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present: Cheryl Novak, Kim Robinson, Melissa Wert-Thrush, Carla Hill, Dawn Sokol, Marci Katona, Tracie Maille, James Whitonis, Lee Ann Stewart, Ralph Roach, Hillary Hubbell, Kaitlin Salvati, Mara Wolfe

PaRC Staff Present: Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Jeanette Alexander called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM after quorum was established.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol for approval of the agenda and past meeting minutes. Mr. Andrew Pennington seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

Review and Discussion of Transition Customer Satisfaction Surveys and Act 26 Reports

Survey Return Rate

Act 26 Data Regarding Blind and Visual Services for Students

- Mr. Ralph Roach explained the Customer Satisfaction Surveys were converted from

a mailing system to an electronic system in 2013 in conjunction with Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). Currently, surveys are generated electronically by CWDS and sent to OVR customers that are receiving services through Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS), Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS), and Transition Services on a monthly basis. Hiram G Andrews Center (HGAC) conducts their own survey process with their students. Surveys are categorized by the different stages of job coaching or supported employment a customer has received such as those who are in Status 28 defined as closed / not rehabilitated and Status 26 customers defined as an individual who has had successful employment for 1 month, 6 months, and 12 months after successful employment. Front end of this process is handled by Deloitte and CWDS. Survey results are compiled monthly by the System and Operations Team. Approximately one-thousand Transition Services surveys are sent out each month and OVR is not currently receiving any responses because surveys are going to SPAM folders. CWDS and Deloitte are continuing to work on resolving this issue. Transition surveys sent out for September 2022 did not receive any responses. Response rates for all categories is between two and four percent.

- Ms. Jeanette Alexander inquired if there was any thought to have students take the survey while receiving services with staff present.
- Mr. Andrew Pennington inquired if the adult surveys were sent the same way as the Transition surveys and if customers are given information about surveys during intake.
- Mr. Roach stated that they will take that suggestion under advisement. There was a difference in the way the adult and transition surveys were sent out.
- Ms. Kim Robinson reported that currently transition surveys are only sent to students receiving VR services and not potentially eligible students. Different paper surveys are given to students during the provider agreement process but are not tallied. Recognized that students do better when filling out surveys with staff present to assist. The Professional Connections service has a survey included within the provider agreement which has received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Surveys collected through provider agreements could be shared in the future with the Council members.
- Mr. Pennington inquired if the surveys are accessible and easy to understand.
- Mr. Roach reported that the surveys are written at about an 8th grade reading level and those with a cognitive disability may struggle to answer the questions. Deloitte is under contract to deliver readable fully accessible documents including the surveys.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart explained that Temple University assisted with the development of the surveys as part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) process about six years ago. Transition surveys were developed about four years ago. OVR understands that the survey process needs to be redeveloped.

OVR Updates Recruitment and Retention Workgroup

**Staffing / Rapid Response Implementation / Outreach Efforts
Youth Ambassador Program / Transition Navigator
Early Reach Workgroup**

- OVR continues to work in collaboration with Human Resources with retention and hiring efforts. Recently expanded Measurable Expandable Trainings and have seen improvements in the number of applications received for VR counseling positions.
- Ms. Robinson reported they have hired their first Youth Ambassador in the Erie area. They have identified projects in conjunction with the Erie District Office to develop curriculum, job shadowing, interviews, and public speaking skills. Deliverables for the Early Reach Workgroup include working on factors and standards with internal staff, update of the Evidence Resource Center (ERC) Manual, review and updates of training for staff entitled "First Hundred Days of ERC", and updates to other goals, guidance, and presentations.

Updates from Bureau of Special Education

- Ms. Alexander reported the Bureau of Special Education continues to focus on the Attract, Prepare, Retain Initiative which include evening Zoom meetings to assist with retention levels. State steering committee is collaborating with universities in looking at the certification process. Act 55, focusing on disability curriculum and awareness, includes an early initiative to focus on an inclusion resource tool that focuses on equity of VR in the school setting.

Adjourn

MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol to adjourn. Mr. Andrew Pennington seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.