



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

11:30 a.m.

Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School

115 Amesbury Line Road

Haverhill, MA 01830

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cal Williams, Megan Shea, Sr. Gwynette Proctor, Brad Howell, Vinny Ouellette, Melissa Hogan, Tom Cuddy, Sharon Marshall, Steve O'Brien, Linda Piergeorge, Ed Warnshuis

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Janet Allison, Gina Bozek, Tom Casey, Tom Cuddy, Ed Fitzgerald, Erin Kelly, Jeff Marcoux, Cindy Mejia, Erin Kelly, Janet Allison, Bob Mazzone, Fred Shaheen, Joy Sabolevski, Dorothy Smith, Joanne Sullivan

GUESTS PRESENT:

Amy Weatherbee, Tina Bradshaw, Tim Connors, Superintendent Karen Sarkisian

STAFF PRESENT:

Chris Shannon, Mary Kivell

I. Approval of Minutes

Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. and introductions ensued. Mr. Williams thanked Superintendent Karen Sarkisian and Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School for hosting today's meeting and asked her to say a few words.

Supt. Sarkisian said that she is very pleased to report that 100% of the seniors at Whittier have passed the MCAS. She welcomed everyone to the school and

said that students had done the build out for the dining area and room we are meeting in and said she is proud of their work.

Cal Williams then said the first order of business is the minutes of the April 18, 2007 Youth Council meeting.

Megan Shea made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2007 Youth Council meeting as submitted. Steve O'Brien seconded the motion and motion passed.

II. WIA Youth Updates

a. CAI Program Extension

Amy Weatherbee said that in the next months we will be adding programming which we did at the last meeting. She said that last month we reviewed and made a recommendation on CAI to de-obligate \$5 - \$6K in funding due to enrollment issues and that has been negotiated.

b. ISY Program Contracting

Amy said that last month the Youth Council made their recommendations on ISY Programs which were brought to the Planning Committee who approved the Youth Council's recommendations. Amy said that the contracts have been signed and executed this week. One program was a drop out prevention tied to electronics and the other a clinical medical education program tied to drop out prevention from LARE working with Lawrence High School.

c. OSY Recontracting Status

Amy Weatherbee explained the performance of the LARE OSY Education and CNA/CCHA noting that 17 students have completed the Red Cross CNA/CCHA training and 13 have obtained Vital Sign Certification and Alzheimer's Certification. She also said that 17 have obtained ARC C.N.A. Certification and 12 have obtained their state C.N.A. License. She is recommending re-funding for a second year of service with no changes in the program and a 5% contracting leeway to account for increases in minimum wage for subsidized employment.

The second program is the LARE OSY Education and Medical Assisting Program in which 7 students took the NHA exam for certification. She is recommending this program for re-funding with no changes and a 5% contracting leeway as above.

The third program is the LARE OSY Education and Medical Billing and Coding Program in which 2 students have taken National Exams (Billing and Coding Specialist) with the next test scheduled in June in the evening for employed youth customers. Amy recommends re-funding for a second year of service with no changes to the program and the same 5% contracting leeway.

Motion by Ed Warnshuis seconded by Steve O'Brien to approve the recommendations for recontracting for the LARE Education and CAN/CCHA, LARE Education and Medical Assisting, and LARE Education and Medical Billing and Coding programs as presented. Motion passed.

Amy then reported that the last two programs were Notre Dame OSY ESOL and CHHA/C.N.A. and LARE OSY Education and Electronics Program and that she had provided performance information by way of an update but would delay review until the June meeting because Notre Dame is in the final two weeks of clinical and the LARE program participants are completing their internships.

Superintendent Karen Sarkisian asked if we could know who the employers are at the June meeting and Brad Howell asked for demographics on who we are serving.

d. Reallocation of FY'07 Supportive Services/Needs Related Payments

Amy said that by way of an emergency vote Arthur Chilingirian, DTD Executive Director, is requesting a reallocation of \$10,000 from the Title I WIA Youth Supportive Service line item to the Title I WIA Youth Needs Related Payments line item based on the needs of the customers.

Motion by Steve O'Brien seconded by Sr. Gwynette Proctor to approve the reallocation of the FY'07 Supportive Services/Needs Related Payments in the amount of \$10,000 as presented. Motion passed.

Chris Shannon asked about the possibility of a pilot program and Amy said that right now she is looking at the budget allocation for next year recognizing that we need enough money to fund current programs and are working across fiscal years. She said that she would have a better idea in June. Brad Howell asked how a pilot program fits into priorities. Chris said that this came up at the last meeting where folks asked about creating more male centered out of Lawrence programs and whether there may be some money left to work with the schools to foster that sort of thing and bring new players to the table. Amy said that we can articulate in the Plan where we have those gaps.

III Summer Jobs Update

a. ValleyWorks Career Center

i. Mayors' Summer Jobs Initiative

Chris Shannon then asked Megan Shea, ValleyWorks Youth Program Director, to give an overview of the Summer Jobs programs. Megan began stating that the Mayors' Summer Jobs Initiative is focused on the using the Mayors' leverage to access private sector summer jobs for 18-24 year olds. The area Mayors all signed a letter and a job fair was held in Haverhill and Lawrence. Ms. Shea said

that we are now taking the jobs on the road and have 30 in Lawrence and 60 in Haverhill. Participating companies include Verizon, Mass Commuter Sales and a Newburyport food service company among others. She reported that we also got a lot of positive feedback from the companies who were impressed with the kids.

ii. YouthWorks

Megan said that the YouthWorks grant went in and parents have already been calling. This grant focuses on placing younger youth in subsidized employer and allocating 25% to older more at risk youth. Megan said that we would like to have referrals from the schools this year and want to try tying the jobs to summer school as an incentive. She said that they are currently interviewing summer jobs coaches and said that to be eligible the youth must be eligible for free lunch. They are planning for the first week to be a boot camp during the last week in June. Students will have 7 weeks of employment (4 days a week with the fifth day attending workshops on work readiness.) We received more money this year and there is a 55/35 split for Lawrence/Haverhill with 10% allocated for Methuen/Salisbury.

Discussion followed on the idea of the boot camp and bringing in the private sector to offer workshops. Chris Shannon said that the kids need to know that they can lose this job because of poor performance.

b. EOPS Grant Update

Chris Shannon said that we have applied to the Executive Office of Public Safety, thanks to help from Amy Weatherbee, for a grant which will place 30 youth in subsidized employment in the Greater Lawrence area. We are partnering with GLEC and DYS. Amy said that we have requested \$62,000 and that the grant will mirror the Youth Works grant. We also added some Joey Fournier services in this grant. Chris Shannon said that this will enhance other initiatives we have in place.

IV. Open Meeting Law Summary

Amy Weatherbee said that some of the Youth Council members had some questions on the Open Meeting Law and how it applies to this committee. It was agreed to push this discussion off to the June meeting.

V. Annual Plan – Youth Priorities and Programming Discussion

Chris Shannon then said that every year we are required to provide to the state our priorities for youth in the youth section of the Annual Plan. She proceeded to give a brief overview of the priorities identified to date such as identified in the P-21 initiative, serve at risk youth, better connections and streamlining of services, more training for males, encouraging females to STEM, creating training for private industry needs in critical and emerging industries, and equitable resources across the region.

Brad Howell said that there is a long way to go in networking and better connections and wondered if we should make that a priority.

Chris said that we have worked to make those connections but we lost six superintendents and when folks leave positions, networks fall apart. She said that this is a point well taken and perhaps we need to develop more formalized MOU's. She noted that it is often difficult to create an MOU when there is no money involved. She said that she could work on this with Amy and bring it to a meeting in the fall. Amy said that there are other partnerships and meetings happening. We need to make a strategic plan of what is happening in each group, perhaps having a quarterly joint meeting for more understanding of what other agencies are doing.

To that end, Chris Shannon said that we have added Gina Bozek, Dottie Smith, and Ed Fitzgerald to the Youth Council for their insight and to look at efforts to streamline services without undermining anyone.

Brad Howell said that we need to identify gaps across the board, particularly for people with disabilities, and design a model to fit funding and community needs without always reacting to funding.

Chris said that it is an interesting point that instead of responding to funding to be able to consider funding what we want to do. She said that often we do a lot of work for very little money and she would recommend putting this on the agenda for discussion perhaps at the December meeting.

Amy said that it would be nice to plan with other agencies and not worry about money next year. She said that we could perhaps spend some energy to discover, what is in Salisbury, for example.

Tina Bradshaw raised the issue of youth participation and Chris said that we do have a youth member. She also said that since we are meeting at Job Corps in July, perhaps we could have Job Corps youth at the table. Today we have students from Whittier showcasing their skills for us and in November Notre Dame will be hosting our meeting. Chris said that taking the Youth Council on the road and meeting providers is a way to involve youth.

Chris said that she would work on a draft of Youth Council priorities for the Council to review.

Cal Williams told the Youth Council members that the Workforce Investment Board will be meeting on June 5th and they are welcome and encouraged to attend.

VI. Connecting Activities FY'08 Program Update

Chris then reported on Connecting Activities saying that the House of Representatives didn't include the \$3M line item increase. This year we received \$180,000 and worked with eleven schools. Without the \$3M funding our allocation for the region will revert to \$75,000. Chris said that we could look at this in two ways. First, Senator Hart put the \$3M back in the state budget and we can encourage our state senators to sign on in support of this. Secondly, we can lobby for the Merrimack Valley to receive more funding from the \$4M allocation. We are tired of the Merrimack Valley receiving the lowest allocation given the statistics. This money is slated for drop-out prevention and recovery. She encouraged Youth Council members to lobby for this.

Chris then said that we want to work with the five districts through nine programs. They are Amesbury, Haverhill, Methuen, Lawrence and Whittier. If we are level funded, we will work with Haverhill, Methuen and Lawrence.

Chris Shannon also reported that Whittier participated in a Lean Manufacturing Training for teachers. Thanks to teacher Chris Kelly, teachers of different persuasions at Whittier participated in the training. This is a \$4,000 training that is offered free of charge. Chris said that ValleyWorks Career Center is hosting another session from 10 – 2:30 with lunch and travel reimbursement and encouraged participation.

Sr. Gwynette suggested adding a section on advocacy to the Annual Plan and suggested having an e-mail ready to go. Cal also suggested sending an e-mail to the WIB to involve the private sector.

Tina Bradshaw then told the Council that Job Corps is in jeopardy of a reduction in funding due to empty female beds. She encouraged anyone who knows a female between 16-24 years old who might have interest to apply.

VII. Adjournment

Having no further business Megan Shea complimented the staff and students at Whittier for the excellent luncheon and made a motion to adjourn seconded by Steve O'Brien. Motion passed.

The next meeting of the Youth Council will be held on June 20, 2007 at the MVWIB.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell
Recorder