



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jaime Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Employer and Engagement Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2023
11:30am – 12:30pm
1525 Bull Lea Rd.
Lexington, KY 40511
Meeting ID: 896 9583 4547

Members Present: Merry Reid Sheffer, Michael Rimer, Rebecca Wilson, Todd Coffey and Zach Morgan

Members Absent: Jessica Beaven, Cora McNabb, Dawn Gardner and Dina Klimkina.

Staff Present: Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard, KYOVR Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Administrative Assistant, Pepper Caudill, KYOVR Employer Services Branch Manager, Deana Wilson-Kimble

Staff Absent: KYOVR Assistant Director Department of Workforce Development, Kristen Beach

Public Present: None

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

KYOVR Administrator, Nanci Howard, welcomed those in attendance to the Employer Education and Engagement subcommittee meeting. Nanci Howard introduced Pepper Caudill as the new Administrative Assistant to the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and briefly went over the agenda with the attendees.

Chair Report:

Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer, presented motion to approve minutes from 02/14/23 meeting and this was seconded by Zach Morgan. All members were in favor and the motion passed unanimously. Merry Reid Sheffer opened the agenda and began discussion by sharing her “Chairs’ Meeting” updates with the subcommittee. She stated the chairs of the subcommittees have met once to provide updates to each other with the potential to collaborate with other subcommittees. She indicated the following:

- Advocacy & Education Subcommittee would like to; introduce and distribute a power point brochure for conferences for Employment First that explains the program and its benefits and are seeking collaborations around transportation initiatives.
- Transition Subcommittee would like to; reduce existing transition toolkit to a single page, starting a Facebook page for local/state resources available as part of

Employment First, data collection of students already transitioned to work and what they may still need. Hoping to make funding structures less intimidating for job candidates to access.

- Provider Capacity Subcommittee would like to; review barriers of prioritization of Employment First specifically focusing on intellectual and developmental disabilities, IPS and visual and hearing impairments and prioritizing transition services.
- Employer and Engagement Subcommittee would like to launch a Lunch & Learn Series to educate and engage employers.

Merry Reid Sheffer went on to present other points of interest that were discussed at the Chair's Meeting which are explained over the next several lines.

- Amanda Owen, Chair of the Advocacy and Education Chair, spoke about the Owensboro Coalition Collaboration and their similar work in this ideal. She offered to share the information with this subcommittee to assist them in getting started and Merry Reid Sheffer stated that she would in turn share that information with this subcommittee before the next meeting, if possible.
- There was a "Disability 101" Lunch & Learn previously offered by another group that can be reviewed.
- Chair of the Council, Katie Whaley, shared in the Chair's meeting, her experience with WIPA and this could be a good topic of interest for employers.
- Provider Capacity Chair, Jeff White, provided information on application for a tax write off at the Chair's meeting.

Chair of the Employer Education and Engagement subcommittee, Merry Reid Sheffer, opened the floor up for further comment or questions. No discussion.

Subcommittee Discussion:

Subcommittee member, Todd Coffey, requested the Chairs' Meeting notes from Nanci Howard and she indicated that she would gather and distribute those to the subcommittee members at her earliest convenience. He questioned whether Employment First resources could be added to a website so that employers could access all the herein mentioned information more conveniently. There was discussion between Mr. Coffey and Chair, Merry Reid Sheffer regarding this. It was determined that the chair would ask this question at the next Chair's meeting in April. KYOVR Administrator, Nanci Howard, mentioned there is a space on the KYOVR website where they could add this information, if they chose to. Todd Coffey explained he envisions a single website to accommodate relevant information into a single space to create ease on the employer's side to access all information. The chair asked Mrs. Howard on whether Employment First had developed a website if it was a part of OVR. Mrs. Howard confirmed Employment First has a section created which is housed under the KYOVR website. Rebecca Wilson provided her support for the idea. Deana Wilson-Kimble verbally shared information about a free Google-Business page option as a solution to the website matter. She explained that she agrees with the idea as well. Michael Rimer expressed his support for the idea and stated he wants to present this idea to the Council. Merry Reid Sheffer made mention of a "Link-Tree" and suggested bringing that or the Goggle Business Page to the Employment First Council is interested in collaborating to create a shared resource page. Rebecca Wilson made mention of TikTok and social media platforms having an impact on sharing information with younger generations. Merry Reid Sheffer mentioned that subcommittees could collaborate to create a social media campaign and respectively share through their social media outlets. Deana Wilson-Kimble was in support of the social media platform idea. Michael Rimer stated that LinkedIn is a good platform to share resources. There was further discussion between subcommittee members regarding social media platforms, campaigns and how they could be used to distribute First Employment resources to the public. Merry Reid Sheffer stated that she would take these ideas to the Council and present them

for further thoughts.

Todd Coffey spoke about a “Lane Report” and its value to the business community. He then turned the conversation back to the website idea and that matter was further discussed. Mr. Coffey asked Nanci Howard to provide a historical background of other state’s Employment First websites. Nanci provided her support with the subcommittee moving forward in their pursuit of a website and provided guidance regarding the subcommittee bringing forward an action item, to bring this matter to the Employment First Council. **Merry Reid Sheffer made motion to present the idea of a resources page/website to the Council as an action item. Todd Coffey provided a second and the motion passed unanimously.**

Merry Reid Sheffer began discussions regarding the Lunch & Learn Series and asked subcommittee members to share any progress or additional thoughts on the matter. There was discussion amongst subcommittee members regarding this matter.

Todd Coffey brought forward his experience with Louisville Coalition having monthly meetings with employers/providers and suggested that this could be something in addition to the Lunch & Learn Series, that this subcommittee could offer. He provided further discussion on this matter and Deana Wilson-Kimble was in support of this idea. Merry Reid Sheffer asked for clarification and posed the question if this would be considered a Networking Series or if the Coalitions would want to present during the Lunch & Learn Series. Michael Rimer began discussing the strategic partnerships and partnering with local Chambers to promote the Lunch & Learn Series to the public. Zach Morgan expressed his support to partnering with the Chambers. There was further discussion amongst subcommittee members regarding networking and sharing information with the public. Todd Coffey mentioned he would like the Subcommittee to have a meeting with the Coalition(s) prior to launching the Lunch & Learn Series, to discuss replication of the coalition models and other members of the Subcommittee were in support of this idea. There was discussion amongst the subcommittee of the value in replicating this model across the state of KY. There was further discussion of this idea and facilitating it to partner with other states.

Merry Reid Sheffer shifted discussion back to Lunch & Learn Series and guided the discussion using her notes from the 02/14/23 meeting. Michael Rimer mentioned that he would like to include Vanessa S. from his internal team into the next meeting, to provide information regarding their internal Accommodations process. There was further discussion amongst the subcommittee regarding their pitch(es)/promotion(s) for the Lunch & Learn Series. Rebecca Wilson mentioned that she would be reaching out to an internal contact named Emily James, for further information regarding WIPA. Deana Wilson-Kimble stated she would reach out to her internal contact Cheryl Martinez for further information/training materials regarding myths, etiquette and range as it pertains to disability. Merry Reid Sheffer stated she would reach out to her internal contact and mentor Milton Tyree for similar information as it pertains to disability etiquette/assumptions. There was further discussion of Lunch & Learn Series points of interest for topics and CEU/SHRM credits that could be used as a hook to interest employers. There was mention of reaching out to Barry Whaley for more information regarding ADA.

There was discussion among the subcommittee regarding what action items they would like to bring to the Employment First Council as it pertains to Coalition presentations. It was discussed that each subcommittee member would present to the Council, their agency and it’s role in order to identify potential partner or overlap opportunities.

There was discussion amongst subcommittee members in bringing an action item to the First Employment Council regarding the Lunch & Learn Series and whether Council members would be interested in participating as presenters, in this series. **Merry Reid Sheffer made a motion to bring**

the Lunch & Learn Series as an action item to the Employment First Council. Todd Coffey provided a second to the motion and it carried unanimously.

There was further discussion regarding the Coalition(s) presenting information to the Subcommittee during their next meeting. It was decided that Kitty Z. would attend the next meeting to give a 10-minute presentation, explaining her coalition's history.

Subcommittee members discussed their next meeting time and decided to confirm date for Friday, April 21st, 2023 from 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM. Nancy Howard Requested that Merry Reid Sheffer send her notes to Nanci, so that she may distribute them to the rest of the subcommittee members. All participants thanked each other, and the meeting was ended.

Issues identified:

No new issues were presented for discussion.

Future Areas of Focus:

- Subcommittee members to prepare “pitch(es)” for Lunch & Learn Series to be presented to subcommittee at next meeting
- Coalition representative(s) to give 10-minute presentation(s) on historical evolution of the agency
- Other subcommittee member's internal contacts to give presentations at next meeting
- Lunch & Learn Series prep and launch
- Website/Resources Page to host all Employment First information into a single location
- Coalitions model replicated across the state

Action Items:

- 1) **Merry Reid Sheffer made motion to present the idea of a resources page/website to the Council as an action item. Todd Coffey provided a second and the motion passed unanimously.**
- 2) **Merry Reid Sheffer made a motion to bring the Lunch & Learn Series as an action item to the Employment First Council. Todd Coffey provided a second to the motion and it carried unanimously.**

Next Meeting Date:

Friday, April 21st, 2023
11:30pm – 12:30pm
Hybrid Format
Location: TBD