



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jaime Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Transition Committee **Minutes**

June 12, 2023
11:00am – 12:00pm
Zoom
Meeting ID: 848 6718 7452

Members Present: Co-Chair, Frankie Huffman

Members Absent: Chair, Jessica Beaven, Diana Merzweiler, Tal Curry, Todd Coffey, Anette Jett, Gretta Hylton, Larry Taylor, Patricia Seybold

Staff Present: Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard, KYOVR Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill, KYOVR Transition Services Branch Manager, Veronica Dale, KYOVR Assistant Director of Field Services, Jonathan White

Staff Absent: None

Guest(s) Present: Executive Director for the Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities, Johnny Callebs on behalf of Patricia Seybold, Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Pre-ETS Coordinator, Audra Shutt

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

KYOVR Administrator, Nanci Howard welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that due to many members' absence, a quorum was unable to be established and therefore the business conducted during the meeting would be limited. She reminded all members to maintain video connectivity throughout the meeting to maintain compliance with the Open Meetings Act Guidelines. Nanci mentioned that the Chair, Jessica Beaven had stated that she would be attending the meeting shortly. Nanci introduced the Co-Chair, Frankie Huffman and shared the meeting agenda via screenshare with attendees. She asked Frankie to begin the meeting by welcoming everyone and beginning introductions because there were new faces in attendance. Frankie explained that he was attending the meeting virtually through his cellular phone and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He began by introducing himself to the attendees and each attendee provided an introduction thereafter.

Because Chair, Jessica Beaven had not joined the meeting at this time, Nanci continued in sharing and explaining the meeting agenda via screenshare. She explained that due to a lack of quorum the minutes from the May 2nd, 2023, meeting would not be able to be approved and she began explaining the Project NEON Charter to the group. She went over the details of the Best Practices Day scheduled on August 21st, 2023 and explained the purpose of that event to the group. Frankie requested an accommodation and therefore Nanci read the agenda out loud to the group. Nanci then opened the meeting for group discussion of the Charter document or other ideas the group may wish to discuss. There was some discussion to clarify the different upcoming events in August and September 2023.

Subcommittee Discussion:

Co-Chair, Frankie opened the floor for any ideas of how this group can strengthen transition services across the state. KYOVR Assistant Director, Jonathan White gave information regarding shared team goals that KYOVR is working on. Guest, Johnny Calles inquired if there were any data patterns that suggested where improvements could be made, and Jonathan provided a response to that inquiry. Staff turnover was mentioned as a pattern that has played a role in the difficulties experienced in this matter. There was further discussion held regarding this matter. KYOVR Manager, Veronica Dale stated that outreach skills play a huge role in the process as well and there was further discussion amongst the group regarding that matter. Jonathan stated that scheduling loads are also posing challenges between schools and KYOVR staff being able to seamlessly work together. He mentioned that there are competing priorities pitted against identical goals on both sides and there was further discussion regarding that matter. Johnny inquired if the schools are waiting too long before implementing KYOVR transition services and Guest, Audra Shutt provided her insight. She stated that in her experience, the cases were stalled being opened until the students were ready to graduate and further stressed the importance in opening the cases earlier to avoid losing the students during that transitional period. Jonathan explained that KYOVR does not want its counselors to operate that way and expressed that a more proactive approach was desired. There was discussion that performance evaluations or data tracking measures can also be to blame for gaps in the prioritization of students in the transition process. There was discussion regarding parents posing a significant barrier, also when the student is receiving SSI benefits. It was discussed that further education is needed for families and public sectors to understand the process and the importance of the students' finding employment. It was mentioned that cultural beliefs can take some time to adjust. Veronica mentioned that KYOVR should go to universities and present to the Special Education Teachers about the Vocational Rehabilitation organization and process to help bridge the gap and her idea was liked by other group members. Frankie shared his personal experience with transitional services, and he expressed that he wants students and parents at the middle school age to be required to see a counselor to discuss the SSI benefits issue so that they better understand the process. Veronica mentioned that getting the information to the parents at "First Step" may be a way to get through that barrier. Audra mentioned that this could be repeated throughout the student's academic career so that by the time they are ready to graduate, there is a solid plan in place. There was further discussion regarding this matter. As the meeting was ending, Nanci stated that Chair, Jessica Beaven had reached out to say that she was unable to make it to the meeting. Jonathan provided insight regarding (WIOA) Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act mandates for students to acknowledge receiving vocational rehabilitation information as part of their program.

Future areas of focus:

- Educate Special Education Directors School Staff and Students regarding Transition and how it affects SSI Benefits
- Mandate for parents to visit a benefits counselor to get educated on process

Action Items: None**Public Comment: None****Adjournment:**

Co-Chair, Frankie Huffman called the meeting to adjournment. Administrator, Nanci Howard thanked everyone for attending and offered her sympathy regarding the lack of quorum. She encouraged that if there were any questions or requests that those be forwarded to herself or Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill or Council members Frankie Huffman or Johnny Callebs, and the meeting was ended.

Next Meeting Date:

Friday, July 14th, 2023
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Hybrid Format
Location: TBD

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