

Maryland State Rehabilitation Council
Minutes
Workforce & Technology Center
November 14, 2018

Members Present:

Anil Lewis, Chair
Marsha Legg, Co-Chair
Denise Carter-McCormick
Christy Stuart
Chris Conklin
Rene Averitt-Sanzone
Tony Lawson
Cindy LaBon
Chris Conklin
Scott Dennis, Acting Assistant State Superintendent

Members Unable to Attend:

Katja Fort-Rhoden
Sue Schaffer

Guests:

Brenda Isenock
Megan Glaze-Keller
Sharon Payne
Terri Massie-Burell
Michael Shaw

DORS Liaisons to Council:

Toni March, DORS – OBVS Director
Jody Boone, DORS – OFS Director
Kim Schultz, DORS – Public Relations

Support Staff for Council:

John Stem
Sandy Bowser

Welcome/Introduction – Anil Lewis, Chair:

Anil Lewis welcomed guests and members to the Council meeting and asked that everyone introduce themselves.

The minutes from the Executive Retreat held on August 28, 2018, were approved as written. The minutes from September 12, 2018, were approved as written.

The 2019 Maryland State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Dates are as follows:

February, 2019 – Legislative Event – To Be Determined

May 8, 2019 – Workforce & Technology Center

August, 2019 – Executive Retreat – To Be Determined

September 11, 2019 – Workforce & Technology Center

November 13, 2019 – Workforce & Technology Center

Guest Speaker – Brenda Isenock:

Pathways Program –This program is geared for individuals who are on the Autism Spectrum and attending local community colleges. DORS has a variety of staff that are housed at the colleges who provide these individuals the following supports: coursework, transition, employment goals, etc. DORS/WTC has participated in the program for approximately 15-18 years. We currently have 24 active students participating in the Pathways Program at CCBC Essex and Catonsville, Howard Community College, and Montgomery College – Rockville Campus. Staff on campus work with students, college professors, and the Disability Support Services to ensure success for the consumers.

DORS/WTC is now expanding to Anne Arundel Community College. There are nine students that have been identified that need these supports. We are receiving positive feedback from parents who are very interested in the program and pleased with the expansion.

Outreach for this program is provided at transition fairs, and parent nights in conjunction with the community colleges. A suggestion was made for DORS/WTC to begin reaching out to local high schools.

Driver’s Education Classes at WTC – DORS now offers the 30-hour Motor Vehicle Administration approved Drivers Education Class through the Workforce & Technology Center for consumers who are deaf and hard of hearing, as well, as

consumers with autism. There are two separate classes. As of October, 2018, this class has been expanded to consumers with all types of disabilities and will be offered four times a year. DORS staff is also available go to the MVA with consumer to assist in taking the driving test.

Chairperson/Vice Chairperson Report – Anil Lewis/Marsha Legg:

As the new Chair for the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council, Anil Lewis would like to bring himself up-to-date on the by-laws and DORS Policy. Anil will arrange a meeting with Scott Dennis and John Stem to work on this goal. Anil would also like to have a Client Assistance Program report at each meeting.

Discussion was held on the time of future State Rehabilitation Council meetings. It was suggested that the meeting be held from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. with no dinner. The Council was receptive to this change and a final decision will be made before the February 2019 meeting.

2019 Legislative Day:

Discussion was held on how the State Rehabilitation Council would like to visit Senators and Delegates in Annapolis during the 2019 Session. Several council members expressed interest in scheduling appointments in order to advocate for Vocational Rehabilitation Services for consumers. Anil would like to have DORS staff prepare information/handouts for the SRC to take with them for the legislative visit, such as consumer success stories.

Public Comment:

The Council was pleased to have three guests attend the meeting. Ms. Terri Massie-Burell, Director, Student Disability Services, Mr. Michael Shaw, Disability Support Services, Community College of Baltimore County, and Ms. Sharon Payne, Orientation & Mobility Specialist. Ms. Massie-Burell and Mr. Shaw were past members of the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council.

Acting Director's Report – Scott Dennis:

DORS Planning Meeting:

The DORS Planning Meeting was held October 17th. The DORS Annual Plan was developed based on the Strategic Plan. This was a good meeting with a lot of great input from staff on various objectives and the planning piece for the

upcoming year. The Plan will be finalized and forwarded to the State Rehabilitation Council for their review and approval within the next few weeks.

CSAVR/NCSAB Fall Conference:

The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB) Fall 2018 Conferences were held in Long Beach California October 29 – November 2, 2018; Jody Boone and Scott Dennis attended the CSAVR portion, and Toni March attended the NCSAB portion. These meetings/conferences are attended by state and federal employees and also a number of organizations that provide technical support.

CSAVR Topics of conversation included Pre-Employment Transitioning Services and how it is progressing around the county. A majority of states still have not fully used their base amount of 15% for these services although a number of states are close. DORS is close to having our Pre-ETS 15% fully spent for FY17 and a good start for FY18.

DORS, as an agency, will continue to look at scanned services. A few areas we are looking into is preliminary work for our technical assistance and a peer mentoring project with the school systems with a kick-off in the fall of 2019.

Competitive Integrated Employment is also a hot topic around the nation with providers and VR Programs. DORS continues to have internal discussions with staff and our attorney general to look at our existing guidance to see if we are heading in the right direction.

911 Data is our quarterly data that we have to report to the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Maryland reports every quarter on time without error. There will be changes made to this report. Some of the data elements DORS has been required to do will be eliminated.

This is first year for VR Agencies to file an Annual Program Report July – June. The report is called the ETA 9169. This report was initially developed by the Department of Labor and has been modified to add in the VR Program information. There is a lot of statistical information provided in this report. One interesting fact showed that DORS is serving younger consumers – 42% are between the ages of 14 and 24.

Part of DORS agreement with the Developmental Disability Administration (DDA) is that we have quarterly senior management meetings. The first one was held on November 13th. This meeting included Scott Dennis, and Bernie Simonds at DDA and go over what is working, what is not working, what needs to be improved, training for all staff including DORS, DDA and Providers. The initial feedback received was good.

DORS is working on the statewide level with the Department of Labor, Department of Health & Human Services, and MSDE on a data sharing agreement that allows our agencies to share data.

The biggest presentation at CSAVR was the review of the general accounting agencies/offices of the VR Program. They reviewed several questions that came out of Senator Murray's office, who is a supporter of the VR Program. The focus was on services to businesses, competitive integrated employment and pre-employment transition services for students. Maryland was one of the states chosen to be reviewed extensively by GAO. SRC members are encouraged to read the report put out by the GAO.

NCSAB talked about the data that is being collected on the dashboard and how we can use it. The focus was also on Pre-Employment Transitioning Youth.

Committee Reports:

Blindness and Vision Services – Toni March – Office for Blindness & Vision Services, Customer Satisfaction Survey, was discussed at the last committee meeting. The Mentoring Program just implemented with the National Federation for the Blind was also a topic of discussion. Students from across the state will mentor with competent independent blind adults. OBVS is preparing a proposal for Scott Dennis's review for an Independent Employment Specialist. This position is similar to job coaching but will be focused on the job search process, resume development, accommodations on-the-job, and follow-up. Discussion was also held on providing consumers thumb drives at their first appointment. The thumb drive will be loaded with initial documents, brochures and any other information that may be beneficial.

Strategic Planning and Public Relations - John Stem – Focus was on the Customer Satisfaction Survey that wrapped-up for the October 2019 quarter. Surveys were sent to 1,533 individuals and 217 responses were received. This is 14% higher than last quarter. There was a slight decrease in the responses from Office for Blindness & Vision Services and a slight increase in responses from the Office of Field Services. 73.5% Agreed or Strongly Agreed that they would recommend DORS to a friend which is a substantial increase over last quarter. OFS contacted consumers that requested follow-up. Consumers who were satisfied with DORS services were contacted by their counselor and consumers who were not satisfied were contacted by the Regional Director.

Membership Committee – Marsha Legg, MSRC Co-Chair is the new Chair for this committee.

Policy and Quality Assurance – Tom Lavery would like to have council members participate on this committee.

Council Sharing:

Christy Stuart reported that MSDE had five professional learning opportunities across the state. In the past year, local school systems in the different regions came together and disseminated information about practices, had speakers, etc. to share information/experiences. This year DORS partners were invited to attend which turned out to be a great experience for all. Customized data packets for the school systems were distributed featuring outcome data, data on absenteeism, career tech education data, etc. Feedback from the school systems were very positive and DORS was highly praised for their participation in providing professional learning opportunities.

Sharing Data – Christy Stuart:

The Kick-off for The Center for Transition and Career Innovation was held on November 13th at the University of Maryland. The University of Maryland has been tasked with developing a “Transition Tracker”. This tracker will allow students who transition out of school to be linked with the appropriate agency. This is an online, electronic tracker system for information to be uploaded to the schools on students in transition. The agency the students are referred to would have access to this information. This tracker system is now being piloted in Caroline and Calvert Counties.

NFB Partnering w/DORS – Anil Lewis:

DORS and The National Federation for the Blind are partnering together on the Career Mentoring Program. This program pairs young blind students ages 14-22 with successful blind adults. The students can be mentored by up to three adults to provide a variety of diversity and different career perspectives that will help with their education. This is anchored with quarterly retreats where mentors and mentees will interact on a regular basis.

The National Federation for the Blind Convention held in Ocean City, Maryland was attended by 386 individuals. Toni March presented and did a wonderful job!

The National Federation for the Blind is partnering with Maryland Department of Disabilities, offering inclusion accessibility fellowships to professors at universities and community colleges that teach IT to work with NFB to integrate accessibility in the environment.

Respectfully Submitted
Sandy Bowser
MSRC Staff Support