

Maryland State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Minutes

September 11,2024

Members Present:

Katherine Jones – Chair
Jody Boone
Kristen Patterson
Marla Friedman
Todd Tolson
Cory Richo

Members Unable to Attend:

Ronza M. Othman
Rosa Raez
Marlo Lemon
Penny Reeder

DORS liaisons to Council:

Toni March, Director, Office for Blindness and Vision Services
Wanda Peele, Program Manager II Business Relations Branch
Patrick Peto, Program Manager Policy, and planning DORS Kim
Schultz, Director, Office of Communications & Accessibility
Marla Friedman, Director, Client Assistance Program
Tom Liniak, Director of Community Based and Workforce Services
Beth Lash, Director, Office of Field Services

Support Staff for the Council:

Erica Kneessi
Staff Specialist, Training & Professional Development
Sherri Alban, Executive Associate DORS HQ

Guest

LA Benn
Michele Hamlin
Kristina Richards

Welcome: Katherine Jones

Katherine Jones welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

The May minutes will be viewed as the SRC May workshop Notes.

Public Comment: No public comment

Jody Boone, Acting Assistant State Superintendent

DORS received a Re-Allotment from the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the amount of \$4.95 million in addition to the \$51.6 million originally received for FY24.

Maryland Pathways to Partnership Initiative (MPPI) – RSA Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) Grant Update:

This is a 5-year grant, awarded to DORS by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The partners are four local education agencies (Allegany, Caroline, Charles, and Washington Counties), three centers for independent living (BACIL, Resources for Independence, and SMCIL), University of Maryland CTCL, Independence Now, MSDE DEI/SES, Abt Associates, The Parents' Place of Maryland, and the Maryland Department of Disabilities.

Our kickoff meeting will be at Turf Valley Resort on October 9, 2024:

- We are expecting around sixty guests consisting of staff and partners.
- We will provide an overview of the grant.
- Introducing training models
- Going over the Outreach and Recruitment process
- Web site set up
- Implementation of services set for January 1, 2025

MSRC 2024 Retreat:

- DoubleTree by Hilton Columbia, located at 5485 Twin Knolls Rd., Columbia, MD 21045. From 9am - 4pm in the Columbia Ballroom.
- Guests will include MSRC members, new members, those who would like to become members and DORS staff.
- Directions and meeting agenda will be sent out shortly.

Counselor Case Loads:

- OFS Case load average is about 160 open, VR & Pre-ETS combined.
- Our caseloads are 2-3 times higher than the national average.
- On Sept. 23rd Beth Lash along with OFS senior management will meet to look over the balance of OFS counselor caseloads and work on how to balance those caseloads statewide.
- Our 2-year MOU pilot program with the University of Maryland CCTI unit ended last

month. We have taken back all Pre-ETS referral processes until a new MOU agreement is in place. Under the agreement, CCTI worked on and processed all Pre-ETS referrals and they reviewed all documents and interviewed students and family. This was a huge help for the counselors with managing caseloads and getting the student cases processed and started in a timely manner.

- Hoping to give CCTI access to the AWARE system. This will further streamline the process.

Samanth McGinley is our new Individual community Liaison (ICL). Samantha will give a brief presentation at the Retreat on her position, job duties, present and upcoming projects.

Assistant State Superintendent position Update: We are actively recruiting now for a new Assistant State Superintendent.

Kimberlee Schultz, Director Office of Public Affairs

Recruitment Flyer:

- If anyone needs copies of the Recruitment flyers email kim.schultz@maryland.gov
- The flyer will be posted on the MSRC website.

Patrick Peto, Program Manager for Quality Assurance, Policy & Planning

Quality Assurance Reviews Wrap-up Event

Friday November 1, 2024
Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel
903 Dulaney Valley Rd
Towson, MD 21204
8:30am – 4pm

Performance Measures

We are servicing more people and providing more services in vocational training:

- 4th Qtr. 2022 servicing 12148 participants
- 4th Qtr. 2023 servicing 13170 participants

Pre-ETs:

- 4th Qtr. 2022 - 5594 Students
- 4th Qtr. 2023 - 7242 Students

Attached: FY2022 Q 4 & Fy2023 Q 4 performance measures report

New Services:

Adult Learning Experience –

- Help adults gain valuable experience in their chosen field.
- This is a 12-week program.
- \$15 per hour wage.

New Work support group – Earn while you Learn.

- Help students find jobs to help cover their basic needs while in school or training.

New project:

Helping students obtain laptops while in vocational training program, specifically college.

Services we are planning to offer:

DORS is preparing to provide Financial Empowerment Services to help consumers develop the knowledge and skills needed to make informed and effective decisions about managing money, including budgeting, saving, investing, and debt management.

Toni March, Director of the Office for Blindness & Vision Services

- The SRC Sub committee met on Aug 28th.
 - We reviewed the number of students who attended various summer programs.
 - Went over Policy update.
 - Discussion on how the Adult learning experience program is being implemented in OBVS.
 - Concerns: Want to make sure the consumer is communicating with their employer and not just relying on their Job coach and IEP.
- MBEP has a new Vending Program Administrator, Vernon McNece and we are happy to have him aboard.
- OBVS had their training on the new ILOB review process. We have nine counselors across the state who service our Independent Living Older Blind.

Tom Liniak, Director WTC

- We just finished our second cohort in Laurel for Retail Training in conjunction with CVS and just started our third.
- The 1st cohort ended with 72% employed and our 2nd ended with 100% employed.

- We run Food Service Internships at 2 of our Employer partner CommuniCare's facilities.
- Added a new component to our Work Readiness program, Functional Independence for Employment. This enhancement focuses on executive functioning, compensatory cognitive skills and education and training in physical endurance and proper body mechanics.
- We are Looking into adding a financial literacy component: Basics of Social Security to our Work Readiness program.
- In discussions with Prince Georges CC and Montgomery College about adding a Child Care employment training program in 2025.

Beth Lash, Director OFS

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Unit (DHHU) just celebrated their 1-year anniversary.
- I want to thank Sharon Plump for the excellent job she is doing in managing the DHHU. I believe it has made a huge difference in the delivery of services to the deaf.
- Excited to announce that OFS will be adding around six new staff members next month.
- We were able to expand our Eligibility Determination unit by four: a 3rd Supervisor, 2 additional counselors and an Administrative Aid.
- At our recent Terps succeed meeting we found out that our membership has been expanding, we are now at 15. Terps succeed is our comprehensive Transition program at the University of Maryland, Partnership program with the Developmental Disabilities Administration and University of MD. The program gives college experience to individuals with intellectual and Developmental disabilities. Provides relative course work to their job goal as well as internship experience on campus.

Committees:

Policy & Quality Assurance- Patrick Peto N/A

Blindness and Vision Services – Penny Reader N/A

Membership – Vacant N/A

Employment/Career Development – Wanda Peele N/A

Strategic Planning & Public Relations-

If anyone is interested in joining the Strategic Planning & Public Relations committee, please contact Kim Schultz at kim.schultz@maryland.gov

Council sharing

Kim Schultz –

MSRC-DORS 2024 Public Meetings

September 18th, 4:00 PM & September 19th, 10:00 AM

Virtual, via Zoom, Meeting ID: 848 8064 1350

Passcode: DORS

Beth Lash –

I will be attending the NSRC conference in Seattle this October along with Dr. Katherine Jones and Kristen Patterson. This will be the first time in years that the MSRC council has had members attend.

Katherine Jones –

The Bay Area CIL just received our CARF accreditation.

Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherri Alban

MSRC Staff Support