

**Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
School the Work Transition Workgroup Meeting
November 13, 2006
BRS Central Office
Minutes**

Present: Patricia Anderson SDE/BRS, Anthony LaCava DRCFC, Maggie Boyce DRCFC, Barry Rita BESB, Carol Stock Prandy Transition Consultant, Cathy Ludlum MIG Principal Consultant, Dawn Lambert BRS/MIG Director, Patti Clay BRS Staff Liaison to Workgroup, Nora Bishop BRS, Khampasong Khantivong BRS

Absent: Susan Werboff/Barbara Konow OP&A, Jane Bowles CPAC, Susan Zimmerman FAVOR, Sara Lourie DCF, Jo-Ellen Wickwire DMR, Nikki Richer DMHAS, Karen Stigliano SERC

Welcome and Introductions

Patti welcomed the group and thanked them for coming together on such short notice. The group introduced themselves.

Background

The group was advised that Connecticut DSS has been awarded approximately \$5,600,000 to be used in the next 15 months to increase employment and community participation for individuals with disabilities. The group also reviewed the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Strategic Employment Plan and the priority areas identified at the Employment Summit last June.

Those four areas are:

- School to Work Transition
- Stakeholder Education
- Recruitment, Employment & Retention
- Transportation

Workgroup Purpose

The MIG Steering Committee has decided to work on both statewide and community initiatives. The funding will be split approximately half-and-half between the two initiatives. Requests for proposals (RFPs) will be offered to local communities within the next six weeks for local initiatives. This workgroup is charged with advising the Steering Committee on statewide initiatives and articulating the transition services for students with disabilities to be included in the RFPs.

Priorities

The priority areas developed by the MIG Steering Committee include:

- Workplace employment opportunities
- Integration of assistive technology that can follow to work
- Understanding of benefits
- Opportunities for mentoring

Ensure Independent Living needs are met

The workgroup discussed statewide initiatives for each of these priority areas and local initiatives to be included in the community RFPs. See attached grid for outline of recommendations.

Dawn Lambert also discussed the Steering Committee's request to this workgroup to address an initial statewide initiative for the next three months. The request is to develop an outreach strategy to address the issue of "attitudes" toward employment. The original request was to focus these strategies for youth, parents and educators. Employers were expected to be addressed in the Stakeholder Education workgroup. This workgroup felt strongly that employers should also be addressed specifically in regard to transition.

The workgroup discussed a number of strategies including brochures, booklets, PowerPoint presentations to be presented by a technical assistance team, targeted benefits information, and youth benefits specialists. Folders of sample materials that might be included as tools for a community or as the basis for developing Connecticut specific material were provided to each workgroup member. These folders will also be distributed to the workgroup members who were absent.

Workgroup members also felt strongly that school systems and communities have been provided with materials and training in the past. What has been missing is technical assistance in implementing a process or comprehensive plan. One example might be a continuum of work experience opportunities such as:

- Job shadowing
- Field assessments
- Paid work experiences
- Noncompetitive with stipends
- Summer employment
- Internships

Next Steps:

1. Workgroup members will think about the "Key Messages" for the statewide outreach strategy
2. Review materials in folders and consider materials they are currently using or familiar with
3. Think about dissemination methods and what materials or "tools" might work best with specific methods
4. E-mail Patti any suggestions for key messages and materials to be reviewed or considered by the rest of the workgroup
5. Come to the next meeting prepared to discuss key messages and outreach options

Next Meeting:

December 8, 2006 9 a.m.-12 noon BRS Central Office 11 floor