

## YOUTH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

APRIL 13, 2016

8:15 A.M.

PARK FOUNDATION CONFERENCE ROOM

**PRESENT:** A. Hendrix, R. Pollack, S. Peake, V. Zeppelin, S. Kittel, C. Weems

**EXCUSED:** I. Burbank

**STAFF:** J. Mattick, J. Luu

### CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Hendrix called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

Ms. Hendrix stated the meeting is intended to review the responses to the questions that were presented to the Office of Employment and Training relative to the operation of the WIOA youth program. The group first met when WIOA was being rolled out and this is an opportunity to find out how the program is progressing under the new legislation. Following the discussion, the Committee will make a decision on whether to recommend to the Workforce Development Board a one-year extension of the current contract.

Below are the questions and answers that were provided to OET. Committee discussion is in italics.

#### **1. What recruitment strategies are you using? How has your community partners changed with the transition to serving increased numbers of Out of School Youth?**

Recruitment continues to be consistent with Job LINK partners including but not limited to: The Learning Web, Challenge, school districts, ACCESS-VR and BOCES. With the increase to age 24 for Out of School participants, Job LINK has been able to successfully partner with TST Adult Ed. As well as customers who are coming to the WFNY Career Center for services. Job LINK staff attends a twice-monthly Meet and Greet Orientation for Adult Ed., allowing for a real time meeting and explanation of the program. WFNY Career Center resource staff and youth partner agencies are aware of the increased age, and refer appropriate customers to Job LINK staff for further program information.

The overall increase to age 24 has been a positive aspect of the WIOA legislation for the Job LINK program to offer services.

*Ms. Kittel asked how connections are made with those youth who are disconnected from the more traditional ways of recruiting. Ms. Brown stated that often parents connect with/for the young person. The Program also utilizes other youth program providers as resources. Ms. Kittel suggested other avenues could include having program staff on site at WIC clinics, at food pantries, libraries, etc.*

#### **2. How many total participants were served? New participants? Carryover from previous year?**

As of 7/1/15-3/28/16:

76 participants served

38 participants carried over from PY 2014-2015

38 new participants enrolled

Real time (as of 3/28/16): 65 active participants (56 OS, 9 IS)

#### **3. Of those exited, what was their status at exit? When are youth exited from the program?**

As of 7/1/15 – 3/28/16:

21 exits-90 Day Soft Exits (per WIOA enrollment, all participants should soft exit unless they are deceased, institutionalized or incarcerated.)

- 13 exited as employed or entered education (or both)
- 8 exits with no outcomes. In PY 2014-2015 there was a significant staff transition. As a result of new roles within the Job LINK program, participants who were inactive yet still enrolled were exited during the 15-16 PY.
- 1 Hard Exit due to incarceration

*Ms. Brown stated staff work with participants to determine when exit will occur. This is typically when an individual is stable in job/education, life skills, etc. Exits only occur when all parties are comfortable.*

*Ms. Peake asked what methods are used to reengage individuals who have not been actively participating. Ms. Brown indicated that staff reach out through texting, emailing, visiting employers or just running into them. They also utilize social media to keep track of participants as a way of finding out where the individual can be located so they can touch base.*

#### **4. How many met the goals identified in their Employment Plan?**

With the development of a more thorough ISS, we have been able to better identify goals with the participant. For example, we have participants whose primary goal is to obtain employment, but as we go through the intake process, we are better able to identify the steps that need to be taken prior to the actual employment placement.

Typically this will include: having the participant attend Adult Ed. Orientation (if they don't have a diploma), arranging for transportation (obtaining a bus pass, mapping out bus routes from home to the worksite and the times the bus is running), arranging for child care (identifying child care needs, providers and payment), interview preparation and practice and what to expect in the workplace. The participant will also take their TABE Test and complete a Career Zone portfolio.

Of our 65 current active participants, 59 are working consistently towards their employment goals. Goals are obviously adjusted based on how the participant is doing on the worksite (either subsidized or unsubsidized), and academically (enrolled in education, taking the TASC, etc.)

All participants have regular contact with their Job LINK advisor; via office and community visits, phone calls or email contact.

We have 6 participants who are currently not meeting their employment plan goals. While the Job LINK advisor still has contact with these participants, they are dealing with circumstances such as substance abuse, a general indifference to working, childcare or living arrangement complications. In these cases, we continue contact with them, acting as a referral source and support network for the participant.

#### **5. What trainings were offered to participants in 2015? How many attended?**

Three trainings were offered specifically to Job LINK participants.

10/15 Interview Skills: 4 attended

11//15 Career Zone: 8 attended

2/16 Job Search and Resume Prep: 8 attended

Participants have utilized TC3 Biz trainings that are offered (Microsoft Word and Excel). Participants have also attended workshops offered by WFNY. The WFNY monthly training calendar is shared with participants and worksites and attendance is encouraged.

#### **6. If the program could only identify one success and challenge for 2015-16, what would that success and challenge be?**

Success: As noted in question 3, we realized that we needed to balance enrollment with the bigger picture of long term planning and engagement. As we saw exits based on a participant enrolling but never following through with our program, we learned how to engage participants from early in the application process. We use the opportunity for employment as the final step of a thorough assessment. This means we are spending more time with the ISS, Career Zone, worker readiness, and academic planning discussions. The success of this has been participants and advisors being able to celebrate each step of success-from enrolling in adult ed., obtaining a TASC, obtaining an unsubsidized job, etc. It is more of a collective, long term investment.

Challenge: Increasing the literacy/numeracy scores of participants continues to be a challenge, in particular for participants who may already have a diploma, but are not participating in any ongoing education. Participants will meet with Chad Zimar to review reading and math skills and provide a refresher on techniques, but we don't always see a remarkable increase of literacy and numeracy gains. Apparently there will be a change in WIOA performance accountability provision for PY 2016 (effective 7/1/16); we are using doleta.gov/WIOA to keep updated on TEG's and how we should modify our programming with the changes in the Common Measure.

## **7. What screening process is used and how are referrals made?**

Referrals are made from agencies such as The Learning Web, local school districts, worksites we have worked with (past and present), Challenge Industries, TST Adult Education, WFNY Career Center customers and word-of-mouth from past and current participants. We strive to meet a potential applicant in person and explain our programming, and have informational materials available for applicants to take with them.

The screening process is very clear in terms of WIOA eligibility; once we have a signed release (part of the application) we send an inquiry to DSS for any services the applicant may receive, and to a school and or medical professional if the participant discloses they have a disability/IEP/504 plan. If the applicant is not receiving any services from DSS, we will further inquire about verification of household income. If the applicant is not program eligible, we will refer them to WFNY or other community services that may be appropriate/helpful.

## **8. Walk us through how you decide what services individuals need and in the case of services you are not providing how do you access the services for participants?**

We find that the easiest way to begin the process of engagement is using the ISS as tool to assess what services our participants will engage in. It is not uncommon that participants would like to get to work immediately, however, times when we've moved forward with employment without being very specific about our plan, our outcomes are not always what we hoped they would be.

If the participant is out of school, we see what their last grade level is, as well as what academic goals they may have. If the participant has dropped out of high school, we encourage them to meet with TST BOCES Adult Ed programs. We will attend meet and greet sessions (which occur twice a month) with participants at both the WFNY and TST BOCES locations.

Transportation, child care needs and housing are other areas of the ISS that we use to identify what is needed before the participant moves forward with a work placement. Depending on the agency that is making the referral to Job LINK, there is often concurrent planning happening for these needs. For participants that are working with the Child Care Council for a daycare subsidy while they are in adult ed class or work, we will work with DSS to outline what hours child care is needed.

The assessment discussion addresses needs such as transportation, if the participant is working with other services, and if there are any medical/health related restrictions that we need to be aware of when making a services plan. For example, if a participant is in recovery work for substance abuse issues, we will want to check with the counselor to assure that adding work and worker readiness skills will not hinder the recovery work they are doing.

While we are working on the general discussion about the participant's goals, the participant will take a TABE test and complete a Career Zone portfolio. Generally this is our first 3-4 meetings with the participant depending on their ability to complete the TABE, their computer skills (for Career Zone), or willingness to share about what other services they may be working with. We may also be working on these tasks while we are waiting for verification of services from DSS or if their file is in the enrollment process to OSOS. We've learned that it's much easier to keep the participant engaged from the beginning of the application process instead of waiting until they are fully enrolled so that we don't lose them along the way. In the rare case that the participant is not eligible for Job LINK, they've at least had a chance to open a Career Zone account and we will be able to refer to other services within the WFNY Career Center.

**9. Please provide us a copy of a completed work maturity evaluation with the name redacted.** *The Committee reviewed.*

**10. Please provide us a copy of a completed job specific evaluation with the name redacted.** *The Committee reviewed.*

**11. Please provide us a completed copy of your participant assessment tool and your Individual Service Strategy/Employment Plan with the name redacted.** *The Committee reviewed.*

## **12. What leadership development opportunities have been offered to program participants during the past program year?**

WIOA defines this as opportunities that encourage participation in activities related to leadership, decision-making, citizenship, and community service. Job LINK participants have been involved with the following activities:

- Leading a dance group for CUMEP under the supervision of Dr. Nia Nunn Makepeace /Ithaca College and Southside Community Center
- Recruiting and training volunteers: Compost Program Newfield Schools
- Newfield Public Library: coordinating activities for children during community events such as the spring book sale and Old Home Days
- Participation in Sister Friends hosted by Multicultural Resource Center and the Greater Ithaca Activities Center
- Life Skills Training: Learning Web Youth Outreach Program
- Parenting Support and Education: Child Development Council and Cornell Cooperative Extension
- BEAM Program: Sarah Bonawitz
- ACE Program
- Upward Bound: Cornell

**13. How many participants participated in adult mentoring programs? What programs were used for these participants?**

Adult mentoring is a program element that provides a participant with the opportunity to develop a positive relationship with an adult. The adult mentor should provide a positive role model for educational, work skills, or personal or social development. This is not the Job LINK advisor, even though it is our goal to have a positive impact for all the above noted characteristics.

We have found that positive mentoring relationships have been developed within worksites and community centers. For example, female participants working at GIAC have been able to attend the Sister Friends luncheon at Ithaca College. A participant in Dryden developed a personal relationship with the mayor, who would come to the café where the participant was employed through a Job LINK placement. When he applied for an unsubsidized job, the mayor was able to be a reference for him. We have found that The Learning Web Youth Outreach Program provides positive support around housing (finding and maintaining), parenting and an overall 'safe space' for participants to get encouragement from staff.

We are encouraged by the relationships that our participants develop with their academic instructors and worksite supervisors; because they are working so intensely together, these adults are able to provide more than just instructional and task related feedback. Having multiple adults checking in with the participant about how things are going reinforces the relationships both personally and professionally.

**14. What other elements are youth participating in besides subsidized employment?**

There are 14 program elements that Job LINK participants are provided. WIOA Section 129(c)(2) outlines the elements-below are noted the ways we meet the elements for participants:

	Program Elements	Provider
1	Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion or it's recognized equivalent	-TST BOCES Adult Ed -Job LINK (tutoring w/Chad Zimar) -Tompkins Learning Partners
2	Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services	-TST BOCES -Job LINK -BEAM
3	Paid and unpaid work experiences with a academic and occupational education component	-Job LINK -Specific worksites -Learning Web -Challenge
4	Occupational skill training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations	-Job LINK and WFNY -Careers in Construction and Skilled Trade workshops -Heath Career Expo
5	Leadership development activities (e.g., community service,	-CUMEP

	peer-centered activities)	-GIAC Festival -ACE Program -Upward Bound/Cornell -Liberty Partnerships
6	Supportive services	-TCAT -clothing/uniform vouchers
7	Adult mentoring	-GIAC -Tomp. Learning Partners -Learning Web -Worksites
8	Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion	-Job LINK
9	Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling	-TCMH -Family and Children's -CARS -TC Alcohol and Drug svcs. -school based services (IS participants)
10	Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster	-Job LINK -Career Zone -ReSet Program/green training -HETP Program
11	Financial literacy education	-Job LINK -Career Zone budgeting module -ACE/Dollars and Sense Program -Cornell Coop. Extension Financial Exploration programs
12	Entrepreneurial skills training	-Job LINK
13	Services that provide labor market information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations (career awareness and career exploration services)	-Job LINK -Career Zone -Local career/job fairs
14	Postsecondary preparation and transition activities	-TC3 Transition Support Programs -Upward Bound/Cornell -Liberty Partnerships -BEAN

**15. What follow up services have occurred with program participants that have exited?**

After the Job LINK participant is exited from the program, one year of follow up services are provided. Follow up services typically include resume updates, assistance with job applications, and interview preparation. Follow up services may also include referral to the appropriate agency based on the needs of the participant. This may include how to file taxes, maintain a bank account, or how to complete a college application. We often are an employment reference for participants.

**16. Please provide copies of fully executed MOA's for all required WIOA services that OET is not providing.** *The Committee reviewed.*

**17. Were any program participants referred to counseling services?**

While we do our best to identify mental health and substance abuse needs for our clients, there have been 3 specific incidents where we had direct intervention with our participants. One was an emergency mental health placement/hospitalization; one was a hospitalization because of a drug overdose during a pregnancy, and one was a mental health referral. In the final case, because the referral was not considered an emergency (not to call 911) we were only able to facilitate the phone call for services as well as provide space for a subsequent phone intake.

In cases where the worksite expresses a concern about mental health or substance abuse issues while on the job, the Job LINK advisor will provide guidance and support in having a participant find the appropriate service.

**18. How close is the program to meeting the Youth Performance Chart goals as outlined on page 12 of the proposal?** *The Committee reviewed.*

**19. What is the breakdown of participants by place of residence?**

14850 (Ithaca): 52	13068 (Freeville): 2	13073 (Groton): 2
13045 (Cortland): 1	13077 (Homer): 1	14817 (Brooktondale): 2
13053 (Dryden): 1	14867 (Newfield): 6	14882 (Lansing): 1
14883 (Spencer): 1		14886 (Trumansburg): 6

**20. What is the process for youth who are not succeeding at a worksite? What happens if youth are fired from their work placement?**

Job LINK advisors are meeting with the participant and worksite at least once a week, there is a general understanding or consensus when the job is not going as anticipated-rarely do we have a "surprise" termination from the work placement. The primary reason for termination is due to unreliability or frequent no-call/no shows for the work shift. When there are issues at the worksite, the Job LINK advisor will meet with the participant and supervisor individually, and then there will be a group meeting to outline the concerns and make a plan for resolving them.

We have been able to increase our ability of predicting when a worksite is not going well and can end the placement prior to it being a detrimental situation. In all cases the Job LINK advisor and participant will continue to meet and work on the issues that precipitated the issues. We are appreciative that our worksites are willing to give participants several opportunities to rectify any issues that arise.

*Ms. Mattick indicated there have been discussions about career pathways and moving individuals beyond entry level as the next step. She stated the program should not be competing with private sector to get employees into subsidized employment if the employers are willing to hire individuals with lower skills.*

**21. How many youth received follow up services after exit and what were the services provided?**

All exited youth receive one year of follow up services, and contacts (or attempts to contact) are done quarterly based on the date of exit. Job LINK staff update OSOS quarterly with any activity that the participant has engaged in noting employment, academic, personal activity (if they have moved from the area, became a parent, etc.). If there is an instance where the participant cannot be located, it will be documented as such. Question #15 outlines some of the specific follow up activities that are done.

**22. Please provide a list of all employers that youth were placed in unsubsidized employment with. In addition please identify the occupations youth were placed in.**

Unsubsidized placements:

- Agway:Store Associate

- Birnie Bus Services: Bus Assistant/Aide
- Burger King: Cook
- Country Inn and Suites: Housekeeping
- GIAC: After School Child Care provider
- Greenstar: Cashier, Food Prep, Stocker
- Groton School District: Cleaner, Substitute Food Service
- Fairfield Inn and Suites: Housekeeping
- Historic Ithaca/Significant Elements: Chair caning and furniture repair
- Independence Cleaners Corporation: Cleaner
- JM Murray Center: Production Line Worker
- Life So Sweet Chocolates: Sales Associate and Confectioner
- Longview Senior Living (Sodexo): Dietary and Food Prep.
- Marietta Hospitality: Production Line Worker
- Marriot: Housekeeping
- Newfield School District: Lunch Monitor/Aide
- Panera Bread: Food Prep
- Plato's Closet: Sales Associate/Key Holder
- Rasa Spa: Front Desk Receptionist
- Sew Green: Classroom Instructor
- Tops: Stocker
- Wegmans: Cashier

#### **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION – WIA YOUTH RECOMMENDATION TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Ms. Zeppelin stated there are some areas of concern with the 14 elements, but there isn't clear guidance.

There was discussion about the MOA's and whether they were fully revised or just resigned for the current year. These need to be strengthened and be uniform across all providers. They need to identify which elements they are addressing through their training and they all need to be signed and dated. The suggestion was made to revisit this issue in 4 months, once guidance is received. There was also discussion about enhancing strategies to obtain more rural enrollments.

The group also discussed the need to follow-up with youth right away when a referral is made. Pre and post surveys need to be conducted in a timely fashion and forms that are required from participants should be made available on the agency website.

It was Moved by Ms. Kittel, seconded by Ms. Peake and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve a one-year extension to the WIOA Youth Contract with the Tompkins County Office of Employment and Training in the amount of \$340,000.

Ms. Mattick requested that the current contract with the Office of Employment and Training be increased by \$15,000 to \$345,000. It was Moved by Ms. Kittel, seconded by Ms. Peake and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to increase the current contract with the Office of Employment and Training to \$345,000.

#### **SYEP UPDATE**

Ms. Mattick reported the summer allocation passed by the State totals \$31 million. Once local allocations are known she will notify the group. She stated she has notified Challenge Workforce Solutions that they will not be receiving the amount requested in their proposal.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 11, 2016 at 8:15 a.m. in the Park Foundation Conference Room.

Minutes prepared by Jennifer Luu.

DRAFT