

YOUTH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

April 15, 2020

8:30 A.M.

Zoom Platform

PRESENT: V. Zeppelin, K. Shanks-Booth, S. Kittel

EXCUSED: T. Watts

GUEST:

STAFF: N. Branosky, D. Achilles, S. Alvord

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Shanks-Booth Called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 10, 2020

It was Moved by Ms. Zeppelin and seconded by Ms. Kittel and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of April 10, 2020.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Branosky reviewed the future of the Summer Youth Employment Program from attending county meetings. The state has not made any decisions on SYEP and the County Administration says plan for yes and prepare for no.

REVIEW OF SYEP CONTRACTOR ANSWERS

Ms. Alvord reviewed the answers from the Office of Employment and Training and the Ithaca Youth Bureau to the questions concerning the current economic circumstances and running the program starting May 1st. The contractors for the SYEP answered with good responses and want to move forward with the program. The Youth Oversight Committee had conversation around ways to move forward under the current circumstances of the economy. All committee members will need to complete the rating sheets and submit to Ms. Branosky or Ms. Achilles.

SYEP PROPOSAL REVIEW AND VOTE

Ms. Alvord reported that the contracts with Office of Employment and Training and Ithaca Youth Bureau might need to be modified according with what happens at the state level. Ms. Branosky informed the committee that the SYEP will go to full board for approval April 28th meeting.

Ms. Shanks-Booth made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate contract with the Tompkins County Office of Employment and Training and the Ithaca Youth Bureau to operate the 2020 Summer Youth Employment Program when the funding amounts are made available by New York State.

It was Moved by Ms. Zeppelin and seconded by Ms. Kittel and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the Summer Youth Employment Program contracts.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Shanks-Booth adjourned the meeting at 09:21a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2020.

Youth Oversight Committee – SYEP Contractor Questions and Answers

Jackie's response from WFNY Job Link program:

1.) Let's imagine that COVID has been resolved, social distancing is lifted, and schools are back in session in May. What are the (if any) impacts on your SYEP planning needs as programs resume regular operations in the month of May? The pace of coordinating worksite placements and recruiting youth will likely be more intense than usual. The majority of our previous employers/worksites are currently not in operation at all or are operating in a different way than “normal”, so not only will our staff be adjusting to being back in the workplace, employers will be doing the same and their preparedness for taking on youth work experiences may be less so than usual. We will need to increase the pace of recruitment during the month of May and handle the remaining paperwork and gather parent/guardian signatures, youth working permits, and other required documents. **Do you anticipate any changes needed to your proposal as presented early this month as a result of the delay to activities in March and April?** The timeline will be most impacted as the recruitment process will likely be delayed and therefore will be more intense to be ready for orientations and managing the payroll paperwork process.

2.) If social distancing measures are extended beyond April 29, what would the impact to SYEP planning be? Think in regards to important areas such as: staffing, recruitment/outreach of participants, conducting orientations and training, and creating job placements. Could your program run? If social distancing measures are extended beyond April 29th, SYEP planning and recruitment will be significantly delayed and intensified to attempt to fit in the preparation before launching work experiences. Whether or not the program could run will depend on how delayed youth and worksite recruitment is due to the social distancing measures. **Would your budget need significant updates? At this time, there aren't any anticipated budget adjustments; however, there may be depending upon delays. **What, if any, program elements can be conducted remotely, and what is your organizations capacity for doing so?** Youth and worksite recruitment can be conducted remotely; however, application signatures, work permits, photo IDs, and payroll paperwork will need to be gathered once social distancing measures are lifted. Orientations, interviews, worksite interviews and most of the enrichment workshops (financial literacy, Metrix, business panels, etc) could be facilitated remotely / virtually; however, youth access to these virtual program elements will be dependent on their access to different types of technology (phones, computers, tablets) and internet, which may be limited given that program eligibility is income based.**

3.) What is the impact to your program if the SYEP funding is changed - if you were to receive less money than requested; if you were to receive more money than requested?**3.) What is the impact to your program if the SYEP funding is changed - if you were to receive less money than requested; if you were to receive more money than requested?** In either case, whether we receive more or less money, it will depend on how much less or more as to how this impacts our program and staffing. If we receive more money and therefore can provide more youth with work experiences, we would hope to increase staff capacity to handle that if feasible (depending on how much more money is offered). If we receive less money and that requires us to serve fewer youth, we may need to adjust our budget and staffing hours. If SYEP is cancelled this summer altogether, we may need to consider temporary staff layoffs or at least furloughs.

Bev's response from the Ithaca Youth Bureau YES program:

Here are my best attempts at answering the Youth Oversight Committee's questions, based on what I know in this moment.

1.) Let's imagine that COVID has been resolved, social distancing is lifted, and schools are back in session in May. What are the (if any) impacts on your SYEP planning needs as programs resume regular operations in the month of May? Do you anticipate any changes needed to your proposal as presented early this month as a result of the delay to activities in March and April? In this scenario, our primary obstacles would be delay. We are already far behind participant recruitment than is normal for this time of year, and would have to get creative and increase staffing to manage a higher intake of teens over a shorter period of time. We would likely also push our application deadline back by at least two weeks, as well as our matching and orientation sessions. The City would need to reevaluate its current hiring freeze in order for us to hire seasonal case managers. We have also been informed by our criminal background reporting company that they will have a significant backlog when courts reopen and that reports will be delayed, which will also slow our hiring process. In this scenario, most of our worksite partners would hopefully be unaffected, and would be able to accept the number of teens stipulated in their job descriptions. We could potentially shift start dates by two weeks and have teens wrap up their jobs in late August. Dates and deadlines would definitely need to be changed, and we might not be able to serve the full number of teens in the proposal, depending on how quickly we can mobilize staff to recruit.

2.) If social distancing measures are extended beyond April 29, what would the impact to SYEP planning be? Think in regards to important areas such as: staffing, recruitment/outreach of participants, conducting orientations and training, and creating job placements. Could your program run?

If social distancing continues beyond April 29th, we would continue to do our best to provide outreach and intake remotely for as long as school is not in session. We likely would not be able to hire seasonal staff in this scenario (or our ability to hire would be delayed further than in scenario 1). Lack of staff will lower our capacity to serve, but the larger looming question in this scenario is what happens to the worksite partners. Camps and large worksites may not run at all, which would severely reduce our placement options. Furthermore, many worksites who typically take a small number of teens will likely not be able to take on additional workforce while maintaining social distance policies. In this scenario our ability to run our program safely will depend entirely on the best practices put forth by the health department, and what our worksite partners (as well as the City of Ithaca) choose to do in light of them. We may find ourselves in a situation where we do not have enough sites to run the program at a truly functional level.

There are many innovations the YES Team is already exploring to address what we CAN control, including virtual Orientation and Payroll Sessions (we are already moving forward assuming this will be our reality), matching teens to jobs on a rolling bases rather than in large batches, virtual training sessions, shifting to a truncated and delayed work schedule (perhaps 4 weeks instead of 6, perhaps only in the month of August). We can reduce contact case managers have with teens and make that more remote. If social distancing continues well into the summer, we could, with permission from the YOC, shift into a paid training program that is fully remote (with the understanding that this would not allot for anywhere near 125 hours per participant). Any and all of these adjustments will impact the budget in our proposal. It is highly unlikely that we would be able to support the number of participants for the number of hours in our original proposal in some version of scenario 2.

3.) What is the impact to your program if the SYEP funding is changed - if you were to receive less money than requested; if you were to receive more money than requested? From where I stand in this moment, I think that some version of scenario 2 is much more likely than scenario 1, which means we would likely be unable to spend the full amount in our original proposal and certainly unable to handle a larger allocation. What is most critical to me during this time of uncertainty is communication and flexibility. Estimating a budget based on what ~80 teenagers will decide to do is always a complex thought exercise, but this year we will have to adapt much more often and much more severely. It will be important for me to know the degree of flexibility the YOC will have for programs shifting and flexing capacity in light of decisions made at the State and local level.

I love this program, and it pains me to imagine it running in deeply curtailed ways, but I also know our priority as a community is the health and wellbeing of our participants, our staff, and our partners.

Please reach out if you have additional questions or need further information.

Tompkins County Workforce Development Board WIOA YOUTH Objective Assessment Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for program staff to follow for completing Objective Assessments in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth program prior to a youths' enrollment. The outlined policy provides a process that will identify youths' service needs, academic levels, goals, interests, skill levels, abilities, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and measure their barriers and strengths. This process includes a review of a youth's basic and occupational skills, prior work experience, employability potential, and developmental needs. The result of completing this process is having comprehensive information to work with in establishing an appropriate Individual Service Strategy as well as providing the youth with an understanding of how a variety of their personal attributes affect their potential success and satisfaction with different career options and work environments.

Background

For a youth to be enrolled in the WIOA Youth program, Objective Assessments must first be completed. The U.S. Dept. of Labor Employment & Training Administration's (DOLETA) TEGL 21-16 states that "the WIOA youth program design requires an objective assessment of academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant". The required Objective Assessments review includes the following areas:

- Basic Skills
- Occupational Skills
- Prior Work Experience
- Employability
- Interests
- Aptitudes
- Supportive Service Needs
- Developmental Needs
- Strengths

The DOLETA TEGL 21-16 states that the Objective Assessments must consider a youth's strengths rather than just focusing on areas that need improvement. The TEGL 21-16 further states that assessments used must be: valid and reliable; appropriate, fair and cost effective; be well-matched to the test administrator's qualifications; and be easy to administer and interpret results. Alternatively, skills-related gains may also be determined through less formal assessment techniques such as observation, folder reviews, or interview. These assessments may be provided directly through WIOA youth program staff, and/or through referrals to national and community-based partners and resources.

Policy

Prior to enrollment in the WIOA Youth program, youth must complete the following Objective Assessments. This policy defines what will be used to assess each of the required steps and how those methods will be recorded in the youths' paper files and in OSOS. **All youth must complete the requirements listed below prior to being enrolled in the youth program** (i.e. before first service is entered in OSOS).

The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) will be utilized to record and document notes regarding each Objective Assessment criteria with selected strategy for working with that youth on maintaining or improving their skills in each area. Program Staff will use the ISS to document that the initial Objective Assessments have been completed prior to enrollment with date and signature of staff. Any changes to the ISS will need to be dated and signed by the youth as well. ISS documentation (paper file) will match what is input in OSOS (electronic file).

Example:

BASIC SKILLS – Method of assessment used: TABE test, math and reading (test date xx-xx-xx). Results of assessment: Youth scored at 6th grade reading level and 5th grade math level. Determined that youth is lacking basic skills in reading and math. Strategy: Refer youth to XX agency to provide academic support, tutoring services.

Procedure

To assess the Objective Assessment criteria, please utilize the following directives issued by the LWDB. In all pertinent circumstances, **Reasonable Accommodations** will be provided for individuals with disabilities, individuals who are English Language Learners, and individuals assessed as being Basic Skills Deficient for eligibility purposes (see LWDB Basic Skills Deficiency Policy for more information). Accommodations to include, but not be limited to: extending test taking time, distraction-free spaces, use of technology aides, paper-based exams, accessible testing stations, web-based accommodations, and other accommodations as based on the policies of the test creators. More information regarding accommodations can be found at: www.ada.gov.

Use of previous basic skills assessment results are permitted if the assessments were conducted within the past six (6) months.

Please keep copies of all corresponding assessments/documents (i.e. interest profilers, test scores, etc.) in the youth’s paper file, along with their updated ISS form.

Basic Skills:

Option 1 – A H.S. Diploma, H.S.E., or passing report card*/transcript** dated within 6 months prior to date of enrollment identifies the youth as “not Basic Skills Deficient” (BSD).

**Passing report card is an overall grade of 65 or higher (less is considered BSD)*

***Passing transcript is a GPA of 2.0 or higher (less is considered BSD)*

Option 2 – TABE score of below 8th grade reading or math level, dated within 6 months prior to date of enrollment, identifies the youth as “Basic Skills Deficient”. A score at or higher than an 8th grade level would identify the youth as “not BSD”.

Option 3 – A “Passing Score” of 80% or higher on Metrix NY Wired Prove It Integrated Assessments (Basic Reading Comprehension, Basic Arithmetic, Math & Reasoning Skills, and/or English as a Second Language) is considered “**not BSD**”; a “Failing Score” on an assessment of 79% or lower **would be considered “BSD”**. Refer to the LWDB Basic Skills Deficiency Policy for a detailed description of these

assessments, as well as for criteria for using Basic Skills Deficient as eligibility determinant. The LWDB approved Prove It assessments can be located at: <http://tompkinsskillup.metrixlearning.com/>

Interests:

Option 1 – O*NET Interest Profiler (available online at <https://www.careerzone.ny.gov/> - youth will be required to create a profile on Career Zone; if youth do not want to create a profile at this time, the same assessment tool can be located at: <https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>) – print a summary of the results for youth’s file. For youth ages 18+, it is recommended to create a profile with Job Zone (instead of Career Zone) – <https://www.jobzone.ny.gov> – the “Career Interest” profiler on Job Zone will produce similar results to the O*NET Interest Profiler.

Option 2 – Metrix NY Wired Skill Track Course Completion: “Discovering Your Strengths: Uncovering and Utilizing Your Talents and Skills” <http://tompkinsskillup.metrixlearning.com/> (Learning Objective ID: 52575; Course ID: apd_10_a01_bs_enus). This 20 minute online course covers techniques for identifying your unique capabilities, and outlines what you should include in a talent action plan to fully utilize and develop your key talents and skills. Print course completion record for youth’s file.

Option 3 – If youth can already identify a specific career interest, please use the American Job Center Network’s <https://www.myskillsmyfuture.org/Target.aspx> to explore that career and identify the skills and training that correspond with that career. Print record of results for youth’s file.

Occupational Skills & Prior Work Experience:

*Note: Occupational Skills refers to **employment related skills** (i.e. money handling, lifeguard certification, using computers/programs, etc.) that relate to specific job duties and responsibilities.*

Option 1 – Demonstrated work history via resume; record of certifications/licenses

Option 2 - Interview with youth to include description of past work experience, including volunteer work, “under the table” or gig work, subsidized and unsubsidized experiences.

Option 3 - Metrix NY Wired Skill Tracks course completion in desired career pathway (i.e. Healthcare, Manufacturing, Customer Service, etc.). Print record of course(s) completed and any corresponding badges earned for the youth’s file. <http://tompkinsskillup.metrixlearning.com/>

Employability:

*Note: Employability is based on **professional skills** (i.e. time management, communication, conflict resolution, etc.) to be determined by assessment, self-attestation, and/or ability to produce professional references.*

To determine a youth’s employability, staff must utilize one of the following options:

Option 1 – Demonstrated longevity in work history (i.e. participant has worked continuously for 6 mos.) as documented on youth’s resume and/or the youth can produce a work-related professional reference.

Option 2 – Career Zone Section 05 “Job Readiness”: Youth will self-attest to their skills which will generate a list of career options for their skill sets. <https://www.careerzone.ny.gov/> Youth ages 18+ can take the “Skills Survey” assessment at https://www.jobzone.ny.gov for a similar skills-based report.

Option 3 – Job Zone’s “My Employability Score” on <https://www.jobzone.ny.gov/> - This basic employment profile collects data related to employment prospects and weighs this data based on which factors contribute more heavily to employment. The higher the Employability Score, the greater your competitive advantage in the labor market. The Employability Score is based on how well a job-seekers’ employment profile matches their target occupation and labor market demand. Both positive and negative factors contributing to the Employability Score will be identified to determine what factors to target as well as potential barriers to the youth’s employability that will be to be addressed.

Aptitude:

Note: Aptitude measures the technical aspects of career readiness (i.e. level of suitability and/or fitness for specific tasks).

To determine a youth’s aptitude levels, staff must utilize one of the following options:

Option 1 – Record of training program completion, certification(s), license(s), or credential(s) needed for specific career pathways and/or occupations.

Option 2 – Career Zone Section 04 “Abilities” – youth will complete this self-assessment of a variety of abilities, including their Sensory Abilities, Physical Abilities, Psychomotor Abilities, and Cognitive Abilities. This tool will generate a list of career options based on the youth’s self-reported strengths. This tool can be found at: https://www.careerzone.ny.gov. For youth ages 18+, the Job Zone “Abilities Profiler” is appropriate for this purpose. This tool can be found at: https://www.jobzone.ny.gov. Records of completion can be printed for youth’s file.

Option 3 – Metrix NY Wired Career Pathways “Entry Level Pathway” Skills Rating: Youth will self-attest to their skill levels in required fields. If skill level is determined to have gaps needed for success, relevant Metrix NY Wired courses will be assigned. Records of completion can be printed for youth’s file. <http://tompkinsskillup.metrixlearning.com/>

Supportive Service Needs:

Supportive Services include barriers such as: housing, transportation, communication, childcare, clothing, and other needs. Staff will conduct an interview with youth to identify various barriers to employment based on youth’s self-attestation. Staff will use the local ISS form for recording of barriers and any supportive services provided should be documented in the youth’s paper file and in OSOS following the local WDB Supportive Services Policy.

Developmental Needs:

To determine a youth’s developmental needs, staff must utilize one of the following options:

Option 1 – Official documentation provided by school or medical professional (i.e. IEP documents or medical note from a licensed professional).

Option 2 – Conduct a brief mental health assessment using evidence-based assessment tools: Generalized Anxiety Disorder Survey (GAD-7) and the Depression Survey (PHQ-9). Results would determine a youth’s need for supportive services, referral to counseling, and/or general work readiness. Mild results (scoring between 0-5) would indicate that there is not a mental health barrier present at this time; moderate results (scoring between 6-10 points) would demonstrate that the youth are likely suitable for work placement but may need supports (requirements would include to attend a variety of skill-building workshops, referral to external services if needed, etc.); moderately severe-severe (scoring between 11-21 points) would demonstrate that the youth is not suitable for work placement at this time and need mental health referral first. The tools can be found at: <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/uploads/score-sheet-gad-7-anxiety-and-phq-9-depression.pdf> ; please maintain a record of the youths’ assessment in their file.

Option 3 – Conduct a thorough evaluation of the youth’s developmental needs using the Casey Life Skills Assessment tool. This tool will assess the youth’s skills in the following areas: daily living, self-care, relationships and communication, housing and money management, work and study life, career and education planning, and looking forward. Youths’ responses to the questions in this survey will identify areas of need for assignment to relevant workshop offerings, training and/or external referral services. This assessment tool can be found at: http://www.casey.org/media/CLS_assessments_LifeSkills.pdf; please maintain a record of the youth’s assessment in their file.

Strengths:

Determination of the youth’s strengths should be summarized from the completion of the above objective assessments. Staff should review the summary with the youth and add any additional comments the youth may wish to contribute. Staff observations may be recorded in the Strengths section of the local ISS but should be recorded as such (i.e. Staff observes that this youth demonstrates patience and perseverance in completion of online assessments.). Staff observations must be objective in nature and supported by youth approval (signature/date).

Individual Service Strategy Plan: Upon completion of all Objective Assessments, staff will be prompted on their form to complete an Individual Service Strategy Plan, which summarizes all of the “next steps” outlined from the Objective Assessments. Youth will complete a Certification to attest that the information provided is accurate to the best of their ability and that they agree to the steps outlined by the staff person in the ISS Plan.