



Bay Area Workforce Development Board

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YOUTH COUNCIL of the Bay Workforce Development Area

MEETING SUMMARY September 27, 2006

Present: Christopher East, Bob Guenther, Patty Nagle, Noel Ryder, Nancy Schopf, Richard Seidemann, Benjamin Villarruel, Dennis Dobberstein, Bob Kellogg, Kathryn Zavala, Ann Franz

Staff: Jim Golembeski, Betty Gregory-Paasch

Introductions were made and Mr. Golembeski opened the meeting. He explained the budget situation with the WIA Youth programs. Staff had overestimated the available WIA funds that would be carried in (unspent) from PY 2005 to PY 2006. The result is that there are no longer any unobligated Youth funds for the current year and efforts are being made to develop additional coordinated efforts to make sure that all enrolled youth will be served. Contractors have been very cooperative in working together to maintain the high quality of WIA Youth services in the Bay Area. There was general discussion about the current WIA Youth programs and how best to connect young people to the jobs in the regional economy.

Beyond that, the level of federal WIA funding is decreasing, and Wisconsin's relatively healthy economy reduces our share of the federal WIA funding. WIA allocations for 2006 represent a 21% decrease in funding from 2005. This trend is expected to continue into the next few years.

With reduced funding, the Bay Area WDB will not be able to continue to contract for the level of service that has been done in the past. It is the job of the Youth Council to help the WDB focus its efforts and prioritizing the needs of young people. [Note: At this point, contractors and other potential proposers left the meeting so as not to create a conflict of interest in determining the direction of WIA programs in the future.]

Mr. Golembeski began the discussion by distinguishing three levels of service and asking for feedback on how best to utilize available WIA Youth resources. Those three levels were:

1. **Broad Focus:** trying to reach the largest numbers of young people and youth service providers by making programs and services widely available.

Examples include, funding WISCareers or other career development programs and/or conducting regional conferences.

2. Middle Focus: targeting at-risk students who have the best chance to obtain a high school diploma. This has been a strong area for services in the past and would include supporting alternative high school initiatives.
3. Intensive Focus: Targeting the young people who are hardest-to-serve such as young people coming out of state juvenile corrections facilities.

Ms. Gregory-Paasch pointed out that the first option would be very difficult as a primary approach given the regulations of the WIA Youth program. Likewise, in order to achieve required program performance outcomes, it might be best not to focus solely on the most difficult young people, but balance service levels among several groups. Still, she indicated that the Bay Area WDB would likely use a more targeted Request for Proposals (RFP) in the future as opposed to the more open-ended one utilized in the past. The latter gave contractors more flexibility to determine the kinds of services they provide as opposed to the WDB requiring a very specific focus.

Dr. Kellogg spoke for the rural school districts and pointed out the needs such districts have as distinct from the needs of the urban school districts. He indicated that there is a real need for the Middle level of services to rural kids who can graduate with a little extra boost that the schools cannot always provide. He complimented the quality and focus of the services CESA #7 currently provides in his counties. It was also pointed out that having access to things such as WISCareers can benefit the credit-deficient students as well as other groups. Dr. Villarruel indicated the importance of the current program for expelled youth and youth who have committed expellable offenses, indicating the need for additional resources to provide more intensive intervention once a serious problem has occurred. There was discussion about determining the needs of the various subregions within the Bay Area and having different approaches that addressed those differences. Balancing resources between the Middle and Intensive options made sense.

Members asked for additional information about the number of WIA Youth being served in each contract and for program outcomes information. There was discussion about who else should have input into these discussions. Mr. Ryder brought up the subject of “youth aging out of foster care” as a population needing our attention. There was discussion about other at-risk groups such as teen parents. Members asked staff to pull together information about the numbers of teen parents, youth aging out of foster care, and credit deficient students.

Lastly, there was discussion about the value of funding a Youth Service Coordinator who would add value by connecting the variety of youth resources available in the Bay Area, creating economies in program efforts and reducing duplication of services.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.

The Youth Council will meet next on Wednesday, December 20, 2006.