

Pennsylvania Partners Technical Workgroup Meeting

May 7, 2008 - Hershey Lodge, Hershey, Pennsylvania

I. Welcome and Introductions

Deb Newton welcomed all attendees to the Technical Workgroup Meeting. Deb welcomed special guests Deputy Secretary Linda Blanchette and Ruth Ann Van Dyke from the Bureau of Employment and Training Programs. Attendees all introduced themselves, where they were from as well as their job title.

II. Work Certified Issues and Concerns

- A. *Criteria for Client Assignment*- There was discussion about criteria for client assignment to this program. Terri Cooley-Taylor (Corporate Supervisor from Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc.) spoke about how the program works in her area. The main criteria are teacher discretion and the use of a 6th grade reading level as the baseline. This leads to a very high success rate. Also mentioned was the attempt to keep class sizes low, below twelve when possible. It was also mentioned that Move-Up is utilizing the Work Certified Job Readiness Curriculum.

- B. *Publicity Techniques to Inform Employers of Certification*- There was also discussion about techniques and best practices for informing employers about the skill's credentialing process and how to share with employers the benefits of the credential. There were many suggestions as many individuals shared what they were doing in their area to inform employers. Some of the suggestions included using the Business Service Team and presentations through chambers of commerce as well as individual presentations to employers as often as the employers are willing to hear the presentations or host them. There was some concern mentioned about targeting employers with only skill credentialing programs, as it is important to make sure the employers know all that is being offered to them.

Linda Blanchette encouraged the group to begin tracking program retention, job wages, and increased jobs using these skill credentialing programs so that they can be evaluated for their effectiveness

III. CWDS

There was significant discussion on the CWDS system. There was a concern expressed that feedback and requests to the helpdesk are not being responded to in a timely manner. There was also concern about CWDS/CIS not operating in concert at all times in all areas which could be potentially an issue with performance data.

Linda Blanchette indicated that currently DPW is looking at the statewide capacity of CWDS as well as the reporting capabilities. Specifically she mentioned the possible capabilities of the training and standard reporting systems in CWDS.

Ruth Ann indicated that DPW will be doing training specifically focused on CWDS as part of the Annual Guidelines series of training.

There was a question from the group about the confidential capabilities of CWDS to allow the use of the case note features in CWDS.

There was a concern about the use of Ad-Hoc reporting and the fact that there are few individuals who are able to access that feature with much success in many of the areas.

Linda Blanchette mentioned refresher training for individuals working with CWDS given by BETP. The group indicated that such training would be well received.

****Note:** Please respond to survey questionnaire (separate attachment) regarding specific CWDS problem areas or report capabilities. Your input will be shared with BETP.

IV. Jodi Sue Kelly

There was a great deal of discussion about Jodi Sue Kelly coming to individual areas to provide specialized training and assistance to the individual areas. Pittsburgh (contact persons include Manager Judy Hill Finegan and Supervisor Deidra Cochran) shared in detail their experiences and the changes that Jodi Sue made in their area. One such change was to focus on “How to increase income to the family” as opposed to simply getting a job. They also invited individuals to come see how the program was working with the changes. As part of the discussion Linda Blanchette commented on becoming more client focused and focusing beyond the traditional barriers to employment. Linda indicated that DPW would like to encourage a holistic approach to the client.

V. Communication with CAO's.

Most individuals in attendance indicated that they were not having issues with the CAO offices in their area and that they were working closely on issues. There was one area that indicated that they were having some difficulty and that Jodi Sue was able to focus on that as well.

VI. Posting of Guidelines and State Performance Data

There was a question about posting the guidelines prior to annual training for review and Ruth Ann indicated that would be possible to do. Also, there was a question about posting statewide performance data back on the Inspiritec website. It was mentioned that this practice had already resumed.

VII. Performance Based Contracting

Cheryl Davis and Bryon Noon joined the meeting for this discussion.

It was indicated that Performance Based Contracting was an initiative of the Governor's office and that the design was to encourage areas to reach out and connect to other resources in their communities and leverage support and resources. This again ties into a more holistic approach to meeting the needs of the individuals.

The contracts will be cost reimbursement as of July 1st with the possibility of incentive based payments for high performance and performance based reimbursement to follow at some point later in the year.

The main thing to remember with the contracting is the goal to encourage capacity building within the system. This includes managing the system to get outcomes and coordinating services in a strategic manner.

Areas need to be thinking about what they can do on a local level. Cheryl indicated that areas need to provide solid data showing that the areas are being innovative and working to meet goals. If they are able to do that then that gives DPW the chance to advocate for their needs. She also encouraged the areas to talk with their local legislators about their needs and the good work they are doing as this could be another tough budget year.

The process will include the following steps:

- A. Environmental Analysis of the Caseload
- B. Performance and Measures
- C. 3 Page Budget Document

This information has been shared with fiscal agents and other stakeholders and DPW will be coming to LMC meetings as well as providing more information as we move into the rest of the spring and early summer.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 2008 TO BE HELD IN STATE COLLEGE.