



YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, October 9, 2013
Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board
439 South Union Street
Lawrence, MA 01843

Youth Council MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Allen, April Lyskowsky, Steve Noroian, Brad Howell, Megan Shea, Michael Strem, Beverly DeSalvo, Linda Piergeorge, Ellen Weinhold, Cal Williams

MVWIB Youth Council MEMBERS ABSENT:

Marina Acosta, Janet Allison, Francisco Brea, Irene Chalek, Arthur Chilingirian, Tom Connors, Ed Fitzgerald, Barbara Richards, Donna Rivera, Ed Warnshuis

MVWIB STAFF PRESENT:

Cristy Gomez, Mary Kivell

I. Call to Order and Introductions

A quorum being present, Cal Williams called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. and introductions were made around the table.

II. Approval of September 11, 2013 Minutes

Cal then called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2013 meeting.

Motion by Megan Shea, seconded by Howard Allen, to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2013 Youth Council minutes as submitted. Motion passed.

III. Youth Programs Updates

Christy mentioned the following items.

- a) National Manufacturing Day Youth Tour
- b) STEM @ Scale Proposal Partnership
- c) Development of this year's Youth Programs

Some were discussed in detail as follows.

Youth Workforce Program Manager Cristy Gomez said that the latest newsletter is in the meeting packets and that she would provide a summary of what has transpired since the last meeting.

She said that we received year round funding for YouthWorks and will serve kids from Lawrence, Methuen and Haverhill. We plan to serve 50 in school youth and 60 out of school.

We received BOG funding to serve 20 DYS youth. They will participate in 10 hours of orientation and a minimum of 10 career readiness and youth development sessions. The first cycle of 10 started this week.

Cristy also said that through Connecting Activities we will continue to educate students about the MA Future Ready Campaign's three key messages: Start Now; Aim High; and Look Beyond.

The Pathways funding will continue to support youth from the classes of 2003-2014 who require further assistance to pass the MCAS.

Cristy continued by stating that MVWIB and Career Center staff have met with several Lawrence High School staff including the Head Master and Assistant Head Master to familiarize them with our programs. As part of National Manufacturing Day, the Career Center and the MVWIB took 31 Lawrence High School Students on a manufacturing tour Friday, October 4th, 2013. They visited Arwood Machine Corporation in Newburyport and Mainstream Global. Students were selected by guidance counselors as having an interest in the manufacturing field. We provided the transportation and lunch.

Cristy said that we also released a RFP to replicate Haverhill's Students Need a Plan (SNAP) program for seniors at risk of not graduating high school. It was very successful in Haverhill so we have now opened it up to bid by other Merrimack Valley communities.

Cristy said that on Wednesday, November 13, 2013 the Massachusetts STEM Summit 2013 will take place at the Gillette Stadium. Cal mentioned that because that is the date of the next Youth Council meeting he would like to move the date up one week to Wednesday, November 20th at 11:30 am. There were no objections so it was agreed to have the next Youth Council meeting on November 20th.

Cristy then said that we are partnering with Metro North WIB on a new program called Future Cities for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders on STEM Careers. She said that the program is at Lawrence Family Development Charter School (LFDCS) and students get to go to Northern Essex Community College. She said that she doesn't have all the details but will report further at next meeting.

Howard Allen then spoke about the WGBH Nova program which has a whole education department specific to STEM programming and they are working to bring it into grammar schools. Nova is a real teaching program with vignettes of 20-30 minutes that can be brought into the classroom through Smart boards. Steel Case Company is bringing a Smart room to a Salem charter school which will be the lead for the whole area (Mass/NH) for others to come in and see a smart room. Students will be able to

learn in these rooms by rearranging the room with ease into theatre style or separate out into teams. Howard said that this is where the STEM initiative is taking us. He said that Mexico has spent \$500m on this technology and Brazil and South America are also clients of Steel Case which is located in Chicago.

IV. DCS Title I Program System Certification (Oct. 21-25)

Cristy said that every year we must answer a questionnaire and the state monitors our system and reviews records. The DCS Title I System Certification monitoring will be from October 21-25, 2013. They look at programs, outcomes, eligibility, the fiscal system, and the support services system. Once the monitoring is complete, we will be notified of their findings.

V. Partner's Information

Denise Perrault said that there will be a Science Night at Greater Lawrence Technical High School on Friday, October 18, 2013 from 4:00 – 8:00 pm and it will have an Astronaut in attendance. This event is free and will have Latin food and prizes. She handed out a flyer.

Megan Shea wondered about WIA allocations and how many ITAs we have. Cristy said that all of the youth funding was allocated last year. She would have to check on the number of ITAs currently. Megan asked if there was any news about sequestration and Cristy said not at this time.

Ellen Weinhold asked about the people receiving UI and cited a case of someone who was unemployed but not getting their UI. Cristy said that the State changed the way to file a claim. It was changed from when they used to be. Previously, people were able to walk in to a Career Center and get help opening a claim. Now people must file their own claim via the internet or by phone. The new program is called UI On-line. People can currently come into the Career Center and use one of their computer but they must try to open their own claim. Some people currently receive some help if they don't know how to use a computer or read English. Howard Allen spoke about the process as he recently assisted someone in opening their claim. He said that it is not too involved but some questions are uncertain and you need to be able to read and understand English and use a computer.

Mike Strem asked Howard if he sees any long term changes to curricula through the STEM initiative and if school committees are approving the changes. Howard said at the Salem charter school there are 5 UNH graduates age 26-27 who have their master's in education and are teaching grammar school. They are teaching the new math which is basically teaching how to think. Students are learning Algebra in the 3rd grade. Mike asked whether local school boards approve changes and Howard said charter schools are not under a local school board.

He said that STEM changes have been made over the year with MCAS adjustments in certain states with populations not educated in that area. Howard then spoke about the Rotary partnership at the Guilmette School in Lawrence where 30% of 5th graders cannot read/write English. Charter school students are chosen by lottery and 30% enter reading below grade level and are reading by the end of the year.

Beverly DeSalvo said that the student/teacher ratio is lower in charter schools. She spoke about a one to one initiative where freshman/sophomore teachers have been given Mac books and the students will be getting I-Pads next year. She said that she supports this initiative but as the Vocational Technical Counselor at Whittier at the end of the day the employment piece is still a big gap.

Megan Shea opined that with youth unemployment rate at 27%, youth don't have the face to face experience or people skills for interviewing and getting jobs. Cal Williams agreed as a retired HR person. He said youth employability is a nightmare as they often don't have the soft skills. Cal spoke about going into the schools in the past and talking to youth about what is expected by employers. Ellen Weinhold spoke about her experience with the summer youth and how they learned to call in when absent and the need to be on time. She said that they have a strict texting and cell phone policy as some of the youth were operating maintenance equipment. Cristy said that this year the year round program requires 20 hours of workshops so the youth will be ready to work.

Discussion followed on the lack of social skills in today's youth and the ramifications of technology where they don't even make eye contact. Denise Perrault said that all job applications are on line today and some are very difficult to navigate. Ellen Weinhold then said that she had raffle tickets available for a toy John Deere tractor to benefit the Christensen Community & Family Support Center.

Beverly DeSalvo said that she is pleased to report that Whittier has 40 students enrolled in a Robotic Club and they are looking forward to competing.

VI. Adjournment

Having no further business Megan Shea made a motion to adjourn seconded by Howard Allen. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kivell

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Recorder