

Board of Vocational Rehabilitation
March 30/31, 2017

AmericInn, Ft. Pierre

Members present: Chuck Quinn, Beth Schiltz, Jolleen Laverdure, Lisa Sanderson, Darla McGuire, Kendra Gottsleben, Kim Hoberg, Joe Vetch, Chad Maxon and Patty Kuglitsch. **Members absent:** Cole Uecker, Colleen Moran, Thore Jenshus, and Peter Bullene. **Others present:** Bernie Grimme, Dr. Cooch, Dr. LaDuke-Pelster, Dan Rounds, and Colette Wagoner. **Interpreters:** Julie Paluch and Rick Norris.

OPENING ACTIONS: Patty Kuglitsch, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:20 pm and invited everyone to introduce themselves. Approval of the Agenda: Patty asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda; there were none.

MOTION MADE (M) TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS MAILED, MOTION SECONDED (S), AND CARRIED (C). Patty moved to the December 2016 meeting minutes, asking for any changes. Two edits were made correcting the spelling of names found on pages one and eight, **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CHANGED, SC.** Next, she referred to the Executive Committee minutes from February 24, 2017. Two funding recommendations were noted: 1) \$2,000 to support East Dakota Educational Cooperative, Teachwell Solutions, to send staff to the Project SEARCH 11th Annual International Conference in Pennsylvania in July; and 2) \$2,000 to support presenter fees for the 2017 Lighting the Way Conference. Lisa stated that Parent Connection submitted the request for Lighting the Way, so she would abstain from the vote. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AND THE TWO FUNDING REQUESTS, SC.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Eric touched on Monte Tschetter's passing. He explained that Monte was serving on the Statewide Independent Living Council at the time. He served on the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation from 2003 – 2009. Monte served in various capacities on each (Chairperson, Vice Chair and Member At Large), as well as worked full time with Social Security and part time with Lutheran Social Services. Next, staff passed around a "Thank You" note received from the Watertown Mayor's Committee for their support of the "Spencer Speaks" event held in February.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were none.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS/COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS: Eric spoke of the vocational rehabilitation agency goals, which outline independent living and

employment goals for individuals with disabilities. There are laws/regulations in place which stipulate the need for specific partnerships, in addition to many other partnerships that intertwine: community support providers, centers for independent living, mental health centers, and private providers. These partnerships are important to the long term success of individuals with disabilities. The working relationship with the Department of Labor and Regulation has increased as called for under the new requirements under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA). He noted working with the five tribal Native American Vocational Rehabilitation programs in the state, through constant interactions of staff and programs. The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired is a separate division in our state, whereas in some states these programs are combined. The two divisions share a case management services system, share resources, and partner on various activities in the state, e.g., NDEAM, Governor's Awards, solicitation for nominations. There are membership requirements for different entities to increase capacity and the interactions of various boards/councils (BVR member serve on the SILC and Workforce Development Council; Division staff serve on the Behavioral Mental Health Advisory Council, Council on Developmental Disabilities). Transition age youth have been served by collaborative efforts between the Divisions and the Department of Education, now serving upwards of 400-500 students annually, e.g., Project Skills, Project SEARCH, Youth Leadership Forum, Catch the Wave. The Transition Services Liaison Project is co-funded by the Department of Education and the two VR agencies.

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION – INTRODUCTION OF POST SECONDARY EDUCATION INDICATOR 14 SURVEY AND RESULTS: Beth Schiltz explained that Indicator 14 is a survey that looks at “exiters” - students who were on an IEP (at the time they left high school). They left high school by either graduating with a diploma, aging out or dropping out. The survey is disseminated by mail. If the response rate isn't high enough telephone calls can be placed to obtain a higher response rate. Beth introduced Dr. Cooch to speak to the survey results. General comments were made about the number of years the survey has been conducted and areas that have been improved. One example included the involvement of school districts and staff in assisting with obtaining survey responses (improved contact with students). Students are grouped in five different tiers.

- Tier 1) Higher education: students who enrolled in Post-Secondary school either full or part time, completed at least one term and were enrolled in a University or Community College (2 year)
- Tier 2) Competitive Employment: students who work for pay, have worked a total of 3 months or more since leaving school, have worked for at least 20 hours per

week with others who are non-disabled, were paid at least minimum wage and did not appear in Tier 1. Includes exiters who are in the military.

- Tier 3) Other post-secondary education or training: students who have ever enrolled in a post-secondary school either full or part time, completed at least one term in a program that is less than 2 years. This includes vocational/technical programs, vocational training programs, and job corps.
- Tier 4) some other Employment: students who have worked for pay for at least 90 days since exiting the K-12 system. This includes the following types of settings: family members business, working while incarcerated, sheltered or supported employment, competitive employment in a training capacity.
- Tier 5) Disengaged: students who did not meet the definitions to be included in Tiers 1, 2, 3, or 4.

Dr. Cooch referred to a PowerPoint and provided the definitions for higher education, competitive employment and other post-secondary education or training.

The 2014-15 exiter data had 418 total responses out of a total of 653 exiters - of which 15.5% were enrolled in higher education; 67.5% were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed; and 81% were enrolled in higher education or in some other post-secondary education or training programs; or competitively employed or in some other employment. Seventy-five of the respondents were not engaged. Of these, 56 of them had gone onto some post-secondary, however, they didn't complete the semester for whatever reason, or they didn't work the minimum of 20 hours a week for a ninety day period out of the year. South Dakota's data reflects that the majority of exiters are competitively employed. When looking at different data sets, Dr. Cooch explained that persons with Emotional Disturbance category was the most positive he has seen than in years past. Native Americans respondents not engaged was at a 15% rate, which is better than years' past. A general statement was made that the more activities a student is involved with during high school years, the more likely the student will be engaged down the road. Dr. Cooch explained that if the student is participating in activities such as Project Skills, YLF, Catch the Wave, or self-determination, the student is 1.7% times more likely to be engaged as an adult. Overall, the more independent variables offered to the student, the better the engagement rate for the student. Other noted highlights:

- In 2014-15 South Dakota had the largest percentage (60.8%) of students considered to be competitively employed since data has been collected for Indicator 14 (2008-09);
- There has been a 15.5% increase in competitive employment this year (2014-15) from baseline year 45.3% to 60.8%;

A question was asked regarding the ability to extract information on students who are deaf to determine if things are improving for this population. Dr. Cooch explained that in previous years, the data indicated yes. Now with the closure of the School for the Deaf and students being mainstreamed, and the number of deaf students responding is so low that he cannot answer this question. Beth shared the website link "Post School Outcomes Survey Website" <https://www.sdposthighsurvey.org/> if people want more information.

TRANSITION TOPICS: Dan Rounds introduced the Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP) and explained that it was a product of a systems change grant. The project is co-funded by the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services & Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Office of Special Education. Its purpose is to provide technical assistance to transition age students and families, local education agencies and other providers. Dan identified the other staff as well as the territory each serves. Activities were outlined with background on each, e.g., Youth Leadership Forum; Catch the Wave, Project Skills, transition forums, website, and trainings. A newer session introduced in November "Let's Talk About Work!" was held in Sioux Falls. This was a collaborative effort involving TSLP, VR, DOLR, Business Resource Network, and Division of Developmental Disabilities staff. It had 143 participants. More of these events will be conducted in 2017. TSLP staff are also involved in "monitoring" with the Department of Education for quality assurance in which staff join education specialists in reviewing IEP files. A checklist is utilized to ensure quality assurance and in 2016/17, fifty schools were reviewed. The project hosted training for post-secondary institutions' disability services staff in May 2016. Training focused on service/comfort animal policies and accommodations. The next training will be held May 24, 2017. A question was asked about the Youth Leadership Forum regarding the number of applicants (93) and the number of students selected (48 with 5 alternates) and if anything is offered to those not accepted. Dan explained the selection process (every applicant is interviewed), and provided some examples of applicants. Some applicants are only in the 9th grade, and have 3 or more years to apply again. Some students are not ready yet (maturity), some students are applying because of a school assignment and don't want to attend. Other opportunities are available for youth through Centers for Independent Living and other providers, e.g., transition week. A comment was made that South Dakota should be proud of the high number of delegates attending when compared to other states. It was noted that Department of Education provided funding last year for a "self-determination" group consisting of YLF delegates. The students met by conference call and face to face, worked on presentations, and most recently several students presented at the Special Education Conference.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Eric provided this report. He explained that the Governor signed an executive order which will add a new division under the Department of Human Services – Division of Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) which was formerly Adult Services and Aging, a Division under the Department of Social Services. This will become effective April 12 and impacts approximately 100 staff, of which 15 are in Pierre. The remaining staff are located across the state. Now all Medicaid Waivers will be located under one department which will hopefully improve efficiencies. A question was asked about the Aging and Disability Resource Connections (ADRCs) and if it will also move. The response was yes. A comment was added that this piece could be added to the Division of Developmental Disabilities Life Span folder or as a searchable database depending on future changes. Yvette Thomas will be the LTSS Division Director.

Division Budget: The Division is in the budget request cycle again. The budget request will contain a request for an increase in federal authority for Disability Determination Services (DDS) which is a 100% federally funded program. Small increases were requested for the ADLS Waiver, provider inflation and an increase to expand the interpreter mentoring program. Federal authority will also be sought for the Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit, part of SSA. This will be an employee of DDS, who will investigate fraud among SSI/SSDI cases. The Division is also seeking spending authority to provide interpreter services for entities which have no obligations under state or federal regulations (i.e., churches, funerals). If approved the Division would need to create procedures to provide these services.

The Division had no increase in budget request for the VR program (needed state funds are sufficient to match federal dollars for expected expenditures). It is required to match state funds with federal funds (78.8% federal funds to 21.3% state funds). He commented on the national front that it is too soon to make any projections or outline any changes that may impact programs and services.

South Dakota legislative session wrapped up earlier this week with Monday designated as gubernatorial veto day. Session was a real challenge with the projected revenue shortfall. There was no wage increase for state employees. There was very little provider inflation. House Bill (HB) 1149 was an act to revise the tax on telecommunication services and devices (to reduce the access fee of fifteen cents per phone/cell phone/pager bill to thirteen cents). These funds are utilized to provide Telecommunication Relay Services and other equipment to individuals who are deaf or have other disabilities. Revenue for this program has gone down the last five years and expenditures have increased. The bill was passed by both the Senate and House, vetoed by the Governor, and the veto was upheld.

SOLICITATION FOR BOARD NOMINATIONS: Staff reported that the solicitation for BVR/SILC/BSBVI nominations was disseminated March 3rd with a due date of March 31st. In addition to the mailing of the solicitation packet, information was also posted on various websites. Three vacancies will occur on the board as of June 30th. Six members' terms expire; however, they are interested and eligible for re-appointment. Three nominations have been received to date. Eric encouraged members to nominate individuals who would be interested and able to serve on the board.

MOTION TO ADJOURN FOR THE EVENING, SC.

MEETING RECONVENED AT 8:20 AM. Patty called the meeting to order and invited everyone to re-introduce themselves.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Kendra shared a flyer highlighting the Center for Disabilities Symposium "Connecting the Dots: Creating Pathways of Opportunities" which will be held in Sioux Falls on September 10-12, 2017. Patty announced the South Dakota Association of the Deaf will host their annual conference in Deadwood June 30 through July 2nd.

VR PROGRAM INITIATIVES: Bernie provided flyers for the Fall Conference "Building Bridges on a Solid Foundation" which will be held in Pierre October 2-4, 2017. Tracks will feature vocational rehabilitation, transition, and independent living topics. This year the Department of Labor and Regulation is sending staff, so attendance is expected to be over 300. Again, if members are interested in attending please contact staff. Establishment grants: The first round of grants were issued January 2015 to expand the service capacity of Community Support Providers and Mental Health Centers to help individuals move out of sheltered workshops and young students move into competitive work experiences. This round resulted in nine grants being issued which resulted in 12 positions being added, with 249 clients served. The second round issued in January 2016 resulted in 5 additional grants issued with 141 individuals receiving services and 29 clients employed. Staff turnover has been high with these providers. The Division conducted training sessions for provider staff on different topics mostly by webinars, which are recorded and can be watched later. Average webinar attendance reaches approximately 50 individuals. The training sessions started with informational topics, moving into "hands on" topics, and then working directly with individuals with disabilities at various worksites. The Division offers training to assist provider staff with obtaining certification. Once certified, providers can earn a 25% higher

reimbursement rate. As of today, 86 providers have passed certification. The provider exam is offered twice a year in which 15-20 providers participate.

Section 511 – Sheltered Workshop & Sub-minimal Wage: Bernie explained the changes in regulations which were effective July 22, 2016. Schools can no longer contract for students with disabilities to do subminimal wage. They have to explore competitive integrated employment options first. Youth with disabilities who are 24 and younger can no longer start sub-minimum wage positions until they have had experiences with pre employment opportunities and other transition services. This also impacted individuals who were working in sub minimal wage positions before the regulation change. These 1,000 individuals will now have periodic reviews. The majority of reviews have been completed, and 75 individuals were referred to VR. The reviews are showing that a large percentage of these individuals have guardians, who are contacted as part of the review process.

Annual case file review: A review is conducted annually; and this year it will be held April 18-20 in Pierre. Approximately 330 cases will be reviewed; samples are pulled at different stages of the VR process. Seventeen staff will work in a computer lab, since the majority of information and review tools utilized are in electronic format. This provides training for staff involved looking at consistencies across the state. The random samples of cases include: successful closures, unsuccessful closures, and ineligibilities.

EMPLOYMENT WORKS INITIATIVES: Kim Hoberg provided this update. 2017 Summer Vocational Rehabilitation Initiatives. DRS and SBVI will provide funding opportunities for two initiatives. 1) pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities and 2) employer based work experiences for VR participants. Proposals are due March 31. Business led organizations: Sioux Falls Business Resource Network and the Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills both provide education, awareness, and support to local businesses on hiring, maintaining, and retaining individuals with disabilities. The Division provided start-up funds to other communities in 2016 to start similar initiatives (Aberdeen, Brookings, and Yankton). Each of the three communities has identified a name, steering committee, host regular meetings, and have provided training. It is the Division's intent to extend these three community initiatives one more year. The Division is bringing Dinah Cohen, Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN), to South Dakota the first part of June. Most of the business led organizations mentioned above will be hosting the training events, so Ms. Cohen will be in Aberdeen, Brookings, Yankton, and Sioux Falls. EARN provides training on disability and diversity-related topics, e.g., recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities.

Business Specialist Activities: Kim has facilitated 87 business contacts (new and existing). Examples include working with a large employer providing options to receive ADA training; provided information and resources to a bank (that has locations in 22 different communities within the state) on mandatory reporting forms regarding discriminating and general diversity reporting set by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). Monthly meetings have been scheduled with the human resources recruiting specialist to continue the partnership and review job openings. **Ability for Hire Initiative:** The Division continues working with Epicosity on the Ability for Hire initiative. The current contract will end May 31st and will be renegotiated for one more year. Website analytics include a total of 6,766 users visiting the website of which 6,713 are new visitors. Social media analytics from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 a total of 1,149,918 impressions occurred (number of times content associated with the Facebook page has been displayed). There are a total of 4,281 fans, and 6,553 users have actively engaged in the posts on the pages. Women between the ages of 25-34 appear to be the leading force on the social media page. The two employer testimonials that were shown at a previous meeting are featured on the website and each has been viewed at a high rate, e.g., Pizza Ranch/ 82,000 video views, and Rick's Body Shop/ 25,000 video views. **Presentations:** Kim presented at South Dakota Retailers Association annual conference in January on hiring/retaining employees with disabilities and what services are available to businesses in SD. Other activities she will participate in include: Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) State Conference (May 3-5 in Pierre); and the Bureau of Human Resource (BHR) Leadership Conference (Sep 27-28 in Pierre). **Project Skills:** The Division continues efforts to expand Project Skills within state government, which offers paid work experience opportunities for high school students with disabilities. A similar work experience for adults with disabilities is entitled the "Employment Skills Program" is also expanding. For FFY2017, the Division established a goal of achieving work experiences for 11 individuals, presently there are eight individuals working in various state agencies, e.g., DOLR, BHR, DRS/SBVI, SD Public Broadcasting, and the Developmental Center in Redfield. **South Dakota Retailers Association (SDRA):** Kim showed SDRA's video that was put together as part of their involvement with the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) initiative entitled "Getting Down to Business". Three employers were featured along with interviews from the three employees with a disability. This initiative aimed to increase workplace inclusion.

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS: The nomination packet has been finalized and will be disseminated throughout the state on April 3rd. The nomination forms are also available on various websites in pdf or Word format. Members were reminded that a committee made up of BVR/SILC and BSBVI members review the nomination forms and process. The committee convened shortly after the last awards ceremony

was held and updated the forms. Positive comments were made about the awards ceremony, members feeling that it has improved over the years. Division staff mentioned that with the Fall Conference being held in Pierre in October, they will try to schedule the Governor to speak at the luncheon and present the awards during this event. Staff asked for volunteers to serve on the review committee. Lisa, Joe, and Jolleen each agreed to serve in this role.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL UPDATE: Chuck was absent so Bernie provided some highlights from the meeting held on March 21st. Jennifer Geuther, IL Program Specialist, was introduced. The 704 Report is the annual report completed for the Administration for Community Living and includes information from each center. This electronic reporting system is a new system and is a work in progress. The RFP process for support services for the BVR and SILC concludes the end of this month. The Division will complete the Centers for Independent Living (CIL) reviews by the end of March; this is the responsibility of the designated state entity (division) per the State Plan for Independent Living. Each CIL provided reports on activities including the Home Modification Adaptive Devices Program, ramp program, consumer satisfaction survey, independent living services, and funding sources. In response to the SILC's assistive technology report, the department convened an advisory group which met in early December. The group is focusing on funding gaps, potential remote monitoring, and marketing and training on the use of AT for independent living needs. Reports were provided by D/SBVI and SILC staff on various activities and programs. The SILC Congress was held in January and staff and a member attended. The CIL staff training will be held May 1-3, and an invitation is extended to the Native American VR Programs and Adult Services and Aging staff.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES: Eric introduced Brooke Lusk, and talked about the partnership that the Division has had with Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC). BHSSC provides a number of services including the SD Benefits Specialist Network. The Benefit Specialist Network was created in 2001 and is funded by the Social Security Administration and the Division. There are six benefit specialists who serve the entire state. The benefit specialists assist SSI and SSDI beneficiaries to better understand how employment will affect their benefits. Over 70% of referrals come from VR, and the remainder comes from CSPs, MHC, schools, and a few self referrals. Brooke talked about work incentives that exist to help support people as they choose to move into greater levels of self-sufficiency. She spoke to the fear of losing health insurance for people who are on SSI or SSDI and exploring employment. Individuals who receive SSI and Medicaid can earn up to \$35,903 in 2017 without losing Medicaid, which provides health

coverage. Staff provides work incentives training which targets provider and state agency staff who work with beneficiaries. These trainings are coming up in April and May. Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities (MAWD) is a program that grew out of a Medicaid Infrastructure grant, established in 2006. It provides personal attendant care in the workplace and created the Medicaid Buy In program. To be eligible for the program, the person must be working, paying FICA taxes, unearned income is less than \$755 per month, and earned income limit is 250% of FPL (%5,110 gross) and assets are less than \$8,000. MAWD allows those working to receive Medicaid, allows higher earnings and resource limits than regular Medicaid. There are 300-400 individuals on the program at any one time. To apply for MAWD, individuals would contact the Department of Social Services, DRS or SBVI or a benefit specialist.

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH: Staff reported that a review committee made up of BVR/SILC and B/SBVI members met last week to review 12 community funding proposals. The community requests totaled \$20,893.33 and the committee's funding recommendation was for \$18,760.00. Ellsworth Airforce Base was a community that asked for \$250 in support of an event. It was shared that Ellsworth might join with the Rapid City event, and more information is needed to fully consider this request. Two community proposals were reduced (Sioux Falls and Vermillion), monies for giveaway items and encouraging asking other partners to provide the funding for these needs. Funding from the board was discussed as well as other possible funding from the Board of SBVI and the SILC. **MOTION TO APPROVE UP TO \$13,000 IN SUPPORT OF THE 2017 NDEAM EVENTS, SC.**

CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY: Bernie introduced this topic and had a PowerPoint. He described the Consumer Satisfaction Survey as a function of the Board per federal regulations "to conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction..." Division staff worked with the Board's Consumer Services Committee which created the survey in 2001. Changes included the survey being simplified, asking six questions with a 5 point scale rating and disseminated via a postcard at the end of each quarter. There are three separate surveys which are distributed at three different phases of their VR program. Individuals return the postage paid postcard or complete the survey on line or call a 1-800 number.

CLOSIG ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: election of officers typically takes place during the June meeting. Scheduling Next Meeting: There was discussion of hosting the meeting by DDN or face to face. After further discussion, consensus was hosting a face to face meeting in Pierre/Ft. Pierre with trying to obtain the dates of

June 21/22, Wednesday/Thursday as the first choice. Thank yous were expressed for members traveling to Ft. Pierre and their participation in the meeting, and safe travels home. **MOTION TO ADJORN AT 11:35 AM, SC.**