

**Board of Vocational Rehabilitation**  
**March 28 – 29, 2018**  
**AmericInn of Ft. Pierre**

**Members Present:** Eric Weiss, Cole Uecker, Chuck Quinn, Beth Schiltz, Jolleen Laverdure, Lisa Sanderson, Kristi Eisenbraun, Kendra Gottsleben, Kim Hoberg, Colleen Moran, Brad Konechne, Patty Kuglitsch and Bill McEntaffer; **Members Excused Absence:** Joe Vetch and Pete Bullene; **Others present:** Lyle Cook, Director of Cheyenne River Tribal VR Program; Faye LaDuke-Pelster, Associate Professor, BHSU; Mitchell Close, DRS Program Specialist; Shelly Pfaff, BVR Staff and Interpreters – Rick Norris and Julie Paluch.

**OPENING ACTIONS:** Lisa, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:10 pm. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Lisa asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Hearing none – **MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED – MADE (M), SECONDED (S) AND CARRIED (C).** REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MINUTES – Lisa asked if there were any changes to the draft minutes. Kim noted a minor change on the first page “be” needing to be changed to “by”. Hearing no others – **MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER MINUTES AS AMENDED – MSC.** Patty joined the meeting at this point and accepted the gavel as Chairperson. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MARCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES – Patty asked for any changes. Hearing none – **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MARCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES – MSC.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Lisa handed out information on three different upcoming events – (1) Lighting the Way – Solutions for Success: Diagnosis Through Adulthood to be held in June at Augustana University; (2) Serving on Groups That Make Decisions, which is being held in Sioux Falls and Rapid City in April and early May; and (3) Lunch and Learn Education Session scheduled for May 8<sup>th</sup>. She invited members to share this information with others and encourage their participation.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Patty asked if anyone present wished to make public comments at this time. Seeing and hearing none – she moved on with the agenda.

**DIVISION DIRECTOR’S REPORT:** Eric Weiss began his report by thanking members for their commitment and involvement in carrying out the work of the board. He apologized for the fact that he was going to have to leave the meeting later today for another commitment that was unavoidable. BVR NOMINATIONS – Eric briefly explained this process and encouraged members to share related information with others and to encourage them to consider having their names submitted for nomination. He explained that there is only one vacancy at this time. In response to a

question from the Board, Eric noted that DRS has contacted past nominees at times to see if they would be willing to be considered again. FORMER BVR MEMBER – Eric provided an update on Tim Neyhart, a former member, who has been battling some significant health matters and is someone known by many of the current members. DRS BUDGET – He reported that the FY18 budget is expected to be over expended; yet it will not be over expended as much as the budgets of the past couple of years. In response to a question from a board member, Eric does not see any cut in services resulting, nor does he see the agency needing to go under an Order of Selection. The FY19 budget, which was a result of the recently concluded legislative session, resulted in DRS receiving additional federal and other fund authority. This assists them in meeting the needs of those served. Other legislative activity during the recent session did not directly affect the vocational rehabilitation program. SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FUNDS – At the last meeting, Eric had reported that due to pending decisions at the federal level, South Dakota was probably going to be losing \$300,000 in funding for supported employment services. With the recently passed budget, which carries the federal budget through the end of September, they are hearing that they will be receiving supported employment funding. They are waiting to see what the actual outcome will be. TRAINING – Next Eric ran down a variety of upcoming opportunities which will provide training to their staff and others e.g., case file review in April; customized employment training; Youth Leadership Forum; new counselor training in June; new support staff training in July; and Fall Conference in October).

At this time, it was noted that there had not been introductions. Patty asked everyone to introduce themselves and say what their plans were for Easter.

**CORE INDICATOR 14 REPORT:** Beth Schiltz, Department of Education/Office of Special Education, and Faye LaDuke-Pelster, Associate Professor, School of Education at BHSU, provided this report. Beth shared some history of this survey and the report provided to the BVR. She further explained additional information available on the SD Post High Survey website and invited members to access this site for additional information. Faye continued this report by providing information specifically on Indicator 14 2015-2016 Data. Contents of this presentation were: (1) definitions of measurements A, B, and C; (2) Definition of Tiers 1-5; (3) 2015-2016 Findings for Tiers 1-5 and Measurements A, B, and C; (4) 2016 Targets vs. 2016 Findings; (5) NPSO Data Display Template; (6) NPSO Response Calculator 2015-2016; (7) Multi-year Comparison of Tiers 1-5; and (8) Summary Comments. Following the completion of the presentation, a lengthy dialogue took place concerning what inferences might be drawn from this data, as well as how the survey might be changed to result in additional data that would be helpful for the board and others as they seek to support

youth with disabilities reaching their career goals. Patty thanked Beth and Faye for their presentation.

A fifteen-minute break was taken at this time.

**VR INITIATIVES:** Due to Bernie Grimme, DRS Assistant Director, being unable to participate today, Kim Hoberg provided this report. TRANSITION ACTIVITIES – DRS is doing a one-year contract with the Aberdeen School District to assist them in re-establishing the “Transition Learning Campus” (see attached). The program is for students with disabilities ages 18 – 21; it will start in the Fall of 2018 on the campus of Northern State University. Funding in the amount of \$19,000 will be used towards Pre-Employment Services, and most of DRS expenditures will support one-time equipment purchases. Participating students will receive funding for services through Project Skills. 2018 Youth Leadership Forum will be held June 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> at Northern State University in Aberdeen. They received over 90 applicants, and approximately 45 individuals will be selected to participate this year. Catch the Wave Events – designed to help high school students prepare for post-secondary education – have been happening statewide since February. Upcoming events will be hosted at USD, NSU, and Lake Area Technical Institute between now and the end of April. Other upcoming transition focused events are: Employment and SSA benefits in Sioux Falls – April 26<sup>th</sup>; Let’s Talk About Work in Rapid City – April 12<sup>th</sup>; Transition Resource Fair in Rapid City – April 18<sup>th</sup>; Guardianship and Informed Decision Making in Aberdeen – April 12<sup>th</sup>; SD Educator’s Institute in Sioux Falls – July 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>; and Post-Secondary Disability Services Coordinators meeting in Mitchell – May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Kim then provided a brief overview of Project Search, which is now available in Sioux Falls, Brookings, Aberdeen and Rapid City. A total of 156 students have participated in these opportunities. There has been an average success rate of 92% for participants obtaining employment within one year of completion of the program. Graduation ceremonies for these programs will be occurring in May. PROVIDER SERVICES – DRS provided a webinar for providers and VR staff in February. The focus was competitive, integrated employment; customized employment; and supported employment. Over 100 individuals participated and it was recorded and is available via the DRS website. DRS has also contracted with the USD Center for Disabilities to provide training sessions for service providers. Kim provided a handout on these sessions (see attached). FALL CONFERENCE – The 2018 Fall Conference will be in Aberdeen October 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>. It is a partnership between VR, providers, centers for independent living, and the Department of Labor and Regulation. The theme is “Back to the Future – the Next 100 Years” With a focus on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act. Members are encouraged to participate and to contact staff if interested in participating.

**BUSINESS SPECIALIST REPORT:** Kim now moved into her report of activities she carries out on behalf of the Department. VR INITIATIVES – Project Skills/Employment Skills Initiative – State Government – DRS continues to work on expanding this program within state government with a goal of South Dakota State government becoming a model employer of people with disabilities. Currently, for this federal fiscal year, there are a total of seven individuals working in state agencies. The majority of the work experiences are occurring within the Department of Human Services. DRS continues to strive for a variety of state agencies to participate in this initiative. Project Skills – The Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP) and DRS recently updated these brochures – one specifically for businesses and the other for students (see attached). 2018 Summer Initiatives – DRS and DSBVI are again offering funding for projects providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to secondary students with disabilities. They will focus on workplace readiness training, self-advocacy, and information about vocational rehabilitation and other services. Proposals have been submitted and were approved for: (1) Aberdeen School District; (2) Black Hills Special Services Cooperative/Career Learning Center of the Black Hills; (3) Career Connections of Mitchell; (4) Groton School District; (5) Independent Living Choices of Aberdeen; and (6) Teachwell Solutions of Sioux Falls. Business-led Groups Updates – DRS is in its third year of supporting these groups, which provide technical assistance, training and education to businesses in their communities. Brookings has partnered with the Area Human Resources Association, and Yankton has partnered with the Area Chamber of Commerce. Aberdeen will be partnering with the Aberdeen Area Human Resources Association, after having cooperated with the Area Chamber of Commerce in the previous years. Performance Measures for Effectiveness in Serving Employers – WIOA placed emphasis on helping job seekers access employment and training opportunities and stressed the importance of workforce development system to provide effective supports to employers to match them with skilled employees. DRS and DSBVI have collaborated with the Department of Labor and Regulation to identify two indicators are performance measures: (1) retention with the same employer – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide employers with skilled workers; and (2) repeat business customers – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time. DRS has developed a tracking tool to be utilized by VR staff, Sioux Falls Business Resource Network, and the Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills to track these activities and began using it in January. Ability for Hire Update – Kim provided a report of analytical data on the website (see attached) and a copy of the “Business Resource Guide,” which is available via the website. Dialogue followed on additional data points that might be useful and ways in which the resource guide might be more accessible and useful.

**BVR COMMITTEES:** Shelly provided an update on the status of membership for each committee. She also shared that there are presently two members who have not identified a committee on which they wish to serve. She will be following up with those members soon.

**SILC REPORT:** Chuck provided this report as he serves on the SILC. He provided highlights from the DRS Report provided by Jennifer Geuther, which focused on the consumer satisfaction report, IL funding sources for FY18 and a report on the status of CIL contracts with DRS. He then provided highlights from the DSBVI Report provided by Sandy Neyhart. Items contained in this report were the total number of individuals served by the Older Blind IL program in FY17, consumer satisfaction survey results, update on the digital video magnification program, and the telecommunications adaptive device program. Next, Chuck provided a few highlights from the Board of SBVI report presented by Catherine Greseth – NDEAM and Governor’s Awards activities, White Cane March planned in Rapid City, the 2018 Fall Conference, and the board’s participation in the 2018 Disability Awareness Day at the Capitol. Chuck then moved on to hitting highlights of the SILC Staff report provided by Shelly. This report focused on the completion of the 704 Report, SILC Congress, and identification of NDEAM and Governor’s Awards Committee members. The next agenda item Chuck reported on was one that needed considerable time at the SILC meeting – Meeting the Needs of People in Unserved Portions of the State. This dialogue included talk of Part C and Part B funding of IL services, the impact of NAAP relinquishing their funds on SILC workgroup efforts and the delivery of services to eligible people in those areas of the state, and the pending revision of the State Plan for Independent Living. A workgroup update was provided as a part of this report, and as noted earlier, some had not met or had had to postpone what they had been working on due to NAAP’s decision to no longer function as a center for independent living. The Assistive Technology/Home Modifications Assistive Devices workgroup shared DakotaLink’s annual report – highlighting some data from that report; and they shared that DRS staff was working on new guidance for center staff relating to the construction of ramps.

**ADJOURN FOR THE DAY:** At approximately 4:30 Patty called for the meeting to adjourn for the day. **MOTION TO ADJOURN FOR THE DAY – MSC.** It will reconvene at 8AM tomorrow.

MEETING RECONVENED AT 8AM ON THURSDAY, MARCH 29<sup>TH</sup>. Patty asked participants to again introduce themselves and use one adjective to describe themselves. Following that time, the meeting moved into the agenda for the day.

**BVR STAFF REPORT: STRATEGIC PLANNING FUNDS REQUEST** – The Board had received two organizational funding requests that were mailed out prior to the meeting. They were reviewed individually at this time. (1) SD Parent Connection requested \$2,000 in support of the 2018 “Lighting the Way – Autism Spectrum Disorders in Our Community” Conference to assist with conference related expenses. Lisa declared a conflict of interest due to being employed by SD Parent Connection. **MOTION TO APPROVE \$2,000 IN SUPPORT OF THE 2018 “LIGHTING THE WAY” CONFERENCE – MSC.** (2) Teachwell Solutions requested \$2,000 in support of staff participation at the 2018 International Project SEARCH Conference in late July, early August to assist with hotel costs. **MOTION TO APPROVE \$2,000 IN SUPPORT OF TEACHWELL STAFF PARTICIPATING IN THE 2018 INTERNATIONAL PROJECT SEARCH CONFERENCE – MSC.** Staff will notify both organizations of the Board’s decision and follow-up with information about necessary documentation required for them to receive the approved funding.

**NDEAM 2017 FINAL REPORT** – Staff had sent out summary reports on each event prior to the meeting. At this time, she provided a fiscal report on the year’s activities. Expenditures came in significantly lower than anticipated due to one out of country speaker not charging his speaker fee. As a result, funds provided by the Board for 2017 events were not fully expended. In addition, funds obligated by the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) were not accessed. The SILC met last week, and they strongly stated their discomfort with being recognized as a co-sponsor and their funds not being utilized; they also obligated funds towards 2018 events.

**NDEAM 2018 RECOMMENDATIONS** – The joint committee comprised of members from the three boards/council met last week to review the submitted proposals for funding. The total requests for 2018 events was presented as \$21,440; the committee recommended funding at a level of \$18,800. They felt strongly that funds should not be used for “give away” items (e.g., marketing items or food). They encourage local resources be tapped for these costs. A couple of the committee members addressed the rationale behind these recommendations. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED AMOUNTS FOR 2018 NDEAM EVENTS TOTTALLING \$18,800 – MSC.** Staff will contact each community with the specific recommendation for their community. At this time, consensus was that no new BVR funds will be directed towards 2018 NDEAM events due to a carryover of \$7,346.87. In addition, the SILC has obligated up to \$3,000 in support of 2018 events. The BSBVI will be contacted to see if they will again obligate funds in support of 2018 events. If it becomes necessary to identify additional funds, staff will bring that need to the Board at a later time. A couple of suggestions made by Board members in relation to this process were: (1) staff send logos for the three boards/councils out to local planning groups so they are sure to include them in all materials marketing the events; and (2) that a “best practices” document be developed that could be shared with all communities, which could

include both successful practices as well as challenges encountered and ways that have been tried to address them. Consensus was that this would be a positive endeavor to undertake. BVR NOMINATIONS – Staff provided some additional information on how and to whom the nomination information was disseminated and added their encouragement to BVR members to share the information and encourage nominations be submitted by the April 13<sup>th</sup> due date. GOVERNOR’S AWARDS – Staff reported that draft documents are ready to be sent out to the joint committee for this effort, which again includes representation from the BVR, BSBVI and SILC. The BVR has previously had three representatives, and presently it only has two. Staff asked if there was someone else wishing to serve on the committee. Kendra volunteered to serve. The Governor’s Awards Joint Committee membership is comprised of Joe Vetch, Jolleen Laverdure, and Kendra Gottsleben – BVR; Cheri Knispel – BSBVI; and David Scherer – SILC. Staff will be getting the draft materials out to the members and working with them to implement this annual process. This concluded the staff report.

**CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT:** Mitchell Close, DRS Program Specialist, provided this report. He utilized a presentation (see attached), which then led to significant dialogue on topics surrounding (a) who is surveyed; (b) when they are surveyed; (c) comparisons that might be beneficial e.g., college graduates vs. others seeking to enter employment; (d) time between case closure and survey being sent out; (e) modes of communication used between VR staff and those they serve e.g., text, email, face-to-face and much more. Eric explained that the survey was developed with considerable input from the BVR. Every state carries out this activity differently. He expressed that DRS is always open to exploring ways this process might be changed to ensure it remains accessible to those served and garners the best level of response, which providing useful data to the division and board.

**STATE PLAN:** Eric Weiss provided this update starting with an overview of the history of WIOA and related implementation dates. He explained that every four years the Unified State Plan must be submitted (it was submitted in 2016) and then updates are required every two years, which meant this year (2018). He referenced the portions of this 230-page document which pertain to VR services. He also explained that their notice of needing to submit an update and the short turn-around for submission made it very difficult to gather consumer input into the process this year. The six areas needing revision were: (1) Input of the State Rehabilitation Council; (2) Comprehensive System for Personnel Development; (3) Annual Estimates of People Served and Costs to Serve; (4) Order of Selection; (5) State Strategies; and (6) Evaluation and Reports of Progress. A public forum was held with appropriate advance notice. It was held utilizing video-conference sites statewide, as well as telephone access. Unfortunately, staff outnumbered customer participation.

Patty called for a fifteen-minute break at this point.

**ASPIRE:** Tynell Millner, Enrollment Specialist, provided this presentation (see attached). She explained that ASPIRE is a consortium of six states, including SD, and one of six such projects in the country. ASPIRE is the only one that includes mostly rural states and tribal representation. These projects fall under the PROMISE Grant – Promoting the Readiness of Minors on Supplemental Security Income. This is a research project, so there is a control group and another group that receives additional interventions/supports. A total of 132 youth enrolled in SD. Sixty-five youth and families in 27 towns have been enrolled in ASPIRE. Of those sixty-five, 38 or 58.46% have been employed since enrollment. This is the highest of the six states within the consortium. Some key findings have been: (1) ASPIRE youth are more likely to be employed compared to usual. Youth who meet more often with a case manager are more likely to be employed than those with less frequent meetings; (2) ASPIRE youth perceive greater support of employment from parents, schools and case managers; (3) ASPIRE youth reported school, parents and case managers have talked to them more about employment and post-secondary education; (4) ASPIRE youth are more likely to see themselves working in a paying job in the next year; (5) ASPIRE youth are more likely to be employed or looking for employment; (6) ASPIRE youth who attend self-determination classes are more likely to be employed compared to those who have not attended any classes; (7) ASPIRE parents have higher expectations that their child will live independently, graduate with a regular diploma, attend school after high school and work; (8) at 24 months, ASPIRE parents report they are better able to teach their teen to live independently, make informed decisions, and become a self-sufficient adult; and (9) at 24 months, ASPIRE parents report they better understand employment options, rights and responsibilities, disability laws, policies & support systems, and the change in services when their teen leaves high school and enters the adult system. Due to a “no-cost extension” the new end date for this project is May 31, 2019. Tynell concluded her presentation by sharing a few “success stories” of youth who have benefitted from ASPIRE services.

**COLLABORATION WITH TRIBAL VR:** Eric provided some background information on the placement of Tribal vocational rehabilitation within the Rehabilitation Act and read a portion of Section 121, which contains Tribal VR. He went on to explain that the match rate for Tribal VR is not the same as that for State VR, and the grant process for Tribal VR is a totally separate process than that for State VR. He also explained that an eligible individual may receive services from both Tribal VR and State VR. Presently there are five Tribal VR programs in South Dakota on the Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Cheyenne River, Standing Rock, and Lower Brule reservations. He invited Jolleen, Director of the Lower Brule Tribal VR Project, to share more information. Jolleen shared that their process is a five-year grant with the budget



being a year-to-year process, so it is possible that they may not receive funding in any given year. There are presently 88 Tribal VR programs in 26 states. Eric spoke to the role that Lyle Cook has taken in encouraging and supporting relationships between Tribal and State VR programs at both the state and national levels. He went on to explain that State VR staff meet at Tribal locations when in those communities, and State VR has cooperative agreements with Tribal VR in an effort to best serve tribal members. He also spoke of past public meetings on Tribal lands, and Jolleen shared that such a meeting is being planned for May in Lower Brule. Also, there is some upcoming training for State VR staff sponsored by the Center for Disabilities on cultural sensitivity that will be presented by Jim Warne in June. Jolleen spoke to the helpfulness of technical assistance and support provided by DRS to Tribal VR in their regular meetings and also in their regular access on a daily basis when questions arise. A question was asked about what happens when a Tribal VR program has used all of its funds, and Jolleen explained that when that occurs, the program no longer accepts applications from new individuals.

**FOCUS/LOCATION OF FUTURE MEETINGS:** Eric explained that the Division truly appreciates the members' commitment of time to their service on this board, and he wants to do all that can be done to make the meetings meaningful to them as they carry out their duties. In support of that thinking, he suggested to the Executive Committee that it might be beneficial to move the location of the meetings around the state so members might be able to "see vocational rehabilitation" in action, rather than hearing reports about it. For example, if the board was to meet in Aberdeen in June, they would be able to participate in a portion of the Youth Leadership Forum, possibly see and/or hear from Project SEARCH in that community, and meet DRS staff; if they were to meet in Brookings, again they could see and/or hear from Project SEARCH in that community, hear from the Masters degree program in VR at SDSU and meet DRS staff; in Rapid City in addition to Project SEARCH and DRS staff, there is DakotaLink and the Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills; and in Sioux Falls in addition to Project SEARCH and DRS staff, there is Community Campus, Business Resource Network and more. A suggested schedule for meetings this year might look like – June in Aberdeen; October in Pierre; December via video-conference and March in Brookings. Dialogue followed, and consensus was that moving the meetings is good for the board and also for providing an opportunity for those served to attend a board meeting. It was agreed to work to hold the next meeting in Aberdeen on the afternoon of June 6<sup>th</sup> and morning of June 7<sup>th</sup>, concluding with board members participating in the YLF luncheon.

**CLOSING ACTIONS: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS** – Since the next meeting will be in Aberdeen, suggested agenda topics are Project Search, Summer Initiative with Aberdeen School District, The Connection – business led committee, meet DRS staff

and participate at YLF luncheon. Patty thanked all for a “good meeting” and the information shared during the meeting. She asked if there were any other comments. Colleen shared that Sioux Falls has recently installed a new interactive signal light at a new intersection. She explained its many features, as well as the fact that this type of signal light will be installed at all new intersections and redone intersections. Patty called for a motion to adjourn. **MOTION TO ADJOURN – MSC.** Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.