

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Youth Council Meeting

January 25, 2007

Members Present

Billy Collins
Abe Hassan
Sheldon Jensen
Peter Jessen-Howard
Peg Killen
David MacKenzie
Dale Maristuen
Rick Polanski
Dean Shawbold
Jody Yungers

Members Absent

Andrew Freeberg EA
Traci Gauer EA
Kirk Hayes EA
Courtney Henry
Doug Hubbard EA

Staff/Guests Present

Mary Jo Gardner, WIB Staff
Kate Bates, WIB Staff
Terry Zurn, Workforce Solutions
Jim Zentner, Workforce Solutions
Marnie Wells, City of Saint Paul
Jody Nelson, GAP
Lynnette Landry, GAP
Tom Moran, GAP
Asia Randall, GAP

Call to Order

Dean Shawbold called the Youth Council meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

Approve Minutes from November 15th Meeting

Motion made by Jody Yungers and seconded by Billy Collins to approve the meeting minutes from November 15th as presented.

Motion carried.

Approve WIA/MYP Youth Plan

An ad hoc of the Youth Council met to review and update the WIA/MYP Youth Local Plan, with help from Workforce Solutions staff. Thank you to Kirk Hayes, Peter Jessen-Howard, Dave MacKenzie, Rick Polanski, Dean Shawbold, Jody Yungers and Mary Jo Gardner.

The plan is produced on a biennium basis, and this year an update of the plan created last year was required. Highlights in the changes were: modified goals from the update of the council's work plan; moving from a primary contractor to various community organizations delivering youth services; resource mapping collaborative project; and the renewed interest in reinstating the Building Lives program.

Motion made by Sheldon Jensen with second by Billy Collins to approve the WIA/MYP Youth Plan as presented.

Motion carried.

Update from GAP

Several individuals were present from Guadalupe Alternative Programs (GAP) to update the group on the progress of their WIA funds and the YouthLEAD program. Jody Nelson, Associate Director of GAP, gave the background and demographic information on the program. GAP is an alternative school program that also provides a wide variety of support services to ensure the success of their students; with the help of WIA funds, the program is now able to provide employment training and services, based on the ten WIA elements.

Lynnette Landry works on employment with the youth enrolled at GAP. There are several training programs that the kids are able to utilize, including a Pathways Manufacturing program, HIRED's customer service program, and a technology training program with Best Buy. Lynnette would like to start a Nursing Assistant program with Saint Joe's hospital, and HAP is talking to Toyota about training with Toyota, which all of the WIA Youth program participants could utilize.

Tom Moran is a counselor with the YouthLEAD program and assists the kids with a lot of support services. Many of the students have had difficult lives and are involved with drugs or alcohol, some are homeless, and

some are involved in gangs. Youth in the program have received help with transition housing, health care assistance, legal issues and mental health barriers. Most importantly, the program provides a long-lasting positive adult influence in the lives of the participants.

Asia Randall is a student at GAP graduating June 2007; Asia expressed how the program has helped her become a successful and positive citizen.

Presentation on the Second Shift Initiative

Marnie Wells is the coordinator of Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman's Second Shift Initiative. This program seeks to improve the policies, funding and activities available to youth outside of school hours in Saint Paul. Youth spend 20% of their time in school, and this program addresses funding positive and healthy ways for kids to spend the other 80% of their time. There are four goals to this program: create a "virtual one-stop" web-based interactive site to provide information on the program; create an East Side circulator bus system that would be free to youth in the hours after school, modeled after the West Side circulator that currently exists; have city-wide "No School Day" events for weekdays where there is no school; and create and utilize a quality assessment tool to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Second Shift programs. If anyone is interested in assisting with this initiative, please contact Marnie Wells. The Youth Council will stay connected with this program as it develops.

Update on Building Lives

Peter Jessen-Howard gave an update on the Building Lives program. The ad hoc continues to meet, and last met on January 24th. Members are currently working on meeting with key individuals, including setting up meetings with legislators. If any members are talking with their legislators, they are asked to talk about the Building Lives program. Committee members may be called upon soon to actively lobby for this funding. Talking points on the program will be distributed soon. The next meeting of the ad hoc is on February 7th at 3:30 at Pete's office.

Update on Youth Resource Mapping

Jody Yungers has continued her work on finding a collaborative and all-encompassing approach to create and maintain a resource map for youth programs in our area. Jody held a meeting with United Way's 211 mapping staff, WIB staff, Saint Paul IT staff, PACER Center staff and two individuals from Washington DC representing the technology company that developed the technology behind Project C3. The goal is to develop an effective online resource mapping tool that is able to be constantly updated and accessible to those with internet, while still utilizing the "hard copy" resource map that United Way's 211 program puts out. Everyone is very interested in creating this collaboration and talks to do so will continue. There will also be continued conversations on how this can utilize GIS mapping used by the county. Thank you to Jody for convening all of the partners and keeping the Youth Council up to date on the project.

Presentation on ACT Credential

Jim Zentner, Workforce Solutions, gave the group an overview of the work skill credential/certificates that are being analyzed for use with job seekers in the WorkForce Centers. DEED has expressed an interest in having a consistent work readiness assessment and credential across the state. A credential or certificate would also give employers an objective tool to assess the work readiness of potential employees.

Jim provided a side-by-side comparison on two such credentials- the Career Readiness Certificate from ACT and the Work Readiness Certificate that grew out of the National Institute for Literacy's "Equipped for the Future" initiative. The ACT certificate is tied in to the "Work Keys" assessment and job profiling system. There are 5,000 active jobs that can be analyzed with "Work Keys" and the readiness certificate. The Work Readiness Certificate is backed by the National Chamber of Commerce and is a more basic entry-level assessment. The ACT assessment could also be used with youth who are unsure of what field they would like to pursue, as it determines competencies for thousands of careers. There is a possibility that stacking the two assessments would be helpful to businesses and job seekers. The cost of the ACT assessment is less expensive, with the basic tests totaling around \$15, while the Work Readiness assessment costs \$65. There is no determined mind-set at DEED about which is better, so it is a good conversation to have at this level.

Other

Staff is asking that members sign up for a subcommittee on the Youth Council and will resend the email requesting this action.

HIRED and Workforce Solutions youth staff will be moving to the new WorkForce Center in early February.

Funding for MYP is not in the Governor's budget- youth testified today at the committee about the importance of those funds, and received a very warm welcome by the legislators.

Adjourn

Motion made by Dave MacKenzie with second by Peter Jessen-Howard to adjourn the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

Motion carried.

Next Meeting: February 22, North Saint Paul WorkForce Center