

Meeting Minutes

Region 3-4 Youth Standing Committee

Tuesday Feb 19, 2019

The Region 3-4 Youth Standing Committee met at the IowaWorks Center on Tuesday Feb. 19, 2019 at 10:00, in Spencer Iowa. Meeting was called to order by Chair Diane Twait Nelsen. Members present were Shay Davis - My Choice/Hope Haven, Molly Giddings-IVRS, Ryan J. Jenness-My Choice/Hope Haven, Mary Sloan-Compass Pointe, Sarah Breems-Diekevers-NCC-AEL, Paula Meyer-NCC-4+ Program and PACE Grant, Val Bonney-WOIA Title 1 Director, and Diane Nelsen-Region 3-4 Labor Representative Emmet County.

First order of business was a review of the agenda previously sent out by Chair Nelsen and Val Bonney. Chair Person Nelsen explained that at this time the agenda was somewhat focused based because of the decision still to be made statewide on the re-designing of the IowaWORKS regions in the state of Iowa. Thus, Nelsen, asked with permission of those committee members present, for time for a brief update from Val Bonney our WIOA Title I Director of our Spencer IowaWORKS office, to give us a brief update on the changes occurring in the state that would directly affect this committee as well as how it would affect our Regions 3-4, this unanimously agreed upon by all members present.

WIOA Director Bonney gave the committee a brief overview of some of the many things currently going on in the state of Iowa with IowaWORKS regions. She noted that right now the state is looking at 6 regions, that as few as 2 regions had been considered (we currently have 15). Director Bonney went on to explain that there had been state committee meetings as recent as yesterday and that there were many decisions yet to be made, but if we were to go with the proposed 6 region concept our region would be part of one that included Sioux City and Fort Dodge regions. They are looking at having all decisions regarding this new re-design done by Dec., 2019. Director Bonney indicated there would be one larger board for the region. Chair Nelsen then stated that this was the reason, that when looking at the agenda for today's meeting that it is a very focused agenda area....the number one thing that the committee had brought forth from past meeting- "Out of School Youth-Under-served and Under-Reported" how to best help in this area. Chair Nelsen also noted that as a committee should these changes occur state wide with the regions and we move to a different region set up our Region 3 & 4 Youth Standing Committee will also be affected. She noted that we will talk more about that in the next steps-future focus section of the agenda.

Next on the agenda was a brief re-introduction/overview of those present and the agencies that they represented so that everyone present was aware of those that were there.

This was followed by a review of our current membership. Val Bonney noted that she was having CJ Bauman's emails returned- CJ represented Boys Town and may have been relocated or have taken a different position. It was felt due to the uncertainty of our committee's future status that we would not pursue new members at this time but just proceed with the membership that we had. It was noted that if an individual or agency wished to join us they would be more than welcome to.

The third item on the agenda was the main item of our focus for the morning-“Out of School Youth that are under-served and under-reported”. This is young people ages 18 years to 24 years of age who have not received a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate/diploma and are not aware that they still have options to receive help in getting one or the other and that we have multiple services and agencies in our area to assist them with the process. As a region we feel that this is a very under-reported problem because young adults who may have dropped out of high school who move into the area or already live here do not realize that we have multiple avenues for helping them secure this important educational and career step. We also realize that many of these young persons are already important members of our work force and can not or do not have the ability to give up their jobs in order to attend what they would consider “traditional school”. We need to help make these young adults, their families, and most importantly their employers, aware of the many avenues we have to help them complete this important career /life step. Through multiple connections with our community colleges (both Northwest Iowa Community College and Iowa Lakes Community College) we have programs in place that can help young adults complete their high school diploma or their high school equivalency certificate/diploma. Currently there are three major options that we as a committee want to make young adults and their employers aware of:

- 1) Young adults (or older adults too) with less than 5-6 credits needed to complete their high school diploma may be able to complete that diploma completely at their local community college. This is referred to as “Credit Recovery” and both of our community colleges have staff that can help an individual determine if this is possible.
- 2) HiSET (High School Equivalency testing) in Iowa -this takes the place of what was formerly known as the GED)
- 3) In special situations where persons have completed an associate’s degree (A.S.) from a community college in Iowa they may also be awarded an Iowa high school diploma.

It is also important to help these underserved and under-reported youth and their employers and families know that there is funding sources available to help them with expenses that may occur while they are enrolled in these programs. Additionally many times these programs can lead into or work hand in hand with existing programs that already exist through IVRS or IowaWorks to help the individual in their workplace or in becoming more workplace ready. Both community colleges offer certificate diplomas that would lend to advancing career and work place skills for many of these young adults while keeping them in their current work environments.

The committee noted that as a committee we are aware that we have a low unemployment rate in our region which is great but also makes it difficult at times for some of these young adults, if employed to find time to attend classes to complete a diploma or equivalency certificate. As a committee we discussed/brainstormed ways that may make that possible including night classes, on line course work, and classes that could actually be brought to a business or industry. All committee members felt that it was important that we kept going forward with this issue and as a committee these next steps were formatted:

Next Steps/Future Focus:

Committee Members Sara Breems-Diekevers and Molly Giddings are both on the Iowa WORKS Business Services team and will be sharing our information, concern, and focus with them. We will also be continue to share the information we each gained today with members of our own various agencies to remind them of the help that is available through different agencies as we work with jointly together with young adults who may not have their high school diploma or equivalency certificate. Additionally as a committee we decided that we would meet again on **May 3, 2019** to draft a letter to prepare a draft letter of concern/focus reflecting this area to who may be in charge of the region in the future. Chairperson Diane Nelsen volunteered to set up a draft letter for the committee to work from that morning. **We will meet at 10:00 at the Spencer IowaWorks center for this meeting.** Meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Diane Nelsen, Region 3-4 Youth Standing Committee Chair