

**Youth Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2017**

The Youth Committee was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair Teresa Strum. Roll Call was taken.

Name	BEST, Inc. Fiscal Office, Dixon	NCI Works One Stop Center, Ottawa	Absent
Martha Anderson	X		
Tera Armstrong			X
Jim Carlson			X
Emlee Dooley	X		
Jill Guynn			X
Sally Hanrahan	X		
Beth Hubbard	X		
Aurora Medina			X
Teresa Strum	X		
Breanne Suarez		X	

OTHERS PRESENT (Ottawa): Pam Furlan, Jo Ann Johnson

OTHERS PRESENT (Dixon): Dianna Schuler

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Emlee Dooley motioned to approve the August 8, 2017 Meeting Minutes. Motion was seconded by Martha Anderson and carried.

Business Meeting

Update on Career Preparation/Life Skills Programs

Sally updated members on the Career Preparation/Life Skills Programs. She told members that programs are being operated at the Safe School in LaSalle and Center of Change at Thome School. Sally told members that the students were surveyed on topics of what they were interested in. She shared some of the topics with members. Sally said that presentations either by staff or employers will be done at Safe School on a monthly basis. In regards to the Center for Change program, Sally told members that they are using our program as part of their social learning. Students in the Center for Change Program will also hear information from staff and employers, however, they are interested in inviting representatives from technical schools like MIT and Whiteside Career Center. Discussion was held regarding how the programs have evolved since they started.

Update on Current Youth Providers / Project Reach

Sally informed members that all programs are active. She said that each of the program coordinators have been meeting with new and continuing students. Staff have been completing eligibility files so that the students can be enrolled. Sally then provided an overview of the program objective and enrollment statistics.

Work in the Real World Update

Sally told members that Work in the Real World will be held on November 17 at Sauk Valley Community College. She said that staff are in the process of recruiting students and employers. She said that the plans are for 54 presenters with 250 students. To date, Sally said, confirmations for each are about half.

RISE Up Update

Beth informed members that she enrolled one individual in the RISE Up program. On the first day, Beth said, she completed one module. Beth noted that the information looks to be great valuable information. She told members that the program includes 15 modules. The individual that is enrolled in the program is committed and it took her about an hour and a half to complete the first module of 26 pages. Overall, Beth said that it will take at least 20 hours to complete the full program. The first module, Beth said is fundamental that covers soft skills, company project knowledge, problem solving, payment, customer service, inventory tracking, etc. She noted that there is a lot of information and it will require a person who is committed to completing the program. Members held a discussion regarding the program components and fees. Beth told members that an enrollee would have one year to complete the program and take the test. She said that it is fairly easy to create an account and access the materials.

Tackling the Tough Skills Update

Breanne told members that she was unable to connect with Jamie Salazar with Circuit Breaker, so she did not have a report. Emlee commented that Ms. Salazar is new to Circuit Breaker and she is getting acquainted with her new surroundings. Emlee stated that Ms. Salazar did reply to her email and she sounded interested in the Tackling the Tough Skills program, however, she will follow up on with Ms. Salazar. Breanne said that she would be happy to schedule a meeting with her, but told the members that she would be leaving on maternity leave at the end of the year and gone through March.

Youth Committee Initiatives

Pam presented the Youth Committee Initiatives that were included on the Meeting Agenda. Providing an overview of each of the initiatives, Pam said that the initiative to Research Career Pathways Options was a recommendation of the State of the Workforce Report. She reminded

members that we did apply for a special grant for out of school, at risk youth but the funding was not granted and it there was a lack of interest of operating such a program in-house. Pam said that we may need to explore why there was no interest in such a program.

The next initiative is to collaborate with the Employer Engagement Committee on the “drain brain” challenge. Pam said that this issue was also identified in the State of the Workforce Report where young people are leaving the area to go to college, military, etc., and not returning to their roots. Pam commented that not only are we losing our young people we are losing our replacements for those who are retiring. She stated that this may be accomplished through employee retention and recruitment. Pam then informed members of the Cool Community Survey NCI Works conducted a few years ago that surveyed high school students that asked for their input about their future. A copy of the report was included with the meeting materials.

Members then discussed collaborative opportunities between youth and the business community. Sally told members that Sterling High School offers a community service program where students spend an hour each day with a business. One business, a local bank, gave a student an opportunity to rotate through the various departments of the institution. He, then, spent the remaining of the semester designing a billboard that was eventually displayed in town. Pam shared information about an initiative she was aware of between McDonalds and local banks. She said that the program started the youth at McDonalds where they learned work readiness skills such as customer service and counting money. The second step of the Career Path, Pam said, was to move into the banking industry. Pam commented that maybe such a program could be linked with the RISE Up program. Continuing, Pam said that some ideas were discussed at an earlier meeting on Career Pathways, however the focus was on out-of-school youth. She reminded members that at least 75% of the WIOA funds must be spent on out-of-school youth with the remaining percentage being spent on In-School Youth. She stated that In-School Youth applicants must meet eligibility guidelines and become a part of the performance measures for completion. Pam said that she would like the Youth Committee to think of some initiatives, other than work experience, for the In-School population.

Discussion was then held regarding the Initiatives that were presented. Pam stated that she would like to see the Youth Committee select at least one, maybe two, of the initiatives mentioned. She did tell members that to date, BEST, Inc. does not have their final budget, but if it is close we will have sufficient funds. Pam also reminded members that the focus of WIOA is on work-based learning and work opportunities for youth.

Pam and Sally provided an overview of the WIOA eligibility requirements for the In-School and Out-of-School Youth Programs. Sally pointed out that Foster Care students are automatically eligible, however, they are harder to recruit. As a foster parent, Emlee shared some information about a transition program that allows foster care youth to become independent. Emlee said that the easiest way to find out who those students are is by contacting DCFS. She continued by saying that some of these students struggle with transportation to get to appointments/work. Emlee also suggested that when these students transition to independence it would be a benefit to

have an advocacy center or some where they can call when they have questions or need advice. Pam asked if the transition program was certified, but Emlee was not certain. Sally commented that this program was a good idea, but did not know how it would be executed/implemented or if students would use it. She stated that it takes a long time to establish relationships. Emlee agreed that there were a lot of pieces to the puzzle. After discussion, members agreed to further pursue getting information about the program. Emlee will contact DCFS and get the information to Sally. Pam asked Sally to talk to the BEST, Inc. youth group about possible ideas. It was agreed that discussion would continue at the next Youth Committee meeting.

Youth Apprenticeships

Pam informed members that businesses are beginning to consider Apprenticeships. She said that the Youth Committee may want to think about how Out-of-School Youth can benefit from Apprenticeship program(s).

Youth Budget Update

Pam informed members that 20% of the Youth Budget must be spend on work-based learning activities. To date, she said, 18.4% has been spend on work-based learning activities. Pam said that she does not see a problem meeting the 20% by the end of the Program Year. For accountability purposes, Pam said, she will continue to keep the Youth Committee informed on this expenditure.

Other Business

Information on a webinar series hosted by the University of Illinois was shared with members. The webinar, Five Strategies for Retaining & Attracting Youth to Rural Communities”, Sally said, was very good and encouraged members to take a look at the information.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Teresa Strum motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Beth Hubbard and carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Jo Ann Johnson