

**Youth Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 10, 2018**

The Youth Committee was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Chair Teresa Strum. Roll Call was taken.

<b>Name</b>	<b>BEST, Inc. Fiscal Office, Dixon</b>	<b>NCI Works One Stop Center Ottawa</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Tera Armstrong			X
Jim Carlson			X
Emlee Dooley			X
Jill Guynn			X
Sally Hanrahan	X		
Beth Hubbard	X		
Sarah McFarlane	X		
Aurora Medina			X
Teresa Strum	X		
Mary Stouffer			X
Breanne Suarez		X	

**OTHERS PRESENT (Ottawa):** Jo Ann Johnson, Laura Olson (BEST Career Advisor)

**OTHERS PRESENT (Dixon):** Kathy Day

**TELECONFERENCE (IVCC):** Pam Furlan

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Sally Hanrahan motioned to approve the February 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes. Motion was seconded by Sarah McFarlane. Motion carried.

**Business Meeting**

Update on Career Preparation/Life Skills Programs

Sally informed members that the Career Preparation/Life Skills Programs will be coming to end for the school year at the end of this month. She said that AHEC will be making a presentation next week to students at Thome School. Sally told members that at the end of the program she will distribute evaluations to both the students and instructors asking for input in regards to what they would like to see for next year. Teresa asked if an employer panel would be making a presentation this year as they have done in the past. Sally responded that they have had

employers come in and talk with the students throughout the year, so an employer panel will not be presented this year.

#### Update on Current Youth Providers / Project Reach

Sally informed members that the information regarding the 4 Youth Projects and Project Reach was included with the meeting materials. She said that the report reflects numbers from July 1, 2017 to the end of March. Sally said that each of the programs are operating successfully and some have had some successes. Sally told members that the Education Outreach Program (Regional Office of Education #47) recently had several students receive their High School Equivalency. In regards to the Project Reach program, Sally told members that Judy Fitzpatrick (Career Advisor-HSE Tutor) has had results with students getting their High School Equivalency and is getting more interest from other individuals. Pam commented that the Bridge Program (Streator High School) appeared to have picked up enrollments. Sally responded that they added 3 more for a total of 13 enrolled. It was noted that their goal was 15.

#### PY 2018 Youth Request for Proposals

Sally told members that when WIOA replaced WIA a few years ago, it brought with it some different performance measures and a larger focus on work-based learning. Under WIOA, Sally said, the performance measures now look at the percentage of youth who are employed or in post-secondary education in the second and fourth quarters after exit. Sally said that this means that staff have to continue to work as closely as they can with youth to help them stay successful for a year after they exited from the program. She said that it can be a challenge because there is not a lot of services that staff can provide for them once they leave the program. Another change, Sally said is that WIOA changed the credential measure. Under WIA, Sally said, the credential measure only looked at the percentage of youth who earned their diploma. Under WIOA, they have to earn their diploma and be employed, in post-secondary education or military in order for the measure to count.

Continuing, Sally told members that the Request for Proposal was changed this year to encourage providers to explain how they were going to build more work readiness, career exploration and job skills into the program in addition to providing the education piece. Many youth, Sally told members, develop great relationships with their instructors and it makes sense that instructors continue to work with the youth through the time that they not only exit the program, but also through the one year follow up period.

Sally told members that for PY 2018, we received proposals from the same four providers who have been working with us from previous years. These Request for Proposals were sent to reviewers for review and rating. Sally said that the results of each of the reviewers was included

with the meeting materials. She told members that the BEST, Inc. Career Advisors that work with the providers got together and looked at the ratings and comments and made a list of list of suggestions and/or changes that they would like the providers to consider for the next year. Sally said that staff believe that these suggestions and/or changes will make their respective programs more successful and also help to meet performance measures.

Sally then provided members with a summary of each of the proposals that were received. She told members that the Step Ahead program provides high school equivalency preparation and credit recovery when requested. Sally told members that they also provide work based learning (work experience and job shadowing). She said that the Direct Training Budget page was missing from the proposal, so if the Step Ahead Program is approved, as part of the contract negotiations, they will be asked to provide that information and will be asked to increase their goal of serving 15 youth to enrolling 15 new youth. Other recommendations that will help the program be more successful at providing work readiness and work based learning activities will also be addressed during negotiations, Sally said.

Teresa Strum motioned to approve the Step Ahead program (Bureau Henry Stark Regional Office of Education) upon contract negotiations. Motion was seconded by Sarah McFarlane. Motion carried. Beth Hubbard abstained from discussion and voting as she submitted a competitive proposal.

Next, Sally presented the Regional Work Study Program (Regional Office of Education #35). She said that they provide credit recovery to youth in LaSalle and Putnam Counties. Currently they have locations in Oglesby and Ottawa. If approved, Sally said, they plan to add a third location in Mendota. She said that as part of the negotiations staff will request that they submit a description of how they plan to provide the 14 elements and clarify their budget numbers and number of youth they plan to serve. Sally said that staff will also provide recommendations that they think will help the program be more successful at providing work readiness and career exploration.

Sally Hanrahan motioned to approve the Regional Work Study Program (Regional Office of Education #35) upon contract negotiations. Motion was seconded by Teresa Strum and carried. Beth Hubbard abstained from discussion and voting as she submitted a competitive proposal.

The Education Outreach Program (EOP) (Regional Office of Education #47) was then presented to members. Sally told members that the EOP provides high school equivalency preparation in Lee, Whiteside and Ogle Counties. She said that they have locations in Oregon and Sterling. For the Lee County students, Sally said, they are referred to Sauk Valley Community College. The program also provides work experience and job shadowing and some short-term vocational training, Sally said. Sally said that if the EOP is approved, as part of the negotiations staff will

request that they increase their proposed number of youth enrolled in work experiences and job shadowing. Also, she said that like other projects, staff will provide some recommendations that they think will help them be more successful at providing work readiness, career exploration and follow-up.

Sarah McFarlane motioned to approve the Education Outreach Program (Regional Office of Education #47) upon negotiations. Motion was seconded by Breanne Suarez and carried. Beth Hubbard abstained from discussion and voting as she submitted a competitive proposal.

The last proposal is for the Bridge Program at Streator High School, Sally said. She said that this program has been around for many years and does a good job at helping students earn the credits they need to earn their diploma. However, Sally told members that there are currently two credit recovery programs at Streator High School with one of them being the Bridge Program.

Sally told members that when she met with the instructor last month to do monitoring, she asked him what criteria the school used to determine which credit recovery program students went to. He told Sally that it was based on credits and explained that if a student has at least 14 credits, then they can go to Bridge. Sally informed members that the Request for Proposal asks providers to explain the need for the program so while their proposal states there is a need for the credit recovery program, it does not explain what makes Bridge stand out from the other program or what it offers that the other program does not. Sally told members that staff provided some options regarding the Bridge program. She said that the program could be approved pending negotiations. As part of the negotiations, Sally said, Streator High School would be asked to submit an explanation of why the program is in need and what makes Bridge different from the other credit recovery program. The other option, Sally stated, is that the Youth Committee recommend to not approve the program. If the second option was considered, Sally told members that the youth that are enrolled in the Bridge program would be funneled into the other credit recovery program or they could be absorbed by the Regional Work Study Program offered by Regional Office of Education #35.

Members then discussed the options put forth regarding the Bridge Program. Kathy (Day) expressed concern that we are duplicating services that are already being offered by the provider. Sally stated that she would like to give Streator High School an opportunity to provide some of the unanswered questions that staff have regarding the differences between the two credit recovery programs. Pam commented that staff need to be very specific of the information that we want Streator High School to provide. After discussion, Teresa Strum motioned to approve the Bridge Program with negotiations as discussed and bring the information back to the June 12, 2018 Youth Committee Meeting for final approval. Sarah McFarlane seconded the motion. Motion carried. Beth Hubbard abstained from discussion and voting as she submitted a competitive proposal.

## Youth Committee Initiatives / Youth Grant Discussion

Pam informed members that Kathy and Sally will explain the youth grant and the original proposal that the Youth Committee talked about at the last meeting. She said that as part of that proposal was to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Internship Program. Pam said that that option is no longer available. She told members that the Committee talked about replicating the Vermillion Advantage Program in our eight-county region. Pam said that she talked with a representative with Vermillion Advantage about our plans and are waiting to hear back from them. Pam told members that because Vermillion Advantage are the only provider for this program, it would be done through sole-source procurement and we would not need to go out for other bids. She continued by saying that Vermillion Advantage was used as a pilot program for the U.S. Chambers Talent Pipeline Challenge Initiative. In the meantime, Pam said, we can apply for the Workforce Innovation Grant and put the proposal in through that grant. She said that the grant does not require any enrollments or participants as it is an innovative effort that would eventually lead to serving participants. Pam said that she will keep the Committee informed as soon as further information is available. Moving on, Pam told members that Kathy would discuss with them the information that she needs to submit this project under the Youth Grant that is available through DCEO.

Kathy stated that when the Committee discussed this project at the last meeting, the Youth Grant was not yet released by DCEO. She said that after we received the Youth Grant information, that it the intent of the grant did not meet the Youth Committees initiatives. Kathy said that the Youth Grant is geared toward designing Career Pathways for youth programs and working with Bridge Programs. She also said that the Youth Grant is only for WIOA eligible youth which will require that 20% of the expenditures be spent on work-based learning activities. Kathy told members that she and Sally had a discussion regarding this matter and have a few things to consider. Kathy said, BEST, Inc. has \$200,000 unspent youth money for PY 17. She told members that this project could be developed using regular WIOA funds. Kathy then highlights requirements of the Youth Grant such as it requires a commitment by local Business and Community Partners through a formal Agreement. She also said that it needs to link with the Governor's Initiative in working with targeted populations including individuals with disabilities. Kathy told members that the Youth Grant success will be measured on benchmarks in terms of performance. In summary, Kathy told members that the programs in working with transitional age youth that the Youth Committee is interested in developing does not fit into the requirements of the DCEO Youth Grant application. However, Kathy said, there is another option. As mentioned earlier by Sally, Kathy said that there is a need for providers to learn how to address Life Skills and the Program Elements that are required under the WIOA. Kathy suggested that a Youth Leadership Summit be considered that would include youth providers as well as other professionals who work with youth. During this Summit, Kathy told members that these individuals can hear first-hand how to implement these program elements into their

program. Kathy stated that the unspent WIOA youth money could be used for this purpose. Pam asked if the \$200,000 unspent money Kathy referred to is also unobligated. Kathy replied that some of the money will be obligated, but said that there was money left if the Youth Committee wanted to proceed with this type of event. Kathy told members that the Youth Grant is due on May 1. Pam noted her concern about getting the Youth Grant done in time to meet the deadline of May 1. Teresa commented that a lot of work goes into writing a grant and suggested that staff proceed with the ideas that the Youth Committee had for the Transitional Aged Youth/Foster Care Youth using the regular WIOA funds as seed money. Teresa continued by saying that if another grant opportunity comes forward the Youth Committee can look at it. Pam suggested that a Request for Proposal be released for a provider to develop curriculum to serve the Transitional Aged Youth/Foster Care Youth. She said that the Request for Proposal could be ready for review at the next Youth Committee Meeting. Pam said that at the May NCI Works Meeting that they could give the Youth Committee authority to act on behalf of the NCI Works in approving Proposals received in response to the Request for Proposal. Kathy commented that there should not be any problem in getting the Request for Proposal released next month as she still has her notes from the February Youth Committee meeting. She also said that it would be no problem in getting the proposals returned and rated before the June Youth Committee meeting. Members then discussed putting together a Task Force of interested individuals to brainstorm for ideas to include in the Request for Proposal. Pam reminded Teresa that DeAnne White with Sinnissippi is interested in this project and would be able to provide information. Sally commented that someone who works with Foster Care and individuals with disabilities would be an asset also. Pam mentioned that Emlee Dooley would be an asset to have the Task Force. Kathy said that she would develop a draft of the Request for Proposal and meet with Sally, Emlee, DeAnne and anyone else interested in this project. Sally suggested that the project be geared toward students who have their diploma. She said that she did not want to pull students from BEST, Inc. contracted programs. Kathy commented that RISE Up could also be considered or any other program that has a customer service focus. Pam reminded members about the culinary program with the University of Illinois Extension that was discussed by Jill Guynn at the last meeting. Teresa suggested that Janice with the Lee County UI Extension may be a good resource. Breanne said that the Community Kitchen program is operated in LaSalle County by the UI Extension noting that the Lee County office does not offer that program. Discussion then turned to whether there is a need for a Request for Proposal or if there is someone who can put together a program/workshop/initiative to address the population of Transitional Aged Youth. Kathy commented that a mini-conference (train the trainer) could be held for professionals that work with this population. As part of the mini-conference, a Round-Table discussion could be held to see what is needed to serve that population. In order to get a qualified trainer, Kathy said, a Request for Proposal would need to be released.

Jo Ann asked Sally what the age group was for the Transitional Aged Youth. Sally replied 17-24 depending on the circumstances.

The Committee then discussed the steps to move forward. Sally commented that she met with providers during recent monitoring visits, they like the opportunities to discuss trends, generational issues and how to connect and stay connected with the students. One provider, Sally said, is interested in moving the students towards the big picture. She said that the students focus on one-day at a time instead of towards the future. Sally told members that she attended a Sauk Valley Chamber of Commerce Educational Committee meeting earlier today and they talked about the need for students to developing coping skills. They commented that their academic ability is only 25% of their success. Sally suggested that maybe there is a trainer that can give providers some ideas of how to incorporate some of these concerns into a mini-conference of summit. Kathy commented about the benefits of providing the practitioner with additional information to help them do their job in working with these youth.

In summary, Kathy confirmed that she could assist Sally with talking to with DeAnne White, Emlee Dooley, Breanne Suarez, Janice McCoy (Sauk Valley Area UI Extension Office) and possible other representatives of the targeted population to develop a task force as to how to best meet the needs of the transitional aged youth. The Youth Committee agreed and gave Sally Hanrahan the authority to begin the process.

#### Youth Work-Based Learning Expenditure Update

Kathy Day reported that the Youth Work-based Learning Expenditure to date is at 24.9%. She reminded members that 20% is the minimum expenditure required for Work-based Learning.

#### Tackling the Tough Skills Update

Breanne informed members that she has just returned from maternity leave and said that it was agreed to start providing the Tackling the Tough Skills program with the Safe School in the fall. She told members that if they had other sites that they would like to have the program presented to let her know as she has grant funding available for this program.

#### Other Business

None

#### Public Comments

None

## Adjournment

With there being no further business, Teresa Strum motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Breanne Suarez. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Jo Ann Johnson