

**Youth Committee Conference Call  
Meeting Minutes  
October 13, 2020**

The NCI Works Youth Committee Zoom Meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Chair Teresa Strum. Roll call was taken.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Tera Armstrong		X	Beth Hubbard	X	
Jim Carlson	X		Aurora Medina		X
Emlee Dooley	X		Sarah McFarlane	X	
Abby Farrell	X		Kris Noble	X	
Jill Guynn	X		Teresa Strum	X	
Sally Hanrahan	X		Justin Wiggins		X

**Others Present:** Beth, Dellatori, Carrie Folken, Jo Ann Johnson

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Sarah McFarlane motioned to approve the August 11, 2020 Meeting Minutes. Motion was seconded by Jill Guynn. Roll Call vote was taken.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Tera Armstrong			Beth Hubbard	X	
Jim Carlson	X		Aurora Medina		
Emlee Dooley	X		Sarah McFarlane	X	
Abby Farrell	X		Kris Noble	X	
Jill Guynn	X		Teresa Strum	X	
Sally Hanrahan	X		Justin Wiggins		

Motion carried.

**Business Meeting**

Update on Career Preparation/Life Skills Programs

Sally provided members with an update on the Career Preparation/Life Skills Program. She informed members that she has talked with the Safe School in Peru and they are interested in have recorded presentations for the students. Sally said that they will be sending her a list of what they are doing in their classrooms and she will customize the recorded presentation for them. Sally also said that she provided them with a laundry list of what has been done in the past stating that staff could offer these topics either through recordings, life or webinar format. Safe School will be getting back with Sally regarding possible topics.

### Update on Current Youth Providers

Sally referred members to the handout that was included with the meeting materials. In regards to the Education Outreach Program (EOP), Sally pointed out that Whiteside and Lee each had 1 New Enrollment. She said that the "Total Served" number is correct for the EOP. Sally informed members that the EOP is not getting as many students coming back as they had hoped, but they are getting some students back that have disappeared during the summer. She said that the EOP is doing whatever it takes to continue students to return. Beth commented that they have a GED instructor that willing to mentor students and do whatever they can to help them succeed.

Sally told members that the Regional Work Study Program for LaSalle and Putnam Counties just started up in September. She said that they have a number of students going through the initial testing. Sally said that the Regional Work Study Program is offered at 3 different sites and they are willing to do remote learning for any student that does not feel comfortable going on site.

In regards to the Step Ahead Program with the Bureau Henry Stark Regional Office of Education, Sally told members that they have recruited students and are in the testing process.

Teresa commented that based on Sally's report that percentage goals may not be met this year. Sally responded that part of what the projects are doing is to serve the students that they have. She said that some students are just requiring more than what they can be given. Sally said that the youth projects are getting the programs and services that they need. Carrie noted that it is more important to look at the quality of the program and services instead of trying to enroll students that are not committed to completing the program. Carrie said that staff need to spend the time and energy on the students that are interested and committed to succeeding.

Teresa also commented that Work in the Real World was not included on the agenda and asked Sally for an update. Sally said that she talked with Kris Noble and Dana with Sauk Valley Community College and they agreed to not hold Work in the Real World event this year, but do want to connect with the schools to provide them with similar information. Sally told members that Kris had several employers that were interested in sharing information about different careers within their business. She said that discussion is underway to bring the information to the schools that are interested in receiving the information.

Kris said that they have talked about different options to share the information for students She said feedback from the guidance counselor and teachers will determine how the information will be shared and how businesses can connect virtually with schools and students this year..

Sally commented that the Work in the Real World information could be shared throughout the year.

### Youth Committee Initiative/Committee Goals Update

Sally said that she did not have any updates. She reminded members that at the last meeting we discussed potentially doing something where we could encourage students who have been in the

program to come back and share some information about where they are right now and encourage others to enroll in the program. Sally told members that they have not looked into that much and will need more time to report back to the committee.

Teresa stated that members were trying to brainstorm how to get those students in the 17 age bracket interested in the program. Beth commented that students need to be ready to be involved. She said that she can bring in students but if they are not ready and willing to do what is required, they will not return. Beth told members that this year the EOP is low on enrollments but she is not concerned because the students will bounce back. Some students, she said, are also concerned about the virus and are laying low. Sarah agreed saying that the 17 age bracket is the hardest to serve. The motivation, she said, is not there.

Kris informed members that the areas of Sterling and Rock Falls have about 30% of students attending classes online. She said that kids have found a way to not go to school. Kris shared a story about a local business, McDonalds, that is having difficulty with students staying on the job. Kris said that McDonalds hire the 17-22 year olds and they quit shortly after they start so McDonald's training costs are exceedingly high.

Members then held a discussion on how parents are enabling some of the students. Beth told members that it is not unusual for a parent to bring in a student for the EOP. Beth said that she tries to engage with the student as much as she can, but is concerned how the student will respond when not being pushed by the parent. Beth also commented that some students' friends are not going to high school so they feel they also don't need to go.

Emlee said that most teachers are struggling to teach and feel like they are treading water to survive. The students, Emlee said, are not in their usual learning mode due to masks and being distant from each other in the classroom.

#### Youth Work-Based Learning Expenditure

Carrie reminded members that we are required to spend 20% of youth funds on Work Based Learning activities. She said that it is confusing because our grant is good for 2 years so when we look at meeting the 20% it is over a 2 year period. As of now, Carrie reported that we have spent 21% of the youth funds on Work Based Learning activities. She told members projecting out to June 30, 2021 we are looking at spending 25% of youth funds on Work Based Learning activities. Carrie told members that the 20% includes youth wages and some staff wages for activities that lead to a work based learning event, such as Supervisor Orientation.

Kris asked if it was a bigger challenge to get the students or the worksites. Carrie responded that during COVID it is a combination of both. She stated that BEST has less Work Based Learning than in the past. Carrie noted that some worksites didn't want to take youth on and some youth didn't want to work during the crisis. She said that living through COVID is a very different time.

## Other Business

Carrie asked members for their input about how the youth are being impacted with COVID 19. Similar to what Emlee mentioned above, Carrie asked what different areas are seeing.

Kris informed members about the BLIND program for juniors and seniors of 5 local high schools that were chosen to be a part of this program. She said that it is their job to mentor freshmen students and help them navigate through the school year.

Beth stated that her experience is that when a student does open up and confide with another individual they are appreciative.

Jim shared information about what is happening at the Seneca schools. He said that 95% of the students are attending in school. He said that remote learning was offered and some students, due to personal reasons, have opted to do remote learning. Jim said that data shows poor numbers of remote learning. At Seneca, he said that they noticed early on that the students were excited to come back. He told members that Seneca has a small student enrollment, but the school is large enough so they can navigate. Jim said that they are not perfect and may not be a 100% with social distancing, but they were doing okay. He said that after a couple of weeks of the students going through the motion, it started to feel like high school recess. Jim shared with members some of the activities that they are doing to keep the students interested and upbeat like dress up days, etc. Jim admitted that Seneca has lost some students due to quarantine so they could not tell if they were successful or not, but the plan is to muscle through everything. Jim outlined the school structure for members saying they run a 5 hour day block schedule with one group dismissing at 1:10 and the second group dismissing at 1:15. He concurred with what other members have shared stating that this has impacted all youth but being in school has been good for them.

Carrie commented that being social with friends and/or co-workers is important not only for youth but for adults. She said that adults need the interaction just as much as the youth do.

Carrie then asked members if there was anything that BEST or NCI Works could do to help the youth that are impacted by the COVID 19 crisis.

Jill introduced Beth Dellatori to members. Beth is the Youth Development Coordinator with the U of I Extension office located at IVCC. Beth shared her experiences as a mother and educator and concurred with a lot of the comments that were made by other members. Beth shared with members a program that is offered through the U of I Extension, called Your Thoughts Matter. She said that the program helps kids define mental health issues. Beth said that kids are struggling and it helps them to talk to family and friends, but yet they don't understand the actual issue that they are going through. This program, Beth said, provides topics and lesson for them to define mental health issues. The age group for this program is 12-18.

Another program, Beth suggested is "Welcome to the Real World". She said that this program offers financial literacy, independence and decision making by providing them a basis for good work ethic.

Beth also shared with members a new program that is starting in November entitled "Youth Thoughts Matter". She said that it is a statewide program being held via Zoom for students. The program is currently for students in Bureau, LaSalle, Marshall and Putnam Counties, however, it is statewide so it will be offered throughout the other counties of LWIA #4. Beth offered to share the information with Youth Council members.

Teresa informed members that her agency has implemented a Virtual Job Shadowing program, highlighting over 1000 different positions. She said that it also includes some health and wellness information plus some soft skills like showing up on time, resume building, etc. She said that seats are available and there is no charge to attend this program. Teresa commented that, as adults, we get meeting overload and she cannot image what it is like for kids to learn remotely. She complimented the teachers for a great job. Teresa said that her agency is changing the delivery of programs and services and they are adapting. She said that even the clinicals for nursing students have been impacted.

#### December Youth Committee Meeting

After discussion regarding the December 8, 2020 Youth Committee meeting, members agreed to not meet unless any action items would come up that needed to be addressed.

#### Public Comments

None

#### Adjournment

With there being no further business, Kris Noble motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Emlee Dooley and carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Jo Ann Johnson