

**Balance of State Workforce Investment Board
Youth Council
INDOT Building, large conference room, 185 Agrico Lane, Seymour
October 18, 2011
2:30 to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time**

Members Present: Lydi Davidson, Cheri Jones, Robin Landrum, Dorian Leiva, Jennifer Osterholt, Marilyn Pitzulo, Patricia Sutton

Members Absent: Betty Lonis, Jean Crowe, TJ Brink, Brett Niemeier, Derrick Stewart, Karen Ragland, Holli Sullivan, Suzanne Crouch, Deidre Conner

Also Present: Michelle Bowman, Youth Services Director Region 9; Bart Brown, Regional Operator Region 9; Elizabeth Darby, Manager of Youth Programs Department of Workforce Development; Jim Heck, Regional Operator Region 11; Tina Judd, Partner: Monitoring, Data Management and Policy, Region 8; Brianna Morse, Director of Youth Services, Region 5; Cheryl Musgrave, Executive Director, Balance of State Workforce Investment Board

Call to Order and Introductions:

The Executive Director of the BOS WIB called the meeting order and began introductions. She referred the members to the hand out in the packet containing the member and panelist contact information and the map of the Youth Council service area.

Orientation: Workforce Investment Act Youth Program Overview:

Elizabeth Darby, Manager of Youth Programs for the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, led the panel discussion with a program overview. She discussed the program requirements established by US Department of Labor (“DOL”). She expressed that all four regions operate differently but all follow the same Workforce Investment Act (“WIA”) guidelines. Workforce Investment Act guidelines state the participant must be income eligible, 14-21 years old. Most teens aged 14-15 are not served due to issues related to child labor laws, are in school already, or have maturity issues. All youth must have barriers to employment, including in foster care, disabled, be a school dropout, pregnant or parenting, or offender. These participants must be seeking attainment of a degree or certification.

Ms. Darby discussed the program elements with the board using the two-page handout titled Workforce Investment Act Youth Program Elements. She explained that all regions must provide specific services, such as tutoring. She then asked the panelists to give examples of how their region handles this service.

Brianna Morse, Region 5, stated they focus on dropout prevention and she referred to the JAG (Jobs for Americas Graduates) program. The program is an in-school program

led by a non-certified teacher that seeks students at risk of dropping out of high school. The students learn about potential careers, create resumes, and engage in job-skill activities. In addition, Region 5 focuses on tutoring, study skills, and offer referrals to the Adult Basic Education program where appropriate.

Michelle Bowman, Region 9, stated they provide a Workforce Investment Act youth representative in all the schools and utilize a program called Mind Leaders. Mind Leaders is an on-line resource that includes access to books and classes in video format.

Tina Judd, Region 8, requires staff to work on study skills. Jim Heck, Region 11, works with the out-of-school Jobs for America's Graduates program to focus on those who have already dropped out. They require the participant to be working towards their General Educational Development ("GED"), a high-school equivalency degree.

Ms. Darby discussed the Workforce Investment Act required Program Elements and distributed a 13 page document describing the requirements in detail. She reviewed each element and the panel shared information about programs that meet the requirements, stating every youth must be offered each element.

The youth are grouped in two categories. First, "In School", refers to a youth either in High School or Post Secondary school. Second, "Out of School", refers to those who have dropped out or have graduated from high school, but have a basic skills deficiency. The goal is to keep youth engaged and planning for their future. It is important to keep them interested in a career pathway.

She described the Jobs for America's Graduates program, explaining it has been around for 30 years, is competency based, and staffed by professionals and meets many of the required program elements. Ms. Darby discussed how the Jobs for America's Graduates program offers the opportunity for election of officers, boosting self confidence and helping develop leadership skills. Development of leadership skills is a required element.

The next program element discussed was summer employment opportunities. Ms. Judd, Region 8, discussed the Young Hoosier Conservation Corp ("YHCC") program. This program was funded through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("ARRA") funds for the first two years and is now being funded through the Major Opportunities fund. The Major Opportunities funding is from the state. It helps youth learn "soft" skills they will need once out in the workforce, like showing up on time and coming to work every day. Ms. Morse and Ms. Bowman explained the program in more detail stating it is a work experience program that allows youth to get a feel of what kind of career pathway they want to take.

Occupational skills' training is another required element in assisting Youth. Ms. Judd stated Region 8 utilizes Ivy Tech and Vincennes University to help provide these training classes. Ms. Bowman, Region 9, stated they utilize community services and

work with partners to help with leadership development courses and bring in guest speakers.

Ms. Darby discussed the adult mentoring requirement. To mentor youth, an adult must be able to have consistent contact with the individual for a 12-month period. Ms. Morse stated Region 5 utilizes the WorkOne staff. Mr. Heck stated Region 11 utilizes teachers in the schools as mentors.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling is a key factor in keeping these youth involved. These services are offered through referrals to agencies able to assist youth with drug and alcohol problems, mental health counseling, and other related issues.

Supportive services are available and offered with Workforce Investment Act funds. These services can include assistance for transportation, clothing, books, and work or education related requirements.

Follow-up services are attempted, but loss of contact with young people is a frequent issue. The regions use various tools to stay in touch, including Facebook.

Ms. Darby reviewed the Department of Labor performance standards and how the different regions are rated.

Ms. Musgrave stated there are two vacancies on the board: one representative of a local public housing authority and one parent of a Workforce Investment Act eligible youth seeking assistance.

Members discussed the board's ability to apply for additional federal grants or seek private grants. Ms. Darby emphasized that the majority of the program funding will come from the Workforce Investment Act and that it totals roughly \$16 million dollars this year.

Members discussed a desire to combine the funding of existing organizations, such as Housing Authority grants, with the resources available through Workforce Development Programs. Members discussed learning about other state or federally funded groups serving youth. Ms. Darby shared that a "service map" had been available in years past, but it is not longer available.

Future meetings

The members requested a meeting before the end of the year. A schedule of meetings would be addressed at that meeting. Members felt that French Lick was a central location.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.