

Philadelphia Vision for Employment
Steering Committee Meeting

April 17, 2007

Attendance: Ann Marie Campbell, Todd Handler, Karen Kenny, Leonard Kravitz, Michael McAllister, Teresa Myers-Thompson, Shauna Roman, Kathy Sykes, Andrea Glazer, Marianne Roche

Meeting Summary

The meeting revolved around the following topics:

I. Review Joint Advisory Committee/Steering Committee Meeting

Minutes from the March 21, 2007 Joint Advisory Committee/ Steering Committee meeting were made available and will be distributed by mail to the Advisory Committee. A cover letter will be included with the minutes with a reminder about the next scheduled meeting. The next Advisory Committee meeting will be held on June 5, 2007 at the Doubletree Hotel (Broad at Locust Sts.) from 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM in the Minuet Room which is located on the 4th floor. Extra copies of the March 6, 2007 Steering Committee minutes were also made available.

II. Work Group Goals, Products and Materials

There was a general discussion about Work Group goals and activities and a process for approving materials before they are widely distributed. A table was shared which shows Work Group goals for the 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 fiscal years. Given the amount of work needed to be done it is important that all of the Work Groups collaborate on activities and documents that overlap in order to avoid duplicative efforts.

A decision was made that any promotional materials, documents, or other products developed by Philadelphia Vision for Employment 2010 Work Groups must be approved by the Steering Committee before they are widely distributed outside of the Work Groups. Prior to approval by the Steering Committee, materials and documents are to be considered as “drafts”. This decision was further refined to note that once the Steering Committee approves materials, or documents, the Logo will be placed on it (as appropriate) as a way to identify that it was approved by the Steering Committee.

It was further decided that materials which are being considered for approval should be sent to the Steering Committee prior to a Steering Committee meeting so that members can have an opportunity for review before the meeting. In addition, there was a discussion of the need to use consistent terminology in order to assure there is a “common voice” and theme in the way employment is presented in written materials as well as in discussions with individuals and families. Karen also noted the need to

“operationalize” the theme of employment so that consistent messages are conveyed by everyone working within Philadelphia Mental Retardation Services.

The discussion of terminology, “common voice”, and theme was further explored by the group. Karen shared a discussion from the most recent Public Relations Work Group (PR) meeting concerning language use and story focus on the www.philaonthejob.org website. The PR Group is considering stories and pictures to be shown on the website and there was some ambivalence about what terminology to use when referring to individuals who are the focus of Philadelphia’s Vision for Employment 2010. There was a discussion about whether the broader term disability was the appropriate term to use on the web site and in other materials.

While terminology is changing in the field and the Commonwealth has recently changed its name from the Office of Mental Retardation (OMR) to the Office of Disability Programs (ODP), it was noted that Mental Retardation Services (MRS) has a mission of serving individuals with mental retardation. It was decided that any photos, stories, and information on the website should be about people with mental retardation.

A decision was made to use the term “developmental disability” rather than the more broad term “disability” and to continue to use the term “mental retardation” for more specificity when applicable. It was also suggested that the website contain links to organizations that serve individuals with other types of disabilities.

A. **Materials Review**. Documents created by the Supports Coordination Work Group were reviewed by the group. Marianne reviewed the materials and provided some background information about their development and use. Three specific “fact sheets” were reviewed: “**Information for Families and Caregivers**”, “**What You Can Expect from Supports Coordination in Transition**”, and “**What you Can Expect From Supports Coordination in the Process of Employment**”.

Marianne shared with the group conversations that have taken place at Supports Coordination Work Group meetings concerning the role of supports coordinators and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) counselors in working with transition age students. There appears to be some confusion regarding when and how OVR is involved as well as the role of supports coordinators in this process. Also discussed was the concern that current funding (PFDW) may not be enough to provide adequate employment support for individuals leaving school especially given the costs of community integrated employment services. Marianne requested that the next Steering Committee meeting agenda include a discussion about this issue as well as the need to consider potential “safety nets”.

It was agreed that the *Information for Caregivers* document would be re-formatted as a one-sheet bi-fold to be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting. Karen agreed to get the file and make minor edits so that it could be utilized at an upcoming event. She will then forward the file to Andrea Glazer. Andrea will work on reformatting the

documenting taking into consideration some of the editing suggestions made at the meeting. The document will be reviewed again at the next meeting.

A number of edits were suggested for the other two documents developed by the Supports Coordination Work Group. Marianne will make those edits in collaboration with the Supports Coordination Work Group.

B. Other Ideas. Len, Teresa and Michael agreed to meet to review other Employment related documents such as the Philadelphia Employment Policy, ODP's Employment Guidelines, etc. The idea was to review already published materials as a basis for updating and creating new materials. Documents to be created and updated include a tri-fold brochure describing Employment Services in Philadelphia, updating the Employment Services Directory, and a "script" for supports coordinators to use when discussing employment with individuals and families. The tri-fold brochure would be modeled after ODP's *Why Choose Work* document but with a Philadelphia focus. Kathy suggested that the goal should be for these documents to be developed for distribution at this year's Employment Supports Symposium.

III. Capacity Building

Teresa distributed a document updating the current status of the "Transition 44" Project noting the status of individuals in the project, including whether the paper work has been completed for waiver eligibility, whether they are using OVR funded services, and whether they are working. According to Teresa's information, nine (9) of the 44 individuals are working, 25 are enrolled in the waiver, and 13 are using OVR funded services.

There was a general discussion of the need to begin to collect data about the number of people who have gotten jobs in the first six months of the current fiscal year (July 2006 through December 2006). Len will begin compiling that data using a process similar to what was used to collect the fiscal year 2006 data. The goal is to have that data available for the June Conference.

Also discussed was the need to collect and analyze other data to assist with understanding system-wide capacity. It was agreed that following data would be collected and reviewed:

- The number of staff working in VOC, ADT, and CIE services.

Teresa will compile the above information and have it available to discuss at the next Steering Committee meeting on May 18, 2007.

There was a general discussion about the need for on-going training for Supports Coordinators in the area of employment. Kathy agreed that providing more training for supports coordinators is essential.

IV. Other Employment Related Activities

Michael provided updates on the Employment Supports Symposium and distributed a draft of the Brochure to be used to advertise the event. There was a brief review of the contents of the Brochure. The group suggested edits in a number of areas, including changing the term disability to developmental disability as appropriate based on the decision reached earlier in the meeting. The final document will be completed and sent out by the end of the week.

The article “*Embracing a Working Life for All*” by Michael Callahan was distributed to the group. The article was published in the January/February 2007 TASH Connections periodical. Also contained in that periodical was a piece by Michael Callahan entitled *Employment Imperative*. There was a discussion about excerpting this piece and prominently displaying it on poster board during the Employment Supports Symposium. One idea was to display it during the period of time set aside for Work Groups 9 AM – 12 PM on Wednesday June 6, 2007. There was a request that placards naming the Work Groups be placed on tables during the poster session.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for: May 18, 2007, 1:30 PM at MRS.

Summary Completed by:

Michael McAllister, Ph.D.