



YOUTH INVESTMENT COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, June 2, 2011 - 9:15 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.

*Middlesex County Department of Workforce Development
550 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick NJ
WIA Conference Room A*

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Scott Bollwage (Chair), Lauren Balkan, Davis Blevins, Grant Stuart, Designee for Mimi Hickman-Perfetti, Bruce Negri, Evelyn Rosa, Todd Schaper, Joe Scott, Mary Tarrant, Earl Wiggley, Jason Arrington, Yuqishia Mej

Staff: Jane Brady, Abner Garcia, and Elizabeth Holt

Review and Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the March 7th 2011 Youth Investment Council meeting were approved as presented.

Jane Brady mentioned that the chair Scott Bollwage will be late and initiated introductions introducing the two newest members Lauren Balkan and Jason Arrington.

Committee Goals for 2010 - 2011

The goals were supplied as members arrived at the meeting and discussed as follows:

Objective 1 Increase opportunities for out-of-school youth to access career information and skills training.

- **Create a One-Stop Career System for Youth in Middlesex County.** Jane Brady suggested this to be removed because this goal was completed in 2 years and both are up and running; one in New Brunswick and one in Perth Amboy. The committee suggested not to remove but to change the word create to expand.
- **Continue to develop a general recruitment strategy to assist youth programs in finding eligible out-of-school youth.** Jane Brady recommended keeping this as an on going development. Two staff members; Shamar Spencer and Roberto Rivas have broadened the outreach to the housing authority, high schools, recreation centers etc. Part of the advertisement campaign is up and running and is very successful in Perth Amboy and now in New Brunswick. Jane showed the committee the poster with Shamar and Denisse. The scrolling banner costs \$1,000 and will run for four months. Since the banner has been running there has been an increase in enrollment. This is an effective way to reach the youth where they congregate. This goal will be kept because it is going well.
- **Continue to monitor and improve the service delivery system for youth through collaboration and cooperation among all appropriate agencies and institutions.** Jane Brady mentioned that she will be meeting with court judges that are affiliated with DYFS and will also be meeting with Jewish

Renaissance Foundation next week. A relationship needs to be developed with Puerto Rican Action Board (PRAB) in New Brunswick and Puerto Rican Assoc. for Human Development (PRAHD) in Perth Amboy. This goal should also be kept.

- **Ensure the development and distribution of information regarding assets/resources/services available to out-of-school youth.** It was suggested to add Spanish as well as English. The 411 page is updated on the website and the calendar is in print and will be ready to be delivered to the high school freshman in July. This goal will be kept.
- **Strengthen linkages among workforce development and juvenile justice agencies and institutions.** Staff has determined & US DOL agrees that if a youth has been incarcerated 6 months & 1 day of a year, his/her parents cannot claim the youth as a dependent on their taxes. Therefore when released, the youth would be WIA eligible with no income supporting the youth. The new MOU with Juvenile Justice for the next program year should be signed by the end of June. This goal should be kept.

Objective 2 Decrease the dropout rate for high school students to ensure a more productive workforce and self-sustaining individuals.

- **Provide secondary schools with accurate career information.** Jane Brady informed the committee that staff attends the full guidance counselor meetings to start off the year and that e-mail blasts to the guidance counselors reminding them of websites are sent regularly. This should be kept.
- **Enhance linkages with high schools and the guidance counselors.** The calendars and dropout packages are delivered to the schools yearly or as needed. This should be kept.
- **Anti drop-out play.** This should be added. FADE, produced & presented by NCADD will be presented in 12 schools 2011 - 12 with WIA youth funds.

Objective 3 Increase opportunities for out-of-school youth to interact directly with employers.

- **Organize networks of employers for both employment opportunities and feedback on needs.** Jane Brady informed everyone that this has not been completed yet. We do have a business development task force and are developing relationships with employers such as Sunny Delight, Wakefern, & Lee Linear. UPS is making an effort to hire youth for summer part time jobs. Our youth staff has sent a list of 18 youth to UPS. Wakefern is also offering to hire people 18 years old or older on Davidson Mill Pond Road. Keep this goal.
- **Develop opportunities with employers to expose youth to options and opportunities they might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience.** Taking the youth to places such as Sunny Delight and Lee Linear to expose them to jobs they may not know exist. Setting up a youth summit with all types of careers and people in said careers available to talk to the individual to explain how to obtain this work is in place for this summer. After the event, staff will get the results out to the committee.
- **Develop employee opportunities for out-of-school.** The committee suggested that this third one be added. Currently a youth summit is scheduled for August 18th. This will show youth what types of careers are available and help them navigate the correct school path to obtain them.

Funding for Program Year 2011 - Budget Recommendations

This was also distributed to attendees as they entered the meeting. The total funding for PY 2011 as of now is \$1,265,480. For PY 2010 it was \$1,083,360. We will also have some carry-in money. Up to 20% of the

previous year's funding is allowed to be carried into the new program year. We will be carrying in slightly less than 20%.

The youth one-stops are also known as MC4YOU and are located in Perth Amboy and New Brunswick. The breakdown is clear. Each youth gets paid \$20 a day if in an ITA to attend. The logic is if you were in school and collecting unemployment you would be bringing in an income. This stipend is a form of an income.

MCC programs: The two programs operated by MCC will be renewed for this year.

Possible Carteret Program: If the funds are available a new youth program will be created in Carteret which will be a work readiness or GED program in which the students will then be placed in an ITA. We are looking at MCC or Rutgers to run it. It was mentioned that Rutgers has a work study program. Rutgers's students could assist with our youth program. Evelyn Rosa will e-mail Jane Brady the information.

This year the goal was to serve 120 and we served 105. Next year the goal will be to serve 150 WIA eligible youth.

Visits and Monitoring by State

Jane Brady announced that the visits to the youth one-stops and the monitoring of the programs went well. Mrs. Brady was pleased to not hear any criticism from the state monitors.

- A. Youth Staff from State - May 13th: They offered help in one area which is how to get the individual to take the TABE test seriously. They will give us technical assistance to improve the scores. The TABE is a common measure and the only test available to offer. It is given and timed on a computer.
- B. Review of Files by State: The state found nothing wrong with our files.

Progress of Program (Outcomes)

Abner Garcia gave this overview:

- A. MCC: Work Readiness: Recruitment has doubled. Will start outreach to employers and hopefully will have more next year.
- B. MCC: GED Prep: This has more than doubled in recruitment. Will have up to 20 next year, up from the 18 this year. Out of 10 that took the GED 4 passed. The other 6 continued with the program and were carried over to the next year.
- C. Perth Amboy MC4YOU: Thanks to the advertising this too has doubled with new clients.
- D. New Brunswick MC4YOU: The goal was 20 and we hit 18. Staff is currently working on a similar advertisement for New Brunswick that we have in Perth Amboy.

Some clients have finished ITA's and out of those some have found employment. Will provide numbers at the next meeting.

Wakefern and UPS: Hiring Opportunities : Spoke about this during objectives.

Contract with Juvenile Justice Commission for 2011 - 2012: Spoke about this during objectives.

Youth Summit: August 18, 2011 - Progress Report

This is scheduled for August 18th at the Rutgers Visitor Center from 11 - 2. There will be 200 youth in attendance and several schools and 7 companies are scheduled to be there to inform the attendees of what career paths are available and how to obtain them. We are still currently looking for the following: fashion and sports. If anyone has a lead or contact for one of these industries please forward to Jane Brady. Communications are being held with Wakefern and News 12 NJ to be a part of the event. After the summit is over staff will forward the results to the committee.

Performance Measure Issue: Literacy/Numeracy Achievements

- A. Suggestions for Improving Scores: Incentives have been offered to the individuals to test seriously. They are given the post test within 12 months of the initial testing. If they pass the GED it is counted as a raised score. It was suggested by a committee member to go to the paper and pencil version of the test and the results should increase. The pressure of using a computer can really affect some individuals.
- B. Tutors: Evelyn Rosa will send Jane Brady the information for the Peer to Peer program that Rutgers currently has in place to help increase the number of tutors at a low cost to the program.

Any other suggestions please e-mail Jane Brady.

Adjournment

The next Youth Investment Council meeting will be held on **October 6th at 9 am** at 550 Jersey Avenue in New Brunswick.