

Employment First Collaborative Team Meeting/Conference Call

May 19, 2015
1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.
124 Marriott Drive, Suite 203
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Conference Number – 1-888-670-3525
Conference Code – 7876850281#

AGENDA

1:00 – 1:15 Welcome and Introductions:

Sheila Gritz Swift, Florida Developmental Disabilities Council

Beth Romans-Corsi, Florida Developmental Disabilities Council

Danielle McNeil, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Diane Vacca, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Jean Winsor, Institute for Community Inclusion, UMASS Boston

Judy White, Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Kathleen Roberts, Florida Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health

LeeAnn Herman, Agency for Persons with Disabilities

Nancy Brooks-Lane from Griffin-Hammis Associates

Suzanne Sewell, Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities

Attendees introduced themselves. Sheila Gritz-Swift reviewed the process of how the 2014-2015 strategic action plan was developed and reviewed the process for reviewing the report on the actions that have occurred. Sheila then presented updates to the Collaborative Strategic Action Implementation Plan. Each agency in the collaboration was asked to review their sections of the plan for accuracy and to see if any enhancements need to be added. Please make sure the terminology is clear, and that details are provided for context for anyone in the public reading the document. Grammar and other elements will be checked, but everyone is advised to spell out acronyms in their submissions. Also, the report will have a matrix to plug in the most recent data to compare to baseline data submitted last year. Each partner needs to submit their data.

Point of contact for year 2: The agencies should be considering which of them will be the point of contact for the Employment First Collaborative Team next year. Their interagency agreement stipulates

that one agency should be the point of contact. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) has done it this year and their term ends on June 30th. They are willing to serve for another year this will be discussed again in June. The partners' immediate feedback to this was to agree that the FDDC would be the right choice for this position for the upcoming year.

Legislation: The legislative session has stopped for now. The Employment First legislation was not able to move through before the session ended.

1:15 – 1:45 Update on Employment First Collaborative Training Initiative: Nancy Brooks-Lane provided an update on Griffin-Hammis Associates (GHA) work. The Training Initiative toolkit has taken the feedback the Collaborative Team provided and incorporated it into the draft toolkit. They have also added a training assessment. The toolkit is aligned and arranged around the APSE competencies. The assessment includes a 3 point Likert scale. They would like the Collaborative Team to review the Domain 1 assessment. In the next quarter they will be working with pilot sites (provider organizations) to refine the toolkit and assessments. Have made some recommendations about the pilot sites to the FDDC and the areas to target could be Tallahassee and Tampa. For each domain, there are core competencies, and there's an overall seven-point Likert scale for reviewing where each pilot site is with each domain. The plan is to select a diversity of pilot sites. The draft of changes has been shared, and the EFCT members will review it.

1:45 – 2:00 Update on Employment First Messaging Video/DVD: The video was shown as it is now. Diane has finished all the interviews and plans to get the full rough draft to the FDDC by the end of this month. The attendees are very happy with how the video is coming together.

2:00 – 2:30 Update on Employment First Florida Year Three Project (Pilots): Jean Winsor presented this update. She and Beth Romans-Corsi have met with each site at least over the phone or Skype. Visits to each site are planned from mid-July through mid-August. At this stage, the pilot sites will be assessed for their progress on three stages of development: Collaboration, coordination and presentation. Knowing where they are in this process will be critical as they work together to write their local interagency agreements.

Also, planning is underway for the next Florida Grassroots Group online meeting, to take place in July. This meeting will highlight employment success stories of Floridians with disabilities. Success stories will be presented from various angles, including the employee, the service system and the employer, are welcome.

The Employment First website is also under further development, with more resources being added. Recent conference presentations will be posted there, and any other resources that can help foster stronger connections between agencies especially at the local level.

2:30 – 3:15 Partner Updates (including "Abilities Work" Web Portal and Help Desk and WIOA):

Florida Association of Rehabilitation Providers (FARF): FARF is evaluating changes that have to be made because of WIOA including, How individuals transitioning from high school should be served; the use of subminimum wage certificates in Florida.

VR: VR is closely tracking expenditures on pre-employment services for transition-age youth. They anticipate being able to serve more people with significant disabilities as WIOA is implemented. Additionally they are piloting a customized-employment service and increasing capacity to deliver the Discovery process, including having job developers be ACRE-certified. VR has responded to the draft rules, asking for more support for individuals to access required services, and improvements to delivery trainings to groups of individuals. There are new rules for determination for participation in Ability One contracts, including disability determination by a third party.

APD: APD is moving their training efforts online, including trainings on benefits planning. This will allow for trainings to occur as needed throughout the state. Questions were asked about how APD will ensure that people are accessing the training and that there would be a way to monitor who is using it. There were 144 competitive employment placements over this fiscal year, plus 23 internships.

BEES: BEES was able to fund 40 school districts to attend the Visions conference. The Conference sessions were well attended and the presentations were well done. Educators' attitudes are changing in terms of work expectations for people with disabilities. In spite of some parents and educators with lower expectations, the overall sense is that 80% of students with disabilities should be able to get a standard general diploma.

The presentation on Employment First at the Visions Transition conference was well attended. The conference was held at Rosen Shingle Creek resort which was the first Project SEARCH hospitality site. Individuals had the opportunity to learn more about Project SEARCH beginning with an orientation to the program and concluding with a visit to the hotel departments where the project participants are working. People who attended the Project Search presentation and tour were impressed, and the presentation by the participating employer, the conference keynote, was thought by everyone to be well-delivered and genuine. The keynote was delivered more as an employment panel rather than a keynote speech, which increased its authenticity.

Help desk and web portal: Everything seems to be going smoothly; no complaints have come in. Brochures about it have been printed and distributed at conferences.

Family Café: Events are being coordinated for the Family Café in June. Presentations will emphasize that change needs to happen at the local level.

FDDC: Have advocated with National Project Search to increase options for new site licensing. The \$15,000 per site licensing fee is not something most sites can do. National Project Search has agreed to allow sites to use the technical assistance funded through FDDC to offset some of those licensing fees. VR has both worked to increase funds for providers.

There are two new sites available for next year, and four more sites are interested for the following year. As other sites implement or replicate programs, the main discussion topic has been around making sure the fidelity components are in place and that sites collaborate with each other. Florida has several sites with 100% outcomes and they are more than willing to share the tools they use to be so successful.

3:15 – 4:30 Draft Strategic Action Implementation Plan and Strategies for Completing Year One: The plan is for everyone to review their sections by tomorrow so the plan can be submitted to the Partnership Coalition on Thursday. Data should also be submitted as soon as possible. Beth shared that if she receives any edits prior to 3pm on Wednesday May 20 it will be incorporated for the Thursday meeting.

4:30 Adjourn