

**Whatcom County
Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board (DDAB)**

Whatcom County Health Department
3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham
July 23, 2018
4:30- 6:00 PM

Board Members Present:

Ken Larson
Megen Porter
Russ Sapienza

Kathleen Harrigan
Tim Ballew
Aaron Perzigian
Barry MacHale

Board members excused:

Jeffery Hart

Guests Present:

Beverly Porter, The Arc
Susan Larson, People First
Martia Herlep, Cascade Connections
Nick Harris, DVR

Martha Gluck, DDA
Aaron Dickson, Cascade Connections
Fernando Cuellar, Student

Staff

Amber Wolpers, DD Transition Coordinator; Kathy Cunningham, Clerk; Anne Deacon, Human Services Manager

1.  Call to Order & Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Russ Sapienza and introductions conducted. Quorum was present.

2.  Minutes Approval

Russ motioned to approve minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Ken.

ACTION May 2018 minutes approved as presented. Aye 6, Nay 0



3. Comments from Co-Chairs: Russ gave a report out on the Community Summit that was held in Wenatchee on June 12-14th. He reports that there were many great workshops that he attended and specifically noted a workshop that he enjoyed attending on assistive technology. Ken also reported that he attended the conference and reported that he and Sue were presenters at this year's conference. He reported that they had about 70 people that attended their

workshop on self-advocacy. Both report that it was well organized, well attended and look forward to next year's conference.

4. Employment Quiz: An informal "quiz" was provided followed by discussion to engage and educate the board around employment services for individuals with developmental disabilities provided in Whatcom County.

4. Presentation: School to Work (S2W) Amber Wolpers gave an overview of the School to Work project and highlighted some changes to the program in the coming 2018-19 school year.

- S2W is a partnership between the School Districts, County, Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Vocational Agencies.
- The project is intended for students interested in working, still in school and enrolled with DDA and DVR.
- Goals of the program are to: 1) improve system coordination 2.) Engage the student's "team" to plan for the future, identify needs and next steps 3) expand the student's individualized community based work experience 4) Define employment goals and begin the job search process before exiting from school.
- Changes for next year: Students in their second to last as well as their last year of school are invited to apply. Funding through DVR will be used to expand services available to students.
- Project Search was discussed and a short video was shared explaining this structured internship model.

2018 School to Work graduate Fernando Cuellar along with his job coach from Cascade Connections, Aaron Dickson, talked about his experience participating in the School to Work program. Fernando tried out different jobs sites including the Food Bank and the Co-Op where he did several different tasks including wiping down tables, organizing shelves, sweeping and greeting customers. Fernando reports that he obtained his food handler's permit. He reports that he and Aaron were able to do travel training on the fixed bus routes together and that riding the bus can be confusing. Fernando shared that he is actively looking for employment and is excited to find a job. He also shared that his favorite job site was at the Food Bank.

Nick Harris, DVR: Annual Report

Nick gave an overview of DVR services and his background working as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the past 7 years. He works primarily with transition aged students in the Bellingham and Meridian School District. He noted

the difference between urban and rural transition programs and how vastly the resources and opportunities differ. He reviewed and provided copies to board members on the 2017 DVR annual report.

- 42% of DVR client/case services funding was spent on job placement services, 26% was spent on assessment services.
- DVR is currently in “Order of Selection” which prioritizes services for the individuals with the most barriers to employment. This means some individuals with fewer barriers may not be able to access all DVR services.
- The age group with the highest number of open DVR case is young adults aged 21-25.
- Nick had two students that he worked with highlighted in the statewide annual report and shared both of their success stories.

5. New Business:

School to Work Data:

Amber provided a handout with annual School to Work data from 2016, 2017, 2018.

- Consistently, a % of students are made DDA eligible after the S2W deadlines each year. Expanding S2W to the second to the last year will reduce that number not enrolled with DDA by their last year of school.
- % of grads enrolled with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has steadily improved and reach 90% for this year’s school to work project which is the highest it’s been since we began tracking in 2013.

6. Public Comment:

- Sue Larson shared that the 40th Annual People First Conference is being held September 28th in Olympia. She reports that she attended the very first conference and is looking forward to going again this year. Sue reports that she is selling raffle tickets for \$1 and the grand prize is a weekend getaway on the beach.

7. Meeting Adjourned: Meeting was adjourned by Russ Sapienza at 6:14 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 24, 2018. Note that this meeting will be held at 509 Girard St. in the Administration Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted by Amber Wolpers, WCHD Transition Coordinator

HD staff

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