

Texas Employment-First Task Force (EFTF)

Meeting Summary

February 29, 2016

Members Present:

Stephanie Sokolosky, Chair

Carline Geiger, DARS

Chris Botello

Melody Dabney for Reagan Miller, TWC

Reese Carroll, DSHS

Linda Litzinger

Tanya Lavelle

Marc Mullins, DADS

April Young, HHSC

Linda Levine

Stephanie Myers

Susie May, TEA

Leah Rummel

Norine Jaloway Gill

Members on Speakerphone:

Luis Enrique Chew

Elaine Roberts

Kendra Kerbow

Lori Williams

April Watson-Horton

Members Absent:

Diego Demaya

Robert Williams

Kristen Jones, DFPS

Staff Support:

Chimere Clemons, DADS

Donnie Wilson, DADS

Carrie Bruns

Rita Inman, DADS

Babineaux, DADS

Guests Present:

Christina Bryant, TIBH

Linda Logan, TCDD

Kimberly Berry, TWC

One guest inaudible

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves.

2. Review and Approval of January 14, 2016 Meeting Summary

- A. The January 14, 2016, meeting minutes were reviewed and one correction was noted. All legislative Initiatives were corrected.

MOTION: To approve the summary of the January 14, 2016, meeting as amended with minor edits.

MADE BY: Norine Jaloway Gill

SECONDED BY: Tanya Lavelle

The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously with the minor correction.

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3. Chair Report

Dr. Sokolosky reported to the task force she had met with Executive Commissioner, Chris Traylor and Reagan Miller this past month. Dr. Sokolosky stated the meeting with Mr. Traylor was very good. She asked April Young of Health and Human Service Commission (HHSC) to report her news. Ms. Young informed the task force HHSC had adopted the Employment First Policy and signed by Executive Commission Traylor, it is on the HHSC website. Ms. Young handed out copies of the signed policy and will send the link to the task force. She informed the other state agencies they could post the Employment First policy on their websites as well.

In their meeting Commissioner Traylor suggested incorporating the Employment First website into the navigatelifetx.org website. They discussed the day habilitations and state supported living centers and the loss of jobs. He mentioned Money Follows the Person and there might be a way to capture that money in terms of making adjustments to the state supported living centers and those transitions. She asked if Marc Mullins, Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) might look into this. They discussed the importance of collaboration of the Employment First goals between HHSC, Texas Education Agency (TEA), and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). He stated they could establish a policy but our mission for working with these families surpasses it at a much higher level than the policy, the policy is practically the minimum requirement. Also, when establishing the systems it should not be based on low expectations.

Dr. Sokolosky described her meeting with Reagan Miller, TWC stating she is very interested in the Person Centered planning and wanted to know where the Person Centered planning is going to fit into TWC. She wanted to know where it was in the regulations. Norine Jalloway Gill reported it was in Vocational Rehabilitation, it is clearly defined in the employment process. Carline Geiger, Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) stated this was in their policy and she would share this with Ms. Miller. Another item she is interested in is the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) program and would like some information, Dr. Sokolosky asked Mr. Wilson (DADS) to share SELN information with Ms. Reagan.

Dr. Sokolosky met with Senator Zaffarri's office, they discussed with continuing the task force, in terms of having an expense attached to it, and it might need an LAR request. Next, with having an Employment First entity there are several things that will need to be thought through and identified. First what would the office do that cannot be handled otherwise, why would it need to be established, also, what would be the relevant agency where this office would be housed. Additionally, what would be the functions of this office and how would you ensure interagency collaboration. The task force needs to decide what type of statement we want in order for this office to be important, this will all need to be decided on. Senator Zaffarri's office stated with this office there would be a cost and explained with the price of oil it is going to affect a lot of thing in Texas. She stated another option might be to have selected people in the primary agencies who are designated as the Employment First person and this would be their primary responsibility. In regards to initiative number one, Senator Zaffarri's offices are going to refile this.

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- April Young will send out the link to the signed Employment First Policy

4. Workgroup Updates and Progress

Education and Outreach Subcommittee update - Linda Litzinger reported they have not met since the last Employment First Task Force meeting in January. Their plan is to provide some input into the report and vote on it at the next meeting, or at least start discussing it at the next meeting. Dr. Sokolosky stated one thing that has been discussed was having an Employment First Summit next fall for legislators.

Report Writing Subcommittee update – Norine Jaloway-Gill explained she met with Robert Williams. Dr. Sokolosky stated she had broken down all the statement in the report with various columns per agency. The columns request data such as “working on these items”, “finish”, “gone to the transformation”, this spreadsheet was disseminated to the agency personnel to complete. This workgroup, which comprises of HHSC, DADS, TWC, and TEA, will meet March 21st to review and complete this form. Ms. Jaloway-Gill explained they have not written anything for the report but after they receive this information from the agencies they will incorporate this into this year’s report. Mr. Wilson stated they will need the timeframe for the data points, it was determined the cutoff date for data will be May 1st, this would allow the data to go back two years, he explained the data should be back to them by May 30th. Ms. Jaloway-Gill reported a piece of data collected identifying 10,000 people who were earning subminimum wage in Texas. In their meeting, Mr. Williams suggested writing up a description ending subminimum wage and segregated employment and what the process looks like and send it out to the task force so people can see how it works and happens. Dr. Sokolosky asked that Ms. Jaloway-Gill will write this report for the next meeting. Regarding the Leadership Network in the Houston area, Carline Geiger reported they should contact Cheryl Guido, she is the DARS lead in this area. Dr. Sokolosky suggested the task force research other organizations that are established that have to do with employer networking.

- Ms. Jaloway-Gill will write a report describing the process of ending subminimum wage and segregated employment

Senate Bill 1226 update – Leah Rummel reported they have not met or completed anything except sending a grid/spreadsheet to the state agencies to complete. The next meeting is March 21st and they will review the chart. Susie May of TEA explained the only data for the task force is on TEAs website now. Donnie Wilson, DADS reported the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Plan has been submitted. There is a summary, April Young, HHSC will send the state plan to the task force. Carline Geiger stated the TWC, VR, and DARS combined plan is posted on the website, it is proposed but not signed off on. April Young will send this link out to the group as well when it is signed off on.

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- April Young will send the State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Plan to the task force members
- April Young will send the TWC, VR, and DARS combined state plans to the group after signed off on

5. Discuss specific legislative Initiatives

The committee discussed are revised the legislative initiatives which are listed below.

1. End segregated employment and sub-minimum wage for people with disabilities, including state support of employers who promote the use of segregated and sub-minimum wage employment.

MOTION: To approve initiative number one

MADE BY: Stephanie Myers

SECONDED BY: Chris Botello

All agency representatives abstained from voting on the above initiative.

2. Continue Employment First Task Force beyond September, 2017, with travel expenses funded.

MOTION: To approve initiative number two

MADE BY: Linda Litzinger

SECONDED BY: Leah Rummel

All agency representatives abstained from voting on the above initiative.

3. Create an Employment First Division within HHSC to build employment service provider capacity and develop statewide outreach capabilities, to assist people with disabilities, employers, providers and family members to experience competitive, integrated employment. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:
 - development of an informational website,
 - training and technical assistance
 - expand support to improve the provider network capacity
 - assure expertise to serve all populations with disabilities, including persons with the most complex needs
 - enhance employer participation for job access

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- address how wages impact benefits and the use of work incentives to encourage employment outcomes

MOTION: To approve initiative number three

MADE BY: Norine Jalloway-Gill

SECONDED BY: Leah Rummel

All agency representatives abstained from voting on the above initiative.

4. Develop licensure and oversight requirements of day habilitation facilities to ensure that they comply with Employment First policies outlined in Senate Bill 1226, Section 531.02447, CMS and HCBS requirements and WIOA.

MOTION: To approve initiative number four

MADE BY: Leah Rummel

SECONDED BY: Norine Jalloway-Gill

All agency representatives abstained from voting on the above initiative.

5. Require TWC, with input from HHSC and TEA, to report at least annually on the success of Employment First goals and objectives using reporting requirements in WIOA.

MOTION: To approve initiative number five

MADE BY: Norine Jalloway-Gill

SECONDED BY: Leah Rummel

All agency representatives abstained from voting on the above initiative.

6. Independent School Districts will comply with WIOA Transition guidelines for graduates, particularly in relation to preparation for competitive, integrated employment and highly individualized placements.

MOTION: To approve initiative number six

MADE BY: Stephanie Myers

SECONDED BY: Chris Botello

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All agency representatives abstained from voting on the above initiatives.

Linda Logan will forward website regarding the Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (ACICIEID) to April Young who will forward on the task force members.

- April Young will send out website for Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (ACICIEID) to the task force members

6. State Agency Updates

- a. April Young reported HHSC had adopted the Employment First policy. She reported the state agency workgroup would meet on March 21st.
- b. Susie May, TEA reported TEA, Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) have been meeting regularly. She discussed the Letter of Agreement (LOA) between TEA and DARS which was executed in 2009. They are working on the transition pieces and developing checklist for school personnel so they will be on board and will know when to invite a DARS representative to Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) meetings. The Texas Transition Conference was February 17th – 19th with many speakers and next year conference will be held in Houston on February 22nd – 24th. Ms. May reported Carla who is an arm of TEA stated she looks forward the Educational Outreach sub-committee developing information and material for state capacity building. TEA is developing training guidelines for the designees with the transition. Ms. May explained the Transition Education Designee (TED) will be the contact person in helping with a seamless transition between the agencies. She stated they have been invited to participate in Project Search. She clarified there is a \$15,000.00 grant for school districts to partner up with businesses for training grounds for students to help them develop skills to obtain employment. She clarified this grant is about to run out.
- c. Carline Geiger, DARS reported they are part of many workgroups for the transition activities for programs transferring to TWC. She reported regarding the Vocational Rehabilitation portion there are approximately eleven workgroups. She said Information Technology workgroup is working to ensure the Electronic Case Management System is up and running on September 1, 2016. She stated they are ensuring the manuals are updated and correct so they are ready to go on TWCs website. She revealed a new Money Follows the Person grant will have DADS and DARS providing informational forums on basic components on Employment Assistance and Supported Employment should start in the summer of 2016. DARS is continuing to emphasize services to students with disabilities through DARS, this would be for be for students ages fourteen through twenty-two. The pre-employment transition services has five core areas where the funds are spent, much of this has to do with work-based

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learning opportunities for students. This helps them to be better prepared when leaving high school to have an idea of what possibilities there are when they graduate high school. Ms. Geiger explained there is also a communication workgroup regarding the transition to help current consumers, providers, stakeholders, as well as persons who are no longer active consumers.

- d. Donnie Wilson, DADS explained Sara Kendall is a part time DARS/DADS employee. She is working on a project with several DADS employees in the Center for Policy and Innovation department, creating web-based training. The topics are Employment First, Employment Assistance, Supported Employment, and Benefits. The training might possibly be a three chaired process where training modules will be created for provider level, family level, and individual level in each module. Mr. Wilson introduced Nehtra Davis as the new Money Follows the Person Coordinator. He revealed that Mr. Chamberlain has completed the video that encourages people to hire people with disabilities and hopes to show it at the next EFTF meeting. Another item he discussed was the visit to the Bluebonnet Trails, they are participating in the employment pilot. It was a very good trip, Bluebonnet has implemented the process and over sixty people have gone through their program and have been successfully placed in jobs within the community. They have embedded employment into their policies and procedures, all new staff has to go through employment training along with benefits training. The Blue Bonnet trails has many best practices to help the program be successful. He explained the Apprenticeship Project has kicked off and is going well. He reported it is similar to Project Search, taking individuals who are in the process of transitioning to the community within twelve to eighteen months, cycling through training in non-historically used departments at the state supported living centers. They will receive training and acquire a skill through each of these rotations they do so when they do transition into the community they have a skill set upon completion of this project. Mr. Wilson explained the MFP pilot ends December 2016 and each entity was given approximately \$100,000. Mr. Wilson told the task force they would have a business model next fall.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comments.

11. Adjourn

The next EFTF meeting is April 11th from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. at AUSTIN-HHSC CO (Main Building) PHR 164, 909 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas 78751.

MOTION: To adjourn meeting.

MADE BY: Norine Jaloway Gill

SECONDED BY: Chris Botello

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The meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Next Meeting

April 11, 2016

AUSTIN-HHSC CO (Main Building) PHR 164

909 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas 78751

Austin, Texas 78754