



## WSRC QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

*Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022*

*9:00am to 2:48pm*

**Members Present:** Erica Wollen, Workforce Training Representative, Olympia  
Laurae MacClain, Tribal VR Representative, Nespelam  
Michele Stelovich, Labor Representative, Bellingham  
Peggy Frisk, Council Chair, Community Rehabilitation Provider, Lake Stevens  
Terry Redmon, DVR Director, Ex-Officio, Lacey  
Jen Chong-Jewell, Parent Advocate, Everett  
Jennifer Bean, Client Assistance Program, Bellingham  
Matt Newton, Business Representative, Tacoma  
Lesa Dunphy, DVR Counselor Representative, Ex-Officio, Colville  
Alexandra Toney, OSPI Representative, Olympia

### **Members**

**Absent:** Dion Graham, State Independent Living Council Representative, Union  
Edward Nicholson, Business Representative, Vancouver

**Council Staff:** Shelby Satko, WSRC Executive Director, Lacey  
Jolie Ramsey, WSRC Executive Lead, Lacey

**Visitors:** Mary Crago, DVR Region 1 Deputy Administrator  
Pablo Villarreal, DVR Region 1 Administrator  
Michael Fox, DVR Region 1 ATAP  
Rayanne Miller, DVR Confidential Secretary  
Allesandria Goard, DVR Chief of Field Service  
Doug Burkhalter, Client Assistance Program  
Ann Martin, DVR Region 2 Administrator  
Bonnie Vintin, DVR Rehab Tech, Omak  
Melinda Bocci, DVR Training Manager  
Robb St. Lawrence, DVR Fiscal Compliance Manager  
Abby Smith, DVR Pre-ETS Program Manager  
Aimee Elber, DVR Transition Consultant  
Alex Diseth, NW Center  
Allesandria Goard, DVR Chief of Field Services  
Amber Coleman, DVR EDAI Administrator  
Amy Lystad, DVR RTC, Tumwater

Angela Merritt, DVR Community Program Manager  
Ashley Schweiger, DVR Transition Consultant  
Bek Moras, WASILC Executive Director  
Bill Youngman, DVR Region 2 ATAP  
Brandon Sheldon, DVR Administrative Regulation Analysis  
Cassie Villegas, DVR Deputy Director  
Catherine Herring, DVR Supervisor, Bellingham  
Christina Frye, Trillium Employment Services  
Courtney Williams, Executive Director, Community Employment Alliance  
David Stewart, DVR Supervisor, North Seattle  
Deborah Tigerson, DVR Customer Relations Manager  
Deona Koberstein, DVR Regional Training Specialist  
Elizabeth Gordon, GCDE Executive Director  
Erica  
Francis Gathenya, DVR Transition Consultant  
Gabriela Kasior, DVR Supervisor, North Seattle  
Gina Barrieau, DVR Counselor, Bellingham  
Holly Herrick  
Holly Montana, DVR Transition Consultant  
Jamie Grund, DVR Finance and Budget Manager  
James O'Brien, DVR Supervisor, Lynnwood  
Jamie Rasmussen, DVR Supervisor, Kennewick  
Jayson Morris  
Joanne Ogg, DVR Supervisor, SeaTac  
Jo'el Roth, DVR Region 3 ATAP  
Joy Kramer, DVR Counselor, Mount Vernon  
Kari Russom, DVR Counselor, Mount Vernon  
Kathy Powers, Orion Industries  
Lan Totten, Cascade Connections  
Lori Magnuson, DVR Counselor, Central Seattle  
Lori Moore, DVR Counselor, Mount Vernon  
Maggie Metcalfe, DVR Supervisor, Mount Vernon  
Mari Heusman, DVR Policy and Strategies Manager  
Maria Ozmun, DVR Management Analyst  
Mary Halterman, DVR Program Specialist  
Megan Grundbrecher, DVR Region 2 Deputy Administrator  
Nick Harris, DVR Transition Consultant  
Nicholas Michiels, DVR Supervisor, Central Seattle  
Nikki Wegner, Chinook Enterprises  
Rebecca Jansson, Director, Mainstay/SAILS  
Rena Van Meter, Innovative Services NW  
Shawn Walsworth, DVR Region 3 Administrator  
Tina Mitchell, DVR Business Specialist  
Jana Finkbonner, NIVRP  
Trisha Bustos, Skills, Inc.  
Tennille Nicolette, DVR Training Manager

**Call to Order—** Meeting called to order at 9:04am by Peggy Frisk, Chair

**Motion:** Approval of August 2022 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

**First:** Jen Bean      **Second:** Laurae MacClain

No edits, no abstentions.      **APPROVED**

### **DVR Director Updates:**

#### Staffing updates

- Amber Coleman—EDAI Administrator.
- Abby Smith—Pre-ETS Program Manager.
- Christelle Arnett—Tribal Relations Administrator
- Jeanine Chandler—Business Relations Manager
- Recruiting for a Management Analyst 4
- Don Alvashere left DVR. Jamie Rasmussen is the acting Programs Manager

#### RSA Monitoring Results

- We have not yet received a draft final report.
- We may receive our report in early 2023.

#### WAVES Update

- Current projected go-live date is July 2023
- WellSky is the case management system vendor for Waves. Work being done to remediate all outstanding accessibility issues.
- DVR and services contractors completing interfaces, reports, and data validation.
- WellSky has engaged Quality Logic, an independent and respected accessibility tester, to identify all areas where their VR solution may not be compliant with accessibility requirements under Section 508 of the Rehab Act.
- Any changes to project scope go through formal process involving steering committee and executive sponsorship.

#### New Results Dashboard

- Seeking ways to capture qualitative and quantitative information and improve customer experience.
- The results dashboard helps DVR improve enterprise performance management efforts.
- There is no one central location to track and report data.
- To streamline enterprise performance management, DVR adopted Results Software.
  - Software meets all confidentiality requirements and can speak directly to other systems at DVR, such as Waves, to allow data to flow directly to the software for real-time progress measures.
- Some information to remain internal and some dashboards will be published publicly to allow DVR partners access to measures such as customer satisfaction.
- DVR focused on making performance management a foundation of organization structure.
  - Results will help DVR be more transparent with information about how the agency measures success.

#### Synergy and Pre-ETS

- Synergy Consulting partners were contracted to assist DVR review our current Pre-ETS process and make recommendations for improving the process. After conducting a thorough analysis with on-site and off-site events, they developed a report and provided a plan for improvement.
- Recommendations
  - Executive leadership needs to set clear goals and expectations for Pre-ETS
  - Develop ways to make Pre-ETS more consistent and efficient
  - Develop ways to expand and create best practices
  - Improve vendor relations
  - Create greater fiscal agility and accountability. Making sure that we are not overly creating burden on how it is paid.
- DVR will adopt the detailed action plan. The new Pre-ETS program manager will implement the plan.
  - Extensive collaboration will be done with field staff, RTCs, Transition Program Manager, Policy and Strategies Unit, and others.

#### WSRC Recommendations to Implement the Counselor Reassignment Best Practices Checklist

- Interim solutions include:
  - Float positions filled regionally to address vacated caseloads.
  - Completing CRP communication survey and action items include reminders to staff and added onboarding expectations.
  - Updating all phone lists on internet sites, partner distribution lists, and DSHS databases.
  - Creating auto-reply emails for any staff leaving DVR.
    - Will be sent for one month, and include a contact name and phone/email.

#### Rapid Engagement Strategies

- Rolling out Lean training to HQ leadership team to identify areas of improvement and improve service delivery.

#### CSAVR Conference Updates

- Terry attended conference in San Antonio
- Trends: Rapid Engagement, Lean practices, fiscal spending, staffing/retention.
  - Working more efficiently with our current resources.
  - VRs nationwide are experiencing staffing/retention issues and paying competitive salaries.
- CRPs having issue with staffing as well, which creates an additional waitlist for customers.
- Returning unused funding is an ongoing issue.

#### Q&A

- This is a time to “reinvent” ourselves. Future of DVR is expanding Pre-ETS
- Lesa Dunphy asked, “Has a date set to meet with Synergy?”
  - No, said Terry. Nov. 17 dedicated to look at action plan and determine our direction based on feedback and best way to move forward. Janet will be involved.
- DVR HQ ELT restructure
  - Newly created positions: Changes reflect the added support DVR anticipates in certain areas.

#### DVR Fiscal Updates: Jamie Grund

- FFY22 Spending

- We are currently spending program income
- We received \$7,353,632 (FFY22)
- We have utilized \$3,984,342
- Will start spending basic support 22 in mid-November
- We have not received our Basic Support 2023 grant award
- Pre-ETS Spending
  - DVR increasing the average monthly spending on Pre-ETS for the 2021 grant. \$7.5 million set aside, and \$5 million spent. Funds returned: \$2,567,800
  - DVR starting to spend the 2022 funding.
  - Q: What is messaging to field staff for spending? To shift mindset of being in order of selection. Field staff expressed differences in messaging about funding availability.

#### **Transition Services: Melinda Bocci**

- Overview of Counties
  - There are 39 Counties in WA State, and 32 do not have a school-to-work program
  - Melinda reached out to all 32 counties and met with 18 of them so far. Two more meetings set for November.
  - County meetings per region
    - Region 1: Benton-Franklin, Chelan-Douglas, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Walla Walla-Columbia, Whitman, and Yakima
    - Region 2: Skagit, Whatcom
    - Region 3: Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Lewis, Pacific, Wahkiakum
- Questions asked during these meetings
  - What does transition look like in your county?
  - How are students being connected to DDA, DVR?
  - What are the barriers for a transition program in your county?
  - What do you need for transition?
- Five emerging trends from conversations
  - Roles and Timelines. There can be a disconnect
  - Schools' message
  - DVR relationship
  - Resources available
  - Work is getting done
- Outreach continues
  - Schools, Educational Service Districts (ESDs), OSPI
  - Employment Agencies
  - Counties
- Hiring positions to help with rollout of this work
- Building the Framework
  - Infrastructure
  - Direct Service
- Direct county partnerships: Local meetings
- Capacity building
  - Schools, DVR Counselors, Employment Agencies
- Interagency Transition Networks
  - Working to figure out what programs already exist

- Working closely with OSPI
- Measuring success and Tracking progress
  - Per 5790 guidelines and fiscal note

## **Region 2 Administrator Updates: Ann Martin**

- Staffing updates overview
- Recruiting and Retaining staff successes and challenges continue.
  - Experiencing high turnover, staff changes.
  - More intentional staff recognition. Asking why staff is leaving to be more responsive in those areas.
- New field staff onboarding and training ongoing
  - Three weeks of training, occurring monthly.
  - DVR Director sends out an email to newly hired staff.
- All staff region 2 meeting
- Strategy to address customer satisfaction concerns
- VR staff participating in transformational leadership
  - Partnership between Univ. Mass-Boston Institute for Community Inclusion and Univ. of WA-Stout Voc. Rehab Institute
- Capstone Project
- Tribal Liaisons with Tribal Vocational
  - Barry Aberle-Tulalip Tribes, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
  - Kari Russom-Samish Indian Nation, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
  - Amanda Portillo-Lummi Nation, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Samish Indian Nation

## **Region 2 Deputy Administrator: Megan Grundbrecher, Ashley Schweiger, Nick Harris, & Bill Youngman**

### **Megan Grundbrecher – Deputy Regional Administrator**

- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
  - Taking into consideration Equity, Diversity, Access, & Inclusion (EDAI), equitable services, targeted approach to reach students in schools with the most need.
- Contractors served 1,300 students this year.
  - Little over 1,000 for work readiness
    - 604 for self-advocacy
    - 602 work-based learning activities, job shadows, informational interviews and job site tours.
    - 67 paid work-based learning experiences
- Group and individual services
- Outreach strategies
- RTCs and contractors using innovative strategies to serve students.

### **Ashley Schweiger – Regional Transition Consultant**

- Provided direct services to over 80 students in King County this year.
- Partnering with WSU and Mercer Island School District for a pilot program called Washington Transition Program (WTP)

- School administrators, DVR, other partners, meeting monthly to discuss transition services, how to recognize needs, and improve service delivery.
- Schools increasing awareness of our program
- Working to collaborate more with schools
- Recently hosted their first virtual parent night to tell them about DVR, including Pre-ETS. 108 parents attended. Four parents requested Spanish interpreters.

**Nick Harris– Regional Transition Consultant**

- SD 189, workplace readiness training, advocacy.
- Working with 18-21 programs
- Motivational Enhancement Guided Intervention (MEGI) Acronym Curriculum with five schools.
- Washington Transition program

**ATAP Updates: Bill Youngman – Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioner**

- Numbers served
- Types of services
  - Dragon software
  - Vehicle modifications
  - Computer software, hardware
  - Inventory of equipment, software, apps, etc. for quick service delivery
- Projections for this year
  - Hiring a 2<sup>nd</sup> ATAP for Region 2, supported by a Rehab Tech
- Asked how ATAP can expand services with additional funding
- Working with training team to increase VRCs' awareness of ATAP services.

**Central Seattle Unit Update: Nicholas Michaels – Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor**

- Successes and Challenges in serving urban community
  - Our partners provide wrap around services. We have robust partnerships, liaison assignments, collaborate with foster/youth programs, coordinate with WorkSource
  - Shelter programs where people can receive housing, food, other benefits
  - Airport, council/city, Amazon hiring events
  - Safety concerns and safety committee formed to discuss and resolve concerns with pandemic related safety and increased crime and violence in Seattle.
- Labor market overview
  - Market continues to favor the employee
- Office and Staffing changes
  - We went from two units to one unit. We had two supervisors, 10-12 VRCs, four RTs, one business specialist, and one office assistant. Changed office assignments.
  - Turnover during pandemic, one VRC retiring soon
  - Focusing on maintaining communication with customers during staff transitions.
- Liaison assignments
- EDAI-Intentional Community of Practice
  - Targeting disenfranchised youth for services
- Safety/Policy Changes
  - Ongoing safety changes. Staff accommodate to customers' safety meeting preferences.

## Customer Satisfaction & Program Evaluation Subcommittee: Jen Bean, Matt Newton

### Jen Bean

- Customers served-354
- Comments received-235
  - Overall
    - Positive-47%
    - Negative-40%
    - Neutral-12%
  - Top comment themes
    - Personnel
    - Program outcomes
    - Communication
- Response rate-35%
- Overall satisfaction was 65% statewide, 5% margin of error
- Subcommittee Priorities and Future Goals
  - Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)
    - Deep dives into trends
    - Supports Council work on State Plan
  - EDAI
    - Focus on intersection between EDAI and customer satisfaction
    - Look at equity related to performance and outcomes
  - Rapid Engagement
    - Partner with the Policy & Planning Subcommittee
    - Explore options to improve declining customer satisfaction and program outcomes

### Matt Newton

- Subtheme Distribution. We want to help DVR focus our energy in the most efficient way through data analysis.

### Listening Session Summary: Jolie Ramsey

- Listening Sessions held with customers receiving services by an Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioner (ATAP)
  - Region 1 ATAP: Bill Youngman
  - Region 2 ATAP: Michael Fox
  - Region 3 ATAP: Jo'el Roth
- Ten customers participated, representing all three regions, various backgrounds
- General Themes
  - ATAP providers are knowledgeable, caring, professional, resourceful
  - Having inventory of commonly requested assistive technology improves customer satisfaction. (keyboard, mouse, monitor, etc.)
  - Certain aspects of receiving assistive technology can take several months, which delays customers' progress in meeting goals.
  - Customers expressed understanding that the pandemic created delays in nearly every step of the process.
- Suggestions for Improvement
  - Administrative support needed for the ATAP providers



- The ability to electronically sign documents would help customers, reduce barriers
- Communication
- Building awareness of DVR services
- Flexible work hours for ATAP providers

### **Client Assistance Program (CAP):**

Jen Bean

- Outreach and Training
  - RAs and Regional management team—Fall 2022
  - VRS check ins and unit meetings-2023
  - CAP Coffee Talk-2023
  - CAP/WSRC orientation-2023
  - Rehab Law -2023/2024

Doug Burkhalter

- Vocational Assessment
  - Encourage VRCs to get current assessments
- Best Practices
  - Core principles of rehab
  - Counseling and guidance
  - Intent of the law
  - Customer Service

### **Public Comment:**

- Courtney Williams: Giving a better timeline on the potential rate increase. DDA rate study results. Getting CRPs to have plan signs? Messaging to customers on fiscal reality.
- Kathy Powers: The better analysis and survey is awesome. Questions. As counselors return to office, the flexibility is nice. What are customers saying about that? As a provider, that remote work is not always the most conducive to a robust relationship with customers. I watched a webinar on rapid engagement, and it is very exciting to me. It would help keep DVR relevant in an ever-shifting job market.
  - Ann Martin: In some ways, hybrid, remote work has been great for some, and not as great for others. What parts of the process would be best to be held in-person. It depends on the customer. It comes down to informed choice conversations with each customer and meeting them where they are at in the best way for them. Rapid engagement: is so important to build off the customer's enthusiasm to work.
- Rebecca Jansson: Training for CRPs was excellent. Thank you all for the instructional videos. "What can Community Rehabilitation Providers do to improve their services?"

**Meeting adjourned at 2:48pm**