

**WSRC QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES***Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023**9:02am to 10:56am*

**Members Present:** Laurae MacClain, Tribal VR Representative, Nespelem  
Peggy Frisk, Council Chair, Community Rehabilitation Provider, Lake Stevens  
Jennifer Bean, Client Assistance Program, Bellingham  
Jen Chong-Jewell, Parent Advocate, Everett  
Erica Wollen, Workforce Training Representative, Olympia  
Lesa Dunphy, DVR Counselor Representative, Ex-Officio, Colville  
Alexandra Toney, OSPI Representative, Olympia  
Terry Redmon, DVR Director, Ex-Officio, Lacey  
Aimee Elber, Disability Advocacy Representative, Spokane

**Members**

**Absent:** Dion Graham, State Independent Living Council Representative, Union  
Matt Newton, Business Representative, Tacoma  
Edward Nicholson, Business Representative, Vancouver  
Michele Stelovich, Labor Representative, Bellingham

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

**Visitors:** Janet LaBreck, Synergy Consulting Partners  
Greg Schmieg, Synergy Consulting Partners  
Deane Belk, Synergy Consulting Partners  
Ann Martin, DVR Region 2 Administrator  
Eric Boggan  
Angela Merritt, DVR Community Program Manager  
Lan Totten, Cascade Connections  
Erin Ormsby, Arc of Spokane  
Albert Almanza, Regional Manager, Entrust Community Services  
Jessica Armstrong, DVR Contractor  
Mari Heusman, DVR Policy Manager  
Allesandria Goard, DVR Chief of Field Services  
Cassi Villegas, DVR Deputy Director  
Rena Van Meter  
Deona Koberstein, DVR Regional Training Specialist, Everett  
Mary Halterman, DVR Program Specialist, Bremerton  
Bethany Johnson, DVR VRC, Spokane

Peter Simonson, DVR Supervisor, Bellevue  
 Kaire Downin, Executive Director, Oregon SRC  
 Jeannine Chandler, DVR Business Relations Manager  
 Drew Cassidy, Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board  
 Doug Burkhalter, CAP Representative  
 Jere Jaline, DVR Supervisor, Spokane  
 Carla Caballo-Jackson, DVR Supervisor, Spokane  
 Jeanese Hime, DVR Program Coordinator  
 Christopher Nivinskus, DVR Administrative Regulations Analyst  
 Mercedes Bekke, DVR Management Analyst, Spokane  
 Pablo Villarreal, DVR Region 1 Administrator  
 Maria  
 Catherine Herring, DVR Supervisor, Bellingham  
 Abby Smith, DVR Pre-ETS Program Manager  
 Brandy, CRP, Compass of Spokane  
 Shawn

**Call to Order—** Meeting called to order at 9:02am by Peggy Frisk, Vice-Chair

**Synergy Consulting Partners, Pre-ETS Workgroup Updates:** Greg Schmieg, Jimmy Wilson, Janet LaBreck

- 65,000 students in Special Education/504 plan statewide
- Geographic gaps
- Results software
- DVR work groups
  - Each work team completed a “team charter”, presented it to executive leadership, and leadership.
  - Recommendations will come from the workgroups, not from Synergy.
  - Work will be shared in Results.
- Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Deliverables
  - Clarify the intent of Pre-ETS and recommend steps to access services
  - Work based Learning, Work Readiness Training (WRT), and self-advocacy.
  - Create Policies and procedures for Pre-ETS.
  - Streamlined operational diagrams.
  - Pre-ETS contract is 60-80 pages currently. Billing process is complex.
  - Pre-ETS handbook
  - Improved vendor relations
  - Effective contracts
  - Simplified billing
  - Pre-ETS handbook, contract procedure manual, vendor relations manual
  - Pre-ETS budget
- Equity, Diversity, Access, and Inclusion should take place in your state plan. Does the population of our agency reflect the population we serve?
- Invest in our relationships with our providers.

### **Executive Committee:**

- Lesa Dunphy reported on her April 15-16 attendance at the National Coalition for State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC).
  - Conference held in Washington, DC.
  - It has been four years since they held an in-person conference.
  - Learned about VR in different states and how privileged we are in WA State to have strong partnerships with DVR, SRC, and CAP. Not a lot of integration in other states.
  - Made great connections with Guam and Hawaii SRCs.
  - Partnership building was happening with several state attendees.
- Update on visual communication projects.
  - Staff worked with DSHS Visual Communications to create update brochures.
    - Hard copy and digital versions available both in English and Spanish.

### **Partnership Subcommittee**

#### **Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board:** Erica Wollen and Drew Cassidy

- Drew Cassidy, Integrated Service Delivery Manager, introduced herself, will be taking Erica's place on the Council.
- Working on the TAP plan, working how to better align, reduce barriers for access for both employers and job seekers.

#### **Special Education Advisory Council:** Jen Chong-Jewell

- In-person meeting May 23-24 at WA State School for the Blind in Vancouver. Virtual option as well.
- Priority is writing annual report for State Superintendent.
- Accepting applications for new members.
- Supported OSPI's funding request. Not all the bills passed.
- The arbitrary cap to fund Special Education should be removed. Moved to 15%. Elimination of the use of isolation and reduce/eliminate the use of chemical restrictions for PWD. Those bills died this session.

#### **Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR):** Jen Chong-Jewell

- PEAR plan to be ready to be shared in the next few months.
- Workforce Equity—increase BIPOC and PWD in leadership.
- Commitment to really embed these values in the system.
- Helping DSHS to provide input on rebranding project, everything from color schemes, photos used, populations represented and how they are represented visually.
- Proactive Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Team | DSHS (wa.gov)

#### **Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction:** Alexandra Toney

- Continue to build and improve relations with transition partners and agency connections.
- Data share, student consent project to key transition services. Standalone form and part of IEP transition plan.
  - Collecting feedback from partners to see how they can improve this.
  - Working on data share agreement between the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and DSHS.
- April 2023 Special Education Update (govdelivery.com)
- April 2023 Program Improvement Updates (www.k12.wa.us)

**Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation: Laurae MacClain**

- Works on Core Advisory Team with Christelle Arnett. The Team is focusing on revising the Tribal Policy Manual that VRCs read and use. Connecting Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and 701 plan.
- Working on improving “warm handoffs” during case transfers.
- Conferences in Yakima upcoming. KNAR Con. New leadership to come.
- May is a busy month for many tribes. May is Memorial “month”, not just a day.
  - Grave cleaning, naming ceremonies, etc. It is a month spent honoring and remembering their ancestors.

**Behavioral Health Advisory Council: Jolie Ramsey**

- Council current priorities
  - Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation
    - The Office of the Surgeon General has created a Partner Toolkit to address the “Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation”-Surgeon General’s Advisory on the *Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community*
    - Approximately half of US adults report experiencing measurable levels of loneliness.
    - Loneliness and social isolation are more widespread in the US than many other major health issues, including smoking, diabetes, and obesity.
    - Social connection has been on the decline for decades, since long before the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing trends in loneliness and highlighted how central connections are in our lives. In 2021, almost half of Americans (49%) reported having three or fewer closer friends, compared to 27% reporting the same in 1990.
    - Socially connected individuals and communities also experience better non-health outcomes.
    - We are wired for human connection.
  - Focus on teen and young adult mental health needs.
  - Continued opioid epidemic response in WA State.

**Council Wrap Up**

- Addressing mental health. Customer and staff. How we can create opportunities for staff. Secondary trauma is a real thing.
- Consider how mental health impacts us as staff.
- Business resource groups, ELT, aware and supportive of mental health needs.
- Cultural considerations surrounding addressing mental health. Generational and cultural barriers to addressing and accepting support for mental health needs. Shifting cultural expectations
- Strong mental health component to DVR service delivery. DVR will adapt and change to address the need for this area of support.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:56am**