



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jaime Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Advocacy and Education Committee **Minutes**

June 15th, 2023
03:00pm – 04:00pm
Zoom
Meeting ID: 825 0780 4872

Members Present: Chair, Amanda Owen, Jeff Edwards, Diana Merzweiler, Morgan Turner, Amanda Friend

Members Absent: David Allgood could be heard in the audio however because he was unable to maintain video connection he was marked as a non-participant of the meeting.

Staff Present: Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard, KYVOR Branch Manager, Michelle Cobb

Staff Absent: KYOVR Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill

Guest(s) Present: Interpreter, Tara Eversole, Director of Special Education at Owensboro Public Schools, Carrie Wedding, Field Training Coordinator for the Kentucky Autism Training Center, Tracy Belfield

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

Administrator, Nanci Howard presented and went over agenda with attendees and then turned the meeting over to Chair, Amanda Owen.

Chair Report:

Chair, Amanda Owen called for a motion to approve the May 1st, 2023, minutes. Member, David Allgood made motion to approve the May 1st, 2023, minutes and Chair, Amanda reminded him that because he could not be seen in video, he was unable to make a motion or vote. This was confirmed by Administrator, Nanci Howard. Chair, Amanda called for another member to make the motion to approve the May 1st, 2023, minutes and member, Jeff Edwards made the motion. Chair, Amanda recognized out loud that member, Diana Merzweiler and member, Amanda Friend simultaneously provided a second for the motion. A formal vote was not taken and Chair, Amanda stated that the motion passed. Chair, Amanda asked for brief introductions to be made for all attendees as there were guests in attendance of the meeting. Chair, Amanda made mention of the Kentucky Chamber webinar and expressed her enthusiasm of the information shared

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therein. She recommended that any interested members watch the recording of that meeting. She also reiterated the charge of the committee to educate and advocate on disability topics by pulling information together to create a power point or app that can be used statewide.

Project Charter Document:

Chair, Amanda Owen turned the meeting over to Administrator, Nanci Howard to go over the Project Charter Document and Best Practice Day Event which will be held on August 21st, 2023, at the Transportation Cabinet in Frankfort, KY. Nanci presented the Project Charter Document via screen share and explained the purpose of the document as well as details of the Best Practice Day Event. Member, Diana Merzweiler asked what time the Best Practice Day Event would begin, and Nanci stated that the event will take place from 9:00 AM – 1:30 PM. Nanci went on to explain the details of the Strategic Planning Process which will take place on the morning of July 14th, 2023, before the Employment First Council, quarterly meeting and then turned the meeting back over to Chair, Amanda.

Subcommittee Discussion:

Chair, Amanda Owen shared information regarding the app which she had gathered since the committees last meeting. She stated that she had spoken to two different companies who design apps and websites, and she has concluded that this committee is moving towards creating an interface to the already existing Employment First website which is currently housed under the KYOVR website. She shared additional information regarding cost effective strategies that could be used to access the website from a mobile device which included a QR code. Chair, Amanda went on to say that presently the Employment First website does not house much of the information that this committee would like to share, and she began to screen share the website to show the members and guests what was presently depicted on the website. Chair, Amanda asked Administrator, Nanci Howard if the Employment First Council already had its own domain and Nanci explained that the Employment First page is under Kentucky.gov (interactive) and does not have its own domain. She went on to explain that prior to KYOVR managing the Employment First Council, the website was non-existent and University of Kentucky – Human Development Institute (UKHDI) had information on their page which she pulled over to the KYOVR website when it switched hands. But there has never been a fully developed webpage. There was discussion amongst the committee of who would make updates to the current webpage and Nanci mentioned that she believed these updates would need to go through the Cabinet. She said although she did not know the specific details, she would be happy to investigate further and report back to the committee. Member, Diana Merzweiler stated that Kentucky Works may have information on their website about Employment First. Member, Jeff Edwards stated that UKHDI is creating and housing a webpage for his employer. Chair, Amanda stated that the first step is to determine what this committee wants to publish on the Employment First website so that the committee can begin working on the interface set up. She mentioned the five areas of focus that the committee has already established; Self Advocates; Guardians-Parents; Professionals-Educational; Providers; Employers. There was discussion amongst the committee regarding this matter and agreement amongst members of the goals of this committee. Member, Diana asked if the Kentucky State Government had a marketing division. Chair, Amanda stated that there was discussion regarding the marketing campaign in prior meetings and there is already another committee working on that at this time. She stated that the focus of this committee is to develop the information so that the information could be distributed thereafter. Chair, Amanda stated that the committee members could break out into the five categories based upon their own passion drive to help to develop the website and power point. She mentioned that Administrative Specialist, Pepper Caudill had previously set up a drop box made up of the five categories so that members could share resources to be added to those categories. In turn, these resources could be shared to the Employment First landing page and so on. She expressed her desire for the landing page to be

user friendly and easy to navigate as well. Member, Amanda Friend stated that she is worried the schools will get the Employment First, transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) confused. There was further discussion of the sequence of events and overlap of these services, at the school level. There was discussion of the cost associated with updating the Employment First landing page through the KYOVR website and Nanci stated that she had just been notified that soon there would be a “Boards and Councils” page added to the website and this was where the Employment First landing page was planned to be housed. She stated that she would speak with KYOVR Executive Director, Cora McNabb to get more information and options. The QR code was discussed more, and it was mentioned that the current KYOVR website is not very user friendly. Branch Manager, Michelle Cobb asked whether Employment First could be listed as a separate tab towards the top of the KYOVR website page as this would make it easier to locate. There was further discussion of how to keep the Employment First landing page at the forefront of the website so that it is easier to access information. Member, Jeff Edwards mentioned donations as an option to help with the cost of the website renovations/development. Chair, Amanda stated that through her research she discovered that the cost of developing a website from scratch is roughly \$7,000.00. Member, Diana inquired whether KYOVR has a YouTube channel and if so, could there be a subchannel added so that members could upload videos to the platform. Chair, Amanda thanked Diana for sharing her idea and redirected the focus of the committee to decide what key elements are desired for the website as it pertains to the five categories that the committee has already established. Chair, Amanda stated that she would send an email to the committee members with the intent to gather information on the five categories so that she could prepare a report of this committee to be given at the July 14th, 2023, Council quarterly meeting. Member, Jeff shared information regarding P&A resources with Guest, Carrie Wedding.

Future areas of focus:

- Administrator, Nanci Howard to research and report back specific details of cabinet approval of Employment First website updates/additions.
- Administrator, Nanci Howard to discuss and obtain Employment First website options/information with Cora McNabb.
- Chair, Amanda Owen to email members regarding July 14th, 2023, committee report.

Action Items: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment:

Chair, Amanda Owen called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member, Jeff Edwards made the motion to adjourn the meeting and a second was provided by member, Amanda Friend. A vote was not taken, and the meeting was informally closed.

Next Meeting Date:

Friday, July 14th, 2023
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Hybrid Format
Location: 500 Mero Street
1st Floor (Hearing Room)
Frankfort, KY. 40601

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