



## Employment First Committee Meeting Minutes May 4, 2023

### Attending Members

Julie Gaona (SA)  
Michael Luna (DDS)  
Steve Ruder (UCD)  
Nick Wavrin (CDE)  
Larry Yin (USC)  
Nancy Wentling (DOR)  
Christine T. Moody (UCLA)  
Wesley Witherspoon (SA)

### Members Absent

Cathay Liu (FA)  
Sarah Issacs (DRC)

### Others Attending

Aaron Carruthers  
Tania Morawiec  
Bridget Kolakosky  
Veronica Bravo  
Mary Ellen Stives  
Julie Gaona  
Robin Maitino-Erben  
Suza Szewiola  
Anne De Medeiros  
Michelle Cave  
Beth Hurn  
Tanesha Morris  
Lynne Powell  
Zak Ford  
Katherine Sanders

#### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Julie Gaona (SA) called the meeting to order.

#### 2. **ESTABLISH QUORUM**

A quorum was established.

#### 3. **WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

Members and others introduced themselves.

#### 4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

#### 5. **APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

It was moved/seconded (Ruder/Luna) and carried to approve the February 2023 meeting minutes. All members present approved—Nancy Wentling

and Christine Moody had not yet arrived. (See page one for members in attendance.)

## 6. **APPROVE 2022 EMPLOYMENT FIRST REPORT**

Veronica Bravo reviewed the new structure/layout of the Employment First Report. Unlike previous years' reports, it will include:

- A brief background on the EFC and associated laws.
- Updates on laws and policies that affect Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) and analysis on *how* they affect employment.
- Background on the employment process.
- EFC recommendations below each issue, to ensure legislative staff clearly understand the issue and the recommendation.
- Reiteration and highlighting of the recommendations from previous reports.

Due to its complexity and a delay in the submission of pertinent information, the report did not include all of the up-to-date content. This was of concern to some members (Mr. Ruder, Mr. Wavrin, Mr. Luna) who indicated it would be difficult to approve the report and/or its structure without the inclusion of the total content.

Ms. Morawiec suggested that the EFC hold an additional abbreviated meeting to review the document after Ms. Bravo receives and compiles all the information. Members would receive the document in advance of the meeting in order to review it. It was decided to hold a 90-minute meeting to review the document in June and to table the vote until after that meeting.

Members and staff thanked Ms. Bravo for her dedication and hard work on the report.

Bridget Kolakosky noted the ultimate goal of the restructured report is to clearly identify resources, challenges, and recommendations in such a way that the legislature can read, understand, and act on it.

Ms. Morawiec suggested that the EFC host a 90-minute community conversation to learn their specific barriers to gaining CIE and what, if anything, has helped them overcome those barriers. Information gathered from the conversation can be included in the next report.

A Doodle Poll will be sent out to members to determinate a date to review the more complete draft of the report.

## 7. **TARGET PRIORITIES UPDATES**

The SMART Goal Workgroup Update was postponed because the meeting was ahead of schedule and Christine Moody (who was out of the country) was not yet in attendance.

Robin Maitino-Erben provided a short history of the Data Workgroup. Ms. Morawiec and Ms. Kolakosky articulated the reasons why a “reboot” of the Data Workgroup is warranted. Although there is robust and relevant data coming from DDS, it would be beneficial for the Council to have additional information that meets SB 639 requirements to include in the transition plan and report.

A discussion ensued about additional data to include in the report as well as which agencies should have a representative in the Data Workgroup. It was decided that primary contributors would be DDS, DOR, CDE, and Children’s Hospital, Los Angeles. Other contributors suggested were EDD, ARCA (Association of Regional Center Agencies), and individual Regional Centers.

Lunch Break

## 8. **STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATES**

The Legislative Update was postponed until Ms. Kolakosky recovered from allergic coughing.

## 9. **CIE IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORTS UPDATE**

Ms. Morawiec reviewed ODEP (Office of Disability Employment Policy – Federal Dept of Labor) NEON (National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network) Grant activities through a PowerPoint presentation.

SCDD, partnering with DDS and DOR secured technical assistance (TA) through the NEON grant and the Administration for Community Living (ACL) /Administration on Disabilities (AoD) Disability Employment TA Center.

The grant activities have a two-part focus:

1. Transformation Support through a Community of Practice (CoP) headed by Rick McAllister.
2. Interagency Collaboration (looking at Systems Change and Values-Based Purchasing) headed by Lisa Mills and Bill Hudock.

The California CoP, led by national subject matter expert (SME) Rick McAllister, targets stakeholders involved in 14c transition. Stakeholders include employment providers, regional center employees, and direct service staff.

It will consist of weekly presentations on a specific topic held Wednesdays from 9 to 11:30 a.m. One hour will be devoted to didactic training and one and a half hours to stakeholder discussion, problem solving, and planning. The one hour of didactic training will be recorded for future review.

Ms. Morawiec briefly described the upcoming sessions which will cover topics such as benefits, customized employment/discovery, job development/customization/business bottom line, job retention coaching, mental health and co-occurring disabilities, accommodations, “ask me anything/ask the expert”, and transition planning and on-going needs.

Interagency collaboration will focus on leveraging State and Federal funding systems, unintentional consequences of design and incentives, and braiding and sequencing successfully.

Additionally, several SCDD employees are participating in the Results in Systems Excellence (RISE) Peer e-Learning Community in order to assist the CoP to engage with diverse and underserved communities in relation to CIE.

#### **10. TARGET PRIORITIES UPDATES (continued)**

Christine Moody presented The SMART Goal Workgroup Update. The Workgroup has met a few times since the last EFC meeting to advance the two goals selected:

- Expanding membership to include employers, service providers, more advocates, post-secondary education representatives, regional centers.
- Creating an EFC member role description.

The Workgroup—based on a suggestion from Robin Maitino—determined that utilizing a self-nomination survey would be the best way to expand membership. The survey would allow the EFC to invite potential members to submit an application for consideration. Furthermore, a link on the EFC webpage would allow the wider public to submit an application, increasing nominations and equity.

The Workgroup—consisting of Christine Moody, Michael Luna, and Steve Ruder—created a draft of survey questions for the EFC to consider. Ms. Moody gave an overview of the draft survey and asked for feedback from the entire EFC.

Ms. Maitino pointed out that final appointment of committee members require the approval of Council. The EFC will identify a pool of candidates from which The Chair of the State Council (working with SCDD’s Executive Director) will make appointments.

Mr. Ruder explained the rationale to allow candidates to answer questions in writing or by talking on Zoom. Since EFC members are not expected to be able to write, giving them the alternative of a live online session would provide a more equitable platform.

Mr. Luna said that one of the goals of the Workgroup is to make the self-nomination survey document as accessible as possible. He welcomed input from EFC members.

Next, Ms. Moody reviewed the draft EFC invitation letter which will be sent to those chosen as candidates. The letter includes a description of SCDD and the EFC, the tasks of EFC and the role of its members.

Ms. Kolakosky suggested that, in order to provide context, the invitation letter should include the mandate or purpose of the EFC. Ms. Gaona stated she would like some time to review the letter with the idea of streamlining it. Approval of the letter was postponed until the July meeting so that these additions/edits can be made.

## 11. STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Ms. Kolakosky and Ms. Bravo of SCDD shared a PowerPoint presentation: “Update of Employment and Education Priorities for 2023”.

Work on a budget proposal for the suggested Employment First Office (in the Department of Health and Human Services) continues. Weekly meetings with budget staff in both Houses are ongoing and Senator Durazo (the author of SB 639) has submitted a budget priority letter.

SCDD presented the SB 639 Transition Plan in both the Senate and Assembly budget committees. The Employment First office was proposed to assist in increasing employment efforts. Currently we are waiting to see if

either House will embrace the proposal and include it in the Governor's updated budget known as the "May Revise".

CIE-related bills the Council is supporting are as follows:

- AB 222 (Arambula) Employment Workgroup sponsored by Disability Rights California (DRC) proposes that the Californians with Disabilities Workgroup will be operated out of the Civil Rights Department in the Department of Social Services. This bill is currently in the Assembly Appropriations Suspense File.
- SB 483 (Cortese) Prohibiting Prone Restraint in Schools sponsored by DRC. This is a two-year bill and is not moving this year.
- AB 447 (Arambula) Inclusive College. Pilot program (same as AB 2920 last year) to establish inclusive college programs at UC and CSU campuses. Currently in Assembly Appropriations Suspense File.
- AB 87 (Quirk Silva) IEPs: Recording Section 504 Meetings sponsored by DRC. Extends authorization of audio recordings of individualized education program (IEP) team meetings by a parent, guardian, or local educational agency to team meetings for pupils with an adopted plan. Currently moved to the second house in the Senate and being referred to the Education and Judiciary Committee.

## 12. CIE BLUEPRINT IMPLEMENTATION

Mr. Luna stated that the CIE Blueprint Combined Annual Reports for 2020 and 2021 (Year 3 and 4) have been posted online. He shared the link in the Chat: [www.chhs.ca.gov/home/cie](http://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/cie).

The Year 5 report is currently being compiled. It will include conclusions and recommendations on how the Blueprint can move forward. Local Partnership Agreements (LPAs) will continue and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) intends to make the CIE Roadmap more accessible.

Mr. Wavrin underscored that the Year 5 Report will recommend that permanent data sharing agreements between CDE, DDS, and DOR be established through legislation. Presently, there is considerable relevant data for advancing CIE, but it cannot be shared because the departments lack legal authority to share it. The hope is that the EFC and SCDD can leverage what is written in the Year 5 Report to sponsor such a data-sharing bill.

DDS final numbers for Fiscal Year 21-22 CIE Incentive Payment and Paid Internship Program (PIP) were:

- 1,678 consumers achieved an incentive payment milestone.
- 104 consumers received the PIP incentive payment.
- 180 individuals or 12% attained CIE as a result of the PIP.
- 1,527 consumers participated in the PIP.

The DDS Employment Grant was awarded to 45 projects. Full grantee summaries are posted on the DDS website. First quarterly reports have been submitted. DDS will review the reports and then meet with grantees to discuss their progress.

DDS Regional Center Performance Measures now include a goal, accompanied by a financial incentive, to increase CIE. Incentives will be paid to regional centers that meet the goal. Overall, the State's goal is for a 20% increase in CIE placements over the Fiscal Year of 2021-22.

The summary for a "Person-Centered Career Pathways Pilot Program" has been developed with the assistance of Dr. Olivia Raynor. DDS plans for this program to be developed through a service code. It's main purpose is as a "Career Pathway Navigator".

Mr. Wavrin stated that the April 19th and 20th meetings of the Advisory Commission on Special Education (ACSE) included several items of interest to the group including data collection on the New Individualized Education Program, the Special Education Director's Report, Legislative and Policy Committee Reports, an update on Universal Design for Learning, and Alternate Dispute Resolution. Two day meetings recordings are timestamped, so topics of interest can be easily located.

The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition is having their Capacity-Building Institute May 16th -18th. The Institute is an opportunity for States to collaborate and talk about key initiatives, ideas, and hot topics in Transition. It is where the California State Team develops the State Plan used in the California Community of Practice (CoP) on Secondary Transition. If you are interested in joining and contributing to this CoP, please email CACOP@cde.ca.gov.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Combined Leadership and Project Directors' Conference is scheduled for July 24th - July 25th. The CDE will make presentations on California's sizeable expansion of

Family Empowerment Centers and the WorkAbility 1 (WA1) Elementary School Connection grant which moves transition services to elementary school.

The next WorkAbility 1 Advisory Committee Meeting is scheduled for May 10th. Included on the agenda is Entrepreneurship and Student-Based Businesses with Stacy Williams presenting.

Ms. Morawiec added that she will be attending The Annual Supported Life Conference in Sacramento on October 26th and 27th to gather more information—specifically employment success stories—for Employment First Report.

### **13. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DATA SHARING LEGISLATION**

Mr. Luna said that, due to a contract change, the data that DDS receives from the Employment Development Department (EDD) has changed to non-aggregated. The numbers include all Regional Center consumers who are receiving wages, whether they are receiving employment services from DDS or not.

### **14. MEMBER UPDATE**

Wesley Witherspoon and others in the group complemented Ms. Gaona on today's chairing of the Committee.

### **15. 2023 MEETING DATES AND ADJOURNMENT**

Upcoming meetings for 2023 will occur on July 13th and October 12th.

The meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.