



Employment First Committee Meeting Minutes October 12, 2023

Attending Members

Julie Gaona (SA)
Nick Wavrin (CDE)
Larry Yin (USC)
Christine T. Moody (UCLA)
Cathay Liu (FA)
Alfonso Jimenez (DOR)
Steve Ruder (UCD)
Sarah Issacs (DRC)
Wesley Witherspoon (SA)

Members Absent

Michael Luna (DDS)

Others Attending

Amanda Reynaud
Angel Garcia
Ashley Duke
Beth Hurn
Bridget Kolakosky
Lynn Villoria
Mary Ellen Stives
Suzanna Szewiola
Tania Morawiec
Robin Maitino-Erben
Veronica Bravo

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Julie Gaona (SA) called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

2. **ESTABLISH QUORUM**

A quorum was established.

3. **WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

Members and others introduced themselves.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

SCDD Staff Robin Maitino announced that Beth Hurn is the new Operations Support Analyst and will be facilitating meetings going forward. She thanked Suzanna Szewiola for the support that she has provided the committee over the last two years.

5. **APPROVAL OF JUNE & JULY 2023 MINUTES**

It was moved/seconded (Witherspoon [SA]/Ruder) and carried to

approve the June and July 2023 meeting minutes. (All members present voted to approve the minutes, with the exception of Sarah Issacs, who abstained. See page one for a list of voting members.)

6. **CIE IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORTS UPDATE**

SCDD Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Bridget Kolakosky and Deputy Director of Regional Office Operations Tania Morawiec informed members that SCDD's Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) has created workgroups to create employment related resources and to host an employment focused webinar on October 30, 2023. SCDD is also working to collect employment success stories, which will be used for a social media campaign highlighting the lived experiences of people with I/DD who have achieved success in all aspects of employment, including job searching, the interview process, and working in a competitive, integrated environment.

Ms. Morawiec provided an update on the SCDD's Community of Practice (COP) sessions, which were funded via the CA NEON ODEP grant, and concluded in September 2023. Ms. Morawiec informed the committee that SCDD is interested in continuing this work, and that the deadline to apply for additional funding is October 28th, 2023. Members expressed satisfaction with the work that was completed through the COP and discussed ideas for future projects, including investigating barriers in accessing funding streams for employment programs and providing a presentation on self-advocate owned microenterprises.

7. **UPDATES ON CIE RELATED LEGISLATION**

SCDD Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Bridget Kolakosky provided a presentation on the status of CIE related legislation. This included an update on the new Office of Employment First under the CA Department of Health and Human Services, along with updates on AB 447 and AB 222, and an overview of SCDD's Employment First policy efforts over the last three years. This presentation can be viewed here: https://scdd.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2023/10/EFC_October-2023_Legislative-Update-II.pdf

Public Comment

Ashley Duke asked when the new Employment First Office will be hiring and was informed that the agency has not made any hiring announcements at this time.

Angel Garcia asked if any funding had been allocated for SB 544 and was informed that this bill passed without funding attached.

8. **UPDATE ON PRIORITIES**

Members reviewed the results of the EFC's priorities survey, which members and SCDD staff responded to between meetings to determine what the committee will focus on during the final meetings of the EFC. Results of the survey can be found here: <https://scdd.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2023/10/Employment-First-Committee-Priorities-Survey-Responses-UPDATED.pdf>

Committee members agreed that the responses to this survey should be used to inform the contents of the 2023 Employment First Report and cover letter, with the intent of providing a roadmap and recommendations to the new Office of Employment First.

9. **CIE BLUEPRINT REPORT UPDATE**

Nick Wavrin with CDE reported that the draft of the year five annual report is in its final stages before being sent to leadership for a final review. This report will focus on fiscal year 2021-22, but also encapsulates the efforts throughout the entire blueprint and makes recommendations to continue moving CIE forward.

10. **2023 EMPLOYMENT FIRST REPORT**

SCDD staff presented a proposed outline and timeline for the 2023 Employment First Report. Committee members discussed the role that each member will have in writing the report. The committee agreed that the report should include the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- EFC Lessons Learned
- Recommendations for the Office of Employment First
- Appendices

Members agreed to participate in another survey to inform the "Lessons Learned" section of the report. The SMART workgroup will use these responses, along with recommendations from the past 3 years to create an initial draft of the report for the committee to review.

It was moved/seconded (Witherspoon [SA]/Gaona [SA]) and carried to approve the report structure and timeline as presented. (Motion passed unanimously. See page one for a list of voting members.)

11. **DDS UPDATES**

Michael Luna was unable to attend the meeting and provided his update in writing. The update can be viewed here: <https://scdd.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2023/10/DDS-Update-10.2.2023.pdf>

12. **MEMBER UPDATES**

Committee chair Julie Gaona reported that a friend of hers started a new job and has received employment supports, including a job coach, through DOR.

Nick Wavrin provided an update on CDE activities. SB 141 authorizes a new diploma pathway for individuals who qualify for California alternate assessment. For more information about the Alternative Pathway to a High School Diploma, please visit the CDE website at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/lr/om082523.asp>

The California Community of Practice on Secondary Transition held its first meeting of the 23-24 fiscal year, with a focus on transition planning. Major themes are providing an alternative pathway to a high school diploma, amplifying youth voices, early transition planning, and how to utilize data to improve outcomes. For more information about the California Community of Practice on Secondary Transition, please email CACOP@cde.ca.gov.

CDE's Workability I Family Transition Network Committee held a webinar series on the transition from school to adulthood. These sessions were recorded and included: 1. Alternatives to Conservatorship 2. The value of parents' role in transition 3. Self-Determination, and 4. Working and SSI Benefits.

Cathay Liu reported that the Chinese Parents Association will be providing an employment training series for family and self-advocates on the third Saturday each month from July 2023 through February 2024.

Wesley Witherspoon reported that the State Council hosted a guest speaker from Washington state who talked about her experience with finding a job.

Councilmember Witherspoon stated that he knows a lot of self-advocates who are searching for a job.

13. FUTURE MEETINGS AND ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be held in February 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.