

Minutes
Youth Committee Meeting
Georgia Mountains Workforce Development
February 18, 2016 ~ Habersham Goodwill of North Georgia
Gainesville, GA

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Youth Committee met on Thursday, February 18, 2016 at Habersham Goodwill of North Georgia. All those present registered on a sign in sheet.

Members

Scott Crain
Brenda Dalin
Bonnie Lofredo
Lynne Warren
Lee Highsmith
Cassandra Hunter
Shelby Ward

Staff

Danielle Avelar
Shameka Harrison
Jessica Williams
Angela Pugh

Guest

Kallan Williams
Paul Sweeney

Jessica Williams, Youth Supervisor called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

Jessica began the meeting by informing the Committee that there have been two new members nominated to join the Committee. Paul Sweeney, with Goodwill of North Georgia and Maria Caulkins, Resident Services Coordinator for the Gainesville Housing Authority. The Committee still needs more members and she is working to get someone from the Workforce Development Board to serve as the Committee Chair.

Under the new law, the Committee must have a Board representative, representatives from youth service agencies, public housing authorities, school systems, parent of youth participant, and a youth participant. Jessica asked for recommendations to be emailed to her.

Jessica has been working on Request for Proposals (RFP) for some of the Youth Services. Currently all services are provided are in-house, but with the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), services must be obtained by competitive process, unless it is determined that providing the services in house is better suited for meeting common measures. So far she has almost completed the RFP template and will have a plan for the services to be competitively procured by the next meeting.

Scott Crain, Parent Mentor for Hall County Schools, asked if the WIOA program would still be assisting in-school youth. Jessica answered that in our area it would, but for a much smaller and targeted population. The new law puts more focus on out-of-school youth, since funds have been designated for schools to assist in-school youth.

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Danielle Avelar, Youth Case Manager updated the Committee on the GED program. It was announced that five students have obtained their GED since the last meeting.

- 2 Union County – attending college part-time
- 2 Hall County – 1 attending college, 1 expecting
- 1 Habersham County – plans to attend NGTC

Danielle stated that there has been an increase in students from all 13 counties except for Lumpkin and Rabun, but between the program at the Regional Youth Detention Center and the GED program there is at least one youth in every county served.

Shelby Ward, Dean of Adult Education North Georgia Tech, announced that Pearson View, the company that issues the GED test, has restructured to lower the passing score from 150 to 145. This resulted in 1900 people in Georgia getting their GED diplomas. The change is retroactive from January 2014. She explained that the GED is now tiered:

- High School Level - 145
- College Ready - 165
- College Ready + 10 hours of college credit – 175

Shameka Harrison, Youth Program Assistant updated the Committee on the youth workshops. Shameka has been in contact with Jennifer Fitzgerald, at Banks County Middle School and Youth Staff have already done a few workshops there. Workshops will continue every nine weeks with the 8th grade students.

Shameka has also been in contact with Chuck Graham at Gainesville Middle, Andrea Jones at Habersham High School and plans to offer workshops to students at both schools.

Shameka has been working with the Avita Clubhouse in Gainesville. The center assists youth with substance abuse and mental illness. Some of the youth are mandated to treatment by the court and some have been committed by their parents. She is working with the center to schedule workshops for the youth at the center and is also organizing a series of workshops for Flowery Branch High School and Banks County High School.

One workshop has been held for in-school students who are currently enrolled in the WIOA program and she plans to meet with them on a quarterly basis.

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Jessica informed that the "Mapping Your Future" Initiative is moving forward as more 8th grade workshops are being scheduled. These workshops discuss the following:

- Making decisions
- Career Goals
- Future Planning
- The Importance of High School
- Unusual Career Paths

Both the College and Credit Recovery programs are growing. Mountain Education Charter Schools have been referring students who have been withdrawn for WIOA services to them to complete their diplomas.

Jessica explained the changes to the program elements under WIOA. Under WIA there were 10 elements required to be offered to participants. There are 14 elements under WIOA and are listed as:

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence based dropout prevention and strategies
- Alternative secondary school services, or drop out services
- Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational educational as a component
- Occupational skills training
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive Services
- Adult Mentoring
- Follow-up services no less than 12 months
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial Literacy and education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market and employment information
- Activity that help youth prepare for transition to post-secondary education

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The program also has new performance/common measures that will take effect July 1, 2016. The new measures are:

- Percentage in Employment /Education/Training
- Retention in Employment/Education/Training
- Earnings (Median)
- Credential Rate
- In Program Skill Gain

Jessica stated that the rates are negotiable and only have to meet 80% of the negotiated rates. So far the program has met or exceeded all measures, and she hopes to keep the trend when the new measures come into effect.

The changes in eligibility under WIOA were explained. Most of the barriers do not require youth to be low-income:

- Dropout
- In adult or juvenile justice system
- Homeless, runaway
- In, or aged out of foster care
- Pregnant or Parenting
- Mild disability

Youth that qualify under the “needs additional assistance” barrier income must be low-income. This includes the two additional barriers that were added locally:

- Lives in a non-traditional household
- Has a parent/legal guardian supporting youth who is currently in jail or prison, or has been in jail or prison for a minimum of six months over the past year.

The Committee was asked to review minutes for any changes, no changes were needed

Jessica will send out meeting locations at a later date. Meeting dates are listed on the agenda.