Education and Employment (E/E) Committee Summary

April 20, 2022
5615 Corporate Blvd. Ste. 500B, Baton Rouge, LA 70808
LIVE Streamed Via YouTube

You can watch the meeting here: https://www.youtube.com/user/LADDCouncil/videos

You can view the meeting transcript here

Members Present: Nicole Banks, Melissa Bayham, Logan Davis, Christi Gonzales, Mitch Iddins, Bambi Polotozola, Mary Tarver (Chair) and Phil Wilson

Members Absent: Brenda Cosse, Hyacinth McKee

Staff: Marilee Andrews, Brenton Andrus, Rekeesha Branch, Amy Deaville, Ebony Haven and Hannah Jenkins

Others Present: Rashad Bristo (Council Chair), Lynsey Hebert, Meredith Jordan

Mary Tarver called the meeting to order at 10:20 AM. A quorum was established.

MOTION PASSED: Motion to approve the January 2022 E/E Committee Summary made by Ms. Nicole Banks seconded by Mr. Logan Davis without objection or abstention.

The committee received updates on the Council's advocacy efforts regarding Cameras in Special Education Classrooms from Council staff and Meredith Jordan on behalf of the Department of Education. The Department is looking into possibly using federal funds to fund the cameras, however they have to determine which dollars they can use, if any, before proceeding.

Meredith Jordan also shared multiple updates on behalf of the Louisiana Department of Education:

- The Department is currently in the public comment period of the draft of their IDEA budget application for FFY22. They received 553 responses to their stakeholder survey.
- SPED Fellow Academy Cohort 3: SPED Fellow Acacdemy is a year-long, comprehensive development program for novice special education leaders across the state. Applications for the upcoming school year will open on April 11, 2022 and close on May 13, 2022.
- SEAP Vacancies: Applications for vacant positions will be posted on the Department website and will be advertised in April 2022, with interviews in May 2022 and appointments in June 2022.
- 2022 Special Education Parent Involvement Survey: A list of participating school systems is available on the Special Education Parent Involvement Survey webpage. If parents would like to complete the survey, but their child's school district or charter school is not participating, they can still complete the survey here. The survey will be available until June 30.

The committee also heard concerns from Ms. Corhonda Corley about individuals with disabilities participation in public meetings. Concerns were shared about the Council and other public entities only streaming Live via YouTube because public access and involvement in public meetings is limited to watching only which also limits individuals with disabilities participation. The committee agreed that the Council's meetings should be fully accessible and offer full accommodations in order for all people with developmental disabilities to participate in the fullest extent while maintaining their health.

MOTION PASSED: Motion that the Developmental Disabilities Council pursues an opinion from the Attorney General on open meetings law re: ADA compliance to ensure all public meetings offer every available accommodation for individuals with disabilities to participate, made by Ms. Banks, seconded by Mr. Davis without objections or abstentions.

Melissa Bayham shared updates on behalf of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services which included their efforts in Customized Employment especially for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The committee also received multiple updates on contractual activities including Seminars on Hiring Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (Activity 3.2.2), Louisiana Post-Secondary Inclusive Education Alliance (LaPIE) (Activity 3.1.1) and Customized Employment Training (Activity 3.2.1). Additional information about these activities can be found in the Council's quarterly Status of Planned Activities Report under goal three.

Ms. Kelly Monroe shared with the committee from that the current class enrolled in the Customized Employment certification training have still not been able to identify learning partners in the discovery process. A student cannot move forward without a learning partner. Therefore, Ms. Monroe suggested that the committee consider allowing her to put the remaining funds in the contract towards the customized employment gateway training. Even though participants will not be certified completely, they will still learn about the process of customized employment to work towards systems change.

MOTION PASSED: Motion to continue with the customized employment contract (Activity 3.2.1) and allow Ms. Kelly Monroe to redirect from customized employment certification to another avenue, made by Mr. Iddins, seconded by Ms. Banks without objection or abstention.

MOTION PASSED. A motion to adjourn the Education and Employment Committee meeting made by, Bambi Polotozola seconded by Phil Wilson passed without objection or abstention.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.