

Ad Hoc Committee on Youth Strategy Report

Prepared by Jack Estill, ad hoc committee chair

The Ad Hoc Committee met three times, 10/13/20, 11/3/20, and 11/12/20. The initial meeting covered WIOA requirements, the history of the work2future (w2f) Youth Committee under WIA, and a discussion of the various roles a youth committee might fulfill under WIOA. In the second meeting, w2f current providers, Equus and IRC each gave an outline of their proposed programs and answered questions from committee members. This was followed by a committee discussion of potential roles a more permanent youth committee might provide w2f and the community. The committee decided to schedule a third meeting to outline a draft proposal for an advisory committee that could convene various community youth-centered organizations to better understand current youth needs and provide advice to the Board.

In the third meeting the committee looked at three alternative youth committee models, administrative, coordinating, and strategizing. The Board currently fills the administrative role through its oversight of our direct providers and our performance measures. Since w2f under WIOA provides intensive services that limits the number of youths we can serve, we lack resources and are not well-suited to provide a regional strategy. However, one thing that w2f could do is provide a forum for youth service providers, educators, youth, and employers to meet and discuss the current status of youth needs, particularly youth with barriers, gaps in service, solutions to those gaps, and best practices. Such a committee would be best served as an informal advisory forum, rather than a formal committee, that allows an open, public dialogue around youth that does not currently exist. As initially envisioned, it would have 12 to 20 members of youth-engaged volunteers with a one-year term who are committed to meeting four to six times. The specific goals of the forum would be to have at least eighteen engaged members and identify at least four gaps in current youth services along with a specific recommendation for filling each gap. The forum would provide a written year-end summary of activities and findings for the Board's review and potential extension of its participation. Additionally, the forum's findings could be used to help draft a regional draft youth strategy.

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