

**Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
State Rehabilitation Council Annual Retreat
November 13, 2023
Approved Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Frederick Foard, Commissioner Kathy Hayfield, Heidi Lawyer, Joliefawn Liddell, Talisha McAuley-Davis, Madeline Nunnally, and Justin Spurlock.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Dale Batten, Deputy Commissioner DRS; Catherine Harrison, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs; Donna Bonessi, Director of Employment Services and Special Programs; Julie Jacobs, Director of Field Rehabilitation Services; Alison Shaner, Director of Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center; Kyle Congleton, Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center; Barbara Burkett, Lead Program Analyst; Meghan Cox, DARS Policy Analyst; Elizabeth Patacca, Policy and Legislative Affairs; Lisa Robertson, DARS Policy Analyst; Liz Leitch, ASL Interpreter; Carrie Humphrey, ASL Interpreter.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Introduction of Members: Spurlock called the meeting to order. All members and others present introduced themselves.

Approval of meeting agenda: No changes. Agenda approved by unanimous consensus.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no public comments received.

Commissioner's Remarks: Commissioner Hayfield provided agency updates and comments about the Annual Retreat. The Annual Retreat sets the stage for the next year's activities. The Commissioner looks forward to the Council's recommendations and input. Commissioner Hayfield provided a brief update on recent appointments and reappointments. In September, DARS participated in a White House Policy Forum commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act and in October held a National Disability Employment Awareness Month Virtual Event.

Presentation: Evaluating the Effectives of Vocational Rehabilitation Program Performance and Initiatives for Federal Fiscal Year 2023

Deputy Commissioner Dale Batten and Lead Program Analyst Barbara Burkett presented to the Council an overview of DARS VR Program performance for Federal Fiscal Year 2022.

DARS Agency Responses to 2022 SRC Recommendations

The SRC was provided with a copy of their 2022 recommendations to the agency to review and received a status update from Deputy Commissioner Dale Batten on each recommendation. The

agency updates assist the SRC in developing its 2023 recommendations. The SRC will work on its draft recommendations later today and will finalize the recommendations at the 11/14 quarterly meeting to be included in the 2023 Annual Report.

Presentation: WIOA and Virginia's Combined State Plan for SRC Input

Catherine Harrison and Lisa Robertson with DARS Policy presented to the Council an overview of DARS development of the VR Sections of the Combined State Plan. In particular, SRC members received an extensive briefing on the drafted Goals/Priorities and Strategies to be included in the State Plan.

A discussion of each Goal/Priority followed and the SRC provided suggested edits and revisions. The agency accepted the Council's responses, and their feedback will be reflected in the final versions of the Goals/Priorities and Strategies. The Council also noted language from the VR State Plan to consider including in its 2023 recommendations.

Development of 2023 SRC Recommendations

SRC Chair Justin Spurlock curated a discussion of 2023 SRC Recommendations. In particular, the Council considered its recommendations from 2022 (and the agency responses thereto), performance data derived from the presentation on VR Program Performance for FFY 2023, and the Goals/Priorities and Strategies from the State Plan. Based on the Council's discussion, SRC staff will draft recommendations to be reviewed and finalized at the 11/14 business meeting.

Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center Facility Tour

WWRC staff provided the Council with a campus tour of the Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center, DARS' comprehensive vocational-educational facility at which the Council had requested to host its November meetings.

Upon conclusion of the tour and having no further business, the retreat adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

The SRC Quarterly Executive and Business Meetings will take place on November 14, 2023 at Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center in Fishersville, VA.

Meeting Handouts:

1. Proposed Meeting Agenda
2. VR Program Performance FFY 2023 Presentation
3. 2022 SRC Recommendations
3. WIOA and Virginia's Combined State Plan Presentation