

Saint Louis County
STANDING YOUTH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 4, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present:

Clay Ware	University City – Adult Education and Literacy
Leslie Keaveny	University City Adult Education and Literacy
Amy Siekerman	Vocational Rehabilitation
Karen Musemic	Ritenour Adult Education and Literacy
Danyelle Adams	Saint Louis Youth Build
Lynda Partee	Ferguson Florissant School District
Mary Grott	Parkway School District

Committee Members Absent:

Pat Gaertner	Parkway-Rockwood – Adult Education and Literacy
Barbara Fraser	Educational Liaison, for Saint Louis County Executive
Dave Baker	St. Louis Job Corps
Tashanna Rucker	Big Brothers Big Sisters of South East Missouri
Heather Bond	Saint Louis County Youth Program
Cenia Bosman	CAASTLC
Antoinette Boyd	STLCC – Florissant Valley
Rick Gaines	St. Louis County Courts
Melva Paden Moore	Salvation Army
Shernetta Bouier-Blue	Divine Daughters
Thomas Ousely	Infinite Scholars

Saint Louis County – Workforce Development Staff Present:

Michele Williams

Partner Staff Present:

Barbara Wheatley (Better Family Life MWA), Sara Brown (Employment Connection), Raymond Greer (FWCA), Kofi Ansa (FWCA)

Partner Staff Absent:

None

Michele Williams requested a motion to call the meeting to order. Lynda Partee made the motion. Amy Siekerman seconded the motion to call the Youth Committee meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Michele welcomed all in attendance and requested a motion to approve the August meeting minutes. Clay Ware moved to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Mary Grott. The minutes were approved.

Family Workforce Centers of America (FWCA)

Raymond reviewed the data provided in the FWCA ISY (In-School Youth) report. He reported they are working with various school districts to enroll the youth. It is hard to get transcripts from the school districts.

Kofi reported for ISY there were three enrollments in the month of October and two were approved. There are recruitment efforts at Clyde C. Miller, Soldan, Jennings and Riverview Gardens. Kofi did not have the report to speak to the data or details.

Raymond reviewed the data provided in the FWCA OSY (Out-of-School Youth) report. He reported the youth change their telephone number and FWCA is not able to get in touch with them. Transportation and communication with schools have also been a problem. He also reported that some parents aren't supportive of youth registering for the draft. The one barrier Raymond reported the OSY program needs the Committee's assistance with is parental support of registering for the draft. Kofi reported for OSY there were seven approvals in October and six approvals in November. Kofi did not have the report to speak to the data or details.

Employment Connection

Sara reviewed the data and information provided in the Employment Connection OSY (Out-of-School Youth) report. Sara stated Employment Connection has an additional enrollment. They have 16 enrollments to date. Their top barriers are recruitment and customer follow-thru. Youth buy-in is very low and they aren't putting in the work to accomplish even enrollment. They have seen the youth "fall-off" during enrollment. Sara reported they are concentrating on those customers who are engaged. Financial literacy, work experience and job readiness training have been helpful at keeping youth engaged. They are trying to provide all of the WIOA elements as well. Employment Connection has participated in quite a few events lately to make a presence in the local community. Their hope is that they can spread awareness of the program outside of St. Louis City. Employment Connection attended four events during the month of October. The events included the City of Normandy collaborative, a Spanish Lake community event and a Clayton area resource fair.

The one barrier Sara reported the program needs the Committee's assistance with is implanting a plan or approach to keep the youth customers committed. Sara welcomed feedback and suggestions.

- Clay suggested a barrier assessment could be used prior to enrollment to gauge if the youth is at a point in their life where participation is realistic.
 - Clay will share the assessment he developed for the BUD (Building Union Diversity) program
- Leslie advised she uses an intake spreadsheet that is helpful for keeping track of their students
 - Leslie will share the intake spreadsheet template

Better Family Life

Barbara Wheatley reported that Better Family Life is still operating the MWA and Skill-Up programs. MWA is a required program and in an effort to not sanction benefits, they are making accommodations. They are using virtual measures if the customer desires. They also mail the packet if needed. Better Family Life has found that once customers are sanctioned they are more eager to participate. Sanctioning has changed because it is now a full-family sanction for nonparticipation. This affects the customer because once they lose the benefits, they return as a sanctioned applicant. Better Family Life takes "a hit" if they don't engage the customer in a timely manner and enforce the MWA program requirements. It is the State's money and participation is not negotiable. Skill-Up enrollments are slow right now because there are a lot of agencies working with the Skill-Up program. Meanwhile,

Better Family Life staff are all working from the office. Better Family Life is trying to keep everyone's spirits up, including their staff, while we navigate the current environment.

YouthBuild

Danyelle reported for St. Louis YouthBuild. There are currently 13 enrolled in the program. Three are CNA enrollments and 10 are construction enrollments. YouthBuild also has an Urban Agriculture program up and running. They have harvested most of their produce except the sweet potatoes. YouthBuild is placing a lot of focus on soft-skill training due to employer's requests. Soft skills are the key right now. Unfortunately, none of their youth are in placement or near to being placed. The Neighborhood Impact Center has been helpful for the YouthBuild customers. YouthBuild is able to work with the customers during the day and the Center tests them at two o'clock in the afternoon. The youth have been passing their HiSet with this process. YouthBuild also received money from the St. Louis County Childrens Service Fund to help 13-19 year olds with substance abuse. The program is a Substance Abuse-Drug Prevention-Intervention program. There is no treatment involved, just education. The course will probably be about four weeks. The grant requires the enrollment of 60 youth over two years. YouthBuild must also touch at least 80 adults during that same time period. There will be expert screening and referral to treatment. Danyelle is willing to come to your location and provide drug education. Train-the-trainer has been conducted and they are going to open up that training for other professionals. They also received funding from ARCH's to assist 40 youth receiving TANF or SNAP. Those 40 youth must be served by June 2022. If you have any youth interested in construction of CNA, please send them to Danyelle because she only needs a few more youth to meet her regular programmatic numbers.

Parkway School District-AEL

Mary reported she has seen an increase in their enrollment. They continue to work with St. Louis County for their youth program. However, they are struggling at the Spanish Lake location. Youth are going to sites that aren't youth only. They had better luck last year during COVID with their youth site because the other sites were closed. Since other locations are open, that might be why the youth center is struggling. Recruitment and retaining youth are their main issues.

They have also resumed classes at the St. Louis County Justice Center. Classes began this week so there isn't much to report there.

Ferguson-Florissant School District

Lynda reported she is a District Social Worker. She said this year has been similar to other districts. Everyone is just trying to make it. The kids, teachers, parents are just trying to make it. She is facing the same barriers of operating in the new world.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Amy reported Vocational Rehabilitation is trying to get into the school to get to the kids. St. Louis City schools do not allow Vocational Rehabilitation in at all. Other school districts policies for allowing Vocational Rehabilitation in vary. Some school districts will not allow the students to even leave the building. Getting paperwork back is exacerbated with COVID. People are burnt out and tired of everything. Transition Tuesdays has been going well. There is one more next week. All webinars are on their YouTube page. Leslie spoke at one and did awesome.

University City School District- AEL

Clay reported that he echoes the reports already given. University City School District AEL is still virtual due to their building being sold. They are considering the public library but it is closed for renovations until the spring.

70% of their AEL participants want to remain virtual. Over 252 completed interest forms but only about 25% of them actually enrolled. Staff is resilient and working with those who are engaged. They are also providing incentives with additional funding they received. The District is still working with the BUD program for testing and remediation. Leslie reported there is intake beginning November 30, 2021. Devices and Wi-Fi are some barriers to virtual classes and a constant effort. Retaining ownership of the Chromebooks has proven challenging but not impossible.

Announcements

Michele announced the Standing Youth Committee has a new chairperson. Her name is CaShanna Armstrong. Ms. Armstrong is the Center Director at St. Louis Job Corps. She will lead the committee, reach out to each member and schedule future meetings. Michele also announced Saint Louis County Department of Human Services has a new Director. His name is Harold Hayes and is the former Director of SLATE.

The next Standing Youth Committee quarterly meeting is scheduled for 10:00am on Thursday, February 3, 2022.

Michele requested a motion to adjourn. Clay Ware motioned for adjournment. Lynda Partee seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 11:08 am