**CCEPD Employment and Training and State Coordination Subcommittee Collaboration on Workforce Issues**

**Overview**

California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (CCEPD) staff evaluated the 2021-2024 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) local plans for trends, best practices, and possible partnership opportunities. Local plans showed extensive partnerships across multiple systems and inclusion of strategies for people with disabilities. In recent Employment and Training Subcommittee meetings, members have expressed interest in close collaboration between the two CCEPD policy subcommittees and partnerships with local workforce boards and service providers identified among local plan best practices. Additionally, when the Employment and Training Subcommittee discussed the CCEPD’s comment letter for California’s 2020-2023 Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan Modifications, members expressed the need to include additional strategies identified among the State Coordination Subcommittee’s purview. The importance was further discussed in the Employment and Training Subcommittee on April 7.

The goal of this collaboration between subcommittees and workforce partners is to develop work products aligned with the CCEPD’s strategic priorities. These work products may include, but are not limited to, developing best practice/guidance/toolkit documents, developing webinars/trainings, or developing policy recommendations.

**Background and Topics**

Following review of the local plans, CCEPD staff believed close collaboration was essential for addressing the work of both subcommittees. Many local potential partners provide services that overlap the purviews of both subcommittees.

At the CCEPD Full Committee Meeting in November, members agreed on the following strategic priorities:

* Increase employment outcomes of people with disabilities through education and training to gain skills as California enters the post-pandemic.
* Coordinate systems to achieve better employment outcomes for people with disabilities.
* Work on a better, coordinated system of benefits and support services for people with disabilities.
* Ensure people with disabilities are included in equitable pandemic recovery efforts and incorporate lessons learned in service delivery from the pandemic.

Based on CCEPD strategic priorities and discussions with members, CCEPD staff recommends collaboration meeting discussions focus on the following topics:

* Co-enrollment and no wrong door policies as being worked on by State Coordination Subcommittee.
* Understanding the partnerships between jurisdictions, departments/agencies, and service providers, which both Committees are interested in, and determine what is needed to improve partnerships to better improve outcomes for people with disabilities. This includes partnerships with businesses and employers.
* Career pathways often include work-based learning and/or apprenticeships when working towards achieving employment goals. This is the purview of the Employment and Training Subcommittee.
* Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) local partnership agreements (LPAs), because the State of California is eliminating subminimum wage and strategies discussed would assist in other conversations. The CCEPD has also advocated inclusion of CIE Blueprint initiatives to be a part of the local workforce development plans.

**Meeting Structure**

CCEPD staff recommends conversations include partners involved in workforce systems at both local and state levels. For example, at the state level, while the CCEPD is housed under Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), other state departments within the Health and Human Services and Labor and Workforce development agencies must be included. These include, but are not limited to, the Employment Development Department (EDD), California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), and Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Statewide non-profits will also be essential partners. At the local level, partners should include local workforce development boards, America’s Job Center of California (AJCCs), and other service providers, including local non-profits. CCEPD would reach out to associations for service providers to include them as part of the conversation.

Conversations should begin with those identified as having best practices among the local plans. Coordinating efforts with those that have been identified by CCEPD staff as exhibiting best practices will improve the CCEPD’s work and outcomes. Identified best practices include efforts to partner across jurisdictions, departments/agencies, and programs, in ways that braid resources and eliminate any duplications of work, whether it be by the service provider or consumer. This is especially important when addressing the intersectionality of disability within other targeted populations and the professional development of staff.

For example, identified among best practices, the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA) and DOR staff have collaborated for cross-training in eligibility, enrollment, and service delivery. SETA and DOR collaboration has also included employer outreach and engagement. Other local plans currently identified among best practices include Orange/Santa Ana/Anaheim, San Bernardino, Solano, and Verdugo. While each plan’s partnerships and activities vary, they often include common trends – especially around extensive partnerships, numerous program offerings, coordination of services across multiple programs, and professional development of staff.

To make clearer comparisons and identify best practices, there is a need for presentations to follow a similar structure. Based on CCEPD strategic priorities and discussions with members, CCEPD staff recommends presenters address the following questions within their presentations:

* What is your overall vision and approach?
* What are your objectives? (Varying timeframes)
* What are your goals? Outcomes? Metrics? (Varying timeframes)
* Why did you pursue the approach?
* What funding was needed and what needed to be measured to receive it?
* What are your lessons learned?
* What promotes long-term engagement with clients?
* What promotes long-term engagement between workforce partners?
* What policies are needed to bridge the continuum for career pathways?
* Is there cross training for services? What knowledge would be needed?
* What are/were barriers to co-enrollment and no wrong door policies?
* Explain barriers overcome, don’t just present good news.
* What recommendations should be pursued at the state level to assist with your initiatives?

These questions can be further tailored or clarified as staff invite local partners to these conversations. Members should provide additional input on questions and conversations.

**Recommendations for Next Steps**

The chairs of the CCEPD subcommittees have begun initial discussions on collaboration. CCEPD staff have identified the following monthly meeting dates for collaborative meetings with the subcommittees and workforce partners identified among best practices.

* Tuesday, April 26, 2 – 3 p.m. (First part of regularly scheduled State Coordination Subcommittee.)
* Wednesday, May 18, 3 – 5 p.m.
* Thursday, June 30, 10 am - 12 p.m.
* Thursday, July 28, 10 am - 12 p.m.
* Thursday, September 29, 10 am - 12 p.m.

Using the referenced meeting dates, the below timeframe could be used as an initial workplan for collaboration into the fall of 2022:

* April – Joint subcommittee meeting for members to provide feedback on the next steps for collaboration and how to engage local workforce boards and/or service providers. CCEPD staff to reach out to service provider organizations and state organizations and begin developing the concepts for panel discussions.
* May – Joint subcommittee meeting that includes a presentation from one or more local workforce boards and/or service providers identified among best practices that perform strategies that overlap purviews. Because SETA was identified among best practices and their leadership is among CCEPD membership, SETA would be an ideal first partner. SETA has agreed to present before the first collaboration meeting on May 18.
* May/June – Begin targeted collaboration of subcommittees with local workforce boards and/or service providers for ongoing conversations and information for work products.
* June/July – Develop initial work products aligned with the CCEPD’s strategic priorities and the conversations. These work products may include, but are not limited to, developing best practice/guidance/toolkit documents, developing webinars/trainings, or developing policy recommendations.
* August/September – Continue to develop the best practice toolkit and other work products.
* November – Submit to Full Committee Meeting for approval and submit to lead departments.