**California State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)**

**November 30 – December 1, 2022 Quarterly Meeting**

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. each day

Meeting location: Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), 721 Capitol Mall, Room 301, Sacramento, CA, 95814

Virtual and telephone participation options offered via Zoom.

# MEETING MINUTES

*Approved on March 8, 2023*

# Attendance

SRC members (in person): Benjamin Aviles (Chair), Theresa Comstock,

Ivan Guillen (Vice-Chair), Joe Xavier.

SRC members (by Zoom): Sara Abdrabou, Chanel Brisbane,

Jonathan Hasak, Lisa Hayes, Susan Henderson, Elizabeth Lewis,

Nicolas Wavrin, Kecia Weller (Treasurer).

DOR staff (in person): Kate Bjerke, Jessica Grove, Priyanka Prasad.

DOR staff (by Zoom): Ana Acton, Maria Aliferis-Gjerde, Carol Asch,

Kindred Bang, Silva Banks, Matthew Brown, Brian Connors, Lisa Cushman, Peter Dawson, Antoinette Deboisblanc, Petre Deliivanov, Shanti Ezrine, Peter Frangel, John Galicinao, Kerry Gantt, Rosa Gomez, Judy Gonzalez, Ava Hacopian, Marla Harper, Michele Kaplan, Brenna Lammerding,

Trung Le, Alicia Lucas, Jeffrey McKey, Ravenn Moon, Sue Pelbath,

Laura Rasmussen, Megan Sampson, Michael Thomas, Carly Tsuruda, Nicholas Weis, Nancy Wentling.

Members of the public (in person): Adrianne Akers.

Members of the public (by Zoom): Kenneth Brooks, Vicka Chaplin,

Liz Drennan, Jennifer Fischer, Danny Marquez, La Trena Robinson,

Taniqua Scott, Candis Welch, Taylor Winchell.

# Wednesday, November 30, 2022

# Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed SRC members and meeting attendees. SRC members and attendees introduced themselves and a quorum was established.

# Item 2: Public Comment

Danny Marquez, representing the California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies, suggested that the SRC consider the following questions at a future meeting:

* In order for consumers to earn livable wages and become self-sufficient, a career is needed. The pathway to a career is achieved through either short- or long-term training. How is DOR encouraging not only jobs for consumers, but careers? How does DOR spend available funding that provides training and education for job seekers?
* What are the diversity, equity and inclusion hiring policies and practices for the new organization [addendum: California Department of Social Services, State Hearing Division] contracted by DOR to conduct fair hearings for DOR consumers?

# Item 3: Approval of the August 31 – September 1, 2022 SRC Quarterly

**Meeting Minutes**

Motion: It was moved/seconded (Comstock/Hayes) to approve the August 31 –

September 1, 2022 SRC quarterly meeting minutes as presented. (Yes – Aviles,

Brisbane, Comstock, Guillen, Hasak, Hayes, Henderson, Lewis); (Absent for

vote – Wavrin); (Abstain – Weller). The motion carried and the approved

minutes will be posted on the SRC webpage.

# Item 4: Icebreaker

SRC members engaged in an icebreaker discussion.

# Item 5: Violence Prevention Presentation and Discussion

SRC Chair Aviles welcomed Vicka Chaplin, Director of Education and Outreach from the UC Davis Violence Prevention Research Program to the meeting. Kate Bjerke, SRC Executive Officer, read Chaplin’s biography and noted that the purpose of the agenda item is to provide the SRC with information as they consider the California Health and Human Services Agency’s call to action for Departments to recognize gun violence as a public health and safety crisis. Chaplin began her presentation entitled “Experiences of Violence in Californian’s Daily Life. Results from the 2020 California Safety and Wellbeing Survey (CSaWS) and How Interventions Add Up to Prevent Violence” study were reviewed. The presentation included the following information: background information on the UC Davis programs/center; experiences of violence in the daily lives of Californians; the epidemiology of firearm injury; data from the CSaWS; and an introduction to the “Swiss cheese model” of prevention on how interventions add up to prevent violence.

Following the presentation, the SRC had the opportunity to ask questions and engage in an interactive discussion focused on how DOR’s employment and independent living programs/services could add to layers of intervention in California. Discussion highlights included the following:

* Joe Xavier, DOR Director, expressed appreciation for the presentation and asked the following questions: 1) Understanding DOR’s mission and work, what strategies could DOR apply to help from the prevention perspective? 2) Is there information available regarding firearm violence trauma and the impact on employment, and any associated mitigation measures or strategies? 3) Are there particular career paths or occupations that can be particularly challenging for individuals who are affected by firearm violence, and are there any mitigation strategies for specific careers or job sectors? Chaplin noted that she will share these questions with her colleagues and will follow up accordingly.
* Information was shared on the strategies that healthcare providers use to help their clients and patients navigate firearm risk and the resources available through the Bulletpoints Project. The “Three A’s” framework of “Approach, Assess, Act” provides guidance to clinicians on how to assess risk factors, address barriers, and appropriately counsel clients. Chaplin will ask her colleagues if information is available regarding adverse childhood experiences and firearm risk.
* Discussion about how individuals who experience post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) resulting from firearm violence receive mental health services.
* Discussion on the connection between firearm violence, employment, and DOR’s role.
* Discussion on how DOR can go upstream and more effectively identify individuals who may be impacted and get information to them as soon as possible. Chaplin suggested connecting with hospital-based violence intervention programs, which have shown to be effective. The social determinants of health are the same as the social determinants of violence. Breaking cycles of violence, poverty and historic underinvestment can be an upstream prevention strategy.
* DOR Director Xavier asked if there is research available that makes connections between employment (getting, keeping and/or advancing with a job) and firearm violence. Chaplin will follow up with her colleagues.
* It was suggested that social media campaigns or support groups could raise awareness on this topic and provide an opportunity for engagement.

# Item 6: SRC Monitoring and Evaluation Committee

Ivan Guillen, SRC Vice-Chair, welcomed Alicia Lucas, Manager, and Marla Harper, Research Data Analyst, from the DOR Planning Unit, who joined the meeting to present the preliminary results of the 2021 Consumer Satisfaction Survey (CSS). Harper began by presenting background information on the CSS. Harper reviewed the following: reported disability impairments, respondent ages, overall satisfaction ratings by question category, reasons consumers are unemployed, feedback received and topic trends. In summary, the preliminary 2021-22 CSS results include the following:

* The CSS surveyed 7.2% of DOR’s total population and 933 responses were received.
* Individuals most reported learning, psychiatric, and physical disabilities.
* Ages 20-39 and 50-59 were most common among respondents.
* Consumers gave satisfied ratings for services provided by DOR and service providers.
* Being a student, still looking, or needs additional help to find a job were top reasons for being unemployed.
* Consumers gave positive, negative, and constructive feedback.

In early 2023, the CSS executive summary report will be finalized. SRC Executive Officer Bjerke reminded SRC members that the results of the CSS can inform future SRC policy recommendations. SRC members then asked questions and engaged in an interactive discussion. Highlights included the following:

* It was asked if perhaps there is a correlation between the staffing challenges reported by some DOR Regional Directors and the communication challenges identified in the preliminary survey results.
* It was noted that DOR has a mechanism to respond to consumers who submit dissatisfied responses. The CSS does not gather information on the number of individuals who reach out to DOR but never get connected; however, this could be a future consideration for the Comprehensive Statewide Assessment.
* Through DOR’s expedited enrollment process, the status of online applications can be tracked and an email address is available for individuals who want to follow up on their application.

Public comment:

* Ava Hacopian provided feedback from her personal perspective regarding communication with consumers and DOR processes.
* Kenneth Brooks suggested that the CSS also capture information on respondent race and ethnicity. Brooks asked if the DOR had ever considered offering incentives for consumers to complete the CSS, and if not, why.

# Item 7: Directorate Report

Joe Xavier, DOR Director, joined the SRC and began by congratulating SRC Chair Aviles and SRC Vice-Chair Guillen on their new leadership roles. Director Xavier highlighted the following commemorations:

* International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3)
* Human Rights Day (December 10)
* Upcoming winter holidays

Director Xavier spoke about person centered approaches and the need to consider if current service delivery and program models fully support equal integration and inclusion. Director Xavier then provided the SRC with a report on national, state, and departmental topics of interest. Highlights included the following:

National Updates

* Danté Allen was nominated as Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Details regarding his confirmation are forthcoming.
* The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) held fall conferences in late October 2022 in Texas. Representatives from DOR and SRC did not attend due to travel restrictions. The conference information and presentations highlight RSA’s continued focus on the programmatic and fiscal performance of the VR program. DOR anticipates attending the spring conferences scheduled for mid-April 2023 in Bethesda, Maryland.

State Level Updates

* The Governor’s proposed budget for 2023-24 will be released in January 2023 and will provide insight on the Administration’s priorities and revenue estimates.
* The California Department of Technology is developing a State Digital Equity Plan, the goal of which is for all Californians to have access to high-speed broadband internet and for individuals to have devices to access broadband. The plan will identify the digital equity barriers for eight covered populations, including individuals with disabilities. The DOR has been asked to participate in the plan development process.
* AB 1195 (Garcia) was signed by the Governor. This bill affirms that the State of California serves as a model employer of individuals with disabilities and that State agencies and departments can specifically target the hiring of individuals with disabilities.

Department Updates

* DOR received a grant award notification in September 2023 for $14 million over a five-year period for a demonstration project entitled the “Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Project.”
* AB 2480 (Arambula) was signed by the Governor and will modernize an existing DOR program requirement. Independent living skills and assistive technology training will be provided to adults who are blind or low vision, and who are not eligible to receive VR services.
* A focus for DOR will be improving outcomes for individuals with behavioral health disabilities as they exit DOR programs. DOR’s goal is to increase the exiting employment rate for consumers with behavioral health disabilities from 44% to 55%. DOR will utilize a targeted universalism framework as the Department works to increase fourth quarter earnings after exit for consumers with behavioral health disabilities to $7,000.
* DOR senior leadership updates:
	+ Peter Frangel - appointed as Executive Advisor, DOR Strategic Initiatives Office.
	+ Jean Cooper - appointed as Assistant Deputy Director, DOR Administrative Services Division.
	+ Jake Johnson - appointed as DOR Chief Information Officer,
	+ Vacancies: DOR Chief Deputy Director; Los Angeles South Bay District Administrator; Redwood Empire District Administrator; and senior managers in DOR’s Information Technology and Contract and Procurement sections.

Director Xavier and the SRC members discussed the following topics:

* Medi-Cal reform efforts that incorporate community living supports as part of healthcare.
* Discussions with behavioral health treatment systems and incorporating employment into treatment and recovery.
* Thoughts about true integration and inclusion, and the goal of having all systems meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. An example was shared about the iPhone and its universal design.
* Follow up questions about recent DOR grant awards (SRC Executive Officer Bjerke will distribute a fact sheet).
* The intersectionality of independent living, vocational rehabilitation and CalAIM transformation. The needed supports to live independently and work are often the same.
* Suggestion for Jake Johnson, DOR Chief Information Officer, to present at a future SRC meeting on the State Digital Equity Plan. As public planning sessions are scheduled, this information will be shared with the SRC.

# Item 8: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Rosa Gomez, DOR Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, joined the SRC and began the agenda item by reviewing SRC recommendation 2020.4 “Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities” and DOR’s response to this recommendation. It was noted that the DOR DEI team needs to be re-established as original members have moved into different positions. Gomez clarified that the “taskforces” referenced in DOR’s response refers to the DOR affinity groups, and she shared information on the role and scope of the affinity groups. In 2020, training was offered to DOR staff on intersectionality and cultural competency. Gomez then spoke about identifying equity gaps, one of which is income disparities at program exit. Gomez and the SRC members then discussed the following policy questions: how can inequities and disparities in DOR’s programs and services be identified, and what strategies can be used to address these equity gaps? Discussion highlights included the following:

* While DEI efforts have taken place at DOR, it does not sound like a comprehensive DEI plan has been established. When developing a DEI plan, including stakeholder feedback will be important.
* There is a need for consumers to receive culturally competent services. To achieve this, DOR’s workforce (and the Department’s service providers) must be culturally competent.
* It can be more effective to make connections with consumers and the community when bilingual DOR staff are available, instead of having to rely on telephonic interpretation services.

Public comments:

* Candis Welch noted that inclusion is limited when resources and services are not made available in different languages.
* Kenneth Brooks suggested that consumers be provided with an option to utilize peer language interpreters.

# Item 9: Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)

Petre Deliivanov, Chief, and Ravenn Moon, Manager, from DOR’s Community Resource Development (CRD) Section joined the SRC and presented an overview of their section. Information was shared on the purpose of CRD, staff and duties, the services available through Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), along with recent initiatives and available resources. After the presentation, SRC members had the opportunity to ask questions and engage in an interactive discussion. Highlights included the following:

* Examples of customized employment.
* Making Individual Placement and Support (IPS) available as a fee-for-service for that CRPs can offer.
* Topics and questions related to the requirement for CRPs to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).
* Suggestion to change the name “Community Rehabilitation Programs”
* Utilization of the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) for posting job opportunities.
* Acknowledgement that the DOR CRP Specialists are extremely helpful and essential to the success of CRPs. DOR staff can contact the CRP Specialists when there are concerns, training needs, etc.
* In early January 2023, CRPs will begin offering student services.
* As a follow up, SRC Executive Officer Bjerke will provide the SRC with a list of the DOR Regional Business Specialists.
* Suggestion to have a presentation from the DOR Workforce Development Section as a future agenda item.

Public comment: Danny Marquez asked how the CRD section assesses service and coverage areas, while also considering cultural competency.

# Recess

The SRC quarterly meeting recessed until 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 1, 2022.

# Thursday, December 1, 2022

# Item 10: Reconvene, Welcome, and Introductions

Ivan Guillen, SRC Vice-Chair, reconvened the meeting and welcomed attendees. SRC members and meeting attendees introduced themselves.

# Item 11: Public Comment

There were no public comments.

# Item 12: DOR Independent Living & Community Access Division (ILCAD)

Ana Acton, Deputy Director, and Megan Sampson, Chief, joined the SRC to provide ILCAD program updates and have an interactive discussion with SRC members regarding potential opportunities for program collaboration and coordination. Acton began by providing the following information:

* Updates on the October 2022 independent living center grant renewals and the Title VII, Part B transition and diversion grants.
* Each year, $1 million in funding is allocated to six Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) program sites. DOR received an additional, one-time funding allocation of $5 million through the Home and Community Based Services Spending Plan. This funding will increase the capacity of the existing TBI sites and will fund six additional, new sites.
* A Community Living Fund of $10 million has been established to provide institutional transition and diversion services. A Request for Interest (RFI) will be distributed in the near future with information on how nonprofits can partner with DOR to provide these services.

Sampson provided the following information as it relates to TBI and the TBI programs.

* The different types of brain injuries and how they are acquired were reviewed.
* The TBI sites serve individuals over the age of 18 who have a TBI. Available services include community reintegration, supported living services, vocational supportive services, information and referral, and public and professional education. It was confirmed that individuals do not need to be DOR consumers to utilize the services offered through the TBI sites.
* The 2022 TBI California Community Health Needs Assessment was conducted to determine what head injury looks like in California.
* Information on TBI and the impacts on employment, emotional regulation, community living, and the activities of daily living was shared.

Questions and discussion highlights included the following:

* Strategies for service providers to support individuals who may have an undiagnosed TBI. It was noted that a pamphlet will soon be made available to community partners that will help individuals identify if they have symptoms that might be related to a TBI.
* Possible policy considerations could include:
	+ Increasing the capacity of primary care providers to understand TBI and refer individuals to services.
	+ Engaging in media campaigns to educate Californians about TBI and increase overall awareness and communication about DOR.
	+ Developing a training on TBI made available to all DOR staff to enhance customer service and reduce stigma.
	+ Identifying best practices from other states (or federal initiatives) for the DOR to consider.
	+ Sampson explained that what is most needed is more funding for the TBI sites and providing education to various systems about TBI.

# Item 13: Benefits Planning and Employment

California Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities (CCEPD) representatives Maria Aliferis-Gjerde, Executive Officer, Taylor Winchell, Vice Chair, and Jennifer Fischer, State Coordination Subcommittee Chair, joined the SRC for the benefits planning and employment agenda item. Their presentation began with background information on the role, responsibilities, membership, and subcommittees of the CCEPD. The CCEPD’s current areas of focus include the updated Youth Leadership Forum concept, benefits plannings, integrated service delivery, and cross-system training needs. In August 2022, the CCEPD adopted the “Integrated Benefits Planning Policy Recommendations” which have been submitted to lead departments for discussion and feedback, and then the recommendations will be submitted to the California Health and Human Services Agency and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. Ideas for possible collaboration between the SRC and the CCEPD regarding benefits planning were shared.

Discussion highlights following the presentation included: 1) the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is considering waivers and changes for innovative practices, specifically a 1115 wavier for Medi-Cal, and 2) the handbook being developed for the Workforce Development Boards may also be helpful for DHCS and the 59 behavioral health agencies in California.

SRC members then reviewed their recommendation “2021.4 Work Incentives Planning Information” and the DOR’s response. Currently, DOR provides WIP services to consumers who are near the end of their VR process. The following comments and topics related to this agenda item were then discussed:

* The need to engage individuals in the benefits planning earlier, as impacts to an individuals’ benefits may affect their decision to participate in VR in the first place.
* Feedback regarding the use of the DB101 website and the need to ensure training is available to help people understand how to utilize and navigate the website.
* There is an overall need to increase the number of benefits counselors throughout the service delivery systems. A suggestion was made to develop a cross-systems (VR, workforce, and education) Request for Applications that allow interested community-based organizations to build capacity and provide benefits counseling.
* SRC Executive Officer Bjerke will connect with the DOR VR Policy and Resources Division for a handout that provides information on the available WIP planning resources. It was suggested that perhaps this handout could be provided during intake processes.
* The Executive Officers from the CCEPD and SRC will meet to discuss next steps and identify possible areas for collaboration.

# Item 14: Student Services

Nancy Wentling, Chief, and Shanti Ezrine, Manager, from DOR’s Program Policy Section joined the SRC along with Carol Asch, DOR VR Employment Division Assistant Deputy Director to present an overview of DOR Student Services and discuss questions that had been submitted by the SRC members. Wentling began by presenting an overview of DOR Student Services and spoke about the five available pre-employment transition services – 1) job exploration counseling, 2) work-based learning experiences, 3) postsecondary counseling, 4) workplace readiness training, and 5) instruction on self-advocacy. Wentling and Ezrine provided details and examples of each of these services. After the presentation, there was an opportunity for questions and discussion. Highlights included the following:

* DOR strives to make sure that all students with disabilities have information about the full range of services offered by DOR. If necessary, DOR can open a VR case to provide needed services or tools.
* The DOR and CDE have discussed possibly presenting on DOR Student Services to the Advisory Commission on Special Education, parent groups and family empowerment centers.
* Utilizing available data, DOR is aware of students in rural areas and makes target efforts to reach them and can provide students in rural areas with internet access.
* CRPs will soon begin offering DOR Student Services. Informational sessions will take place in early 2023. Since DOR is conducting more outreach and serving more students, additional resources are needed.
* There was a discussion about who teaches self-advocacy skills to students and the value of peer mentoring.
* It was noted that any California based student can access a free Coursera license at their library, which provides job exploration counseling and other offerings.
* The importance of outreach to parent support groups and telling students with disabilities from an early age they can work was discussed. SRC Executive Officer Bjerke will compile the website links from different parent support groups and distribute that information to the SRC.
* Suggestions included:
	+ Encouraging partnerships between the Independent Living Centers (ILCs) and with DOR Student Services, as many ILCs have a requirement to support youth transitions.
	+ Have DOR and CDE present on Student Services at an upcoming Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC) meeting.
	+ Provide information on DOR Student Services in enrollment packets and provide information to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams.
	+ Offer a refresher training and information to Local Education Agencies.

# Item 15: Unified State Plan Committee

Alicia Lucas, DOR Planning Unit Manager, joined the SRC and provided a detailed review of the Department’s progress on meeting the five goals in the current DOR State Plan. The updates covered all four quarters from the last program year (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). Lucas noted that most of the objectives and expectations were achieved. Updates are regularly provided to the DOR Program Deputies on DOR’s progress. Lucas noted that the state plan modification went into effect July 1, 2022. During a future update, Lucas will provide information on the modification and speak about minor changes that were made to a few of the objectives to adjust the way DOR tracks and reports data/progress. Questions from the SRC members included the following: DOR received more applications than anticipated for individuals who left subminimum wage employment, and a higher number of closures. In addition, there was a significant increase between the goal of consumers receiving paid work experiences and the number achieved. What does DOR attribute this too? Lucas will research this question and report back.

Judy Gonzalez, Research Analyst II with the DOR Planning Unit, then presented on the Comprehensive Statewide Assessment (CSA) and the current qualitative data collection efforts. Gonzalez explained that three new surveys were developed and administered to gather qualitative data: surveys for DOR counselors, VR consumers, and DOR Student Services participants (i.e., potentially eligible case type). The next step in the qualitative data collection process is to conduct key informant interviews. The SRC was asked for their feedback on the following draft interview questions regarding unserved and underserved populations:

1. In your experience, what populations of people with disabilities are unserved or underserved in California?
2. How can DOR best serve the un/underserved population(s) you identified?
3. What issues or barriers do you believe these populations mentioned in the previous questions have to accessing and engaging in services?
4. What strategies do you think would be effective in providing services to these populations?
5. What are some best practices for conducting outreach to the unserved and underserved populations you identified?
6. Considering equity vs. equality (equity – providing resources to reach an equal outcome; equality – providing same resources), what is the best way to ensure that underserved populations are provided equitable DOR services?

Feedback from the SRC members on the draft questions included the following:

* The importance of service providers having connections to the local community and community organizations as a method to connect with unserved and underserved populations.
* Suggestion to add to question 5: are there any organizations that the DOR should work with to better serve this population?

Logistical next steps and notes include:

* The key informant interviews will be discussions (not written surveys).
* SRC members can assist with the key informant interviews and the goal is to conduct the interviews in early 2023.
* The key informant interviewees have not yet been identified but suggestions are welcome. It was suggested to reach out to all the behavioral health directors in California as their organizations also identify underserved populations.

# Item 16: SRC Annual Report

SRC Executive Officer Bjerke presented the draft 2021/22 SRC Annual Report. Bjerke explained that the annual report is required by federal statute and must be submitted to the Governor’s Office and Rehabilitation Services Administration by December 30th of each year. The reporting period, (i.e., “term”) of the report is October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022 which is the federal fiscal year. Bjerke highlighted the following elements of the draft report: the messages from the SRC leaders and DOR directorate, the SRC overview, a summary of the SRC’s collaboration with DOR and topics discussed during the quarterly meetings, the SRC’s recommendations adopted during the term, a membership roster with pictures, and information on the joint efforts between DOR and the SRC on the Consumer Satisfaction Survey, State Plan, and Comprehensive Statewide Assessment. Bjerke confirmed that after the report is submitted, SRC members can share the report with their networks.

Motion: It was moved/seconded (Comstock/Weller) to approve the 2021-22 SRC Annual Report. (Yes – Aviles, Brisbane, Comstock, Guillen, Hasak, Henderson, Lewis, Wavrin, Weller); (Absent for vote – Hayes). The motion carried and the approved annual report will be submitted and then distributed.

# Item 17: Debrief and Recommendations Discussion

SRC Executive Officer Bjerke reviewed the highlights, questions, and areas of interest identified by the SRC members over the past two days. Bjerke also reviewed the SRC’s list of policy questions for consideration provided in the meeting packet. As a path forward, it was suggested that at the next SRC Executive Planning Committee meeting, that the top policy issues be identified, workgroups/subcommittees be established for large topics (like DEI), and draft recommendations if appropriate.

# Item 18: SRC Officers, Members, and Executive Officer Reports

Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair: Aviles is looking forward to serving as SRC Chair for the next term and working collaboratively to improve services.

Ivan Guillen, SRC Vice-Chair: The Client Assistance Program is now fully staffed with two new advocates in the Los Angeles area. Guillen has been providing mentorship and training.

Kecia Weller, SRC Treasurer: The current SRC budget covers state fiscal year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The SRC’s total operating and personnel services budget is $207,232. The SRC is allocated fulltime support from the SRC Executive Officer. The SRC has funding to provide $100/per day stipends to SRC members who meet the requirements. The SRC’s operating expenses includes funding for SRC member travel, communications, and facility operations. As of October 2022, 26% of the SRC’s budget has been spent.

Susan Henderson, Chair, SRC Monitoring and Evaluation Committee: no committee update at this time; Bjerke and Henderson will connect.

Theresa Comstock, SRC Member: there is a significant workforce shortage in the behavioral health sector. The California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) is administering grants in an effort to increase the workforce.

Nick Wavrin, SRC Member: The California Community of Practice on Secondary Transition, co-led by the CDE and DOR, is meeting on December 5, 2022, to discuss the value and support of the parent role in secondary transition.

Chanel Brisbane, SRC Member: nonprofit organizations are wondering how the recession will impact individuals in entry level roles. Best Buddies has launched in the San Diego area and has vendorized with the local Regional Center and DOR.

Elizabeth Lewis, SRC Member: Union Pacific is busy hiring.

Lisa Hayes, SRC Member: The State Independent Living Council (SILC) legislative specialist has retired. The activities of the Independent Living centers (ILCs) are guided by the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) which is approved by the federal Administration on Community Living (ACL). Due to changes with the ACL databases, submission of the SPILs has been delayed. The CalAIM initiative is transformational in how healthcare services are provided and the ILCs have an opportunity to partner with health plans to provide some services, like transition support.

# Item 19: Adopt-a-Region Reports

SRC members reported out from their recent Adopt-a-Region discussions:

Redwood Empire District: Theresa Comstock, SRC Member, connected with David Wayte, Regional Director. District successes including increasing the number of Transition Partnership Programs (TPP), engaging alternative education programs partners, and initiatives to increase services for students on the autism spectrum. The Napa DOR Office, within the Redwood Empire District, is the pilot office for the CalDOR Consumer Payment Card. The district is active with the State Internship Program. Challenges include staffing and the need to find a new mental health cooperative program contractor.

Santa Barbara District: Comstock connected with Justin Winic, District Administrator. Challenges include staff vacancies. Initiatives in progress include supporting opportunities for staff to promote, increasing Transition Partnership Program (TPP) offerings, increasing services to the migrant farm worker community, increasing Career Technical Education contracts, and increasing services to students. The district held an apprenticeship fair in San Luis Obispo.

Greater Los Angeles District: Nick Wavrin, SRC Member, connected with Maria Turrubiartes, Regional Director. District initiatives include the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California Conservation Corps (CCC). Through the MOU, DOR can pay the CCC to provide training to students, and then those students are referred to DOR. The district is also engaging with youth through the American Job Centers of California in collaboration with the Los Angeles Unified School District. Collaborations are taking place between the DOR, the City of Los Angeles and the Department of Family Services to engage foster youth.

Inland Empire District: Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair, connected with Inland Empire District leadership. District activities include collaboration with community partners and hosting an apprenticeship faire. A challenge is identifying competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals exiting subminimum wage employment and also challenges with hiring American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. Staffing is also a challenge for the district. Future opportunities include goals to increase services to youth involved with the juvenile justice system, the ID/DD population, and foster youth. Recent successes include a training program with Hyatt Hotels.

Los Angeles South Bay: Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair, connected with Susan Senior, Regional Director. The district was recognized by their local city council for DOR’s community outreach. Opportunities include offering adult work experience and connecting with SoFi Stadium and the local labor committee to find positions and opportunities. Senior is working on a black entrepreneurship presentation series.

Orange/San Gabriel District: Chanel Brisbane, SRC Member, connected with Sherri Han-Lam, Regional Director. The district remains busy and hired a new District Administrator, Patty Tso-Lui. A recent highlight includes the district’s apprenticeship faire, and a challenge is hiring ASL interpreters.

Greater East Bay District: Susan Henderson, Chair, SRC Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, reported no update at this time.

San Diego District: Ivan Guillen, SRC Vice-Chair, connected with Peter Blanco, Regional Director, and Jeffrey Noyes, District Administrator. The district is encouraging youth who are participating in DOR Student Services to also enroll in VR Services. The district looks forward to rolling out the new CalDOR Consumer Payment Card and anticipates receiving training soon. The district is working with an organization called “Just in Time” to increase the number of foster youth receiving DOR services. The district reported an increase in applications.

Northern Sierra District: Elizabeth Lewis, SRC member, connected with Vivian Hernandez-Obaldia, Regional Director. A new District Administrator, Sharon O’Sullivan, has been appointed. Staffing can be a challenge, especially with finding qualified counselors, but district leadership have been reaching out to colleges to increase recruitment. The district is participating in the Demand Side Employment Initiative, the Pathways to Success Project, has exceeded their goal for the number of students served in the district, and is piloting a remote counselor position.

San Joaquin Valley District: Lisa Hayes, SRC Member, reported no update at this time.

San Jose District: Jonathan Hasak, SRC Member, connected with Sorath Hangse, Regional Director. Denise Dorsey has been appointed as District Administrator. The district is almost fully staff but is working on filling two management vacancies. Each office in the district now has a Business Specialist. There is a focus on serving veterans, which is of interest to Hasak as there are many new benefits coming out from an infrastructure package that was signed earlier in 2022. The San Jose District Office will need to relocate next year. The district is interested in connecting further with the Workforce Development Board and identifying best practices for collaborating with the American Job Centers of California. The district hosted an onsite hiring event in Salinas with Amazon and looks forward to more events in the future. The district is also partnering with an airline pilot training program.

Blind Field Services District: Sara Abdrabou, SRC member, reported that Peter Dawson, Regional Director, was not available to meet.

Van Nuys Foothill District: Kecia Weller, SRC member, met with Denise McKnight, District Administrator. There are many positions open in the district, and efforts are taking place to rebuild teams and hire new counselors. Consumers with computers are using DOR’s portal to start a DOR case, however, there are reports of consumers not filling out the DOR application correctly. Weller suggested that the SRC look at the online DOR application to identify opportunities for making the online application more user friendly. Challenges in the district include balancing staff wanting to telework and the need to connect with consumers in-person. An upcoming opportunity is the new CalDOR Consumer Payment Card.

# Adjourn

SRC Chair Aviles adjourned the November 30 – December 1, 2022 SRC quarterly meeting.