**California State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)**

**Policy Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 15, 2024,** **1:00 – 3:00 p.m.**

**Location:** Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), 721 Capitol Mall, Room 307, Sacramento, CA 95814

*Approved Meeting Minutes (approved on June 13, 2024)*

Note: This committee meeting was held in accordance with California Government Code section 11123.5.

Attendance:

* SRC Policy Committee members in attendance (by Zoom): Chanel Brisbane, Ivan Guillen, Theresa Comstock.
* SRC Policy Committee members absent: La Trena Robinson, Candis Welch, Jonathan Hasak.
* DOR staff in attendance (in-person): Kate Bjerke
* DOR staff in attendance (by Zoom): Mark Erlichman, Jake Johnson, Nancy Wentling.
* Members of the public in attendance (by Zoom): Michelle Bello.

# Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

A quorum was established and Chanel Brisbane, SRC Policy Committee Chair, welcomed attendees to the meeting. Members introduced themselves.

# Item 2: Public Comment

Kate Bjerke, SRC Executive Officer, read a public comment submitted on March 12, 2024 by Jan Johnston-Tyler, Founder and CEO of EvoLibri, regarding concerns with the cost of Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accreditation.

# Item 3: Approval of the March 14, 2024 SRC Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

It was moved/seconded (Guillen/Comstock) to approve the March 14, 2024 meeting minutes with the addition of details regarding why the regulations that govern the mediation and fair hearing process were requested (Yes – Guillen, Brisbane, Comstock), (No – 0), (Absent – Welch, Hasak, Robinson), (Abstain – 0).

**Item 4: DOR and the Master Plan on Career Education**

DOR representatives Mark Erlichman, Jake Johnson and Nancy Wentling provided an update on DOR’s participation in the development of the Master Plan on Career Education. Johnson began by providing an overview of the Governor’s Executive Order N-11-23 which calls for leaders from California’s education and workforce entities, in partnership with student, families, adult learners, workers and employers to develop ideas for creating equitable access to living wages, and to have these ideas incorporated as actionable ideas in the Master Plan. The Master Plan is due in Fall 2024 and stakeholder engagement has and continues to take place.

Erlichman spoke about DOR’s participation in the Master Plan Task Force, which has been working to collect information and feedback through regional public meetings and working groups. DOR is represented on all four of the Master Plan Task Force working groups, which include 1) transfer acceleration, 2) career pathways, 3) completion support, and 4) e-transcript and California Career Passport. The Task Force will stand up five advisory groups that focus on policy, practitioners, labor, students and families, and employers. Erlichman spoke about his participation on the career pathways working group. Wentling spoke about her experience serving on the transfer acceleration and completion supports workgroups. Johnson spoke about his experience serving on the e-transcript workgroup. Johnson encouraged the SRC to participate and share ideas with the Master Plan on Career Education team.

SRC member questions and comments included the following:

* Are career pipelines being developed in coordination with the Workforce Development Boards? Yes.
* What is the timeline for implementation? Is funding available to support implementation activities? The ideas being put forward need to be actionable. No funding associated at this time. Items four and five within the Executive Order speak to the implementation process.
* Discussion on how the different systems/entities have varying approaches to serving individuals, and how to coordinate.

**Item 5: SRC Feedback – Master Plan on Career Education**

Members continued efforts from the March 14, 2024 SRC Policy Committee meeting to develop feedback on the following Master Plan concepts:

* Create state and regional coordinating bodies that make it easier to access information, funding, and support.
* Align K-12, postsecondary, and workforce training opportunities so it is easier to build skills in a variety of settings.
* Create incentives and improve coordination so that more people can participate in hands-on learning.

Bjerke will compile the SRC Policy Committee’s input into a draft memorandum. The draft memorandum will be reviewed again by the Policy Committee and then presented to the full SRC during the July 17 – 18, 2024 Quarterly Meeting.

# Item 6: Administrative Law Judges, Fair Hearing and Mediations

SRC Policy Committee members reviewed information received as a follow-up from recent discussions regarding fair hearing and mediations and Administrative Law Judges (ALJs). Discussion highlights included the following:

* Appreciation for the information received.
* Regarding a consumer’s right to an in-person fair hearing or mediation, the following section of code could be interpreted to read that the standard for a fair hearing/mediation is in-person and that anything other than in-person, like phone or Zoom, would require the appellant’s consent and the change to be made by the ALJ. The question regarding the interpretation of this regulation could either be addressed by the SRC and DOR, or between DOR and the Client Assistance Program (CAP). The CAP is aware of two occasions in which an appellant wanted an in-person hearing, so CAP does not believe this to be a systemic concern, however, CAP is not always aware of each case and request.
  + CA Welf & Inst Code § 19705: *An impartial hearing officer may change the time and place of the hearing after further consultation with, and to accommodate the convenience of, the appellant. If the appellant consents and each participant in the hearing has an opportunity to participate in the entire proceeding while it is taking place and to examine exhibits, all or part of the fair hearing may be conducted by means other than an in-person hearing.*
  + Federal regulations state that the hearing setting has to be at the convenience of both parties, which is open for interpretation.
* Last year, there was one fair hearing decision in which an ALJ stated that a person’s mental health was not stable enough to pursue employment. The Policy Committee members do not believe this to be a systemic issue at this time.
* Policy Committee members discussed the “Engaged Neutrality in Hearings” training slide deck that is given to ALJs. The training does address implicit bias and disability is included in the training. While there is always room for improvement, members were glad to know that the ALJs receive this type of training.

# Item 7: Identification of Future SRC Policy Committee Topics

Future SRC Policy Committee topics will include:

* Finalize the input on the Master Plan for Career Education.
* Presentation to learn about maintenance supports for DOR consumers.
* DOR’s updates to the online application for consumers based on the SRC’s comments/suggestions.
* Learn about CARF accreditation requirements (ensure that Jan Johnson-Tyler and Danny Marquez are made aware of this agenda item). Understand what the regulations and policies are, and why DOR values CARF accreditation.
* Re-visit the SRC customer service recommendation.

# Item 8: Adjourn

It was moved/seconded (Comstock/Guillen) to adjourn the May 15, 2024 SRC Policy Committee meeting.