Ohio’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Combined State Plan

Narrative

The OOD Council devoted time to discuss and offer input to the Vocational Rehabilitation Services portion of Ohio’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan. As a result, a committee formed to provide a concentrated focus for this effort. Four areas for continued improvement include customer service evaluation, increased information sharing with participants, targeted outreach, and leveraging internships.

First, the OOD Council recommended that OOD create a stronger process to evaluate customer satisfaction. As current survey questions are revised and new ones added, the OOD Council requests to offer feedback. The OOD Council noted that several comments regarding improving services and/or outcomes for the use of assistive technology. It was also noted that there is a need for additional technology for students in STEM fields in order to overcome any difficulties in science and mathematics. The OOD Council will continue to examine survey responses, data, and trends to help shape recommendations.

Second, the OOD Council recommended OOD improve the information available to individuals and families to support their informed choice of providers. The OOD Council determined that information available within the *Provider Search* function (online at ood.ohio.gov) could be improved to be more user-friendly. The OOD Council suggested this function also serve as a tool for people to understand their options and providers that can meet their needs. The OOD Council suggested that posted “scorecard information” regarding providers be reformatted so that individuals can make educated and informed decisions about selecting a provider. Further, the OOD Council suggested that OOD make clear how it evaluates the services of providers and determine scores.

Third, the OOD Council suggested improved targeted outreach efforts. While the OOD Council is pleased that local field offices conduct outreach efforts in their local communities, noting that OOD’s number served has increased, the importance of continued efforts was emphasized.

Finally, with the agency’s new Ohio College2Careers initiative in mind, the OOD Council considered how OOD is encouraging internship opportunities. OOD hired two new career development specialists to work with students who are served through higher education caseloads to connect them to internship and permanent placement opportunities with OOD’s employer partners. The OOD Council encouraged the agency to continue efforts to increase the utilization of internships to help individuals with disabilities obtain higher wage positions.