

Road Map Project Opportunity Youth Advisory Group

Sept. 27, 2017 – Notes from Deep Dive Discussions

1. Regional approach to youth apprenticeship (Shannon M. & Chris P.)

This small group discussed the opportunity for using Open Doors funding to increase access to apprenticeship pathways for Opportunity Youth and the value of a regional approach to brokering and managing relationships with individual school districts and apprenticeship programs. Feedback from OYAG members about what excites, scares and/or confuses them about this idea included:

- Concern about funneling young adults into particular industries that are perceived as ‘bubble’ industries, such as construction. However it was also noted that despite the bubble there are real job openings in the sector due to other pressing factors like retirements.
- Concern about tracking young adults into apprenticeship who are perceived as not being ready for “real school.”
- Ensuring pre-apprenticeship is taken into account in the pipeline and existing resources to support case management and wrap around supports for both apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship are incorporated in an intentional way.
- Ensuring the focus is on real jobs not internships or work experience. These are useful and valid ways to support career exploration and work experience, but they are not apprenticeships.
- Ensuring that there are connections with apprenticeship programs in new fields like technology, and that partnerships like the one between Year Up and Bellevue College are connected.
- Managing expectations around how many companies actually step up to provide these experiences is important. Partnering with entities like a chamber can be a way to market this kind of program, but it’s important that businesses and apprenticeship programs are transparent about how many jobs are available.
- Reaching out to small businesses that are owned by people of color and interested in apprenticeship could be a good strategy for finding companies that would be better cultural fits for Opportunity Youth entering an apprenticeship.
- Developing more opportunities like field trips, site visits, and learning sessions to teach guidance counselors and teachers about apprenticeship is important.

Policy Barriers to Effective OY Services (Ken T. and Annie Laurie A.)

This small group read a brief case study about “Maria” who after re-engaging and working hard to get her life on track, has a job with hours that lead her to need child care for over 10 hours some days. This puts her child care provider out of compliance with DSHS/TANF rules, and she was unable to get an exception, meaning keeping her job would mean losing her child care subsidy. This was one illustration of a broader set of challenges with eligibility and other rules related to federally funded services across TANF, WIOA, SNAP and Pell.

The group reviewed a set of policy waivers that a cross-sector group in Los Angeles has identified and then brainstormed specific policy and practice barriers that could be priorities for advocacy work and/or provider training:

TANF

- 10 hour/day maximum child care rule
- Benefits cliff
- Reduction of parental benefits due to child’s job

SNAP E&T/BFET

- LA #1 existing (Title 1)
- LA DOE #3
- Mandated outcomes don’t match OSY path
- Qualifying for housing (ask All Home)

Practice:

- Provider knowledge: who knows all of the allowed exceptions?
- Encourage specialization across case managers or navigators? Cross agency?
- Federal layers – national waivers not necessarily honored by local/regional reps (DOL example)
- State offices – unwilling to ask for waivers
- Limit to allowable “exaggeration” – navigating grey areas
- Employers (private) asking about credit ratings
- Courts – parole conditions, many mandate day time meetings
- Requirements to do stuff online, but ex-offenders not allowed to use technology

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Road Map Project System Indicator Development (Shelby Cooley)

This small group discussed the development of system indicators across the Road Map Project Equity Essentials framework, then focused in on “Increasing access to quality reengagement programs” as the equity essential in question.

The group reviewed a background document and then draft list of indicators (see below). Time was spent discussing the importance of the regional provider network owning these new indicators and finding them useful, given data collection would rely heavily on that group.

The group added several potential indicators to the list below, including racial/ethnic composition of staff relative to student body, and discussions delved into some of what the group felt were the most important but also difficult to measure items around quality of instruction, cultural relevance of curriculum, and climate.

Improved district reengagement and referral practices
Program participation in monthly reengagement system meetings
Open Doors programs implementing promising/effective practices (based on Back on Track framework)
Access to postsecondary navigators within programs
Access to career/employment support within programs
Access to behavioral health support within programs

Case manager to participant ratio
Partnerships with CBOs
Staff qualifications
Student-centered approaches
Cultural connections
Reasons why students are not in school
Data on program fit to improve referrals
Persistence rates by program
Quality of instruction in programs