

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

Suggested

Quarterly Narrative Report

The information that DEI projects provide in the ETA Narrative Report template helps to track grantee actual performance outcomes in relation to the negotiated goals on a quarterly basis. For each reporting period, it would be helpful if grantees could provide cumulative information for each quarterly update.

Grantee Information	
Grantee Name: Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development	
Address: 332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200	
City/State/Zip: Saint Paul, MN 55101	
Grant Number : DI – 23803-12-75-A-27	Report Period: 4/1/14-6/30/14

Status of Grant Implementation and Progress To-Date

For this grant reporting period, please provide the status of implementation of the Strategic Service Delivery Components that your project is implementing to include: a. current status; b. challenges, and c. notable activities:

- Integrated Resource Team Approach:**

a. Current status:

MN's three Implementation Sites continued to convene Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meetings for DEI participants during this quarter and develop partnerships which will strengthen these teams and address the needs of the participants. Through June 30, IRTs have been conducted for 157 of the 215 youth enrolled in the DEI project (73%). The Youth Profile Form and Youth Action Plan documents being used by the sites help guide the formation of the IRTs. Activities in the implementation sites include:

South Central/Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) region: IRTs have included the youth, MVAC Vocational Advisors, Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC), parents, and partners such as social workers, Vocational Rehabilitation transition counselors, probation officers and others. Some initial IRTs have resulted in follow-up face to face meetings and most all have led to increased communication between team members and with the youth. Staff is becoming more familiar with the IRT concept and informing youth of the option and benefits of an IRT. Staff will contact the DRC for assistance in the IRT formation and scheduling when help is needed, but they are also going ahead with this on their own when they can.

RMCEP region: RMCEP has established 71 IRTs throughout the region. 47 of the 71 participants are enrolled in WIA, 13 in Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), 7 in Minnesota

Family Investment Program (MFIP), 2 in Diversionary Work Program (DWP) and 2 in the Youthbuild program. Youth coordinators are identifying new DEI participants through MYP and are gearing up for September enrollment activities. Case managers for programs other than traditional youth programs such as DWP and MFIP are looking at their caseloads and identifying those who could benefit from an IRT.

Southeast/WDI region: WDI continues to utilize IRTs with a great number of youth. IRTs have been established for 58 youth participants (69%). The IRTs continue to be a great support system for the youth and have been effective in being able to strategize and coordinate services for each youth to achieve their goals for employment. The mapping and coordination of resources and funding has also been beneficial and more effective for the partners involved.

b. Challenges:

South Central/MVAC region: Staff is working to increase involvement of school staff in IRT meetings and participation of MVAC staff in Individual Education Plan meetings at the schools. This is something the DRC will focus on during this upcoming school year through the relationship with the Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTICs) in two counties in the region and with the Special Education Departments in the smaller counties and schools.

c. Notable activities:

South Central/MVAC region: One example of a successful IRT involves a youth who started college with the help of his MVAC Vocational Advisor (VA) and had to take off two semesters due to a health issue. The VA continued contact with this youth during his break from school, making home visits and phone calls to continue to work toward the youth's goals. When the youth felt he was ready to start a work experience through MVAC there were some barriers that he requested assistance with. With the youth's agreement an IRT meeting was scheduled with providers currently involved with the youth, including his VR counselor, mental health case manager, DRC and the VA. Each agency was able to offer specific supports to assist this youth in meeting the goal of a successful work experience. Follow-up emails and phone calls between all team members and the youth occurred to solve some initial problems and no one dropped the ball; this youth has successfully been placed in a work experience. When the youth is ready to transition back to school another meeting will be held if the youth desires.

Southeast/WDI region: The IRTs have proven to be a good way for the DEI youth, their family and stakeholders to better identify the needs of the youth. One example is a participant who was planning on doing a work experience; the team determined that it would be beneficial to first conduct a vocational evaluation to establish and identify a good work experience that would help the youth be successful and accomplish goals for employment. Also, since each IRT is unique to the individual, this has created the opportunity to identify many additional supports and establish more relationships in the community with every IRT.

RMCEP region: 17 new IRTs have been established since the last quarter.

PACER staff sent the pilot site DRCs materials used by special educators to help students prepare for a leadership role in their IEP meetings. The DRCs felt such an approach would be helpful in their work preparing DEI enrollees to lead their IRT meetings.

- ***Guideposts for Success:***

a. Current status:

Each local implementation site continues to use the Youth Profile and Youth Action Plan forms (or variations thereof) developed by PACER Center to document the use of the *Guideposts for Success* in the assessment and development of service strategies for youth participants.

South Central/MVAC region: The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) informally incorporates each of the Guideposts for success into the format and is used for all youth who enter a youth program. The Youth Action Plan is used in conjunction with the ISS.

RMCEP region: Utilizing the *Guideposts for Success* to provide a holistic approach to the participant's goals has been effective. RMCEP uses a visual tool that was created to illustrate each participant's pathway to success in the career pathway they want to pursue. This tool has created clarity and perspective for the participant, family, and professionals who support these goals. In an effort to accommodate those customers who are more linear thinkers, RMCEP has modified the Youth Action Plan. This version of the Action Plan organizes activities in a chronological checklist instead of by *Guidepost*. In this version the *Guidepost* is indicated by a numeric indicator next to the activity. RMCEP's youth program staff has embraced the importance of family supports, connections, and leadership development. Staff has recently requested more disability training to help them better identify and access available supports to increase the likelihood of achieving more successful outcomes.

Southeast/WDI region: Utilizes the *Guideposts* with all DEI youth. The DEI Youth Action plan has been a great way to incorporate the *Guideposts* into each youth's plan. Each DEI youth participates in at least three of the five *Guideposts*; many youth have a goal in each of the *Guidepost* areas if applicable. The DRC also encourages the youth counselors to utilize the *Guideposts* for all of the youth in WIA and MYP, not only those participating in DEI.

b. Challenges:

South Central/MVAC region: Staff is working to reduce repetition among forms used during intake/assessment by incorporating the *Guideposts* more intentionally into the ISS and Employment Plan (EP) forms with a goal of making the process less overwhelming for participants and staff.

RMCEP is working to raise awareness of all staff who work with those ages 24 and younger about the importance of addressing all five *Guidepost* areas, and sharing this information with partners to develop strategies to address the gaps through the goals in the Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

c. Notable activities:

Each of the three pilot sites is using the *Guideposts for Success* framework to guide the planning and delivery of services to youth enrolled in the DEI project. Data through 6/30/14 shows that 79% of participants received school-based preparatory experiences (*Guidepost 1*), 99% received career prep and work-based learning experiences (*Guidepost 2*), 84% received

youth development and leadership activities (*Guidepost 3*), 89% received connecting activities (*Guidepost 4*), and 80% received family involvement and support activities (*Guidepost 5*).

A MN DEI Partners for Youth flyer is available from the project website and includes a brief description of the *Guideposts for Success*. The implementation sites continue to introduce and reinforce the *Guideposts for Success* among local staff, partners, participants and families.

South Central/MVAC region: The local DEI team has identified areas where activity categories on Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and Employment Plan (EP) documents can be combined to more accurately reflect each *Guidepost*. This will facilitate a smooth flow between the ISS/EP and Youth Action Plan.

RMCEP region: The DRC, Brainerd CTIC, PACER, and MN Department of Education representative held *Guideposts* training April 24, 2014 for parents, youth, school faculty and community members who want to learn about the *Guideposts*, how to apply them, and their value to each youth. PACER *Guideposts* training for staff working with the Minnesota Family Investment Program has been scheduled for October 7th in Detroit Lakes, MN. Runestone CTIC will conduct their first DEI *Guideposts* training on October 9th. Planning for trainings in Alexandria, MN is underway.

Southeast/WDI region: The DRC, Rochester CTIC, PACER, and MN Department of Education representative held *Guideposts* training April 9, 2014 for parents, youth, school faculty and community members. The DRC continues to market and emphasize the *Guideposts* to the youth staff, partners and community.

• **Partnerships and Collaboration:**

a. Current status:

At the state level, Minnesota's Shared Vision for Youth (SVY) State Team continues to be an active group meeting on a regular basis to promote and develop state-level interagency collaboration in serving the neediest youth, including youth with disabilities. The DEI Steering Committee is a subset of the SVY team. The full SVY team met on June 20 and will meet again in October 2014. Notes from the June meeting are available on the SVY website at: <http://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/index/shared-vision/>

The three implementation sites continue to reach out to community organizations to spread the word about DEI. In addition, the local implementation sites are working with each other to share best practices and strategies that they are developing as the project is progressing. The State Co-Leads facilitate a monthly conference call with the three sites to provide a forum for sharing their successes and challenges. On May 5, the three pilot sites came together with the State Co-Leads, PACER Center staff, and SSA for a Roundtable to share information and discuss successes and challenges.

South Central/MVAC region: Partnerships continue to be maintained and strengthened. VR and MVAC staff communicates regularly regarding youth, resources and services. Partners attend IRTs when invited as well. MVAC recently began a partnership with Goodwill as described below. The DRC continues to be involved with Mankato and Fairmont Area CTICs.

RMCEP region: The Career Assessment Center in Willmar, MN, the Occupational Development Center in Bemidji and Productive Alternatives in Fergus Falls have all been effectively utilized to provide vocational assessments to identify key strengths and areas for improvement as participants prepare themselves for work or post-secondary education. This will continue to be a resource for current and future participants. A new peer mentorship program has been established in the area funded through a grant administered by Freedom Resources, Inc. The coordinator of that program has agreed to work closely with RMCEP to expand services in the region for those who need adult mentorship and lack family involvement. Lakeland Mental Health is expanding program accessibility for RMCEP participants who require mental health supportive services and referring clients to RMCEP WIA programs as appropriate in addition to VRS.

Southeast/WDI region: There has been an increase in partnerships and collaboration due to the DEI. The DRC has been able to coordinate meetings and create relationships and partnerships among the many agencies and organizations within the region. This has also lead to discovering additional agencies and organizations with whom to partner and coordinate future services. The WDI case managers assisted in planning the Freeborn County CTIC Transition Fair which was held on April 30th, 2014.

b. Challenges:

South Central/MVAC region: Staff sees a need to partner with local colleges to develop a mentoring program for youth with disabilities as they transition to college. This would be an expansion of the existing college disability services. Local staff has encountered some challenges in making the right connections and working with existing college offices and policy.

RMCEP region: A gap in services for homeless youth has been identified. Currently, approximately 8% of participants in the RMCEP DEI project who are under the age of 19 lack a stable home environment due to parental incarceration or hospitalization. It has been difficult to find foster care or independent living programs that can meet the needs of these youth, particularly those who are ages 16-17. In many cases, support service dollars from work training programs are being used to prevent eviction or to secure a suitable place to live.

c. Notable activities:

CTICs in each of the three regions are implementing their action plans to hold multiple joint CTIC/DEI trainings and events over the next year. Planned topics for the trainings include benefits planning, *Guideposts for Success*, mental health and employment, vocational rehabilitation services, career development/pathways, supporting first generation learners with disabilities in post-secondary settings, working with employers, assistive technology resources, and preparing learners with disabilities for competitive employment using 21st century foundation skills. The action plans incorporate measurable goals that can be accomplished by the end of the DEI grant period.

South Central/MVAC region: Referrals from schools and Vocational Rehabilitation Services have increased. The VRS Transition Counselor in the largest county continues to meet with

MVAC Vocational Advisors and DRC monthly. This helps to assure that youth are not falling through the cracks as they are referred from one agency to another for co-enrollment. New partnerships continue to develop with a recent agreement with Goodwill to provide work evaluation services and Benefits Analysis. One full Benefits Analysis has been completed by Goodwill's Work Incentives Connection and one youth has been given preliminary information about SSI benefits and working. The local SMILES Assistive Technology Specialist gave a presentation to MVAC Employment Services staff on Assistive Technology devices for youth going to high school or college. Lutheran Social Services will be providing two financial literacy workshops in July and August.

Southeast/WDI region: A brochure for youth with disabilities has been created by partners in the region (WDI, VRS and SE MN Center for Independent Living). Coordination of services has been more efficient and created less confusion for people in the community. Outreach and the IRTs have provided more opportunities for collaboration and Outreach has increased the number of partners that we have been able to collaborate with (Opportunity Services).

PACER staff has conducted several activities focused on helping implementation sites build their capacity to engage and support culturally diverse youth in MN DEI programs. Activities this past quarter included May 12 and June 3 focus groups for Latino youth in the Mankato area, and a May 20 webinar for DEI field staff and their community stakeholders conducted by PACER multicultural specialists who shared their experiences working with Minnesota Somali and Latino families. An archived version of the webinar is now available from PACER's website at <http://www.pacer.org/webinars/archive-listing.asp>

PACER staff has worked with DRCs in the regions to schedule workshops focusing on the transition needs of youth with mental health disabilities. These workshops are scheduled for September and October 2014.

Obstacles/Barriers to Grant Implementation, if applicable:

The State DEI team and DRCs in the pilot areas are continuing to look for creative ways to market the Employment Network (EN) services to Ticket Holders since Minnesota's Government Data Practices Act does not allow the DEED EN to conduct an e-data share with SSA/Maximus.

Other Significant Accomplishments:

Minnesota submitted a request to DOL/ETA in February 2014 to modify the grant to include more flexibility for the implementation sites to support the development of a job-driven system. The modification was approved in late April with an effective date of 7/1/14 and will allow the local sites to offer opportunities such as on-the-job training, private sector internships, apprenticeships, project-based learning, service learning, field study/practicums, individual training accounts, and mentorship to appropriate DEI participants when other resources are not available.

A total of 215 youth have been enrolled into DEI project activities since August 1, 2013. The project goal is to enroll 225 by the end of the second year so the pilot sites are on track to meet

this target. Sixty percent (129) of DEI participants are enrolled in WIA; the others are enrolled in other programs such as the Minnesota Youth Program, Minnesota Family Investment Program (TANF), and Youthbuild. The most common primary disabilities of those enrolled are emotional or behavioral disorder (31%), autism spectrum disorder (21%), and specific learning disability (21%). Sixty-seven percent (67%) of participants have not yet earned a high school diploma. MN DEI participants face challenges to completing their education and finding employment in addition to their disabilities: 45% are from families receiving public assistance; 19% are youth offenders; 10% are pregnant or parenting youth; 10% are foster youth; 9% are high school dropouts; 7% are homeless or runaway youth; and 64% are basic skills deficient.

Interim indicators of participant success are promising: to date 61% of DEI participants have attained work readiness or educational goals as described in their Individual Service Strategy; 32% have received academic credit or service learning credit; 22% have obtained a high school diploma, GED, certificate or degree; 15% have entered post-secondary education, occupational or vocational skills training or apprenticeship; and 20% have entered the military or unsubsidized employment.

Data for the DEI evaluation is being sent on a quarterly basis to Altarum Institute. The state DEI team participated in the year two evaluation interview with Rob Bartolotta from Social Dynamics on May 21.

Sixteen Tickets have been assigned to the DEED Employment Network as a result of the DEI project (twelve from RMCEP, two from MVAC, and two from WDI). The DEED EN has a Partnership Plus agreement in place with VRS to coordinate services for Ticket Holders also being served by VRS. The Partnership Plus agreement has not yet resulted in assignment of any Tickets to the DEED EN or revenue. The EN has submitted a request for payment on one Ticket Holder who achieved the first milestone and expects to receive a payment of \$1,335 for this milestone.

RMCEP is in the process of finalizing a limited-use vendor contract (up to \$20,000 annually) with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) to provide work incentive planning/benefits planning services within the RMCEP areas along with underserved service areas that border RMCEP's area. This fee for service concept is intended to expand benefits planning services in the rural Minnesota area. Revenue from this service will be used to sustain and expand services for those whose disability is a barrier to employment.

The South Central/MVAC DRC has completed the Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC) Initial Training through VCU and has received provisional certification with the goal of becoming fully certified in March of 2015.

One of the State Co-Leads attended the National DEI Exchange in Indianapolis in June. This was a great opportunity to network with other state leads and DRCs and to learn from others' experiences. The State Lead has shared the presentations and information from this meeting with the Minnesota DRCs who were unable to attend due to schedule conflicts.

State DEI team members conducted on-site reviews of the agreements with PACER Center and

Minnesota Department of Education, and South Central and Southeast implementation sites in June and July 2014. The review of Rural MN CEP is occurring in August 2014.

Minnesota's DEI project will be highlighted at the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals' (NAWDP) Youth Symposium in Chicago September 22-24, 2014. The State Co-Lead and three DRCs will be sharing information about the Partners for Youth Project and the successes and challenges encountered as the grant is implemented.

For this grant reporting period, please describe the development of any DEI products and/or materials (include electronic copies as separate attachments with your report, if available):

Activity reports and updated work plans describing the second year activities of the three implementation sites are posted to the MN DEI website: <http://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/index/disability-employment-initiative/index.jsp>.

The State DEI team developed a data summary tool for the three pilot sites to report DEI participant demographic data and interim performance on a quarterly basis. This will be helpful for reviewing the progress of the project and achievements of participants in addition to WIASRD performance data following WIA program exit. The report template is attached along with the first report of data for the period 8/1/13 through 6/30/14.

Short-term Grant Goals (three - six months):

- Continue outreach and enrollment of DEI participants to reach a total of 225 participants by the end of the second year and 360 participants by the end of the grant
- Continue to identify members for Integrated Resource Teams (IRT) and facilitate IRT meetings
- Continue outreach to Ticket Holders and increase assignment of Tickets to the DEED EN
- Begin to generate income from Ticket to Work milestone and outcome payments for assigned Tickets
- Continue to provide TtW/EN technical assistance and guidance for local implementation sites
- Continue trainings for local implementation site staff based on the work plan and Needs Assessment Survey results
- Continue to develop partnerships that support the goals and strategies of the MN DEI project
- Issue final allocation of funding to pilot sites based on approved work plans
- Identify strategies for sustainability of grant activities in the implementation sites and replication in other regions of the state following the end of the grant in September 2015

Outstanding Questions:

None at this time.

**MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE
DATA SUMMARY**

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION		
WSA: All Three Pilot Sites	Contact: Lynn Douma, State DEI Co-Lead	
Phone #: 651-259-7536	E-mail Address: Lynn.Douma@state.mn.us	
Time Period for Report (Cumulative): 8/1/2013-6/30/2014		
PARTICIPANT SUMMARY INFORMATION (CUMULATIVE)		
Total Participants Served		215
Gender	A. Male	59%
	B. Female	41%
Age	A. 14 – 15	3%
	B. 16 – 17	36%
	C. 18	26%
	D. 19 – 21	31%
	E. 22 - 24	5%
Ethnicity / Race	A. Hispanic/Latino	5%
	B. American Indian or Alaska Native	5%
	C. Asian or Pacific Islander	3%
	D. Black or African American	7%
	E. White	82%
Primary Disability	A. Autism Spectrum Disorder	21%
	B. Deaf or Hard of Hearing	1%
	C. Deaf-Blind	0%
	D. Developmental Cognitive Disability	10%
	E. Emotional or Behavioral Disorder	31%
	F. Physically Impaired	7%
	G. Developmental Delay	1%
	H. Specific Learning Disability	21%

**MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE
DATA SUMMARY**

	I. Speech or Language Impairment	0%
	J. Traumatic Brain Injury	2%
	K. Visual Impairment	0%
	L. Other Health Impairment	5%
Education Level	A. 8 th grade and under	0%
	B. 9 th Grade – 12 th Grade	67%
	C. High School graduate or equivalent	25%
	D. Post-Secondary Education	8%
Other Demographics	A. Limited English Proficient	4%
	B. Youth From Families Receiving Public Assistance	45%
	C. Foster Youth	10%
	D. High School Drop-Out	9%
	E. Youth Offender	19%
	F. Pregnant or Parenting Youth	10%
	G. Basic Skills Deficient	64%
	H. Homeless or Runaway Youth	7%
	I. Not Employed at Program Enrollment	62%
PROGRAM SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND OTHER RELATED ASSISTANCE		
A. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 1: School-Based Preparatory Experiences	79%	
B. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 2: Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences	99%	
C. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 3: Youth Development and Leadership	84%	
D. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 4: Connecting Activities	89%	
E. Participated in Activities Related to Guidepost 5: Family Involvement and Supports	80%	
F. Participated in Integrated Resource Team (IRT)	73%	
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE		
A. Attained Work Readiness or Education Goals in ISS	61%	
B. Received Academic Credit or Service Learning Credit	32%	

**MINNESOTA DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE
DATA SUMMARY**

C. Remained in School or Dropout Returned to School	47%
D. Obtained High School Diploma, GED, Certificate or Degree	22%
E. Entered Post Secondary Education, Vocational/Occupational Skills Training, or Apprenticeship	15%
F. Entered Military or Unsubsidized Employment	20%
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	
A. Number of participants rating experience as "Excellent"	Not yet available
B. Number of participants rating experience as "Very Good"	Not yet available
C. Number of participants rating experience as "Average"	Not yet available
D. Number of participants rating experience as "Below Average"	Not yet available
E. Number of participants rating experience as "Poor"	Not yet available
F. Total Number of Surveys Completed	Not yet available