

TO: Youth Council

DATE: 12/08/04

FROM: Youth Council Staff

For Action

For Information

For Discussion

SUBJECT: Youth Programs Oversight Working Group

PROPOSED MOTION(S): Establish a working group to provide oversight for WIA youth programs – out-of-school and younger youth.

DISCUSSION: The history of Merced County older youth programs has caused concern within the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and the Youth Council about the health of the present program. The WIB Finance Committee is presently looking at both contracts on a monthly basis. The Youth Council reviews the contracts quarterly through the Quarterly Reports.

The creation of a contract oversight working group, with program information produced by Youth Council staff, has been requested. The focus is to be the out-of-school program. The working group would meet monthly or as required.

ATTACHMENT:

Analysis of Youth Programs (sent to WIB Executive Committee, November 16, 2004).

The November 29th Executive Committee has been cancelled. Mr. Headding has asked that you be informed of the following:

1. Youth Programs Update

EMPOWER – Contract calls for up to 313 WIA eligible youth, ages 17-21, to be served in a 12 month program ending June 30, 2005 at a cost not to exceed \$875,000. The recent “High Concentrations of Youth” subgrant will add up to 35 new participants from the Juvenile Justice system at a cost of an additional \$70,000. The EMPOWER program is the 11th largest out-of-school program in California.

Total number of active participants: 198

Total number of participants in follow-up: 173

Number of exits (Jul – Sep): 45

Enrollment in program components:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| • Adult Basic Ed, GED, HS Diploma | 20 |
| • Career Technical Training | 29 |
| • Workshop II | 8 |
| • Work Experience | 14 |
| • Unsubsidized Employment | 40 |
| • Case Management | 87 |

Program Positives

- Recruitment continues at high levels
- The program continues to positively evolve and its basic structure is proving to be sound
- The number of active Arbor and JCG clients is now approximately 50% of the program. Of the participants found after the closure of JCG, most have been re-assessed and had new program plans started.
- The cost per participant is going down. ARBOR was \$5600+, JCG \$5000, and MCOE is now \$2000+. Reasons are experience and the amount of leverage MCOE has with its resources.
- MCOE PLATO labs are now open in Merced and Los Banos.
- MCOE has contracted with Merced College to provide “Thrive and Survive in the Workplace” to all EMPOWER participants.

Program Concerns

- Performance measures for the program are lagging. MCOE inherited JCG’s performance, in addition to not being able to locate over 75 of the inherited JCG clients. In this past year’s exits, 38% of the hard exits were youth who could not be located after JCG closed.
 - Corrective actions for MCOE include (1) one-on-one training of case managers in performance, (2) all exits are now reviewed by WI, (3) the use of a locally recognized credential is maximized through the program design.

- Other areas in need of attention (Source – WI Monitoring Report Nov 12, 2003 – Feb 24, 2004).
 - Reconciliation of enrollment activity information with the State's JTA system
 - Development of MCOE internal monitoring procedures
 - Development of the EMPOWER OJT program

In summary, the Out-of-School program is serving Merced County's needs. Training will be given in Performance Measures, Internal Monitoring, and Exit Strategies. An OJT manager has been hired and is developing the OJT program.

Younger Youth – Youth Opportunity Program: Contract calls for up to 520 WIA eligible youth, ages 14-18, to be served in a 12 month program ending June 30, 2005 at a cost not to exceed \$1,624,000. This program is the 6th largest younger youth program in California.

Total number of active participants: 256
 Total number of exits (Jul-Sep): 210

Program Positives

- Program exceeds all performance measures
- New enrollments are underway. Emphasis is on enrollment from the Junior class
- Summer work experience was successfully completed by 300 students

Program Concerns

- Past program lead instructor left. New program lead instructor is running both younger and out-of-school programs, and younger youth program is running on past momentum. WI is providing technical assistance to help establish new leadership.
- While new enrollments are on-going, the process is running slower this year. There are several new case managers. Program Director, Holly Newlon, is aware and taking management steps to enhance the enrollment process.
- Training is required for new staff in the areas of performance measures, low-income eligibility verification, and internal monitoring procedures.

In summary, the YOP younger youth program continues to serve Merced County youth's needs. Training is being conducted one-on-one with case managers on program performance measures, the JTA state computer tracking system, and eligibility criteria for enrollment.