

Debbie/Capacity Building group recommendations:

YEAR ONE

1. That a comprehensive workforce system be established and built upon over time. This would be accomplished by supporting and making available a wide range and tiered system of professional development and technical assistance for providers of services to individuals with disabilities (including educators) across the state. The professional development should be accessible and affordable with the goal of assuring a common foundational level of knowledge and skill in the following topic areas:
 - Strategic planning for agencies to address conversion of services
 - Innovative funding strategies to support an array of employment options including blending, braiding and amalgamating funding using strategies such as resource ownership, business within a business, and using SSA work incentives like PASS plans for job creation.
 - Whole life supports—wrapping a supports package around an individual that includes employment and inclusive community supports
 - Career Planning and Discovering Personal Genius™
 - Information on SSA work incentives and using work incentives
 - Customized Employment
 - Job development and job carving
 - Strategies to negotiate with employers
 - Financial literacy, financial planning, asset development and economic empowerment
 - Evidence-based Individual Placement Supports and integration of employment into the ACT teams
2. That professional development and technical assistance be required for all providers that creates a culture of supportive employment for all
3. That an Employment First 101 curriculum be designed and made widely available in multiple formats to provide a values-based and foundational introduction to the concept that everyone can work. EF 101 should be required for case managers, educators, and policymakers and recommended for individuals with disabilities, parents and board members.

4. That a job coach credential be established and added to the career ladder of Maine's employment support providers. Training for this credential must be accessible and affordable and jointly recognized by the Maine Departments of Education, Labor and Health & Human Services.
5. That the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services investigates their ability to adopt a policy of presumptive eligibility for individuals on all of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers.
6. That the use of sub-minimum wage certificates (14c in the Fair Labor Standards Act) be phased out and eventually eliminated in Maine. (Voted and passed at November Coalition Meeting)
7. That the Maine Department of Health & Human Services' Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services work in collaboration with MaineCare to submit a 1915(i) waiver. (Voted and Passed at November Coalition Meeting)
8. That a mentoring program be designed and delivered to support agency leadership in their transformation.
9. That provider agencies, at least annually, post a "Report Card" that identifies the number of individuals served, the number of individuals employed, the number of hours worked and wages earned.

Kim – Legislative and Policy Work Group Year One

Legislation (First two voted on and passed during November Meeting)

- A. Phase out the use of sub-minimum wage provisions in Maine's service system.
- B. Develop 1915 (i) waiver opportunity for Maine mental health consumers.
- C. Policy/Rules

- Promote a message, from the Commissioners of DHHS, DOL, and DOE, and from management at funded service provider agencies, advocating a strong Employment First orientation.

D. Other initiatives

- Develop and promote resources on customized employment, highlighting successful employment outcomes.
- Develop and promote resources for families regarding proper transition services, what good transition should look like, and how to conduct strong career goal setting.

Data Work Group

Year 1 Recommendations

- DHHS, DOL and DOE will collaborate to create and initiate a plan to address improvement in uniform data collection related to employment as the first and preferred option in service delivery.
- Data work group will utilize existing data sources to inform other EF work groups and align efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Employment First Maine.
- Data work group will identify initial data markers that can and will be used to measure implementation of the Employment First Maine.

Transition group recommendations: Year One

1. That the various State agencies formalize a process for working together to develop transition protocols based on best practice that are most likely to lead to employment.
2. That mechanisms be developed to ensure that collaboration among state agencies is implemented at all levels and especially at the practitioner level.
3. That resources be repurposed or new ones developed in order to conduct the work of transition planning and implementation.

Lisa/Business Engagement group recommendations:

Year 1 Provide increased support to Businesses that include resources, tools and access to information on Accessibility, Accommodations, Electronic Applicant Screening, Disclosure and other areas as identified by business

- In order to have ongoing, updated information readily available to all businesses.

Year 1 Provide a Business to Business platform that engages and shares information, resources and strategies that have been effective in a Business

- Continued financial support **beginning July 1st, 2015** to efforts such as The Maine Business Leadership Affiliate established in 2010 that provides a mechanism for business to support one another
- In order to promote more businesses hiring employees with disabilities

Year 2 Re-commit Maine as a Model Employer with an Updated Executive Order

- In order to bring new focus to Maine State Governments commitment to hiring employees with disabilities

Year 1, 2 and 3 Increased focus about Business as a Customer in the Employment First Initiative and across all DOL, DHHS and DOE initiatives

- Allow for Business Consultant roles within State Offices that provide support and services directly to a Business engaging in disability hiring initiatives
- Implementation of new WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act Employer Section
- Improves Services to Employers and Promotes Work-Based Training: WIOA contributes to economic growth and business expansion by ensuring the workforce system is job-driven – matching employers with skilled individuals.

Year 2, 3A coordinated Educational/Marketing approach to Businesses about the benefits of engaging a diverse workforce that includes employees with all abilities.

- In order to share consistent information, practices and approaches based in best employment practices.
- Utilize Maine stories that show outcomes.
- Across all DOE, DHHS, DOL offices that engage with businesses.