

## Bennington CORE Team minutes

January 2, 2020

Tiffany Zwinge (YES), Darcy Oakes (CCV), Kay Greenwood (LLC YES), Caitlin Harrington (YDP Bennington), Diane Torres (LLC CC/Young Adult VRC), Kurt Austin (MAUHS IDEALS SpEd/CM), Eric Webster (Adult VRC), Jen Moore (WBL teacher MAUHS), Will Pendlebury (Reg Mgr VR Benn/Rutland), Deb Munoz (LiCSW MAUHS), Kara Haynes (VR TC via phone)

### Agenda

#### Agency introductions and updates

- **Darcy Oakes - CCV** - offering Intro to College & Careers in the spring – free class; great for students even if they are not interested in going to college; time management, networking, soft skills; begins first week of February; anyone from 8<sup>th</sup> graders through HS (some young adults) fill out CCV HS application and Darcy will receive it. **J-term** – Jan 10-12<sup>th</sup> spreadsheet class for anyone to take.
- **Kurt Austin - MAUHS IDEALS** – serve many students with social difficulties and cognitive challenges; many students have been connected with DCF at some point; students need to be connected to more community resources to create a well-rounded support system.
  - Also requested the group share any known opportunities for summer activities
  - Tutorial Center looking to work with local resources such as VR to have things to engage in
    - Darcy – Governor’s Institute – week to 10 day long events
      - Sliding scale cost depending on family income
      - Housed on college campuses
      - Meals included
      - Hands on construction career based interests to astronomy and physics, music, drawing, STEM
      - Winter weekends in February as well as summer
      - Came to Workforce and Ed – Bennington sends the fewest students in the state
      - Online application – if it doesn’t work, don’t let that be the barrier; reach out to the contact in guidance office
      - If parent doesn’t want to upload financial information, letters could be used
      - Darcy will reach out about presenting at a future CORE team meeting
        - Kay – ask about accommodations
        - Darcy stated they attract people from all over the world with different abilities and disabilities so good opportunity

- Kurt – more about matching the students with the right opportunity based on their interests
  - Darcy – many years ago individuals were sent to Governor’s Institute with a personal care aide and they had wonderful experiences. Not sure if they still do that, but it’s worth looking into and pooling resources to assist.
- **Deb Munoz – Social Worker @ IDEALS** – exciting time to work with individuals who are invested in helping students
- **Tiffany Zwinge** - beginning to plan the Resource Fair for spring, planning session tomorrow @ 9 a.m. Everyone is welcome to join. Didn’t have one last year and are hoping to have a good turnout this year.
  - Deb mentioned the HS is a possibility for hosting
  - Kurt said Kara Haynes, TC, has the most up to date testing and conflict days for scheduling purposes

**Detailed referral and program presentation from Caitlin Harrington of the Youth Development Program (YDP)**

- Handouts – brochures with Caitlin’s contact info; newsletter with youth stories and testimonies, artwork, etc.
- Works with individuals how have been or are in DCF custody – any questions reach out to Caitlin
  - If youth involved leave DCF custody prior to age18, still eligible for case management services until age 24.
  - If youth in custody after age 14-15 and remains in custody to age 16 they are eligible for YDP funding
    - YDP funding can include but is not limited to learner’s permit, interview/work clothes, cell phone to assist with work (initial 3-6 months), help youth supporting or building supports with family including train and plane tickets, making referrals to community resources such as VocRehab, housing (BROC) and youth finding independent housing including applying for appropriate vouchers
    - Work with individuals up until 23<sup>rd</sup> bday
    - YDP in every district in VT – if youth moves, they can be referred/transferred/reconnected in current district
  - Newsletter created by youth group called Forward
    - Talk about change they’d like to see for youth in DCF
    - Helped pass the normalcy bill – gives foster parents more rights to make decisions for the children without having to go through the case worker
    - Worked on advocacy
    - Share experiences of being in foster care and to feel they aren’t alone in their situation
  - Caitlin passed around a financial form for the group to look at
    - Cat A Agreement – when youth turns 18 and hasn’t graduated yet, they can choose to stay connected to DCF, youth can choose to stay with foster family and DCF will continue to fund foster family

- Cat B - Can stay with foster family even after graduation and YDP will take over a daily stipend to help family with costs
  - Cat C – supporting relationships, cell phones, clothing, basics needs such as medication co-pays
- Will – how many students are served in the Bennington area?
  - 25-30 but varies
  - Some are more involved than others
  - If youth is at risk for homelessness, the intensity of time spent will increase
  - Not always consistent caseload based on need
- Darcy – housing over breaks while attending college seems to be a challenge
  - YDP could help troubleshoot what scenario looks like
  - If foster home is a possibility to go back to on breaks, YDP can assist
  - Can't pay for hotels/motels
  - College of St. Joseph used to allow students to stay over breaks including summer, but school closed
- Kurt – several students in DCF custody whether with foster family or kinship placement. How does referral work?
  - Send directly to Caitlin
  - Housed within DCF
  - Regular check-ins with DCF
- Kurt - Is that a good conversation to have with the DCF case worker to see if student has been referred to YDP?
  - Yes
- Deb – what about the students that transferred in from Brattleboro and northern VT?
  - Caitlin suggested making the referral; she hasn't heard of any from out of town
  - Caitlin said students fall under the radar when moving around especially as they get older
  - She also works with Bennington School for Girls, which include many girls from out of the area
- Kurt – working with VR/VABIR regularly alongside teenagers promotes trust and willingness for them to work with outside organizations. Would Caitlin be willing to come to school to meet with students/families to start that meeting time alongside VR/VABIR
  - Caitlin said she works outside the office most of the time
  - Caitlin emphasizes she's employed by Sunrise Family Center, not DCF, in case they don't have a good relationship with their case worker
- Will – What's the difference between UCS JOBS and YDP.
  - Eligibility requirements are different
  - JOBS is focused specifically on employment
  - YDP is broader in terms of eligibility
  - Students can work with YDP even if they're already working
- Kurt – Do you see the students more over the summer? School staff is a constant presence during the school year, but educators worry about the students during summer and after graduation. Are there summer camps or programming for students?

- Yes if the need is there and they want to meet more over the summer.
- Some may go on more vacations with family/foster families – in those cases she’s not as involved
- Caitlin is supposed to focus on transition age youth (Jrs/Srs) – they should be a priority in her case load
- If students have specific interests, bring it to Caitlin and she can work on it
- Work with local camps including CRJ (don’t need to be connected with CRJ to attend)
- Kurt – invited to IEP meetings? Attend them?
  - Have attended them in the past
  - Tries to attend team meetings
  - Doesn’t always get involved due to DCF case loads

### Case consultations

None presented today

### Feedback on the meeting (what went well, what should we change, etc.)

- Kara - The phone worked
- Tiffany - Most productive meeting so far this school year
- Kurt – helpful to see what is available in the community
- Other schools send representatives?
- Making sure info is relayed to other educators who are not here
  - Tiffany will relay info to V-19 on Monday
  - Kara sends out email to everyone on CORE team list
- Resource list?
  - Kara – state level talk about building website with local information through Vermont Family Network (VFN)

Next meeting will be Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup> @ 2:30 p.m. @ CCV

Potential presentation from Job Corps or GIV.



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Youth Summit 120519support summary & c