

**State Rehabilitation Council
to the
New York State
Commission for the Blind**

**Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2020-2021**

Introduction

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), for the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) is pleased to issue its Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 to Governor Kathy Hochul and Commissioner Carol Dobak of the Rehabilitation Services Administration. This report includes a discussion of the Council's activities during FY 2020-2021 and plans for upcoming FY 2021-2022.

The SRC ("the Council") is an advisory body mandated by Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The nature and scope of the Council's deliberations and recommendations include NYSCB policies, procedures, and operations as they may affect participants of or applicants for agency services statewide. Additionally, the SRC assists in the development of federally required State plans and annual updates to those plans. Much of the Council's business has been conducted in committees focusing on the NYSCB priority issues of work force development, accessibility, policy, procedure and planning, and transition to adulthood. The SRC meets four (4) times each calendar year.

The Council is comprised of members representing participants who are blind, participants with multiple disabilities, parents, disability advocacy groups (National Federation of the Blind and American Council of the Blind), the Client Assistance Program (CAP), community rehabilitation program service providers, New York State Education Department, business, industry and labor, the New York State Workforce Investment Board, Section 121 Native American Rehabilitation Programs, and New York State Independent Living Council. Ex-Officio representation on the Council includes Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) and various representatives from NYSCB who provide information and assistance as requested by the Council.

Meetings are open to the public and always include a public comment segment during which individuals are invited to provide input or bring issues of concern to the Council's attention.

Functions of the State Rehabilitation Council
(as stated in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act)

The Council shall, after consulting with the State Workforce Investment Board —

1. Review, analyze, and advise the designated State unit regarding the performance of the responsibilities of the unit under this title, particularly responsibilities related to:
 - a. eligibility (including order of selection)
 - b. the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided; and
 - c. functions performed by State agencies that affect or that potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes under this title;
2. In partnership with the designated State unit —
 - a. develop, agree to, and review State goals and priorities in accordance with section 101 (a)(15) (C); and
 - b. evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and submit reports of progress to the Commissioner in accordance with section 101(a)(15)(E);
3. Advise the designated State agency and the designated State unit regarding activities authorized to be carried out under this title, and assist in the preparation of the State plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required by this title;
 - a. To the extent feasible, conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with —the functions performed by the designated State agency
 - b. vocational rehabilitation services provided by State agencies and other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this Act; and
 - c. employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals receiving services under this title, including the availability of health and other employment benefits in connection with such employment outcomes;
4. Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Commissioner on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and make the report available to the public;
5. To avoid duplication of efforts and enhance the number of individuals served, coordinate activities with the activities of other councils within the State, including the Statewide Independent Living Council established under section 705, the advisory panel

established under section 612(a)(21) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (as amended by section 101 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997; Public Law 105-17, the State Developmental Disabilities Council described in section 124 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 6024), the State Mental Health Planning Council established under section 1914 (a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-4(a)), and the State workforce investment board;

6. Provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between the designated State agency and the Statewide Independent Living Council and centers for independent living within the state; and
7. Perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of this title, as the State Rehabilitation Council determines to be appropriate, that are comparable to the other functions performed by the Council.

Meeting Highlights and Activities for FY 2020/2021

Listed below are meeting highlights and activities for 2020/2021 including Council recommendations, public forums, and presentations.

The NYSCB SRC conducts its council business at four (4) meetings each year. The meetings are held in March, June, September, and November. During the 2020/2021 fiscal year, all meetings were held remotely using the Zoom platform due to the Covid-19 pandemic. At each of these meetings, the Council follows an agenda created and proposed by the Council's Executive Committee. A standard agenda consists of introductions, report from the Chair, report from the Associate Commissioner, presentations, public comment, committee reports, council business, and action items. The following is a brief synopsis of the SRC business for FY 2020/2021.

MEETING ONE: November 19, 2020

NYSCB updates from Brian S. Daniels, Associate Commissioner, NYSCB:

Commissioner Daniels reported that the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) 911 quarterly report was submitted on time to RSA. NYSCB is doing well with the Measurable Skills Gains. NYSCB held virtual town hall meetings with the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and American Council of the Blind (ACB) in October. Assistive Technology Centers services was a general trend. Regarding staffing, NYSCB is continuing to hire despite the hiring freeze. Interviews have been scheduled for a few positions. The next Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC) meeting is on 12/9 @ 1:00 pm. NYSCB is currently recruiting an individual to fill a seat on the MISCC. The planning for SUNY Empire State College Orientation and Mobility (O&M) and Vision Rehabilitation Teacher (VRT) certification is going well. Laura Murphy, Mike Honan, and Madison Near make up the team from NYSCB. The launch will potentially be in June 2021. The first cohort is expected to reach capacity as there will be a wide recruitment of diverse participants.

NYSCB staff are working in the field and remotely. The feedback received from the Town Halls regarding this was very positive. Darla Miller who represents the NYSCB counselor membership to the SRC, is leaving because her term has expired. Commissioner Daniels asked Darla Miller to address the group on how counseling and guidance has taken on a whole different meaning. Ms. Miller stated that technology challenges are an issue. People have gone from one extreme measure to another. It boils down to: Isolated vs. Helpful. There has been more online information, training, and connecting with others. Interpreting services online have been very successful. Visiting homes is challenging due to factors such as social distancing, mask wearing, other family members being present, and even sharing pens. Chair Fiderer asked Brian Daniels about hiring and he clarified that vacancies will be filled. In February, under the supervision of Laura Murphy, there may be a position that is directly related to COVID, food security, and the service delivery system. Chair Fiderer also asked Commissioner Daniels if he anticipates any changes to NYSCB policy changes within the new administration. He stated that if an individual is eligible to work, they are eligible for VR services. Chair Fiderer and Commissioner Daniels will have a follow up conversation. Erica Molina asked if the Commission is experiencing any barriers getting vendors approved. He explained that NYSCB puts in a request, lists priorities, Department of Budget (DOB) will approve and release funds to use as it is appropriate. NYSCB uses these funds by prioritizing and for extra payments. The most recent release of money was two million dollars and there should not be any payment issues.

Home Office Updates from Julie Hovey AVRC, Peter Herrig, AVRC, Julie Venneman, AVRC, Lauren Corp, AVRC, & Laura Murphy, Outreach Coordinator:

Julie Hovey updated the SRC on Quality Assurance (QA). The team is beginning to look at remote services at our provider agencies. The team has started with one agency and will be completing two more. The QA team is conducting phone surveys with older blind and VR participants. Phone surveys will continue for the next several months. The Comprehensive Needs Assessment is beginning as well. Business Enterprise Program (BEP) is still in crisis. Only a few managers have returned. NYSCB is doing whatever they can to support them. Peter Herrig updated the SRC on placement services. He stated that services have slowed down. In 2020, NYSCB had 10 referrals and only 1 placement. Career centers continue to be closed across the state. Some virtual trainings are taking place. Before COVID, all equipment had been purchased and delivered to the career centers. Business engagement is on hold and is hoping to re-engage for spring. Regarding Supported Employment, he is looking into the internal process. Erica Molina asked Peter Herrig if Supported Employment services are only in person and Peter said that some services went ahead remotely, however the nature of a job coach and work site deem difficult. Julianne Venneman provided the group with a timeline about RSA: visited NYSCB home office in May

2018, their report was received in August 2019, NYSCB submitted a quarterly to RSA on October 30, 2020 and is waiting for their response. The Corrective Action Plan (CAP) items have been delayed due to COVID. Since new staff have taken this project over at RSA, NYSCB meets with them on a quarterly basis. NYSCB is out of baseline reporting for 1 of the 6 Common Performance Measures under WIOA. To be sure we continue to capture and report all training to staff is being developed and provided in the next few weeks. NYSCB has signed a contract for a new case management system. Eventually, NYSCB will be seeking input from outside vendors. Lauren Corp reported working on approving programs. Pre-Employment and Pre-Voc programs initially were in-person but switched to remote programming. The feedback is positive. She is currently working on guidelines to be posted on website, including residential guidelines. There are currently 13 or so that were submitted that need a contract. She is putting together a guide for counselors and vendors, and a low vision guide is in the works. Laura Murphy informed the SRC that NYSCB brochures were recorded in studio by Maria Mucaria and are being edited. A Public Service Announcement (PSA) was also submitted to newspapers. Also, a NYSCB newsletter is distributed to NYSCB staff monthly with updates on everything that is occurring within offices and staff.

Public Comment: There was no public comment at this meeting.

Plan for Future Meetings, Deb Fiderer, SRC Chair:

Dates are based on the 3rd Thursdays, quarterly- March 18th, June 17th, September 23rd, November 18th. NYSCB Liaison will send out meeting notices and will be conducted via Zoom. Commissioner Daniels stated that potential return to face to face meetings will be revisited after June 2021. Some topics that the SRC would like to have addressed include Carrie Laney for Preferred Source Provider (PSP) updates on strategic planning, continued support for the MISCC and having representation, Kevin Smith has retired from State ED and revisiting the Test of Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), any input on support for BEP, jobs on SUNY campuses, partnering in BEP, voting accessibility and working with NYSILC, session on needs assessment, update on remote services, COVID related issues, Center for Assistive Technology for parents and students, navigating adult services.

Disability Resource Coordinators and their experiences during the pandemic: Maria Lombardi, DRC at Hempstead Works, Mary McLaughlin, DRC at Tompkins County Workforce NY, Kathy DeAngelo, DRC CDO Workforce & Alan Sessions, DRC at CDO:

This group of representatives from Career Centers across the state presented on their experiences during the pandemic. A PowerPoint presentation was given to the SRC prior to meeting. This was a very informative session about their experiences developing remote services and, in particular, the Your Dream, Your Team program for job seekers with disabilities in New York State.

Committee Reports:

Transition- Chris Kchao has stepped down from the SRC. No update for committee currently per Lauren Corp.

Workforce Development- No updates as they have not met, Chair Fiderer will send goals.

Policy, Planning and Technology- Cliff Perez reported that the committee did meet. They went over goals regarding intake materials for the library. This is almost complete after editing is done. After

editing, they will be placed on cartridges. They are also working on the Literacy Act regarding braille. Possible plan to have someone come and present to the council. The Procurement Act is being worked on as well. Brian asked that voting accessibility be put on the agenda.

SRC membership discussion, Debbie Fiderer, Chair and SRC:

An outline was provided on how a potential member gets appointed: obtain a resume for a vacancy, resume goes to counsel's office for review, once approved, resume goes to OCFS Commissioner's office, and finally sent to the Governor's appointment's office. Commissioner Daniels and the SRC Liaison, Tracy Breslin, have been involved in emails and conversations. Both are hopeful that there will be more updates in 2021. Chair Fiderer asked members of the SRC, who are interested, to draft a letter to the Governor's office. Theresa Drum made a motion to write a letter asking how we can help on moving appointments forward in a timely manner and Cliff Perez seconded. Members voted and all were in favor.

Agency updates from Members, SRC: Chair Fiderer reported that HKNC is conducting both remote and in-person services. They are hoping to continue with this for as long as possible. In terms of the in-person services, they will continue but possibly preparing for another shut down. Theresa Drum informed everyone that there will be a webinar held on 12/1/2020 from 6-8 pm from a behavioral specialist regarding holiday stress.

MEETING TWO: March 18, 2021

NYSCB updates from Brian S. Daniels, Associate Commissioner, NYSCB:

Commissioner Daniels informed the SRC that since the last meeting, several potential new members are working with the Governor's Office of Appointments. The New York state-run vaccine sites have brought forth many accessibility issues such as scheduling an appointment with JAWS. NYSCB will be working with the vendor directly on correcting this issue. There are also issues of transportation and accessibility at the site. Commissioner Daniels stated that Meghan Parker's advocacy has been monumental. NYSCB is also working closely with the NYS Office of the Aging as well. Preferred format options for the literature should be available at these sites (i.e., vaccine information, pamphlets, etc.).

Home Office Updates from Julie Hovey AVRC, Peter Herrig, AVRC, Julie Hovey AVRC, & Laura Murphy, Outreach Coordinator:

Julie Hovey reported that a study analysis using NYSCB's Case Management System and 5 studies are being conducted for the Comprehensive Needs Assessment. NYSCB is looking for volunteers who have experience with Braille to participate in a focus group. NYSCB is looking at people's experiences with braille and the impact braille has on their level of success. Ms. Hovey asked the SRC members to help identify any interested volunteers. She is looking for individuals who have studied braille in the last 5 years (but can be longer). Anyone interested in participating can email directly at Julie.Hovey@ocfs.ny.gov. Quality Assurance continues to do remote services reviews.

Peter Herrig updated the SRC on Career Centers and possible re-opening in the next few months. He also reported out for Julianne Venneman and Lauren Corp in their absence. Julie Venneman is working with Libera on a new database system. This should be launched in 2022 and she is currently developing sub-groups to help with the project. Ms. Venneman continued working with the Corrective

Action Plan and has been meeting with RSA on a weekly basis. Lauren Corp is working on the 2021 Pre-College program. Both programs will be remote at LeMoyne and Manhattanville. She is also involved in the Work Experience Trainings.

Laura Murphy reported that all service brochures from NYSCB are updated and online. Maria Mucaria has recorded the brochures and once they are edited, they will be sent to the National Library and on NYSCB's website. Public Service Announcements continue to run on certain radio stations.

Voter Accessibility, Gian Pedulla, Educational Vision Services Supervisor, Staten Island and Brooklyn Districts 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 31, 32, and Grover Cleveland HS:

Mr. Pedulla presented on his experience with Voter Accessibility. It was very informative and gave members perspective on how voting sites differ in New York.

Public Comment: There was no public comment at this meeting.

Committee Reports:

Workforce Development: Debbie Fiderer reported on a few topics: communicating with NYSDOL career centers and finding out when rehiring of the workforce will take place, looking into work experiences for younger individuals this summer and individuals not having access to interviews remotely. There have also been issues with individuals passing Artificial Intelligence screenings as part of the interviewing process for many companies.

Transition Committee: There are no updates at this time, as they have not met.

Policy, Planning, Procedures with Assistive Technology: There are no updates at this time, as they have not met.

Navigating Services, Tonia Weichmann, Transition Coordinator/Project Coordinator at Parent Network of WNY Buffalo/Niagara:

Tonia presented on how to access Community Based services for children & adults with disabilities.

Agency updates from Members, SRC:

Theresa Drum updated the group that her agency is partnering with St. Mary's College on transition services. The sessions will be held remotely.

Talia Santiago informed the SRC that DRNY has a new hire and that she has started a podcast in Spanish.

Debbie Fiderer was pleased to announce that HKNC was part of a short film called "Feeling Through" and it has been nominated for an Oscar. It can be viewed at www.feelingthrough.com

MEETING THREE: June 17, 2021

NYSCB updates, Brian S. Daniels, Associate Commissioner of NYSCB: Commissioner Daniels thanked Debbie Fiderer for her continued leadership. He also congratulated Virgil Amaral on his

appointment to the SRC and his representation as the new Vice Chair for the State Committee of Blind Vendors. Additional appointments are in process with the Governor's office. This includes hold overs, successors and so on. OCFS and NYSCB continue to return to more in person operations in June and even more in July. NYSCB is committed to sustaining services. NYSB is hoping to be fully back to the office in person by September 2021. State Committee of Blind Vendors met in person and Quality Assurance will meet in person at Lighthouse Guild in June. Counselors are meeting participants face to face as well. There are some services that cannot be conducted remotely. NYSCB has been receiving applications for our new VRT/O&M program It is a 9-month cohort to start in September and end in May. Through Empire State College, individuals will earn credits that are halfway to an associate degree and as well as personal experience. Town halls will be in the coming months. There are also two Pride events scheduled with 5 advisors, NYSCB staff and partner agencies. We are hoping that in 6 months we will have practice models for LGBTQ+. Carrie Laney resigned from New York State Preferred Source Program for People who are Blind (NYSPSP), in March and Tim Fiore has been managing in her place. There are interviews set at the end of the month for her successor.

Home Office Updates, Julie Hovey AVRC, Peter Herrig, AVRC, Julie Venneman, AVRC, Lauren Corp, AVRC, & Laura Murphy, Outreach Coordinator:

Julie Hovey stated the Needs assessment surveys are being conducted by telephone and staff surveys.

Peter Herrig reported Career centers are slowly opening and NYSCB is encouraging staff to re-engage with the centers. Training is also taking place for staff for self-employment inventory.

Julianne Venneman reported a training was completed on measurable skills gain for staff. NYSCB's new case management system is anticipated to go live in late 2022. There will be a demonstration for contract agencies and NYSCB staff in August. 33 Workgroups are being created for the new system. Agency staff will be able to provide input as well.

Lauren Corp- Precollege programs are virtual this year and there are 32 participants. 18 are attending Manhattanville and 14 attending Lemoyne. It is a 4-week program that runs from 7/10-8/6/21. Most socialization programs have been running in-person.

Laura Murphy- Thanked Maria Mucaria for her help with recording of NYSCB brochures.

Public Comment: There was no public comment at this meeting.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Manager's Experiences during the Pandemic, Virgil Amaral, SRC:

Virgil Amaral informed the SRC about the happenings of BEP managers during the pandemic. He reported that Managers have come together to help one another to find solutions. BEP staff and counselors have done well to provide support to all.

Return to Work: Post COVID and Efforts to Support People with Disabilities in Downstate, Martha Jackson, Assistant Commissioner, NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities:

Martha Jackson presented on efforts by the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities to engage job seekers and employers, including NYC government, during the pandemic and to continue to support individuals in their job search efforts. A PowerPoint was provided to SRC members.

Committee Reports, SRC: There were no updates.

Hardships and Experiences of youth and young adults during the COVID-19 pandemic, Lauren Corp, AVRC & Transition Counselors:

Counselors who contributed to this discussion were Al Farias, Beth Welch, Maria Ryczek-Guy, and Iris Popkin. They discussed how some of their participants have struggled while some have overcome boundaries. Transition counselors feel that the hybrid model should be kept in place for some services as it does have its benefits.

Agency updates from Members, SRC: Theresa Drum reported that her agency is looking into conducting training and services in the community. If possible, half in person and half remote. Debbie Fiderer stated that HKNC is opening its residential facilities in August. There are currently training modules for professionals available on their website at no cost until the end of the year.

MEETING FOUR: September 23, 2021

NYSCB updates, Brian S. Daniels, Associate Commissioner, NYSCB:

Commissioner Daniels began his update by reporting the appointment and reappointments for SRC members continue to progress at the Governor's Office of Appointments. Glenn Stewart will be representing NYSCB counselors on the SRC. Chris Burke, former executive director at NABA was appointed the new Executive Director at New York State Preferred Source Program (NYSPSP). The SRC will invite him to a future meeting. The first cohort of the paraprofessional training program has begun with six students. Once the students complete their course work, they will be OM/VRT assistants. This is Commissioner Daniels final NYSCB update as he announced retirement in October.

NYSCB Home Office Staff updates: Peter Herrig, Regional Coordinator, Lauren Corp, Associate VRC, Julie Hovey, Associate VRC, Laura Murphy, Outreach Coordinator & Julianne Venneman, Associate VRC

Peter Herrig reported: There is no definite opening date for Career Centers. Upcoming refresher training on NYSCB Comprehensive Services and Placement contracts will occur in the upstate and downstate regions. A counselor in each office will be focusing on business engagement.

Julianne Venneman reported: an update was submitted to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on the remaining Corrective Action Plan (CAP) items, hoping that several items will be closed out; InFormed, the future case management system work continues with future work groups along with data mapping, and cleaning/retention. The projected date to go live is 10/2022; The most recent dashboard for program year 2020 Q4 (4/1-6/30/21) has NYSCB at a rate of 90.3% for Measurable Skills Gains, a lot of work and training was done and will continue; NYSCB held one of two open forums on 9/13, second one will be 9/27. This is a public input opportunity requirement; NYSCB will be looking for SRC comments for the November meeting; Abby Mason, VRC, will be attending the November SRC meeting as she is taking over the State Plan.

Lauren Corp updated the SRC: Pre-College program had 30 students virtually and feedback was excellent; most socialization programming had good attendance in-person and remote; Prevocational and Work Readiness programs are currently being reviewed.

Julie Hovey reported: Needs Assessment will be presented to the SRC in November; White Cane Day will be presented virtually; Remote services continue to be participant choice.

Laura Murphy reported: AmeriCorps VISTA intern will be working with NYSCB to survey participants on pandemic related issues that have not been met; The NYSCB website will have recorded versions of our brochures listed under "Publications".

Public Comment: There was no public comment at this meeting.

Election of Officers Nominating Committee

After a brief discussion, there was a motion to keep the slate of current officers until their replacements are appointed to the SRC mostly due to the delays in the appointment of new members to the SRC. Mid-year elections can occur.

Discussion of future meetings, Debbie Fiderer, Chair

Starting in March, it is optimistic that SRC meetings will be held again in-person. The November meeting will be held remotely.

TASC updates, Debbie Fiderer, Chair

The SRC discussed the announcement of an RFP by New York State Education Department (NYSED) for a new vendor to administer the High School Equivalency (HSE) exam in New York State. The SRC has a long history of advocacy on this topic due to the inaccessibility of the current TASC test for blind and low vision test takers.

After much discussion, it was decided that Debbie Fiderer will email the NYS Comptroller and a follow-up with Ruth Singer at the HSE office making both aware that the SRC has concerns regarding accessibility requirements for the new vendor and test. Theresa Drum made a motion and Meghan Parker seconded. All were in favor and a follow up email will be sent.

Committee Reports:

Workforce Development- Did not meet

Policy-Cliff Perez reported that voting accessibility is still a topic. Chancey Fleet has a group for braille readers. He wants to reach out to her about braille literacy knowledge.

Transition-Did not meet

Voter Accessibility, Brad Williams, NYSILC, Meghan Parker, SRC and Cliff Perez SRC: This presentation provided information on voter accessibility issues. Remote voting in NY is the absentee ballots. Meghan Parker stated that NFB has been working on accessibility and one idea to create braille ballots. A lawsuit is currently being pursued and the SRC will get updates as they are available.

Planned Goals and Activities for FY2020/2021: The SRC is scheduled to meet quarterly in FY 2021/2022. The quarterly meetings for 2022 are scheduled to be in person barring any ongoing safety concerns due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the Executive Committee and each of the three standing committees will meet via conference call throughout the year. The standing committees are:

Accessibility, Policy, Procedure, and Technology; Workforce Development; and Transition. Chair Fiderer will appoint the Chairs and members of each committee and will give each its charge. The Executive Committee will ensure that membership will continue to include qualified, diverse candidates to fill new positions or vacancies on the State Rehabilitation Council.

Below are several goals the Council plans to work on during the next year through its committees, in keeping with its mandated requirements.

Accessibility, Policy, Procedures, and Technology Committee

Goal 1: Work with NYSCB in their efforts to increase the focus on braille literacy among NYSCB participants. Help raise awareness among the blind community of this initiative.

Goal 2: Work with NYSCB to help raise awareness within New York State agencies of new procurement policies meant to ensure full accessibility.

Goal 3: Work with NYSCB and other disability organizations to address the mail-in voting system which is not accessible to blind individuals as well as many other different disability groups. We would like to explore other alternatives to remote voting that meets both accessibility and security needs.

Workforce Development Committee

Goal 4: Provide feedback and recommendations on training curriculum for Department of Labor workforce center staff to improve efficacy in serving the blind and visually impaired community

Goal 5: Work with NYSCB to increase successful employment outcomes for blind and visually impaired job seekers with special attention to individuals returning to the workforce post-Covid and individuals with additional disabilities who may be best served through Supported Employment services

Transition Committee

Goal 6: Identify ways to improve on the dissemination of information about transition-related programs, events, services and other area resources to participants and/or families.

Goal 7: Ensure participants and/or families remain involved and aware throughout the transition process.

Goal 8: Strategize ways to increase the participation of schools in the transition process.

Goal 9: Conduct new survey for transition counselors, using results to identify areas for improvement in the transition process and make recommendations for ensuring effective transition planning.

Goal 10: Strengthen understanding of the current landscape as it pertains to the increase in multiply-disabled participants in the system and the potential implications.

Goal 11: Identify barriers preventing transition-age youth from making effective use of technology

Other Planned Activities in FY 2021/2022

The SRC will continue to support and advise NYSCB in its collaboration with ACCES-VR to ensure full accessibility in test preparation, application, and test-taking for the high school equivalency (HSE) exam under the new NYSED vendor chosen to provide this service.

The SRC will continue to work with NYSCB to communicate and advocate with the Governor's office for an expedited pace to appoint new members and re-appoint current members to the SRC.

The SRC will re-examine its current by-laws to determine whether any amendments or restructuring may be needed.

The SRC will continue the orientation and new member training in the future at one of the four (4) yearly meetings, based on the timeliness of appointment each Fiscal Year hereafter.

In addition, the SRC will work to strengthen connections with other SRC's outside New York State, as well as with the National Coalition of SRC's and the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind.

Finally, the SRC will work with NYSCB to bring about implementation of the various recommendations made by the committees and Council as a whole. Many of the recommendations of the committees overlap with each other as well as with those of the NYSCB Executive Board. Communication and brainstorming among the members of all these bodies will further refine their recommendations, and thereby result in an across-the-board improvement in services and opportunities for New Yorkers who are blind.