

## **Youth Budget Commission Meeting**

**04/19/2021**

Minutes

Commissioners in attendance: Co-Chair Shaver, Commissioner Montorio-Archer, Commissioner Zumdahl, Commissioner Flores, Commissioner Lightford, Commissioner Cates, Commissioner Krauss, Commissioner Huelsmann, Commissioner Thompson

Others in attendance: Curt Clemons-Mosby, Eric Mayo, Paula Corrigan-Halpern, Ali Schoon, Denise Gerda, Kelly Sparks, Jennifer Butler, Claire Jones-Anderson, Leslie Cortez

### **1. Welcome/Approval of the Minutes**

Co-Chair Shaver welcomed the Commission and stated that they will do the last deep dive session today over educated, employable, and connected developmental goals. He stated that he hopes this deep dive will be helpful in moving forward to making policy recommendations. Co-Chair Shaver then reviewed the requirements for voting via proxy during Commission meetings. Commissioners must send an email to the Co-Chairs (cc'ing staff) by noon of the day of the meeting. The only person who can be a proxy is one of the Co-Chairs. He stated that Commissioners are welcome to send replacements to listen, take notes, and add to the conversation, but any formal voting proxies must be done in the prescribed manner above. He thanked the Commissioners for their understanding and asked if there were any questions. There were no questions. Curt Clemons-Mosby started a roll call and asked each Commissioner to state that they could see and hear as per pandemic virtual open meeting requirements. Commissioners Shaver, Montorio-Archer, Zumdahl, Flores, Lightford, Cates, Huelsmann, and Thompson were all present. A quorum was present. Commissioner Krauss joined later in the meeting.

Co-Chair Shaver asked the Commission for any changes to the minutes from last month or any questions. Hearing none, Co-Chair Shaver asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Zumdahl moved and Commissioner Montorio-Archer seconded. Clemons-Mosby did a roll call vote to approve the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### **2. Deep Dive Education Session—Educated, Employable, and Connected- Kelly Sparks (Consultant)**

Co-Chair Shaver stated that these deep dives will not only assist Commissioners in providing policy recommendations but will also assist us in shifting our thinking about the budget from departments to developmental goals. He introduced Kelly Sparks to lead the deep dive education session.

Sparks stated that this deep dive will be quicker than the last one because the last two developmental goals we are reviewing (Employable, Connected) are relatively smaller portions of the budget. Sparks reviewed that for fiscal year 2019, the developmental goal of Educated accounts for 54% of all investments in youth at \$3.2 billion. She stated that educated is connected with the Budgeting for Results (BFR) goal of improving school readiness and student success. Sparks noted that evidence-based funding administered by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) isn't included in this analysis because it is a foundational support and the fiscal scan focuses on supplemental investments for youth.

Sparks then reviewed the agencies that contribute investments to this goal. ISBE has the largest investment at \$2.7 billion, Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) the second largest with an investment of \$430 million, then smaller contributions by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Military Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), and University Scholarships. Sparks noted that none of these agencies have money in any other goal. Sparks reviewed that when educated is broken down by service model, 54% of investments are in treatment/intervention, 25% are in prevention, 21% are in positive youth development, and less than 1% are in rehabilitation.

Sparks then provided an overview of programs in each agency under the different service models. Under the positive youth development category, Commissioner Lightford asked if any of those agencies have scholarships or programs for youth that are entering the workforce and not college-bound. Sparks stated that this fiscal scan can't get that amount of detail but she knows that some of those departments do have workforce programs. Commissioner Lightford stated that the state isn't doing enough to support youth newly entering the workforce. She stated that this Commission can help make sure that these youth are getting workforce development services.

Paula Corrigan-Halpern responded by saying Commission staff have already discussed with researchers at Illinois State University who are working on a holistic review of workforce development in Illinois as required by recent legislation from the General Assembly to have them come present their report.

Commissioner Lightford stated that money coming in from the federal government is being spread out across 7 agencies which makes it difficult for youth to access services from disconnected agencies. She stated that there should be one agency dedicated to workforce development where youth can appropriately access what they need. Commissioner Lightford stated that the Commission can help shine a light on this deficit.

Commissioner Thompson reiterated Commissioner Lightford's statement that more can be done for youth workforce development. She discussed an issue with the community youth employment grant eligibility requirements that changed due to COVID-19 and resulted in some communities no longer being eligible for crucial support. Commissioner Lightford agreed that all of the state has been impacted and should be eligible to receive support for youth employment purposes through the grant.

Corrigan-Halpern stated that there seems to be a lot of interest in learning more about the gap in youth workforce development so she will confirm with the Illinois State researchers about doing a presentation of their report this summer or early fall.

Sparks continued to review the programs under each category including child nutrition, reimbursement for free breakfast/lunch, sexual risk avoidance education, etc. under prevention programs in the educated developmental goal. The treatment/intervention category included programs such as individuals with disabilities act, regional safe schools, Title V, etc. The rehabilitation programs under the educated developmental goal included Community Residential Services Authority which is managed by ISBE for students placed at the highest risk. Commissioner Cates asked if anyone knew where this program was located because the money allocated is minimal and she would imagine doesn't make an impact if over a large area. Sparks responded that she didn't know and Commissioner Lightford stated that it looked like a specific line item included in the budget. Commissioners continued to discuss the program and how it operates to determine if the services it provides to youth in the state is impactful. Commissioners shared links to the program in addition to contact information if individuals were interested in learning more. Multiple Commissioners stated that it is the Commission's duty to get at the root of how the budget is investing in youth, how effective it is currently, and where improvements can be recommended.

Co-Chair Shaver stated that the Commission continues to build out what the work looks like and that it is important to have these thoughtful conversations about deep issues and if the money is where it needs to be. Corrigan-Halpern stated that she thinks about workforce development issues and the seismic shifts occurring in youth rehabilitation being topics that are important for the Commission to consider; both at an eagle eye view and a microscopic view depending on the circumstances. She stated these things can be tackled in the fiscal scan, policy recommendations, or even through special reports by the Commission as needed.

Sparks next reviewed the developmental goal of Employable, which accounts for 3% of total investments in youth with \$152 million invested. She stated that Employable is connected with the BFR goal of increasing employment, and attracting, retaining, and growing businesses. Only the Illinois Department of Commerce

and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) has investments in this developmental goal with two line items in positive youth development. She stated that with the next fiscal scan, improvements have been made so that Commissioners will be able to see dual goals. Additionally, she noted that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds may be overinvested which was also noted by Corrigan-Halpern earlier.

Commissioner Flores asked for clarification on the ages for WIOA as both youth and those over the age of 25 are eligible for and use those funds. Sparks confirmed that the current data is not able to distinguish how much is being spent on youth under 25 but the parameters of the scan say that if some youth use the funds, the whole line item is included. Sparks stated that this is also the case for a few other programs like TANF. Commissioner Zumdahl stated that this is a challenge because the Commission doesn't know how those funds are being distributed by age and how that impacts the scan. Sparks stated that staff have had conversations with departments on how to get more data broken out by age. She stated that some departments/programs say that breakout is easy to do while others say that is difficult to do. Sparks said that this could be an improvement that the Commission does for next fiscal scan.

Sparks continued on to review the developmental goal of connected, which is connected to the BFR goal of strengthening cultural and environmental vitality. Investments under this goal are from the Illinois Arts Council as positive youth development programs such as arts and foreign language in schools, arts education, grants/financial assistance for visual arts, etc.

Sparks also reviewed how interconnected goals could be mapped for the next fiscal scan. Commissioner Huelsmann asked how this would be reported out. Sparks stated that the scan will show them under distinct categories first and then as overlapped goals. She clarified that none of the investments will be double counted and it is just another way to look at the data. Additionally, Sparks reacted to a comment by Commissioner Cates about whether investments are appropriately categorized for what the programs are doing for youth. She stated that staff is working with BFR to ensure that departments update their coding to reflect more accurately their investment tags.

Commissioner Cates stated that it is important to consider how normal language can help convey meaning better than bureaucratic language. She stated that we know there are youth getting lost without help in Illinois and we need to make sure money is being invested in the services that will help them the most. Sparks agreed that any suggestions about how to fix tagging language to make sense and resonate with people is important feedback. Commissioner Cates provided the example of "youth at risk" shouldn't be used anymore because it has no meaning and rather when it comes to gun violence experts speak more to kids who are likely to interact with a gun or be shot by a gun.

Sparks reiterates that at the end of May the Commission should be able to review 2020 data. Co-Chair Shaver asked if there was any additional feedback or insights that will be helpful to Sparks in preparing for next months' meeting. Sparks stated that at this point, nothing further is needed but that in May there will be a lot of discussion about how to present the data moving forward.

Co-Chair Shaver asked if Commissioners had any more questions. There were none.

### **3. Public Comment**

Co-chair Shaver opened up the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments.

### **4. New Business**

Co-Chair Shaver stated that the next Youth Budget Commission meeting is Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup> from 1:30 – 3:00 PM. He stated that there is a lot to cover during that meeting including a draft of 2020 data, legislative

updates, and a session on doing community engagement. Co-Chair Shaver concluded by saying the Commissioners will brainstorm together on how to review the data and start making recommendations.

Clemons-Mosby introduced Jennifer Butler He stated that she will be stepping into his role with the Commission as he steps back for leave. Butler thanked the Commissioners for allowing her to join and that she will do her best to guide the Commission forward.

## **5. Adjournment**

Co-Chair Shaver asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lightford motioned. Commissioner Huelsmann seconded along with Commissioner Thompson. A voice vote was conducted to adjourn the meeting and Commissioners voted unanimously to adjourn.