

Governor's Taskforce on Integrated Employment



Integrated Employment Outreach Summary Report

February 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Social Entrepreneurs, Inc., a company dedicated to improving the lives of people by helping organizations realize their potential, collected the data associated with all outreach conducted and prepared this summary report.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment (herein referred to as “Taskforce”) was established through Executive Order 2014-16 on July 21, 2014 by Governor Brian Sandoval. The Taskforce was charged with examining and evaluating current employment programs, resources, and available training and employment opportunities for individual with intellectual/developmental disabilities (referred to throughout as I/DD). The examination was meant to inform the establishment of a strategic plan that would guide efforts to create a more diversified, inclusive, and integrated workforce.

As a component of its examination, the Taskforce engaged in outreach efforts to explore areas of strengths and weaknesses within the existing system as well as opportunities to strengthen service outcomes.



Types of outreach conducted included:

- **The Alliance for Full Participation State Team Scorecard** was used to evaluate state policies, practices and strategies that impact opportunities for integrated employment.
- **Ratings of Recommendations** of the Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) Position Paper were conducted by Taskforce members.
- **Key Informant Interviews** were conducted to assess the various systems providing individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities with employment training, opportunities and supports.
- **Focus groups** with individuals and/or their parents/caregivers were facilitated to identify opportunities and challenges within the existing system.
- **Consumer Surveys** were used with key stakeholders to help describe the current situation and make recommendations for systems improvements.

This report is a summary of the outreach efforts.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the outreach, per the Executive Order, was to gather information and assess the following:

- **Student Services:** The effectiveness and any deficiencies in the existing methods for identifying students with intellectual/developmental disabilities, the implementation of vocational assessments, and the delivery of employment-related planning and training services.

- **Wage Setting Practices:** The rate setting process, means of achieving competitive wages, and strategies to address and achieve placements that are in the highest and best interest of the individual.
- **Collaborative Efforts:** Opportunities for improving collaboration and partnerships between state agencies, and private and non-profit businesses employing individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- **Funding Mechanisms:** The availability of alternative funding sources and whether the state and/or federal funds are being utilized to their fullest potential.
- **Access to Information:** Whether individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities or their families who are participating in community training centers or assisted services are provided sufficient information to make informed decisions concerning training, services, and employment opportunities, and identify recommendations for improvements or modifications to these programs or services.
- **Day Habilitation Services:** Evaluate the effectiveness, demand, and long-term need for "day habilitation" and sheltered workshops in community training centers.
- **Transitional Supports:** Current approaches and opportunities that allow families to plan for transition services in the K-12 setting.
- **Transportation:** Identify barriers and needed improvements to support transportation for consumers to individual work places.

METHODOLOGY

The following methodology was used for outreach.



STATE TEAM SCORECARD

The Alliance for Full Participation State Team Scorecard was issued to Taskforce members as well as key informants. Thirteen or 100% of Taskforce members, appointed as of January 2015, completed the scorecard between December 18, 2014 and January 25, 2015, while 12 key informants completed the scorecard either prior to or during individual interviews that took place between January 12 and February 6, 2015.



RATINGS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the NGCDD Position Paper were placed into a survey and issued to Taskforce members. The survey used a Likert scale to rate each recommendation in the NGCDD paper, with options ranging from 1 (less important) to 5 (very important). Taskforce members were also given the option of opting out of the rating with either a "Don't Know" or a "Not Applicable" response.



KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Between January 12 and January 31, 2015, 13 interviews were conducted with individuals identified by the Taskforce as having specialized knowledge about the systems that provide employment based services to Nevadans living with I/DD. Interviews took place over the telephone and lasted between 45 and 90 minutes in duration.



FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Between January 20, 2015 and February 5, 2015, 8 focus groups were conducted with consumers, caregivers, family members and advocates for persons with I/DD at locations in northern, southern and rural Nevada. Local service providers recruited participants and provided the space used to host discussions. A total of 87 individuals participated in focus group discussions.



CONSUMER SURVEYS

Surveys were issued to consumers, family members, care providers, and advocates. Surveys were distributed through the Taskforce, offering respondents the option of completing the tool either online through Survey Monkey, or in hard copy form. A total of 356 surveys were collected from stakeholders, including consumers, from across the state between January 12 and February 9, 2015.

LIMITATIONS

GEOGRAPHY OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

While 13 of Nevada's 17 counties were represented in survey responses, four counties were not represented, which limits the ability to generalize rural survey responses for all rural communities.

LANGUAGE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Approximately 25% of Nevadans are Hispanic and a significant portion of them speak English as a second language. While the survey was available in both English and Spanish, only 10 surveys were received in Spanish, so Spanish speaking consumers can be assumed to be under-represented in the survey results.

KEY INFORMANT PERSPECTIVES

Two perspectives sought via key informant interviews were those of a manufacturer and a legislator. While multiple efforts were made to several potential key informants in both categories, SEI was not able to schedule and conduct a key informant interview with an individual representing either perspective at the time of this report.

These limitations may impact the results that follow.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The summary of finding that follows presents the results of outreach conducted within three categories. The first section identifies cross-cutting themes from an analysis of all the outreach conducted. The second section presents findings according to the mandated framework of the Executive Order that established the Taskforce. The third section provides the NGCDD recommendations as rated by the Taskforce and also outlines specific recommendations that came out of the outreach efforts.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES IDENTIFIED

A number of themes emerged from an analysis of the outreach. Some themes were cross-cutting and applied to the overall population of people living with I/DD in Nevada. Other needs were specific to target populations such as those living in northern, southern, and rural/frontier areas of Nevada. While not explicitly a response to the Executive Order, these themes are likely to play a significant role in the success of any plan developed.

SHARED DEFINITION AND VISION: There is a lack of a shared definition of what competitive integrated employment is and what should be measured, and what it means to provide choice or options. Some key informants noted that employment first should be the first and preferred option. Others said true choice includes access to all options and not one at the expense of another. Currently, Taskforce members and key stakeholders are debating the ideal, the practical, and the financially viable. Reconciling this debate through a shared vision is essential for planning. Consumer surveys clearly identify three areas of priority for individuals with I/DD. They include: working in a job they like, having access to job training resources, and having the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do. Additionally, having choices in applying for jobs was also rated high and was a top three issue in Clark County. Any vision must facilitate a pathway to these outcomes.

GOVERNMENT AS A MODEL AND LEADER: Key informants and focus group participants both identified the critical role the state can play in implementing integrated employment. The state could play a tremendous leadership role by employing individuals with I/DD and using innovative approaches such as job carving and job sharing. This would also afford the state the vocabulary to speak with employers knowledgeably about what works and how best to integrate individuals with I/DD into their workforce. Key informants noted that the bureaucracy and risk management constraints at the state often are barriers to the state's ability to employ persons with I/DD.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS: More community awareness and understanding is needed for individuals, families, providers, employers, and community members to create an environment where integration can be successful. As one survey comment stated, "It's not our kids with I/DD that are the barrier. It's the whole community of people raised here that have had little to no exposure to people with I/DD and their fears, intolerance, and poor understanding. Expose the next generation of "typicals" to those with I/DD at a very young age and in 20 years you will have a greater acceptance in the work force."

COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION: Collaboration and coordination is needed between schools and the state agencies serving individuals with I/DD in terms of resources, data sharing, eligibility processes, and transition planning and implementation. Collaboration is occurring at the state level but needs to be

pushed down culturally to the local level. In addition, transportation is a key factor in success and transportation must be seen as a partner and collaborator rather than a resource to improve. Finally, no collaboration will work if it doesn't include individuals with I/DD and their family members at every level of the discussion.

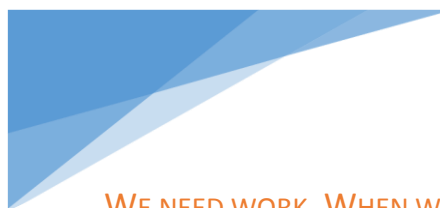
EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT: A lack of sufficient opportunities for meaningful work was identified repeatedly by key informants, focus group participants, and in stakeholder surveys. More large, small, and entrepreneurial business engagement is needed across the state. The state could play a tremendous leadership role by modeling approaches to setting goals and employing individuals with I/DD, and engaging employers in conversations about how the state overcomes barriers that employers are also likely to face.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY: A lack of sufficient resources and the need for sustainable funding strategies threatens the success of any plan or system developed by Nevada. Funding, coupled with the need to overhaul the rate setting process is essential to the success of integrated employment in Nevada. Sufficient resources or the lack thereof was mentioned in every focus group and by every key informant in some context. Therefore, ensuring sufficient resources for the services that promote competitive, integrated employment is a critical issue to many stakeholders.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIAO) has been adopted but final rules have not been published. Ongoing coordination and identification of the implications of WIAO is essential during planning and implementation of any system changes. In addition, Nevada's education system is currently undergoing substantive changes with the likelihood of more to follow. Ensuring that individuals with I/DD don't get further lost or left behind while schools implement the Common Core or adjust to other changes enacted by the 2015 legislature will be critical. Ensuring schools are actively at the table in all implementation discussions is essential.

RESULTS PER EXECUTIVE ORDER

Key informant interviews, focus group discussions, surveys, the State Scorecard ratings and Taskforce ratings provided information on key issues outlined for examination in the Executive Order. Key findings include:



WE NEED WORK. WHEN WE WORK WE FEEL BETTER, WHEN WE FEEL LIKE PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY WE HAVE LESS HEALTH ISSUES. GET COMPANIES TO HIRE US. HIRE JOB DEVELOPERS THAT PUT PEOPLE TO WORK NOT JUST GET \$200-300 FOR MEETING WITH SOMEONE. DISABLED PEOPLE CAN WORK WE CAN OFFER SUPPORT AND BE JOB SUCCESSFUL. GET US IN THE JOB NOT AT MINIMUM WAGE NO ONE CAN LIVE OF THAT IF OUR DREAM IS TO BE INDEPENDENT FROM SSDI. GET US SCHEDULE A FEDERAL JOB PLACEMENT.

SURVEY COMMENT

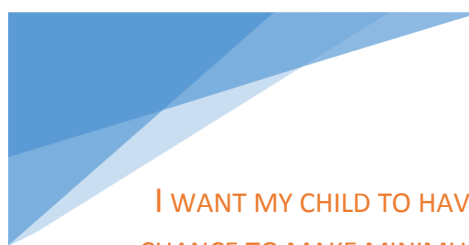
STUDENT SERVICES: Students with I/DD are most often identified prior to kindergarten entry, frequently through parent initiated assessments, and in coordination with ChildFind and/or Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS). While school districts do identify students with I/DD, there are no consistent assessment tools utilized across school districts, and resources (including transitional supports) available post-identification are insufficient to meet students’ needs.

Existing methods for identifying students with intellectual/developmental disabilities, the implementation of vocational assessments, and the delivery of employment-related planning and training services are not consistent or sufficient across the state. Proactive engagement of individuals to identify interests and match their interests to training opportunities are needed. Earlier intervention, access to more options, and opportunities and better transitions through collaboration, coordination, and shared resources are needed.

WAGE SETTING PRACTICES: The current practice of paying individual’s with I/DD less than a living wage was identified as a barrier to achieving meaningful employment practices. The impact of wages earned on an individual’s SSI benefits exacerbates the challenge as those that acquire employment risk losing access to necessary supports which cannot be acquired on the wages typically earned. Achieving competitive wages, and implementing strategies to address and achieve placements that are in the highest and best interest of the individual requires a shared definition of employment first. It also requires education and supports for individuals, families, schools, providers and employers. Finally, a pool of employers to provide choices for jobs is needed.

Proactive engagement of businesses is critical for integrated employment. Job carving and job sharing are two approaches that can achieve placements in the highest and best interest, but in all cases, the focus must fit with the individuals’ interests and skills, as well as the employers’ needs.

Current rates for providers are based on an outdated formula, using ratios that can act as a disincentive to promoting employment and achieving the outcomes sought in the Executive Order. The rate setting process as it currently exists is not adequate and needs to be overhauled.



I WANT MY CHILD TO HAVE OPTIONS AND A CHANCE TO MAKE MINIMUM WAGE. I WANT A FUTURE FOR MY CHILD. I WILL NOT ENCOURAGE MY CHILD TO EXPERIENCE SERVITUDE ENVIRONMENTS THAT DO NOT ALLOW FOR HER TO GAIN NEW SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE GROWTH. WE NEED TO CHANGE THE ATTITUDE OF MANY SERVICE PROVIDERS AND TEACH THEM ABOUT HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT TO SHARE WITH THE COMMUNITY. THEY SHOULD NOT BE HIDDEN AWAY IN INSTITUTIONAL TYPE SETTINGS.

Survey Comment

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS: Collaborations at the state level were noted as a strength by a majority of key informants. However, focus groups indicated that these collaborations often don't exist at the local level. Focus group participants felt that parents, educational institutions, state agencies and community partners do not work in partnership for the benefit of consumers. More opportunities for shared assessments, communications, and resources are needed and could be addressed through effective collaboration. Nevada has many examples of positive collaborations but has few resources to take those collaborations or resulting pilot projects to scale in a way that would have a statewide impact.

Key informants also stated that employers and individuals with I/DD need to be at the table consistently. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are needed between school systems (districts and higher education), Voc Rehab, Regional Centers, transportation, and providers to outline roles, responsibilities and agreements. Transportation was often not included in suggestions for collaboration but came up in every discussion and is a natural and necessary partner for any collaboration to be successful in achieving integrated employment outcomes.

FUNDING MECHANISMS: Nevada doesn't have sufficient resources to implement integrated employment and many are concerned that state and federal funds are not being utilized to their fullest potential. In addition, many key informants agreed there is a tremendous need to develop alternative funding options. A minority of key informants were very concerned that the integrated employment plan would result in a loss of resources for those most vulnerable and in their opinion, unable to work.

Sustainability was a recurring theme when key informants discussed goals, policies or programs. There is a need to support additional services and individualized supports within the educational system, and this is even more pronounced within the adult service systems. While at least one school district is leveraging federal matching funds to support employment and transitional supports, this is not being utilized throughout the state.



ACCESS TO INFORMATION: Information is not widely available to families in their search for services and supports. School districts, community-based providers, and state agencies' staff are not fully aware

of resources themselves, leaving parents and consumers with the responsibility of finding out what is available and how to access care. There was consensus that neither individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, nor their families, are provided sufficient information to make informed decisions concerning training, services and employment opportunities. Access to information was identified as a key concern at every level of the system, from individuals and families, to communities and statewide systems. A number of recommendations for improvements or modifications to programs or services were identified but without a shared definition or goals, recommendations can't be adopted, as some contradict others.

I think it's very important to open many doors available to individuals with IDD in our community. Education is definitely key for community businesses. I also think it's extremely important to find jobs that focus on individual interest and abilities which is not always the case. If we did more of this it would promote longevity with jobs.

Survey Comment

DAY HABILITATION SERVICES: There was considerable concern from many key informants about the effectiveness, demand, and long-term need for "day habilitation" and sheltered workshops in community training centers. At the same time, parents in focus groups and on surveys expressed concern about the need for day habilitation services and more funding for them, particularly in rural areas. Key informants felt that day habilitation should be included in options for individuals with I/DD but voiced concern that they are sometimes provided as the only viable option, rather than employment being the first option offered. Day habilitation settings were often not seen as a resource that supports employment preparedness as it is not believed that they offer opportunities for skill development.

Regardless of whether a person chooses or can choose to work or not, day habilitation settings can offer ways for individuals to contribute to their community and add value in some way. Others noted that they are often staffed by a low skilled workforce. Key informants felt the structure of these settings could be enhanced or reconfigured to support temporary placement based on individualized and progressive skill development for consumers. Truly promoting these services as training centers for assessment and skill acquisition was identified by multiple key informants as a way to enhance the service delivery system. Focus group members and key informants felt this will only be possible if these services are supported by highly qualified, skilled, and consistent staffing levels.

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORTS: Transitional supports for individuals are often insufficient to prepare individuals with I/DD beyond their high school experience. Within the educational system, transitional plans are often established too late and include only rudimentary goals. Additionally, staffing, such as transitional officers are not always available to families. Within the adult serving system (Voc Rehab and Regional Centers), services are not often initiated prior to the age of 18, and when they are, few resources exist to offer students. Current approaches and opportunities to allow families to plan for transition services in the K-12 setting are not consistent across the state and were not seen as sufficient by the majority of key informants. This issue was frequently cross-referenced with the lack of access to information, particularly about programs and options. Providing transition supports earlier in a person's life was mentioned by a majority of key informants. Consumer surveys clearly identified five areas that were most important to individuals with I/DD. They include: working in a job they like, having access to

job training resources, having the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do, having choices in applying for jobs, and having the opportunity to earn minimum wage or higher.

TRANSPORTATION: Transportation to and from work, school, and doctor’s appointments is not widely available to individuals with I/DD, or difficult to navigate due to their condition. Issues cited included a lack of sufficient routes, hours of operation, bus driver consistency, and timeliness of the service. Alternative transportation options and training supports are needed, especially in the rural areas of the state. A number of barriers and needed improvements were identified as essential to support transportation for consumers to individual work places. Barriers include the cost, the areas served, the hours of operation, the treatment of consumers by some drivers, the regular rotation of drivers on a route as a disruption, lack of reliability to be at work on time and general concerns about treatment and safety. Transportation as needed to attend appointments for services and general transportation were identified as top services needed by surveys in Carson City and surveys from the rural counties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NGCDD RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were the top rated recommendations from the NGCDD position paper as ranked by the Taskforce. They are listed in order of ranking.

1. Maximize available state and federal resources through improved rate and payment systems offered by the RSA Section 110 dollars to increase competitive employment.
2. Increase supports to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community, making it the primary service option for working age adults.
3. Develop a five-year, system-wide, employment policy priority and strategy that increases integrated employment by a set percent each year.
4. Consider strategies that promote employment services and outcomes, such as encouraging service systems to make use of community resources available in schools, institutions of higher education, employment networks, and federal and state work incentive programs already in place.
5. Encourage individuals to participate in a community-based work assessment before applying for jobs and day training services, where assessments are reviewed annually and individuals are encouraged to participate in this further evaluation of integrated/competitive employment service options.

STATE SCORECARD ELEMENTS

The following recommendations were derived from the three lowest rated elements on the state scorecard as ranked by key informants and the Taskforce. They are listed in order of ranking with a description of the elements that should be developed.

1. Develop an Action Plan that identifies collaborative activities for policy development, education and training, and capacity building.
2. Implement statewide strategies with public/private partnerships, enact policy changes as needed, and track outcomes at an individual and systems level with an annual review and refinement of statewide strategies.

3. Make resources available to transition-age students and individuals waiting for services and their families to encourage them to choose employment over other service options and include participation of ED/VR/DD.
4. Develop strategies for achieving employment outcomes and ensure they are managed at multiple levels (state, county/region, and local levels) and developed by all stakeholders. Discuss strategies with all stakeholders yearly and adjust them as needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OUTREACH

Other recommendations were made in response to questions posed during outreach and are provided in summary by issue area. These are not inclusive of all recommendation made. Rather they are a summary of recurring recommendations:

MEASURE RESULTS

- Appropriateness of placements should be measured including individual and employer satisfaction, with supports to remove barriers when they are identified.
- Data collection should begin in school and be able to track, follow and measure key data elements including assessment, placement, retention, wages and satisfaction.
- Data sharing is essential to eliminate waste, ensure coordination of services, and optimize outcomes.
- Establishment of outcomes tied to longevity and satisfaction in the workplace: Service systems should develop an outcomes based system that is tied to actual progress in developing and integrated employment culture.

POLICY

- Eliminating separate eligibility processes for state services and providing support to understand the impact of work on benefits and supports is essential for implementing integrated employment.
- Strategies must promote consistent services across the state and reduce some geographic disparities in terms of services and supports.
- People who are placed in these environments (day habilitation) need to be identified as either 1) a long-term placement due to their likely inability to acquire long-term and stable employment, or 2) a temporary placement with a specific plan in place to establish employable skills and independence.
- Mandated coordination between Voc Rehab / Regional Center and school districts.
- Establish a public education campaign meant to develop an understanding, sensitivity and value for individuals of all abilities and the need for integrated employment.
- SSI benefits need to be protected against income earned to support access to needed supports that contribute to an adequate quality of life.

RESOURCES AND FUNDING

- The state should serve as a model employer, leader and collaborator. Pursuing grant funds is going to be critical for Nevada to be successful. Nevada should utilize all available matching funds. This includes actively seeking all funding available including Plans for Achieving Self-

Support (PASS), Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE) benefits, and all Medicaid/WIOA and SSI/SSDI resources.

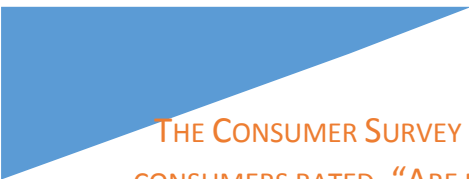
- Development of sustainability plans to respond to funding changes and the WIAO should be part of the plan.
- Identify and secure federal funding available to support integrated employment practices.
- Pursue alternative funding through private foundations and grants.
- Explore entrepreneurial ventures that could generate revenue to go back into the system.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

- Partnerships and resources for employers to help them manage legal, tax, and employment requirements is needed. This would reduce the burden on the employer and help employers know how to implement a program.
- Engaging a number of industries, including small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures, should be part of the plan for systems change.
- Employer incentives and supports:
 - Employer hiring incentives: provision of tax incentives to employers that hire individuals with I/DD.
 - Co-worker incentives: provision of a workplace stipend to mentor and support co-workers with I/DD in the workplace.
 - Job site placement supports: provision of information and education among employers and co-workers about the individual needs of people with I/DD in the workplace. Access to supports when challenges arise.

JOB READINESS AND TRANSITION

- Develop a customized approach to serving individuals with I/DD in their employment needs. Developing a thorough assessment process to identify a person’s interest and capacity, and providing training supports and placement that match those attributes is needed for successful long-term integrated employment.
- Use of assistive technology wherever possible and promotion of tele-services is essential to eliminating barriers for integrated employment.
- Exposing individuals with I/DD to many different options and skill sets would benefit young people even prior to high school and could create a pipeline for various industries in need of workers.
- Staff training, person-centered supports, exposure to volunteer opportunities, development of soft skills, more ways to be out in the community in a variety of settings, transportation so people can get to places in the community, and more creativity about what can be done were all listed as things needed in a day habilitation setting.
- More resources/services need to be available to help kids transition such as:



THE CONSUMER SURVEY INDICATED THAT CONSUMERS RATED, “ARE ENCOURAGED TO DREAM ABOUT THEIR FUTURE WHILE IN SCHOOL” LOWEST OF ALL SERVICES AND SUPPORTS PROVIDED.

- Field trips to new school campuses.
- Job shadowing opportunities, including summer work experiences.
- Life skills training.
- Develop transition planning as a separate and unique process that is initiated as early as possible (middle school).
- Development of a “life plan” component to the transitional process to support clearly identified steps for skills development and actions necessary for transition purposes (guardianship paperwork, Voc Rehab/regional center applications, etc.).
- Increased institutional knowledge on the part of school districts of resources available and provision of such information in a timely fashion to assist families in making informed decisions.

PROVIDER SUPPORT

- System stakeholders must understand and identify with the meaning of employment first across systems to better serve clients in securing employment, utilizing day habilitation programs, and providing families with the information necessary to make informed decisions.
- Increased coordination: Families, schools, community providers, and state agencies need to coordinate efforts in the development of a streamlined system of services and improved outcomes.
- There was an identified need to staff these service environments with a consistent and qualified workforce and a low client-to-staff ratio which would allow staff to customize a service approach and apply best practices for individual growth and skill development.
- Develop a job carving initiative that would offer employment opportunities that fit the interest and skills of individuals with I/DD.

TRANSPORTATION

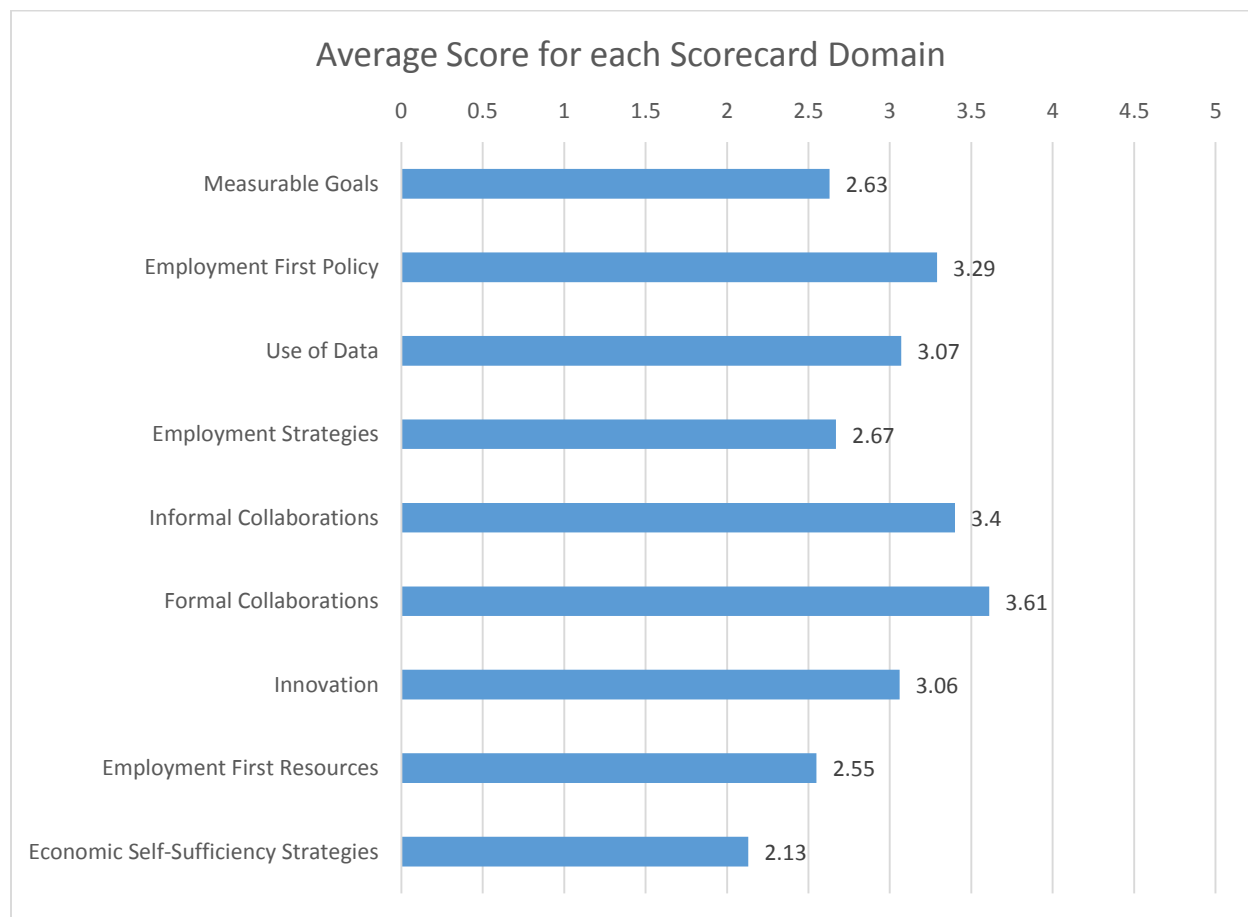
- Additional transportation supports needed are:
 - Taxi vouchers
 - Rural paratransit service options
 - Travel training services (in high school and for adult users)
 - Driver’s license support for high-functioning individuals with I/DD
 - Pick-ups and drop-offs at high schools to encourage access to worksites after school.
 - More flexibility for pick-ups and drop-offs of individuals with I/DD
 - Consistency in bus driving staff

STATE TEAM SCORECARD

The Alliance for Full Participation (AFP) State Team Scorecard was created to help state teams review state policies, practices and strategies that impact opportunities for integrated employment. Developed under the guidance of AFP's Advisory Council, the scorecard is based on the industry's leading practices and measures key processes, policies, and programmatic areas essential to building an environment that supports employment growth.¹ Key Informants and Taskforce members each rated areas on the scorecard. In many cases, key informants and Taskforce members indicated "they didn't know," if the area was one in which they had little or no expertise. However, a majority of the two groups were able to rate each area.



SUMMARY SCORES



¹ Retrieved on January 14, 2015 from: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/index.php?pageId=50&newsId=260>

This table indicates the strengths in Nevada’s system for integrated employment as well as the top opportunities for improvement. This information suggests that strengths that can be leveraged when developing the integrated employment plan include the formal and informal collaborations and partnerships that already exist within the state, as well as the work that has been done to articulate an employment first policy.

Areas that should be a focus in the plan include ensuring there are sufficient economic self-sufficiency strategies as well as sufficient employment strategies. Linking these strategies to measureable goals for economic self-sufficiency and employment is recommended to create an actionable plan for integrated employment.



DETAILED RESULTS

The scorecard has a total of nine questions, and provides the option for a rating between one and five, with each score offering a definition of what that score indicates. Taskforce members appointed as of January 2015 were provided the scorecard for rating. Key informants also rated the scorecard and had the opportunity to comment on each area. Their responses are summarized in the key informant section. The comprehensive scorecard and its rating definitions, can be found in Appendix C.

While 13 key informants were asked to rate the scorecard, one respondent felt unable to rate most the elements. Thirteen Taskforce members rated the scorecard, bringing the total ratings to 24 in most cases. The results of each of the scorecard domains are listed in the order presented in the tool itself.

MEASURABLE GOALS

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #1	Rating	Descriptions	Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Our state has measureable annual	1	There are no goals relating to increasing employment of people with disabilities.	2	1	3 (13%)

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Question #1	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
performance goals with clear benchmarks with respect to expanding the number of individuals in competitive integrated employment as a percentage of people served in day services.	2	There are goals, but the goals are too vague and are worded within overall goals, such as quality of life.	3	3	6 (25%)
	3	There are employment goals, but they are not measurable.	2	0	2 (8%)
	4	There are measurable employment goals, but they are problematic (i.e., meeting the goal does not necessarily mean an improvement in or increasing the rate of services in employment, as compared to segregated or non-work services.)	2	2	4 (17%)
	5	There are measurable goals with meaningful benchmarks.	0	1	1 (4%)
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	3	5	8 (33%)

Sixteen of 24 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada has measureable goals. There was no significant difference between key informant or Taskforce member ratings. The majority of respondents felt that when goals exist, they aren't statewide or shared across divisions within the state and could be more measureable to have an impact on integrated employment.

EMPLOYMENT FIRST POLICY

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #2	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Our state has a strong employment first policy.	1	There is no employment first policy nor is one being considered.	0	0	0
	2	We are considering an employment first policy, but there is not a formal group working on it.	1	0	1 (4%)
	3	We are actively working on an employment first policy; or we have one but it is flawed and is not clearly having employment be the first day service option.	6	5	11 (46%)
	4	We have an employment first policy, but it could be worded stronger so that employment first is more meaningful in influencing practice.	2	2	4 (17%)
	5	We have a strong employment first policy in legislation and policy.	1	0	1 (4%)
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	2	5	7 (29%)

Seventeen of 24 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada has a strong employment first policy. The majority of those who responded felt that Nevada was actively working on an employment first

policy and many key informants pointed to the Taskforce as evidence that a policy was being developed. One key informant felt there was a strong employment first policy because of the Governor’s Executive Order.

USE OF DATA

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #3	Rating	Rating Descriptions	Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Our state collects and publishes data on employment outcomes. This information is collected on a regular basis and shared in summary form with stakeholders. Data are used to inform strategy and contracting decisions.	1	There is no state-wide data system	2	1	3 (12%)
	2	Partial data is sometimes collected	2	0	2 (8%)
	3	Partial data is sometimes collected and summarized	0	3	3 (12%)
	4	Data is collected and summarized but not a part of ongoing discussion	3	2	5 (20%)
	5	A data system is in place. Information on employment	2	0	2 (8%)
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	3	7	10 (40%)

Fifteen of 25 respondents were able to rate how Nevada uses data. Both key informants and Taskforce members acknowledged there are data systems and data is collected but the system isn’t statewide. A third of respondents felt that data is collected and summarized. Key informants noted that there are opportunities to ensure that meaningful data is collected routinely and shared to better articulate outcomes and areas of need. Data could be more routinely shared with stakeholders and used to inform strategy and contracting discussions. There was no significant difference between key informant or Taskforce member ratings. Taskforce members and key informants varied in their ratings with fewer Taskforce members having direct knowledge of data systems.

EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #4	Rating	Rating Descriptions	Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Strategies have been developed for achieving employment outcomes and are managed at multiple levels (state, county/region and local levels) and with all stakeholders.	1	There are no statewide strategies in place	1	2	3 (13%)
	2	Statewide strategies are sometimes discussed with some stakeholders	2	0	2 (8%)
	3	A core group of some stakeholders are discussing statewide strategies	7	4	11 (46%)
	4	All stakeholders are joining to develop statewide strategies	1	1	2 (8%)
	5	Strategies have been developed and are discussed and adjusted at least yearly with all stakeholders	0	0	0
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	0	6	6 (25%)

Eighteen of 24 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada has developed employment strategies. Almost half of respondents, representing the majority of both key informant and Taskforce members identified that a core group of some stakeholders are discussing statewide strategies. However, there was a minority of Taskforce members and a key informant who felt there weren't statewide strategies in place or that they are only sometimes discussed.

COLLABORATION

Respondents were asked to rate both informal and formal collaboration efforts.

INFORMAL COLLABORATIONS

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #5	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Informal relationships or collaborations exist among state, regional and provider agencies, advocacy organizations and employers to support integrated employment.	1	There are few, if any, relationships among all stakeholders	0	1	1 (4%)
	2	Relationships are beginning to form among some stakeholders	3	3	6 (25%)
	3	Relationships among all stakeholders exist and some ideas are being discussed	0	3	3 (13%)
	4	Relationships and collaborations are emerging at state/regional/local levels	4	0	4 (17%)
	5	Informal relationships or collaborations exist among state, regional, and provider agencies, advocacy organizations and employers to support integrated employment, including regular state/regional/local meetings and discussions of all stakeholders.	4	2	6 (25%)
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	0	4	4 (17%)

Twenty of 24 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada has informal collaborations. Key informants felt that relationships and collaborations exist or are emerging and noted this was a strength of the state. More variance was found in Taskforce ratings with relationships and collaborations rated along a continuum, from few existing to fully in existence. There was no significant difference between key informant or Taskforce member ratings.

FORMAL COLLABORATIONS

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #6	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Formal interagency agreements or collaborations exist to support	1	There are no formal agreements	1	0	1 (4%)
	2	Agreements are beginning to be discussed	0	3	3 (13%)
	3	The broad outlines of agreements are emerging	2	2	4 (17%)

Question #6	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
integrated employment.	4	Formal agreements are being developed	3	1	4 (17%)
	5	Formal interagency agreements or collaborations exist to support	4	2	6 (25%)
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	1	5	6 (25%)

Eighteen of 24 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada has formal collaborations. The majority of key informants indicated that formal interagency agreements or collaborations exist or are being developed, while Taskforce members indicated that agreements were in more of the beginning stages, where outlines were emerging and issues were still being discussed.

INNOVATION

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #7	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
The state supports and encourages innovation in employment services.	1	There is no plan of investment in innovations	1	1	2 (8%)
	2	The need for innovations is being discussed among some stakeholders	3	2	5 (21%)
	3	There is agreement to pursue resources to encourage innovations	2	1	3 (13%)
	4	Some innovations are being encouraged and supported	2	4	6 (25%)
	5	Innovations have/are emerging and are documented and discussed for broad implementation	1	1	2 (8%)
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	2	4	6 (25%)

Eighteen of 24 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada supports innovation in employment services. Key informants in interviews and the combined ratings both indicate that some innovations have occurred and are being supported, and that the need for innovation is being discussed among stakeholders, but there is an opportunity to further support and encourage innovation. Key informants indicated that innovations are typically pilot projects that lack funding to be implemented statewide.

EMPLOYMENT FIRST RESOURCES

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #8	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Resources are available to transition age students and individuals waiting for services and their	1	Few if any resources are available.	3	3	6 (24%)
	2	The need for transition resources is beginning to be discussed.	2	3	5 (20%)
	3	There is agreement to develop transition resources.	3	1	4 (16%)

Question #8	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
families to encourage them to choose employment over other services options.	4	Some resources are available statewide and more are emerging.	3	4	7 (28%)
	5	Resources available to transition-age students and individuals waiting for services and their families to encourage them to choose employment over other service options and include participation of ED/VR/DD.	0	0	0
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	1	2	3 (12%)

Twenty-two of 25 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada has resources for transition age students. There was no significant difference between key informant or Taskforce member ratings. A third of respondents felt some resources are available statewide and more are emerging (7) while almost a third indicated that few if any resources are available.

ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY STRATEGIES

Respondents were asked the following question:

Question #9	Rating Descriptions		Key Informants	Taskforce Members	Total
Strategies have been developed for advancing economic self-sufficiency and are managed at multiple levels (state, county/region, and local) and with diverse public and private stakeholders.	1	There are no statewide strategies in place.	4	4	8 (35%)
	2	Stakeholders have been identified across public agencies and private sector (financial institutions, IDA providers, United Way, EITC Coalitions) and a work group has been established.	2	1	3 (13%)
	3	An Action Plan has been developed that identifies collaborative activities for policy development, education and training, and capacity building.	0	0	0
	4	Pilot activities are being implemented in selected parts of the state and promising practices are being identified, documented, and disseminated to relevant stakeholders statewide.	2	3	5 (22%)
	5	Statewide strategies are being implemented with public/private partnerships, policy changes are in process, and outcomes are being tracked at an individual and systems level with an annual review and refinement of statewide strategies.	0	0	0
	6	Not applicable	0	0	0
	7	Don't know.	2	5	7 (30%)

Sixteen of 23 respondents were able to rate whether Nevada has strategies to advance economic self-sufficiency. Half the respondents, whether key informant or Taskforce member, felt that there are no statewide strategies in place. A third of respondents indicated that pilot activities are being implemented in parts of the state but key informants noted that no pilot projects have really been brought to scale and been implemented at the state, regional and local level.



NGCDD RECOMMENDATIONS RATINGS

In 2014 the Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) issued a position paper regarding integrated employment opportunities and support for Nevadans with I/DD. The paper explored the overwhelming underrepresentation of individuals with I/DD in the workforce and identified recommendations to improve the situation.

Taskforce members were asked to rank each of these recommendations to prioritize their importance.

DETAILED RESULTS

The table that follows indicates the average rating that Taskforce members gave to each of the NGCDD recommendations. Ratings ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 being less important and 5 being very important.

Recommendations in the table are ranked by order of most importance.

“Individuals with I/DD in the labor force have a positive financial impact on our economy, generating income that is ultimately returned in the form of tax revenues and the purchase of goods and services. Despite this knowledge, **individuals with I/DD continue to have the lowest workforce participation rates of any minority group in our country.**”

NGCDD Position Statement on Integrated Employment, 2014

Recommendation	n	Importance Average
Encourage employment as the outcome of the annual Individual Service Plan (ISP) process and emphasize the critical role of person-centered planning in achieving community-based employment. These employment outcomes must be consistent with the individual’s skills, interests, abilities, and reflect an informed choice	11	4.73
Maximize available state and federal resources through improved rate and payment systems offered by the RSA Section 110 dollars to increase competitive employment.	13	4.55
Increase supports to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community, making it the primary service option for working age adults.	11	4.54
Explore new outcome-based reimbursement systems for providers to assure that the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) can support the intensity of supports to assure that people with severe disabilities acquire an appropriate community placement and that the Aging and Disability Services Division can support the follow-along services to be successful.	13	4.45
Consider additional strategies that promote employment services and outcomes, such as encouraging service systems to make use of community resources available in schools, institutions of higher education, employment networks, and federal and state work incentive programs already in place.	13	4.31
Encourage individuals to participate in a community-based work assessment before applying for jobs and day training services, where assessments are reviewed annually and individuals are encouraged to participate in this further evaluation of integrated/competitive employment service options.	11	4.33
Develop a five-year, system-wide, employment policy priority and strategy that increases integrated employment by a set percent each year.	10	4.09
Emphasize the use of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver to promote integrated/competitive employment options through revised service core definitions and provisions for career planning services.	12	4.00

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Recommendation	n	Importance Average
Develop a full-time statewide position for employment development within the State DD system. This would identify an individual with a specific job function and accountability for developing employment strategy and policy and improving employment outcomes.	12	3.77
Utilize training curricula from national organizations, university classes, etc., for BVR employment staff.	11	3.67

Taskforce members were also asked to prioritize the top five recommendations.

The table is ranked by the number of respondents who believed the recommendation was a top 5 recommendation, then by the average rank given by those respondents. Respondents selected their top five recommendations, leaving another five recommendations blank.²

Recommendation	Number of people ranking issue in Top 5	Priority (lower is better)
Consider additional strategies that promote employment services and outcomes, such as encouraging service systems to make use of community resources available in schools, institutions of higher education, employment networks, and federal and state work incentive programs already in place.	10	3.30
Increase supports to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community, making it the primary service option for working age adults.	9	2.33
Maximize available state and federal resources through improved rate and payment systems offered by the RSA Section 110 dollars to increase competitive employment.	8	1.25
Develop a five-year, system-wide, employment policy priority and strategy that increases integrated employment by a set percent each year.	8	2.38
Encourage individuals to participate in a community-based work assessment before applying for jobs and day training services, where assessments are reviewed annually and individuals are encouraged to participate in this further evaluation of integrated/competitive employment service options.	8	3.88

² The table uses this two-step ranking because of the possibility that a recommendation averaging a rank of 1 may only have one respondent who believes it should be a top 5 recommendation.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Using an initial contact list developed by Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD), Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) Vocational Rehabilitation staff, and the Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD), the Taskforce reviewed, revised, and approved a list of 20 names to contact for key informant interviews with a goal of completing 15 interviews.



Key informant questions were provided to the Taskforce who reviewed, revised, and approved the questions and the outreach approach. All key informants were provided the questions in advance of the interview. Some key informants submitted responses in writing, while others provided information only during the interview.

All interviews were completed by Kelly Marschall, SEI consultant. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. While notes were taken during each interview, all interview participants were assured that no response would be attributed to a specific person. The information extrapolated from the interviews has been aggregated and summarized for this report.

SEI conducted key informant interviews with stakeholders by telephone to gather insight about the state using The Alliance for Full Participation State Team Scorecard to evaluate the state policies, practices, and strategies that impact opportunities for integrated employment. Key informants were also asked to assess the system in Nevada using open ended questions. In addition, key informants with particular content expertise were asked about specific issues outlined in the Executive Order.

Key informants provided a variety of perspectives including national (1), state (5) and local (7) as well as representing different parts of the service delivery system that impact competitive, integrated employment. Service sectors included business (4), public agencies (4), parents (3), advocates (2), and education (2).

RESULTS

For each question posed to key informants, themes were identified that summarize the main points made by those interviewed. In some cases, one theme may be at conflict with another identified in response to the question. In addition, some themes emerged in response to more than one of the questions.



THE POLICY SHOULD ENSURE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES OR IT WILL FAIL.

KEY INFORMANT

A. Key themes in terms of goals for Nevada included that:

1. Nevada needs a system in place to complete assessments of skills, capabilities, and interests, and expose individuals with I/DD early

to career, educational and training options, settings, and facilities so they can make a truly informed choice based on what is available, with ongoing support and follow-up needed to continuously measure how things are working and what additional supports may be needed.

2. Individuals should be presented with all options, be truly aware of what is available, and be able to make a choice based on that information.
3. Parents and family members should be informed and aware of choices, resources and supports.
4. Appropriateness of placements should be measured including individual and employer satisfaction, with supports to remove barriers when they are identified.
5. State agencies must collaborate effectively, sharing data, reducing duplication of efforts, and streamlining eligibility processes to eliminate waste and promote seamless service transitions.

B. Key themes in terms of an ideal policy for Nevada included that:

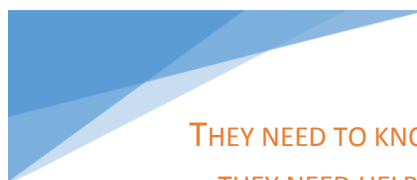
1. Nevada needs a policy where it is the expectation that all individuals beginning at transition be given support and the opportunity to understand and achieve integrated, competitive employment.

Vocational rehabilitation (Voc Rehab) should be required for all students and include education regarding all available options and environments for the family with a sustainable funding structure.

2. Consensus and a shared definition of what the employment first policy is and how to ensure public resources are aligned with the policy is essential.
3. Job developers should be available and be able to provide ongoing support after placement in a job.
4. The state should set the example as an employer and collaborator.
5. Coordination and collaboration should be in place between schools and regional centers long before Voc Rehab is provided.

C. Key themes in terms of data collection and sharing in Nevada included that:

1. Data collection should begin in school and be able to track, follow, and measure key data elements including assessment, placement, retention, wages and satisfaction.
2. Data sharing is essential to eliminate waste, ensure coordination of services, and optimize outcomes.
3. Satisfaction of both employers and employees placed should be collected and used to measure success.
4. Data should be collected and used to identify what leads to success or what barriers are in place and should inform policy decisions.



THEY NEED TO KNOW WHAT IT IS,
THEY NEED HELP TO GET IT AND
THEY NEED A PLACE TO GO (VIA
EMPLOYER EDUCATION)

KEY INFORMANT

D. Key themes in terms of top strategies for achieving employment outcomes in Nevada included that:

1. Nevada needs a coordinated system that includes education, assessment, training, and an array of services.
2. Education for individuals and their families so they know what they are eligible for, what options are available, and how to access them is needed.
3. Job developers who can provide ongoing support for both employers and employees and who can follow along as needed in the workplace setting should be available statewide.
4. Data sharing across systems would reduce frustration, enhance collaboration, and promote better outcomes.
5. The Regional Centers and Voc Rehab must work in partnership with each other and with schools and families. Education for persons with I/DD should take place from K-12 but also include vocational training, community colleges and universities. Curriculum in community colleges and university settings is needed to train teachers on assessing students and to train Voc Rehab counselors and job developers about employment first.
6. An innovative funding formula and sustainability plan is needed for the system to be feasible for providers.
7. A statewide campaign is needed to promote awareness of options, engage businesses, and speak of the value of individuals with I/DD in the workplace. Employers need supports that would make their recruiters' jobs easier to promote hiring.



HUGE QUESTIONS—THERE ARE SO MANY PRONGS TO THAT FORK. NEED A PLACE THEY CAN GO, NEED WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE EMPLOYER, NEED TO LOOK BEYOND THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS THEY HAVE, NEED TO BE ABLE TO BREAK JOBS INTO LITTLE PIECES, JOB SPLITTING, THINKING CREATIVELY, NEED TO HAVE BENEFITS FOR THE EMPLOYER, HAVE TO BE WILLING TO LET PEOPLE BE DRIVEN BY THEIR OWN INTERESTS WHICH MEANS KNOWING THE PERSON IN DEPTH, AND MATCHING THEM TO SOMETHING THAT MEETS THEIR NEEDS AND THE EMPLOYER.

Key Informant

E. Key themes in terms of gaps in relationships and collaborations in Nevada and how productive the relationships are included that:

1. A number of positive, effective collaborations and partnerships are in place. Partnerships and collaborations are most frequently limited by a lack of resources, which prevents innovative, effective pilot projects from going to scale statewide.
2. Among many partners there is trust and willingness to work together to achieve better outcomes for individuals with I/DD.

3. The major gap identified was the lack of employers and job opportunities for individuals with I/DD and how bureaucracy and red tape prevents innovation.
4. Awareness of programs and resources was a gap identified repeatedly by key informants.
5. Partnership and resources for employers to help them manage legal, tax, and employment requirements and reduce the burden on the employer would help employers know how to implement a program.

F. Key themes in terms of agreements and collaborations needed, and barriers to supporting integrated employment in Nevada included that:

1. A number of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are in place but more are needed to make the system work statewide including with school districts, government agencies, colleges and universities.
2. The main barriers listed to supporting integrated employment were lack of awareness of existing resources and options, insufficient resources to help everyone who would like an integrated employment opportunity, lack of transportation, lack of training and placement options, and low expectations about what is possible for individuals with I/DD.
3. Eliminating separate eligibility processes for state services and providing support to understand the impact of work on benefits and supports is essential to implementing integrated employment.
4. Collaboration and agreements related to data sharing is needed to measure impact and make policy decisions.
5. Use of assistive technology wherever possible and promotion of tele-services is essential to eliminating barriers for integrated employment.

G. Key themes in terms of resources/partnerships and innovations in Nevada included that:

1. The state should serve as a model employer, leader and collaborator. Pursuing grant funds will be critical for Nevada to be successful. Nevada should utilize all available matching funds. This includes actively seeking all funding available including Plans for Achieving Self-Support (PASS), Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE) benefits and all Medicaid/WIOA and SSI/SSDI resources.
2. Exposing individuals with I/DD to many different options and skill sets would benefit young people even prior to high school and could create a pipeline for various industries in need of workers.



NEVADA SHOULD RESEARCH PROGRAMS WITH THE BEST OUTCOMES AND DETERMINE HOW TO BEST UTILIZE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL FUNDS TO THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.

Key Informant

3. Expanding innovative partnerships and collaborations could leverage resources and expand opportunities for employment. This includes projects like customized employment, VOICE, Project Search and other pilot efforts. More funding is needed to implement these innovative projects statewide.
4. Engaging a number of industries, and including small business and entrepreneurial opportunities should be part of the plan for systems change.
5. Development of sustainability plans to respond to funding changes and the WIOA should be part of the plan.



CLIENTS IN “DAY HABILITATION”
 SETTINGS NEED SUPPORTS TO HELP
 WITH BASIC DAILY LIVING SKILLS.
 THEY ALSO NEED SUPPORTS TO
 HAVE A VARIED RANGE OF LIFE
 EXPERIENCES.

Key Informant

H. Key themes in terms of policies, strategies, resources, and partnerships in Nevada included that:

1. The system should be able to take someone as far as they can go but ensure they have a choice in defining what or where that is. Employment first is the preferred option and the first option offered.
2. Policies should address the segregation of students in classrooms in school settings and promote integration in all aspects of an individual’s life.
3. Peer to peer education should be explored as a way to attain skills such as computer training and job seeking.
4. Financial literacy and life skills are an essential component for self-sufficiency and should be provided as part of job-readiness training.
5. Strategies must promote consistent services across the state and reduce some geographic disparities in terms of services and supports.
6. Policies and resources must address the lack of available jobs and long waiting lists for training and supportive services. Services and supports must be iterative allowing for follow up and re-engagement of individuals if they transition out of school or work.
7. Ratios and the rate setting process need to be overhauled and must be financially sustainable.

I. Key themes regarding what is needed in a "day habilitation" setting in Nevada included that:

1. Staff training, person-centered supports, exposure to volunteer opportunities, development of soft skills, more ways to be out in the community in a variety of setting and opportunities, transportation so people can get to places in the community, and more creativity about what can be done were all listed as things needed in a day habilitation setting.
2. A minority of key informants clearly articulated that integrated employment shouldn’t be at the expense of day habilitation and that day habilitation needs more funding and resources including transportation for those individuals who are the most severely disabled.

3. Some felt that the focus of day habilitation settings is not training but providing a safe, happy environment and that behavioral analysts, recreational therapists, and pre-employment skills are needed in those settings to provide services based on the person’s interest.
4. Supports delivered by a workforce that can teach how to do things others can do and examine how to constantly improve quality of life through self-sufficiency would make day habilitation a building block as part of integration.
5. Opinions of the role of and resources for day habilitation varied by key informant with a majority of key informants promoting person-centered choices and supports being needed.



FIRST OF ALL, SHOW RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH IDD. WE ARE NOT COWS. SECOND, BE ON TIME. IF WE HAVE TO BE ON TIME FOR WORK THEY HAVE TO BE ON TIME FOR WORK AND VICE VERSA. NOT EVERYONE HAS A MOMMY. MAYBE SOME PEOPLE ARE MOMMIES, LIKE ME.

Key Informant

J. Key themes regarding what barriers exist related to transporting individuals to work places in Nevada included that:

1. Lack of reliable, accessible, timely, respectful, safe transportation options are barriers for gaining and maintaining employment.
2. Cost and scheduling are also critical issues.
3. Lack of flexibility in the system was noted as a barrier with individuals getting a “check mark” if they don’t cancel transportation far enough in advance, even if dealing with ongoing, chronic medical conditions that can’t be anticipated or controlled on a schedule.
4. Policies that prohibit flexible use of resources by the state because of liability issues reduces transportation options for individuals who are hired and can work, particularly if the employers’ locations don’t fall on a bus route.
5. All key informants agreed that transportation is one of the greatest barriers for employment and that creativity and utilization of existing resources in different ways is essential.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Focus groups were held with consumers, caregivers, family members and advocates for persons with I/DD at locations in the north, south, and rural areas of Nevada. Focus groups were used to identify the employment needs of individuals with I/DD as well as opportunities and challenges within the various systems that serve them in this capacity.



Focus groups lasted approximately 90 minutes in length. Participants were solicited by the host site as well as community providers from pools representing a variety of stakeholder groups. Each focus group began with a brief description of the Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment, the strategic planning process, and an explanation of how the focus group information was relevant to planning efforts. Each group discussed questions posed and offered recommended action through a dynamic exchange of ideas among the participants.

PROFILE OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

There were a total of 87 people who participated in a total of 8 focus group meetings. Of those 87 participants, 57 were women, and 30 were men. Participants were asked to identify themselves within the following categories: consumer, caregiver, advocate, family member, provider and policy maker. Participants were given the option of identifying within multiple categories.

The following table represents the host site for focus group facilitation as well as how participants self-identified according to the categories listed above.

	Host Site	Consumer	Caregiver	Advocate	Family Member	Provider	Policy Maker	Multiple	Total
Southern NV	Grant a Gift Autism Foundation	3			4	2			9
	Azulblue				10			3	13
	Opportunity Village	6		2	3		1	1	13
	Easter Seals							15	15
Northern NV	People First, Reno Chapter							8	8
	* Washoe County School District Special Ed Staff					11			11
	Northern NV Center for Independent Living	Scheduled for February 12, 2015/ results will be added							
Rural	Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center	3	1		3	5		4	16
	* Rural School District Special Ed Staff					2			2
Total		12	1	2	20	20	1	31	87

RESULTS

Focus Group discussions provided information on key issues outlined for examination in the Executive Order. The following table presents a summary of the data collected during focus groups according to major areas of exploration. The information has been paraphrased and should not be construed as direct comments from focus group participants unless presented in quotation marks.

School-based Identification of Kids with I/DD

- Parents often initiate identification prior to kindergarten entry.
- When schools are tasked with identifying kids with an intellectual or developmental disability they do a decent job. That being said, challenges arise when there are kids who are transferred from either another school district or another state as the assessment, placement, and documentation of progress varies across systems.
- There is a difference between a medical diagnosis and an educational classification. Kids may qualify for a medical diagnosis, and not an educational classification, creating frustration and tension between parent and school district.
- Identification is often a result of a noted deficiency (behavioral and/or academic). This deficiency-based perspective often shapes the way the system views a child and impacts the supports provided. Multiple parents described their child as being bullied because of their condition, and labeled as a “behavioral problem” or “academically challenged.”
- How proactive a school is in identifying kids with I/DD is dependent upon the administrative culture, resources, and testing capacity of individual school sites.
- Challenges associated with identification include:
 - System in flux: Within the educational system, things are constantly changing, making it hard to identify what the correct/appropriate response is or who the responsible agent is.
 - Parent resistance: Some parents are resistant to the reality and subsequent classification of their child having a disability.
 - Language barrier: Parents who are not native English speakers sometimes have difficulty negotiating the system in acquiring a diagnosis/classification or accessing services.
 - Cultural competence: Students of color are often over-identified due to an institutional lack of cultural competence.

“I had to bring a note from my child’s psychologist. If I hadn’t done that, she would have never been identified by the school. The whole time, she was being bullied, and the school felt like she was the problem.”

Transitional Supports

- The availability and quality of transition activities is largely person dependent. Teachers, counselors, and/or transition officers often provide transition opportunities (such as field trips, micro-enterprise experiences, and bus route training) based on their own initiative and sometimes on their own time.
 - Transitional officers are not widely available, and when provided by school districts are often stretched too thin.
 - The transition planning process as utilized within the IEP framework is not structured to adequately prepare a student for their life beyond high school (be it college or paid employment). It is often initiated too late, does not have purposeful goals, and does not include adult service providers as a mandated component.
 - Support networks are needed for parents of children with I/DD to help them understand the system, validate their feelings, and to provide support when necessary.
 - Students need to be in integrated environments at their schools at the earliest age possible if it is expected that they will eventually land in an integrated employment setting. Segregated classrooms do not provide students with the social skills needed to interact with people of all abilities, and in the case of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), can hinder their progress.
 - More resources/services need to be available to help kids transition such as:
 - Field trips to new school campuses
 - Job shadowing opportunities, including summer work experiences
 - Life skills training
- “The school treats my son well, but they just want him to move along. They are not working to prepare him for real work in the real world.”*
- Recommendations provided to strengthen transitional practices included:
 - Develop transition planning as a separate and unique process which is initiated as early as possible (middle school).
 - Development of a “life plan” component to the transitional process to support clearly identified steps for skills development and actions necessary for transitional purposes (guardianship paperwork, Voc Rehab/regional center applications, etc.).
 - Mandated coordination between Voc Rehab / Regional Center and school districts.
 - Increased institutional knowledge on the part of school districts of resources available and provision of such information in a timely fashion to assist families in making informed decisions.

Day Habilitations Services and Supports

- These environments are currently structured to support safety and recreational opportunities. They do not prepare individuals for the work world by offering challenging, progressive skill development or responsibilities.
- There was an identified need to staff these service environments with a consistent and qualified workforce and a low client-to-staff ratio that would allow staff to customize a service approach and apply best practices for individual growth and skill development.
- People who are placed in these environments need to be identified as either 1) a long-term placement due to their likely inability to acquire long-term and stable employment, or 2) a temporary placement with a specific plan in place to establish employable skills and independence.
- Transportation was identified as an enhanced service option to/from the day habilitation service site.

Transportation Supports

- Participants describe a reality in which individuals with I/DD require access to public transportation to get to school, work, social service, and medical appointments.
- Issues noted with the current transportation system include:
 - Lack of timely service. Busses are often behind, making people late to work/appointments.
 - Lack of sufficient routes/hours of operation: Additional stops (specifically at high schools) and extended hours of operation are needed to meet people's needs. This is especially true in the rural areas of the state.
 - Lengthy bus rides: Some bus routes take 2 to 3 hours to get a rider to his or her intended destination. This makes use difficult, especially for people with I/DD.
 - Requirement for advanced notice is often a barrier to the use of this transportation resource. Advanced 24-to-48-hour notice means people need to know exactly where and when they will need to be somewhere.
 - Poor customer service: Multiple focus groups identified a lack of good customer service by bus drivers toward individuals with I/DD.
- Additional transportation supports needed are:
 - Taxi vouchers
 - Rural paratransit service options
 - Travel training services (in high school and for adult users)
 - Driver's license support for high functioning individuals with I/DD
 - Pick-ups and drop-offs at high schools to encourage access to worksites after school.
 - More flexibility for pick-ups and drop-offs of individuals with I/DD
 - Consistency in bus driving staff

Access to information

- There is a widespread lack of institutional knowledge within the educational setting, community-based providers, and state agencies about the resources available to families living with an I/DD. This dynamic combined with a high staff turn-over rate leaves people tasked with helping families in a position of not being fully informed and consequently not able to share appropriate information.
- Families are most often the responsible agent for gathering information about resources and how to navigate the educational/social service system. This can be challenging when guardianship becomes an issue.
- Community-based providers working within an advocacy function were identified as the best “source” of information (Nevada PEP, Grant a Gift Autism Foundation, etc.).

Most Significant Employment Concerns

Focus group participants were asked to describe what was most worrisome in regards to individuals with I/DD working. The following list of worries was identified:

- Acquiring/having the skills necessary to be successful on the job.
- Access to a long-term job coach (not based on a random timeframe of service eligibility).
- Being provided adequate supports/accommodations in the workplace.
- Being able to make a livable wage with no taxpayer subsidies.
- Losing benefits because of income earned.
- Safety concerns: Will the workplace be a safe place for individuals with I/DD?
- The need for a standard (predictable) schedule.
- Transportation to/from work.
- Lack of employment options/choices.
- Acceptance from employer and co-workers.
- Appropriate expectations from employers.
- Dignified placement in an integrated environment.
- Being able to navigate social circumstances.

“I am worried that people will not recognize all the things that I can do.”

Satisfaction with Services

- Participants described a system in which there are limited services, often deployed late, and with limited opportunities resulting in large scale failure to meet the employment needs of individuals with I/DD.
 - Limited Services: There is a limited amount of services available for skills development, job training, employment placement, and job coaching. More resources are needed to support additional service options.
 - Deployed Late: Transitional planning in schools and access to Voc Rehab/Regional Center support are often provided late. Transitional planning in school is described as occurring just six months prior to graduation, while adult employment services suffer from a long enrollment process and a significant wait list.
 - Limited Opportunities: There are not enough options for individuals with I/DD in the workplace. Job placements typically fall within a limited category of employment opportunities. Furthermore, participants describe a system that takes a “take it or leave it” approach, offering what is available, but not customizing the services or approach to meet the needs of its consumer/client base.
- In one focus group, the system was described as a place where people’s choices are taken away from them, and one in which the system is controlling them rather than empowering them.
- In the rural areas, there is a limited range of services available through Voc Rehab, the Regional Center, and Public Transportation providers.
- Many participants described the need to develop a customized approach to serving individuals with I/DD in their employment needs. Developing a thorough assessment process that identified both a person’s interest and capacity, and provides training supports and placement that matches those attributes is what is needed for successful long-term integrated employment.

Improvement Recommendations

- Establishment of a job carving initiative: More effort should be placed on establishing job carving opportunities for individuals with I/DD in multiple work settings.
- Employer incentives and supports:
 - Employer hiring incentives: provision of tax incentives to employers that hire individuals with I/DD.
 - Co-worker incentives: provision of a workplace stipend to mentor and support co-workers with I/DD in the workplace.

- Job site placement supports: provision of information and education among employers and co-workers about the individual needs of people with I/DD in the workplace. Access to supports when challenges arise.
- Person-centered planning: Implementation of a person-centered planning approach by Voc Rehab and the Regional Center that includes:
 - Thorough employment assessments which identify an individual's interests and skill sets.
 - Customized employment options to ensure job placement is a "good fit."
 - Individualized supports that are not standardized, but rather based on an individual's needs (such as access to a job coach, health supports, assistive technologies).
- Increased outreach and awareness: Establish a public education campaign meant to develop an understanding, sensitivity and value for individuals of all abilities and the need for integrated employment.
- Benefits protection: SSI benefits need to be protected against income earned to support access to needed supports that contribute to an adequate quality of life.
- Increased coordination: Families, schools, community providers, and state agencies need to coordinate efforts in the development of a streamlined system of services and improved outcomes.
- State sponsored employment pilot: The state should act as a pilot in conducting job carving and widespread employment of individuals with I/DD so as to model how efforts may be successful.
- Provision of assistive technologies in the workplace: Providing assistive technologies in the workplace will increase opportunities and the likelihood for success for individuals with I/DD in the workplace.
- Provision of life skills training: Providing life skills training will help people interact in the workplace and assist with successful integration. This service component can be added to day habilitation settings and the Voc Rehab slate of services.
- Establishment of outcomes tied to longevity and satisfaction in the workplace: Service systems should develop an outcomes-based system that is tied to actual progress in developing and integrated employment culture.

CONSUMER SURVEY

Consumer surveys were issued to consumers, family members, care providers, and advocates to solicit input regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the current system as well as their suggested priorities for action related to employment services and supports.



SURVEY RESPONDENTS PROFILE

AFFILIATION

The survey asked respondents to identify a category that best described their profile/affiliation. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants and exceed 100% as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple affiliations.

Representation (n=328)	#	%
Consumer	160	48.6%
Person helping consumer complete the survey	41*	12.5%
Parent or family member of a consumer	114	34.7%
Care giver	52	15.8%
Advocate	43	13.1%

*Ten of the 41 persons who marked they were helping a consumer complete the survey also marked that they represented a consumer as well. To avoid duplication responses from persons helping a consumer complete the survey were not combined with consumer responses.

The majority of all survey respondents were consumers for all regions except Clark County whose respondents were primarily parents or family members of a consumer.

GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

Respondents were asked to identify the county that they live in. For the larger metropolitan areas of Clark and Washoe County, they were also asked to identify zip code. Responses that included zip codes can be found in Appendix I.

Geography	Total (n=346)		Consumers (n=159)	
	#	%	#	%
Washoe	50	14.5%	37	23.3%
Clark	190	54.9%	52	32.7%
Carson City	37	10.7%	26	16.3%
Balance of State	69	19.9%	44	27.7%

Counties within Nevada's Balance of State regions include Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Esmeralda, Humboldt, Lyon, Nye, Pershing, and Storey. Four of Nevada's 17 counties did not have survey respondents.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

GENDER AND ETHNICITY

Demographic Profile		
Gender (n=339)	#	%
Male	134	39.5%
Female	205	60.5%

Demographic Profile		
Ethnicity (n=314)	#	%
Non-Hispanic/Latino	266	84.7%
Hispanic/Latino	48	15.3%

More females than males responded to the survey and the majority of respondents were non-Hispanic.

RACE

Race	Survey Respondents (n=325)		Consumers (n=147)		Nevada Population with Disability (n=320,844)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
White	255	78.4%	118	80.3%	247,995	77.3%
Black or African American	37	11.4%	14	9.5%	30,054	9.4%
Asian	10	3.1%	2	1.4%	16,284	5.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	7	2.2%	5	3.4%	5,397	1.7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	0.6%	0	0.0%	1,661	0.5%
Multiple Races	14	4.3%	8	5.4%	19,453	6.0%

There were no significant differences in the demographic profile among the counties. Race breakout of survey respondents and consumers were representative of Nevada’s population with disability with differences no greater than 3.7%.

AGE

Respondents were asked to identify their age to determine if they fell within the target population to be served by the integrated employment plan. Consumer responses were filtered to identify their age ranges specifically.

Age Breakout by Consumer	Total (n=343)		Consumers (n=158)	
	#	%	#	%
Under 5 years	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
5 to 17 years	5	1.5%	3	1.9%
18 to 24 years	51	14.9%	32	20.2%
25 to 44 years	161	46.9%	81	51.3%
45 to 64 years	110	32.1%	36	22.8%
65 and over	16	4.6%	6	3.8%

Consumers represented a younger age range than survey respondents overall with more falling within the age range that would likely be interested in integrated employment services.

SERVICES RECEIVED

Respondents were asked to identify the services they had received to help gain integrated employment. In the case of advocates or family members, they were asked to select the services that they, or someone they knew, had received. The top three services received by all respondents are listed below. Percentages may exceed 100% because the question asked participants to “check all that apply.” Responses are filtered by geographic area. While percentages varied by area, the top three services were largely the same statewide.

Top 3 Services Received	Washoe (n=49)		Clark (n=179)		Carson (n=37)		Balance of State (n=69)		Total (n=343)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Assessments of job skills and abilities	42	85.7%	122	68.2%	19	51.4%	46	66.7%	233	67.9%
Assistance with job search and placement	41	83.7%	92	51.4%	15	40.5%	33	47.8%	183	53.4%
Jobs and Day Training (workshop/training center)	30	61.2%	77	43.0%	25	67.6%	40	58.0%	172	50.2%

Top 3 Services Received for Washoe County	Services	#	%
Washoe County (n=49)	Assessments of job skills and abilities	42	85.7%
	Assistance with job search and placement	41	83.7%
	Job readiness skills training and assistance	37	75.5%

Top 3 Services Received for Clark County	Services	#	%
Clark County (n=179)	Assessments of job skills and abilities	122	68.2%
	Assistance with job search and placement	92	51.4%
	Jobs and Day Training (workshop/training center)	77	43.0%

Top 3 Services Received for Carson City	Services	#	%
Carson City (n=37)	Jobs and Day Training (workshop/training center)	25	67.6%
	Supported Living	23	62.2%
	Transportation as needed to attend appointments for services	21	56.8%
	Transportation: general	21	56.8%

Top 3 Services Received for Balance of the State	Services	#	%
Balance of the State (n=69)	Assessments of job skills and abilities	46	66.7%
	Jobs and Day Training (workshop/training center)	40	58.0%
	Transportation as needed to attend appointments for services	39	56.5%

Top 3 Services – Consumer vs All Respondents	Consumer (n=158)		Total (n=343)	
	#	%	#	%
Assessments of job skills and abilities	114	72.2%	233	67.9%
Assistance with job search and placement	88	55.7%	183	53.4%
Jobs and Day Training (workshop/training center)	84	53.2%	172	50.2%

The top three services used between consumers and all respondents were the same.

The top service used was either “assessments of job skills and abilities” or “assistance with job search and placement” with over 60% of respondents for all regions, except for Carson City. Most used services for Carson City were “jobs and day training,” “supported living,” and “transportation services.”

RESULTS

MOST SIGNIFICANT ISSUES TO ADDRESS

Respondents were asked to rate issues, in order of importance, which needed to be addressed. The top three issues rated by all respondents are listed below. Rating was scaled between 1 and 5 with 1 as not important and 5 as most important.

Top 3 Significant Issues to Address – Average Ratings (Higher is more significant)	Washoe	Clark	Carson	Balance of State	Total
E. Work in a job they like	4.21 (n=47)	4.59 (n=167)	4.42 (n=33)	4.16 (n=61)	4.43 (n=308)
C. Have the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do	4.47 (n=45)	4.25 (n=165)	4.19 (n=32)	4.05 (n=60)	4.24 (n=302)
G. Have choices in applying for jobs	4.43 (n=47)	4.30 (n=164)	4.07 (n=28)	3.86 (n=58)	4.22 (n=297)

Top 3 Issues for Washoe County	Issues	n	Rating
Washoe County	B. Work in a competitive job in the community	23	4.48
	C. Have the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do	45	4.47
	G. Have choices in applying for jobs	47	4.43

Top 3 Issues for Clark County	Issues	n	Rating
Clark County	E. Work in a job they like	167	4.59
	H. Have access to job training resources	164	4.32
	G. Have choices in applying for jobs	164	4.30

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Top 3 Issues for Carson City	Issues	n	Rating
Carson City	E. Work in a job they like	33	4.42
	C. Have the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do	32	4.19
	D. Have the opportunity to earn minimum wage or higher	32	4.16

Top 3 Issues for Balance of the State	Issues	n	Rating
Balance of the State	E. Work in a job they like	61	4.16
	C. Have the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do	60	4.05
	H. Have access to job training resources	59	3.88

A comparison was made to determine if consumer responses matched the statewide responses of all persons who completed a survey.

Top 3 Significant Issues to Address – Consumer vs All Respondents (Higher is more significant)	Consumer	Total
E. Work in a job they like	4.26 (n=149)	4.43 (n=308)
C. Have the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do	4.23 (n=144)	4.24 (n=302)
G. Have choices in applying for jobs	4.10 (n=139)	4.22 (n=297)
D. Have the opportunity to earn minimum wage or higher	4.11 (n=147)	4.01 (n=299)

The top three issues for consumers were similar to all respondents, but were rated as less significant. All respondents chose “have choices in applying for jobs” as the number three services while consumers chose “the opportunity to earn minimum wage or higher” for their number three service.

“Work in a job they like” was the most significant issue to be addressed among Clark County, Carson City, and the balance of the state while Washoe County’s most significant issue was to “work in a competitive job in the community.” Top issues for all regions were job related. The rural counties ranked issues with less importance compared to the other counties.

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Respondents were asked to rate services and supports based on how well they were implemented. The lowest rated services by all respondents are listed below. Services were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 as not well at all and 5 as very well.

Bottom 3 Existing Services and Supports Rating Averages (Higher is better)	Washoe	Clark	Carson	Balance of State	Total
E. Individuals and their families or support system) are helped to transition to college	3.67 (n=30)	2.54 (n=116)	3.33 (n=12)	2.57 (n=30)	2.78 (n=188)

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Bottom 3 Existing Services and Supports Rating Averages (Higher is better)	Washoe	Clark	Carson	Balance of State	Total
D. Individuals and their families or support system) are helped to plan for college	3.97 (n=31)	2.55 (n=118)	3.45 (n=11)	2.53 (n=34)	2.82 (n=194)
B. Individuals are encouraged to dream about their future while in school	4.19 (n=36)	3.11 (n=131)	4.20 (n=10)	2.70 (n=40)	3.26 (n=217)

Bottom 3 Existing Services for Washoe County	Services	n	Rating
Washoe County	H. Have the level of quality in the supports they receive to get and maintain a job	37	3.35
	M. Have easy access to transportation to get to and from a job	44	3.61
	E. (And their families or support system) are helped to transition to college	30	3.67

Bottom 3 Existing Services for Clark County	Services	n	Rating
Clark County	E. (And their families or support system) are helped to transition to college	116	2.54
	D. (And their families or support system) are helped to plan for college	118	2.55
	B. Are encouraged to dream about their future while in school	131	3.11

Bottom 3 Existing Services for Carson City	Services	n	Rating
Carson City	E. (And their families or support system) are helped to transition to college	12	3.33
	D. (And their families or support system) are helped to plan for college	11	3.45

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Bottom 3 Existing Services for Carson City	Services	n	Rating
	J. Access to equipment or devices that would help them get and keep a job	25	3.56

Bottom 3 Existing Services for Balance of the State	Services	n	Rating
Balance of the State	D. (And their families or support system) are helped to plan for college	34	2.53
	E. (And their families or support system) are helped to transition to college	30	2.57
	B. Are encouraged to dream about their future while in school	40	2.70

Bottom 3 Existing Services and Supports Rating – Consumer vs All Respondents (Higher is better)	Consumer	Total
E. (And their families or support system) are helped to transition to college	2.85 (n=78)	2.78 (n=188)
D. (And their families or support system) are helped to plan for college	2.84 (n=82)	2.82 (n=194)
B. Are encouraged to dream about their future while in school	2.34 (n=88)	3.26 (n=217)

Bottom services between consumers and all respondents were the same and were related to education. Help with a college plan and help with college transition were rated the lowest among all regions except Washoe County where job transportation and job support to get or maintain a job were the lowest.

Washoe County and Carson City had higher ratings for how well they believed their bottom three services were implemented compared to Clark County, balance of the state, and the consumers.

Please rate how successful businesses in your community (in Nevada) are with hiring persons with I/DD:

Hiring persons with I/DD	Washoe (n=46)		Clark (n=175)		Carson (n=31)		Balance of State (n=59)		Total (n=315)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not well	11	23.9%	63	36.0%	11	35.5%	36	61.0%	123	39.1%
Neutral	12	26.1%	61	34.8%	4	12.9%	7	11.9%	84	26.7%
Very well	7	15.2%	18	10.3%	5	16.1%	7	11.9%	37	11.7%

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Hiring persons with I/DD	Washoe (n=46)		Clark (n=175)		Carson (n=31)		Balance of State (n=59)		Total (n=315)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Don't Know	16	34.8%	33	18.9%	11	35.5%	9	15.2%	71	22.5%

More than half of the respondents (61.0%) of the balance of the state believed businesses performed not well when hiring persons with I/DD. The majority of Clark County and Carson City respondents also believed businesses performed not well (36.0% and 35.5%, respectively) while the majority of Washoe County respondents were neutral on the subject. However, more Washoe County respondents believed businesses performed not well for hiring those with I/DD compared to very well (23.9% compared to 15.2%).

Hiring persons with I/DD	Consumer (n=140)		Total (n=315)	
	#	%	#	%
Not well	53	37.8%	123	39.1%
Neutral	25	17.9%	84	26.7%
Very well	22	15.7%	37	11.7%
Don't Know	40	28.6%	71	22.5%

There were small differences in responses between consumers and all respondents. A larger percentage of consumers believed businesses performed very well in hiring persons with I/DD compared to all respondents (15.7% compared to 11.7%).

Assistance for businesses that hire those with I/DD

Respondents rated how well businesses received assistance and support for hiring a person with I/DD. Types of assistance are listed in order of highest rating by all respondents. Ratings were on a scale between 1 and 5 with 1 as not well at all and 5 as very well.

Assistance for Businesses Averages	Washoe	Clark	Carson	Balance of State	Total
B. Support to businesses after they have hired a person with I/DD	3.58 (n=31)	2.47 (n=116)	3.10 (n=20)	2.26 (n=19)	2.66 (n=206)
A. Assistance to businesses in helping them to understand about hiring a person with I/DD	3.23 (n=30)	2.36 (n=126)	2.75 (n=20)	2.63 (n=40)	2.56 (n=216)

Washoe County respondents rated the items higher than the other regions with a score of 3.23 for “assistance to businesses in helping them to understand about hiring a person with I/DD” and 3.58 for “support to businesses after they have hired a person with I/DD.”

“Helping them to understand about hiring a person with I/DD” scored lower than “support after hiring a person with I/DD” for all regions except balance of the state.

Assistance for Businesses Averages	Consumer	Total
B. Support to businesses after they have hired a person with I/DD	2.76 (n=88)	2.66 (n=206)

Assistance for Businesses Averages	Consumer	Total
A. Assistance to businesses in helping them to understand about hiring a person with I/DD	2.69 (n=90)	2.56 (n=216)

The highest rating for assistance to businesses was 2.76 from consumers and consumers rated support to businesses higher than all respondents (2.76 compared to 2.66 and 2.69 compared to 2.56).

Detailed comments on surveys and tables can be found in Appendix A.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SURVEY COMMENTS AND DETAILED TABLES

Comments

The list below contains comments left by survey respondents and the area of the state the respondent resided in. Comments are provided verbatim.

Washoe:

- Having worked in different states with different placement programs Nevada excels in some areas but lacks in others. NV is lacking in job placement opportunities for people with I/DD, but has excellent services for people with I/DD compared to other states.
- On the citifare bus they need more walker spaces on the buses and more wheelchair spaces.
- The lions share of funding that could support expansion of community based services are hostage to ever growing monopolistic sheltered workshop systems in Nevada. When 4 of 5 young adults report being consigned to segregated sheltered workshops immediately after graduation, there are no real options. Other students sit for years after high school waiting for other options that don't exist. Many of them land in segregation as well out of family desperation.
- Nevada has some big challenge, the biggest of which is school inclusion. Close Piccolo and get those kids into traditional settings. It's not our kids with I/DD that are the barrier. It's the whole community of people raised here that have had little to no exposure to people with I/DD and their fears, intolerance, and poor understanding. Expose the next generation of "typicals" to those with I/DD at a very young age and in 20 years you will have a greater acceptance in the work force. Secondly, other states use a variety of professionals (i.e. people with college degrees and licenses) - not just BCBA's and people with a (non-licensed) degree in child development or BS in psychology to do this work. My profession (OT) and speech therapists are two of the "biggies" in other areas, but are for the most part missing from the table altogether in Nevada, starting with the schools. We are uniquely qualified to address all areas of function required for success on the job: physical (fine and gross motor), cognitive, behavioral, socio-emotional. Yet Nevada is heavily driven by behavioral services. I have no argument with a well-devised behavioral plan, but it cannot be the only professional steering services, and in fact should be collaborative or else the final "finishing" piece to the program. For many consumers, this is like putting the cart before that horse. The third big problem is our Nursing regulations and lack of developmental nurse specialists in Nevada. This creates an artificial and regulatory barrier for those who need nursing services daily.
- Opportunities tend to diminish to virtually zero after a student with severe cognitive disabilities becomes "case managed" by the state; considerations after graduation for individuals made strictly on funding rather than individual's desires. Transportation and funding the 2 most influential factor's that cause individuals with severe disabilities to have to remain at home after graduation; post-graduation services for this population are very poor.

Clark:

- thank you... u know NV could do a better job w/all children/adults looking for wage earning satisfaction...sooo the fact that NV has extremely limited services for a person w/I/DD is no surprise and frankly both scenarios are not acceptable...i have always advocated for my I/DD daughter sooo her services are good....the fact that

the school system does not recognize the need to ready our children for employment practically & emotionally is a social tragedy.. xoxo

- There is nothing in my community to help I/DD!
- Under my son's circumstances. It was difficult to answer these questions.
- Thanks to Opportunity Village, our daughter is training every day to do better job, and feel important.
- Before leaving Minnesota and living in Nevada (since 2001) [Name] always had jobs where he had interaction with the public, McDonalds, Olive Garden, Eddies Pizza. [Name] is very personable and loved the interaction with customers. I have been told that Nevada does not have these same opportunities. When he worked at Bahama Breeze he had to enter/leave from the back so customers wouldn't see them. (They even got angry at me for going in the front door when picking him up 1 day). When he worked at Banana Republic they kept them in a basement, away from the public. Seems to me Nevada business are ashamed of people with disabilities. When he worked at Garden Olive his hours were early morning so that they would be gone before the restaurant opened. When he worked at Olive Garden in Minnesota he bussed tables, did salad area, and assisted servers. The public and servers were wonderful to [Name] and he loved that interaction with the public; joking, laughing, teasing, helping. It was awesome for him. When [Name] worked at Olive Garden here, I asked if he could work his way into other responsibilities, beside just rolling silverware for 3 hrs. before opening, and was told "it is not allowed here." It is very sad Nevada doesn't appreciate all that persons with special needs can offer.
- I work at movie theatre and like it.
- Waiting lists and limited funding pose major problems.
- We need more programs to assist ALL individuals with intellectual disabilities integrate within the community, find and maintain appropriate employment within the boundaries of their abilities and disabilities.
- My son is in a program called Project Enable at Opportunity Village and could never function in a community based integrated employment position. He is developmentally and physically handicapped with some autism tendencies.
- [Name] is happy doing his job at Transition Services working for [Name] and [Name] has been very helpful to us in anything I have asked her to do. And any questions.
- [Name] has never worked outside the OV program. She needs transportation!
- Opportunity Village is a great support for families in Henderson NV.
- Opportunity Village is focus on my son ability to work.
- This OV facility is very helpful in assisting disabled individuals as well as the families in keeping this unfortunate individual to live up or reached their maximum potential. My son is very disabled and cannot be sent to the community to work. He needs one on one assistance for his activities in daily life.
- All companies should hire people with disabilities All companies should have a job coach for disabled. All companies should have job training All companies should have opportunities for job advancement.
- We are new to the area.
- Just glad Richard got a job at OV and doing his best.
- a) Moved to NV with parents/guardians who retired here - did not attend school in NV b) attended sheltered workshop under Title XIX waiver program in PA since 21.
- Opportunity Village and Easter Seals have great programs and have seemed to have mastered this disability. The next step would be to have those get into college instead of putting coat hangers in a box until they die. Let's think outside of the box and give them an education.
- I believe that people with mental disability that are strong functional are lost in the system in the state of Nevada.
- It is so important that people with disabilities are able to succeed in the community. Currently most education, training, and job opportunities occur in contained environments. How is society going to be able to value each individual, if those individuals are unable work, live and contribute to their community?

- My son wants to be an active, participating member of his community. He enjoys interacting with his typical peers. After elementary school this becomes increasingly more difficult in the systems in place in Nevada. I feel as though parents are forced into signing off on IEP's that are not in the least restrictive environment because Nevada does not have opportunities available. When they leave high school there are not college opportunities available like in other states so the students become housed in self-contained classes on high school campuses in which they do not belong. It then becomes hard to be in integrated competitive employment and hopes and dreams stifled.
- We need work. When we work we feel better, when we feel like productive members of society we have less health issues. Get companies to hire us. Hire job developers that put people to work not just get \$200-300 for meeting with someone. Disabled people can work we can offer support and be job successful. Get us in the job not at minimum wage no one can live of that if our dream is to be independent from SSDI. Get us Schedule A federal job placement. According to Executive Order 13578 the federal government wants to hire I/DD. So make it happen. I want a Veterans Affairs job I got the contact and my counselor sat on this for 1.5 years and she still hasn't done anything. They were quick to write a Schedule A letter and then they have done nothing to secure employment placement for me...just pass the buck. She communicated with the hiring authority who said he was interested in setting up a program, but then she never contacted him back again and it has been 1.5 years. When asked for update she said my case load is too busy now and it's not my job to get you employed. With counselors burned out you need to hire more people that really want to do their job instead of sit in a closed door all day and take intakes for budgets to be maintained. WE WANT JOBS!!!! And independent lifestyles Counselors make 64-120K a year to do nothing but intakes. Get us jobs not just lip service, and then lies and close our cases.
- Nevada is very behind many other states in employing persons with disabilities in competitive integrated employment settings. Too many years of the same offer of 10 cents an hour is what many persons with disabilities have experienced. I want my child to have options and a chance to make minimum wage. I want a future for my child. I will not encourage my child to experience servitude environments that do not allow for her to gain new skills or experience growth. We need to change the attitude of many service providers and teach them about high expectations for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities have a tremendous amount to share with the community. They should not be hidden away in institutional type settings.
- Need braces for drop-foot. Had to pay 600.00 out of pouch.
- Nevada needs to get rid of companies that pay persons pennies and the bosses lots of money. I want help in getting a job and help learning the job. I am frustrated with counselors that do not think I can be a good worker. I want help and then I will do a good job. Other people in this country are given a chance. Why not in Nevada?
- My daughter worked at local Smiths market. She quit for the second time due to lack of support. Initial hiring manager was awesome, but once working, there was a lack of understanding to the individual. She felt "less than" affecting her self-esteem and quit blaming it on painful feet. Co-workers had a complete lack of understanding or empathy. She was told they would hire her back but she requires friendly, understanding loving people and the world is not filled with them. We will forever be grateful to [Name] from DRC for her years of support and guidance. She is HELPING LIVES!!! Thank you
- My daughter is in the Art Program at OV Patrick. She loves the program.
- I am seriously impacted with autism, some intellectual disability, and epilepsy. I am unable to speak, read or write. I am physically strong with good gross and fine motor skills, but I lack a sense of danger which puts me at risk of stepping in front of moving vehicles, being harmed by machinery or being abused by others. The most important thing for me is my right to choose the work I do and the setting in which I do it.
- I am pleased to help fill this form out for [Name]. He can't speak for himself. I've felt for several years, since he started to work 5 days a week that it was a "shame" and "abusive" that he doesn't work for the minimum wage. I am also, non-satisfied with Paratransit Service's expensive "monthly pass" for a limited amount of rides -and the \$3 one way fare! Sincerely, XXX-Parent

- BVR is a joke. Need more counselors and vendors with practical experience with general I/DD and, more specifically, ASD.
- Opportunity Village is the most amazing place for my mentally challenged and legally blind brother and sister. They love working there so much; they never want to be absent and are proud that they earn perfect attendance. It is the best!
- I am not sure on a lot of these services as have not been acquainted with them as of yet.
- This was very confusing &... Assistance please?
- It is time to address this piece rate work that people with disabilities are paid. There should be incentives to work hard and pay that allows for more financial independence. Is this piece rate ever adjusted for inflation? Is there ever merit pay based upon good work habits?
- What's up with question 6 ?????? Why not include it in question 7 ????????
- The school district (CCSD) needs to improve their communications with families in educating them on services, job training, and options available to individuals with intellectual disabilities. Unfortunately they are more ignorant than many parents. The MOST important thing is for IID is that they have choices and are not forced into either integrated or workshop or training or arts program. Individuals without intellectual disabilities are free to pursue the arts or recreation or workshop-style employment instead of higher paying jobs they may not like.
- The work you are doing is critically important - but for more than 20 years we have been asked these questions, reports are created, plans are developed, yet it only gets worse. This is a topic that needs thought and planning and support from numerous constituencies. DVR is an incredible stumbling block when compared to the nation. PLEASE make this the last survey and do something that makes a difference.
- There needs to be more opportunities to inform and teach employers about individuals with disabilities and how they can be integrated in the workforce. These individuals will be some of the best employees out there.
- I personally believe parents have to advocate for this information. Many times I have had access to this information because transition is important to me. However, if you have no clue about resources available to you within your community, the information is not provided.
- Nevada continues to ignore people with disabilities. It is dead last in providing supports and training---in school or out of school. Nationally, we continue to be a joke with parents, educators, and researchers. It has become embarrassing to tell people where I live when I work with other states and researchers nationally. Nevada just does not care about a good education.
- I think it's very important to open many doors available to individuals with I/DD in our community. Education is definitely key for community businesses. I also think it's extremely important to find jobs that focus on individual interest and abilities which is not always the case. If we did more of this it would promote longevity with jobs.

Carson:

- Truly I am appreciated with my social worker [Name]... Always helpful and very attentive to my needs and [Name]
- Mucho comentario, no lo sé. // Much comment, I don't know.
- Starbucks!

Balance of State:

- I'm trying to start and ask questions now.
- Some of the questions I really don't understand. I had some college courses but had to quit because they don't offer them in Fallon or they are online. With my disability I need to be in a classroom with a teacher.
- Key Locket Shirts
- My thought is due to insurance liabilities. The businesses are afraid to hire individuals with disabilities. That is what I have been told.
- Nevada's schools need to get better at teaching job skills in a student's area of interest. Until then VocRehab needs to provide training for job skills. In my case this would require the expertise of a BCBA and staff capable of teaching me the necessary job skills as well as coping skills developed by the BCBA.
- It is very hard for a disabled person in Elko, NV. to get and maintain a job. To a lot of people the lack of skills they have are an "inconvenience" to others. Some are seen as "stealing" hours that could be given to people without disabilities.
- We have no services available in our area. We went to Vegas for job class. Wasn't helpful at all.

Identify programs or services you have received or that you are familiar with because someone you know received the services. (Check all that apply)

Services Received	Washoe (n=49)		Clark (n=179)		Carson (n=37)		Balance of State (n=69)		Total (n=343)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Assessments of job skills and abilities	42	85.7%	122	68.2%	19	51.4%	46	66.7%	233	67.9%
Assistance with job search and placement	41	83.7%	92	51.4%	15	40.5%	33	47.8%	183	53.4%
Assistive technology (cane, wheelchair, computer, applications & software, etc.)	34	69.4%	59	33.0%	10	27.0%	17	24.6%	121	35.3%
Career counseling and guidance	21	42.9%	43	24.0%	10	27.0%	20	29.0%	94	27.4%
College/University education	20	40.8%	28	15.6%	6	16.2%	10	14.5%	64	18.7%
Employing Job Developers to assist with job placement	25	51.0%	48	26.8%	8	21.6%	23	33.3%	105	30.6%
Interpreter and communication services	12	24.5%	30	16.8%	6	16.2%	8	11.6%	56	16.3%
Job Coaching	26	53.1%	70	39.1%	19	51.4%	37	53.6%	158	46.1%
Job readiness skills training and assistance	37	75.5%	71	40.0%	10	27.0%	34	49.3%	152	44.3%
Job-required licenses, tools, equipment and supplies	15	30.6%	26	15.5%	5	13.5%	14	20.3%	60	17.5%
Jobs and Day Training (workshop/training center)	30	61.2%	77	43.0%	25	17.6%	40	58.0%	172	50.2%
Mental health Counseling	17	34.7%	50	27.9%	15	40.5%	28	40.6%	110	32.1%

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Services Received	Washoe (n=49)		Clark (n=179)		Carson (n=37)		Balance of State (n=69)		Total (n=343)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Mobility services for individuals with visual impairments	10	20.4%	26	14.5%	7	18.9%	6	8.7%	49	14.3%
Nursing	9	18.4%	19	10.6%	10	27.0%	15	21.7%	53	15.5%
Physical and mental restoration medical services & procedures	9	18.4%	22	12.3%	4	10.8%	12	17.4%	47	13.7%
Supported Employment (On-going support services on the job or follow-along services after employed)	21	42.9%	58	32.4%	11	29.7%	20	29.0%	110	32.1%
Supported Living	28	57.1%	62	34.6%	23	62.2%	32	46.4%	145	42.3%
Training, skills enhancement, certificate programs	16	32.7%	36	20.1%	4	10.8%	7	10.1%	63	18.4%
Transitioning students with disabilities from high school to college or jobs	23	46.9%	51	28.5%	8	21.6%	12	17.4%	94	27.4%
Transportation as needed to attend appointments for services	24	49.0%	68	38.0%	21	56.8%	39	56.5%	153	44.6%
Transportation: general	20	40.8%	71	39.7%	21	56.8%	34	49.3%	147	42.9%

To identify the issues that should be addressed in promoting competitive, integrated employment, please rate how important the following are to you: 1 being not important 3 being neutral 5 being most important N/A –Not applicable DK for Don’t Know Individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD):

Significant Issues to Address – Average Ratings (Higher is more significant)	Washoe	Clark	Carson	Balance of State	Total
A. Are visibly included in traditional schools	4.08 (n=24)	4.02 (n=135)	3.50 (n=16)	3.79 (n=34)	3.95 (n=209)
B. Work in a competitive job in the community	4.48 (n=23)	3.99 (n=154)	3.67 (n=30)	3.61 (n=56)	3.92 (n=263)
C. Have the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do	4.47 (n=45)	4.25 (n=165)	4.19 (n=32)	4.05 (n=60)	4.24 (n=302)
D. Have the opportunity to earn minimum wage or higher	4.42 (n=45)	3.99 (n=159)	4.16 (n=32)	3.70 (n=63)	4.01 (n=299)
E. Work in a job they like	4.21 (n=47)	4.59 (n=167)	4.42 (n=33)	4.16 (n=61)	4.43 (n=308)
F. Work in a job they like whether it pays or not	3.96 (n=47)	3.94 (n=159)	3.66 (n=29)	3.75 (n=59)	3.87 (n=294)
G. Have choices in applying for jobs	4.43 (n=47)	4.30 (n=164)	4.07 (n=28)	3.86 (n=58)	4.22 (n=297)
H. Have access to job training resources	4.31 (n=48)	4.32 (n=164)	4.07 (n=30)	3.88 (n=59)	4.21 (n=301)

Please rate how successful your community (in Nevada) is with the following: 1 not well at all 3 neutral 5 very well N/A -- Not applicable DK -- Don't Know Individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD):

Existing Services and Supports Rating Averages	Washoe	Clark	Carson	Balance of State	Total
A. Are visibly included in traditional schools	4.00 (n=34)	3.24 (n=133)	4.50 (n=8)	2.94 (n=31)	3.37 (n=206)
B. Are encouraged to dream about their future while in school	4.19 (n=36)	3.11 (n=131)	4.20 (n=10)	2.70 (n=40)	3.26 (n=217)
C. Are encouraged to plan for their future while in school	3.78 (n=36)	3.13 (n=135)	4.33 (n=9)	3.33 (n=39)	3.32 (n=219)
D. (And their families or support system) are helped to plan for college	3.97 (n=31)	2.55 (n=118)	3.45 (n=11)	2.53 (n=34)	2.82 (n=194)
E. (And their families or support system) are helped to transition to college	3.67 (n=30)	2.54 (n=116)	3.33 (n=12)	2.57 (n=30)	2.78 (n=188)
F. Have supports available to help get a job	3.95 (n=42)	3.38 (n=151)	3.63 (n=27)	3.50 (n=52)	3.51 (n=272)
G. Have supports available to keep/maintain a job	3.70 (n=44)	3.42 (n=155)	3.92 (n=26)	3.49 (n=51)	3.53 (n=276)
H. Have the level of quality in the supports they receive to get and maintain a job	3.35 (n=37)	3.35 (n=150)	4.17 (n=24)	3.33 (n=55)	3.42 (n=266)
I. Have job opportunities made available to them	3.78 (n=41)	3.20 (n=152)	3.57 (n=30)	3.21 (n=56)	3.33 (n=279)
J. Access to equipment or devices that would help them get and keep a job	3.97 (n=38)	3.22 (n=137)	3.56 (n=25)	3.31 (n=51)	3.39 (n=251)
K. Have job training resources available to them	4.33 (n=39)	3.34 (n=148)	3.64 (n=28)	3.27 (n=55)	3.50 (n=270)
L. Have on the job training resources available to them	4.16 (n=45)	3.36 (n=154)	4.11 (n=19)	3.39 (n=59)	3.55 (n=277)
M. Have easy access to transportation to get to and from a job	3.61 (n=44)	3.35 (n=160)	4.07 (n=27)	3.40 (n=62)	3.47 (n=293)
N. Are offered quality job training resources	3.73 (n=41)	3.21 (n=155)	3.73 (n=22)	3.16 (n=51)	3.32 (n=269)

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP SITE SUMMARY REPORTS



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	Washoe County School District
Date:	January 20, 2015
Total Participants:	11

PARTICIPANTS

Roberta Langley (Provider / Job Developer)	Mary Nevin (Provider / Teacher)	Matt Burak (Provider / Principal)
Stacey Conner (Provider / Teacher)	Brandi Richmond (Provider / Teacher)	Jacque Matteoni (Provider / Special Ed Administrator)
Rob Stuart (Provider / Teacher)	Diana Crites (Provider / Teacher)	Kelly Wales (Provider / Director VOICE Program Transitional Services)
Anne Moody (Provider / Teacher)	Steve Behm (Provider / Teacher)	

Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
				11		

Men	Women
3	8

This focus group was facilitated via teleconference. While all participants were in a single location, the facilitator conducted the discussion over the phone.

WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Washoe County School District (WCSD) is a public school district providing public education to students in Washoe County, Nevada, including the cities of Reno and Sparks, and the unincorporated communities of Verdi, Incline Village, and Gerlach. The Washoe County School District is the second largest school district in Nevada with approximately 63,000 students enrolled in 93 schools.

The Special Education Student Support Services Department's mission is to ensure that the right resources, training, and supports are in place to support all children with a disability to graduate college and be career ready as well as to gain the necessary life skills to succeed throughout their life.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer's employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- We do a fairly good job of identifying kids in the school system.
 - We use a multidisciplinary process with a variety of different data points and perspectives.
 - Administrative code must be followed when classifying kids with I/DD.
 - Developmental disabilities cannot be used to identify kids aged 6-22.
- Schools are the primary source for identification.
- Fifty percent of the population who qualifies under an intellectual disability classification was identified prior to entry into the K-12 system.
- Challenges with identification:
 - Sometimes there are challenges when we get kids from other school districts as we may use different processes for identification.
 - Sometimes counselors misinterpret transcripts received from other school districts/states. For example, California uses the term “special day class” as a component of their classification system. This is similar to our classification of a “resource class.” If the counselor doesn't know this bridge, they may classify the child into an inappropriate placement.

- California’s version is more inclusive and not as clearly defined for Nevada purposes.
 - Language can behave as a barrier when we are serving kids whose primary language is not English. Parents sometimes can be intimidated by the paperwork or fearful due to their immigration status.
 - Sometimes parents behave as barriers. Parents sometimes don’t understand or are resistant to acknowledging that their child has I/DD. There are also cultural considerations that can get in the way (with the Native American/Hispanic populations).
- We could do a better job of finding an appropriate assessment that identified the needs of a student.

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for a child’s movement through and beyond the K-12 system.

- More Parent Involvement: Parents need to be more involved in the education process and beyond.
 - Sometimes parents are intimidated by school system/use of acronyms.
 - Sometimes families are in denial of their child’s aptitude.
 - Sometimes parents have their own disabilities.
 - Sometimes parents are overwhelmed.
- There needs to be more communication about the services that are available amongst parents, teachers, and school staff.
 - Schools need to get better at communicating with parents about what their kids are capable of doing beyond high school. Need to develop a consistent approach with simple language.
 - We need to do a better job of regularly engaging in real conversations with kids and families about what they are going to do after high school.
- Need more resources for kids when they leave school for work options.
- Students need to be provided with a variety of different work experiences while they are in school to help them for transitioning into the work world.
 - Vocational training exploration would be helpful to allow kids this opportunity.
- School is working on development of a “Transitional Wheel.” This will show families what kind of services/supports are needed throughout their K-12 experience. It will be expensive to produce, but useful for schools and families alike. It will be available statewide.
- As a school system, we don’t often pay enough attention or devote enough resources to transitioning kids with I/DD for life beyond high school. We begin preparing typical kids

for college, trade schools, etc., at a very early stage, however we do not mirror this approach for kids with I/DD.

- Schools do provide field trips to prepare kids for transitioning to new school campuses.

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- School District teachers, counselors and administrators
 - School hosts transitional conferences, supporting parent participation
 - Teachers need to know what services are available in the community. There is staff turnover in the school system which results in the loss of institutional knowledge about community resources.
 - Parents are given limited information about transitional supports. We do not follow-up on this through our counselors.
- Community providers like Nevada PEP.
- Sierra Regional Center – the case manager is really critical. They should serve as a bridge to navigate the families throughout the system. Parents tend to be more informed when the SRC manager is intimately involved with the family.
 - Sometimes the RC staff do not have enough time to devote to providing information.
- Parents sometimes encounter challenges in understanding how things change when a child turns 18 (due to guardianship issues).

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- Regional Centers
 - They are over-worked, their funding is constantly in flux, and the resource they have to offer are limited.
 - Regional Centers have denied children services at a younger age. This sometimes serves as a barrier for parents to reapply for services as their child and their needs change.
 - Waitlists are often a barrier to services.
- School Districts
 - We do not have enough resources to meet the variety of needs of our students.
 - We do an OK job at meeting the needs of kids with intellectual disabilities. Maybe not as good for kids with other disabilities.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- We should establish outcomes to measure our own success in placing kids in college/employment beyond high school.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- Provide transportation to/from the site.
- Provide more staff with appropriate levels of training and education.
- Support clients beyond habilitation setting, and into their employment setting to encourage success.
- Services made available to take care of healthcare needs while “on the job.”

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- Transportation.
- SSI benefits being affected by their income.
- The need for reasonable accommodation.
- Lack of employment options.
- Lack of family support.
- Will they have the skills needed for employment.
- Will they be accepted by their co-workers.
- Job support beyond 90 days offered by Voc Rehab.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- School districts need to work with transit authority to do pick-ups and drop-offs at all high schools. This would help us work with students to get them to employment opportunities.
- Schools do not have access to public transportation within their area.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer’s chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- WCSSD should hire students to behave as a model employer and encourage other employers to offer these kinds of opportunities to kids with I/DD.
- Soliciting the support of large private companies to employ individuals with I/DD.
- Coordination between service providers.
- State should invest in more 3rd party cooperative agreements.
 - This opportunity provides a 4:1 match with the money coming from the Federal Reserve. The WCSSD VOICE program is funded through this program and requires no additional district dollars.
 - Clark County doesn't have any 3rd party cooperative agreements.
- Voc Rehab should do a more comprehensive assessment of needs and capacity of kids so that their placement encourages long-term success.
- More resources, services, and supports for kids with I/DD.
 - As a school district, we don't have a voice about funding allocations.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- Kids and families need to understand the concept of an “entry level job” and have realistic expectations of what their kids can do successfully.
- Kids go from being in an entitlement environment (schools) to a non-entitlement environment. We need to develop a bridge that takes them from dependence to independence.
- The state needs to look at how to maintain SSI benefits for individuals seeking/obtaining employment. This is a significant barrier to many families.
- Kids need to feel safe and valued. They have to like what they do in order to be successful.
- We need to pay attention to the deterioration of gains to assess whether kids are happy and successful in their placement beyond high school, and not just case statistics to measure our own efforts.
- We need to figure out how to work together and how to be able to share information so that we can better serve folks.



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	Easter Seals
Date:	January 22, 2015
Total Participants:	15

PARTICIPANTS

Joe Mattes	James T. Kurashige	Dañelle Sundell
Melvin Goldberg	William Carey	Diana Sundell
Alice Goldberg	Tosha L. Carey	Carolyn Young
Gay Kurashige	Kristy Doraro	John Young
Terry Taylor	Maxine Taylor	Harold Despain

Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
2	6	4	15	5	3	

Men	Women
7	8

EASTER SEALS

Easter Seals is a non-profit provider of health and human services, incorporated under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Easter Seals offers help, hope and answers to more than a million children and adults living with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other disabilities or special needs and their families each year. Children and adults with disabilities

and special needs find the highest-quality services designed to meet their individual needs when they come to Easter Seals Nevada. Teams of therapists, teachers and other health professionals help each person overcome obstacles to independence and reach his or her personal goals. Easter Seals also includes families as active members of any therapy program, and offers the support families need.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer's employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- They do a decent job of identifying kids in school. They could do a better job of preparing kids for what to do after school.

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for kid's movement through and beyond the K-12 grade system.

- Parental partnership with school district.
- Effective IEP's.
- A support network for parents.
- There needs to be more individualized attention to all kids in the classroom. Teachers are under pressure to pass kids. 5% excel, 5% fail. More focus needs to be paid to the 90% in the middle.
- More job programs.
- Better job programs.
- Better transitional supports.

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- Participants describe getting information from the following sources:
 - Schools
 - DRC: DRC did a good job of providing information.
 - Voc Rehab

- Easter Seals
- Participants describe not knowing what to do to get benefits.

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- Easter Seals: One participant voiced his frustration with the payroll system.
- College Programs: Client described wanting to go to college, but that the programs weren't good, and so he just stayed home.
- State Agencies: State agencies need to do a better job of communicating with one another.
- Bureaucratic challenges: A participant described a system in which you have to jump through a lot of governmental hoops and if you don't, you are threatened to be dropped from services.
- Access: Waitlists are significant and people are always being bumped in priority. These circumstances prevent people from being able to access services when they need them.
 - Opportunity Village: Has a waiting list that could have people waiting for years to get services.
 - Adult Day: DRC Case worker put client on waitlist for services at age 17. He is now 23 and has yet to be served.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- More staff to serve their needs.
- The system needs to identify what clients excel at to support their placement success.
- Need for more respite care.
- Affordable access to more respite services.
- More employment options, which offer better pay.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- More staff: need a lower client to staff ratio.
- Participants want the Taskforce to recognize the need for adult day services, as not everyone can get a job.

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- Who will hire us (concerns related to benefits).
- Being able to live off of minimum wage – need for better pay.
- Losing their benefits because of income. One participant described losing benefits because of employment income. It took a long time to correct the issue.
- Concern about resources being diverted from programs that serve people who can't work.
- Getting enough support through periods of transitions. Ensuring that people are provided the support they need so that they don't revert.
- Safety concerns.
- The need for a standard routine.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- Background checks for bus drivers to ensure safety.
- RTC Policy change: If a person has a seizure, RTC should stop and call 911.
- Policy change which acknowledges life's circumstances. If you call to arrange for a pick-up and then your kid gets sick, they consider it a no show.
- Busses need to run on time.
- Bus routes that come to a client's house for pick-up.
- Need more routes.
- Consistent bus driver – especially important for people with I/DD (routine).
- A more efficient system: Sometimes bus route may take 1-2 hours for a person to get to their desired destination.
- Paratransit passes for those that need to get to work.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer's chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- Not having to worry about losing Medicaid benefits due to income.
- Access to assistive technology.
- Safe and protected environment.
- Access to a job coach.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- Participants wanted the Taskforce to recognize that not everyone has the ability to get a job. They don't want the Taskforce to reduce resources (funding) for adult day services.

- Participants thought it would help people understand the issue more if they went to spend a day at adult day services (ADS).
- Multiple resources and more funding will be necessary to achieve integrated employment.



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	Opportunity Village
Date:	January 23, 2015
Total Participants:	13

PARTICIPANTS

Rosie Scott	Dan Kemple	Scott Ruggies
Reggie Daniel	Katherine Kemple	Regina D. Daniel
James Ruggles	Sarah Quinn	Sue Suran
Judith Roller	Nicholas	Christine Gregory
Jason Johnson		

Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
6		2	3		1	1

Men	Women
6	7

OPPORTUNITY VILLAGE

Opportunity Village is a not-for-profit organization that serves people in the Southern Nevada community with intellectual disabilities, to enhance their lives and the lives of the families who love them. Opportunity Village is dedicated to helping people with severe intellectual and related disabilities become the very best they can be. Through vocational training, community employment, day services, advocacy, arts and social recreation, citizens with severe disabilities are able to find new

friends, realize future career paths, seek independence and community integration and unleash creative passions.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer's employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- Participants stated that the schools don't do a very good job at identifying students with I/DD.
- Wasn't aware of job preparedness.
- Schools should provide more resources.
- Schools should prepare for life outside of college.
- Schools should place emphasis on things other than college prep.
- Schools should do a better job at integration. They say they integrate kids, but kids with I/DD have their own segregated classrooms.

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for kid's movement through and beyond the K-12 grade system.

- Knowing what information is available.
- Public service announcements.
- School funded field trips to facilitate transitions.
- Friendly, supportive people.
- Programs like job discovery.
- Ensuring that space is safe and accessible.
- Helping families plan for the future by knowing all of their options.

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- Participants identified that they are not given enough information about what exists to make good decisions.
- Job Coaches were identified as a source of information, but there are not always enough of these resources to help people sufficiently. There are not enough job coaches to assign this resource to everyone.
- Schools – sometimes kids can get involved in Voc Rehab early through partnerships with the school district
- Participants also identified a participant driven process for getting information by contacting the state to identify resources.

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- **Employment Supports:** Participants identified the need to conduct monthly evaluations to check-in with consumers regarding whether they like their current placement, or where they see themselves in the future.
- **Fit:** Sometimes consumers are not placed in jobs that suit their needs, making success difficult.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- **Community Based Placement:** Consumers would like to have jobs out in the community.
- **Dignified Treatment:** Consumers want people who are receptive to their contribution, informed about what is needed for them to be successful, and supportive.
- **Stability:** Having a more stable long-term job. One participant shared their experience of having to change jobs every three months, requiring them to learn a new bus route every time the change takes place.
- **Transportation:**
 - Free transportation to/from Opportunity Village.
 - On-time Paratransit
- **Assistive technology supports.**
- **Life Skills:** Life skills training: It would be nice if Opportunity Village would have conferences about life skills to help us outside of the job.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- Participants want to be part of a team.
- Consumers need to be shown how to do a work related activity.
- Consumers would like to see a boss that takes a “hands-on” approach.
- More social support – not leaving consumers to their own devices.
- Peer integration opportunities.

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- Being able to focus on their job.
- Learning how to do what the job requires.
- Equipment – knowing the rules and how to operate them.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- **Timely Service:** Consumers describe an RT system that often runs late, making them tardy to the worksite or doctors’ appointments.
- **Additional Routes with Direct Service:** Consumers describe a system in which it may take 2-3 hours to get to the desired destination, making it difficult to use.
- **Good Customer Service:** Consumers describe a system in which buses can run notoriously late, but are not willing to wait at all for folks who may need a little more time to get onto the bus. They describe a system in which it is expected that riders make accommodations as opposed to the busses making rider accommodations. They also describe some bus drivers as not nice or respectful.
- **Advanced Notice:** Consumers describe the requirement that paratransit be given 48 hours advanced notice for pick-up reservations. Sometimes this makes it difficult because you have to know exactly when and where you are going to need to be somewhere.
- **Increased Access in Rural/Unincorporated Areas:** Some service points are 26 miles away from consumers.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer’s chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- **Job Fair:** Consumers would like to be able to participate in a job fair that would allow them to access employment without having to go through an application process.
- **Employers who can tell the story of good, hard, loyal workers with I/DD.**

- Increased Public Awareness: to encourage people to understand, respect, and value people of all abilities.
- Participants identified the conditions that would make them satisfied with their employment:
 - To be able to make enough money.
 - Be able to make choices about their place of employment.
 - Be able to work hard.
 - They want to be able to do a good job.
 - They want a worksite that is a good fit for them.
 - They want the skills to be successful.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- Participants described Opportunity Village as being a “bubble” which can lead to a consumer’s anxiety for fear of not being accepted and respected in the community.
- Consumers with I/DD need to be able to meet people in the community if acceptance and integration is ever going to be possible.
- Consumers with I/DD feel like they are the minority that not one wants to talk about. They feel disregarded and want to be recognized. They want their voices to be heard.

Message to Taskforce: “We appreciate anything you can do.”



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	People First Nevada, Reno Chapter
Date:	January 26, 2015
Total Participants:	8

PARTICIPANTS

Ian Laetkehans	Blanca Ocana Perez	Ariel Hoagland
Erin Dinnell	Deidre Hammon	Travis Mills
Cherryl Dinnell	Brianna Hammon	

Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
5		8	2	2		

Men	Women
2	6

PEOPLE FIRST NEVADA

People First of Nevada is a self-advocacy group run by and for individuals with developmental differences throughout Nevada. People First of Nevada received its 501(c) 3 designation in 2005. There are currently active chapters in Reno/Sparks, Carson City, Las Vegas, Fernley, Fallon, Elko and Winnemucca as well as a statewide board. Members are involved in local issues in their communities and offer testimony and legislative advocacy to create positive systemic changes for people with disabilities in Nevada.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer's employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- The schools do a fair job at identifying kids, but will often misidentify the root cause.
- Student of color are often over-identified due to an institutional lack of cultural competence.
- Schools will often identify a child based on a “failure” of some sort. They are not proactive in their identification or strength based in their approach to serve.

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for kid's movement through and beyond the K-12 grade system.

- Access to assistive technologies.
- The system should be set up to provide a proactive customized service approach to families. They (service providers) currently come from the place of “Here is what we have, take what you need.” They need to shift their focus to “What do you need? Based on what you need, here is what we have to offer.”
- School systems need to do a better job of identifying what a family's strengths are and working to support achievement.
- What is often provided is a Band-Aid to pacify the issue.
- The state needs to look at establishing a children's waiver which would provide access to services immediately upon a diagnosis (similar to Colorado Medicaid Waiver).
- Better coordination between school districts and Voc Rehab. Currently Voc Rehab is not obligated to provide services while kids are under 18, even when they are preparing to transition. Sometimes they come to IEP meetings, but not always, and when they do come they often don't provide any follow-up. Duplication of services become an issue, and it leaves our kids unprepared.
- Develop a transitional manual that includes college programs, micro boards, competitive employment, and training/Voc Rehab evaluation resources.

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- Word of Mouth
- Supported Living Provider
- Voc Rehab
- Nevada PEP

Participants described a system in which information given is structured around what is easiest to provide and not based on what would encourage a successful placement. They also described the information gained being “person dependent” meaning that the quality and quantity an individual was given was based on the person giving it and their commitment to serve.

Individuals in the focus group also describe the challenges associated with gathering information after a child turns 18 as guardianship becomes an issue. Parents noted a frustration that a lack of guardianship doesn’t allow the families of individuals with I/DD much information, while consumers identified the guardianship issue as a barrier that doesn’t allow them to make choices for themselves.

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- Voc Rehab: Participants describe a system that does not work well in coordinating their efforts with other service providers, does not do a comprehensive assessment of a person’s skills and abilities, and one in which they are provided limited options for placement with little support for success.
- Regional Center: One person in the focus group described having a good experience with Sierra Regional Center and identified that they taught him money management skills, and independent living skills which has been very helpful.
- System is conditional. One participant described the service system as being a place where people’s choices are taken away from them. They see the system as controlling them rather than empowering them.
 - An example given was in regards to sheltered workshops. Participants describe a reality in which this option is “sold” to consumers because it is a safe and secure environment with people trained to provide assistance to folks with I/DD. The money is often tied to these providers, and thus it leaves little other choice for consumers.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- Fix Katie Beckett waiver (which includes a parental cost component). Make it similar to the adult waiver.
- Allow individuals the ability to determine where their benefits costs are going (money follows the person).
- Voc Rehab should conduct a more thorough evaluation of skills and talents as well as priority placement identification based on a good “fit.” They need to be pro-active in their placement approach and go beyond what a person’s interests are.
- Use a person centered planning approach to services.
- When sheltered workshops are utilized, they should be utilized to increase a person’s skills set and be time limited in their duration.
- Training supports provided to employers, employees, and secondary providers regarding working with individuals with I/DD.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- These environments currently focus on safety and recreational activities. People will often get “stuck” in these environments. They need to repurpose the time people spend here to increase a person’s marketable skills.
- A better job needs to be done to identify demonstrated skills acquired through training that is marketable for employment purposes. They need to conduct evaluations around items that I could put on a resume.
- They need to add a behavioral analysis support system to these settings.

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- Access to a good job coach.
- Getting adequate supports in the workplace.
- Being able to make a livable wage with no tax payer subsidies.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- There needs to be additional transportation options provided inside and outside the ADA zone.

- More routes in more areas.
- More paratransit services.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer's chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- People need more choices about where they can work.
 - Including trial work opportunities to showcase their skills and abilities.
 - Organizations need to do a better job of job carving, and government needs to lead by example.
 - Incentives should be given to employers that hire individuals with I/DD, and to co-workers that help and support these individuals on the worksite
 - More attentions should be paid to telling potential employers about the success stories associated with employing individuals with I/DD to encourage their partnership.
- People need more supports provided to them on the worksite to encourage their success.
- System need to be more responsive to the wants and needs of consumers – be consumer driven.
 - Consumers understanding what their rights are and all of the services/supports they are eligible to receive.
- We need to change people's attitude toward individuals with I/DD. They should be more accepting and not assuming about their disabilities, rather focused on their abilities.
- Access to supportive technologies on a worksite.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- One participant described the desire to see the state set measurable goals (similar to the Rhode Island settlement between DOJ and the City of Providence) in which there are measurable benchmarks to move the system from sheltered workshops to integrated work settings.



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	Azulblue
Date:	January 27, 2015
Total Participants:	13

PARTICIPANTS

Rosa M. Reza	Gabriela Sanchez	Luz Gonzalez
Pedro Correa	Monica Dell Orto	Angelica Montenegro
Bertha Lopez	Otilia Camargo	Olivia Nicole Espinoza
Maria Albarran	Aide Gonzalez	Unknown – Didn’t sign-in
Maria Yolanda Gonzalez		

Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
		4	11			

Men	Women
2	11

AZULBLUE

Azulblue is a Las Vegas based non-profit organization that provides support services to families with autism. Services include; parent orientations, monthly education workshops, soccer and basketball camps, teen’s inclusion group, ladies breakfast and support group, and DAD’s support group. The organization is fully staffed with bilingual (Spanish/English) professional enabling it to serve both populations.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer's employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

Based on the participants of this focus group, responses received were specific to children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- Participants describe two ways in which kids are identified:
 - A good teacher notifies a parent that there is a concern.
 - If a parent already has a diagnosis and advocates for their child.
- When kids are identified with I/DD, they are placed in a segregated classroom, isolating them from their typical peers.
- Multiple parents described their situation:
 - “I had to bring a note from my child’s psychologist. If I hadn’t of done that, she would have never been identified by the school. The whole time, she was being bullied, and the school felt like she was the problem.”
 - “I asked the school for resources to help my child, but I was denied. I asked about whether my child had autism, they said no. My language made it even more difficult.”

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for kid’s movement through and beyond the K-12 grade system.

- Transition from kindergarten to elementary and from elementary to middle/high school is virtually non-existent. Parents state that “their kids” are not used to these significant changes to their routine, noting that the shift from elementary to middle/high school is particularly difficult due to the noise and the amount of kids that are present in the school atmosphere.
- Parents describe a system in which the schools do not provide sufficient support for life beyond high school.

- IEP / Transition plan contains low level goals (such as getting an ID) that do not adequately prepare them for college/employment. One parent described the transition plan as “just a piece of paper” while another describes it as “a joke.”
- Schools don’t have the resources available to create opportunities or to provide the transitional supports necessary for our kids.
 - “The school treats my son well, but they just want him to move along. He is currently helping at the school, but he has no contact with other people. They are not working to prepare him for real work in the real world.”
- Schools put a Band-Aid on the issue, waiting until the child is “no longer their responsibility.”
- Schools don’t do a good job of integrated kids with different abilities. A parent describes her son’s situation, stating that while everyone knows her son at school, no one is his friend.
- There are only two to three transitional officers to serve the entire Clark County school district. One parent describes having to learn herself about the existence of the transitional officer in the school district. She claimed that the teacher didn’t even know they existed.
- Parents describe needing:
 - An IEP process that takes a more aggressive approach at developing a life plan for kids at the earliest age possible.
 - Transitional activities that happen six months before a transition takes place (field trips to school, preparedness for work world).
 - Kids should be given an assisted field trip to the school they will be transitioning to. There also needs to be some preparation/allowance for families to allow them to escort children on campus for a period of time until that child feels comfortable to manage independently.
 - College as an option. Parents describe a system in which college is not offered as an option to kids, and thus they are not provided with supports to access this beyond high school.
 - More options for life beyond high school. Parents state that there are only two options currently offered to kids transitioning after high school; 1) stay in school until 22, or 2) work in a janitorial, retail, or restaurant job.
 - Kids to be in integrated environments at school to prepare them for the social interaction needed to be successful beyond school.
 - Socialization skills development provided in schools.
 - Community, partners, and schools need to work better together.

- An employment integration program at the high school that begins to prepare kids for life beyond high school.
 - Kids should be in this class/program beginning at age 14.

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- Parents declare that it is left to them to find out about what resources are available for their kids.
- Parents describe a school system that is not knowledgeable about community resources. They describe teachers that are not adequately informed and who do not see acquiring or giving this information out as their immediate responsibility.
- Parents state that the system is responsive in their requests for information, but not proactive in providing it. They state: “If you ask the right questions, you may get options. If you don’t ask, then no information is provided to you.”
- Parents describe the issue of guardianship as creating some difficulty in having access to information. If a child is not “low functioning enough” then ability to get guardianship is hindered, and access to information is limited.

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- Parents are not pleased with either the school system (for all the reasons noted in the previous questions) nor with the adult-based service systems (Voc Rehab and Regional Centers). They describe a system that has **limited options** for their kids. They also describe a system that **does not individualize its approach** to serving their child’s employment needs.
- The quality of service that someone receives is often dependent on the person delivering them, as no system has consistently delivered high quality, responsive services.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- **Individualized service approach:** Identify what a child is interested in and what they are good at. Adapt jobs/work environments to be consistent with those interests/skills.
 - Kids are being categorized by their functionality, not their interests.
 - Provide work environments that are one on one for kids with ASD. These kids do better in smaller environments without significant pressure.
- **ASD Specific Programs:** Government needs to do more to address autism.

- **Additional Support on College Campuses:** Colleges should do more to accommodate individuals with ASD. One parent described her son’s situation in which he had been enrolled into college, but failed to get passing grades due to his disability. The college didn’t allow him to continue, essentially cutting his future goals. He now sits at home, bored and frustrated.
- **Additional Government Supports:**
 - There are not enough services/program made available to kids who are considered too “high functioning.”
 - There needs to be more programs to support job skill development.
 - Government should support CBO’s in their attempts to create opportunities for individuals with I/DD. Parents feel like they are best positioned to create work opportunities for their kids, as the general society is not interested in these kids. They would like to see government grants and support to encourage this type of advocate driven economic enterprise.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- More skills development. Some of these programs just “babysit” and don’t provide real instruction to help people become self-sufficient.
- Transportation: In school, kids are provided with transportation to/from, but after high school, there is not enough transportation to get kids to/from work, school, and recreation activities.

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- The need for competitive wages.
- Dignified integration in employment settings.
- Scared that they won’t be accepted. They are scared that people won’t have patience for them and that people won’t understand their condition.
- Need more choices/opportunities/job choices.
- Kids are not ready, prepared, or skilled for jobs.
- Access to transportation to get to/from work.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- Paratransit needs to be more reliable, on-time.

- Driver's license support: Need a program to help high functioning kids to be able to drive and get their driver's license.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer's chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- Reliable/Trusted transportation options.
- Community Awareness and sensitivity.
- Accommodations provided within the workplace to support individual with I/DD success.
 - Parents describe the need to train and support employers in their attempts to provide employment opportunities to individuals with I/DD.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- Parents describe the need to have their kids (kids with ASD) be in integrated environments with typical children. They describe their children imitating other children's behavior, and thus when placed in a segregated classroom with highly impaired/low functioning kids, they begin to imitate the characteristics of these kids. This can impede their own development or readiness for life beyond high school.
- Government should set the example for integrated employment.
- Legislation that requires integration.



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	Grant a Gift Autism Foundation
Date:	January 27, 2015
Total Participants:	9

PARTICIPANTS

Jonas Martin	Rebecca Samples, MSW, LSW	Jamie Johnson
Kathy Martin	Arlene Comeela	Cathi Britz
Lynda Tache	Stephen Comella	Alex Britz

Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
3			4	2		

Men	Women
3	6

GRANT A GIFT AUTISM FOUNDATION

Gift Autism Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization helping children, youth and their families fight autism by providing diagnostic and treatment funding, support services, vocational training, transition planning, and education. The organization acts as a community safety net by filling in treatment and funding gaps not covered by state and federal resources or insurance. The organization achieves this by collaborating with other organizations, state agencies, or providers to give children with autism spectrum disorder, growing up in Nevada, a better quality of life and future as they transition into adults.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer's employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

Based on the participants of this focus group, responses received were specific to children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- Schools don't often identify students independently/initially.
- Parents most often initiate identification prior to school entry. Kids are identified through ChildFind and/or NEIS based on the advocacy efforts of parents. Despite this early identification, schools cannot take a "medical diagnosis" or assessment that was conducted outside of the school district in order to qualify kids for special education supports. They must conduct their own assessment process. This sometimes leaves a gap as it is possible for kids to have a medical diagnosis and not qualify for special education supports based on the findings from the school district assessment.
- When schools do identify kids with I/DD, it is often because the child has had some sort of academic or behavioral issues. These issues are then the focus for school administrators, and the assessment process and supports are then provided from a "deficiency" perspective. The labeling of a child who has I/DD as a "behavioral problem" or "academically challenged" can affect that child's long-term outcomes.
- How pro-active a school is in identifying kids with I/DD and providing supports is really dependent upon the administration and a culture of acceptance/support at a school site.
- Identification within the school system is also dependent upon resources and testing capacity.

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for kid's movement through and beyond the K-12 grade system.

- Participants identified a number of issues around transitions such as:
 - Timing:
 - When kids are transitioning from one school site to another, often families are not informed about what school their child will be attending until four

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- Participants stated that information was not widely available to them, and that they often received information about employment related services through their own research and/or through community providers like the Grant a Gift Autism Foundation.
- Participants explained that unless parents are asking the right questions, they are not getting the information that is needed.
- Participants also described a scenario in which schools/teachers are reaching out to the community partners (Grant a Gift Autism Foundation) for information and/or resources to share with their own students.
- Not having the information necessary early in the transitional process makes it difficult for consumers/families to make good decisions about training, services and employment.

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- Participants described a system in which limited services, deployed late and with limited opportunities often failed to meet the long-term needs of individuals with I/DD.
 - Limited Services: Participants described a system in which Voc Rehab most often starts to serve kids at the age of 18, and only when services are initiated by either the consumer or their parent. They describe the service provider as reactive, understaffed, and non-comprehensive in their approach to prepare, place and support individuals in employment settings. The same story was told by multiple participants in which consumers were provided a short interview, asked what kind of job they would like to have, and ultimately placed in a short-term, preselected placement that was not customized to meet the wants, needs or supports necessary for individuals with I/DD. Participants describe the approach as a “take it or leave it” way of supporting people (consumers take what is available or don’t get served).
 - Deployed Late: Participants identified two timing issues that negatively impacted their service satisfaction:
 - Transitional planning for high school students: transitional planning is not given sufficient attention until the six months prior to high school exit. This creates significant challenges for consumers and families as they do not have a “life plan” in place until most of their support systems are gone.
 - Voc Rehab service eligibility: Service eligibility for Voc Rehab doesn’t officially start until the age of 18. While it was noted that the service provider will sometimes engage earlier than that during school district IEP

meetings, it is not required of the agency and doesn't occur on a regular basis.

- Limited Opportunities: Participants described a system in which consumers with I/DD had limited options available regarding employment placement. Most participants assign responsibility for this circumstance to a public that is uneducated about the value of individuals with I/DD and to an insufficient pool of employers willing to hire, accommodate and/or support individuals with I/DD in their workplace.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- Development of a stronger transitional planning process which is implemented in middle school and results in a clear “life plan” for kids and families.
- Establishment of a strength-based approach to support services, focusing on an individual's assets as opposed to deficiencies.
- Development of more employment placement opportunities, giving kids a variety of choices where they can be “matched” to the consumer's interests, skills and special needs.
 - A suggestion was made to offer employers an incentive to employ individuals with I/DD.
- Increase collaboration between service partners and systems was identified as a critical need.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- Participants identified the need to strengthen the development of employable skills, noting that it is not often a core component of day habilitation settings.

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- Consumers identified the following worries related to work environments:
 - Being able to complete an application.
 - Having the skills to do the job well.
 - Being nervous when things get hard, unable to be successful.
- Other concerns shared by participants included:
 - Employers having unrealistic expectations of employee with I/DD.
 - Quality of Job Coach can make/break a consumers ability to be successful.

- Employers and co-workers having patience with individuals with I/DD and offering their acceptance.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- Participants identified the need to develop a training component within the school district environment that trains individuals on how to use the public RT system.
- Participants identified para-transit as unreliable. They described a system that is often late and that has a significant amount of turnover in staff/staff schedules (this change is difficult for people with ASD).
- Participants identified ITN as a better resource than paratransit as it is more reliable, however many people do not know that if you are approved for para-transit that you can also utilize ITN.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer's chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- Better collaboration between state agencies (that often fill employment service gaps) and state agencies.
- Education:
 - Improving the awareness of school districts about local community partners and employment opportunities for students.
 - Improving the awareness of potential employers about the value of employing individuals with I/DD.
 - Improving the awareness by the general public to increase acceptance for individuals with I/DD.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- Throughout the focus group discussion, people identified the system as being “person-dependent” meaning that the quality of services and supports someone received was largely based on the individual providing it. Professions in which this was identified as an issue included; teachers, school transition officers, job coaches and regional center case managers.
- Participants identified the need to begin “integration” efforts early so that individuals of all abilities become accustomed to being taught, trained and living side by side one another from kindergarten through employment.



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center
Date:	January 30, 2015
Total Participants:	16

PARTICIPANTS

Todd Crowe	Daniel C. Citapin	Lisa McVeigh
Jeff Kaul	Abigail M. Wheeler	Keenan Knight
Jacita Young	Kay Moore	Martha Knight
Nikki Van Orman	Bernice Southuwk	Scott Carter
Todd Crowe	Daniel C. Citapin	Lisa McVeigh
Ralph Sacrison	Ellie Carter	Naomi Leahy
Sylvia Ruiz		

Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
3	3	2	6	6		

Men	Women
6	10

NEVADA DISABILITY ADVOCACY & LAW CENTER

The Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center (NDALC) is a private, statewide non-profit organization that serves as Nevada's federally-mandated protection and advocacy system for human,

legal, and service rights for individuals with disabilities. Services provided by NDALC include, but are not limited to: information and referral services, education, training, negotiation, mediation, investigation of reported or suspected abuse/neglect, legal counsel, technical assistance, and public policy work. NDALC has offices in Las Vegas, Reno/Sparks, and Elko with services provided statewide.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer's employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- Participants shared that most often, kids are identified prior to kindergarten entry through either ChildFind or NEIS.
- Schools do a pretty good job in identifying kids with special needs however, the service options available are not adequate.
- This has gotten a lot better over the past 10-15 years, however identified that there is still room for improvement.
- One participant assigned credit to the heightened awareness of ASD amongst the general public and school officials.

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for kid's movement through and beyond the K-12 grade system.

- Parent support groups: Participants identified the need for parents to receive support in navigating the process for their kids. Participants shared that many parents have a hard time understanding and dealing with their child's condition and all of the efforts that go into helping them. Supporting parents throughout the various stages of transition was a critical issue needed as identified by multiple focus group participants.
- Earlier transitional planning: There is a need to start transitional planning for life beyond high school earlier than current efforts. Participants identified that this should start for all kids in middle school.
- Additional transitional activities: Representatives from the various school systems in Elko identified that they conduct transitional activities such as field trips and integration activities

as often as they can, but are hindered in their approach because of timing, resources and the distance between school sites. Additional resources for increased transitional activities was identified as a need.

- One strategy to support transition beyond high school was implementation of an employment shadowing component to their high school education.
- Earlier training around self-care techniques: One high school instructor identified that many of her kids come to her in high school unable to conduct self-care activities. She identified that these kids are capable of doing these types of activities (potty training) but that they have not been trained on how to do this. This limits the activities that the teacher can do with the students and hinders their long-term chances of achieving integrated employment.
- Summer work opportunities: Offering kids an opportunity to work over the summer to expose them to an employment atmosphere and increase their skills.

It was clear through the course of the focus group discussion that often times the transitional activities that take place on behalf of kids in the school system is person dependent. School teachers and community partners that are highly committed to the issue do what they can, but cannot serve everyone in the county needing assistance. Often times their activities go beyond the scope of their job requirements.

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- Participants identified the following sources for how they get their information:
 - Word of Mouth
 - Employment Office
 - School District
 - Job Coach
 - Voc Rehab
 - Rural Regional Center
 - PACE Workshops
 - Northern Nevada Advocacy Network (NNAN)
- Participants identified a system that is understaffed and inconsistent in its service implementation. This makes getting information and being able to access services difficult and time intensive. They also describe a “one size fits all” approach to services.
- Participants also describe the need for service providers to be fully informed about local resources so that they can fully assist families.
- Parents are often the responsible agent for finding information to support their children with special needs.

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- High staff turnover: Participants described a system that suffered from significant staff turnover within the various service providers supporting individuals with I/DD in their employment needs. People are always coming and going, leaving folks in service positions with limited knowledge about local resource or the clientele. This causes disruption in case management and frustration amongst a population that doesn't deal with change very well.
- Lack of employment choices: Participants stated that there are not very many job opportunities for individuals with I/DD. They identified the need to work with employers to encourage employment opportunities to people with I/DD.
- Lack of job coaches in area: There is a lack of job coaches to support individuals with I/DD in the area. Participants describe this as a critical issue to support employment success, especially in integrated environments. The lack of this particular resource was assigned to the costs associated with becoming insured to provide this service, low pay and delayed reimbursement for services rendered. Participants described a need for permanent job coaches assigned to individuals in the workplace.
- Voc Rehab was the resource identified as the primary source of service supports. There was widespread dissatisfaction with the service for the following reasons:
 - Limited Access to Service Provider: Due to funding cuts, there are no staff members at the local Voc Rehab to answer phones or process applications.
 - Limited Staffing to Provide Support: There are only two staff members assigned to a five county area leaving folks with limited access to supportive services.
 - Reactive Service Approach: Voc Rehab providers were described as expecting people to come to them knowing exactly what it is they want to do. Participants described a system that doesn't see it as their responsibility to help folks identify what it is they are good at, where they want to work, or how to achieve their ultimate employment goals.
 - Short-term service approach: Voc Rehab will "phase out" services after 90 days of successful employment. This was identified as an issue, as many consumers need more than 90 days' worth of support. While amendments can be made to the Voc Rehab plan, because of limited Voc Rehab staff resource and the outsourcing of eligibility, it is difficult to get this accommodation,
 - Voc Rehab was described as simply shuffling people around the system (referring them to regional center, etc.)
- Ticket to Work Program: This is a program through Voc Rehab that was identified as a good approach, however it was noted that not many people know about it.

- Limited Range of Services: Participants noted a limited range of services through Voc Rehab and Regional Center. They identified the need for supportive living services and recreational opportunities.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- Increase Employment Options and Employer Supports: Participants want to see more outreach conducted to encourage employers to employ individuals with I/DD. They also identified the need to fully inform employers about what each individual with I/DD employed by them need to be successful. Participants identified the need to incentivize employment of individuals with I/DD.
- Person-centered Planning in Voc Rehab: Participants want to see Voc Rehab really explore the needs of each individual accessing their services, being responsible for fully exploring their wants, needs, and skills to place them in an employment situation that is a good fit and encourages their long-term success. They also identified the need to serve each individual's unique needs without arbitrary time limitations to service supports (such as job coaches).
- Increased Coordination: Participants want to see service providers fully informed about their counterparts in the community and to coordinate care with these partners to better serve consumers. Participants identified the need for a continuum of care for consumers.
- Increased Information and Support for Consumer Choice: Participants want consumers to be fully informed of the services that are available to them and afforded the choice to do what is best for them.
 - A significant amount of discussion centered on the dismantling of JDT options for individuals. The elimination of this option is not in the best interest of all individuals. Some individuals with I/DD prefer this work environment and should be afforded the choice to participate in this kind of work environment.
- Increased Outreach and Awareness: Participants want to see a more informed public to support individuals with I/DD in the workforce and in their communities. Increased awareness would support more employers' willingness to employ, more co-workers willingness to work with and accept, and more consumers to support individuals with I/DD in the workplace.
- Incentives for Employment Longevity: Participants would like to see service providers incentivize employment longevity amongst their workforce to develop consistency. Ideas shared included an offer to pay for education in exchange for a long-term commitment, and recruiting from within the community.

- **Local Presence:** Participants want to see a local Voc Rehab office that employs someone to answer the phone and process applications to increase access to information and timely services.
- **Increase social skills development:** Participants identified the need to increase social skills amongst this consumer group that teaches them how to deal with issues in the workplace.
- **Address Issue around Benefits/Work:** Participants identified the fact that if individuals are successful in maintaining minimum wage employment, that their benefits package will likely be eliminated. This removes access to medical benefits, supportive housing, etc., many supports which minimum wage will not support. The system needs to fix this issue if they want folks to be successful in their employment efforts and be able to make a livable wage.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- **Progressive employment responsibilities:** Consumers need to be given progressive tasks to build their skill set and position them for successful employment.

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- “People won’t recognize all of the things that I can do.”
- “Worried that people will scream at me.”
- “Worried that people will not give me a chance.”
- “People will want me to do things that I do not want to do.”
- Other concerns listed included:
 - Consumers are worried about being able to get a job.
 - Consumers are worried that they won’t be prepared/have the skills necessary to get a job.
 - Worried about what will happen when their job coach leaves the work site.
 - Worried about losing their benefits because of their income.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- **Increased Routes/Hours of Operation:** Participants identified the need to have more routes offered in Elko and in the surrounding areas. They also noted that routes needed to be offered for extended hours to help people get to/from work safely.
- **Taxi Vouchers:** Participants identified that if the state offered Taxi vouchers, it may help people in rural areas.

- **Travel Training:** An individual who trains people with disabilities on how to use the public transportation system.
- Two consumers also expressed a concern with the local NEAT busses leaving consumers if they were running a little bit behind, or having a hard time getting to the bus stop. This leaves some consumers left to walk home if they miss the bus.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer's chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- Increased choices of all types and varieties of employment.
- People giving them a chance/opportunity.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- N/A



Governor’s Taskforce on Integrated Employment

Focus Group Site Summary Report

Host/Site:	Rural County School District
Date:	February 5 2015
Total Participants:	2

PARTICIPANTS

CJ Fields (Lyon County – Life Coach Teacher)	Jan Albertson (Carson City County – Director of Student Support)
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Participants were asked to self-select their identification. In some cases, the identification categories may outnumber the total participants as individuals were given the option to identify with multiple categories.

Consumers	Caregivers	Advocates	Family Members	Providers	Policy Makers	Unknown
				2		

Men	Women
1	1

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions were structured around 11 questions that were developed to identify how the current system identifies individuals with I/DD, supports and ultimately prepares them for employment purposes. The focus groups also sought to identify what consumer’s employment needs and concerns were as well as what they would like to see changed to better support them.

The feedback received from focus group participants are listed below categorized by major topics of discussion.

Identification: Participants were asked to describe how well schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

- The school district does a pretty good job. There are instances where kids are re-assessed and needs are identified. In Dayton, there have been two kids in the past two years who were identified while in high school. This is a concern, as it gets difficult to get these kids plugged into a system and get them the supports they need.
- In rural areas, identification is pretty easy. Everyone knows everyone, so identification has usually occurred, or the school is aware of the child before they get to school.
- Challenges:
 - As systems have become integrated over the last couple of years, the systems have become confused, sometimes leaving kids without an identification or services.
 - There is no standardized format for gathering data regarding assessments or response to interventions across school districts/systems.
 - It makes gathering data and interpreting data a very difficult thing from a systems perspective.
 - Kids may be in a loop that leaves them without the supports they need.
 - Interpretation is different across systems.
 - No ability to identify a net effect of efforts for serving individuals with I/DD.
 - The intellectual disability classification can be very subjective.
 - Within the school system, things are constantly changing, making it hard to identify what the correct/appropriate response is or whose responsibility it is for what.
 - Medical diagnosis is different than an educational classification.
 - Tension between school district system and parent expectations.

Transitional Supports: Participants were asked to describe what supports were necessary to help families plan for kid's movement through and beyond the K-12 grade system.

- Transitional Specialist position was created in Carson City County. This person's job responsibility is to meet with families to assist them with their transition needs.
- The kids that have the hardest time with transitions are those that have a behavioral health issue. The school district has utilized behavioral specialists to work with them to help them through periods of transition.
- Needed:
 - Families need a clear life path to help their kids become meaningful members of society.
 - Participation of Regional Center Staff at a meaningful level for all kids with I/DD.
 - If kids are on a waitlist, they won't participate in transitional meetings.
 - Even when they come to the transitional meetings, they don't have a lot of resources to offer.

Information: Participants were asked to describe how they find out about employment related services and to what extent that information allows them to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities.

- School systems are the primary source of information in the rural communities.
 - Sometimes the school system is in a difficult position, as we know what resources are available, but we also know the faults in the system. We are tasked with deciding whether to send people to a resource that we know will not serve them or not serve them well, or withholding information from them to prevent the frustration,
- The Department of Developmental Disabilities at the college will come to the school and let kids know about the type of programs and supports that are available to them on the college campus.
- Parents will go out and find out information on their own.

Service Satisfaction: Participants were asked to describe the extent to which work employment related services met their needs.

- School System:
 - We have hired back these students as “para-professionals” because there were no employment opportunities for them in the community.
 - Kids who are disabled but who graduate with a standard diploma have little to no resources made available to them, leaving them with little options.
- Voc Rehab:
 - Better coordination needed between Voc Rehab and Regional Center programs. If a kid fails the Voc Rehab Community Based Assessment (CBA) then they are kicked over to the regional center for skills development. There is not a lot of coordination that happens as the kid is tossed back and forth in between these programs.
 - Voc Rehab has more success with high functioning kids than with low functioning kids or kids that need a lot of medical supports.
 - Community-based assessment process is very generic. Service approach is not customized to meet the individualized needs of the client.
- Rural Regional: This organization is supposed to provide job training supports, but often, due to a lack of funding, they are unable to deliver this service.
- Rural dynamic: In the rural communities, there are not a whole lot of employment opportunities for typical folks, let alone individuals with I/DD. Voc Rehab is moving away from sheltered workshops, leaving even fewer options for kids needing/wanting employment.

- Bureaucratic challenges (like paperwork completion) sometimes make accessing services difficult for families.

Recommendations: Participants were asked to identify changes that would improve their satisfaction with support services.

- The IEP process should be utilized as a framework for establishing vocational supports.
- Establishment of customized employment options.
- Job carving.

Day Habilitation Settings: Participants were asked to identify the type of supports needed in “day habilitation” settings.

- What is needed in these settings are highly qualified staff that are equipped to appropriately serve consumers.
- Facilities need to operate in a manner that encourages progressive development.
- Consistent staffing (levels and personnel).
- These settings need to be good at finding the net potential of these kids and helping to support their individual development.
- Often times these services simply become a place to put people. They don’t look to enhance their skills and transition them into a more productive environment.

Work Related Concerns: Participants were asked to describe what they worry about most related to working.

- Participants indicated that the worries that an individual has really varies by disability, but some of the worries they identified included:
 - Being able to navigate social settings.
 - Worry that he/she will be “found out.” Fear that people will treat them differently once they know they have a disability.
 - Worried about an unpredictable routine. Fear of “change.”
 - Worried about having the skills necessary for success at a job.
 - Being in a community that has been largely inaccessible to them.
- Focus group participants also noted that these type of worries or difficulties do not often present themselves until a kid has had an opportunity to be in the work world. When they are 16 to 17, they are just excited about being able to go out and be contributors. It is only after exposure and disappointment do these fears take root.

Transportation: Participants were asked what transportation help was needed to get consumers to individual work places and support services.

- There are no transportation options between Dayton and Carson City. If there was, it would open up more opportunities to our kids.
- Rural areas need access to paratransit services.

Opportunities: Participants were asked to describe what they thought would improve a consumer's chance of being in a place where they want to work.

- Job Carving:
 - Voc Rehab should initiate a job carving initiative.
 - State should initiate job carving as a pioneer in the practice.
- Customized placement. Organizations need to really understand each individual's interests and skill set and identify opportunities that fit them.
- Ongoing assessment and adjustments made to the work related supports.
- Post high school system that mirrors supports available in the educational system.
- More job opportunities.
- The participants on the call described a very simplified formula for a kid being happy in their workplace which involves 1) meaningful relationships, and 2) being connected to a purpose. If these environments are created, most kids will feel happy in their work place.

Other: There was an opportunity for participants to share other ideas that were not specifically addressed through the structured questions, but that they felt was important for the Taskforce to know as they move forward with their planning efforts.

- Kids want to be valued, appreciated, and integrated.
- We are pushing these kids into a reality in which opportunities are not there.
- There is a significant body of research available regarding what “works” when serving individuals with I/DD. Using evidence-based practices is what we should be doing.
- There are more services available for individuals with developmental disabilities, not as much available for those with learning disabilities.
- Parents are use to a system (schools) that is responsive to their needs. They move into a system that is unfamiliar and has little to no resources available to them. This is a challenge.
 - We need to establish the same standards and accountability measures within the adult serving systems (Voc Rehab and Regional Centers) as are imposed upon the educational system.

“In not addressing this issue, we continue to “waist human capital.” It is a tragedy.”

APPENDIX C: STATE TEAM SCORECARD SURVEY TOOL

This scorecard was created to help state teams review the state policies, practices and strategies that impact on opportunities for integrated employment. The answers on this scorecard will help state teams identify priorities and set goals for employment initiatives and outline a strategy for doubling their state’s rate of integrated employment.

<p>Please rate your level of agreement with each statement below by circling the number that best reflects Nevada’s current situation, using the indicators at right.</p>		
<p>Our state has measurable annual performance goals with clear benchmarks with respect to expanding the number of individuals in competitive integrated employment as a percentage of people served in day services.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no goals relating to increasing employment of people with disabilities. 2. There are goals, but the goals are too vague and are worded within overall goals, such as quality of life. 3. There are employment goals, but they are not measurable. 4. There are measurable employment goals, but they are problematic (i.e., meeting the goal does not necessarily mean an improvement in or increasing the rate of services in employment, as compared to segregated or non-work services.) 5. There are measurable goals with meaningful benchmarks.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow up: What goals would you propose, with what benchmarks?</p>

<p>Our state has a strong employment first policy.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no employment first policy nor is one being considered. 2. We are considering an employment first policy, but there is not a formal group working on it. 3. We are actively working on an employment first policy; or we have one but it is flawed and is not clearly having employment be the first day service option. 4. We have an employment first policy, but it could be worded stronger so that employment first is more meaningful in influencing practice. 5. We have a strong employment first policy in legislation and policy.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe the ideal policy</p>
<p>Our state collects and publishes data on employment outcomes. This information is collected on a regular basis and shared in summary form with stakeholders. Data are used to inform strategy and contracting decisions.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no state-wide data system. 2. Partial data is sometimes collected. 3. Partial data is sometimes collected and summarized. 4. Data is collected and summarized but not a part of ongoing discussion. 5. A data system is in place. Information on employment, percentages and outcomes are routinely collected, analyzed, reported, and discussed.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe how data is collected and shared, what outcomes should be measured. What data is still needed?</p>

<p>Strategies have been developed for achieving employment outcomes and are managed at multiple levels (state, county/region and local levels) and with all stakeholders.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no statewide strategies in place. 2. Statewide strategies are sometimes discussed with some stakeholders. 3. A core group of some stakeholders are discussing statewide strategies. 4. All stakeholders are joining to develop statewide strategies. 5. Strategies have been developed and are discussed and adjusted at least yearly with all stakeholders.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe top strategies for achieving employment outcomes that are needed</p>
<p>Informal relationships or collaborations exist among state, regional and provider agencies, advocacy organizations and employers to support integrated employment.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are few, if any, relationships among all stakeholders. 2. Relationships are beginning to form among some stakeholders. 3. Relationships among all stakeholders exist and some ideas are being discussed. 4. Relationships and collaborations are emerging at state/regional/local levels. 5. Informal relationships or collaborations exist among state, regional, and provider agencies, advocacy organizations and employers to support integrated employment, including regular state/regional/local meetings and discussions of all stakeholders.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe gaps in relationships or collaboration. Describe whether the relationship are productive and do the goals align?</p>

<p>Formal interagency agreements or collaborations exist to support integrated employment.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no formal agreements. 2. Agreements are beginning to be discussed. 3. The broad outlines of agreements are emerging. 4. Formal agreements are being developed. 5. Formal interagency agreements or collaborations exist to support integrated employment integrated employment and include DD/VR/providers/advocates.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe agreements and collaborations needed, describe barriers to supporting integrated employment</p>
<p>The state supports and encourages innovation in employment services.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no plan of investment in innovations. 2. The need for innovations is being discussed among some stakeholders. 3. There is agreement to pursue resources to encourage innovations. 4. Some innovations are being encouraged and supported. 5. Innovations have/are emerging and are documented and discussed for broad implementation.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe resources/partnerships and innovations to be considered</p>

<p>Resources available to transition-age students and individuals waiting for services and their families to encourage them to choose employment over other service options.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Few if any resources are available. 2. The need for transition resources is beginning to be discussed. 3. There is agreement to develop transition resources. 4. Some resources are available statewide and more are emerging. 5. Resources available to transition-age students and individuals waiting for services and their families to encourage them to choose employment over other service options and include participation of ED/VR/DD.
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe resources/partnerships and policies needed</p>
<p>Strategies have been developed for advancing economic self-sufficiency and are managed at multiple levels (state, county/region, and local) and with diverse public and private stakeholders.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no statewide strategies in place. 2. Stakeholders have been identified across public agencies and private sector (financial institutions, IDA providers, United Way, EITC Coalitions) and a work group has been established. 3. An Action Plan has been developed that identifies collaborative activities for policy development, education and training, and capacity building. 4. Pilot activities are being implemented in selected parts of the state and promising practices are being identified, documented, and disseminated to relevant stakeholders statewide. 5. Statewide strategies are being implemented with public/private partnerships, policy changes are in process, and outcomes are being tracked at an individual and systems level with an annual review and refinement of statewide strategies
<p>Comments:</p>		<p>Follow-up: Describe strategies, partnerships and policies needed</p>

APPENDIX D: NGCDD: POSITION STATEMENT ON INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT

Position Statement on Integrated Employment
Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities

CHANGING NEVADA'S EMPLOYMENT LANDSCAPE- INCREASING INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR NEVADANS WITH INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Summary

Work is a fundamental part of adult life, and the benefits of integrated employment for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) have been clearly demonstrated. It gives us a sense of purpose; shaping who we are and how we fit into our community. Nevadans with I/DD must not be deprived of the opportunity to work within the general workforce and make a meaningful contribution. Individuals in the labor force have a positive financial impact on our economy, generating income that is ultimately returned in the form of tax revenues. There is literature filled with examples of the benefits and Return on Investment (ROI) when individuals with I/DD are working and contributing vocationally in their community. Our state is becoming more diverse and Nevadans with I/DD should be included in diversifying the workforce. This can be achieved through established supported employment practices. Improving employment outcomes for Nevadans with I/DD at the state level requires a holistic approach that communicates a clear message, incorporates policy change, funding, capacity development, interagency partnerships, outcome measurement and service innovation.

Background

Individuals with I/DD in the labor force have a positive financial impact on our economy, generating income that is ultimately returned in the form of tax revenues and the purchase of goods and services. Despite this knowledge, individuals with I/DD continue to have the lowest workforce participation rates of any minority group in our country. The discrepancy between those with and without disabilities in the workforce is staggering. For example, 69.1% of working age adults without disabilities are employed compared to 20.5% of those with disabilities. Furthermore, for people with I/DD the rates are between 5% and 7% which are working in the community for competitive wages.

The publication, StateData: The National Report on Employment Services and Outcomes, examined 37 states that consistently provided data on the total number of individuals served and the number of individuals in integrated employment services. Sixteen states increased the number of individuals in integrated employment.

... the average increase was 958 individuals (range: 133–3,367). States that increased the number of individuals served in integrated employment by more than 500 individuals between 2001 and 2011 were: CT, LA, MA, MD, NC, OK, OR, and WA. Each of these states has engaged in strategic efforts and systematic changes to their service delivery system to make integrated employment the preferred service outcome for adults with I/DD in their state. (Butterworth et al., 2013, p. 22)

Nevada is no exception. Rather, it has been identified as a national leader in collaboration on integrated employment. With funding tied to innovative projects, clearly articulated goals, and mechanisms to track progress, supported employment has become an essential tool to help citizens with I/DD become contributors to the economy rather than recipients. Changes in federal policy (e.g., Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, etc.) and the development of national experts providing technical assistance (e.g., State Employment Leadership Network, Employment Leadership Network, Institute for Community Inclusion, Association of People Supporting Employment First, Virginia Commonwealth University, etc.) have changed the employment landscape and helped citizens with I/DD find community-based employment.

Vermont has closed their facility-based programs with mixed results. In Oregon, however, a class action lawsuit is currently under review.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court, charges state officials with violating the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act by confining individuals with disabilities to segregated settings where they... are paid far below the state's minimum wage of \$8.80 for doing rote tasks that offer no training, no skills, and no advancement. (Disability Rights Oregon, 2012)

The State of Nevada Developmental Services Jobs and Day Training (JDT) services has not restructured the rate setting process, decreased participation in non-integrated facility based day services, nor created incentives for community providers to advance integrated employment outcomes. To follow the national trend, there is much work before us.

Problem Statement

The benefits of integrated employment for individuals with I/DD are well established in nationwide literature, however, movement from segregated settings has been slow and the percentage working in integrated employment has been flat since the 1990s (Butterworth et al., 2013). In Nevada, the percentage of individuals with I/DD in community based programs has increased since the 1990s. The effort needs to continue until everyone has appropriate community employment as the priority service option. The purpose of this paper is to inform Nevada's legislators about supported employment, provide a background of Nevada's efforts, and describe the picture that agency administrators, businesses, advocates, and Nevadans with I/DD are painting. The picture we want to achieve is supported employment outcomes for Nevadans with I/DD working in the community at competitive wages, making a financial impact on the economy, diversifying the workforce, and improving their quality of life.

Nevada needs to make the best use of limited resources to advance employment opportunities for people with I/DD, beginning with re-aligning the financial structure so it is fiscally viable for providers to offer supportive employment services.

A recent publication, *A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities; Blueprint for Governors*, is the culmination of the Chair's (i.e., Governor Markell) initiative for the 2012-2013 National Governors Association (NGA). This blueprint focuses on the employment of people with disabilities and the role of states in assisting businesses.

The five top areas are:

- Make disability employment part of the state workforce development strategy.
- Find and support businesses in their efforts to employ people with disabilities.
- Be a model employer by increasing the number of people with disabilities working in state government.
- Prepare youth with disabilities for careers that use their full potential, providing employers with a pipeline of skilled workers.
- Make the best use of limited resources to advance employment opportunities for people with disabilities. (National Governors Association, 2013, p. 4)

These areas reflect recurring themes heard during the NGA Chair's Initiative from experts in the field of disability employment and are supported by the latest research by experts on how states can improve integrated employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

Independence and competitive employment should be the expectation for all adults in Nevada. For those with developmental disabilities who do not currently choose employment, meaningful day habilitation should be an option. Job and day training services awarded to the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Developmental Services agency could be leveraged with Rehabilitation Division funding to provide meaningful job readiness skills and prepare individuals for competitive employment. Providers of day habilitation should improve and increase programming geared toward competitive employment, including becoming a provider of supported employment job development services. Through these means, and others, state and local government, along with private industry could work together to realize the goals outlined in *A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities; Blueprint for Governors*.

Also, litigation has increased the momentum to transition from sheltered workshops to integrated employment. The US Department of Justice (DOJ) has participated in lawsuits in Oregon, Rhode Island, New York and most recently Florida.

For example: the DOJ has previously advised the State of Rhode Island, the civil rights of people with I/DD who can and want to receive employment services and day services in the community are violated when they are unnecessarily segregated in facility-based sheltered workshops and in facility-based day programs. Individuals are in, or at risk of entering, segregated sheltered workshops and facility-based day programs due to systemic State actions and policies, which include: 1) the State's failure to develop a sufficient quantity of integrated transition, employment, vocational, and day services and supports for individuals with I/DD; 2) the State's direction of available employment resources to segregated sheltered workshops rather than to integrated employment service; 3) the State's direction of available day program; and resources to segregated facility-based day programs rather than to integrated day services; and lastly 4) the State's use of systemic criteria and methods of administration that unnecessarily require persons with I/DD to attend sheltered workshops and facility-based day programs in order to access and receive employment, vocational, and day services.

In summary, the federal government is increasing pressure to support those with I/DD to have the opportunity to work in a community based/competitive employment setting.

Nevada's Recent Efforts

In 2010, Employment Policy Summits were held in Elko, Las Vegas and Reno through a grant sponsored by the Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD). Each two-day event brought together agency decision-makers, businesses, advocates, and Nevadans with I/DD to identify the barriers to employment for Nevadans with disabilities. More importantly, attendees developed regional work plans to overcome the barriers identified and systematically work toward detailed statewide priorities (Harrington, McKinlay, & Rock, 2010). These events and subsequent meetings generated Medicaid Infrastructure Grant funding, innovative projects (e.g., Customized Employment Pilot Study, Nevada Career Development Academy, etc.) and have served as a catalyst for meaningful changes. One fruitful outcome is the Nevada Employment First Ad Hoc Committee sponsored by the NGCDD. These groups of forward-thinking and resourceful advocates are identifying best practices in community-based employment and are formulating language that identifies integrated employment as the first option for Nevadans with I/DD. Another recent effort that shows much promise is the collaboration between the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities (NCED), Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), and DHHS Developmental Services' Sierra Regional Center (SRC) on the Customized Employment Project.

The Customized Employment Project is a braided funding strategy that is person-centered and carves positions in Nevada businesses based on the job seeker's strengths, interests, and skills. BVR provides funding for job development and the NCED provides job carving/development service while SRC identifies the individuals to be served and provides ongoing service coordination along with follow-up supports (jobs and day training funding) after the case has been successfully closed.

The Nevada Career Development Academy is a collaborative effort between High Sierra Industries (community provider), SRC, and BVR to provide intensive soft skills development to prepare Nevadans with I/DD to leave facility-based centers and join the mainstream workforce with the ultimate goal of achieving competitive employment.

Based on Section 110 funding through the Rehabilitation Service Administration, the Washoe County School District (WCSD), BVR, and NCED are collaborating to utilize unclaimed federal funds through Vocational Opportunities for Inclusive Career Education (VOICE). Students participate in hands-on activities in the business community, learn public transportation skills, and are engaged in vocation-related classroom assignments in order to secure an integrated job for competitive wages.

The Clark County School District (CCSD) has two post-secondary programs designed to provide students with disabilities an opportunity to learn and develop necessary work skills in order to gain competitive employment. The Program Approach to Career Employment (PACE) and Post-Secondary Opportunities for Transition (POST) enables students to gain transition from school-to-work while obtaining necessary work skills through community-based instruction in order to eventually become competitively employed. Project SEARCH is a school to work program that is a partnership between University Medical Center (UMC), CCSD, and BVR and takes place exclusively at UMC. The program model is an integrated work setting where students work as interns in various departments within the hospital. The program is designed to assist students with disabilities to transition from school-to-work while obtaining necessary work skills in order to eventually become competitively employed.

Opportunity Village (community provider) has a long-standing Job Discovery Program (JDP) which is a partnership between the CCSD and Opportunity Village. Students in the JDP rotate in sequential nine-week sessions at worksites where they “try out” assorted jobs such as food service, retail, child care, custodial services, art, animal care, and customer service. This partnership was formed to provide intensive vocational training in a natural work environment to CCSD students who require an enclave community based work setting or supported employment activities to become successfully employed.

Another innovative program is the Community Based Career Exploration Summer Camp (CBCESC). This is a collaborative effort that brings together the resources of BVR, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living (NNCIL), WCSD, NCED, and NGCDD to produce a one week, vocational summer camp experience. To set the tone and reinforce the employment emphasis of this program, students must submit an application to participate in the camp. An interest inventory embedded in the camp application assists in determining each student’s community based employment site. During the week of camp students divide their day between work experiences at their community based job site, mobility orientation/transportation skills, resume writing, job applications, interview skills, self-advocacy, and engaging in vocation-related classroom assignments.

The Path to Independence Program, a pilot postsecondary program for students with I/DD is a collaborative project between the University of Nevada (UNR), Aging and Disabilities Services Division (ADSD), and BVR that began in the fall semester of 2013. Research by Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) shows that students who participate in such programs have 26% increased success in finding employment, and earn 73% more in weekly wages.

Recommendations for Consideration

- Maximize available state and federal resources through improved rate and payment systems offered by the RSA Section 110 dollars to increase competitive employment.
- Increase supports to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community, making it the primary service option for working age adults.
- Develop a five-year, system-wide, employment policy priority and strategy that increases integrated employment by a set percent each year. Consider additional strategies that promote employment services and outcomes, such as encouraging service systems to make use of community resources available in schools, institutions of higher education, employment networks, and federal and state work incentive programs already in place.
- Develop a full-time statewide position for employment development within the State DD system. This would identify an individual with a specific job function and accountability for developing employment strategy and policy and improving employment outcomes.
- Explore new outcome-based reimbursement systems for providers to assure that BVR can support the intensity of supports to assure that people with severe disabilities acquire an appropriate community placement and that the Aging and Disability Services Division can support the follow-along services to be successful.
- Emphasize the use of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver to promote integrated/competitive employment options through revised service core definitions and provisions for career planning services.
- Encourage individuals to participate in a community-based work assessment before applying for jobs and day training services, where assessments are reviewed annually and individuals are

encouraged to participate in this further evaluation of integrated/competitive employment service options.

- Utilize training curricula from national organizations, University classes, etc., for BVR employment staff.
- Encourage employment as the outcome of the annual Individual Service Plan (ISP) process and emphasize the critical role of person-centered planning in achieving community-based employment. These employment outcomes must be consistent with the individual's skills, interests, abilities, and reflect an informed choice.
- Embrace new, innovative, evidence-based models of support (with provider payments) to help individuals obtain and maintain integrated and competitive employment in the community.
- Continue membership with the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a multi-state technical assistance collaborative established to improve employment outcomes.
- Establish a uniform definition of integrated employment and use the definition to create a statewide baseline to measure performance progress.
- Share resources of both time and knowledge for systems change and performance at all levels.
- Develop an Employment First Task Force to collaborate, coordinate and improve competitive and integrated employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

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Appendix

NGCDD Employment First Ad Hoc Committee Members:

Sherry Manning, Facilitator (NGCDD) – Non-voting member
Jack Mayes (NGCDD and Nevada Disability, Advocacy, and Law Center)
Mary Bryant (Parent)
Lisa Bonie (Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living)
Ed Guthrie (Opportunity Village)
Scott Harrington (Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities)
Mark Hinson (Nevada Department of Education)
Elizabeth Kelley (Damonte Ranch High School)
Mechelle Merrill (Division of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation)
Naomi Leahy (Ruby Mountain Resource Center)
Rosie Melarkey (DHHS Aging and Disabilities Services Division)
Jennifer Coleman O'Connor (Clark County School District)
Santa Perez (People First of Nevada)
Robin Renshaw (NGCDD and Nevada PEP)
Staci Pratt (American Civil Liberties Union)
Kelly Wales (Washoe County School District)
Anita Frantz (Nevada Disability, Advocacy, and Law Center)
Rena Smith (National Federation of the Blind)

APPENDIX E: NGCDD RANKINGS TOOL

Please rank each of the recommendations, as follows: 1 = less important, 3 = neutral, 5 = very important. If you don't know, circle DK. If you don't believe the question is applicable circle NA.

Recommendation	Rating
Maximize available state and federal resources through improved rate and payment systems offered by the RSA Section 110 dollars to increase competitive employment.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Increase supports to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community, making it the primary service option for working age adults.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Develop a five-year, system-wide, employment policy priority and strategy that increases integrated employment by a set percent each year.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Consider additional strategies that promote employment services and outcomes, such as encouraging service systems to make use of community resources available in schools, institutions of higher education, employment networks, and federal and state work incentive programs already in place.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Develop a full-time statewide position for employment development within the State DD system. This would identify an individual with a specific job function and accountability for developing employment strategy and policy and improving employment outcomes.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Explore new outcome-based reimbursement systems for providers to assure that BVR can support the intensity of supports to assure that people with severe disabilities acquire an appropriate community placement and that the Aging and Disability Services Division can support the follow-along services to be successful.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Emphasize the use of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver to promote integrated/competitive employment options through revised service core definitions and provisions for career planning services.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Encourage individuals to participate in a community-based work assessment before applying for jobs and day training services, where assessments are reviewed annually and individuals are encouraged to participate in this further evaluation of integrated/competitive employment service options.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Utilize training curricula from national organizations, University classes, etc., for BVR employment staff.	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA
Encourage employment as the outcome of the annual Individual Service Plan (ISP) process and emphasize the critical role of person-centered planning in achieving community-based employment. These employment outcomes must be consistent with the individual's skills, interests, abilities, and reflect an informed choice	1 2 3 4 5 DK NA

Please rank your top 5 recommendations in a range from one (1) to five (5); one (1) being the recommendation with the higher priority and five with the lower priority of the top 5.

Recommendation	Ranking
Maximize available state and federal resources through improved rate and payment systems offered by the RSA Section 110 dollars to increase competitive employment.	
Increase supports to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community, making it the primary service option for working age adults.	
Develop a five-year, system-wide, employment policy priority and strategy that increases integrated employment by a set percent each year.	
Consider additional strategies that promote employment services and outcomes, such as encouraging service systems to make use of community resources available in schools, institutions of higher education, employment networks, and federal and state work incentive programs already in place.	
Develop a full-time statewide position for employment development within the State DD system. This would identify an individual with a specific job function and accountability for developing employment strategy and policy and improving employment outcomes.	
Explore new outcome-based reimbursement systems for providers to assure that BVR can support the intensity of supports to assure that people with severe disabilities acquire an appropriate community placement and that the Aging and Disability Services Division can support the follow-along services to be successful.	
Emphasize the use of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver to promote integrated/competitive employment options through revised service core definitions and provisions for career planning services.	
Encourage individuals to participate in a community-based work assessment before applying for jobs and day training services, where assessments are reviewed annually and individuals are encouraged to participate in this further evaluation of integrated/competitive employment service options.	
Utilize training curricula from national organizations, University classes, etc., for BVR employment staff.	
Encourage employment as the outcome of the annual Individual Service Plan (ISP) process and emphasis the critical role of person-centered planning in achieving community-based employment. These employment outcomes must be consistent with the individual’s skills, interests, abilities, and reflect an informed choice	

APPENDIX F: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe existing methods for identifying students with intellectual/developmental disabilities and the implementation of vocational assessments.
- 2 How are employment-related planning and training services for transition age youth provided? How well does it work?
- 3 How are employment-related planning and training services for adults (over 24) provided? How well does it work?
- 4 What do you know about the rate setting process for employment supports?
- 5 What is needed to achieve competitive wages for individuals with the most significant disabilities?
- 6 What strategies are you aware of to address and achieve employment placements that are in the highest and best interest of the individual? What would you propose to do so?
- 7 What specific programs would you advocate for Nevada to consider to ensure state and/or federal funds are being utilized to their fullest potential?
- 8 What resources would you advocate for Nevada to consider to ensure state and/or federal funds are being utilized to their fullest potential?
- 9 What type of supports are needed in a "day habilitation" setting?
- 10 What barriers exist related to transporting consumers to individual work places?
- 11 What suggestions do you have to overcoming those barriers?
- 12 What should we talk about that we haven't?

APPENDIX G: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1 Identify your perspective for today's discussion: consumer, advocate, provider, caregiver, family member, policy maker, other (can select more than one).
- 2 How well do schools identify students with intellectual/developmental disabilities?
- 3 What would help families plan for kids to move from K-12?
- 4 How do you find out about work programs and services? How well do they meet your needs? (for you as a consumer, or for the consumer(s) you represent)
- 5 Are individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, or their families, (who are participating in community training centers or assisted services) provided enough information to make good decisions about training, services and employment opportunities?
- 6 What type of supports are needed in a "day habilitation" setting?
- 7 What would you recommend to improve these programs or services? (for you as a consumer, or for the consumer(s) you represent)
- 8 When you think about working what are your top concerns? (for you as a consumer, or for the consumer(s) you represent)
- 9 What transportation help is needed to get consumers to individual work places or support services?
- 10 If you could change one thing that would improve your satisfaction with support services, what would it be?
- 11 What one thing do you think would improve your chance of being in a place where you want to work? (for you as a consumer, or for the consumer(s) you represent)
- 12 Can you think of anything else that we need to know in order to make training, services and employment opportunities better?

APPENDIX H: CONSUMER SURVEY TOOL

Instructions:

The purpose of the survey is to collect anonymous feedback from stakeholders across the state about opportunities for persons with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (IDD). Anyone who is an individual with IDD or a family member or caregiver is eligible to participate in this survey.

If you are helping someone complete a survey, please let them know their answers are very important. Please ask them to rate each item to the best of their ability, without leading them toward a certain answer. You as a caregiver, family member or advocate can complete your own survey separately.

People with disabilities have the same right to work at a job that pays them minimum wage or more, in a place that has people with and without disabilities working together, and provides chances to get raises and promotions, as people without disabilities. This is called Integrated Competitive Employment, or ICE.

This is your opportunity for your voice to be heard. The results of this survey will be used by a Taskforce to develop a plan to improve integrated, competitive employment for persons with IDD.

To be effective, we need your advice on the how things currently work and what is important to you. So, we welcome your voluntary participation and feedback through the attached survey.

We realize your time is valuable, and appreciate your consideration.

Stakeholder Survey Questions

1. Identify programs from which you have received services or are familiar with because your loved one or your client received services (drop down list) (check boxes) Please put in alphabetical order
 - Assessments of job skills and abilities
 - Job readiness skills training and assistance
 - Assistance with job search and placement
 - Employing Job Developers to assist with job placement
 - Physical and mental restoration medical services & procedures
 - Assistive technology (cane, wheelchair, computer, applications & software, etc.)
 - Transportation assistance as needed, to attend appointments for services
 - Interpreter and communication services
 - Career counseling and guidance
 - Job Coaching
 - College/University education

- Training, skills enhancement, certificate programs
- Job-required licenses, tools, equipment and supplies
- Transitioning students with disabilities from high school to college or jobs
- Mobility services for individuals with visual impairments
- Supported Living
- Nursing
- Transportation
- Counseling
- Supported Employment
- Jobs and Day Training (workshop/training center)

2. Identify county (drop down menu will list the 17 Nevada Counties If they select Clark or Washoe ask for Zipcode)

3. Identify age (drop down ranges) use census data ranges

4. Identify gender (drop down menu) m f trans

5. Identify race/ethnicity (drop down menu using US Census categories)

6. Please identify the populations you represent (check all that apply)

Consumer Parent, Family Member or Friend of a Consumer helping them complete the survey

Parent or Family Member of a Consumer Care Giver Advocate

Other: Specify _____

7. To identify the issues that should be addressed in promoting competitive, integrated employment, please rate **how important the following are to you:**

Circle one number for each question on a scale of 1-5 with

1 being **poor** or **not important** and

3 being neutral

5 being **well** or **most important**,

N/A –Not applicable

DK for Don't Know

Individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (IDD):		
A.	Are visibly included in traditional schools	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
B.	Work in a competitive job in the community	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
C.	Have the opportunity to earn a wage that is fair for the work they do	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
D.	Have the opportunity to earn minimum wage or higher	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
E.	Work in a job they like	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
F.	Work in a job they like whether it pays or not	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
G.	Have choices in applying for jobs	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
H.	Have access to job training resources	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK

8. To identify the issues that should be addressed in promoting competitive, integrated employment, please rate **how successful your community (in Nevada) is with the following:**

<p><i>Circle one number for each question on a scale of 1-5 with</i></p> <p>1 being poor or not important and</p> <p>3 being neutral</p> <p>5 being well or most important,</p> <p>(N/A) –Not applicable</p> <p>DK for Don't Know</p>		
Individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (IDD):		
A.	Are visibly included in traditional schools	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
B.	Are encouraged to dream about their future while in school	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
C.	Are encouraged to plan for their future while in school	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
D.	And their families or support system are helped to plan for college	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
E.	And their families or support system are helped to transition to college	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
F.	Have supports available to help get a job	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
G.	Have supports available to keep/maintain a job	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
H.	Have the level of <i>quality</i> in the supports they receive to get and maintain a job	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
I.	Have job opportunities made available to them	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
J.	Access to equipment or devices that would help them get and keep a job	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
K.	Have job training resources available to them	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
L.	Have on the job training resources available to them	
M.	Have easy access to transportation to get to and from a job	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
N.	Are offered quality job training resources	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
In your community, how well do		
O.	Businesses do in hiring persons with IDD?	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK

How well does Nevada provide		
P.	Assistance to businesses in helping them to understand about hiring a person with IDD	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK
Q.	Support to businesses after they have hired a person with IDD	1 2 3 4 5 N/A DK

9. Other comments _____

APPENDIX I: ZIP CODES FOR SURVEY RESPONDENTS FROM METROPOLITAN AREAS IN NEVADA

Washoe County	
Zip Code	Number of Respondents
89502	12
89511	6
89509	5
89431	4
89503	3
89433	2
89434	2
89436	2
89508	2
89512	2
89523	2
89441	1
89704	1
<i>Inaccurate Zip Code*</i>	2
<i>Question Incomplete</i>	4
County Total	50

*Washoe County had two respondents that listed an inaccurate zip code, one listed 89343 and the other listed 89534.

Clark County			
Zip Code	Number of Respondents	Zip Code	Number of Respondents
89074	11	89115	2
89131	9	89120	2
89129	8	89122	2
89031	5	89144	2
89117	5	89145	2
89139	5	89147	2
89141	5	89183	2
89052	4	89014	1
89081	4	89005	1
89130	4	89044	1
89134	4	89102	1
89149	4	89106	1
89015	3	89110	1
89032	3	89113	1
89101	3	89118	1
89107	3	89138	1
89108	3	89143	1
89121	3	89146	1
89123	3	89148	1
89128	3	89173	1

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

Clark County			
Zip Code	Number of Respondents	Zip Code	Number of Respondents
89002	2	89178	1
89012	2	89179	1
89103	2	89191	1
89104	2		
<i>Inaccurate Zip Code*</i>	1		
<i>Question Incomplete</i>	59		
County Total	190		

*One respondent from Clark County listed an inaccurate zip code of 8904.