EQUITY TASKFORCE POLICY WORKGROUP

Date: Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Time: 8:30-10:00 AM CST

**Location:** Zoom (See Details Below)

**Workgroup Co-Lead and Chair:** Sergio Mendoza and Angela Morrison

**Staff Present:** Sarah Blalock and Jeannette Tamayo

**Members Present:** Elba Aranda-Suh, Peter Creticos, Kevin Anthony Ford, Jennifer Foster, Laura Gergely, Jason Keller, Sergio Mendoza, Angela Morrison, Julio Rodriguez, Itedal Shalabi

**Members Absent:** Pat Devaney, Jamie Ewing, Jessica Linder Gallo, Maggie Rivera, Manika Turnbull, Audra Wilson

**Guest Present:** Corinne Kodama

| Time | Item | Presenter |
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| 8:36 am | Welcome Remarks Roll Call (Jeannette Tamayo)  Ms. Tamayo reviewed meeting access and participation expectations. Ms. Tamayo conducted Roll Call for the members. | Sergio Mendoza and Angela Morrison |
| 8:40am | Approval of Minutes – December 9, 2020 and February 18, 2021  Ms. Morrison asked for a Motion to Approve the Proposed December 9, 2020 Minutes. Laura Gergley moved to Approve the December 9, 2020 Minutes. Jason Keller seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.  Ms. Morrison asked for a Motion to Approve the Proposed February 18, 2021 Minutes. Julio Rodrigues moved to Approve the Proposed February 18, 2021 Minutes. Laura Gergely seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. | Angela Morrison |
| 8:45am | Review of the Definition of Equity Lens and Framework  Ms. Tamayo reviewed the Equity Conversation that was held at the Full Equity Task Force Meeting on 2.24.21.   * Need a definition of equity lens but also need a definition of equity. * Definition needs to be more robust on what we’re trying to accomplish. * Specific terminology was discussed in terms of marginalized, elimination of barriers. * Chicken and Egg; do we need a definition of equity first or equity lens first. * In conversation, what does equity that mean. * An example was given from Dr. Julian from the 2.24 meeting in regard to the different ways to say soft drinks to highlight the need for a common definition. | Jeannette Tamayo |
| 8:50am | * Review of the Target Population Barriers Poll   Ms. Tamayo discussed that at the last meeting we voted to recommend the addition the Population of digitally disconnected to the Equity Task Force.  Ms. Tamayo discussed the importance to think of equity in terms of the Target Populations. What does equity mean to each Target Population? Need for a discussion of the barriers of target populations and the intersectionality of the barriers of the target populations. Mr. Mendoza’s example was discussed with Justice Impacted Individuals and are they the same as Returning Citizens.  A two-part Zoom Poll was launched:  Question 2:  “Of the many barriers that Target Populations face, which are the most prevalent in education and workforce development programs?”  Options given- Transportation, Childcare, Awareness of an opportunity, location of services, geography, cost of opportunity, federal eligibility requirements, participation requirements, criminal history (actual or perceived), language and communication barriers (digital literacy, understand the provided tools, zip code.  Response over 50%: Transportation, childcare, location of services, geography, cost of opportunity and communication barriers.  Mr. Mendoza discussed his experience within his field with participants need loner laptops. College resources are going more to credit students and not students in short-term training. Grant sources have denied funding to go to this barrier.  Ms. Tamayo will share statewide broadband opportunities that may be helpful.  Ms. Morrison asked if cost was on the list, Ms. Tamayo responded that the cost of the opportunity was listed but will include financial cost.  Mr. Creticos discussed the framework of the question; it is not about just eliminating barriers ask a question of dealing with equity. The thought process of eliminating a barrier then makes it a matter of personal responsibility. Success is then dependent on the persons own volition. How can a person have agency and then exercise that agency? Empowering an individual to access opportunity.  Tying in Mr. Creticos comments to frame the question in terms of attributes rather than barriers. Ms. Tamayo attempted to relaunch the poll for Question 1, yet relaunching poll would cause a loss of previous responses. Mr. Mendoza suggested screen shotting the initial poll results and then proceed with relaunching. Ms. Tamayo took a screen shot of the poll. Poll was then relaunched.  Question 1: What attributes of equity should be included in the written definition of equity?  Options: Access, accessibility, demographic information or group identification, treatment with dignity and respect, distribution of assets and resources, justice economic social, geography, income level identification and or classification, outcome focus, opportunity awareness availability to participate advance and mobility.  Responses over 50%: Access, accessibility, Outcome focused, elimination of barriers, treatment with dignity and respect, justice, opportunity; awareness, participation, advancement and mobility.  Ms. Morrison and Ms. Shalabi commented that the poll required user to answer both questions in order to submit.  Ms. Blalock asked Ms. Tamayo to discuss the importance of the Poll results to the group. Ms. Tamayo then discussed when thinking about equity what are the attributes? From employee, participant, employer and system. What is it that the system will have to do to equip participants to succeed? There is a need to name it, claim it, and measure it in regard to equity.  Ms. Shalabi discussed the importance to identify these barriers but conveyed a concern on the employer and their training and strategies to employee an equitable system. While working on empowering the individual, a focus should also be made towards the employer side to ensure that they will use these strategies.  Ms. Tamayo discussed a useful equity definition would work both for the employee and the employer and then asked to put some of the conversation in the parking lot on how to tailor it to the employer.  Ms. Tamayo asked the group if we are missing anyone in the Target Population and Equity Attributes.   * Ms. Shalabi recommended paid training, cost and financial impact.   Mr. Certicos discussed that there are three different frameworks interacting within the attributes list; employee, employer and public institution who governs and allocates resources and that it may be helpful to divide these into the three groups. Ms. Tamayo agreed that in order for a definition to work it has to work for the whole system. Ms. Morrison reiterated the charge of the Policy Workgroup and that separating the attributes into three groups may lead the group down a rabbit hole and that a definition should be comprehensive and capturing all within the system. Mr. Creticos discussed there must be a viewpoint from accountability and enforcement perspective; what is the skin in the game for each of these groups. Ms. Morrison discussed the importance for a comprehensive policy in order hold employers accountable. Mr. Creticos discussed the importance of the expectation to employers to be held accountable. Ms. Blalock discussed the attributes would work as a funnel that could then be narrowed down for each part of the system. Ms. Tamayo discussed the origins of the attribute list and the importance of making the equity definition applicable to everyone or there is a potential of it being misused or unused.  Additional Discussion from the Chat:   * Ms. Kodama : I didn't see financial cost listed as a barrier? * Ms. Shalabi: language * Ms. Foster : For our students, total wrap around services. This would be a handled on a case by case basis. This may be include food insecurity. | Jeannette Tamayo and All |
| 9:26 am | Ms. Morrison posed the following discussion questions to the group:   * What attributes of equity apply best to workforce development, regardless of funding source, participant demographics, and business sector?   Ms. Tamayo reshared the poll results; access, accessibility, justice; social justice or economic justice. What does justice look like or an example?  Ms. Shalabi expressed that concern that with adding anymore to the list could make the list redundant. Eliminating the quota in terms of diversity is important, there needs to be a tool on measuring equity. Implementation is the most important in regard to real change. How to look at the previous policies and how they shape social justice issues.  Ms. Tamayo discussed that the Equity Task Force is charged with equity goals to apply across the system, accountability. Ms. Tamayo discussed the difference of equality and equity in diversity is in numbers rather it is how the system designs programs to be inclusive and equitable, a transformation perspective.  Ms. Morrison reiterated the importance of aligning implementation. The workgroups and the idea of equity should all be cohesive in the policy, implementation and research.  Ms. Tamayo called on Ms. Foster for her views on the discussion: Look at equity from making certain that all participants can access services, using data to inform decisions in order to have a continuous process. Longitudinal study of data would inform the implementation of policies so that the populations can access the services. Ms. Tamayo asked for Ms. Foster to define access. Ms. Foster used the example of completion and examining what groups are not included and then study the barriers. A case-by-case practice and customization is important to each participants. Ms. Tamayo explained that the data group is examining the gaps in the data.  Mr. Mendoza discussed those with disabilities in terms of access to training. Ms. Tamayo how do we make sure policies meet the needs of an individual? Services must be customizable, but the definition needs to be firm.  Ms. Gergely how are our policies creating barriers so that populations don’t have access to training? A data deep dive and research on other state best practices in examining those barriers. Ms. Tamayo points our Colorado and Oregon as at the forefront of equity. Boil the ocean; we can’t fix everything, but what is it that the workgroup can do within the workforce system?  Pastor Ford: How can this work be manifested on the street? Equity as it fosters in specifically in the construction industry. The restrictive boundary systems of zip codes and work as a percussor for allowing Black workers to access opportunities, creating an apartheid. How can we create a system that allows participants to move freely to access viable sustainable careers? Ms. Tamayo reiterated the importance of zip code as a determinant of opportunity and parroting.  Discussion Topics that were not specifically asked but covered throughout discussion:   * How can a definition of equity lens leverage maximum inclusion within the context of a statewide workforce system? * What would be a useful working definition of “equity,” “equity lens,” “equity outcomes” to frame the Task Force’s work? * Which workforce policies apply differently across skill levels or income tiers? * How would using this lens change the outcome of common policies that create or contribute to barriers to access across workforce programs?   Additional Discussion from Chat:   * Ms. Foster : We should look at equity from access to services perspective. We have to look at it from a gaps perspective. Answering the question from a why are certain groups accessing training and others are not and come up with strategies to ensure that these groups access the training or instruction. How can equity help do our jobs better to ensure our participants access the services? How do we use the data to inform our practices and services to participants. * Ms. Tamayo : Spaghetti thoughts and conversations are great! We all think of many items at the time. Share them in the chat or raise your hand or speak. * Ms. Foster : Agree Sergio. We can't have a one size fits all approach. Customization is key. * Ms. Morrison : Yes, Laura--totally agree! This group should definitely be looking at what policies are currently in place and what are the best practices. | ALL |
| 9:55 | Mr. Mendoza suggests we start looking at policies, Ms. Tamayo expressed that a poll will be sent to everyone and policies will be in hand prior to the April Meeting.  Identify Upcoming Workgroup Research and Review for Next Meeting   * What are the best practices in policy assessment and review among workforce providers for incorporating an equity lens into their programs? * Identify resources, partnerships and information needed | Sergio Mendoza and Angela Morrison |
| 9:56am | Ms. Blalock stated the next workgroup meeting time: April 7, 2021 8:30-10:00am and the next Equity Task Force meeting will be held April 28, 2021 8:30-10:00am | Sarah Blalock |
| 9:55am | Public Comment  Ms. Blalock opened the floor to the Public Comment; The Open Meeting Act Requires the group to give up to 5 minutes for Public Comment. No members of the public were present and noted that there was no public comment at the time. | Sarah Blalock |
|  | Adjournment.  Ms. Morrison asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Creticos moved the motion to adjourn; Ms. Shalabi seconded. With that Ms. Morrison adjourned the meeting. | Angela Morrison |

**Meeting Goals:**

1. Approve Minutes of December 9, 2020 Meeting
2. Approve Minutes of February 18, 2021 Meeting
3. Review Definition of Equity Lens and Framework
4. Discuss the attributes of equity
5. Establish a working definition of “equity”
6. Discuss identified barriers and policies and practices that the definition would address

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*Program Workgroup*

**Drivers:**

* Execute a customer centered design service delivery model
* Better prepare staff to effectively serve business and individual customers
* Demonstrate a business-demand driven orientation and establish strong business partnerships
* Funding opportunity for piloting best practices in Equity work

**Anchors**

* Integrated business services framework for state and regional workforce and

economic development programs

* Cross-Agency development of staff and WIOA system stakeholders
* Expand access to information and resources
* Establish direct relationships among diverse stakeholders

**Expected Outcomes**

* Identification of best practices in equity-based decision-making among organizational leadership and in-service delivery
* Identification of best practices for assessing performance and performance metrics in evaluating organizational capacity and service delivery
* Identification of strategies and programs for providing high-quality professional training