

Centralina Workforce Development Board

Youth Council Meeting

Boys & Girls Club of Cabarrus County

247 Spring St. Concord, NC

Thursday January 15, 2009 – 10:00 A.M.

Members Present

Carol Johnson, Youth Council Chair
Carolyn White
Linda Smith
Marion Kinley
Rick Brown
Erin Buckland
Billy Marsh
Sharon Allen
Kristina Stout

WDB Staff

Emily Clamp
Natasha Pender

Guests

Bob VanGorden, Centralina WDB Chair
Chris Lowder, Cabarrus County Schools
Kathy McDuffie, Rowan – Salisbury Schools
Monique Phoenix, I-CARE, Inc.
Deborah Ervin, I-CARE, Inc.
Almond Miller, Salisbury - Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc.
Paula Holmes, UCCA, Inc.
Katrina Duke, Cabarrus Literacy Council
Roger Withers, Rowan - Salisbury Schools
Wilma King Means, South West Cabarrus Agency
Tony Long, Guardian ad Litem
Robert Kirk, Cabarrus County Schools
Kathy Gardner, Stanly Community College
Curtis Parker, Stanly Early College
Clarissa Henry, City Dive, Inc.
Glenn Usry, Iredell PAL

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Youth Council Chair, Carol Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM. Carol welcomed everyone, asked that each attendee introduce themselves, and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 20, 2008 meeting were mailed prior to the meeting. Carol Johnson waived the reading of the previous minutes and asked if there were any changes or corrections. Carolyn White moved that the minutes stand as submitted and Marion Kinley seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the motion to approve the minutes was unanimously approved.

New Youth Council Member

Carol Johnson introduced new Youth Council applicant Sharon Allen. Sharon was a guest speaker at the November Youth Council meeting, in which she shared information about her King's Daughters mentoring program. Sharon Allen is the Executive Director of Connecting Futures, Inc. in Monroe NC. She is a native of Union County who entered into the workforce immediately after completing High School. After several years working as an Office Manager at an Accounting Firm, Sharon decided to pursue other options. She returned to school and began a new career at Carolinas Medical Center – Union in 2000.

Sharon is the mother of two daughters, whom she adopted in 2006. In 2005, Sharon received the honor of Foster Parent of the Year. Sharon is active in her Church and community. She has a passion for serving youth that led to her creating the Connecting Futures, Inc. organization in June of 2007. Sharon is currently working toward earning her Master's Degree in Health and Human Service Management.

Youth Council member Linda Smith made the motion to approve Sharon as a new Youth Council member (ad-hoc). The motion was seconded by Marion Kinley and unanimously approved.

Icebreaker – Youth Council 2008 Year In Review

Natasha Pender presented a PowerPoint pictorial to members and guests that showed highlights of the youth programs in the Centralina WDB region during calendar year 2008. Members and guests reflected upon the youth summer programs, the North Carolina and Centralina WDB Youth summits and the NC Workforce Development Partnership Conference in which the Centralina WDB Youth Council had a winner in the Governor's Award category for outstanding youth – Mr. Sherman Rankin.

Natasha asked members and guests to share goals and expectations for 2009. Youth Council chair, Carol Johnson encouraged WIA Youth contractors to nominate several youth for the awards categories for this year's Governor's awards. She noted that there many success stories in our region, and they need to be heard. Emily Clamp added that youth should be recognized individually at the Centralina WDB youth summit. Other members and guests agreed. Linda Smith added that we should continue to encourage youth by positively promoting their successes. Discussion ensued regarding the Centralina WDB Youth Summit. Natasha Pender noted that an invitation to participate on the planning committee for the 2009 Centralina WDB Youth Services Summit had been sent out. She added that all those interested in participating can respond via email or express interest directly to her following the meeting.

Carol Johnson thanked everyone for their input and their continued support of the Youth Council.

Presentation – North Carolina Graduation Project

Natasha Pender introduced Kathy McDuffie and Chris Lowder. Kathy McDuffie is the Career and Technical Education Director for Rowan – Salisbury Schools and Chris Lowder is the Career and Technical Education Director for Cabarrus County Schools.

The North Carolina Graduation Project is a performance assessment that allows students to connect skills, content knowledge, and work habits to real world situations. The program is a state requirement for graduation, beginning with the class of 2010.

The Graduation Project is a culmination of skills that each student should have acquired during the course of their educational journey. The components of the project are: a **research paper** that demonstrates the students research and writing skills; a “**product**” which will serve as a demonstration of the topic that was chosen for the research paper; a **portfolio** that combines documents that tracks the students learning experience and research; and a 10-15 minute **oral presentation** that should communicate information gathered throughout the entire process, to a panel of reviewers. The Project begins with 11th graders. They choose a topic to submit for approval. Once the topic is approved, students can immediately begin with gathering information. Students are required to pair with a mentor who is an expert in the field that the student has chosen to research for their project.

Through the Graduation Project, students have an opportunity to demonstrate such skills as employability, information retrieval, computer knowledge, language, writing, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving. Completion of the project does not earn the student an actual letter grade. Students **must** complete the Graduation Project to receive their diploma, regardless of GPA.

Graduates of the class of 2010 will be the first group to complete the Graduation Project in the Rowan Salisbury School System. Cabarrus County is in its second year of implementation. Many questions followed the presentation. Students who do not complete the requirement must attend Summer School or be counted as a drop out. Cabarrus County has seen a 94% success rate among its students. Of the 6% that were unsuccessful, Chris cites a refusal or failure to write a passing research paper.

When asked about parent resistance, both Chris and Kathy said they have experienced very little parent opposition of the project; adding that most schools have had several of the components of the Graduation Project already in place as a graduation requirement. Chris Lowder stated that all students have equal expectations; no standards have been lowered to accommodate any students' individual circumstances.

Carol Johnson thanked Chris and Kathy for their time and for a great presentation.

2009 NC Youth Summit

Natasha Pender stated that the planning committee for the 2009 NC Youth Summit will be meeting on Friday, January 16th. Tentative dates for the 2009 NC Youth Summit are April 17 & 18 at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro, NC.

Centralina WDB Youth Summit

Youth Council members voted to have the 2009 Youth Services Summit during the month of September, and also to have the next Youth Council meeting at the Boys & Girls Club of Cabarrus County. Natasha Pender reiterated that anyone interested in serving on the planning committee for the 2009 Centralina WDB Youth Summit should see her following the meeting.

Folder Items/ Handouts

Natasha Pender reviewed the items included in the Youth Council folders:

- NC Fatherhood Development Advisory Council: Fatherhood Forum
- College Foundation FAFSA Day – February 21, 2009
- Running Start! Girls in Politics Program
- NC Reach: Educational Assistance for Foster Youth 7 Adoptees
- Article – “Program grant will help pave paths for students” – *The Statesville Record & Landmark*
- Article – “College Board panel calls for efforts to raise completion rates” - *Innovator*
- Article – “Innovative School honored as good place to teach and learn” - *Innovator*
- Article – “Schools lauded for technology” – *The Statesville Record & Landmark*
- Article – “Earning a GED might be some students best ticket for a better life” – *The Salisbury Post*
- Article – “Teen takes Lead” – *The County News*
- Article – “Rowan-Salisbury School System to receive grants to help curb dropouts” - *The Salisbury Post*
- Article – “Boys & Girls Club facility a dream come true” – *The Statesville Record & Landmark*
- “Just 4 YOUth!!! Handout
 - Youth Participant spotlight: from all providers
 - Top Paying jobs for Associate Degree holders

Updates and Upcoming Events

The Centralina Workforce Development Board is scheduled to meet at the Cabarrus Regional Chamber of Commerce in Kannapolis on Tuesday February 10, 2009. The Anson County Career Fair will be held on Saturday February 21, 2009. The Rowan-Salisbury Schools Career Fair will be held on Wednesday March 11, 2009.

Carol Johnson reminded attendees that the Centralina Workforce Development Board E-Newsletter has a section titled “Youth Corner.” This section highlights youth related articles from around the region as well as upcoming events. She asked that members submit articles to Emily Clamp at eclamp@centralina.org.

The next meeting of the Centralina Youth Council is scheduled for Thursday March 19, 2009 at 10:00 am at the Cabarrus Boys & Girls Club in Concord.

There being no further business, Carol Johnson adjourned the meeting at 12:05 pm.