

# WorkFirst Local Planning Conference Call Conversations

May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009

## Call #7 –

Next Call – *Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am - 9:30 am*

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**Sub3 Attendees:** Roxanne Lowe, Diane Klontz, Kristin Ockert, Ken Koernke, Dasha Mitchell, Samantha Smithingell

- √ Region 1 – Spokane/Lincoln LPA, Okanogan LPA
- √ Region 2 – Benton/Franklin LPA, Yakima/Kittitas LPA
- √ Region 3 – N. Snohomish LPA, S. Snohomish LPA, Skagit/San Juan and Camano Island LPA, Whatcom LPA, Whidbey Island LPA
- √ Region 4 – King East LPA, King South LPA, and Renton LPA, and Rainier, Capitol, Beltown LPA
- √ Region 5 – Pierce County LPA Kitsap County LPA
- √ Region 6 – Clark LPA, Grays Harbor/Pacific LPA, Mason County LPA, Thurston County LPA, and Lewis County LPA

### **CE Transition Plans:**

Over the past several months a Sub3 workgroup has been revising the Comprehensive Evaluation as it is currently structured and the changes will go into effect September 1<sup>st</sup>. Because the WorkFirst Delivery Agreements did not provide guidance for continuing the college portion of the CE, LPAs must develop transition plans to address this two month gap beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>. From the May 18<sup>th</sup>, CE Transition Memo:

“For the period July 1 through August 31, the one-on-one interview and entry of education justification information conducted by the colleges will be eliminated; CASAS scores and corresponding grade level or descriptors will be entered into the CE section of eJAS. Local partners will discuss and agree on the location and availability of the CASAS testing. The remainder of the CE process will continue as it exists currently.

There remain concerns, however, about logistical issues, such as requiring parents to travel long distances to the closest CASAS testing location and increasing the time spent in a CE (non-countable) component. To mediate those concerns, LPAs are encouraged to think creatively, explore innovations such as available automation, and monitor performance data carefully. Below are a couple of examples of how LPAs could accommodate the reduction in CASAS testing sites:

- Parents could be sent to a college testing site (may be more than one in an area) after the Foundation has been completed
- College representative could go to the CSO or WorkSource office on a locally-determined schedule ”

An additional memo will be sent out via the Listserv mid to late July with technical details related to the CE Changes. Ctrl+Click to review the currently published memos and listserv messages below. These memos and directions for joining the Listserv can be found at:

<http://www.workfirst.wa.gov/news/listserv.asp>

Comprehensive Evaluation Transition: [Memo](#)

May 18, 2009

Comprehensive Evaluation Process Changes: [Memo](#)

April 30, 2009

[Comprehensive Evaluation Changes Coming](#)

March 23, 2009

### **WorkFirst Delivery Agreements—Life Skills Component:**

With the new Delivery Agreements going live July 1<sup>st</sup>, we wanted to know how the Life Skills components are shaping up at the local community colleges.

Reminders from Sub3:

- The expectation has always been that the Life Skills component is a short-term engagement strategy aimed at improving the participation rate.
- Life Skills counts against Job Search activities. Federal participation is counted in the same 4 weeks on, 1 week off, 4 weeks on fashion as these other components. The longer a client is in LS the less time they have available to participate and count federally in Job Search.
- Life Skills is not intended as a long-term “gap filler”. It is a short-term engagement strategy for those clients referred to the colleges.
- Each Life Skills component will vary across the state. Local colleges have the flexibility to develop these activities to suit their clients and to manage within local resources.

There is currently no JT offered for clients within the Mason County LPA. LPA Lead Yvonne Rivera-Ensley is interested in what other LPAs have done to build their own JT offerings. The Mason/Thurston area, serviced by Olympic and South Puget Sound colleges, are extremely concerned about the disconnect between their JT needs and local capacity.

\*The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges is developing a matrix of college offerings under the new Delivery Agreements. As a complement to this document, they have also asked each college to detail what specifically will NOT be provided in the next program year in contrast to the current program year. This information will provide much needed information on how offerings and capacity will change as of July 1<sup>st</sup>. We hope to share this information with you all as soon as it is complete.

### **Elevate America:**

The Elevate America initiative is in the process of distributing 1 million vouchers to states to provide free access to Microsoft E-Learning courses and select certification tests. Within Washington, these vouchers are being distributed via the Workforce Development Councils- everyone is eligible. Vouchers must be activated by July 31, 2009 and participants often have up to one year to complete their chosen courses. This is a great opportunity to tap into alternate funding as some courses can be counted as JT, depending on class structure. Locally, many CJ contractors have been providing

supervision as clients participate in the program, thus enabling their hours to count for the federal participation rate. More information can be found at [www.elevateamerica.com](http://www.elevateamerica.com) or by contacting your local WorkSource office.

### **Local Heroes:**

During the April conference call many LPAs shared a desire to highlight local heroes. Please know that this can only be what you make of it! Be prepared to come to the call with a positive story from the field- be it improved process, staff going above and beyond, client outcomes that surpass the norm, etc. If you're impressed by something new going on in your area then we want to know about it—this is a great opportunity for sharing best practices and “feel good” stories about the small successes currently happening across the state. Special thanks to Yakima/Kittitas LPA, Chelan/Douglas LPA, King East LPA and King South LPA for sharing stories and kudos in this first installment.

I'm currently working to contact those that shared a local hero story and will continue to do so with each additional conference call. My plan is to compile all of these fabulous mentions into a separate document and post to the Local Planning page on the WorkFirst website [www.workfirst.wa.gov](http://www.workfirst.wa.gov). Let's get the word out that we're *proud* of our clients, partners, staff, co-workers and management teams that are continuously and tirelessly working together to make this program the success that it is.

### **LPA Monthly Conference Call Schedule and Call-in Details:**

Our next call will be **Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, from 8:30 to 9:30 am.**

- **Call-in #: (360) 407-3780**
- **PIN: 257901#** *(please one line per LPA unless pre-arranged with Samantha)*

### **Call Topic:** *Please send your ideas to Samantha! These calls are for you!*

- **Updates on Local CE Transition Plans**
- **Local Heroes**

Note: Calls have been scheduled for the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Thursday of every month through September. All calls will use the same call-in number and PIN.

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