

Governor's Council on Women and Girls
Education and STEAM Subcommittee
Wednesday, May 22, 2019

Meeting Minutes

- I. **Call to Order and Introductions** - Meeting was brought to order at 1:07 p.m. by Co-chair Commissioner Bongsi Magubane. The following committee members were in attendance and introduced themselves: Eric Smith (Department of Transportation), Erin Choquette (Department of Administrative Services), Lindy Lee Gold (Department of Economic and Community Development), Penny Potter (Department of Revenue Services) and Noele Kidney (Office of Higher Education.) The following members of the public were in attendance at the meeting as well: Stephanie Rosario (Middletown), Sabrina M. Tucker-Barrett (Girls for Technology), Ira Revels (Ira Revels Consulting) and Elizabeth Durgin (CT Tech Council.)
- II. **Discussion of Progress (Results of agency survey) –**
 - a. The survey was sent out to all state agencies with the exception of a few that would not be appropriate. Erin Choquette received 37 responses, 19 agencies did not respond. Commissioner Magubane asked that a courtesy note/email be sent out to those agencies that did not reply to find out if it was intentional that they did not reply and if not, to encourage them to reply. As we discussed at our initial meeting, we need to determine interest on behalf of the agencies.
 - b. Once all replies are accounted for, Erin believes she can get someone from DAS to help with the compilation and analyzation of the data received.
 - c. The subcommittee goal is to collect information from agencies that have an internship programs (for example - DOT) and create a standardized hiring policy and procedure plan within a framework of a “internship development/hiring kit” that can be used by all agencies.
 - d. Currently the following agencies have opportunities for high school students: CHRO, DOT, Secretary of State, Pardons and Paroles, Library, DOE and Elections Enforcement.
 - e. Most agencies replied that they get their interns from UCONN or Chalkboard. DEEP says they don't have internships but maybe they just don't refer to their job opportunities as internships. The Chair added that we should be defining “internship” around duties, experience, pay, etc. Ask agencies in a different way – “What are your agency's experiences available to college/high school students?” might garner a better picture.
 - f. The survey didn't get sent to BOR and UCONN nor the Judiciary Department as this was an Executive Branch survey. Erin will reach out to the Judicial Branch to ask if they'd be interested in participating in the survey.
- III. **Subcommittee Discussion –**
 - a. There was considerable discussion about whether high school students should or would be included in the recommendations after the DOL Summer Employment program was suggested as an example of hiring policies for teens. It was decided by the group that

the primary focus for this subcommittee would be on students aged 18-24 but that high school students have to avoid a number of legal and personnel issues that exist when hiring high school students – state has more flexibility than private sector in this realm.

- b. Maybe once an Internship toolkit is developed, it can be shopped to the appropriate schools within the state?
- c. Most agencies reported they have unpaid internships. We also need to realize that not all students can make an unpaid internship work – working with the schools often can result in earning credits instead of dollars. DOT – reaches out to high school students but its program, while available to everyone is specifically aimed at underrepresented and disadvantaged population.
- d. It's becoming more important that schools and businesses work together to develop pipeline programs. An area that needs to be addressed is how programs are evaluated. Our internship program's goal is to provide a pathway or pipeline for students, to give them a valuable work experience and in doing so to encourage them to stay in Connecticut.
- e. Community/Business Partnerships – we should make sure business and community partnerships are included to ensure that all viewpoints are heard. It was suggested that the group could possibly look at creating a dual-internship experience with a state agency and business/corporation.

IV. Public Comment –

- a. Stephanie Rosario expressed her concern that girls who reside in the inner cities don't have the same workplace and workplace opportunities that their suburban counterparts are. Commissioner Bongini assured her that this is the very reason why the Governor's Council on Women and Girls (and the Education and STEAM subcommittee) were convened.
- b. Ira Revels asked that the committee pursue community partnerships to help with the goal of providing meaningful and substantive work experiences for youth. She referred to a recent article in the Hartford Business Journal that mentions new ways for students who don't attend college to develop pathways to employment:
<https://www.hartfordbusiness.com/article/greater-hartfords-new-economic-plan-contrasts-ambitious-vision-with-stark-challenges>
- c. Sabrina Tucker-Barrett runs Girls for Technology (works with Ira Revels) and tries to develop pathways to employment in technology fields to reduce the gender and racial gap in the field. <http://girlsfortechology.org/>
- d. Elizabeth Durgin of the CT Tech Council explained that they are a non-profit company located in East Hartford that works with high schools, colleges to offer awards to students who have shown a strong interest in technology. They could help with the recruitment of interested interns.
- e. It was suggested that we offer a mentoring program as part of the internship experience or offer a menu of alternatives because not every agency might be able to offer the same type of experience.
- f. **Next Steps –**
 - a. Committee members should be reaching out to include community/business partnerships for this venture – public attendees were interested in being involved.

- b. Erin Choquette will write up notes on survey.
 - c. Subcommittee would like to review DOT's policies and procedures for their internship program.
 - d. The sub-committee should include Art in its agenda for next meeting. Partner with area art organizations. Talk with technical high schools/ state employees submit photography?
 - e. Noele Kidney will contact Lindy Lee Gold to find out contact for DECD Art Program.
 - f. Next meeting will take place at Legislative Office Building and meeting dates for the rest of the year will be determined at that meeting.
- V. Meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.**