

**Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Self-Advocacy Committee
Mini-Retreat
February 14, 2013**

MEETING NOTES

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Goal #1: Build a self-advocacy alliance comprised of diverse advocacy organizations that is led by persons with developmental disabilities.

Self-advocacy means that individuals have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to represent themselves throughout the life span in a variety of settings (school, work, community, etc.). It includes leadership and civic engagement. Self-advocacy can occur at the person level or at the system level. More conversation is needed on the definition and philosophy of self-advocacy and what successful self-advocacy looks like.

The self-advocacy alliance will be a *statewide* collaborative comprised of self-advocacy groups.

Objectives

Although important, current objectives are too narrow if the goal of self-advocacy is to be achieved. There are two aspects of self-advocacy—preparing self-advocates and increasing the receptivity of organizations (e.g., civic organizations). Current objectives focus only on the first aspect.

Proposed new objectives are as follows:

Objective 1: Enhance the leadership capacity of self-advocates, as measured by their involvement in civic and other leadership activities.

Objective 2: Strengthen self-advocacy organizations, as measured by the capacity of self-advocacy organizations to create systems change.

Objective 3: Develop, expand, and strengthen a statewide self-advocacy alliance.

Objective 4: Build capacity for self-advocacy in underserved areas of the state.

(Objective 5: Build community capacity for inclusion. *Should this be added now or at a later time?* More thought is needed about the strategies that might be employed to achieve this objective.)

These objectives are responsive to the Comprehensive Review and Analysis (CR&A).

It was noted that these objectives can be addressed not only through contracts but through the work of Council members and staff, as well as through partnerships. It was agreed that all objectives need to have clearly stated outcome measures, which could be in the objective or in the evaluation plan. The Committee wants to focus on results in a constructive way.

Contracts

The current contracts are in alignment with Goal #1 and both the current and new objectives. They all have evaluation components.

- Identification of Self-Advocacy Groups in Arizona (current Objective 1 & 3) (new Objective 2-4). This project report will be completed by May 2013 and will result in a good description of existing self-advocacy groups.
- Project LEAP (current Objective 2) (new Objective 1). This project is in Year 2 and provides conference stipends for self-advocates and family members.
- Partners in Policymaking (current Objective 2) (new Objective 1). This project is in Year 3 and provides training in policymaking; training is being expanded into various areas of the state.
- Project SPEAK (current Objective 2) (new Objective 1). This project is in Year 2 and provides training for self-advocacy groups in several areas of the state. There is a strong connection between this project and the identification of self-advocacy groups in Arizona.

Approaches that might be pursued/funded include:

- Direct training
- Opportunities for civic engagement
- Placement onto boards, committees, etc.
- Systems integration (to make systems more responsive)—directly and through self-advocates
- Rights advocacy

Ideas for new projects included:

- Post-secondary options (leadership in school, work, community)
- Leadership within high schools (or lower grades)
- Placement of self-advocates on boards, committees, etc.

Opportunities for Internal and External Collaboration

There will be opportunities for leveraging the work of the Self-Advocacy Committee with the work of both the Integrated Employment Committee and the Empowerment through Information Committee, as well as with State agencies, employers, and others.

The Committee would like to encourage partnerships and grant awards that are outcome focused and inclusive of agencies and organizations that have not previously engaged with the Council.

The Committee discussed the Council role in achieving Goal #1. Roles include the following:

- Leading by example (e.g., starting a self-advocacy organization)
- Being good stewards of Federal funds
- Talking to community groups, businesses, etc. in order to increase awareness
- Opening doors, sharing relationships
- Being good partners to staff
- Staying out of operational issues

Staff roles would be similar in some respects to Council member roles, but with the following:

- Handling operational issues so the Council can do its job

- Public speaking
- Relationship building

Partners will include:

- ABIL
- DIRECT
- SILC
- Civic organizations
- Tribal organizations
- Chambers of Commerce
- K-12 schools (public and charter)
- Community colleges
- Universities
- DD Network
- Local and state governments
- Commissions on disabilities
- Other like-minded organizations with whom the Council might have shared/compatible goals