Paul welcomed the group and explained the reason for changing the meeting name. The purpose of this network is to provide a place for community agencies and schools, that serve individuals with special needs, to share information, learn from each other, coordinate their efforts and find ways to have greater impact together on improving postsecondary outcomes for students. The four meetings this year will focus on a different postsecondary goal: Employment Focus, Adult Living Focus, Training and Education Focus and Community Participation Focus.

Employability Statistics – National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) –

* Employment during years emerging adulthood improves chances for a higher quality of life.
* Young adults with learning disabilities (79%) were more likely to have a paid job than those with other disabilities.

Table Activity

Barriers: establishing good habits, transportation, self-determination skills, lack of parental support, lack of social and soft skills, barriers with SSI and Medicaid, access to employers – dealing with disability, lack of understanding by employers, how to get from where they are to getting the job, stigma hurts confidence, articulating your disability

Successful Practices: Project SEARCH Fifth Third has employee mentors, job shadowing geared toward interest and follow-up, peer mentoring from agencies (self-advocacy, pre-employment skills, peer to peer), ??, supported employment, ??, Pathways (KTC), ACE Program (agreement with MRS – summer and school year projects with work-based learning), ??, working with students individualized, teachers’ awareness of what is available and what steps they can take, advocating for students with employers

Innovative Ideas: Transportation options (local pick up place) and Lyft/Uber, Opportunities in school for employment, more job tours for students at an earlier age, teaching CPR to students, invite parents in for an activity and use time to talk about agencies like MRS, motivate employers with tax breaks or training from agencies, bring businesses in for sharing info, get employers to meet with others to find out what has worked, get parents together during the critical ages (age 14)

Goals – Next Steps: a move to the next step guide from programs that work, start PTO groups for parents of 14 year olds, Region 2 transition programs, Paul will contact CEOs, collaborate with career readiness, ??,

Patt Clement, ARC – Provided flyers for the different workshops they are offering.

Network 180 - ?see flyer, there is a scholarship available

Sarah Green, Rapid – They have a Wave card, they have a new free run along Bridge Street (partnership with Spectrum) they are looking at new ways to partner with businesses

Kathleen Weaver, MRS - introduced their new Pre-ETS Counselor (get name) and announced that Brittany Carter has moved to a new role working with Region 4.

Tara VanDyke, Sheldon House – they have an open house tomorrow. They work with young adults on career building and other skills. They are part of Cherry Health.

Cindy Alferink, Project SEARCH – they have 25 students this year. Students at Fifth Third have the option to do rotations at Doubletree Hotel (this is a pilot).

Bonnie Miller, DAKC – They have two individuals trained for Benefits Planning workshops. Bonnie will be working part time for MRS. They have an event on October 20th.

Nate, Down Syndrome – shared information about a workshop put on by the national Down Syndrome Association.

Paul shared a guide document that was created for the Navigating Transition PD. He discussed different areas of concern with the checklist. When inviting an agency, be sure to include their name in the new field that was created for that purpose.

Paul, along with other ISDs, are questioning the state on their new guideline requiring a parental signature for assessments. They have sent six questions to them asking for clarification: is any other state doing this, can you describe what a formal assessment is, and others. Our recommendation for now is to continue giving informal classroom assessments as you have been but to get consent for a more comprehensive assessment using the REED.