District 4 Disability Services

Advisory Council

November 18, 2026, 12:00 PM

Microsoft TEAMS Meeting

Join the TEAMS Meeting at

Minutes

In attendance

Debbie Davis, Kyla Claussen, Chuck Morris, Shayla Stater, Bobbi Maynes

Others: Brooke Lovelace, Shelly Haines-Western Iowa Services Collaborative (WISC) Services Supervisor, Suzanne Watson- Western Iowa Services Collaborative (WISC) Executive Director; Danelle Bruce- Western Iowa Services Collaborative (WISC) Operations Supervisor

Introduction of New Member

Suzanne Watson introduced Kyla Claussen as our new Advisory Council member. Kyla shared her background in advocacy and on statewide groups with the council.

Agenda- Action

Motion made by Debbie Davis, seconded by Bobbi Maynes, to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

August 19, 2026, Minutes- Action

Motion made by Debbie Davis and seconded by Kyla Claussen to approve the August 19, 2026, minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

District Assessment Update/Surveys

Suzanne Watson informed the group that WISC is working on data collection for our district assessment over the next few months. HHS has provided a survey (per district) and Suzanne asked council members to consider completing and providing their feedback. The assessment survey results will help guide updates to the District Plan, which is due to be approved by July 1, 2027. WISC will continue to work with the council as we work through the assessment and planning process.

District Updates

Shelly Haines shared WISC navigators have been very busy with a lot of referrals recently. Around 50% of referrals request help in applying for Social Security Disability. Other

common reasons for referrals include assisting individuals to apply for HCBS Waiver wait lists, referring to Medicaid Habilitation services, and assistance for completion of Medicaid applications. Staff caseloads range from 40-45 individuals right now. In September, WISC participated in IVRS/school planning meetings within school districts in D4. During those meetings, WISC shared our referral information explaining how we can be of help to transition age youth.

Danelle Bruce updated the council on rollout of (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) across the state as of July 1. Dedi Redmon, WISC SOAR Navigator, has led technical assistance statewide for the new program and it has been going well so far.

Advocacy Presentation- Brooke Lovelace, Executive Director, Iowa DD Council

Brooke Lovelace provided an overview of the DD Council. The DD Council is funded through federal law and there is a DD Council in every state. The DD Council works on understanding barriers, works with stakeholders to achieve enduring change, and empowers advocates. The DD Council is a group of volunteers making up a 24-member council appointed by the governor. 60% are people with disabilities or family members.

Ways to get involved in advocacy include:

InfoNet and Capitol Chat- resources for civic and political participation for people with disabilities and their family members.

Public Policy Priorities- put together each year with policymakers.

Advocacy at the Capitol- put groups (family members, self-advocates, providers) together throughout the legislative session; some financial grants available to help get to the Capitol. This is a way for individuals/advocates to talk about issues that they care about.

Youth Leadership Academy- program in the summer each year- ages 14-25. Virtual training series over a week's time.

Make your Mark Conference- Self-advocacy conference, just had their 13th year conference in September. Hotel scholarships (limited) are available as conference is a day and a half.

Voting- next election season offers voter grants for different organizations on how to train others on voting rights.

Allies in Advocacy- group of self-advocates for individuals of any age and any disability. Most meetings are virtual but some in-person activities (i.e. legislative day at the Capitol).

Advisory Discussion/Q and A

Chuck Morris commented on the great advocacy being done and experiences he sees as a local SWITA driver. The group discussed unknowns of upcoming political changes in Iowa. Bobbi thanked the WISC team for what we do to help individuals with disabilities.

Public Comment

None