District 1 Disability Services

Advisory Council
November 19, 2026, 12:00 PM
Microsoft TEAMS Meeting
Join the TEAMS Meeting

Minutes

In Attendance

Barb Burns, Deidra Brown, Alisha Frady, Teresa Magnussen, Ashley Miller

Others: Suzanne Watson- Western Iowa Services Collaborative (WISC) Executive Director; Danelle Bruce- WISC Operations Supervisor

Agenda- Action

Motion made by Ashley Miller and seconded by Barb Burns to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

August 20, 2026, Minutes- Action

Motion was made by Teresa Magnussen and seconded by Ashley Miller to approve the August 20, 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.

Update 2027 Meeting Dates

Danelle Bruce requested a change of meeting dates for the February and May meetings of 2027 due to WISC leadership having a new standing meeting during our previously scheduled meetings. The group agreed to the dates of February 16th at 12:00pm and May 18th at 12:00pm. Danelle will update the Teams calendar invites for the council.

District Updates

Danelle Bruce shared that WISC had a staff leave employment in late October and that position has been filled with the new employee starting on November 30th. The new employee will be based in the Plymouth/Woodbury County area. The SOAR navigator in District 1 has continued to build up her caseload. She found out today that one of her first referrals was approved for SSI. Suzanne Watson additionally shared that caseloads are busy. WISC participated in many IVRS/school planning meetings this fall. During those meetings, WISC shared our referral information explaining how we can be of help to transition age youth. This opportunity has led to more referrals for assistance with transition age youth.

Advocacy Presentation- Brooke Lovelace, Executive Director, Iowa DD Council (previously recorded on November 18, 2026)

Suzanne shared that WISC asked for guidance from HHS regarding the District 1 Advisory Council wanting to work with other DAP advisory groups for advocacy. HHS sent back guidance suggesting our councils attach to existing advocacy groups. WISC then requested a presentation from Brooke Lovelace, who is the CEO of the Iowa DD Council. Brooke was unable to speak for today's meeting, however, provided a presentation at the District 4 Advisory Council meeting on November 18th, which was recorded. The recording was played for the meeting today.

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).

After the recorded presentation, Deidra Brown indicated WESCO took some members to the Capitol a few years ago and it was a really great experience after receiving a grant from the DD Council. They also had a member go through the self-advocacy conference through the DD Council. Ashley Miller commented she is on the list for the DD Council and finds their meetings very informative, they translate any proposed legislation and provide legislative updates. Teresa Magnussen commented that Imagine the Possibilities are involved with them as well.

Advisory Discussion/Q and A

Teresa Magnussen informed the group there is an Iowa Provider Medicaid Townhall at 4:00pm today.

Public Comment

None