

**Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)**  
**State Rehabilitation Council Executive Committee**  
**March 3, 2026**  
**Draft Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Christopher Martin, Gayl Brunk, Frederick Foard, and Nick Zweerink.

**Members Absent:** None.

**Others Present:** Marco Callender, SRC; Lillian Garland, SRC; Brandy Schantz, SRC; Ryan Mauzy, SRC; Ryan Haywood, SRC; Yohance Goodrich, DARS; Catherine Harrison, DARS; Meghan Cox, DARS; Becky Gibbs, DARS; Lisa Roberston, DARS; Alison Shaner, DARS; Carrie Humphrey, ASL Interpreter; Ivy Brothers, ASL Interpreter.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Introduction of Members:** Martin called the meeting to order. All members and others present introduced themselves.

**Approval of meeting agenda:** No changes. Agenda approved by unanimous consensus.

**Approval of November meeting minutes:** No changes. Minutes approved by unanimous consensus.

**Matters of Public Comment:** There were no public comments received.

**Discussion:** Cox provided an update on agency business and previewed business meeting items.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 10:16 a.m.

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**Meeting Handouts:**

1. Proposed Meeting Agenda
2. Draft Executive Committee Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2025

**Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)  
State Rehabilitation Council Quarterly Meeting  
March 3, 2026  
Draft Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Christopher Martin, Lillian Garland, Brandy Schantz, Marco Callender, Nick Zweerink, Frederick Foard, Ryan Mauzy, Yohance Goodrich, Ryan Haywood, Patricia Morgan, Heidi Lawyer, Becky Alwood, Beth Klein, and Gayl Brunk.

**Members Absent:** Lee Talley.

**Others Present:** Becky Gibbs, DARS; Dale Batten, DARS; Catherine Harrison, DARS; Donna Bonessi, DARS; Matt Luther, DARS; Julie Jacobs, DARS; Alison Shaner, WWRC; Lisa Robertson, DARS; Meghan Cox, DARS; Barbara Burkett, DARS; Wil Barber, DARS; David Leon, DARS; Ivy Brothers, ASL Interpreter; Carrie Humphrey, ASL Interpreter.

**Participating Electronically (Family Medical Matter):** Travis Staton

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

**Introduction of Members:** Martin called the meeting to order. All members and others present introduced themselves.

**Approval of meeting agenda:** No changes. Agenda approved by unanimous consensus.

**Approval of November Meeting Minutes:** Amendments made noting typos and attendance of Patricia Morgan on November 12. Motion to accept the amended minutes presented by Lawyer, seconded Haywood, and passed by voice vote.

**Matters of Public Comment:** There were no public comments received.

**Chairperson's Report:** The Chair provided a report from the Executive Committee meeting and asked for Annual Report Subcommittee volunteers. Foard, Haywood, and Schantz volunteered to serve.

**New Business**

SRC Member Ryan Haywood provided an update of outreach efforts with Quiyoughcohanock and Warraskoyack Tribal Council and meeting with DARS Leadership. Meeting notes were provided to the Council among meeting materials.

Haywood made a motion to establish a Tribal Affairs Special Committee as follows:

That the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council establish a Tribal Affairs Special Committee as a special (ad hoc) committee, effective upon adoption of this motion and active through November

30th, 2026, with the Council to evaluate at the November 2026 quarterly meeting whether circumstances warrant continuation, reconstitution, or dissolution of the committee.

Purpose: The Tribal Affairs Special Committee shall support DARS leadership in advancing equitable access to vocational rehabilitation services within Virginia's tribal communities. Specifically, the committee shall be charged with sharing relevant contacts and community intelligence with DARS; coordinating on-the-ground outreach to both Federally recognized and State-recognized Virginia tribes; facilitating cultural competency and awareness efforts in support of DARS staff and programs; and tracking progress against collaboration opportunities identified through the Council's active tribal engagement workflow, including those emerging from the January 28th, 2026 introductory meeting with the Quiyoughcohannock and Warraskoyack Tribal Council.

Composition: The committee shall be composed of four (4) members: three (3) voting members of the State Rehabilitation Council, to be appointed by the SRC Chair, and one ex officio representative designated by DARS, who shall serve in a non-voting advisory capacity.

Meetings: The committee shall meet no fewer than twice during its active period and no more than quarterly. Meetings shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and no more than every other meeting may be held virtually, consistent with FOIA constraints.

Reporting: The committee shall provide a status update to the full Council at each quarterly meeting and shall submit a summary report and recommendation regarding its continuation or dissolution prior to the November 2026 quarterly meeting.

Motion was seconded by Lawyer and approved by voice vote.

Chair asked for three volunteers to serve on Tribal Affairs Committee. Haywood, Lawyer, and Callender volunteered to serve. DARS Deputy Commissioner Batten tasked FRS Director Julie Jacobs with serving in ex-officio DARS role.

### **DRS Division Reports**

DRS Deputy Commissioner Dale Batten welcomed SRC members, introduced DRS staff, and described the flow of DRS reporting to be delivered to the Council.

Julie Jacobs, FRS Director, and Barbara Burkett, DARS Policy, provided requested data updates to the Council on WIOA metrics and the Pathways grant, and delivered a related presentation, which is included among meeting materials.

David Leon, Director Workforce Programs, provided updates on the Pathways grant and grant closing activities, and delivered a related presentation, which is included among meeting materials.

Donna Bonessi, Director of Employment Services and Special Programs, provided a quarterly update on Pre-ETS that the Council requested in its 2025 Recommendations and delivered a related presentation, which is included among meeting materials. Bonessi asked about other data that would be useful from the Council: Martin suggested data from FRS offices and determining if unique student numbers could be parsed from data.

### **Policy Division Updates**

Catherine Harrison, Director of the Division of Policy and Legislative Affairs, delivered a presentation on Order of Selection, which is included among meeting materials. She also provided an update on the 2026 General Assembly Session and selected legislation, and the state budget, as well as forthcoming VR Manual changes.

Wil Barber, DARS Policy Research Analyst, provided the updates on the Consumer Satisfaction Survey for FFY 2025 and FFY 2026 (to date). Highlights include overall satisfaction rates for FFY 2025 of: Satisfied (60.8%), Neutral (19.5%), and Dissatisfied (19.7%). Counts of 244 and 447 and response rates of 20.3% and 17.2% for FFY 2025 and FFY 2026, respectively. And percentage of respondents satisfied with the amount DARS has kept in contact with them of 59.7% and 56.5% for FFY 2025 and FFY 2026, respectively.

Lisa Robertson, DARS Policy Analyst, provided an update on the WIOA Combined State Plan two-year update. Virtual public hearings were held on February 18th and 19th. No comments were received. The draft state plan modification was forwarded to VCU Center for Public Policy (CPP) and the Virginia Workforce Board on February 26th. Performance measures were entered to the WIOA State Plan Portal on February 27th. The open comment period for the full State Plan is March 9th through March 22nd. The Workforce Board will meet March 26th and 27th to approve the state plan. The workforce board requested an extension from RSA and the extension was granted. The extension due date is April 30th; however, the workforce board has set a preferred deadline for full state plan submission of April 15th.

### **Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center Report**

Alison Shaner, Director of Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center, delivered a presentation that included updates on the facility and its services. The presentation is included among meeting materials.

### **Member Reports**

- Gayl Brunk: SILC meeting wasn't held due to weather.
- Heidi Lawyer: PEATC continues to offer its online parent training programs, including Transition University, as well as in-person trainings on a variety of topics. Transition topics continue to be very popular. Through RSA grant, currently providing training on competitive integrated employment for parents and youth in six states, including Virginia. Delivering sessions on effective communication strategies with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Independent Living (IL) professionals, as well as how to effectively use AI. Under contract with DARS, will begin informed consent training for parents and students next month. Continues to update and develop and new resources in English and in Spanish, which

are highlighted on social media platforms and in newsletter. Has been monitoring legislation in the General Assembly that impacts students with disabilities and their families. Last month, in partnership with the Center for Family Involvement at VCU, provided training to three members of the Chickahominy Tribe on Medicaid waivers and SSI. This marked PEATC's first successful outreach effort to this community.

**Matters of Public Comment:** There were no public comments received. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

The next meeting will take place on June 3, 2026, at the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services Central Office in Henrico.

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**Meeting Handouts:**

1. Proposed Meeting Agenda
2. Draft Meeting Minutes from November 12 and November 13 Meetings
3. Tribal Council DARS Introductory Notes
4. DRS Data Updates Presentation
5. Pre-ETS Updates Presentation
6. Pathways Updates Presentation
7. Order of Selection Policy Presentation
8. WWRC Updates Presentation