

Background:

Behind this tab is an Executive Summary a Partners and Policymaking project. Prior to developing this summary, staff received substantive input from by Colleen Wieck, Ph.D., the Executive Director of the Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities and the creator of Partners in Policymaking. Among other suggestions, Dr. Wieck provided input o ways TCDD might reduce the funding amount slightly to address TCDD concerns regarding the expense of the project when previously implemented. Staff also discussed with Dr. Wieck ways that other Councils have used technology to create satellite programs in order to expand the number of people trained – or, in this instance, possibly increase the diversity of people trained so that it more closely approximates the racial and ethnic composition of the state.

If you have any questions or thoughts related to this Executive Summary, please contact Joanna Cordry, Planning Coordinator, at (512) 437-5410 or Joanna.Cordry@tcdd.texas.gov.

<p><u>Project Development Committee</u> <u>Agenda Item 7.</u></p>	<p><u>Expected Action:</u> The Committee will consider th Executive Summary an may recommen Council approval for funding.</p>
<p><u>Council</u> <u>Agenda Item 6. A.</u></p>	<p><u>Expected Action:</u> The Council will conside recommendations fro the Committee.</p>

Executive Summary

Partners in Policymaking

Project Goal

Facilitate Partners in Policymaking training for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and family members of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Relationship to TCDD State Plan Goals

This project will help TCDD meet the following TCDD FY 2012 - 2016 State Plan Goal and Objective:

Goal 6: Work with others to double the number of identified leadership development and advocacy training programs that are able to provide culturally appropriate training for people with developmental disabilities without ongoing grant funding from TCDD, by 9/30/2016.

Objective 4: Each year of the plan, support individuals who have developmental disabilities, their family members, and their allies to improve their skills related to self-advocacy, public advocacy, and leadership.

Maximum Funding and Duration

One project, for up to five years, for the following funding amounts:

- Up to \$100,000 for the first year to prepare for the first class and develop an evaluation plan
- Up to \$225,000 for the second year to hold one class
- Up to \$250,000 for the third year to hold one class and an advanced training weekend
- Up to \$300,000 each year for the fourth and fifth years to hold at least two simultaneous classes one advanced training weekend each year

Background

Partners in Policymaking (PIP) is a nationally recognized leadership training program for people with developmental disabilities and family members that was created by Colleen Wieck, Ph.D., the Executive Director of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. Partners in Policymaking promotes citizen involvement and leadership by providing participatory training in best practices, current issues, and trends in service provision; and by developing advocacy-related skills. Graduates often assume leadership roles in a variety of community and statewide organizations following their participation in the program. The Texas Developmental Disabilities Council funded PIP from 1990 to 2006. TCDD's program followed the original model closely. It was implemented over eight weekends, each of which involved at least one overnight stay; used national as well as in-state presenters; and ensured that training and activities were consistent with the Minnesota curriculum. The typical class size was slightly over 30 people. When the program ended in 2006, the annual funding amount was \$385,000 per year.

Funding covered training-related expenses, including presenter's fees; all participants' and presenters' travel, lodging, and meals; administrative costs; and an independent evaluation consisting of a six-

month follow-up survey of recent graduates and a long-term follow up of past graduates. A third of participants typically responded to the follow-up surveys. The evaluation results from 2004 revealed that the majority of respondents indicated that they became involved in advocacy leadership activities, such as participation on local and state boards and on advisory committees. Of those involved in these activities, 82% stated that the PIP training was “Very Important” in helping prepare them to advocate. Respondents also indicated that personal factors such as work and children, not lack of knowledge, skills or interest, limited their opportunities for advocacy leadership. While the response rate was consistent with the response rate one would expect from a survey, it was unfortunate that little or nothing was known about the activities of the two-thirds who did not respond to the surveys.

TCDD funds other successful leadership and advocacy training programs, some of which have curriculum based on the PIP model. The majority of these projects serve local or regional areas and do not require participants to stay overnight. These are able to offer training to a greater number of people across the state at a reduced per-person cost and several have provided training in Spanish. The most recent round of projects each trained approximately 100 people a year with TCDD funding of \$75,000 per year per project. The grantees evaluated participants’ satisfaction with their training, but no long term or global external evaluation was typically done, in part due to the low funding amount. Other related projects funded by TCDD include local and statewide Youth Leadership Projects and funding for TCDD public policy fellows who focus on developmental disabilities issues.

TCDD has funded leadership and advocacy training projects that have had various purposes:

- to help people advocate for themselves;
- to support people to become local leaders;
- to provide a potentially life-changing experience that helps people to understand disability as natural and to be committed to the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of community life; and/or
- to develop advocates who will address statewide policy issues in a highly visible manner, such as advocating at the Capitol or serving on statewide councils, committees, or workgroups.

Council members have identified all four outcomes as worthwhile. The Council’s current local leadership and advocacy projects definitely accomplish the first goal and may accomplish the first three; however, Partners in Policymaking produces the largest number of advocates who are committed to testifying and serving on statewide boards, committees, and workgroups.

Project Development Committee members have recently expressed interest in considering funding a PIP program, but at a smaller funding amount and in a way that would increase the percentage of graduates who participate in statewide advocacy. To gather information for the Committee, TCDD staff spoke with Colleen Wieck, Ph.D., about ways to reduce costs and maximize TCDD’s investment while remaining true to the model. She provided the following observations and recommendations:

- The purpose of PIP has always been to change public policy, and the screening process can focus on selecting individuals who are most likely to engage in the type of public policy advocacy TCDD desires. Individuals who don’t wish to or cannot be a presence at the Capitol can use the

Minnesota Council's [Telling Your Story](#)¹ app to share their stories with legislators and to provide TCDD with electronic library of stories.

- TCDD may make some changes to the curriculum to support Council priorities; for example, Person Centered Thinking, supported decision making, and disproportionality and disparities experienced by people with developmental disabilities who are of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds, and how culture impacts personal values and choices are all topics that could be included in training.
- Costs may be decreased by selecting lower-cost presenters; using one presenter for most of the weekend; incorporating distance learning, Skype, or other video conferencing approaches; holding regional classes; reducing the number of weekends; or eliminating overnight hotel stays for some or all participants. Dr. Wieck has offered to assist the selected grantee to identify other ways to reduce costs.
- The project could also take a blended learning approach, using the Minnesota Council's [blended learning guide](#)².
- Graduate workshops, held one weekend per year - provide graduates with an opportunity to re-connect, network with other advocates, get the latest information on best practices in disability services, and expand their networks of policymaker contacts – all of which could maximize TCDD's investment.
- Charging for participation in the program (and offering stipends or another method of making the program accessible to those who cannot pay the fee) might help defray costs.

Public Policy Issues

TCDD has a roadmap for change articulated in the TCDD Position Statements and Public Policy Priorities. The TCDD Partners in Policymaking program will educate participants in TCDD's positions and priorities. TCDD expects that the graduates of this program will fully collaborate with other advocates in organized public policy advocacy on TCDD public policy priorities. Because public policy work requires an ongoing effort to maintain communication with and educate policymakers, graduates will also be encouraged to engage in other organizational, local government or individual public policy advocacy. However, each must also embrace their responsibility to indeed be a partner in policy-making. Participants should be selected based in part on their willingness to work with legislators in their district offices and the capitol and to communicate the need for policy change to policy makers and the general public. TCDD also expects that all participants would be signed up to receive emails and news from TCDD.

Public Awareness, Products, and Communications

TCDD develops and shares information with individuals and organizations to inform them of opportunities and issues. TCDD also benefits from individuals and organizations providing input to TCDD. Graduates could potentially reach individuals and organizations that might not be aware of TCDD, which would enable more individuals to benefit from TCDD's efforts or to become more active in TCDD activities. Additionally, they will be able to provide TCDD with information that TCDD might share with

¹ Telling Your Story is available at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/telling-your-story/id541403749?mt=8>

² The blended learning guide is available at:

http://mn.gov/mnddc/pipm/pdf/PPM_Coordinator_Handbook_Online_Learning_v16.pdf

others. If new curriculum or materials are developed by this project, they also could be shared with other organizations.

Expected Outcome, Goal, and Outputs

Outcome

People with developmental disabilities and family members will engage in public policy advocacy that has a statewide impact.

Goal

At least 75% of individuals who respond to follow-up contact report they have been actively involved in public policy advocacy that impacts statewide policy.

Outputs

In the first year of this project:

- The grantee will complete plans and preparation needed to hold a class in the second year of the grant.
- The grantee will work with TCDD to complete the outreach, and selection processes will be completed.
- A plan will be developed to allow TCDD to evaluate the activities of graduates one, two, three, four, and five years after they graduate.

In the second year and third years of this project:

- A diverse group of twenty to thirty Texans who have developmental disabilities and family members of people who have developmental disabilities will complete the Partners in Policymaking program each year.
- A plan to meet the expectations for the fourth and fifth years will be developed.
- Beginning in the third year, one weekend of advanced training will be provided each year.

In the fourth and fifth years of this project:

- Two simultaneous classes will be held, using available technology to enable approximately 40-50 Texans who have developmental disabilities and family members of people who have developmental disabilities to complete the Partners in Policymaking program each year. At least one program will be held in an area of the state that has a high percentage of people who are racial/ethnic minorities.
- One weekend of advanced training will be provided each year.
- A final report will be provided to TCDD within 60 days of project completion.
- Recommendations will be provided to continue the program while reducing the cost to TCDD (this may include developing partnerships that will co-sponsor the program).

Project Description

One organization or several organizations working in collaboration will develop and implement a Texas Partners in Policymaking program that supports individuals with developmental disabilities and family

members to achieve [competencies expected of Partners in Policymaking graduates](#). These are listed in the Attachment A found at the end of this Executive Summary.

In addition, graduates will have a basic understanding of TCDD's positions and priorities; Person Centered Thinking; supported decision making and other alternatives to guardianship; disproportionality and disparities experienced by people with developmental disabilities who are of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds; and how some of the information presented may be perceived differently due to culture, including cultural differences that exist between some active adult advocates who have autism (such as members of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, or ASAN) and others who are focused on finding cures for Autism.

The grantee is expected to develop the structure and model for their program using information from other Partners in Policymaking programs and the resources available through the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities' Partners in Policymaking webpages.³ This website includes a blended learning guide that will allow the grantee to augment face-to-face training.

The grantee will be responsible for meeting the goals identified in this Executive Summary, including:

- Developing objective selection criteria to be used by a selection team that includes the program coordinator and other program staff, TCDD representatives, and other funding source representatives.
- Holding at least one Partners in Policymaking class each year beginning in the second year.
- Holding one advanced training weekend per year, beginning in the third year.
- Starting in year four, supporting at least one additional regional program per year in an area of the state that has a high percentage of people who are racial/ethnic minorities. The regional program(s) should have local facilitators and use technology such as skype or video conferencing to connect with each other.

The grantee will also be responsible for:

- Managing logistical issues (arrangement of hotels and meals if needed, organization of transportation if necessary, assistance with accommodations, development and timely dissemination of written information).
- Assisting Partners to develop solutions to barriers to attendance or to resolve conflicts or concerns.
- Adapting the program content and recruiting speakers.
- Ensuring inclusion and accommodations for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Supporting networking activities.
- Evaluating each weekend and providing a report at the end of the grant project.
- Connecting graduates to TCDD; Disability Rights, TX; the University of Texas Center for Disability Studies; the Texas A&M Center on Disability and Development; and other organizations or agencies that are affiliated with disability advocacy, systems change, and legislative issues.
- Encouraging and assisting graduates to begin applying for leadership positions on governor-appointed councils or statewide workgroups and committees.

³ <http://mn.gov/mnddc/pipm/index.html>

Sustainability

TCDD set a goal for the FY 2012 – 2017 State Plan to “... double the number of identified leadership development and advocacy training programs that are able to provide culturally appropriate training for people with developmental disabilities without ongoing grant funding from TCDD...” and TCDD has tried numerous approaches to encouraging sustainability of leadership development and advocacy training projects. However, very few grant projects have been able to continue to provide this type of training at the same level after their grant is completed. This includes previous Partners in Policymaking projects. It appears unrealistic to expect the program to become sustainable without any funding from TCDD or other partners; thus the grantee will be encouraged to bring in additional partner organizations that can contribute funding or other resources. The grantee will also be expected to create a lasting impact by developing advocates who will remain active for many years following their graduation.

Project Evaluation

Data and evaluation collection activities will include the following and may include others:

- Demographic information
- Feedback from participants
- Indicators of program impact such as the
 - number of policy makers informed by graduates
 - number of materials created and disseminated to policymakers by graduates
 - number of graduates who join boards, committees, workgroups, or assume other positions of leadership
 - specific policies changed, and activities or projects undertaken by graduates

Other Considerations

1. The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities has placed a high priority on achieving racial and ethnic diversity in the classes. One concern with selecting participants who will be available to travel to Austin for meetings and/or to testify at the Capitol after they have completed training is that it may limit the diversity of participants. Past PIP classes did include individuals of various races and ethnicities and provided simultaneous translation to people whose first language was not English, but the class makeup was not representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of a state that is now a majority minority state. However, classes did include individuals from various geographic regions of the state and individuals who had a range of income levels. It may be difficult to accomplish any of these if the selection process favors those with the resources and inclination to advocate at the Capitol or serve on statewide boards. This Executive Summary proposes that the PIP program use technology and facilitators to develop regional classes that prepare people to advocate with their legislators when they are in their home districts. Such classes, if also culturally appropriate, could increase the racial, ethnic, and economic diversity of the individuals who benefit from PIP training. Another option would be to develop additional culturally appropriate PIP projects, perhaps in other areas of the state and perhaps implemented in other languages.

2. Dr. Wieck has stated that she will gladly work with the organization to whom the grant is awarded to help them find ways to reduce costs, and that she will not offer support to one applicant over another. The Request for Proposals will state that her advice is available to everyone and that applicants should not request letters of support from her.

Appendix A – Competencies Expected of Partners in Policymaking Graduates

- Describe the history of services for, and perceptions of, people with developmental disabilities.
- Describe significant contributions of the parents' movement.
- Describe the history of the self-advocacy and independent living movements.
- Describe the benefits and values of a quality, inclusive education for students with and without disabilities.
- Outline specific strategies to achieve a quality, inclusive education.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the service coordination system and what services may be available.
- Describe the importance of futures-planning and self-direction for people with developmental disabilities.
- Understand the principles of choice and control of resources in futures-planning.
- Understand the reasons for and the importance of proper positioning techniques for people with physical disabilities.
- Describe examples of state-of-the-art technologies for people with significant disabilities.
- Describe the importance of supported, competitive employment opportunities.
- Understand that a flexible, responsive system of supports for the families of children with disabilities is the cornerstone for a true system of community supports for people with developmental disabilities.
- Understand the need for all individuals to experience changes in lifestyle across the lifespan.
- Know/understand the importance of home ownership/control as one of the defining characteristics of adult life in our culture.
- Understand the basic principles and strategies being used to support people with developmental disabilities in their own homes across the lifespan.
- Create a vision for the year 2020 (and beyond) for people with disabilities.
- Understand how a bill becomes a law at the state and federal levels.
- Identify critical federal issues and the process by which participants can personally address their concerns.
- Demonstrate successful techniques for advocating for services to meet the needs of unserved and underserved individuals.
- Draft and deliver testimony for legislative hearings.
- Learn how to meet a public official and discuss issues.
- Identify strategies for beginning and sustaining grassroots-level organizing.
- Understand the role of when and how to use the media to effectively promote issues.
- Demonstrate proper procedures for conducting a meeting.
- Gain a basic understanding of parliamentary procedure and serving on boards.