STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (SRC)
3rd Quarterly Meeting
Tuesday, June 23, 2026
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
[DRAFT] **MINUTES**

Attendees:
SRC Members Present:
Dr. Judy Daniels (Disability Advocate Group)
Patrick Gartside (Statewide Independent Living Council)
Sandi Jakob (Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor-Private)
Sean Knox (Workforce Development Council)
Cynthia Mew (Department of Education)
Evan Nakatsuka (Business Industry and Labor)
Emily Wilkinson (Client Assistance Program)

SRC Members Absentees:
Tira Kamaka (Community Rehabilitation Program)
Monty Montgomery (Business Industry and Labor)
Meriah Nichols (Former VR Recipient)
Dr. Christine Park (Disability Advocate Group)
Ramon Ruis (Business Industry and Labor)

DVR Attendees:
Lea Dias-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator
Cheryl Matthews-SRC Liaison

General Public:
Laura Fussell - Employment Manager, Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD).

I. **Call to Order at 10:05am** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

1. Housekeeping remarks; Requested online attendees to mute microphones unless talking and to be visible on camera when speaking.

II. **SRC Member and Stakeholder Introductions** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

1. Conducted roll call and introductions. Noted that quorum was initially not met.

III. **Consent Agenda** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

Note: Quorum was met later in the meeting upon the arrival of Emily Wilkinson, at which point the consent agenda was voted on and approved.

1. Approval of Minutes - February 24, 2026

    - Approved unanimously later in the meeting.

2. State Rehabilitation Council Partner Council Reports

    Chair E. Nakatsuka asked for questions or comments on each Council Partner Report.

    - Client Assistance Program (CAP)

        Written report submitted; no questions were taken initially as E. Wilkinson was absent during this portion.

    - Department of Education (DOE)

        Verbal report by C. Mew - Discussed work-based learning available to high schools and a draft of Community Based Instruction (CBI) guidelines. C. Mew announced this would be her last meeting.

    - Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

        Verbal report by P. Gartside - SILC and VR are maintaining constant communication. Addressed concerns regarding employment support on Maui and highlighted transportation barriers and service gaps.

    - Workforce Development Council (WDC)

        Written report provided by S. Knox; no questions were asked.

3. State Rehabilitation Council Standing Committee Reports

    - Unified State Plan Committee Report

    - Verbal report by L. Dias. The state plan modification was submitted, public comments were incorporated, and RSA indicated it looks good and has been moved for final approval.

    - Dr. J. Daniels moved to approve all items in the consent agenda. S. Knox seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. **State Rehabilitation Council Verbal Reports** Dr. Judy Daniels

1. National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils, Inc. (NCSRC) and Councils of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Spring Conference Attendees' Reports

- Verbal reports provided by Dr. J. Daniels and L. Dias. Discussed the revamping of the Department of Education, recruiting people into the SRC, and the role of business.
- Highlighted research on essential master's degree classes for VR counselors and discussed the University of Hawaii's Rehabilitation Counseling Program's role in credentialing staff.

V. **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Data Report** VRA Lea Dias

1. L. Dias presented the PY25 Q4 data reflecting activity through June 1, 2026.
   - Status of Total DVR Consumers Served
     1. Total individuals served increased to 5,023.
     2. Total year participants increased to 3,881.
   - Status of DVR Consumers Data by County
     1. Total Applications Received – 868.
     2. Total Determined Eligible – 835.
     3. Total Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) – 759.
     4. Total Cases Closed Rehabilitated - 156 cases closed successfully, a 45% increase over last year.
   - Status of Competitive Integrative Employment (CIE) Detail
     1. Average hourly wage was $31.38 with a median of $24.55.
     2. Average weekly hours worked was 33.6 with a median of 40 hours.
   - Status of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to Student with Disabilities (SWD)
     1. Served 2,258 students.
     2. Work-based learning experiences increased significantly to 547.
   - RSA Performance Measure
     1. DVR is currently under a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) with RSA, which aligns closely with the goals of their Reimagine and Renew initiative.
   - Status of FFY26 Impartial Hearings

1. One hearing request was resolved at the administrative review level without holding a formal hearing.

- Statewide vacancy rate decreased to 32.5%.

VI. **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Verbal Updates** VRA Lea Dias

1. State and Federal Budget Status

   - L. Dias reported the federal grant increased to over $20.8 million, raising the required state match and Pre-ETS spending obligations. The state budget sustained a cut of approximately $121,000

2. General Updates

   - Highlighted the ongoing Reimagine and Renew initiative, focusing on organizational culture, partnerships, and staff development.

   - Discussed working with HR to revise minimum qualifications for VR counselors, which has resulted in a temporary hiring freeze.

   - Shared that OSERS/RSA may be administratively moved from the Department of Education to Health and Human Services.

   - Shared consumer success stories, including an individual who trained/worked as a social worker at the Department of Human Services and is today employed by the Department of Corrections helping others, and Emily Cruz, a blind vendor managing a modernized snack shop at the State Capitol.

VII. **Old Business** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

1. Selection of Standing Committee Members

   - Membership Committee

      1. Reviewed the drafted SRC application and added a voluntary self-disclosure question regarding disability status to properly document compliance with SRC bylaws, which require a majority of people with disabilities.

      2. Clarified the SRC application process, noting the DVR liaison will explicitly assist applicants with navigating the Boards and Commissions application and testimony drafting

      3. Proposed standardizing an SRC email and Google workspace for file hosting; SILC volunteered to set up and maintain this space.

4. Confirmed holdover membership status for current SRC members whose terms expire on June 30, 2026, allowing them to serve until successors are appointed.

5. P. Gartside made a motion to approve the four membership committee action items. C. Mew seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. **New Business** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

1. Reopened nominations for the Membership Committee Chair. No nominations were made, so the discussion was tabled to the next quarter. The Executive Committee will continue to fill this role in the interim.

IX. **Upcoming SRC Events** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

1. July 1, 2026 - Newly Appointed SRC Term Begins.

2. Tuesday, August 18, 2026 - SRC 4th Quarterly Meeting 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The first hour (10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.) will be dedicated to Board Meeting Training for new SRC members.

X. **Comments from the Public** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

1. Chair E. Nakatsuka shared a positive update on summer Pre-ETS work-based learning, highlighting local businesses in the community supporting and employing students with disabilities.

XI. **Adjourn** Chair Evan Nakatsuka

1. Mew made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. J. Daniels seconded the motion. Chair E. Nakatsuka adjourned the meeting at 12:24 p.m.