MARY OLSEN: Hello, everybody.

For some interesting reason, at the very end of the day when your minds are super packed, they've asked me to come up here and talk about this beautiful and sparkly subject of strategic planning.

Really exciting.

If I would have known, right, when I was working at a center, I would have seen 23-year-old Mary who spent way too much time trying to decide what unicorn poop looked like, if I would have told her that I would be talking ten years later about strategic planning, she would have laughed and kicked me out, but here we are.

Welcome.

Oh.

First of all, I need a little thingy.

So I generally don't use PowerPoint, so if I forget to move a slide, somebody yell at me.

I'm learning.

Welcome to begin, needs assessing.

So needs assessing just really simple means something specifically relates to your particular group or community.

I'm saying that because the first part of strategic planning is needs assessing.

And I forgot.

Hold on.

Back it up a second.

So one of my disabilities is an anxiety disorder.

So one way that I've learned how to cope with that is by breaking everything down into really small chunks and writing it all down.

And so you get to be a part of inside of my brain.

And all of you have this beautiful piece of paper that NCIL printed for us.

And it's the strategic plan that I'm going to be talking about today.

So everything that I say even the examples are all right there.

And you can take it home with you.

And if you also like to break things down and you are square and like everything written out, you can use this.

So now moving forward.

One of my first things that I like to do to start to kind of break it all down is needs assess.

And that is a really big fancy way of saying, let's ask some youth what they need and what they want.

So the very first thing we have to think about before we can ask them what they need and want is who.

Find them, right?

Like a big game of where's Waldo.

So the first thing is to find some youth.

One thing that we like to do is think really creatively, and you guys all work at centers for independent living and you are all super creative thinkers already.

So, where do we find youth?

There are the collective youth.

So if you don't have youth in your area, you are welcome to borrow some of ours.

Sierra talked a lot about the APRIL programs and Kings talked a lot about the NCIL program.

We have got youth across the country involved.

You know, it might not be exactly what you guys use in your community, or need, but it will give you a starting place.

So collective youth.

Check in your state.

Do you have a youth leadership forum?

Those are collective youth that you can tap into.

Parent and training centers like Kimberly mentioned, they are all required now to add in this youth self-advocacy piece, so some of them have youth.

The other thing is looking a little bit broader.

Maybe some of the places that you don't typically think of.

Boys and girls clubs, other youth areas in general, not necessarily for youth with disabilities.

School systems, one really creative thing that we did when I was working at a center in Montana was that we put together a needs assessment survey, and we took it into a high school prep class, and that teacher let us survey the students and she made it a classroom assignment because young people need to practice filling out forms.

And then we also talked to them about, you know, did you know the ADA says you get an accommodation when you're filling out an application form if you want one?

And so we practiced asking for an accommodation while they were filling out my survey.

They got what they wanted and I got what I wanted.

Win-win.

I have to remember if I laugh, that makes a really loud noise.

I got to remember that and try not to do that.

You know one of the other things is that consumers, we might not typically think of the consumers that you already have on board as being youth, but, they were youth.

And so we're going to talk a little bit about what's changed about youth now.

But the other thing is that adult consumers that you have, when they were young people with disabilities, you can ask them what are some things that you wish you had or that you had wanted some help with?

And that can be a starting place.

They also might have kids in high school.

So consumers might have some youth that you can talk to.

Whether or not they have disabilities, it doesn't even really matter.

When you're just starting, talking to a youth voice in general is helpful.

I got a message on my phone earlier that said somebody requested you on flirty.

I don't even know what that is.

I have to find a youth later and ask them.

So, how and what do you ask them?

So again, I just gave you guys a lot of different suggestions on ways that you can talk with youth.

So you can have what we call in Montana, we call them listening forums or listening sessions, where we just get a bunch of pizza donated by a local business because we can't spend that money on it, right?

And we have a pizza party and we'll just all sit around, and actually guys, here's the thing.

Listening forums can also be community events when you're reporting them.

Or you could say it's a peer support service, because one of the first questions I usually ask is, you know, what are some things that you guys need or want?

What are some barriers you're facing?

And then we say okay, what is a barrier.

We talk about barriers.

You know, and another thing that, another question that I ask is what's something that really scares you about graduating high school?

Or what's something that really scares you about moving out on your own?

And here's something, I'm going to side track for a second.

I told Tim I would try to stay out of a rabbit hole, but I always trip into one, you guys.

Here's the really interesting thing is that when I started really having these sessions with youth and talking with them and surveying them, I was thinking they would all say, you know, I want some social and rec opportunities, which a lot of them do say.

And also, some of the things that scared them about living out on their own were real life things that scare all of us like I'm worried I'm not going to be able to find a place to live and I'm going to be homeless.

Or I'm worried I'm not going to be able to pay for food.

And that was like wow, that just really hit me that they're already thinking about these things at like 17 and 18, and that's what we're there for.

How do you ask them?

Listening sessions.

You guys, I'm a big fan of Twitter chats and Facebook chats.

The folks at NCIL were the ones who taught me what that was.

I'm old.

I'm in my 30s now.

Just put one of these questions out on your Facebook or Twitter and you can even mark it that you're having a live Twitter chat or Facebook chat at this time and invite youth to just go in and start chatting and answering the questions in real time.

It's kind of fun.

And you get a lot of different responses that way.

Tabling at resource events.

Surveying groups like I said.

There's a lot of different things in there.

Just trying to figure out, so once you find the youth, then you need to figure out how am I going to talk to them?

What kinds of forms of talking am I going to do?

And then you need to figure out what do I want to ask them?

And I gave you guys a lot of questions or thoughts there.

So again, what are some of the barriers you experience?

What's your preferred way of learning?

Sometimes I ask students, okay, what is the best way for me to get ahold of you?

You don't answer my e-mails, you don't answer my Facebook.

You don't answer my phone call.

How do I get ahold of you.

So then I can really start to learn from them on how do I do that outreach.

In Montana, they prefer that I send out a group text message.

So you can go on a website.

There's all these free websites where you can use it, put in all their phone numbers and it comes from a message so I don't have to use my cell phone number.

And they prefer group text messages to hear about stuff.

You can get creative.

All right.

Let's see.

So, oh, and I just wanted to put these last two considerations.

When you're talking with them, think about as a group, so how are the things that they're asking for the same or different than what typical CIL consumers need and want?

We talk a lot about youth.

So what's different about youth today?

Right?

One thing is that they grew up with the ADA.

One thing is that they also grew up with social media.

Those might be some ways that they're different than typical CIL consumers, but there's a lot of things that are still the same.

Like, they are still people with disabilities.

And they still need to learn about what their rights and responsibilities are.

How to ask for an accommodation.

How do I disclose a disability?

When do I disclose a disability?

These are all things that we're really good at and that all of our consumers need and youth need these, too.

And the last one is how is it the same or different in youth without disabilities?

We're going to talk a lot in the next couple days just about collaboration.

And I really encourage you to find the outside of the box thinking.

Find those outside organizations that are working with youth.

And it might not be youth with disabilities.

It might be youth in general.

And one thing you can do is go in and offer your expertise and help them make some of their programs accessible.

And one thing that they can do is let you borrow some of their resources to do needs assessing in order to come up with flashy and fun ways of getting ahold of youth.

Maybe a lot of youth with disabilities are already coming into these organizations and we can help fill the gaps of these organizations.

So the next part after talking to some youth and finding out what they want is for you guys as a team at your organization to sit down and think about what is it that you really want?

So why are we heading down this path?

So besides the fact that we have to because of the new core services or however you look at it, but the other thing is we all really want young people involved because as my boss, Billy Altom, tells me every day, he says I'm getting really old and I'm getting really tired.

So I want more of you guys to come in and take some load off my shoulders.

So just really think about what is it that you guys want?

What would you like to see youth get out of your CIL?

What would you like to see them give back to your CIL?

What would you like to see them give back to the community at large, your local community, and the disability community at large.

So really start thinking about these dreams.

And the other thing that I do is I like to look at some other stakeholders.

So the most important voice is the youth.

The second most important voice, I think, are the CILs.

And we also need to look at some of these outside stakeholders like Voc Rehab, parent and training organizations, and find out what they think youth want and need.

But again I would prioritize those a little bit lower, but they're still really important.

All right.

So speaking of that out-of-the box thinking, you ready?

I have a word up on the screen.

It's N-U-M-B-E-R.

Can you tell what word that is?

Number.

You guys are good at this.

Who knows what the word "number" means.

I'm being serious, you guys.

I hope it's everybody.

Most of the people in the room are raising their hands, the other half of the room is sleeping.

Who has seen the word "number" before.

Oh, the whole room is raising their hand.

Now we got it.

So now I want you guys to put it alphabetical order in your head or on your table.

Just do it.

All right?

Now that you've done that, I want you guys to missy Elliot it.

That was a really old reference.

Put it in reverse.

Reverse it.

All right.

Now that you've done that, so, we have on the screen here number and the letters are all over the place.

And this is just a little fun thing, hopefully it was fun to talk about thinking outside the box.

The word number is something that you guys all know.

You've all heard of it.

You've all seen it.

You've all used it, I'm sure.

And flipping all the letters around, all of the same components are there to make up a number.

It's all still there.

It might look a little bit different than how you remembered it.

And that's what we're talking about here.

A lot of you guys might have already been serving youth.

You might not have called it youth transition program.

You might not have called it a youth program.

But you have seen young people coming into your offices, and just because we're standing up here and we are rearranging a little bit, changing those components around, they are all still there.

And it is still a youth transition program or a youth program and you're still serving young people.

As we're going through this process, I want you guys to remember that.

First of all, pat yourselves on the back.

You're doing a good job.

I know a lot of you have done this before.

We're going to think a little differently.

Moving along.

Strength and weaknesses.

Strengths, oh.

Strengths and assets.

Sorry.

One thing that I really like to do when I'm working with centers, I am going out and doing mentoring, and we're sitting down and doing this strategic planning process with their youth program is to look at, okay, so you're already doing this.

What do you already have that you're bringing to the table?

So for example, do you already have classes and activities that could appeal to youth?

So a cooking class or maybe you are already helping people go through their driver's Ed manual.

It might be that you're using the adaptive version.

Maybe you're already working with consumers on how do you disclose a disability in employment.

These are all things that also young people with disabilities need and can use.

And I actually put a ton of these in here of examples if you're following along on the sheet.

Which you don't have to.

Computer classes are really big ones.

I've seen a lot of centers that have computer labs in their center, and that's a really big draw for young people because they can come in and use the computer and you know, they might not have access to that at home.

So what you already have, are youth already accessing a lot of your different services?

So are youth already accessing information and referral?

You know, do you already have youth peer mentors?

You know?

What advocacy are you already providing for youth?

So one of the centers was talking about information and referral, oh wait.

They were talking about IEPs and one thing that I used to do is go into an IEP, but I didn't go in as an advocate.

What I did was I went in as an information and referral specialist.

So transition IEPs, they have to write three goals.

One is for employment, one is for independent living and one is for social and rec.

Voc Rehab is always at those meetings talking about employment and so I kind of approached the transition teachers and I said, look, I would be happy to come in and I can talk about independent living resources, and I can also talk about some social and rec resources.

So I went in and did information and referral.

That was one creative way that we did that.

So, let's see.

I also want you guys to think about infrastructure.

I know that's also one of those billion-dollar words.

Really all that means is do you have people in things that youth might want?

So, I also include what's around you.

Really think about where is your center located?

Where are you?

Are you by a bus line?

Are you by any kind of youth hang-out areas?

Are there parks nearby?

You know, we have, at the center I worked at, we were right next to a grocery store, which was a really big draw for us because we were then able to take like mini field trips to the store and we talked a lot about choosing healthy food options and, you know, we would have the youth before we had our video game night, we called it.

And we would sit around and play video games.

We would first, go to the store which was right next door and talk about healthy food options and you know, choosing those different things.

So if you might be next to an area, that can be a big draw.

Let's see, do you have youth staff?

Or other youth who are involved who can really talk about youth programming?

Do you have skilled facilitators or dynamic staff?

So here's the other thing that we, I know.

I know.

We decided this, you guys, that standing up and teaching a class, it's not teaching.

And that's, I just wanted to back up for a second.

Not teaching a class, it's facilitating a class.

That's what I really try to push on to, you know, IL centers.

You're there not teaching independent living skills, but you're there to facilitate the knowledge in the room.

There are all these young people who have all this expert knowledge in areas that they're experts on.

We know as people with disabilities that we're the best experts on ourselves.

So a facilitator is just there to pull out the nuggets, right?

So really beefing up on your strong facilitation skills.

And I think that facilitation is all about a performance.

So maybe even put yourself out there and as a staff during staff meetings, practice doing some public speaking.

Practice running some activities in a staff meeting so that you can all get comfortable with, you know, this performance.

It's all about reading your audience.

It's all about being able to teach something and reteach it in a new way and facilitate with some creativity.

That's what makes youth want to keep coming back to the IL skills trainings that you're teaching.

And if you have somebody who's good at that, use them.

Which is why I'm here.

Just kidding.

So buy in from organization leadership.

Some people might not think of this as a big asset, but I do.

We're going to talk a lot during the next two days about creating a culture of youth in your organization.

So from the top to the bottom, you all have to belief in this idea of really involving youth with disabilities.

Like Sierra and Jim Baker always say, youth are not a service, they are a population.

We have to really believe it.

And the other thing about IL, I don't know if this is a secret or not, but we always say that who we are is who we serve.

And so, you know, for example, if you've got some folks with invisible disabilities on your staff, you might notice other folks with invisible disabilities gravitating towards your center because they want to work with them.

The same for people who are deaf and the gamut and all of that comes back to peer support, right?

We kind of gravitate towards that area that we know a lot about.

And so that's my plug for bringing in a younger person on staff and/or the other thing that I like to say is even if you don't have a youth, that doesn't matter.

A lot of it also has to do with your passion level.

And like I said before, the engagement.

So looking at your organization, an asset could be that you guys believe in this from the top to the bottom.

If that's all that you've got that is a great place to start.

So, you guys can look at those.

I wrote down a lot of them again.

That's my way of getting it out of my brain and on to paper.

So the reason, also, that I'm really like blazing through this, just so you know is I'm here to set the stage, and then we're going to really dive into this and we're going to be doing strategic planning all week together.

I'm just kind of introducing it.

All right.

So it wouldn't be a good strategic plan if we also didn't say where are some of the places that we can improve on, right?

So when we're doing the identifying the strengths and assets that you have inside your center, also look at what are we missing.

So do we have all the right people at the table?

You know, maybe it's that you need to look at hiring a new staff.

Or maybe it's that you need to look at, you know, bringing, just bringing in some other folks, you know, like I said before.

Finding some collective youth.

Who are we missing?

The other thing is what are we missing?

So, do you have some of those classes like cooking classes or a disability history and culture class?

Do you have something like that already that you can start with?

Or are you going to be starting from scratch and trying to build something new?

So, you know, that might be part of what you're missing.

Let's see.

I'm going to really quick go a little Rogue One.

Just so you know, that was a bet between me and my fiancé.

I totally can work Star Wars into a presentation.

Take that, Jay.

I am going to go a little rogue because I forgot to add this in there.

On strategic planning, the next two pieces and on your sheets is community and resource and asset mapping.

That's my fancy way of saying who do you know.

I'm stealing this from the lovely Ann McDaniels in West Virginia.

Because what this lady does, it's so smart.

When somebody like walks in the door, she's like hands them a piece of paper and says, all right, who do you know?

Who's your Uncle?

Who's your mamma?

Who do you know?

Who do you work for?

Who does your organization that you work for, who do they collaborate with?

And they fill out a form so that they know from the beginning who you guys all know.

Because here's the thing, is that everything that we need for a youth program is probably sitting in your staff meeting and has been every day.

And you just don't even know it.

The people that work at your center probably know you.

They probably know somebody who works at the local Safeway who will donate, you know, $500 in gift cards.

You just don't even know until you ask.

And so, you know, creating a list of those families, the friends, the businesses, and other potential supporters who really might also have a stake in working with youth with disabilities.

On that form, I added a sub next to it from Ann's and I always put next to it how might they be supporting?

Because, one thing that we, I think we get in a little box.

We think that supporting means money and it doesn't always mean that.

One of the places that I still get to volunteer now that I don't work at the IL center, I volunteer at base, which is our community center at the center for independent living for youth with and without disabilities.

We do a lot of in-kind donations for this place.

We've gotten furniture this way.

We have gotten a big TV for them to play video games on.

We donate this space out to the community when we're not using it.

So for example, a local improv and comedy troupe uses it to practice and then in return they have to do so many volunteer hours for us at our youth program.

We have them come in and they do improv with the youth, which also teaches a lot of really great life skills you guys, improv.

That's one way that we kind of do this.

Looking at assets and money that our funding coming in doesn't always mean money.

It can be creative.

We also do, we have an instructor who donates all of her time.

She comes in and does an adaptive yoga class for us.

We've got the raised boxes for the adaptive yoga class that we got donated.

A local church came in and built them for us.

None of that was actually money, but I consider it all as funding coming in.

So indicate how they might be helping next to the lists of folks that you have.

And the last piece that I put on there is planning for evaluation in the beginning.

So I'm going to put my super uber nerd hat on for a second you guys.

In another life, I think I was meant to be like some really famous researcher, so I'm always thinking about evaluation.

When I very first write a program, I think about how I'm going to evaluate it while I'm writing it.

And because if you think about evaluation in the beginning, it's a lot harder to retro fit it into your program than it is to just think about it in the beginning.

And the reason why it is so important to evaluate.

I think we all know the reasons, but I'm going to say some of them.

First of all, it really helps you to focus in on your objectives of your program.

Where I have seen a lot of CILs programs fail is that they try to be everything in the beginning.

If you think about evaluation in the beginning, what it does it really narrows in your objectives and helps you have a focal point so that you're not setting yourself up for failure.

The other thing that it can do is if you have got really strong evaluations, guys, then it's a lot easier to go and get funding.

So for example, in Montana, our youth leadership forum is now funded by our state legislature.

And we don't have to fight for that every year.

It's in the budget.

It's there.

It's done.

And that's because in the very beginning, June Hermansen, who was my mentor, she asked me and she was evaluating from the beginning and we had all these years of data to show what is happening with these youth people once they leave.

We don't ever have to try to get that funded again.

It is already there.

It's like in our budget.

The other thing that it can really do is really help.

I think for you guys to focus in and by evaluating the very beginning, we, I think we can also know, change policies.

You might end up finding out that a lot of youth are experiencing the same kinds of barriers in the community.

That's how we work at IL centers, right.

We see a self-advocacy goal that maybe a few people need and then what we realize is it's a systems change need.

And so that's another way that we can help change policy is by evaluating.

I just have a couple of tips on this planning for evaluation on this sheet.

My first one is make sure that you know who your target audience is.

Also try to look at the direct skills that you're trying to increase.

So for example, think about measurement.

Is it something hard that I can measure?

Like they didn't know how to cook when they came in and now they do.

They didn't know how to make a grilled cheese when they came in but now they know how to make a grilled cheese.

Make it specific even, so you can measure that change.

We can also measure some outcomes that we can't necessarily see, but we know are happening.

Like self-determination.

And you can even break self-determination down a little bit more because research says that self-determination happens in three places.

It's when you have relatedness, which sounds like peer support, guys, autonomy, which sounds a lot like consumer control, and when you're teaching somebody a skill.

So, you know, go after some of that self-determination funding.

All you got to do is just build some of those measures and do your programs.

And I'm going to stop going rogue.

And for some of you guys in the audience, you are starting at square two, not at square one.

So a lot of the places I was just talking about, that's really, if we're just starting from scratch, I'm just trying to give you a place to start.

So if you're starting at square two, luckily you all have your handy dandy evaluations at home because you've thought of that.

What we used to do at Summit, where I used to work, I loved this about my program manager.

She would get the whole youth team together, and twice a month we would sit in a room and talk about all the things that we just did that month with youth.

And we would say what did we like?

What do we want to change?

What do we think we want to add?

What do we want to take a break from?

We would do a lot of debriefing.

So after we had an event or class, we would sit and debrief together and say all right, where did we lose the audience?

So, you know, when we popped in the ILRU video on financial management, we lost everybody.

I was just seeing if you guys were paying attention.

So really sitting down as a team and trying to figure out where you lost your audience, what might you need to change.

If you're losing your audience, that's a great place to add an activity or another reteach method.

So doing debriefing and meeting as a team regularly.

Also look at your outcomes.

Are you achieving the outcome that you hoped for?

So for example, if you are having youth coming in and they are getting information and referral and then they're never coming back, talk as a team.

Are we getting what we hoped for?

Once you, you know, figure out yes or no, sit down and kind of think about it a little more.

How can we change really having these conversations.

The other thing is that what are some unexpected outcomes that you are getting?

And I think that we also, we're easy to say I think about ourselves and our programs, what we're not getting.

But I think we forget to look at all the really cool things that we are getting and we didn't know we were.

So all those youth that came in for information and referral, you know why they're not coming back?

A really cool, unexpected outcome is that they all got jobs and they're out in the community and they are, you know, doing disability advocacy just by being themselves in the community.

That may be a great unexpected outcome.

So kind of think about that as a team and try to give yourself pats on the back.

Looking at your groups.

Are you serving the identity groups that you want?

What groups would you like to see more of?

Does your staff feel like they have enough support and training?

If not what do they need?

That's another one that I think hindsight's 20/20, but if I would have known then, you know, we would hire a lot of our youth graduates.

So if they finished one of our classes, then they would come in and be guest speakers, we would slowly try to get them to start being leaders and take over a class.

What we realized is that a lot of them would leave.

And I don't think we were asking enough of this question: Do they have enough support and training?

I think they didn't feel supported, so that's one thing to think about if you're at stage two.

How am I doing?

I better speed up.

All right.

Using them to revisit, adding more activities, expanding into specialized areas.

I have got a couple here, you can look at those.

Healthy relationships, disability pride, volunteerism, all the things.

Expanding consumer groups in your existing programs, I just talk a little bit here.

Adapting your stuff for youth intellectual disabilities or different identity groups or cultural groups, you know?

I'm having somebody come in and do an IL conversation for the IL-NET.

APRIL runs the IL conversations and she's talking about Latinos, and she talks a lot about, I'm probably not going to say it back.

Personal Ismo?

I can't even say it.

I'll have to ask her.

It was a word I had never heard before but it is all talking about how you interact with this person.

See, I didn't do it right.

But if I had her on one of my advisory committees, we could better serve young Latino people.

So expanding into fee for service.

They're going to talk about this tomorrow.

But basically researching programs that are similar to yours.

Looking at grant opportunities that target these groups.

Kellogs, Mitsubishi, Darden, Wal-Mart, Motorola.

These are all people that really target young people with disabilities.

Looking at school districts, voc rehab, asking them if they have funding.

Another way that we actually funded some of our food pool, if you will, is that we had the young people in our group, pay a membership fee.

It was like a dollar.

It does two things.

It one, helps them so they actually keep showing up and they have a little bit of buy-in into our programs, and two it created a nice little kitty pot that we, you know, could be a little bit less discretionary with.

So it did two different nice things for us.

I am sorry you guys, I am trying to get through.

And last but not least, if you're in square two, looking at expanding your leadership opportunities.

So hiring youth on staff, training youth to be active board members, creating internship opportunities.

We used to have a lot of our youth who graduated and they wanted to keep taking the same class over and over again.

So what we would do is have them come to the class, great, you probably don't need to sit through the consumer part anymore, but you can be a peer facilitator.

So we would have a staff facilitator and a peer facilitator.

And they would get to help learn the skills and still get to be a part of the group which is what they really wanted.

Have youth organized disability pride events in your community.

They can find sponsors for your youth programs.

Youth make great billboards.

Encourage them to get involved in national organizations like APRIL or NCIL.

Start a youth leadership forum with youth staff and planning committees.

These are all different things that you can do as a step two process, really start engaging the youth on a little bit of a higher level.

Have youth, I saw one center, I can't remember where it was now.

They had a youth committee who would go out and give good access as good business awards.

Or they would give the above and beyond award for businesses who went above and beyond the ADA, to really including them in their business and organization.

So that was really great.

It was great exposure for the center and for the young people.

They organized it, they led it, and gained a lot from it, too.

So, yes.

I did it.

I did it, Tim.

Did it.

I think that's it.

Does anybody have questions while we are waiting for Tim to come up?

That was fast and furious.

While he's walking this way, I'll say a couple of things that I've learned and I've seen other centers learn is to be careful of siloing your youth program.

So make sure that everybody in the organization knows what the youth programs are doing.

And that they're a part of it and you're creating this culture because the other thing that I see is that a lot of times youth programs live in people's heads and not on a book or in a computer.

So if that staff leaves, so does the youth program.

So start in the beginning writing it down and keeping track of it.

Those were the biggest two lessons I have seen.

TIM FUCHS: Thanks Mary.

Paula is going to come up to wrap up the day.

I have a couple post its and thank you for the post its, by the way.

We've gotten a lot and I really appreciate the feedback.

And we will start with them tomorrow morning.

Really great questions and things to consider.

There were a couple that were really quick that I wanted to go through.

Someone asked what Robert's Rules is.

Robert's Rules are a set of rules that meetings are usually run by.

So it's a good thing to orient young people to if they're looking for leadership opportunities, joining boards, councils, and things like that.

That was probably the reference earlier.

What is OVR?

That would be the Office of Vocational Rehab.

And a lot of you know, the acronyms and acronym soup around Voc rehab will change from state to state and at the federal level as well.

But if it includes V and R, there's a good chance that's what it is.

And the link for the PPR recommendations, I want to ask Paula, because I found the link on my phone.

Was the comment period extended?

Because the original deadline was April 7 I believe.

The new deadline was May 6, so thank you.

You know, and I literally Googled at the back of the room this morning when we were talking about it, comment period ACL PPR, and it came up.

It's on the federal register.

If any of you are interested, I can send you the link.

Coincidentally we just, NCIL's board just met at the end of March, and Bob Williams from ACL, the Administration for Community Living, joined us there, and his answer to pretty much all of the criticism about why weren't we more involved in the developing the PPR, was the comment period is open and please let us know what you do and do not like.

So I think they are really waiting to see what they get from the field.

We saw that with the regs, a kind of thorough and thoughtful response to what the community offered and they're looking for it again with the PPR.

So it may not be perfect.

It certainly wasn't what we were expecting or maybe hoping for, but the comment period's open and I really hope you all will take advantage of that.

The link is on slide seven?

Thank you very much.

Yeah, I think Paula mentioned that it was on the slides this morning, just maybe not the slide we were on at that time.

So the link is on slide 7.

Someone asked Kings, but I will happily answer for her.

Will you consider the YTC calls, the youth transition coordinator support calls after your term ends?

Although we don't like to talk about the end of Kings' term in the office, they absolutely will.

So the next y, youth transitions fellow at NCIL will carry on with those calls.

And someone else asked what a pipeline grant advisor is and I have no idea.

So I was hoping that whoever mentioned that could talk about that.

SIERRA ROYSTER: Okay.

So the pipeline grant was actually what Kings was talking about, that's one of the collaborative opportunities and grants that we're working on with APD and NCIL and APRIL.

NCIL and APD have a certain role on that and that's supporting a lot of centers.

APRIL's role in that grant is to be an advisor to the tool kit that Kings mentioned earlier.

So as we're collecting material from the three centers of what worked and what didn't work through that grant.

One of our roles as APRIL is to go through the tool kit and provide any resources or kind of feedback on that.

And also an advisor to the rural center that is a part of that grant.

TIM FUCHS: Thanks, Sierra.

I should have known that.

I'm going to turn it over to Paula to wrap up the day for us.

PAULA MCELWEE: Not going to say much because your minds are full, huh?

What a day.

So we looked at regulations, which was a little bit, you know, kind of trying to get our minds around how we match up language and realize we can't always between different funding sources and our own policies and programs.

So you have a lot of leeway to make it clear for yourselves, and develop your own way of approaching that.

Acronyms.

Just a thought.

If you type the word, "alphabet" into the ILRU search bar, we do have a booklet about the most common acronyms, which might be helpful if you're new.

And we went to see these wonderful programs that have so many things going on.

Didn't that really impress you?

It's like wow, and they grew from small to large, wow.

Maybe we really could do that, right?

We got a stack of comments and questions from you and Tim hit some of them.

I noticed there was a big stack.

You can still write them.

We will pick them up one more time.

If you looked at that and had questions, please go ahead and jot those down.

And then we looked at some of the practical side of it, that it is a plan that you need to put together.

And we'll do more work on this as we go, but you should be taking notes and saying to yourself, I bet you are, aren't you?

Are you writing down ideas?

I loved that idea.

I'm going to talk to them later about it during break or after the session or I'm going to grab their card or e mail so we can follow up.

This would work for us.

For everything like that that you heard, you hopefully will take that home and make something happen from that.

That's what we really want.

We don't want you to just say, wow, I heard it at a workshop.

We want you to say I can do that and I am going to.

So we are hoping that is what will come out of this.

Is there anything pressing from any of you that you really feel must be said before we let you go for the day?