

**Minnesota Quality Framework Task Force Working Meeting**  
**Minnesota Humanities Center**  
**Working Session Summary, February 19, 2009**

**New Materials Distributed to Participants:**

- *Putting It All Together from Public/Private Ventures (PPV)*
- *The Quality Imperative (Draft) – from NGA/CCSSO*

**Vision guiding today's discussion:** By age 21, Minnesota young people will be ready for the responsibilities and rewards of employment, life-long learning, relationships and community engagement. *Adapted from the work of Michelle Gambone*

**Review and Comment on Principles**

Joyce Walker, PhD, University of MN Center for 4-H Youth Development provided the group draft key principles that link to ensuring quality practice. The eight key principles included youth as active participants; different levels of challenges, risk, creativity, leadership and best practice as youth age; attention to race, class and culture; elements of nonformal education include clear purpose, intentional structure and participant engagement; and quality practice formed from three elements – research-proven program features, youth worker expertise, and active youth engagement. Participants worked in groups to identify what "worked" or "didn't work" in the draft principles piece. Suggestions were made on how to simplify the list.

**Review and Comment on the Framework for Quality White Paper**

Next, the participants provided the framework writing team feedback on phrases, symbols and topics that were being considered for inclusion in the document. These included: "making variety a virtue", appropriate levels of accountability at the state program and point of service levels, using "formal, nonformal and informal learning" as a way to describe the field, and the three key elements of quality practice. Discussion continued to focus on the information that systems-level groups needed to have available; i.e., policy-makers, funders and the professional development community.

**Review and Comment – Key Concepts**

Sheila Oehrlein, Kate Walker: Youth Worker Expertise ; Jenny Collins, Delroy Calhoun: Youth Engagement; Tom Miller, Brian Siverson-Hall: Program Features

Next participants joined in a discussion to consider the three essential elements of quality practice; program features, youth worker expertise and youth engagement to test further the use of those terms in the framework piece. For each discussion area, a two-person team began and hosted the conversation and was joined by any other participants – two at a time who had questions or comments to add. The program features discussion centered on issues related to a balance between variety and standardized, a continuum of program characteristics and possible tools or methods to gauge program features. Topics discussed relating to youth worker expertise included on whether youth worker expertise is innate and can be 'grown'; the importance of youth workers with high quality skills, and the need to stabilize youth worker employment. Youth engagement was identified as the missing element; i.e., a quality program and amazing youth workers does not get the result needed unless youth are present and engaged.

**Draft Recommendations**

Participants closed the day by brainstorming a list of draft recommendations related to next steps for action at the systems level in promoting quality practice.