



**CPSD**  
*Real lives. Real work.*

Collaboration  
to Promote  
Self-Determination

**PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY PLAN**  
**2016-2017**

**Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination**

CPSD Management Team  
Updated: January 15, 2016

# Public Policy and Advocacy Plan

December 2015 - December 2017

---

## Introduction

This plan is a result of a retreat of all CPSD members held in July 2015 and three policy workgroup planning meetings (October 20, 22, 29, 2015) which identified:

- CPSD's renewed commitment to its Mission
- Where the gap(s) exist related to policy and advocacy work for citizens with significant disabilities
- The legislative and regulatory issues that we want to prioritize and influence in the coming 14-24 months.

With thoughtful planning and budgeting, CPSD can use this plan as a framework and guide to fully develop and implement targeted strategies and activities leading to measurable results – including the desired policy and advocacy outcomes outlined in the plan as well as the overall strategic goals of the organization.

## The Plan

The Mission, Vision and core strategic policy and advocacy goals of CPSD are:

**MISSION:** The Mission of CPSD is to empower citizens with disabilities to become self-sufficient, productive members of society through employment in jobs and environments that are typical in our society. These individuals should be paid at competitive wages with commensurate benefits, where citizens with disabilities work and live side-by-side with other community members in integrated settings. CPSD advocates for comprehensive, innovative public policy reform based on a presumption of competence on the part of all citizens with disabilities.

**VISION (excerpt from website):** CPSD is committed to ensuring that *every adult age 18 and over living with complex intellectual, developmental and cognitive disabilities has the opportunity, encouragement, and support required to lead an independent, productive life through self-direction and self-determination*. Thus, CPSD seeks to **promote opportunities and eliminate barriers to working and saving** while ensuring the continuation of individualized supports (as necessary). Such reform requires a system that allows for an environment of “continued attachment” for individuals who have successfully achieved partial self-sufficiency but require continued public assistance to offset the tremendous costs of certain long term supports related to their disability.

## Strategic Policy and Advocacy Goals: Careers, Income and Assets for Citizens with Disabilities

**CPSD's Commitment:** In order to achieve the strategic goals and Mission of the organization, CPSD wants to directly influence Congress and the Administration on behalf of the citizens the organization collectively represents across the United States. By uniting and guiding its grassroots force as one voice on federal policy and advocacy issues, the policy results ultimately can have a direct impact on all citizens with disabilities throughout the United States.

**Where the Gap Exists:** CPSD is the leading authority on creating self-sufficiency and independence for citizens with disabilities and believes that competitive, integrated employment, fair wages and the

alignment, modernization and reform of critical work incentive and benefit programs are the essential components to the success of *every individual* with a significant disability in the United States. Using the campaign theme -- ***Careers, Income and Assets for Citizens with Disabilities*** -- CPSD will represent the voice and views of its membership in order to:

**Goal 1: Establish CPSD as the national policy and advocacy authority** and voice for citizens with significant disabilities on advancing economic self-sufficiency through the advancement of:

- competitive and integrated employment;
- fair wages; and,
- continuous effort to align and modernize federal benefit systems.

**Goal 2: Become the lead voice and key advisor to Members of Congress, the White House, federal agencies and other leaders** primarily on critical federal legislative and regulatory matters focused on the work incentive reforms impacting the employment, benefits, wages and independence of citizens with significant disabilities; and,

**Goal 3: Create grassroots and media attention** to drive and support a positive and meaningful national conversation for this agenda.

**What Issues Matter Most:** CPSD is well positioned to directly influence the outlined policy issues as well as address the concerns that will inevitably arise via legislation and regulation over the course of the next 15- 24 months. Therefore, from December 2015 through December 2017 (with adjustments as necessary due to external and internal factors), CPSD agreed to target its policy and advocacy resources to:

**Create and Advocate for New Federal legislation that will:**

- Align, modernize, reform and develop a functional Social Security Insurance program (SSI) in order to:
  - Create work incentives so people with significant disabilities can be meaningfully employed
  - Eliminate the cash cliff and establish a graduate benefit offset for beneficiaries. See: BPC recommendations
  - Raise income limits and address asset limitations.
  - Create [new] demonstration program(s) to strengthen employment-focused supports
  - Update the definition of ‘disability’
  - More...
- Phase out the use of Section 14(c) subminimum wage certificates as currently allowed in the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- Support and oppose bills identified by CPSD Members as directly related to our core Mission and objectives (e.g. SSDI or other proposal where our voice is needed for reinforcement or pushback)

### **Inform Federal Legislative Recommendations that:**

- Modernize or align programs currently under review by federal agencies or committees such as:
  - Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (ACICIEID)
  - Other activities underway to implement the Workforce Opportunity Improvement Act that directly impact people with significant disabilities ability to work  
See: Hoff Analysis of TEAM Employment Act of 2011/WIOA 2014
- Impact the pending reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to (in summary):
  - Change the age for transition planning back to age 14;
  - Make explicit the requirements in terms of employment so they are aligned with Competitive Integrated Employment as an expected outcome, and align IDEA with the transition requirements of WIOA
  - Prohibit placement of students in sub-minimum wage employment or to identifying sub-minimum wage employment as an acceptable post-school goal
  - Prohibit use of non-work segregated settings
  - Allow IDEA Part B discretionary dollars to be used by districts to hire or contract with professionals possessing transition expertise for youth with significant disabilities

### **Develop and Launch public affairs activities that:**

- Generate and create media attention through all available traditional and social media avenues (e.g. publications, events/briefings, grassroots impact)
- Create partnerships on Capitol Hill, with the White House and others
- Engage grassroots advocates in support of CPSD's legislative and regulatory priorities.

### **Timeframe and Strategies for Success**

In order to develop work plans within the current CPSD budget, CPSD will use the proposed timeframes as a guide to effectively implement policy and advocacy strategies to accomplish measurable outcomes. Since public policy exists in a "live" environment, it must be understood that the recommended activities and timelines below are based on the most current information we have at our disposal. Thus, the ability to change and adapt based on events (i.e., elections in November 2016, a new Administration in 2017) must also be acknowledged. Therefore, ongoing assessment and planning should occur to assure that the political landscape, internal priorities – including the effective use of CPSD resources – are evaluated and adjusted so that meaningful outcomes can be achieved.

### **Recommendations from the Management Team**

In order to effectively launch a robust policy and advocacy plan, CPSD must do the following:

1. Commit to an organizational structure and dues plan for 2015-2016.  
Update: The Board approved a proposal on November 23, 2015.
2. Approve this policy plan [understanding refinements will be made] and support the planning to operationalize it immediately. A subsequent policy plan will be developed in Q4 of 2016.

Update: The Board approved the policy and advocacy plan on November 23, 2015.

3. Support and help implement a nimble and responsive internal decision making process for policy and advocacy. The Management Team recommends developing two committees: 1) Policy Committee; 2), Public Affairs Committee. All CPSD members are invited to participate in one or both and each includes the participation of at least one Board member that will act as liaison to the Board. Each committee will assist the Management Team in making timely and efficient decisions on all policy and advocacy strategies and tactics.

Update: A Legislative workgroup was formed in December 2015 and is chaired by Board member Julia Bascom. The workgroup meets monthly.

4. Produce a communications plan and multi-faceted public affairs campaign to fully support the implementation and achievement of the policy and advocacy strategies.

Update: Planning will begin in February 2016, to support the work of the Legislative Workgroup.

### **December` 2015 – May 2016: The First Six Months -- Targeted Strategies**

In order to accomplish its goals, CPSD will create a targeted policy and advocacy plan that will include the following key activities:

#### **Legislative:**

- Create specifications for legislation to assure the bill(s) introduced are comprehensive.
- Identify champion(s) and work with them to introduce needed legislation.
- Support and promote finding additional sponsors of the bill(s).
- Monitor legislation and determine whether to support or oppose other bills.

#### **Regulatory:**

- Continue to monitor and provide input to the ACICIEID. (Note: The ACICIEID meets each quarter through July 2016 with a final report due in September 2016.)
- Monitor other regulatory developments and proactively participate as needed.

#### **Public Affairs:**

- Commission the development of policy briefs on key topics related to improving SSI and its subtopics (e.g. SSDI, Seamless Transition for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and Other Significant Disabilities to a Career – proposed by R. Luecking for late fall/winter 2015-2016).
- Launch knowledge building events such as hill briefings or other events to highlight key findings from policy briefs or reports to draw attention by the media and policy makers to important findings.
- Create a communications plan and public affairs campaign to engage grassroots support for the legislative, regulatory and advocacy activities of CPSD.

#### **Timeless Strategies**

The following strategies may be used for any/all of the priorities at any time of the legislative year:

- Bring CPSD leadership team(s) in for Hill, White House and federal agency visits to clarify and underscore the CPSD's recommendations and reinforce the CPSD brand as the lead voice on Careers, Income and Assets for Citizens with Disabilities.

- Create meaningful partnerships that are specifically designed to help CPSD identify for each policy priority where it will lead, follow, support or decline involvement in order to achieve efficiencies and successfully accomplish the specified policy and advocacy goal.
- Initiate and monitor press to generate opportunities for CPSD to comment, blog, write op-eds etc. to speak in support of or against a policy issue that resonates with the CPSD networks.
- Convene Hill briefings, roundtables, summits or other knowledge building activities that establish CPSD as a leader, support collaboration and generate consensus on pressing issues that may be on the horizon for Congress and the Administration to consider.
- Find and promote potential witnesses that can be called upon to testify before Congress.

### **Internal and Ongoing Policy and Advocacy Work**

CPSD must also actively monitor and engage on other issues that directly impact this agenda. WPLLC will work with CPSD in early 2016 to create a calendar and timeline that goes beyond March 2016.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

Given CPSD's current budget and assets directly focused on public policy WPLLC highly recommends that CPSD plan to maintain the current contract – through at least December 2016 with WPLLC to assure a tactical and targeted launch of the policy and advocacy campaign and all related activities as described here and in the related Funding Plan.