



Missouri Workforce Development Board
January 28, 2021 from 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Conference Call Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chair Len Toenjes, Garland Barton, Greta Bax, Tony Bryan, Dr. Don Cook, Celeste Cramer, Kristie Davis, Dr. John Gaal, Assistant Commissioner Tim Gaines, Stephanie Garrett, Director Anna Hui, Commissioner Gary Jungermann, Kathy Lambert, Commissioner Zora Mulligan, Gregg Roberts, Fred Steinbach, Vigil White, and Jill Williams

SWDB Staff: Mark Bauer, Allyssa Johnson, and Dr. Mardy Leathers

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME: Chair Len Toenjes called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and welcomed everyone.

ROLL CALL: Allyssa Johnson conducted roll call and quorum was not met. Quorum was declared later in the meeting.

JOBS FOR AMERICA'S GRADUATES: Paul Kincaid, the Executive Director of Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), explained JAG was established over 40 years ago. JAG offers high quality career education to 35-50 students per cohort with a focus on 37 core competencies. JAG teachers follow the students for one year with monthly follow ups to ensure students are following the path, updating their resumes, offer counseling, and support the students in identify ways to penetrate the job market. Governor Parson and First Lady Teresa Parson have supported and promoted the program for many years. JAG students learn relevant competencies, practice, and develop skills.

The JAG program and specific courses offered are customized to support the needs of the local communities and their economies.

Chair Toenjes asked what industries the students are placed in, understanding the industry placements may help understand how the State Workforce Development Board can support JAG. Paul responded that he would follow up with that information. Paul added that 40% of the JAG Students go to 2 year programs and 50% transition to the military or the workforce.

Fred Steinbach asked how long are students in the program and do the students attend the program and traditional school. Paul said students attend JAG for 1-2 years and also attend traditional school.

Chair Len Toenjes asked of the State Workforce Development Board engage with JAG. Paul said the formal connections are with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the individuals schools. Dr. Mardy Leathers added that the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) is interested in connecting with JAG on out of school youth to sustain out of school youth training. Further, Dr. Leathers highlighted the opportunity to collaborate with apprenticeship or possibly a pre-apprenticeship opportunity.

SWDB OPEN DISCUSSION: Chair Len Toenjes asked the private SWDB members to share their workforce struggles and how each member is approaching these challenges.

Garland Barton shared he is working with several industries and education providers such as Missouri State University-West Plains to support workforce needs. There are many job openings and positions available, but employers are not receiving referrals. Garland wondered if the enhancement of unemployment benefits are creating challenges.

Celeste Cramer shared her organization is launching apprenticeship programs to skill up the workforce from Licensed Practical Nurse to Registered Nurse. Celeste is partnering with Jill Williams at the Missouri Hospital Association on workforce needs. Celeste commented that Missourians are not showing up on the first day or even to the interview.

Dr. Don Cook explained how it has been a difficult time due to the nature of the work with large conferences. Stephanie Garrett stated her company is still looking to hire for open positions.

Gregg Roberts reported there are many applicants applying, but not appearing in the interview. Gregg has participated in virtual job fairs. There are many open jobs, but not enough qualified applicants.

Fred Steinbach highlighted how marketing and advertising has transitioned to a digital world. While the unemployment rate has decreased, it is unclear how many Missourians have employment. It is clear there is a skills mismatch.

Chair Toenjes reported in construction there is uncertainty in the market and projects are postponed. Chair Toenjes is hopeful there is an uptick in employment at the middle to end of next year.

Virgil White stated there are a lot of different job opportunities and many are still working online.

2021 SWDB PLACEMAT: Dr. Mardy Leathers presented the 2021 SWDB Placemat was built upon the October Retreat with the board and drives the work of OWD. It is proposed the SWDB coordinate and bridge gaps between the State board and the local boards through the establishment of a new committee. This new committee will be made up of a few members of the State Workforce Development Board and will focus on bridging gaps and coordinating efforts with the Local Workforce Development Boards. The 2021 SWDB Placemat also seeks to build a framework to effectively serve job seekers and employers through adopting policies to support omnichannel job center service delivery. SWDB Placemat will also rethink relationships with employer and strategically align to serve Missourians to engage in the public workforce system.

Jill Williams commented that the 2021 SWDB Placemat is great.

APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE: Dr. Mardy Leathers and Chair Toenjes asked for SWDB members to support and engage on this committee. Dr. Leathers recommended Tony Bryan, Celeste Cramer, Gregg Roberts, Garland Barton and Stephanie Garrett.

Tony Bryan added this committee is interesting and important to have conversations with the job centers to further understand the resources needed to be successful. Tony asked if staff to support this committee.

Chair Toenjes requested parameters to be developed to bridge gaps and recommended the committee have a planning session and consider good models, weaknesses, and action items necessary.

Tony Bryan added a focus point will be standardization, a streamlined process and Job Centers of the Future efforts.

Dr. Leathers added the importance of coordination among the Local Workforce Development Board to understand the challenges and connecting local board efforts to the vision of SWDB.

Donna Parrot asked if it is possible for a LWDB Director to be on this committee.

Dr. Leathers said no because this is a SWDB appointed committee and plans to work directly with all LWDB Directors.

PUBLIC PARTNER UPDATE & WIOA PERFORMANCE: Keith Roderick with Rehab Services for the Blind (RSB) reported on quarterly dashboards submitted to the federal partners. Keith highlighted that these performance measures submitted to the federal partners is a new for RSB. RSB is ranked 1st in the nation among blind agencies in second and fourth quarter after exit measure.

Yvonne added this is our partners' performance, including the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Director Hui responded that DOLIR is working closely with partners to get Missourians back in the workforce.

While the public health improves, Missourians are exhausting their benefits, it is important the public workforce system intervene to reengage in the workforce.

TRADE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: Yvonne Wright presented OWD operates the Trade Assistance Program to assist workers that lost their job due to foreign trade. The final Trade Assistance rule implemented in the fall and OWD will be complying with federal law.

STATE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: Dr. Mardy Leathers reported the DHEWD Placemat connects to broader initiatives and connects with the SWDB and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE). SWDB will have the ability to connect with CBHE on the placemat and strategic planning to understand where there is overlap between the two boards.

Dr. Leathers shared a new funding opportunity to support pre-apprenticeships in the state to support a talent pipeline to registered apprenticeship programs. This funding opportunity will be available to submit a proposal to the following types of organizations: Local Workforce Development Boards, Community Colleges, Labor Management Organizations, and Career and Technical Education organizations. This funding opportunity will be released on February 15th and applications must be submitted by March 15th. This will allow awarded organizations to develop curriculum and competencies that will tie directly to registered apprenticeship programs within the state to ensure Missourians are ready for an apprenticeship program with the skills necessary.

Fred Steinbach asked if charitable organizations are eligible for this funding opportunity. Dr. Leathers responded that we would not be able to fund those organizations due to limitations in the federal law.

Jeanna Caldwell added that this opportunity would support critical needs and fill the pipeline to access apprenticeship programs.

Dr. Leathers shared the Fast Track program has new programs certified by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. SWDB members will receive an email from Allyssa Johnson to outline the opportunities for feedback on this newly approved list.

Dr. Leathers presented a new National Governor's Association (NGA) approached the State Workforce Development Board with an opportunity to participate in policy workshops with peer states on economic recovery as it pertains to the pandemic. It is proposed the State Workforce Development Board Executive Committee participate in these upcoming workshops. There will be more information coming on the dates and times.

Tony Bryan commented that this is a testament of the great work Missouri is doing.

Dr. Mardy Leathers shared OWD is about half way through the Job Centers of the Future (JCF) initiative or the learning phase. The information learned and understood will be leveraged for implementation.

JOB CENTERS OF THE FUTURE UPDATED: Ken Mall shared that a lot of data and information from the staff is helping OWD understand and feed information for the policy workshop. Ken will be sending out a survey statewide since JCF was unable to connect with all staff during the focus group phase of the project, this will be an opportunity for the job center staff to be heard.

Chair Toenjes stated at some point we will be in the future, instead of Job Center of the Future, it could be Job Centers For the Future.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 26TH, OCTOBER 8TH AND 2021 SWDB PLACEMAT: Garland Barton moved to approve the August 26th, October 8th and 2021 SWDB Placemat and Tony Bryan seconded. The August 26th, October 8th and 2021 SWDB Placemat were approved.

TEAM REPORT: Greg Laposa presented on behalf of the TEAM President, Michael Ravenscraft. Last year, for the Local Workforce Development Boards was about adaptability to support training for 900 Missourians. Tony Bryan and Cyber Up was very supportive in offering a path to employment and training. LWDBs had to design a digital process for enrollment processes and video conferencing to connect with job seekers. In 2021, the LWDBs are focused on innovation and building great practices previously implemented during the pandemic. Streamlining processes and strengthen collaboration and promoting open dialogue will be critical for the success of the public workforce system.

Celeste Cramer added Sally Payne and the Ozark region have pivoted extremely well and appreciated the continued innovation and support employers in the community.

Dr. Leathers stated OWD and LWDBs have come together and build relationships to better serve job seekers and employers.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND CLOSING REMARKS: Chair Toenjes added the TEAM presentation will be a great starting point for the committee on local board engagement. Chair Toenjes thanks everyone for a great productive meeting.

Tony Bryan moved to adjourn and Fred Steinbach seconded.

The meeting ended at 11:59 A.M.