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Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)

Youth Employment Committee Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2021 – 11:30 AM

1. Welcome and Introductions

The LWDB Youth Employment Committee assembled via ZOOM. Co-Chair Jennifer Hughes welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order. New committee member, Catherine Bitting with WSU Tech was introduced; she has replaced Leah Roeder, WSU Tech on the committee.

2. Youth Employment Project (YEP)/Helping Youth Prepare for Employment (HYPE) 2022 Work Plan

Staff reviewed the work plan with committee members and asked for comments and suggestions.

The proposed areas of focus for the program in 2022 are to generate outcomes equal to or greater than those of 2019, increase employer engagement including small business participation, grow and expand partnerships with area high schools and form strategies to engage more school counselors, develop stronger connections to community-based organizations in the region, leverage Work Based Learning (WBL) pilot projects and identify funding support for 2022 and beyond. In regard to small business engagement, staff are looking at the possibility of offering incentives to subsidize a certain amount of placements as well as to increase employer outreach and awareness by holding a series of meetings targeting employers not currently engaged with HYPE or may have been in past years, and have business from the same sector/industry discuss how and why they are HYPE partners. Smaller groups of employers could be assembled from similar sectors.

More employers are needed to offer summer internships and job opportunities in order to give young people a breadth of opportunities and match to their interests and academic goals. Catherine Bitting asked if attempts had been made to match young people geographically. Staff recognize that transportation is a barrier and do attempt to match youth to opportunities in their area; however, more employers are needed to participate, which will provide more options. Transportation options and funding are needed. Students may use their school ID's in the summer to use public transportation for free; however, there is some stigma and apprehension issues about using public transportation. Sally Stang offered that group leaders have taken students out together for interactive instruction for how to use system and reduce the anxiety and perception of using the system. Staff shared a list of employers that have been involved in YEP/HYPE since 2017. The list includes a wide variety of employers that have been involved in the program in the past and others that have and are currently participating. An effort can be made to determine why an employer was once involved and no longer is. This list can also help staff and committee members in recruiting employers geographically. The list will be sorted to look at who can hire directly or offer internships. The list will be shared with the Committee with a request to provide feedback on companies that should be contacted for outreach about the program. The question was asked if youth participants areas of interest are able to be matched up with jobs that match those interests. Interest surveys are provided to participants and many of these youth would fall into WBL programs. Students have a Xello profile that shows areas of interest and staff work with CTE coordinators in the schools to place students. The YEP newsletter has also been a good tool to inform youth about career awareness and available opportunities. Aliex Kofoed, WA Youth Work Experience Coordinator will run some reports from Xello to obtain data in order get an idea how many youth/percentage are interested in what fields. This information will be useful in the outreach to target employers to participate in the program. The Committee reached consensus that in regard to employers that it is important to look at strategies behind incentivizing

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small businesses that have never been involved, look at geographic component and obtain data in regard to career interests of the youth in order align them with work opportunities of employers.

One aspect of HYPE that has been very beneficial is the partnership with USD 259 paying for and providing externs to assist with the program. Staff will look into the possibility of using this model in smaller areas in the region and if those areas cannot afford to provide externs, having the WA use funding to hire counselors, teachers or other school staff in the summer for that community. The WA would have to address where that funding would come from, how to train those externs and what transportation options would be needed for those areas to participate in the program.

The HYPE outcomes from 2019 through 2021 and the proposed goals for 2022 were reviewed with the committee. Staff want the goals to be realistic, but ambitious. Committee members were asked for their thoughts on the goals. Staff were asked about the counties being served. The WA serves a six-county region, but can and do assist participants outside the region.

WA staff propose that the Camp HYPE model efforts continue, which will develop and provide Work Based Learning (WBL) opportunities for youth. The plan is to return to the model used in 2019 prior to the pandemic. In that model, participants attended an all-day camp with participants spending the first half of the day engaging in soft skills training and the other half being transported by bus, through a partnership with Wichita Transit, to various employer sites for tours and career exposure. The following companies have committed to participate and financially supporting Camp HYPE in 2022 and other have been or will be contacted. Some of those businesses include Spirit AeroSystems, Textron Aviation, Evergy, FlagshipKansasTech.com, Ascension Via Christi, Conco Construction will partner with Hutton Construction for a construction camp and the Wichita Wind Surge. The WA plans to further develop partnerships with community agencies and employers with hopes to utilize various facilities for hosting the camps as well as expand the camps into Cowley and Butler counties to provide the same opportunities to more youth in the region. That will require additional partnership development efforts in those counties. Camp HYPE focuses on younger youth, 14 to 15 year olds to provide a career awareness entry point and then transition to the YMCA's Job Prep program and the City of Wichita's Way to Work program as they get older.

Committee members were encouraged to continue to offer suggestions to staff after the meeting. The goal is to have a final document to present to the LWDB Executive Committee and full board in January. Staff will make changes to the current draft and send back out for additional feedback prior to those meetings.

Report was received and filed.

3. **Work Based Learning (WBL) Project Update**

The Governor's Education Council established a WBL Task Force to analyze the project and make policy recommendations to promote WBL across Kansas. Keith Lawing co-chairs the task force. All Kansas local area workforce boards are involved in a pilot project to implement WBL programs across the state. The Governor's Education Council is recommending that the WBL pilot be continued and that the WBL Intermediaries continue to be funded past June 30, 2022.

Report was received and filed.

4. **Consent Agenda**

Minutes from the September 21, 2021 meeting and Program Year 2021 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Performance Reports for the WIOA Youth Program were presented to the Committee for review and/or approval.

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Amy Williams (Michele Gifford) moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion was adopted.

5. **Next Steps**

- A. Staff to send list of past and present participating employers to Committee members to identify those to target in outreach efforts.
- B. Staff to prepare and send Xello report showing data on youth areas of interest.
- C. Staff to revise work HYPE/YEP Work Plan based on meeting discussion and send out to members for comment prior to the LWDB Executive Committee and full board meetings in January.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 PM.

Attendees:

LWDB Youth Employment Committee Members

Catherine Bitting
Rod Blackburn
Michele Gifford
Jennifer Hughes
Mim McKenzie
Dr. Dennis Rittle
Sally Stang
Amy Williams

Staff/Guests

Stacy Cotten
Amanda Duncan
Aliex Kofoed
Keith Lawing
Shirley Lindhorst
Jo Truong
Cherie Wenderott, Senior Services of
Wichita
Deb Weve, Flint Hills Job Corps