

WORKFORCE CENTERS

of South Central Kansas

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Workforce Alliance (WA) Youth Employment Committee Meeting Minutes December 19, 2023 – 11:30 AM

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Workforce Alliance Youth Employment Committee assembled via ZOOM. The meeting was called to order and self-introductions were given. Phet Namphengsone was introduced as Caitlyn Gregory's replacement for Textron Aviation's position on the Committee.

2. Program Updates

Staff KC Schumacher shared some data and a success story from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth program. The WIOA Youth Program is for young adults 16 to 24 years of age. Total participants in the program have been increasing over the last few years; there were 66 in 2020, 74 in 2021, 113 in 2022 and the program is on track to meet the goal of 150 for 2023. Participants engage in some of the following services: work experience, supportive services, occupational skills training, leadership development, counseling, financial literacy and career guidance. Youth are limited on engaging in some work experiences such as construction and animal care due to their age and potential issues that insurance will not cover. This is a large barrier in being able to offer more work experiences that young people have expressed an interest. Blackburn noted that this issue should be revisited and that work needs to be done with insurance companies and legislature to change workers compensation and general liability coverage issues. Youth staff have started group orientations and eligibility meetings so that staff do not have to meet individually with every potential participant. Staff have just completed a pilot program with Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation (CPRF) in implementing the Roadtrip Nation (RTN) curriculum, which includes multiple training sessions and an interview process. Participants can earn a \$25 gift card after successful completion of a session for a total of \$150. There is a need for businesses and community organizations to provide staff to be interviewed by young people, so that they can make career exploration videos to upload to the hub. A list of interviewees needs to be assembled, so that staff can schedule interviews as they are needed. Many of the larger organizations have communications departments that are required to approve their staff's involvement in videos, which is time consuming. If interviewees can be vetted in advance and placed on a contact list, this would make the process more efficient. Committee members Phet Namphengsone with Textron and Jakobe Davidson and Lori Hladik with Spirit were asked to look into this for their organizations.

Staff Amanda Duncan provided an update on the statewide Work-Based Learning (WBL) program. First quarter numbers through September 30, 2023 were presented. The report includes data statewide for every workforce area that receives staff support to partner with high schools across the state. Over 4,600 students were served in 41 school districts and 111 schools. The report includes tracking students by career pathway in high school, type of activities participants engaged in, number of referrals into WIOA Youth program and a breakdown of school districts, which has grown statewide. Next quarter's report will be presented at the next meeting in February. This data is reported to the Kansas Dept. of Commerce, Kansas Department of Education and the state board of education.

RTN watch party kits have been developed for staff to use when showing the film in the schools so that afterwards they can discuss and promote the use of the RTN Community Hub of career exploration tools. The documentary, videos and tools can also be shared and used by anyone in the community. A video of some clips from youth interviews was shown to Committee members.

Report was received and filed.

3. 2024 YEP Planning

A slide presentation was presented to update the Committee on planning for YEP in 2024 in order to gain consensus on the direction that staff are taking toward next year's goals and to discuss further

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strategies. An overview was provided of the last three years of activities and goals for 2024. The main focus is to increase the total of young adults served to 6,000 students, attain total employment of 2,500 and increase referrals to the WIOA Youth program to 50. The strategic program goals for 2024 include expanding and formalizing WBL internship opportunities within YEP, integrating RTN curriculum, expanding Camp HYPE to engage younger youth in career exploration activities and in other counties outside of Sedgwick County and introducing virtual career exploration tools (TRANSFR headsets). Wichita Public Schools is working strategically with the WA's YEP to focus their internships more toward the summer than during the school year. The need to increase the number employers and the employment sectors of those employers is critical in being able to offer a youth participant as work experience in the career field that they are interested in. A successful YEP program helps to create a talent pipeline and retain talent in Kansas. Staff are also looking at the possibility of hosting a couple of community webinars for employers and partners about the program.

Committee members expressed their support of the plan and goals presented and to recommend to the Workforce Alliance Executive Committee.

4. Partner Updates

- Applications for the City of Wichita's Way to Work program for next summer will be released in January; the goal is to have 175 participants.
- Butler Community College is enrolling for Spring and has an event in Wichita on January 5th. They will also host a Career Fair on their Andover campus on March 6th.
- Spirit AeroSystems is working on high school summer internships and promoting interview day at the Future Ready center.
- Textron is preparing for their summer internships and are confirming the number of positions they will have available; applications to go live the week of January 15th.

5. Consent Agenda

Approval of the minutes from the August 15, 2023 meeting and notes from the October 17, 2023 meeting, Program Year 2023 (PY23) budget, WIOA Youth Program performance reports for PY23 and Youth Employment Committee meeting schedule for 2024 were presented to the Committee for review and/or approval. The recurring meeting times for this committee were discussed and it was determined that staff will look at some alternative times and send a poll out to gain consensus on another time if needed.

Sally Stang (Debbie Kennedy) moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion was adopted.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:52 PM.

Attendees:

LWDB Youth Employment Committee Members

Rod Blackburn, Partners in Education, Chair
Laura Barker, Wichita Public Schools
Jakobe Davidson, Spirit AeroSystems
Aletra Chaney-Profit, Butler Community College
Debbie Kennedy, Wichita Children's Home
Phet Namphengsone, Textron Aviation
Sally Stang, City of Wichita

Staff/Guests

Auston Cooley
Chelsea Daniel
Amanda Duncan
Amanda Hill
Denise Houston
Keith Lawing
Shirley Lindhorst
KC Schumacher
Lori Hladik, Spirit AeroSystems
Deb Weve, Job Corps