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Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Youth Employment Committee Meeting Minutes

February 11, 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.

2. **Review and Approval of the Minutes from the January 22, 2021 Meeting**

Sally Stang (Laura Hands) moved to approve the meeting minutes from the January 22, 2021 meeting. Motion adopted.

3. **WIOA Youth Program Overview**

The Committee was provided an overview of performance, eligibility, services and providers for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program. The WIOA Youth program is divided into In School and Out of School youth. At least 75% of youth funds must be spent on Out of School Youth each year and at least 20% of youth funds must be spent on work experiences for those participants. WA staff member Denise Houston reviewed the eligibility criteria and barriers for both Out of School Youth, which includes participants must be between the ages of 16 and 24 and not attending any school and for In School Youth, which includes participants between the ages of 14 and 21. WIOA Youth program staff is comprised of Stacy Cotten, Youth, Youth Program Supervisor, two case managers and work experience coordinator. The program offers 14 program elements to youth participating in the program. The program receives referrals from the career center and from providers and community partners. Participants go through an orientation process, are provided with expectations and complete the eligibility process. Once a participant has completed the admission requirements, assessments and testing are done to determine the services the participant needs, goals are set and an action plan is developed to achieve the goals. The WA does not provide all of the elements and contracts with providers to provide these elements. And follow up with providers regularly.

Information was presented to the Committee on performance for the WIOA Youth program. A few years ago, when WIOA was adopted, there was a shift of focus to out of school youth and performance measures were changed to focus on employment and match the measures of the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The current Program Year, (PY20) began on July 1, 2020 and will end on June 30, 2021. The third quarter of PY 2020 started January 1, and the performance levels in the report provided to the Committee are subject to change as more data is collected. The Youth Program projected 3rd quarter performance is to exceed the goal for Placement in Employment, Education, or Training 2nd Quarter, Placement in Employment, Education, or Training 4th Quarter and Credential Rate. Workforce Alliance serves Local Area IV (LAIV) and is projected to not meet the sanction level for Median Earnings and Measurable Skills Gain. The low rate for Measurable Skills Gain is a data entry issue. Jennifer Hughes asked about what criteria was considered in determining Measurable Skills Gain. Report cards, transcripts, number of credit hours taken, requirements of the school and credentials or degree are factors. This measure is not currently being met due to data that has not yet been entered and is usually entered later in the year, so over the next couple of months a more accurate picture will emerge.

WIOA Youth program services available to participants also include supportive services to help pay for transportation, child care and living expenses to overcome barriers, funding for on-going training costs, assistance in obtaining and funding a work experience and help in placing participants on a career pathway. The program partners with and provides referrals to other community resources to assist participants. Hughes asked about the WIOA budget or funds available regarding the requirements for 75% of youth funds must be spent on Out of School Youth each year and at least

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20% of youth funds must be spent on work experiences for those participants and where the WA is regarding the performance level for that. Staff reported that due to COVID, the work experience spending this year is less than it usually is. Hughes asked that if at the next meeting a budget be presented regarding the performance of the different funds.

One of the challenges for the program is reaching the out of school youth population. The WA receives referrals from many community organizations, but only about one in 10 of those referrals follow through with the requirements and actually access a service. WA staff have visited with youth program staff in Kansas City, Kansas and have scheduled a learning exchange with youth program counterparts in Louisville, Kentucky to review the ways they provide services and look at their best practices and then tailor those methods to the needs and partnerships the WA has locally.

4. City of Wichita – The Way To Work Program

Committee member Sally Stang, Director of Housing and Community Services for the City of Wichita provided an overview of the City's The Way To Work program. It serves youth in lower income families and is an eight-week program targeting 14 to 17 year olds. The program has both an educational component and a work placement component to equip and empower participants to become successful employees in the future by providing job preparation, job skills and personal development training as well as financial literacy. Youth are placed in on-the-job training opportunities at non-profit organizations and within city departments; wages are subsidized by program funds.

This program is part of the Helping Youth Prepare for Employment (HYPE) program with the Workforce Alliance, YMCA and USD 259. The goal of HYPE is to combine resources, eliminate duplication of training areas and efforts and focus on certain age groups; however, last year with COVID, this could not happen on the level planned. Uncertainty remains about how this year's program will be implemented with the continued COVID restrictions. Committee members will need to help identify way to make HYPE more effective. Laura Hands asked if there could be a common entry point for these youth and then they could be filtered into appropriate programs based on needs and eligibility. This is one of the goals of HYPE, but in 2020 and into 2021, individual programs will have to provide the services that they can and combine efforts where they can, but it probably will be 2022 for programs to become more aligned. The program will need to have more employers on board to implement and with COVID issues that remains uncertain.

Report was received and filed.

5. Helping Youth Prepare for Employment (HYPE) Report for 2020

Planning is underway for HYPE in 2021. The YMCA is partner in the HYPE collaboration with the Workforce Alliance and the City of Wichita and has invited a representative to serve on this Committee. Staff are developing the 2021 HYPE Work Plan and will distribute that to the group before the next meeting on March 11 for review. Staff continue to adapt to conditions, but the opportunity or the ability to do much different than what has been done for 2021 is limited. A virtual Manufacturing Interview Day with Textron Aviation and Spirit AeroSystems has been scheduled for March 22. Committee members were encouraged to suggest other manufacturers that should participate as the goal is to expand these opportunities. As in previous years, career camps are being planned for 2021. Career camps are for those that cannot be placed in a work experience. Employers will be scheduled to be on-site to assist with the camps. In addition to the manufacturing and trades camps that were held last year, healthcare and technology camps are also planned. Stipends will be provided for youth participants that complete the camp. Committee members are asked to help to form a targeted and visible strategy for how to move the HYPE collaborative forward.

The report was received and filed.

6. **Other Discussion/Announcements**

There were no announcements or new business to discuss.

7. **Next Steps**

- Jennifer Hughes shared HYPE page on the WA website and the links to the YEP newsletters and asked Committee members to make a commitment to review those. Staff will send a link for future issues to the Committee
- The Jobs FORE Youth Golf Tournament is an annual fundraiser for the WA's youth employment program. The tournament for 2021 has been scheduled for September 30. Committee members were asked to think of ways to improve outcomes. The money raised fills funding gaps for the youth program.
- For the next meeting, begin to discuss goals on communication and marketing formats, what is needed from Committee members and what can be done to make the best of the Committee members' time.
- The YMCA has been contacted about having a representative serve on the Committee. They will be asked to provide an overview of their Job Prep program to members at the next meeting.
- Staff will provide projected numbers from each of the HYPE partners on goals for how many participants can be served this year and share ways that Committee members can help achieve those goals.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM.

Attendees:

LWDB Youth Employment Committee Members

Kelly Bielefeld
Rod Blackburn
Anne Marie Coughlin
Michele Gifford
Laura Hands
Jennifer Hughes
Angela Perez
Dr. Dennis Rittle
Leah Roeder
Sally Stang

Staff/Guests

Stacy Cotton
Amanda Duncan
Denise Houston
Aliex Kofoed
Keith Lawing
Shirley Lindhorst
Soutdaly Sysavath, Wichita
Childrens' Home