



**Workforce Alliance (WA) Executive Committee
Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 • 11:30 a.m. – Noon
ZOOM Only: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87989599869>

- Welcome and Introductions:** Alana McNary (11:30)
- Butler County Workforce Center Lease Termination:** Chad Pettera (11:35) (p. 2)
The lease for space in El Dorado for the Butler County Workforce Center will be discussed.
Recommended Action: Approve the termination of the Butler County Workforce Center lease.
- Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Memorandum of Understanding for Required Partners:** Chad Pettera (11:40) (p. 3 and Attachment)
The required One-Stop Partner Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is expiring and is being renewed for PY26.
Recommended Action: Approve publication of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) One Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for public comment.
- Partnership Agreement with the City of Caldwell for Summer Internship Program:** Keith Lawing (11:45) (pp. 4-6)
The WA is working with the City of Caldwell on an application to the State of Kansas for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to support a three-week, career-focused Caldwell Summer Internship Program.
Recommended Action: Authorize the CEO to enter into a partnership agreement with the City of Caldwell to implement a Summer Internship Program as presented.
- Additions to the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List:** Chad Pettera (11:50) (pp. 7-8)
All programs on the Eligible Training Provider List must be approved. Accelerated Academy has requested approval for a dental assisting program.
Recommended Action: Approve the initial programs as presented.
- Workforce Alliance Updates:** Keith Lawing (11:55)
An update on WA programs and projects will be provided.
Recommended Action: Receive and file.
- Adjourn:** Alana McNary (12:00)

The next WA Executive Committee Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 11:30 a.m.

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The Workforce Alliance is the Local Workforce Development Board for Local Area IV

Item

Lease Termination for Butler Workforce Center

Background

The Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas (WA) is evaluating the termination of the lease for the Butler Workforce Center due to budget constraints and changes in service delivery needs. Since 1999, WA has supported the operations of the Butler County Workforce Center with the assistance of many local partners, helping connect residents and employers in Butler County to employment, training, and workforce development services.

Analysis

The Butler Workforce Center is currently located at 524 N. Main in El Dorado and is owned by South Central Mental Health Counseling Center (SCMHCC). Costs associated with the facility are currently shared between WIOA, the RETAIN program, and Orion Educational Services. The RETAIN program is scheduled to conclude in June 2026, and recent WIOA budget reductions, combined with lower levels of center traffic, have made it increasingly challenging to sustain a dedicated facility in El Dorado.

Based on these financial and operational considerations, WA staff recommend that the lease be terminated prior to June 30, 2026. WA has been meeting with community partners in El Dorado to explore options for shared space that would allow a staff member to continue providing services locally; however, no viable arrangements have materialized to date. WA has also been collaborating with Butler Community College on potential grant opportunities that could support shared space in downtown El Dorado.

Orion Educational Services has indicated interest in potentially leasing the entire space from SCMHCC should WA vacate the facility.

While terminating the current lease may be necessary, WA remains committed to serving Butler County residents and employers. The organization is open to maintaining a presence in Butler County through alternative service models and is actively seeking partnership strategies, shared-space opportunities, and other ideas that would allow workforce services to continue in the community.

Recommended Action

Approve the termination of the Butler County Workforce Center lease.

March 11, 2026

Submitted By: Chad Pettera

Item

One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Background

The One Stop Partner Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is currently in place expires June 30, 2026. A new MOU between the WIOA Partners has to be in place by July 1, 2026.

Analysis

The current WIOA MOU was shared with all partners in January with guidance to review and provide updates. The MOU was also discussed at a WIOA Partner meeting in February. To date, no partner has requested changes; however, there are ongoing conversations that may lead to updates during the public comment period. At this time, the MOU does not include any substantial changes. The updates primarily reflect operational adjustments over the past three years, along with alignment with updated guidance and the current Local Plan. Each WIOA partner is also updating its referral guidelines and the way services are made available through the America's Job Centers in our local area (partner service grid). Attached to this report is the MOU proposed for publication for public comment.

Recommended Action

Approve publication of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) One Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for public comment.

Item

Partnership Agreement with the City of Caldwell for Summer Internship Program

Background

The City of Caldwell is applying to the state of Kansas for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to support a three-week, career-focused Caldwell Summer Internship Program designed to bridge the gap between youth potential and local workforce needs. The initiative is intended to address commonly cited “soft skills” deficiencies by equipping students with essential workplace competencies valued by employers, including communication, teamwork, reliability, and problem-solving.

The program is designed to serve twenty-five students who have completed ninth or tenth grade, providing paid, hands-on work experiences combined with structured workshops in career readiness and financial literacy. Participants will engage in mentorship, explore local career opportunities, and develop practical skills that prepare them for future employment and education pathways.

The Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas has been asked to serve as a cornerstone partner in this initiative. Proposed responsibilities include project management, curriculum planning, employer coordination, student recruitment support, scheduling, and alignment with regional workforce priorities and best practices.

Analysis

Youth employment and early work-based learning experiences are strongly aligned with the Workforce Alliance’s mission to connect individuals, employers, and partners to develop a skilled workforce. Paid internships for high school students are recognized as an effective strategy to improve career readiness, strengthen local talent pipelines, and support long-term economic mobility.

Participation in the Caldwell Summer Internship Program would:

- Expand youth work-based learning opportunities within the broader Local Area IV region.
- Strengthen relationships with municipal partners and local employers in Caldwell.
- Advance regional alignment of youth career pathways and employer engagement strategies.
- Provide a scalable model that could be replicated in other communities.

The partnership is expected to formalize roles, responsibilities, performance expectations, and financial commitments through a written agreement between the Workforce Alliance and the City of Caldwell. Staff capacity and program alignment have been reviewed, and the proposed engagement is consistent with existing youth workforce strategies and priorities.

Recommended Action

Authorize the CEO to enter into a partnership agreement with the City of Caldwell to implement a Summer Internship Program as presented.



Summer Internship Program Proposal Overview

Program Overview

The Caldwell Summer Internship Program is a three-week, career-focused initiative designed to bridge the gap between youth potential and workforce needs. It addresses the challenge of “soft skills” deficiencies by helping students build essential workplace competencies that employers value most.

The program will provide twenty-five students with paid, hands-on experience, develop soft skills, career readiness, and financial literacy. Through workshops and mentorship, participants acquire practical skills, explore local career opportunities, and prepare for success. Students who have completed ninth or tenth grade will be the target audience.

Operating as a paid summer employment opportunity, the program combines structured workshops with real-world exposure to local industries through guest speakers, mentorship, and job site tours. Students will progress from career awareness to exploration, gaining practical insight into local businesses and community issues while developing teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.

By treating the internship as a true job experience, students will learn the importance of engagement, reliability, and maintaining a positive attitude in professional settings. Ultimately, the Caldwell Summer Internship Program will cultivate a new generation of motivated, career-ready individuals who are equipped to contribute to their local workforce and community.

Throughout the program, participants will interact with professionals across various fields, fostering mentorship and networking connections. The final week culminates in a Student Showcase, where teams present group projects aligned with community needs and inspired by their internship experiences. Parents, business partners, and local officials will be invited to attend this event.

By connecting students directly with local employers and opportunities, the Caldwell Summer Internship Program broadens career perspectives and strengthens community ties. It helps students recognize the diversity of viable career options in the region, encouraging them to envision a prosperous future close to home.

The **Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas** will serve as a cornerstone partner, providing project management, curriculum planning, and resource coordination. Their expertise supports scheduling, talent recruitment, and alignment with regional workforce priorities. This partnership ensures the program remains relevant to employer needs and sustainable in its long-term impact.

Strong partnerships and stakeholder engagement are central to the success of the Caldwell Summer Internship Program. The program will be a partnership among businesses, schools, and community groups, linking students to real-world experiences, mentors, and career pathways, thereby building skills

and strengthening Caldwell’s workforce. Collaboration among key community organizations, educational institutions, and industry partners ensures that students receive a well-rounded, hands-on experience that bridges education and workforce readiness.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is a foundational component of the program’s development. A diverse planning group has been established to guide the design and implementation process, ensuring broad representation and alignment with local priorities. This group includes elected officials, business and industry leaders, non-profit representatives, educators, and workforce development professionals. Their collective expertise helps shape program goals, curriculum, and logistical planning to serve both students and the community.

As the initiative continues to evolve, the planning group will expand to include parents and additional community stakeholders. Their input will provide valuable perspectives on student needs, local opportunities, and long-term sustainability. By fostering open communication and collaboration across multiple sectors, the program is building a strong foundation of shared ownership and community pride.

The program is launch-ready, backed by strong collaboration, secured sites, and community support. Ongoing planning with businesses, schools, the community, and workforce partners ensures a well-designed, sustainable program for local youth.

Program Timeline

The Pre-Application was submitted on January 20, 2026. The Grant Application will be submitted on or before March 10, 2026. The program is scheduled to launch in June 2026, following planning, recruitment, and student engagement. Between now and to July 2026, partners will finalize the curriculum, hire staff, enroll students, and evaluate outcomes to guide future program years.

Funding

Amount of Funds Requested from Community Development Block Grant:	\$70,000.00
Amount of Local Matching Funds: (cash and in-kind)	\$7,000.00
Estimated Total Project Cost:	\$77,000.00

Item

Recommended Addition to the Eligible Training Provider List

Background

All programs on the Eligible Training Provider List must be approved. The ETP list is state-wide, and the policy governing it does not require programs to meet a wage requirement nor appear on Demand Occupation lists within all or any local areas.

Analysis

Pending Initial Programs

A new training provider, Accelerated Academy, has requested approval for a new Dental Assisting program. Accelerated Academy offers a hybrid learning experience with theory work done online and hands on-learning completed at a partnering dental office; Hillside Family Dentist, in this case.

While not on the Workforce Alliance (Local Area IV) Demand Occupation list, Dental Assisting does show median earnings that exceed the current self-sufficient wage and show projected growth in our area.

Recommended Action

Approve the initial program as presented.

**WIOA Eligible Training Provider
Programs Information
March 2026**

Provider Name	Program Name	Demand Occupation/ Industry in Area IV	Length of Training	Approximate Cost Per Credit Hour In State	Approximate Total Program Cost	Type of Attainment	Avg. Wage Per Hr.	ONET Projected Growth 2022-2032	Recommended Action
<i>Pending Initial Programs</i>									
Accelerated Academy	Dental Assisting	N/A	10 wks/80 hrs		\$3,599.00	Industry Certification	\$19.15	6%	Approve