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Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Youth Employment Committee Meeting Minutes May 18, 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. Committee member Mim McKenzie, YMCA was introduced to the Committee.

2. **Review and Approval of the Minutes from the March 11, 2021 Meeting**

Michele Gifford (Debbie Kennedy) moved to approve the meeting minutes from the March 11, 2021 meeting. Motion adopted.

3. **Helping Youth Prepare For Employment (HYPE) 2021 Update**

An update on participant numbers for HYPE coalition (Youth Employment Project (YEP), City of Wichita's Way to Work and the YMCA's Job Prep) was provided. Applications for Camp HYPE have been coming in slowly and staff are finding that parents are not receiving information about the camps from their children or the schools. Staff are discussing ways to address this problem. Relationships with the school districts are good, but students do not seem to be relaying information to their parents. Program directors for non-profit community youth organizations are on the distribution list to receive this information and staff will follow up directly with these organizations to ensure that they are receiving these communications. Many youth programs are experiencing a decrease in applications for their programs this summer. The COVID pandemic, home schooling and transportation have been mentioned as challenges. Another challenge has been that due to COVID, staff cannot be in-person interacting with students at the schools to promote the program. The suggestion was made to reach out to the WA's employer customers to promote the program to their employees and families. Staff will look into reaching out to these employers through the WA's Business Service representatives.

Staff plan to distribute a press release regarding Camp HYPE and contact the Wichita Eagle and television station to see if interest can be generated about the program. Participating youth will receive a stipend for successful completion of the camps. Rod Blackburn asked if it is known how much an average youth can earn or how much money is it worth to a student to attend Camp Hype that results in successful employment. A youth could earn \$1,160 at minimum wage working 20 hours a week for eight weeks. Blackburn suggested that this information be included in promotional materials to increase interest; "earn \$1,100 this summer". Another aspect is that parents are not paying to send their child to these camps; the child is actually earning a stipend and treating the experience as a job.

Laura Hands asked if it would be possible for staff to share a list of the non-profit organizations that the program works with so that Committee members can make recommendations for other organizations that may not be on the list. Staff will share this list along with the notes from this meeting.

The YMCA is on track to hire close to 500 youth up to age 25 this summer; however, progress has been slower than usual and the Job Prep program is doing well.

There is a need for school districts to directly engage parents rather than rely on students to communicate information to parents. Due to the pandemic, it was more difficult for schools to engage students, which has resulted in a large number being at risk to not graduate on time many more students having to attend summer school this year; this could impact a student's ability to attend the

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camps or other youth programs. It may not be possible to do so this year, but next year it was noted to plan the camps at a different time than summer school hours so that a student has the opportunity to attend both. Committee member Kelly Bielefeld, USD 259 will share with his staff regarding directly engaging parents about the youth programs and the possibility of working with organizations coordinating summer classes with youth employment programs.

As it is difficult for a few staff to cover all of the school districts, it was suggested that a possible train the trainer approach could be taken with WA training others to implement a camp or program in their schools.

- Involvement of the business community
- Engage schools
- Connect to academic interests
- Make the program relevant to the real world

Spirit AeroSystems and Textron Aviation have provided YEP internships over the last couple of years and the goal is engage more companies to provide these opportunities in the future. Textron Aviation is currently onboarding 100 interns for their six-week, half-day internships to begin on June 7th. Spirit has a goal of 30 interns and currently has 22.

The focus and goal of the HYPE coalition is how to make the organizations fit together where a youth can move through each of the programs (Job Prep, YEP, Way to Work) based on their needs beginning at ages 14 to 15 and then move on to internship programs. It was suggested that this be better illustrated in HYPE promotional materials for parents and schools to use as a “roadmap”.

4. Employer Communication and Outreach Plans

Committee members were encouraged to recommend companies that they work with or have connections to that might be willing to hire youth in order to provide a warm lead for WA staff to follow up on. A list of employers in the region where the WA has placed youth in subsidized work experiences through the WIOA Youth and Pre-ETS programs was shared with the Committee.

The WA does do outreach to chambers of commerce and other community organization such as the Greater Wichita Partnership and Wichita Independent Business Association has been done in the past, but this has not been an option due to the pandemic.

Laura Hands asked about a one pager what value a business to pass along in their distribution channels.

It had been suggested at the last meeting that staff include in the marketing materials for potential employers, information on how other employers successfully navigated legal and other barriers to successfully employ youth in their organizations.

5. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program Performance Reports

An update activities, outcomes and performance of the WIOA Youth program was provided to Committee members. WIOA mandates that 75% of participants in the program are not in school. The WA contracts with CPRF to provide bundled services where youth can be provided seven of the required WIOA youth elements.

The WIOA Youth program received a substantial increase in its annual allocation from the federal government for the program year to begin July 1, 2021.

There is a mandate that 20% of WIOA funding be spent on work experience placements may be missed by all of the Kansas local areas for this program year due to the pandemic. The WIOA Youth program provides for WA attempts to place eligible youth in a subsidized work experience with an employer and allows for 500 hours of subsidized placement where the WA pays 100% of the wages for that participant. The WA works primarily with the high schools to obtain referrals of students who may be graduating and that will not be pursuing post-secondary education to then see if they are eligible for a subsidized work experience with an employer. The WA is looking into hiring and additional youth staff to assist with outreach and a liaison position to identify customers in the career center who are under 25 years of age that may be able to take advantage of youth program services rather than adult services.

6. Work Based Learning (WBL) Project

The Committee was formed to assist WA staff sharpen strategies and plans for the youth programs that it manages, WIOA Youth, Youth Employment Project (YEP)/Helping Youth Prepare for Employment (HYPE) and the state's Work Based Learning program. The State of Kansas is looking to create work based learning opportunities for high school students whereby they can earn academic credit through WBL projects through an applied learning model. Other states have implemented similar programs. The state has implemented WBL pilot projects with some local high schools. The WA is working with Circle High School; due to COVID the pilot has been extended another year. Some issues exist that need to be resolved in order to move this program forward statewide. The state school board must approve the work experiences to qualify for academic credit and the risks and legal and insurance barriers for employers such as workers compensation coverage extending to work based learning opportunities must be addressed.

Circle High School had 71 students are participating in internships with various companies where they are they are working on real world projects. In order to help parents understand more about career pathways, videos have been created showing what the students are doing within the pathway and go out to meet with employers to show them what the pathway means in terms of getting out of high school and going to into a career job opportunity.

USD 259 Lunch and learn series for Textron Aviation internships video to share with committee members.

The district is hiring a work based learning coordinator contact, resource, possible Committee member Virtual career fair engagement opportunity for Committee to use. Would like to do a regional career fair.

7. Next Steps

- Staff will send out meeting notes, employer list and community non-profit partner list with the Committee prior to the next meeting.
- Staff will prepare a draft plan to present to the Committee for discussion and feedback at its next meeting on July 20th. An approved plan would begin implementation over the fall as well as establishment of goals and metrics.
- Strong leads for potential employers that might be willing to hire youth to Aliex Kofoed.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:56 PM.

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Attendees:

LWDB Youth Employment Committee Members

Kelly Bielefeld
Rod Blackburn
Michele Gifford
Laura Hands
Jennifer Hughes
Debbie Kennedy
Mim McKenzie
Angela Perez
Leah Roeder
Amy Williams

Staff/Guests

Stacy Cotten
Amanda Duncan
Aliex Kofoed
Keith Lawing
Shirley Lindhorst
Jessica Kilpatric, LWDB
Cherie Wenderott, Senior Services of
Wichita
Greg Butler, Cowley College
Jennie Heersche, Cowley College