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of South Central Kansas

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Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Youth Employment Committee Meeting Minutes September 21, 2021 – 11:30 AM

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The LWDB Youth Employment Committee assembled via ZOOM. Co-Chair Amy Williams welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order.

2. **Youth Employment Project (YEP) / Helping Youth Prepare for Employment (HYPE) 2021 Update**

Staff provided and reviewed the final outcomes of the 2021 YEP and HYPE programs. Over 800 youth were employed and including the numbers from HYPE there were over 1,000. 114 employers were involved in the program over the summer. Some of the positives and challenges from this year were shared with the Committee. In regard to job placement services, students were not as dependent on YEP/HYPE to find jobs this year due to the current employment situation whereby employers are having difficulties finding workers. During COVID, visits by staff to students in the schools was not possible, but staff have started these visits again and have been scheduling Essential Work Skills workshops for students to earn certifications. One of the goals of YEP is to reduce turnover of job placements with these certifications. The YEP newsletter has been effective for employers and the partnership with schools and community organizations has helped to distribute it to more people.

This summer's Camp HYPE for 14 and 15 year olds was successful, however, there were several participants that signed up for camps that did not attend. USD 259 has indicated that they are addressing absenteeism and enrollment issues as well. Parents mandating participation of their child in the program is ineffective. School counselor referrals have been a much better way to insure successful attendance and participation of a student in the program and in matching student to the proper camp. This summer, five Camp HYPE's were conducted at the Wichita Workforce Center a Technology camp supported by Flagship Kansas.Tech, Trade Skills camp supported by the electrical union, Textron Aviation camp, healthcare camp supported by Ascension Via Christi and a Spirit AeroSystems camp. Staff would like to expand the Camp HYPE model to include other business sectors and other regions.

Staff are expecting an increase in participation in the program next year. Some strategies for next year include a renewed focus on working with school counselors to obtain referrals, an effort to work with partner schools that are part of the state's Work Based Learning (WBL) pilot program, conducting Camp HYPE's in surrounding counties and coordinating with community partners to host camps in their facilities so that camps and programs can be offered in a variety of locations. New WA staff member, Jo Truong, was introduced; she has been hired to assist with WBL initiatives directly in the schools.

Report was received and filed.

3. **2022 Work Plan Discussion**

Committee members were provided with a work plan draft for 2022 and asked to assist in developing youth employment program goals and strategies for the upcoming year. The plan includes four key elements or activities:

- Career Camps primarily for 14-15 years olds (possibility of expansion to different ages if needed) Could continue and improve upon career camps could design based on industry/employment sectors. Integrate college partners.

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- Summer Internships Determine what youth are interested in and improve the variety of employers that benefits both participants and the employer. Include both large and small employers.
- Direct Employment Improve direct employment piece – help youth find their own jobs
- Leveraging Work Based Learning (WBL) pilot projects – WBL gets staff into the schools, has statewide funding and students can receive academic credit.

Discussion

- The biggest challenge for the program is how to get more businesses to work with YEP, while building upon the existing participating employers and what does that outreach look like.
 - Provide outreach and awareness that creates buzz and makes it appealing to employers so that they want to be a part of the program and show how that participation benefits youth and employers. Show the economic impact to the community of the program as well as the value and impact in being part of it.
 - Look at opportunities to include parents and caregivers in information distribution / Offer monthly incentives to keep parents engaged.
 - Use voices of employers that are already part of YEP/HYPE to promote the program to other employers
 - Create awareness about the program and show employer how to hire and how they can address challenges and barriers.
 - Create videos that show the real, actual impact of participation in the programs and the successes that result from it. Track and highlight previous participants and their accomplishments.
 - Coordinate large meeting event of employers to promote the program and its services.
 - Take advantage of the increased urgency and appetite of employers in obtaining workers. Create a menu of options for how employers can participate in the program according to their interests and abilities – Virtual Classroom speaker, field trip to employer site, one day work simulation, to job shadow, summer employment or internship, etc.
 - Include examples of internships versus first job experiences and how they teach job skills in different ways.
- Need to look at how this program can be expanded and implemented in other communities in the region. Butler Community College outreach connection team, Cowley College and WSU Tech hosted expose student participants to college environment
- Partner with employers in using Xello, QuickHire and other platforms all employers are looking for talent connecting point to high school students. Make it easier for employer to obtain a quality hire more quickly.
- Provide opportunities like Camp HYPE to 14 to 15 year old students who are not old enough for employment opportunities and then build through other programs in the HYPE program such as internships/YMCA's Job Prep as they get older. Offer more sessions sponsored by more and different employers.
- Coordinate tours of businesses for youth as was done successfully pre-COVID with Wichita Transit Authority providing transportation.
- Schedule camps, workshops, job fairs, etc. in different locations in the area such as community centers, employer sites, WSU Innovation Campus, etc. to add variety and interest.
- Renewed emphasis on direct job placement services, job fairs, etc.

4. 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 WA's new WBL Intermediary will have a direct role in working with schools to provide academic credit to students learning from a hands-on work experience with an employer. A challenge to implementation of WBL is liability insurance. The task force is looking at the issue of whether employers or schools bear the responsibility of liability. There is legislation that has been introduced, Senate Bill 91, which clearly identifies school districts as being responsible and there is a concern that schools cannot obtain the level of coverage needed. The National Governors Association has been consulting on the matter and whether a student works in a paid versus unpaid experience is a major factor in determining liability. If this issue can be resolved, opportunities can be expanded. Currently, USD 259 has a model whereby catastrophic injury coverage is provided through KSHSAA and then the school district pays for coverage up to the catastrophic limit. A very small percentage of students are doing work that requires a significant level of risk and their coverage should not be difficult to cover; possibly this model could be expanded in the state. There are a few schools involved in the pilot project and the goal is to include more. This year, the new schools participating in the pilot in Local Area IV are Maize, Clearwater, Wellington, El Dorado and some new USD 259 schools. WBL is not just about providing internships; job shadowing, mentorship, presenting in schools are also ways to provide WBL opportunities to students. The tracking of these students through the program, what progress they make and where they ultimately end up will be important in marketing the program to employers. There is a need for assistance from educational institutions to try to determine a way to track WBL students' progress once they graduate and have left the public school system. Cowley College does have the structure in place through a data request to obtain this information. 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.

5. Consent Agenda

Minutes from the July 20, 2021 meeting and the final Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Performance Reports Program Year 2020-2021 for the WIOA Youth Program was presented to the Committee for review and approval. All performance measures have been met or exceeded and no corrective action is necessary. Staff feel that the WIOA Youth Program is not serving as many youth as it should be and are increasing outreach efforts.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda was adopted.

6. Next Steps

- Increasing employer engagement is key and targeting a list of employers that would be a good fit and benefit from the program is important. Committee needs to know how many and what kind of businesses are currently participating and have participated in the past, to determine what other kinds of businesses are needed. Employers ideally should line up with key employment sectors in the region and schools' defined career pathways. and then
- Butler Community College and Cowley College look at ways to expand regional involvement in the program.

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- Staff will email a revised work plan outline incorporating discussion items from this meeting to Committee members in advance of the next meeting on November 16th, so that members can provide feedback by sending “Reply All” on email exchanges in order for staff to prepare a final draft for approval at that next meeting with the goal being to roll out the plan in January.
- WA staff send Committee members a list of currently participating employers and members will provide WA staff with ideas for other employers that would be a good fit and align with sectors in order to help with targeted recruitment.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 PM.

Attendees:

LWDB Youth Employment Committee Members

Aletra Chaney-Profit
Kelly Bielefeld
Anne-Marie Coughlin
Laura Hands
Mim McKenzie
Angela Perez
Dr. Dennis Rittle
Leah Roeder
Amy Williams

Staff/Guests

Stacy Cotten
Amanda Duncan
Denise Houston
Aliex Kofoed
Keith Lawing
Shirley Lindhorst
Jo Truong