

Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Date: April 26, 2024

Time: 9:18 A.M.

Place: Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City, 900 N. Portland Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73107 - Student Center, Third Floor, North & South Conference Rooms.

Call to Order/Welcome

Chair Chuck Gray called the meeting to order and determined there was not a quorum, which resulted in no votes. He welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

Approval of January 19, 2024, Minutes

Members of the council were not able to approve the January 19, 2024, minutes due to not having a quorum at the 4/26/24 meeting. No further discussion.

Bylaw Update Project

Andrew Chilson, General Counsel at OESC provided an update on the policies and procedures of the GCWED. Work is still ongoing and updates will be provided at future GCWED meetings.

Committee Membership – we are looking at more representatives in two of our key committees:

- Career Pathways Committee: we are looking at adding a business co-chair (Marissa Lightsey, had been co-chairing from an educational perspective.) Marissa will still be on the committee, but Shawna Nord has now taken on the co-chair responsibilities. Chair Gray is asking the GCWED members to consider being a co-chair from a business standpoint. The next meeting is on June 28th.
- Healthcare Committee: also looking for a business co-chair as well as a new healthcare leader. The committee is working on a healthcare awareness month (September) and job shadowing events (working with the Oklahoma City Publics schools), where kids of all ages are invited to come and see what different healthcare opportunities are out there.) Please consider serving on this committee and providing leadership.
 - Melinda Fruendt brought an issue forward for healthcare committee members to look at. Melinda met with 2 young adults who are interested in the new OSU nursing program (they have not started the process of being admitted). These young adults have fallen into a gap with regards to not being allowed by hospitals/clinics to do an internship because they are not currently in a nursing program. Melinda is bringing awareness to the healthcare committee members that an exploratory opportunity should be made available. – Where individuals who may be wanting to investigate a healthcare career but do not know which avenues/paths to take, which interning/shadowing would assist these individuals to possibly help narrow down.
 - A possible suggestion by Trae, is for these individuals to go to their local AJCs (where they live) and ask for open internships specific to their career tracks. Trae also stated that healthcare as a whole is highly regulated.

State Plan Submission Update

Individuals involved in the 200 plus pages of the updated state plan were recognized and applauded for their herculean efforts to get it updated, completed, and submitted. (Each state that receives funding for WIOA dollars must submit a state plan every 4 years. Then there is a 2-year amendment to the state plan. This process is a big back and forth with the Dept. of Labor, with months in the making, requiring years of coordination.)

Board Certification Update & Vote

Members of the council were not able to vote, due to not having a quorum at the 4/26/24 meeting. (Trae reminded council members that at the GCWED January meeting, a provisional certification with a 180 days' timeline to work with the workforce boards to provide more thorough documentation) Vote will be tabled to the next GCWED meeting scheduled for July 26, 2024. No further discussion.

Centers for Workforce Excellence

Scott Smith and Scott Fry presented on Centers for Workforce Excellence.

Where it began – Purpose & Mission:

- Identify and propose recommendations and workforce strategies that provide Oklahoma with a highly effective and marketable workforce development system.
- Strategic Framework – was developed by consensus of all committee members that implements the following: (to simplify a complex issue.)
 - Replicable – the model is designed in a way that can be applied to any community and industry ecosystem.
 - Locally focused – the framework is designed to be driven and applied at the local level by engaged partners.
 - Efficient – the model emphasizes high level collaboration that leverages existing work and resources of engaged stakeholders.
 - Effective – the model is designed to be effective by addressing specific issues related to a community's industry ecosystem.
- System Strategies:
 - Fully leverage Oklahoma's strong educational infrastructure utilizing existing assets and resources through the states CareerTech and Higher Education systems.
 - Further leverage OK Works and the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development.
 - Create a statewide network of advisory councils in each ecosystem driven by Oklahoma Business and Industry leader.
 - Establish branded regional Centers for Workforce Excellence focused on local demand.
 - Leverage and maximize existing resources and assets to support the workforce effort.
 - Establish a "single point of contact" concept which will serve as a single point of entry for workforce related services.
 - Establish a link data system that collects and links information from education, employment, and workforce agencies so that policy makers and state leaders can make more informed decisions.
 - Develop and effective brand and marketing strategy the new workforce model.
 - Support effective intervention strategies which serve the most at risk and vulnerable populations aimed at increasing education completion, certification attainment and workforce participation rates.

- Designation of a local Center of Workforce Excellence serves as official recognition of the hard work and dedication of communities who leverage and align resources to build a comprehensive workforce development system that is responsive to local needs. – Each completed application must include the following:
 - Education and Innovation
 - Partnerships and Advisory Boards
 - Evidence of Planning and Progress
 - Evidence of Promotion and Recognition
 - Evidence of Sustainability
- Application review process:
 - All applications will be evaluated per the designated rubric by CareerTech professional staff.
 - Applications will be scored by each evaluator and final score averaged from totals.
 - An equivalent score of 90% must be achieved to be moved to the next level.
 - All applications and scored rubrics will be presented to the five-member application review committee.
 - Applications meeting set criteria will be presented to the GCWED for final approval.
 - Applications who do not meet criteria will be provided guidance to strengthen their application.
- Overview of Centers for Workforce Excellence:
 - Central Conveners
 - Primary Access Point
 - Navigation System
 - Industry-driven
 - Workforce Analysis
 - Solutions Advocates
- Center Locations:
 - Ada
 - Broken Arrow
 - Duncan
 - El Reno
 - Muskogee
 - (2) in Tulsa
 - Oklahoma City
 - Pryor
 - Rogers County
 - Tishomingo
- Impacts of CWEs: (State level support could facilitate funding for programs aimed at expanding outreach and workforce development initiatives, ultimately increasing the number of individuals in high quality jobs.)
 - Ada’s Center for Workforce Excellence:
 - BR+E Program – revamped in 2022, this program has worked with local export companies to understand their talent needs, identify workforce skills gaps, and explore expansion opportunities.
 - Digital Skills Program – in partnership with the Center on Rural Innovation and Ascendum, the group is collaborating with local educational institutions and employers to pilot a program aimed at boosting the numbers of individuals entering the tech workforce.

- Youth Coding League – scratch based program hosted by AJF for 5th and 6th graders in Pontotoc County to increase coding, programing, and computer science skills. This YCL program is the only one of its kind in the State of Oklahoma.
 - Aerospace and Cybersecurity Center for Workforce Excellence – Tulsa Community College:
 - Cyber skills Center (24-week bootcamps) – have served over 220 diverse individuals in the first 2 years. In June of 2024, there will be more than 120 completers, with 75 still in course work. VP Workforce Development, Dr. Pete Selden, presented on program success at SXSW EDU 2024 in Austin, TX.
 - Secure Information System Certificate Program (16-week program) – 1.2M Cyber Lab opened in February 2024 to compliment Cybersecurity degree and certificate program. Has two cyber lab classrooms and a fully functional data center.
 - Canadian Valley Center for Workforce Excellence:
 - Prison Work Release Program at Union City, Community Corrections Center:
 - 12 inmates are currently participating.
 - This could be tripled with additional financial resources to support additional transportation assets.
 - Significant increase in career training pathways – 19 new training pathways have been created over the last 4 years, with many based-on suggestions made by the CWE advisory committee members who are local employers.
 - Registered Apprenticeships – five new US Dept. of Labor registered apprenticeships have been put into place with several others in the works. Work-based learning that allows students to “earn while they learn” is a proven workforce pipeline growth tool.
 - Bridges Out of Poverty – with proper funding, this program and curriculum could be rolled out to employers and workforce providers and radically change how our employees and future employees are hired and retained.
 - MidAmerica Center of Excellence:
 - Focuses on the manufacturing sector and associated careers.
 - A collaborative approach that leverages the existing resources and programs from local, state, and tribal agencies.
 - The center has 3 primary focus areas, which includes:
 - Pipeline development.
 - Incumbent worker training
 - BR&E services
 - Reaching over 3,000 students annually through a variety of STEM education and career development programs.
 - Post secondary and customized training for business and industry as requested and designed collaboratively by local companies.
 - Multiple business led advisory groups which focus on and address common workforce, legislative and community issues.
 - Muskogee County Center for Workforce Excellence (CWE) – focuses on deploying resources, leveraging existing programs and aligning curriculum with local and regional employment demand. CWE brings together the Port Muskogee’s office grassroots workforce initiatives (including future pipeline and current workforce) and community and educational partners to formalize a comprehensive state approved workforce plan.
 - Work Ready Muskogee: Ready. Set. Move. – Port Muskogee’s workforce effort together with The City of Muskogee Foundation is investing in talent for area companies. If an organization has a hard to fill position or creates a new position

with the qualifying NAICS codes and pays more than 110% of the Muskogee average county wage, the recruit could be eligible for a one-time \$10,000 stipend to purchase or build a home in the city limits of Muskogee.

- GMMA Scholarship – created by Muskogee area manufacturers who recognize that a skilled workforce is critical for their future. The goal of the scholarship is to assist individuals in attending vocational or technical programs to improve their education and manufacturing skill sets.
- Rogers County Center for Workforce Excellence: Workforce training – Rogers County CWE has offered over \$150,000 in workforce gap training scholarships to 107 Rogers County programs scholarships in the business and technology departments residents. Additionally, the CWE has provided over \$100, 000 in micro-credential at Rogers State University.
 - Rogers County Center for Manufacturing Excellence Engineering Internship – launched in 2023, the engineering internship accepted 10 juniors from the Pre-Engineering program at Northeast Tech. This program helps to enhance students’ employability skills, earn safety certifications, and gain exposure to college and industry through tours.
 - Rogers County Career Portal – centrally located and user-friendly job board, where applicants can quickly and easily connect with over 150 employers and over 600 positions. It is offered to employers at no cost. Since its launch in July 2022, the job board has had over 6,500 unique visitors and generated 560 employment applications within the county.
 - Rogers County Career Fair – Annual career fair that coordinated high school junior and senior attendance across the county by providing school transportation grants to cover gas mileage, bus driver wages, and fuel costs associated with attending. With over 35 employers last year and nearly 200 visitors, the event serves as one of the best opportunities for students and job seekers to meet 1:1 with industry leaders and discuss opportunities within the community.

Partnership Updates – OESC (title 1 & 3), CareerTech (title 2), DRS (title 4)

OESC (title 1 & 4) / Trae Rahill, CEO:

- State Plan Submission Complete:
 - The 2024-2028 WIOA State Plan for Oklahoma was submitted to the US Dept. of Labor on March 1, 2024.
 - The US Dept. of Labor has reviewed the plan, with corrections and updates submitted April 12, 2024.
 - Plan to be modified in 2026.
- Board Certification Update:
 - 5 boards recommended for board certification:
 - Central
 - Northeast
 - South Central
 - Southern
 - Western
 - 1 board recommend for provisional certification: Green Country
- Changes to Governor’s Council Committees:
 - Healthcare Committee
 - Career Pathways Committee

- Executive Committee
- Workforce System Oversight Committee

CareerTech (title 2) / Brent Haken, State Director:

- HB 3234 went through, and Governor Stitt signed it two days ago, meaning next year we can start closing the gaps on high school diplomas.
- Program(s) numbers and where we are today:
 - 10,086 enrollments; last year was 10,081.
 - Virtual options have been added with 586 participants in with new virtual options. We are shooting for 955 participants.
 - Participant hours logged: 53,000. – the new HB3234 will help tremendously.

DRS (title 4) / Melinda Freundt, Executive Director:

- State Plan: The Vocational Rehabilitation Services portion of the State Plan has been submitted and is also in federal review. VR worked with other core partners on the completion of the Oklahoma State Plan.
- Partnership meetings: OESC, CareerTech and the Department of Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS) have established monthly partnership meetings and are working closely to promote existing workforce resources and services. Director Freundt and I have focused on some joint marketing efforts with other core partners to highlight DRS services and supports available. This includes a WIOA partnership highlight reel, panel video discussion with core partner agency directors about the role our agency plays in workforce development.
- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS): Transition continues to maintain relationships and provide resources around the state to and with our pre-ETS. The 23 Pre-Employment Transition Specialists are still currently working with students and schools on providing pre-ETS services in over 220 schools. The 3 work skills trainers through the pre-ETS contract are increasing inclusion in the communities and competitive integrated workplaces. COWIB continues to have Work Skills Trainers for the school year, and they are working with the IPSE programs as well as other pre-ETS programs around the state. This will allow students to work during high school and gain work experience with some support.
- Transition Stem Camp: TechNow STEM Camp is open to Oklahoma students with disabilities, ages 14-19 who are on an IEP or 504 Plan or who have other documented physical, mental, or cognitive disabilities. At STEM Camp, students will learn different ways to interact with computers, software, and related technologies to design and create: Power Racer dragster, HT Racer, full color patches for jackets, pants, and shirts. They will get to make shirts, hats, mouse pads, pin back buttons, and bracelets. Students will develop new skills while interacting with peers and making memories that will last a lifetime. The camp is held from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. over three days. There are 6 planned STEM Camps for Summer 2024, and the information can be found on the DRS website.
- Business Services: On March 28, 2024, the Disability at Work 2024 – Thrive Forum Business Summit was co-hosted by the Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services, Autism Foundation of Oklahoma, and Oklahoma Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Alliance. This event featured a collaborative participation discussion by Workforce Partners Directors – Melinda Freundt, ORS; Brent Haken, OCTE; Trae Rahill, OESC. There was also a Workforce Partners – Collaborative Services Panel featuring Yasmin Avila Guillen, ORS; Ashley Sellars, COWIB; Letha Bauter, OCTE; Brad Wilkerson, OESC. The Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services appreciates our workforce partners taking time to join our summit for businesses and employers to learn about our partnership and services.

- Upcoming Events: IMPACT meetings have been revamped. In the first one held in Oklahoma City, we had 40 attendees, including Senator Julia Kirt, workforce partners, and businesses. We've created an "Action Contacts List" that mentions workforce partners with their contact information, enabling businesses to seek assistance in different areas through collaboration with partners. The two main goals for these meetings are to implement "action" to assist businesses/employers in meeting immediate needs and to explain and clarify services offered by the workforce system to the business community if there are no immediate needs.
 - Save the Date: May 2nd, 2024.
 - Time: 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
 - Venue: Cocina de Mino at 6022 S Western Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73139

For full presentation of all PPT slides, please go to link for the April 26, 2024, Governor's Council meeting:
<https://oklahoma.gov/workforce/partners/state-wdb.html>

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Governor's Council will be on July 26, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma, 900 N. Portland Ave., Oklahoma City, OK.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:56 a.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Rose Peterson*