



New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman*

Chris Christie, *Governor*

SETC Commission Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2012

10:00AM – 12:00PM

New Jersey Law Center

One Constitution Square, New Brunswick, NJ

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Dennis Bone called the meeting to order at 10:15 am. He welcomed all members and reviewed the agenda. Roundtable introductions were conducted.

Chairman Bone indicated that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was published in the Star-Ledger and the Trenton Times. A motion was made by Marie Barry and seconded by Robert Santare to approve the January 31, 2012 minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously with no changes or corrections.

II. Chairman's Report

WIB Chair Meeting - Certification Roll-Out

Chairman Bone reported on the WIB Certification Roll-Out Meeting held with WIB Chairs and WIB Directors on February 21, 2012. Almost all WIB Chairs and Directors from around the state attended the meeting. A good discussion was held with the chairs and directors about the process and timeline for WIB certification. The certification process is expected to highlight best practices, as well as some issues and challenges to be addressed in the WIB areas. Chairman Bone has received positive feedback regarding the process since the roll-out meeting was held. A letter will be sent this week to the local elected officials in all WIB areas, to inform them of the certification effort and process.

Performance Committee

A new SETC Performance Committee is being formed. Sheryl Hutchison will be the lead staff person for this committee. An outline of the purpose and proposed activities for the committee is included in today's meeting materials. The committee membership will include SETC members and leaders from outside the Commission, with a focus on business representatives. Sheryl Hutchison reported that the committee will build on the work of an inter-agency team comprised of staff from the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) Labor Planning and Analysis, LWD Workforce Development, and the SETC. This team is sponsored by Deputy Commissioner Fichtner. Good foundational work has already been done to explore new performance metrics, beyond the common measures required by US Department of Labor (USDOL). The goal is to make the system more effective, efficient and accountable, with heightened consideration for return on investment. The SETC Performance Committee will build on this work, to provide system oversight and set performance standards.

Date Change for SETC Meeting

The date of the next SETC meeting has changed. The next SETC meeting will now take place on June 12, 2012.

III. State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES)

Chairman Bone noted his deep interest in New Jersey's literacy needs, as past chair of the State Council for Adult Literacy Education Services (SCALES). Adult literacy is a huge challenge for our state's workforce, with many underlying issues. When considering the building blocks of the future workforce, literacy is a foundational element.

Literacy Curriculum Standards Project

SCALES Chairman Robert Santare reported that, at the request of LWD, SCALES is drafting standards to approve literacy curricula offered at private vocational schools and training providers. This includes Adult Basic Education (ABE), GED preparation and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. SCALES will recommend appropriate prerequisites and post-testing guidelines, and develop a process through the evaluation and literacy programs. This is consistent with the SCALES mission.

Additionally, SCALES, with the assistance of Montclair State University, is drafting a report. A full draft of the literacy assessment report is expected to be completed by late spring. Mr. Santare recognized SCALES members Barry Semple and Hal Beder, in attendance at today's meeting, and Lansing E. Davis, SETC staff liaison for SCALES. Mr. Santare then introduced Dr. Erik Jacobson of Montclair State University to discuss the preliminary literacy assessment results.

Adult Literacy System Analysis/Recommendations

Dr. Erik Jacobson, of Montclair State University, reported that this project has been underway for about nine months. Dr. Jacobson gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the assessment goals, process, preliminary findings and initial recommendations.

The project's initial charge was to examine the adult literacy system in New Jersey. Four general questions drove the analysis: 1) What is the overall need for adult education services in the state? 2) What is the current level of provision? 3) Are there any gaps in provision? 4) Are there structural issues that need to be addressed?

From the assessment, four key themes emerged; 1) literacy needs 2) access to services 3) the intensity of provision and 4) the articulation of the programs.

Dr. Jacobson explained why adult literacy is important, and provided evidence from other studies to illustrate the economic impact to the individual and the community, including lost earnings, lost taxes and lower productivity in the workforce. Other societal costs are involved, such as dependence on public assistance and the rate of incarceration and recidivism, which decline with higher educational attainment.

Members discussed the impact of adult high school closures on access to literacy programs. Also, there is concern about the location of literacy programs within counties. On a national level, there is a debate between providing more intensive services to fewer clients or serving as

many people as possible with less intensity. Stakeholders expressed concern that access to services is driven by the funding stream supporting the client, rather than by the literacy or educational need of the individual. Additionally, access to literacy services may be negatively impacted by the lack of public transportation in some counties.

Four initial recommendations have emerged from this study:

- 1) State funding should be increased for adult literacy education
- 2) New Jersey should encourage and provide support for the increased use of Technology in literacy programs
- 3) WIB Literacy Plans and WIA II Consortia proposals need to address the population demographics of their counties, and
- 4) New Jersey should explore waivers regarding funding stream requirements in order to create more flexibility.

The study also examined literacy program intensity. Research indicates that learners need approximately 120 hours to advance by one grade level. This is true for Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and GED learners. Loss of funding may cause programs to limit the number of service hours per week provided to students.

Program articulation was discussed; for students to make progress, they need to identify long-term goals and have a clear path to those goals. Students who enter college via developmental programs are less likely to complete their programs. Some states are building explicit structures to move students from adult literacy programs to post-secondary education and/or industry certifications.

The preliminary report findings indicate that there is no system in New Jersey to support the goal for adult literacy programs to facilitate completion of one year of post-secondary education and/or industry certification. Articulation recommendations include defining a clear pathway for students to follow in order to transition into post-secondary education and/or industry certification and giving each county the authority and responsibility for making this pathway a reality.

SETC members applauded the report and its findings. Members discussed the vital need to link pathways, and to identify resources from multiple partners in the county. Michele Horst noted that Raritan Valley Community College received a \$4.9 million USDOL work skills grant to provide occupation-based education, literacy services and soft skills training, using the I-BEST model. Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) is a national model in which students receive literacy services and workforce training concurrently. The I-BEST model is successful, but costly. It has been implemented in Washington State with private grants. Members suggested exploration of public-private partnerships to provide enhanced literacy services and programs.

Chairman Bone indicated that the literacy need is great and evident. A key question will be how to best use scarce resources. This report is the start of a process. The SETC will need to explore its role in the issues raised, and consider whether any policies can be created to fix the current fragmented system, and better align it with the overall workforce system in order to build a more productive workforce. This may include setting guidelines and standards for local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs). Every local WIB has a literacy committee and a literacy plan, but there is variation throughout the state.

Bob Santare stated that the report will show a direct correlation between literacy needs and unemployment. The final draft of the literacy assessment report is expected to be completed in June and submitted to the SETC for approval.

IV. State Plan Update

Chairman Bone introduced LWD Deputy Commissioner Aaron Fichtner to provide insight into the state plan effort. Deputy Commissioner Fichtner indicated the state workforce investment plan is a great opportunity, under the leadership of the SETC, for LWD to work collaboratively with the Departments of Education, Human Services, Higher Education, the Economic Development Authority and the Juvenile Justice Commission to create clear state policy that will address the challenging issues facing New Jersey's workforce today.

LWD has worked to create a new direction for workforce development in New Jersey. The four focus areas for workforce development closely align with the work of the SETC. The first is ensure all education, training investments and programs are aligned with the needs of the six key industry sectors, and the green energy overlay, that have been identified in New Jersey. Six Talent Networks have been created as part of this effort. LWD will work with the Industry Advisory Councils of the SETC, to engage employers. The second is the modernization of the provision of employment services to job seekers and employers. LWD is working to improve One-Stop services and outreach to employer customers. Improving technology is a major component of this strategy, including the development of the Jobs4Jersey website, integrating unemployment services with workforce development services, and creating networks for job seekers. The third focus area is the strengthening and expansion of education opportunities by improving basic skills and creating a system of stackable skills and clear career pathways so people can gain the skills they need to succeed. This includes partnering with the Department of Education to license vocational training schools. The fourth area of focus is increased performance metrics. LWD has created an office of performance accountability that will help to analyze data and make decisions going forward. LWD looks forward to working with the new SETC Performance Committee on this effort. These focus areas are a beginning point and foundation that will help improve on our vision and develop clear state policies to address the challenges faced in New Jersey.

Planning Committee Report

Tapas Sen, co-chair of the SETC Planning Committee, reported that although this is the first formal presentation regarding the Unified State Plan, a great deal of work has been done. LWD and the SETC have worked together to articulate the best thinking on the state workforce vision. The state planning effort is now in a formative stage. As Deputy Commissioner Fichtner indicated, the strategic alignment and coordination of all partners is critical to making this plan a reality. The critical stakeholders must be engaged.

Mr. Sen presented the draft planning guidance issued by USDOL. He noted that USDOL has not yet provided a timeline for plan creation and submission. A color chart provided in today's packets provides an estimated timeline, with plan components and SETC initiatives that will feed into the plan.

Teri Duda, co-chair of the SETC Planning Committee, acknowledged the work which has been started, but recognized that the state planning effort will require a great deal of staff time and resources, both in the crafting of the plan and stakeholder engagement. The suggestion was

made to engage a nationally-recognized consultant to assist in the plan creation and stakeholder engagement. The SETC staff will be heavily involved in the process, but a consultant would be hugely helpful.

Chairman Bone indicated that the SETC membership includes the state's best leaders in business, labor, community-based organizations and state departments; the input and best thinking of these experts will be critical, and an outside consultant would have the ability to bring the plan together and provide national perspective to the SETC.

Members agreed that engaging a point person to pull the plan together is a good idea. Chairman Bone asked for a motion to engage a consultant to work with the SETC to assist with the Unified State Plan. A motion was made by Bob Santare and seconded by Teri Duda. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Members discussed the planning efforts of local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs). The local WIBs will be engaged in the state planning process, but will not be required to submit local plans. WIB local and regional planning will need to be done in future, to align local efforts with the state vision. Robert Santare, chair of SCALES, indicated that new guidelines also should be issued for local literacy plans, which need to be updated to address new and emerging literacy issues.

Chairman Bone indicated that the work done over the past two years regarding SETC policies, WIB certification/re-certification, and other issues will be a key part of this plan. Also, the SETC and LWD are working closely with the Governor's cabinet to ensure the plan aligns with the Governor's statewide plan for economic development. Chairman Bone thanked Teri Duda and Tapas Sen for chairing the Planning Committee and thanked Deputy Commissioner Aaron Fichtner for sharing LWD's partnership and guidance.

V. Director's Report

SETC Executive Director Michele Horst thanked the SETC staff for their hard work and dedication. She reviewed the SETC Initiatives 2012 document, provided in today's materials. This list of initiatives is a culmination of work begun by the SETC over the last two years. Many of the initiatives will be integrated into the Unified State Plan effort.

Website Update

Ms. Horst provided an update on re-branding of the SETC, with a new logo. The logo is being integrated into all SETC materials, including letterhead, folders, office signage and member pins. The SETC website architecture has been created and a draft site is being populated. The new website content will be completed in the coming weeks. It is anticipated that the new website will be launched in late spring;

National Governors Association Meeting

Ms. Horst recently attended a National Governors Association (NGA) conference in Washington, DC. The NGA is a strong organization, which has a workforce center for excellence. The NGA addressed many of the issues discussed today, regarding collaboration and alignment of workforce resources. NGA conference speakers advised that WIA Reauthorization will not take place this year. At the federal level, there is enhanced focus and interest in the National Skills Coalition project for the integration and sharing of data. Ms. Horst's peers from other states

reported on some exciting initiatives, but New Jersey is really moving ahead of curve with our vision and ideas for workforce system change and innovation.

Performance Committee

The Performance Committee is in need of a chair and members; SETC members are asked to contact Michele Horst if they have interest in serving on this committee.

Chairman Bone expressed his thanks to Michele Horst and the SETC staff, for their hard work on the many 2012 initiatives, and for their future efforts in the creation of the Unified State Plan.

VI. Public Comment

Judy Formalarie provided information regarding the upcoming Women in Science and Technology Workforce Summit. This summit will take place on Friday, June 15, 2012, from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at the Conference Center at Mercer in West Windsor. Ms. Formalarie extended an invitation to Commission members to attend.

No additional public comments were received.

VII. Adjournment

The SETC meeting dates for 2012 were provided to members, and the next meeting date was announced. A motion was approved to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 am.

Next SETC Meeting:
Tuesday, June 12, 2012
10 am - 12 noon
New Jersey Law Center
Ryders Lane (One Constitution Square), New Brunswick

**STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION MEETING
ATTENDEES - MARCH 13, 2012**

PRESENT MEMBERS or ALTERNATES

Barry, Marie (for Cerf)
Bone, Dennis
Connolly, Beth (for Velez)
Duda, Teri
Fichtner, Aaron (for Wirths)
Garlatti, Betsy (for Hendricks)
Karsian, Andrea
Levinson, Jody
Linder, Msgr. William
McAndrew, Brian
McNamara, Joseph
Mickens, Felix (for Lawson)
Sabater, Julio
Santare, Robert
Sen, Tapas
Trezza, JoAnn

ABSENT MEMBERS

Berry, Dana
Carey, Michael
Carter-Wade, Carolyn
Constable, Richard
Davis, Gail
Franzini, Caren
Gacos, Nicholas
Henderson, Henry
Hornik, Stephen
Munyan, Robert
Nutter, Harvey
Reisser, Clifford
Stout, Bruce
Wowkanech, Charles

OTHER ATTENDEES

Beder, Hal	Jacobson, Eric	Scalia, Donna
Guillard, Jane	Nadler, Sally	Stoller, Jeff
		Semple, Barry

SETC STAFF

Conway, Ashley	Horst, Michele
Davis, Lansing	Hutchison, Sheryl
Formalarie, Judy	Vetterl, Susan