



New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman*

Chris Christie, *Governor*

State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) Meeting Minutes

January 30, 2014

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

PSEG Training Center, 234 Pierson Ave., Edison, NJ 08837

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Dennis Bone called the meeting to order at 10:15 am, welcomed all attendees, and wished them Happy New Year. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, a notice of this meeting was submitted to the Trenton Times and Star Ledger and posted on the SETC website. Roundtable introductions were made. Approval of the minutes from the November 26, 2013 meeting was tabled, because there was not a quorum.

Chairman Bone asked Aaron Fichtner, Deputy Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) to make introductory comments. Mr. Fichtner indicated that LWD appreciates its partnership with the SETC. Mary Ellen Clark who served as Assistant Commissioner, Workforce Development for the last 3½ years is no longer with the LWD. The important work started over the last four years will continue. In the interim, Workforce Services will be run by the four program directors; they were asked to reintroduce themselves and describe their area of responsibility:

Alice Hunnicutt, State Director, Vocational Rehabilitation Services: Her unit provides services to persons with disabilities that are barriers to employment. The services are designed to help individuals be competitively employed in an integrated setting.

Patricia Moran, Director, Workforce Grants and Program Management: Her areas of responsibility are customized training and Opportunities4Jersey grant programs; special initiatives such as Parole Placement, NJ Build; all youth programs; and WorkFirst/TANF programs.

Jeff Flatley, Director, Workforce Portfolio and Contract Management: His unit is responsible for administering WIA contracts that go to the local areas, National Emergency Grants which include dislocated worker grant, pharmaceutical grant and the Hurricane Sandy grant.

Catherine Starghill, Director, Workforce Field Services: She is responsible for Employment Services which includes state staff at local One-Stop Career Centers, and Business Services which includes the business service representatives and the Talent Networks.

II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Bone presented the goals that the Commission expects to accomplish in 2014:

1. Talent Advisory Councils (TACs): Complete industry action reports for each of the key industry sectors.

2. **Adult Literacy System:** SETC should continue to work with LWD to study the challenges facing the system, develop a blueprint for change, evaluate literacy services for ex-offenders, and review new high school equivalency diploma support programs.
3. **Youth Initiatives:** Continue the work of the Shared Youth Vision Council, ensure performance accountability and provide technical assistance to local areas.
4. **Performance and Accountability:** Pilot new performance metrics, provide oversight and support for the Eligible Training Provider List, and complete the WIB certification process.

III. 2013 Workforce Highlights

Dr. Fichtner highlighted LWD's 2013 workforce initiatives and 2014 goals. LWD launched Talent Networks, Jobs4Jersey.com, Jersey Jobs Clubs, and the Hire New Jersey initiative.

A major focus in 2013 was helping those impacted by Hurricane Sandy. This included providing Unemployment Insurance (UI) to those who had storm related loss earnings and putting people back to work doing clean-up and rebuilding projects through the national emergency grant. LWD realigned its grants programs to help support the rebuilding and recovery efforts. As a result, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies bestowed upon LWD their highest award for leadership.

The State Plan articulates four core values which workforce activities should be aligned.

Core Value 1: Driving Investments Based on Industry Needs.

LWD identified seven key industries that drive the state's economy - originally six industries were identified, but with the urging of the SETC, the hospitality, tourism and retail sector was added. Talent Networks have been formed for each industry and another was launched to focus Sandy recovery efforts. The LWD Office of Research and Information collects labor market intelligence for these key industries, ensuring quality information to drive workforce and education investments to meet employers' needs. LWD supports the SETC's work with Talent Advisory Councils for the key industries.

Dr. Fichtner highlighted Talent Network (TN) activities in 2013:

- Health Care TN pioneered a health care industry week to raise awareness among job seekers, educational institutions and students about opportunities available in the health care industry.
- Life Sciences TN is doing a tremendous job in working with LWD to help people who have lost their jobs in pharmaceuticals transition to jobs in the growing biotech sector.
- Transportation, Logistics, and Distribution TN was very involved in a large-scale hiring event to fill hundreds of jobs at Newark Airport.
- Advanced Manufacturing TN is taking the lead in partnering with metal fabrication companies and community colleges across the state to create training for this industry.
- Technology and Entrepreneurship TN has done a good job of connecting skilled unemployed with startup companies through a series of networking events.
- Financial Services TN has been successful in reaching out to the state's One-Stop Career Centers to raise the awareness about the many opportunities available in this industry.
- Hospitality, Tourism and Retail TN was just established five months ago through grants to Fairleigh Dickerson University and Stockton University. It has already been helpful in responding to a mass lay-off in an Atlantic City casino by connecting workers to jobs at other casinos.

Core Value 2: Meeting Jobseekers Where They Are

The 34 One-Stop Career Centers are the foundation of this effort. One of the newest is located at Passaic County Community College. LWD has partnered with community colleges to provide reemployment services for individuals who have exhausted state unemployed benefits and transitioned to federal benefits. There are 23 Jersey Job Clubs, peer networking groups, which have more than 50,000 jobseekers registered. The One-Stops served more than 19,000 veterans in 2013. There are more than 260,000 job seekers with resumes in Jobs4Jersey and about 9,000 employers who used the site to search for talent. Two current priorities in Core Value 2 are the One-Stop Evaluation, to assess and strengthen the physical service delivery model; and the digital outreach strategy, Jobs4 Jersey, which is the centerpiece of the virtual delivery model.

Core Value 3: Equipping the Workforce for Employment

The Hire New Jersey investments, Recovery4Jersey (on the job training), Opportunity4Jersey (skills partnerships), and Skills4Jersey (training for current employees), are a major focus under Core Value 3. Over 200 UI recipients have been hired through the Recovery4Jersey program, which subsidizes new employee wages while they are being trained. The jobs have to pay at least \$10 an hour. Through the Opportunities4Jersey program, LWD facilitates partnership between colleges and training providers and employers to address the worker skills gaps. LWD has issued 15 contracts involving 120 employers in program year (PY) 13. Skills4Jersey the rebranded customized training program, continues to be an effective strategy for LWD to partner with employers to train their workforce.

Working with the SETC in promoting a shared youth vision, LWD has made a number of investments in youth programs, including Youth Corp and Youth Transitions to Work. Literacy continues to be a major focus of LWD. LWD will partner with the SETC to undertake a literacy study to develop a blueprint for planning and service delivery. LWD launched the Literacy4Jersey grant program in PY 13 and funded 13 grants that lead to 1,000 people receiving training. Recently released, the LWD Literacy Innovations Notice for Grant Opportunity (NGO) challenges providers to develop innovative literacy initiative. Creating opportunities for people with disabilities to find and maintain employment is another major focus and is consistent with the Governor declaring New Jersey an Employment First State. In PY 13, LWD placed 4,028 people with disabilities in competitive employment.

Core Value 4: Increasing System Accountability: LWD has developed dashboards for all 51 workforce programs to manage activities and monitor performance. It is committed to working with the SETC to apply the 10 balanced score card metrics as a standard for performance across all programs. A federal grant to support a data quality will enable LWD to capture data to create a comprehensive performance review.

Chairman Bone indicated that LWD's direction and priorities are in alignment with the SETC goals. Deputy Commissioner Fichtner also acknowledged the contributions of the other State agencies to the workforce development initiative. Members acknowledged the support LWD has provided for business and employees, queried about the demographic characteristics of the unemployed and their satisfaction with the services, and expressed concern about businesses leaving the state.

As an addition to the Chairman's Report, Mr. Bone noted that Workforce Investment Boards' (WIBs) certification applications are due to the SETC tomorrow, January 31, 2014. The Governance Committee will meet in February to make WIB certification recommendations for the SETC meeting in March.

The WIB Chairs and the SETC Chairman meet with the Commissioner of LWD annually to foster communication and ensure alignment between locals and the state. At their December 2013 meeting much time was spent discussing the next item on the agenda: the Eligible Training Provider List. Local areas want to ensure that the best providers are listed and that customers receive high quality training.

IV. Eligible Training Provider (ETPL) Oversight: New Legislation

Michael Metzgar, Chair, SETC Performance Committee indicated that Kathy Alexander retired from the NJ Department of Education and Sean McDonald has replaced her on the committee. Robert Grimmie, LWD Director of the Center for Occupational Employment Information has also joined the committee. The committee has discussed the ETPL reporting data, which includes course completion and credential attainment. These are important outcomes for training providers, but the committee felt there should be more emphasis on employment outcomes and greater clarity on reporting roles and enforcement. Recent legislation has changed the reporting requirements; Mr. Metzgar introduced Mr. Grimmie to discuss the new legislation and new ETPL initiatives.

Mr. Grimmie provided an overview of the ETPL, the Consumer Report Card (CRC) and how the new legislation impacts the training provider system. Both the ETPL and the CRC are currently available on the New Jersey Training Opportunities (NJTOPPS) website. The ETPL and the CRC were mandated as part of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). These tools facilitate informed customer choice by providing quality provider data. All training providers that receive public training dollars must be on the ETPL and must report their outcome data to LWD. Depending on the curriculum area, school operational approval may come from one of many licensing agencies. However, if there is no licensing body, LWD in partnership with the Department of Education assumes responsibility for approval. Once the provider is approved, they can apply through the NJTOPPS team to be on the ETPL. Through an online connection, Mr. Grimmie provided a user's tour of the NJTOPPS website, highlighting key features of the ETPL and the CRC.

The ETPL lists over 1,000 providers and more than 9,000 training programs. However, the CRC only has complete data for about 44% of providers, making it difficult to set statewide performance standards. Local Workforce Investment Boards have the latitude to set higher standards than the state. Recent state legislation expands the data fields that the CRC is required to display and reinforces the reporting requirement. Next steps to implement changes in the legislation fall into three categories:

1. Technology: website overhaul to accommodate new fields, change intake technology, and create an interface for mobile devices
2. Operational: optimal process for collecting information, data validation, and training provider participation
3. Documentation: appropriate regulations in New Jersey State Administrative Code

The discussion following the presentation addressed the fit between training and demand. It was noted that the customized training program and Talent Networks create the link between training and demand. Measuring long-term outcomes of training is important to determine overall success of programs. Additional comments dealt with the involvement of local WIBs in the vetting of providers for the ETPL; whether nationally recognized certifications should be a required outcome of training; and accountability for placements at the completion of training.

Chairman Bone pointed out that based on the presentation there is a role for the SETC in the implementation and execution of the new legislation. The Chair, noting that there was not a quorum to take an official vote, asked members if this is a role the SETC should take on at this time. There was consensus among the members present that the SETC sees the promise for greater transparency and accountability for the ETPL, and therefore should support implementation of the appropriate provisions of the new law to realize this potential. The SETC should send a letter to the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development indicating that upon review, the Commission accepts responsibility for working with LWD and other state agencies to establish policy related to the new provisions as outlined in the recent legislation for the ETPL.

V. Director's Report – Shared Youth Vision Council: 2013 Briefing

Michele Boronkas, SETC Executive Director, discussed the Commission's refocus on youth. She used the example of a young man named Fahim, a high school dropout now participating in the Newark Leadership Academy operated by Youth Build. This 19 year old, who displays excellent strategic planning and facilitation skills, exemplifies the return-on-investment derived from a commitment to quality youth programs. Kirk Lew, SETC Youth Policy Analyst, has done an amazing job in establishing the SETC's Shared Youth Vision Council, which brings together key stakeholders throughout the state to address youth policies and programs. The Shared Youth Vision Council established the following goals:

1. Equip youth with the necessary skills to meet employer talent needs
2. Increase capacity of state and local systems to serve targeted youth
3. Align local WIB areas with State Youth vision, planning and policies
4. Improve state and local communication, resource integration and promising practices

To provide additional flexibility in determining eligibility for youth services, local areas were asked to establish a 6th barrier policy. New Jersey had been cited by USDOL for its failure to work with local areas to establish these local policies, but under Mr. Lew and the LWD youth team's leadership, 6th barrier policies have been established by WIBs. USDOL now recognizes New Jersey's efforts as an exemplary practice. In partnership with the LWD youth team, we are working with local areas to fortify their programs to ensure that positive outcomes are achieved.

Kirk Lew indicated that development of the state youth council was a result of collaboration and relationship building among many stakeholders, rather than a top-down approach. An important strategy has been to meet with local area staff, identify issues and concerns, and foster strong connections with state partners. The Shared Youth Vision Council was launched in February 2013 with 35 members. Its mission is *to empower New Jersey's Youth to become productive members of their communities*, and it has developed four initiatives:

1. Social Media Study: to help youth use social media to improve employment outcomes
2. Youth Symposia: to inform young people about the workforce system and services
3. Exploring programs for Non-WIA Youth: to ensure services for all youth in need
4. Building System Capacity: to improve the system and ensure a consistent message

The Council promotes innovations, such as the Camden Youth One-Stop. Jeff Swartz, Camden WIB director, noted that all youth partners collaborated to develop this holistic program to address the needs of out-of-school youth in a safe environment. The Council promotes community partnerships, such as partnering with Junior Achievement to explore ways to work with out-of-school youth. The Council is also developing ways engage young people in planning and policy development efforts. Mr. Lew acknowledged Sidney Battle, Department of Children and Family, for her support on the Council.

VI. Public Comment

Ms. Battle inquired about the Soft Skill Council and volunteered to serve on it.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 pm. *Minutes submitted by Lansing Davis.*

Next SETC Meeting

Thursday, April 3, 2014

10 am – 12 pm

NJ Law Center, One Constitution Square, New Brunswick

**STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION MEETING
ATTENDEES – January 30, 2014**

PRESENT MEMBERS/ALTERNATES

Apgar, Dawn (for Velez)
Barry, Marie (for Cerf)
Berry, Dana
Bone, Dennis
Donnadio, John
Duda, Teri
Fichtner, Aaron (for Wirths)
Garlatti, Betsy (for Hendricks)
Howard, Donald (for McNamara)
Karsian, Andrea
Levinson, Jody
Micken, Felix (for Brown)
Trezza, JoAnn
Wise, Robert

ABSENT MEMBERS

Brown, Michele	Reisser, Clifford
Carey, Michael	Sabater, Julio
Constable, Richard	Sen, Tapas
Gacos, Nicholas	Stout, Bruce
Hornik, Stephen	Wade, Carolyn
McAndrew, Brian	Willoughby, Melanie
Nadler, Sally	Wowkanech, Charles
Nutter, Harvey	

OTHER ATTENDEES

Battle, Sidney	Metzgar, Michael
Beder, Hal	Starghill, Catherine
DeBaere, Gregg	Stoller, Jeffrey
Flatley, Jeff	Swartz, Jeff
Frye, Daniel	
Grimmie, Robert	
Hunnicut, Alice	
Janz, Greg	
Jimenez, Anthony	
Meehan, John	

SETC STAFF

Boronkas, Michele
Davis, Lansing
Hutchison, Sheryl
Lew, Kirk