



New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman*

Philip D. Murphy, *Governor*

State Employment and Training Commission Draft Meeting Minutes

Online TEAMS Meeting Platform and In-person meeting
Heldrich Center – 30 Livingston Ave. New Brunswick, NJ 08901

May 31st, 2023
10 am – 12 pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Dennis Bone called the meeting to order at 10:07 am and welcomed members and guests. Chairman Bone announced that, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1978, notice of this meeting was submitted to the Trenton Times and Star Ledger, shared with the Secretary of State's office, and was posted on the SETC website. Introductions were conducted. Chairman Bone noted that as a quorum was not available at the time, we would move forward with the agenda and return to minutes should time allow. Chairman Bone welcomed Kevin Dehmer, Executive Director, with the Heldrich Center for Workforce and Development.

II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Bone opened the meeting with an introduction to Nicol Nicola, Office of Research, and Information, with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and will bring us up to speed with the labor market.

III. Introduction to NJ Labor Market (NJDOL) - Nicol, Nicola, NJDOL

Nicol opened the discussion about the labor economy in various areas. The Office of Research

under Assistant Commissioner Lesley Hirsch, and our division gathers information.

Ms. Nicola explained that statistics are developed for internal and external customers of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL). There is currently a tight labor market making it difficult to find employees in certain industries. A three percent rate provides individuals and businesses some opportunities. At 0%, businesses would not be able to hire staff.

At the present time, inflation has eaten up the wage gains in the market. Our top industries currently in New Jersey are Healthcare, Retail Trade, Manufacturing, and Food. There are 9 significant industries in NJ.

The top opportunities available require on the job training, or certifications, while many do not need the traditional educational system. We are now at a healthy unemployment rate. During the pandemic NJ's Unemployment rate hit sixteen percent. It is now at three percent.

Areas which were hit the hardest were those where we could no longer go. Casinos were hit hard because people could not visit and spend, leaving this industry affected for some time.

During that period, the federal government allocated trillion of dollars which was unprecedented to allocate to use helping businesses, consumers, and households. This money helped household's businesses where people could not work due to the pandemic. Areas which relied on retail were hit hard during this trend.

Public employees were able to move and create a plan to work from home and due to this government employees did not lose their jobs.

New Jersey has very diverse industries and categories, administrative, manufacturing, career services, and have a talented labor force. That diversity provides strength. We do not see automation taking over jobs now.

The top job we see in New Jersey include healthcare, improved services, and professional services. Since 2013 manufacturing has shown growth and political backing. We are very stable in terms of employment and labor force. Our educational institutions such as Princeton, Rutgers, Rowan, Monmouth, and our community colleges. And due to the current state of the economy employees have power to decide on if they want to stay in the job they are in or look for another opportunity in either their current or another industry.

The labor force is at its highest rate. Workers are feeling confident of the economy and the ratio of job openings we are in the normal range. Job growth and the labor market are very strong. Our

economy is doing well.

Regarding questions regarding stressors on the systems and the need for additional training opportunities to meet the needs of the healthcare industry for nurses. Ms. Nicola indicated that when we look at where we were during the pandemic to now, there are limited stressors or difficulties in finding a job. For the example of nurses and healthcare, the difficulty is either finding or establishing sufficient training capacity to meet the demands.

IV. Overview of WIOA and Public Workforce Development System in NJ – Laurie Harrington, Assistant Director, Research and Evaluation, John J. Heldrich Center Brittany Donovan, Research Assistant, John J. Heldrich Center

Members of the staff of the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University provided a presentation regarding the workforce system in the United States. It began with a general explanation of how the public workforce system provides resources, services, and tools to support individuals and businesses in developing and maintaining a workforce development system for a thriving economy throughout the nation. It benefits job seekers, incumbent workers, employers, and community.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014, and replaced the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Congress approved this to strengthen the nation's public workforce system, to help youth, and help those with significant barriers to gain employment, and get them into high quality jobs and careers. WIOA operates under four categories. It authorizes in Title I, II, and IV, education services, rehabilitation services, dislocated workers, and individuals with disabilities.

There are seventeen workforce development boards across New Jersey. Some workforce development boards oversee single areas, counties, or multiple counties. Heldrich staff discussed the State Employment Training Commission (SETC and its role under WIOA (i.e., State Workforce Development Board). The SETC is established by the governor to help improve and develop the workforce development system. The state workforce board oversees local areas and development of plans. The Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are comprised by a minimum of fifty one percent of the business members. Members of the SETC include representatives of business, education, labor, state agencies, and community-based organizations. The role of an SETC board member is to be thoughtful of the information about the labor market and the perspective, and investments. The role is to promote the to states vision.

SETC members should advocate for the workforce development community. The SETC has about five meetings per year. State boards can be large and be an effective structure. There are six committee boards with the SETC: Apprenticeship, Gender Parity, Governance, Shared Youth Vision Council, SETC Commission, and State Council on Adult Literacy on Adult Education.

V. Introduction to the Heldrich Center Carl Van Horn, Distinguished Professor and Director, John J. Heldrich Center

Carl Van Horn opened with who was John J. Heldrich was and the history of how the Heldrich Center came about. Over the past twenty-five years, there have been hundreds of projects, which the John J. Heldrich center has worked on. The Center has published many reports and has sixty students that have worked here to contribute back to the State of New Jersey. Topics include disability policy and research on the economy. The Center performs work all over the United States. By working in multiple places, it helps in understanding innovation.

The Heldrich Center has raised over a hundred million dollars to assist people gain employment. The Center and its team study programs and analyze complex labor market problems to improve government. State data system and wage records, higher education, unemployment, works with policy makers to come up with strategies to help New Jersey. The Heldrich Center is recognized around the country for its data analysis and offers opportunities to scholars to better improve the workforce system.

In response to a request, Dr. Van Horn indicated that the Heldrich Center does make speakers available to various groups/forums.

VI. Heldrich Center Project Spotlight

NJSDS, Stephanie Walsh, Research Project Manager, John J. Heldrich Center

Policy and Implementation, Renee Edwards, Assistant Director, Research and Evaluation, John J. Heldrich Center

Heldrich Center staff discussed the State's longitudinal data system (NJEDs) and the policy and implementation for data system, which was developed through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The Center works with, among others, partners from the State's Departments of Education and Labor & Workforce Development.

This allows the Center to consider longitude outcomes for individuals who we are making investments in such as post-secondary outcomes and long-term outcomes for program participants. The Center considers post-secondary education after someone is on unemployment and uses the data from the board in the system.

The Center has developed products including a higher education dashboard This reviews students' earnings over time after college, their major, and demographics. It considers the benefits of education report and the completion of education in New Jersey. It provides a look at degree level and return on investment. It compares that information over regions and projects out over ten years. It also allows the State to consider future tax revenue. The Center is considering an unemployment dashboard, income after re-enrollment and whether it is different in dual enrollment and multi state activity. Also, considering going outside of the state to look at policy building.

A question was raised regarding shifts seen in employment access for students and pandemic ramifications. Heldrich staff indicated that there were some potential recession concerns, but that data was still being reviewed.

In addition to the data system, there are evaluations on projects and staff/researchers who focus on policies. Goals are to assess employments wages and who participates. Heldrich does work for private industry, and government. They perform qualitative and quantitative work. They perform focus groups and evaluations from the state perspective. To this point, the Heldrich Center has evaluated WIOA services during 2019 by studying Title I and Title II systems.

The Heldrich Center is also working on virtual services provided through WIOA in 2020 and how New Jersey adapted the workforce development system after the pandemic hit. The Center also has worked with the New Jersey libraries on an evaluation of who participated and received benefits such as skill gains and credentials.

The Heldrich Center is also working on projects with individuals with disabilities. The evaluations we also work on Kessler signature grants which focus on community grants to help people with disabilities get into the workforce. The Center considers program goals/models and their outcomes for employment. The Heldrich Center is doing a lot of evaluation work and the learning that the Center brings to the SETC is important.

The policy program area focuses on implementation. The Heldrich is currently implementing a home health aide workforce program focused on home care for individuals who prefer to age/stay in their homes. The Heldrich Center is leading three pilots including efforts such as wrap around services and targeting recruitment to those who are not currently in the workforce. In response to a question regarding organizations that are involved with the effort, Heldrich staff indicated that they are working with multiple groups and looking towards positive outcomes and a better understanding of the career pathway.

VII. Closing Remarks – Dennis Bone, SETC Chair

Dennis Bone discussed the Heldrich Center's credibility and thanked everyone for attending. Dennis mentioned this was such a great opportunity to explain the collaboration between the State Employment Training Commission and the John J. Heldrich and that the meeting allowed for such a robust discussion. the Chairman thanked the presenters and speakers, and the next SETC Commission meeting will be in July, and we will let everyone know of the next meeting date soon.

Next SETC Meeting

SETC Commission Meeting on Wednesday, 7/26:

To join the meeting: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/394439821>

Due to technical issues, minutes of the May meeting lack attendee list.

A recording of the meeting is available for public review.

PRESENT MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

Bone, Dennis

Wise, Robert

ABSENT MEMBERS

Donnadio, John
Wade, Carolyn Carter
Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo
Ferrara, Anthony
Dr. Jordan Schiff (for Allen-McMillan
Johnson, Natasha (for Adelman)
Colton, Tara (for Sullivan)
Franklin, John
Nadler, Sally
Drakeford, Shamira
Duda, Teri

Allen, Dr. Yolanda
Alpart, Davidene
Apple, Emily
Anochi, Eva
Arango, Oswaldo
Bailey, Hugh
Barracato, Meredith
Belin, Jacki
Bicica, John
Blanco, Francis
Bogert, Duwan
Bollhardt, Victoria
Brown, Melissa
Burkhardt, Ron
Buteas, Chrissy
Carvajal, Allyson
Caramelo, JoAnne
Carrol, Karen
Carter, Jean
Case, Kim
Celestin, Sancia
Choudhury, Mitra
Custard, Donna
Czar, Dianne
DeBaere, Gregg
Demmellash, Alfa
Drakeford, Shamira
Emigholz, Chris
Enright, Patricia
Everett, Kaitlin
Feldman, Eliot
Fichtner, Aaron
Gagliano, John
Gaylord, Karen
Gehrke, David

OTHER ATTENDEES

Giordano, Timothy
Gietka, Jennifer
Grzella, Paul
Harris-Kuiper, Stephanie
Hartman, Sharon
Hiller, Nanci
Hirsch, Lesley
Howard, Donald
Hunt, Stacy
Jainarine, Diane
Johnson, Hosea
Jordan, Dana
Jubanyik, Danielle
Kikkert, Becky
Kuiper, Mark
Kurdziel, Kevin
Levandowski, Andrea
Levitt, Jill
Knight, Braheim
Kuhn, Fran
Kurdziel, Kevin
Liu, Helen
Mader, Pamela
Martin, Michelle
Mazzagatti, Pete
McPartlan, Dennis
Mirasol, Catherina
Moody, Melissa
Morrison, Angelique
Murphy, Lauren
Meyer, Cheryl
Odeneye, Jobi
Philp, Amanda
Polack, Carol
Pierre, Eric
Rivera, Antonio
Rodgers, Beth
Reyes, Maritza
Sabater, Julio
Safrin, Michele
Sabir, Zahira
Sarno, John

Satchell, Brigitte
Schaeffer, Janine
Schuster, Manuela
Seith, David
Seavers, Diane
Shamsid-Dean, Veda
Singer-Quast, Sarah
Smith, Dawn
Soto, Luis
Sternbach, Larry
Sullender, Kyle
Sullivan, Sabrina
Staub, Stephanie
Strothers, Sandra
Swartz, Jeffrey
Tabassum, Zainab
Taguwa, Denise
Taylor, Sherwood
Taylor, Yolanda
Vail, Les
VaidyanathanS.
Weir, Barbara
West, Kelly
Williams, Albert
Zahirah, Sabir
SETC STAFF:
G. Altman
C. Lamarca
K. Robinson

