



# New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

*Dennis M. Bone, Chairman*

*Philip D. Murphy, Governor*

## **State Employment and Training Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes**

June 1, 2022

10 am – 12 pm

Online GoTo Meeting Platform

### **I. Welcome & Introductions**

Chairman Dennis Bone called the meeting to order at 10:03 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 and was posted on the SETC website. Roundtable introductions were conducted. Teri Duda made a motion to approve the April 6, 2022, meeting; the motion was seconded by Sally Nadler. The minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

### **II. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Bone provided a review of the agenda. Subjects to include an update regarding efforts to move people from literacy programming to community colleges; ongoing local Board certifications; and a finalized evaluation regarding WIOA Title I and II coordination.

The Chairman also provided a tribute to a member of the Commission, Tapas Sen who had passed away; described WIOA reauthorization legislation which had passed the House of Representatives; his appointment to the Executive Committee of the National Governors Association State Workforce Board Chairs Association; and an update on the Governor's Appointments Office efforts regarding new Commission membership.

In response to the Chairman's request regarding public comment, member Sally Nadler indicated that she would like a few minutes.

### **III. “Building a Bridge from Education to Community College” Gary Altman, Acting Executive Director NJSETC**

Gary Altman provided an update regarding the Moving Along Career Pathways Towards Family Sustaining Wages effort. In the summer of 2021, the SETC with its SCLES group and working with NJDOL’s literacy programs and the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC) hosted a session that had 180 registrants interested in the subject of a literacy to community college bridge program. The session included instructors, administrators, and individuals involved in adult literacy and/or workforce development. The effort may now move from discussion to see how a pilot may be developed that builds off existing contextualized IET (Integrated Education and Training) in widely used sectors, common skills, and occupational demand. The plan would include team building with representatives from colleges, workforce development, literacy programs, WDB staff, OSHE and others as appropriate.

### **IV. Local Workforce Board Certification: Hosea Johnson, Governance Committee**

Mr. Johnson began the discussion by sharing what is required by federal and State rule. As a result of delays caused by the pandemic, staff resources, there are some areas which still require approvals. For this round, there has been a focus on membership and local board efforts regarding oversight of the local system. Three areas considered were Bergen County, Greater Raritan, and Monmouth County. A question has arisen in the process regarding larger non-profits which employ significant numbers of people in a community. May these groups qualify for membership as employers or are they limited to consideration as community organizations. A communication requesting clarity will be forwarded on the subject to federal partners. We will need to emphasize the importance of having businesses, regardless of clarification. There remain eight areas requiring certification, including four areas which we are still resolving prior certification inquiries, and all have received information to move forward on resolving these needs. The areas in which were considered at the meeting were Bergen County, Greater Raritan County, and Monmouth County. A request was made of Chairman Bone to ask the SETC to vote on all three counties certification. Chairman Bone also asked the members to please come forward if there were any conflicts. None came forward Chairman Bone called for the vote and asked if anyone felt certification should not be met. The areas were approved.

### **V. Process Evaluation: Integration of WIOA Title 1 and Title II (Workforce Development and Adult Education)**

Background – Gary Altman, Acting Executive Director, NJ SETC

Gary Altman provided the background on evaluation responsibilities which stems from federal requirements (Section 682.200 of WIOA) which requires evaluations of activities to promote continuous improvement, research and tests innovative services and strategies. This allows for high levels of performance and outcomes. State must annually prepare and submit to the State,

State Workforce Boards (SETC) and Local WDB's and make this information available to the public. States must always cooperate with the federal reporting. States are also allowed to conduct evaluations that jointly examine Title 1 and jointly examine any other Title, I-IV. States may also conduct evaluations similar to those performed at the Federal level. This may include evaluations held over multiple years and longitudinal studies involving multiple phases, and tasks.

Introduction and Response – Hugh Bailey, Assistant Commissioner, NJDOL Assistant Commissioner

Hugh Bailey began with introductions and welcomed everyone including Laurie Harrington, Assistant Director, with the Heldrich Center at Rutgers University along with Brittany Donovan, Research Assistant, and opened the discussion with the importance and the value of Evaluations, and what that means for reporting purposes. The Heldrich Center has been an incredible partner with processes and integration.

Presentation – Laurie Harrington, Assistant Director, Heldrich Center, Rutgers University and Brittany Donovan, Research Assistant, Heldrich Center, Rutgers University

Laurie started by explaining the purpose of the report under the WIOA evaluation requirements and how it two WIOA services. The WIOA Title 1 which includes services such as job training, and historically under-served individuals. The report also addresses WIOA Title II which includes Adult Literacy, and focuses on basic skills, secondary education, and literacy. The evaluation considered prior efforts. One study was one with the SCALES sub-committee which was conducted back in 2017 to examine and investigate the Title II Adult literacy program and Title 1 training and workforce. This study warranted additional review for further investigation. It offered additional information for both areas and found that job placement to be rare outcome for Title II. Among some of the concerns in that report, was a fragmented process of referring applicants between Title II and Title 1 programs, which caused applicants to be entered into the system multiple times and did not allow for the information to flow through one cohesive system.

Background research further found and lead to a literature review, including a review of State WIOA plans and annual WIOA narratives from 18 local areas. The research included telephone and in-person interviews with literacy and workforce development experts. The preliminary interviews with field experts with 10 local Title 1 and Title II practitioners. This was used to program integration with local and what strategies used to effect outcomes. Also discussed were views regarding promising practices along with any other additional ideas they may have for policies. The information garnered was used to create an online survey of WDB Directors and Adult Literacy Consortium leads, with interviews conducted with people from local areas.

Efforts included trying to determine impacts related to the recent pandemic and subjects for further study. The evaluation showed an integration between Adult Education and workforce development, but the authors clarified that not all local area information is a representation of every local area.

The study highlighted the working integration and the two services of integration. One is Curricular which refers to the specific content to be learned and the learning environment, and the second which is service delivery which refers to the various actions taken by people in the efforts to deliver a range of services to the constituents eligible to participate. The study found that with evidence that integration occurs in more than eighty percent of local New Jersey areas. The study summarized from a local perspective, regarding curricular across the Title I and Title II in New Jersey.

Most individuals agreed that core curriculum could be integrated aligning post-secondary with pre-requisites. In addition, most respondents agreed that all three types; align adult content of adult literacy education with post-secondary program pre-requisites, link non-credit workforce training with adult literacy education and high school equivalency requirements, and incorporate career content into adult literacy education, could be replicated. While all three were found to be beneficial to customers from all different areas, local staff had mixed views, regarding how to link these together.

Some of the qualitative concerns that was heard from local staff was that not enough was being done to connect with employers. Staff feedback stressed the importance of needing the buy in from the employer.

The discussion of how Covid-19 has had an impact on service integration was brought up. Some reasons behind these barriers are lack of personal touch, intake and testing, technological barriers, stress and anxiety, and a lack of hands-on training and learning opportunities. The concern is that a lack of coordination between what is included in training versus local labor demand. There is a need for more employers to connect. The impacts of Covid-19 in 2019 showed the inadequacy and local areas lacked the in-person and face to face time. It also had a serious impact for testing Title II in local areas, therefore showing a slowdown in the system.

Providing services and taking services, were impacted including a lack of internet services, and stress created by remote learning. One survey respondent was worried about food, rent, and basic needs rather than taking literacy classes. Covid-19 had impacted jobs such as hands on positions such as Casino workers or massage trainers, creating training for these fields to lack with individuals taking courses. The goal for the recommendations to cement ideas is to make a more seamless service delivery system and opportunities for better outcomes which will lead to better education. There were several recommendations for NJDOL.

1. NJDOL should examine the quantitative data to search for evidence of workforce-related outcomes that resulted in local areas utilizing integrated services and for tracking participants through the WIOA system.
2. NJDOL, should invest in the professional development of staff for vital skill sets, including service delivery in virtual settings and strategic planning.
3. NJDOL, statewide, more emphasis and effort should be directed toward increasing engagement of business and industry to obtain their input into programming for both literacy education and workforce development to ensure that relevant skills are being developed and training programs are being funneled into workplace opportunities.
4. NJDOL should recognize there is a role for the SETC and its subcommittee SCALES, to play in facilitating the sharing among local areas of useful tactics for integrating WIOA service delivery, engaging the business community, finding ways to braid funding and other promising strategies that emerge in local area operations.

## **VIII. Wrap-Up**

Dr. Danielle Jubanyik Director of Literacy with NJDOL discussed the importance and next steps. Utilizing literacy, digital literacy, and anytime there is an outside set of eyes and research, it provides great help with Title II. There is a positive movement to move on policies which will better enhance the literacy program. New Jersey is currently providing more funding to our Title II providers career pathways and integration along with trainings and programs. NJDOL hopes to work along further with the Heldrich Center, in the future and appreciates all the research and work they are doing to improve the quantitative and qualitative data with Title I and Title II.

Policy is also being reviewed. Title II staff are examining MOU's (Memorandum of Understanding) and IFA's (Interagency Funding Agreements) so that everyone involved has a voice at the table and all better versed to engage with outside employers and understand governing regulations should understand the area labor market and the organizations which constitute it to work towards better integration. This report is a great framework starting point and we will work to continue to strengthen our Title I and Title II integration.

## **IX. Public Comment and Adjournment, Dennis M. Bone, Chairman**

Gary Altman, the most recent SCALES meeting with Sharon Bonney of the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) where it was discussed what the group is doing nationally, with their sole focus on adult basic education. Partnerships with groups such as Amazon, and other private businesses nationally. Their membership is focused on literacy professional organization, trying to incorporate like what New Jersey is doing. The Coalition on Adult Basic Education is currently interested in partnering with the State of New Jersey. Laurie Harrington and Brittany Donovan mentioned they would be happy to have a discussion.

Chairman Bone closed by remarking on the great information the Heldrich Center provided.

Gary Altman mentioned the State plan modification which may be found on the SETC website for comment. It is four hundred and seventy-eight pages, and the feds will have a copy soon.

Sally Nadler asked to address the committee and gave a brief update regarding efforts in south New Jersey with Off-shore energy and industry. A team of workforce professionals industry education lead by a South Jersey Industry partnership office came together to prepare workers and build pipelines to prepare individuals for when related jobs are developed. They held a career energy expo with a target audience of high school students and job seekers. It is a grass roots collaborate effort with Rowan, South Jersey Regional Partnerships, Industry and education came together regarding short term and long-term efforts. There will be many of these sessions to come at Stockton College and Expo Center which has great availability to job seekers.

Julio Sabater with Urban Opportunities discussed finding ways to braid funding. He mentioned the urgency of the matter of trying to determine amongst the partners the priorities at hand and reach a consensus for the Title and Title II population to ensure more opportunities, dual enrollment, and access to better funding opportunities. Mr. Sabater is the Chair of the literacy community, and they are finding positive ways to braid funding for the Title II population and not having to have to wait for funding which can be difficult and disruptive to the programs.

Gary Altman with a request if anyone has any ideas for braiding funding and better efforts as mentioned to please reach out to have a further discussion.

Chairman Bone announced that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 27, 2022. The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am.

**Next SETC Meeting**

Wednesday, July 27, 2022

10 am – 12 pm

Online GoTo Meeting Platform

### **PRESENT MEMBERS and ALTERNATES**

Bone, Dennis  
Asaro-Angelo, Rob  
Bridges, Brian  
Johnson, Natasha (for Adelman)  
Butler, Kate (for Oliver)  
Hala, Joanne (for Franklin)

Cappello, Marianne (for Allen-McMillan)  
Duda, Teri  
Wise, Robert  
Lee, Edwin (for Brown)  
Colton, Tara (for Sullivan)  
Drakeford, Shamira  
Catherine Milone

### **ABSENT MEMBERS**

Blake, Allison  
Brown, Kevin  
Carey, Michael  
Donnadio, John  
Ferrera, Anthony  
Gacos, Nicholas  
Wade, Carolyn Carter

Hornik, Stephen  
Reisser, Clifford  
Rice, Honorable Ronald  
Wilson, McKenzie A.  
Wimberly, Honorable Benjie  
Wowkanech, Charles

**OTHER**  
**ATTENDEES**

Alpart, Davidene  
Apple, Emily  
Anochi, Eva  
Arango, Oswaldo  
Armstrong, Jane  
Barracato, Meredith  
Belin, Jacki  
Bicica, John  
Blanco, Francis  
Bogert, Duwan  
Bollhardt, Victoria  
Brown, Melissa  
Burkhardt, Ron  
Bussey, Karen  
Buteas, Chrissy  
Butler, Kate  
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  
Gatling, Kerri  
Gaylord, Karen  
Gehrke, David  
Giordano, Timothy  
Grzella, Paul  
Harris-Kuiper,  
Stephanie  
Hartman, Sharon  
Hiller, Nanci  
Hirsch, Lesley  
Howard, Donald  
Hunt, Stacy  
Johnson, Hosea  
Jubanyik, Danielle  
Kuiper, Mark  
Kurdziel, Kevin  
Levandowski, Andrea  
Levitt, Jill  
Knight, Braheim  
Kuhn, Fran  
Kurdziel, Kevin  
Kvarantan, Alexandra  
Liu, Helen  
Mader, Pamela  
Martin, Michelle  
Mazzagatti, Pete  
McPartlan, Dennis

Mirasol, Catherina  
Moody, Melissa  
Morrison, Angelique  
Murphy, Lauren  
Meyer, Cheryl  
Ochse, Maureen  
Odeneye, Jobi  
Philp, Amanda  
Polack, Carol  
Pierre, Eric  
Rodgers, Beth  
Reyes, Maritza  
Sabater, Julio  
Safrin, Michele  
Sabir, Zahira  
Sarno, John  
Satchell, Brigitte Scalia,  
Donna  
Schaeffer, Janine  
Schuster, Manuela  
Seith, David  
Seavers, Diane  
Shamsid-Dean, Veda  
Sheridan, Timothy  
Shump, Patricia  
Siekerka, Michele  
Smith, Dawn

Sternbach, Larry  
Sullender, Kyle  
Sullivan, Sabrina  
Staub, Stephanie  
Starghill, Catherine  
Strothers, Sandra  
Swartz, Jeffrey  
Tabassum, Zainab  
Taguwa, Denise  
Taylor, Sherwood  
Taylor, Yolanda  
Thomas, Katrice  
Vail, Les  
Vaidyanathan, S.  
West, Kelly  
Williams, Albert  
Yuen, Paul  
Zahirah, Sabir

**SETC STAFF:**  
G. Altman  
C. Lamarca  
K. Robinson  
C. Santarsiero