



New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman*

Chris Christie, *Governor*

State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 29, 2016

10 am – 12 noon

NJ Law Center, New Brunswick

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Dennis Bone called the meeting to order at 10:05 am and welcomed all to the NJ Law Center. Mr. Bone initiated roundtable introductions and welcomed new member, Senator Ronald L. Rice, and introduced Janet Sliwinski as a new member of the SETC staff. Chairman Bone announced that, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was submitted to the Trenton Times and Star Ledger and was posted on the SETC website.

The minutes from the January 19, 2016 meeting were introduced. Betsy Garlatti made a motion to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Melanie Willoughby. The minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Bone expressed his pride in the development and efforts of the 2016 Combined State Plan, and indicated that the data provided in the Plan is phenomenal. He noted that due to the short comment period, the SETC and LWD will hold stakeholder meetings around the state in May, to provide an overview of the Plan and to obtain further feedback. Mr Bone reiterated that comments received after the public comment period concluded on March 28, will be reviewed, along with any comments received during the May feedback meetings. At the June Commission meeting, these comments and any needed Plan changes will be on the agenda for review. The NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA will be submitted to the federal government on Friday, April 1, 2016.

Daniel Frye, Executive Director of the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, complimented the partners on the transparency and collaboration of the efforts throughout the State Plan development, beginning with the Blueprint Conference held last year, to the WIOA Convening in Washington, DC in January. Mr. Frye noted the significant deliberations which were held with partner agencies, and indicated that further feedback and discussion of the State Plan will be a positive next step in this collaborative process.

III. Policy Presentations

a. Governance: Local Area Designations

Sheryl Hutchison, SETC Acting Executive Director, presented the draft SETC Policy Resolution #2016-09. Requests for local area initial designation have been received from 18 local areas; all meet the local area designation requirements to operate under WIOA. The time period for these initial designations ends June 30, 2017. At that time, subsequent local area designations will be considered.

Melanie Willoughby made a motion to approve SETC Policy Resolution #2016-09; the motion was seconded by Harvey Nutter and unanimously approved by the Commission.

b. Performance:

i. Additional Performance Metrics

Dr. Aaron Fichtner, LWD Deputy Commissioner, presented the draft SETC Policy Resolution #2016-10, New Jersey Additional Performance Measures. Dr. Fichtner noted that co-enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III participants was included in this proposal. Commission member Robert Wise asked if performance measures are weighted based on local area conditions; Dr. Fichtner indicated that the statewide performance goals are negotiated with USDOL, and then each local area's goals are negotiated, based on the State goals and with consideration for several local area factors, including unemployment rates and economic conditions. Sally Nadler indicated that the resolution language should include Career Awareness, in addition to Career Readiness. This change will be updated to the Resolution. Members also discussed the need to focus on higher wages for workers. Dr. Fichtner agreed that good wages and good jobs are critical to both jobseekers and the state. Chairman Bone thanked John Franklin, of United Way of Northern New Jersey, for his presentation of the ALICE Report at a previous Commission meeting, and Dr. Fichtner indicated that the ALICE report would be helpful as wage targets are created. Senator Rice indicated the need for a clear understanding of minority perspectives in large urban areas, due to the high rates of unemployment in those communities. He asked the Commission to focus on job opportunities with a priority for local jobseekers, and consider the challenges for these at-risk populations. Senator Rice indicated his willingness to support legislative efforts to advance the Commission's work. Chairman Bone thanked Senator Rice for his continued feedback and support. Anthony Ferrera made a motion to approve SETC Policy Resolution #2016-10 as amended; Melanie Willoughby seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

ii. Industry-Valued Credentials

Dr. Fichtner reviewed the draft SETC Policy Resolution #2016-11, regarding Industry-Valued Credentials. A draft Industry-Valued Credentials List has been created by LWD; it is currently out for public comment. A public comment session is being held today, March 29, at the LWD offices in Trenton. To date, 140 comments have been received by LWD. Dr. Fichtner reviewed the process to approve and update list on an ongoing basis. The final Industry-Valued Credentials List will be published in May 2016.

Dr. Fichtner discussed the need to focus training dollars to support the attainment of these credentials by jobseekers. He reviewed the benchmark goals for spending on occupational training that results in an industry-valued credential, through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). The benchmark goals begin with 50% of the ITAs in SFY 2017 and gradually increase to 80% for SFY 2021.

Members discussed a number of topics surrounding industry-valued credentials and the benchmark goals for ITAs that provide a credential. Members agreed on the value of credentials for jobseekers, not only to obtain a job, but for future success in moving up the career ladder. It was noted that for some jobseekers, including those in literacy programs and vocational rehabilitation, a credential is not always the goal. Senator Rice further indicated that low-level learners must be included in the development of career pathways, and that customers must continue to be assessed to help them find the right job, which may or may not require a credential. Members indicated the importance of monitoring the number of jobseekers who are given ITAs for particular jobs, so as not to saturate the market. Dr. Fichtner noted that the demand occupation list will continue to be utilized, and considered along with Industry-Valued Credentials List, to ensure that individuals receive the right training for the right job. The Industry-Valued Credentials List will be updated in real-time, as the economy changes and as business and organized labor partners provide feedback on the credentials

needed now. Chairman Bone noted that the performance metrics focus on skills and credential attained, but also job attainment and wage outcomes. The workforce system must be agile and responsive to customer needs. Chairman Bone further indicated that, through High Quality Partnerships, business and industry partners provide valuable information to the education and workforce partners, to train and support skills and credential attainment for jobs in demand. Anthony Ferrera made a motion to approve SETC Policy Resolution #2016-11. The motion was seconded by Sally Nadler and unanimously approved.

IV. WIOA Combined State Plan

A presentation was provided by SETC Acting Executive Director Sheryl Hutchison and LWD Deputy Commissioner Aaron Fichtner, which reviewed the Vision and Key Elements of the NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2016. The following five Themes were discussed, and related questions comments are noted for each:

1. Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry-Valued Credentials

This was previously discussed in today's policy resolution consideration; there were no further questions or comments.

2. Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

Members discussed the energy level and engagement of employer partners. It was noted that the Talent Networks are doing a fantastic job to gather industry intelligence and foster engagement. The NJ Business and Industry Association is a great partner in this effort, and will host a Workforce Summit on April 19, "by employers and for employers" to showcase employer partnerships and the opportunities for engagement with education and workforce agencies.

The New Jersey Talent Pipeline Policy Academy, which includes SETC, LWD, DOE, OSHE and NJBIA partners, will host a High Quality Partnership Summit on May 26, to further support the development and expansion of High Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships, by bringing together leaders from workforce development boards, higher education institutions, K-12 education and career and technical education centers, Talent Networks, economic development organizations, organized labor, and other community organizations, and key representatives of business and industry.

Members discussed the need for soft skills, which are supported by the SETC through its Employability Skills Task Force, led by Melanie Willoughby. This effort will be integrated into High Quality Partnership initiatives. It was further recommended that employers be recognized as "High Quality Partners" by LWD and the other agencies, as a means of identifying their commitment and engagement. Small business and minority-owned business engagement were also encouraged as part of this effort, as these are vital to our state and local economies. Dr. Fichtner noted that we have strong partnerships with many Chambers of Commerce and welcomed all ideas about how to continue to engage small businesses.

The creation of Talent Development Centers (TDCs) at Camden County College (Advanced Manufacturing), Union County College (Transportation, Logistics and Distribution) and Rutgers University, New Brunswick (Health Care) was also discussed, and how those Centers would be connected to jobseekers and employers throughout the state. Dr. Fichtner noted that the TDCs will provide services statewide through all community colleges, and that Opportunity Partnership and Skills Partnership grants were also available. This will ensure that all areas have access to high-quality services. A summary of community college partnerships with local areas and grant initiatives will be created and provided to Commission members at a future meeting.

3. Strengthening Career Navigation Assistance through One-Stop Career Centers

This discussion focused on continuing to improve services in the One-Stop Career Centers through the Career Connections initiative, and partnerships with libraries, faith-based and community-based organizations. The effort to involve these partners was noted by members as a great approach to coordinate access for customers in all areas. A Career Connections presentation will be offered today, after the SETC meeting concludes, for all those who are interested in learning more about this initiative.

4. Strengthening Governance through Effective Workforce Development Boards and Regional Collaborations

The discussion centered on the role of local Workforce Development Boards as governing bodies, rather than advisory, and the importance of regional planning and service coordination. In November 2015, the SETC created three workforce planning regions in New Jersey: North, Central and South. Under WIOA, local Workforce Development Boards in these regions will provide the SETC with regional strategic plans, to support better coordination of services, leveraging of resources and collaboration with businesses and economic development that go beyond local area borders. Members noted that various employers, depending on their size and presence, could be regarded as local, regional or statewide partners. Local board certification, board budget and staffing requirements, and local area funding allocations were also adopted by SETC policy resolutions at prior meetings; there were no further questions or comments on these items.

5. Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

The creation of additional performance measures for New Jersey was discussed in today's policy resolution consideration. The State will continue to strengthen the workforce system through the use of these performance metrics, as well as a robust Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card, to maximize customer choice and awareness of training program options.

Stephen Hornik made a motion to approve SETC Policy Resolution #2016-12, the approval of the State Plan. Melanie Willoughby seconded the motion and the Commission unanimously approved the NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA, 2016.

The Commission members complimented the efforts to create a State Plan for workforce development that was inclusive of higher education, the employer community, and other agency partners. Chairman Bone also acknowledged the great foundation provided for this effort through the National Governor's Association award of a grant for the New Jersey Talent Pipeline Policy Academy.

V. Public Comment and Adjournment

John Maddocks, Greater Raritan WDB Executive Director, provided oral and written comments concerning the One-Stop Operator competitive selection process at the local level and noted that a competitive process including a Request for Proposals may take as long as six months to complete. Eileen Higgins, Monmouth WDB Executive Director, discussed the challenges of applying the WIOA performance metrics to those with barriers to employment, including the WorkFirst population; she noted that the attainment of a high school diploma was not an allowable activity for WorkFirst customers.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 pm.

Next SETC Meeting:

Tuesday, May 3, 2016, 10 am – 12 pm
NJ Law Center, 1 Constitution Square, New Brunswick

**STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION MEETING ATTENDEES
MARCH 29, 2016**

<u>PRESENT MEMBERS and ALTERNATES</u>	
Barry, Marie (for Hespe)	Karsian, Andrea
Bone, Dennis	Levinson, Jody
Brown, Kevin	Nadler, Sally
Dilahunt, Stephanie (for Richman)	Nivens, Marsha (for Berry)
Ferrera, Anthony	Nutter, Harvey
Fichtner, Aaron (for Wirths)	Rice, Ronald
Franklin, John	Sabater, Julio
Frye, Dan (for Connolly)	Safrin, Michele (for Blake)
Gacos, Nicholas	Sen, Tapas
Garlatti, Betsy (for Hendricks)	Wade, Carolyn Carter
Hornik, Stephen	Willoughby, Melanie
Howard, Donald (for McNamara)	Wise, Robert
<u>ABSENT MEMBERS</u>	
Carey, Michael	Reisser, Clifford
Donnadio, John	Trezza, Joann
Duda, Teri	Wowkanech, Charles
Orsen, Melissa	
<u>OTHER ATTENDEES</u>	
Akli, James	Jean-Baptiste, Jecrois
Alcalde, Matt	Lane, Davetta
Anbarasan, Sivaraman	Lipski, Linda
Arvind, Padma	Loane, Judith
Aspili, Alan	Lowery, Rhonda
Bicica, John	McKiernan, R. R.
Christiansen, Karen	Milone, Catherine
Davis, Patti	Molinelli, Tammy
Dombrowski, Joe	Mombo, Mien
Engelbert, Peggy	Moran, Patricia
Entwistle, Jennel	Nacion, Glenn
Fielder, Megan	Nagorka, Paulette
Franklin, John	Swartz, Jeffrey
Fugazzie, John	Oliphant, Kareim
Grimmie, Bob	Pisano, Amanda
Higgins, Eileen	Rajput, Riaz
Hunnicut, Alice	Scalia, Donna
Irving, Christopher	Semple, Barry
Kurziel, Kevin	Seville, Tyler
Janz, Greg	Thomas, Joel
<u>SETC STAFF</u>	
Hutchison, Sheryl	
Lew, Kirk	
O'Brien-Murphy, Maureen	
Sliwinski, Janet	