



New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

Dennis M. Bone, *Chairman*

Chris Christie, *Governor*

State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2015

10 am – 12 noon

NJ Law Center, New Brunswick

I. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Dennis Bone opened the meeting at 10:10 am via conference call and welcomed all attendees. Mr. Bone asked Melanie Willoughby to coordinate the meeting in his absence. Ms. Willoughby 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 April 30, 2015 meeting were introduced. Sally Nadler made a motion to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Dana Berry. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote of all the present SETC commission members. Ms. Willoughby reviewed the agenda and initiated roundtable introductions.

II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Bone thanked everyone for the hard work and collaboration during the NJ Blueprint planning process. He then turned the meeting over to Ms. Willoughby.

III. Current State of Talent Development

Ms. Willoughby introduced Dr. Aaron Fichtner, Deputy Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD), to present an overview of the current state of talent development in New Jersey. Dr. Fichtner stated that today was the culmination of a lot of hard work through concise planning and strong partnerships. Dr. Fichtner thanked Chairman Bone, the Commission members and SETC staff, as well as LWD staff for their leadership and hard work over the past 7 months. He also thanked all the state partners for their participation in the WIOA work to this point.

Dr. Fichtner noted that advancements in technology and the globalization of the economy make it imperative that we reevaluate the current workforce system. WIOA gives the New Jersey an opportunity to transform its workforce system and take a fresh look at the four titles. Those four titles include programs are the workforce programs administered by local WIB staff, Employment Services provided under Wagner-Peyser, Literacy and Adult Education services and Vocational Rehabilitation programs. WIOA must be used as a catalyst to push NJ's talent development and workforce development partnerships forward. The processes of engaging our various stakeholders on the both the state and local levels was diverse and comprehensive. The processes included workgroups and capacity-building webinars, which were recognized by the National Skills Coalition (NSC) as best practices. Dr. Fichtner noted that the NSC featured New Jersey's planning and partnership efforts in a case study, "Engagement Matters", showcasing our promising practices; this study is included in today's member packets. The workgroups were aligned with the SETC councils and committees that

represented specific areas of interest within WIOA. The broader partners from around the state were further engaged through a WIOA planning summit, held on March 31 and April 1, 2015.

IV. Future State of Talent Development

Ms. Willoughby then opened the discussion around the key elements of the Blueprint presented today for SETC approval. SETC Executive Director Michele Boronkas noted that the Blueprint is a framework that will assist with creating the new strategic talent development plan to be created for New Jersey under WIOA. Through the development of the Blueprint, the state has explored the WIOA legislation and engaged the system's various stakeholders in an effective and meaningful way. Ms. Boronkas then reviewed the construct of the Blueprint: the first section covers state policy framework; the second section discusses WIOA and its major policy implications and the last section reviews the planning and operational strategies.

V. Blueprint for Talent Development

State Policy Framework: Ms. Boronkas outlined the vision and the mission for New Jersey's Blueprint for Talent Development. The goal is have everyone involved in the workforce system so that the global talent marketplace is filled with high quality candidates. The method in which we will achieve this particular goal is by increasing the number of residents with meaningful degrees and credentials, as outlined in the Mission statement.

High Quality Partnerships: The mission not only focuses on increasing the number of residents with industry-valued credentials or degrees, but achieving this through the development of strong, high quality partnerships. High Quality Partnerships are based on measurable goals and are results-driven. The first initiative is a definition of what constitutes a High Quality Partnership. The definition will help define each partner's roles and responsibilities, and how to measure the outcomes of each partner. Another goal for defining a High Quality Partnership is for each partner to have stake in the training and placement of each job seeker and assist in contributing to the creation of career pathways. High Quality Partnerships will be critical to creating the training, career pathways, experiential learning, and employability skills components needed to support job seekers in attaining post-secondary credentials and meaningful employment opportunities.

Career Pathways: Career Pathways models have been identified as a priority; the Blueprint includes a draft definition developed by the Career Pathways Workgroup, led by LWD. The Blueprint clearly articulates the commitment of LWD and the SETC to developing more career pathways in New Jersey. Another component to this commitment is the establishment of industry-recognized credentials. Evidence shows that jobseekers and employees with degrees and credentials that are meaningful or valued by employers are more likely to be hired and retained, earn higher wages, and have greater opportunity for career advancement.

Community Alliances: New Jersey is in favor of a locally driven One-Stop Career Centers that acknowledges that all services cannot be effectively delivered through the centers themselves. The One-Stop Career Centers must partner with community colleges, libraries, community and faith-based organizations, local unions and educational entities. All of these partners must come together to create a network that offers all services and has the flexibility to appeal to diverse populations. The Blueprint solidifies these alliances and further fortifies the local workforce systems.

Regional Framework: Ms. Boronkas touched upon the creation of comprehensive strategies that will assist in the development of talent in New Jersey that meets the needs of employers. In order to develop such a system in New Jersey, there must be an integrated effort to create and implement comprehensive state, regional and local plans. These plans must be connected and will require local areas to acknowledge and collaborate with the system as a whole.

System Integrity: Dr. Fichtner stated that under WIOA, there are a unified set of performance metrics that are consistent across all four titles. The Blueprint has a strong commitment to implementing the federally-mandated performance measures, as well as continuing to further develop the Balanced Scorecard Metrics. The goal is to develop reliable and comprehensive data, so the public can access to support informed career decisions. The SETC and LWD would like to continue to build upon the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) and the Consumer Report Card (CRC, njtopps.org) foundations, which were both created more than 15 years ago to ensure the public was well informed. The creation of the Blueprint document is a major step forward, but it is not the end of the road. The planning and construction of New Jersey's Unified State plan will be a process that will require assistance from all of LWD and the SETC's partners. LWD is working with their Information Technology staff to develop a replacement for the AOSOS case management tool, with a more advanced option. .

WIOA Requirements: Ms. Boronkas and Dr. Fichtner reviewed the required WIOA elements in the Blueprint and the related policy recommendations. These include the State Board membership and the State Plan format. In the past, New Jersey completed a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Unified State Plan; this is now considered a Combined Plan under WIOA. The new state plan must comply with the law, which defines partners that are part of the planning process. Ms. Boronkas also reviewed the regional and local area designations. The proposed designations were formulated in the Governance and Planning Workgroup and were created with local area input. Local areas must be designated and each area must request to maintain their status within the public workforce system under WIOA. To ensure the planning process addresses the state's priority populations, the local areas are being required to complete WIOA youth transition plans. The changes in youth programs and services under WIOA are some of the most significant and will require both the state and local areas to work together to plan, leverage resources and evaluate the system.

Ms. Willoughby opened up the floor to the commission members for questions and comments.

Daniel Frye, Executive Director of the Commission for the Blind and Vision Impaired, stated the importance of collaboration within the creation of a new strategic plan under WIOA. There will be two DVR entities that will be contributing to the creation of the plan. The need for an increased heightening of cultural competency is necessary, if the plan will be considered a true collaboration. Mr. Frye did not receive accessible documentation prior to today's meeting and did not have sufficient time to review the document. Ms. Willoughby noted this was an oversight and will be corrected in the future. Mr. Fry indicated that the Commission for the Blind and Visual Impaired (CBVI) is one of the DVR entities within the State of New Jersey and CBVI will be a part of the planning process and contribute its portion to the state plan.

Robert Wise made a comment that further definition and criteria around the areas of contextualized learning, apprenticeships, internships and career learnings and readiness. These terms may have different meanings across the different industries sectors.

Sally Nadler commented on the importance of integrating career awareness strategies into the state plan. Career awareness strategies and skill assessments should be cornerstone activities for youth and the other programs within the One-Stop Career Centers and throughout the local workforce development systems.

Dana Berry commented that pre-apprenticeship programs are very successful in the education of the hardest to serve youth populations. Youth are given real opportunities through pre-apprenticeship models, which afford them first-hand perspective into the differences between school and the world

of work. One-Stop Career Centers in partnership with local area employers should work together to give our young people real life experiences and information.

Julio Sabater indicated the importance of building and embedding soft skills and life skills into workforce programming. It is critical in the development of career pathways and will help guide the development of talent prior to entering into training or educational opportunities.

Dr. Fichtner stated that the Blueprint could be edited to include more language around career exploration, planning and assessment, in the community alliance portion of the Blueprint. Mr. Sabater noted the importance of including the low level literacy learner in the career pathways development. John Franklin stated that providing information on career exploration and career pathways is not enough, we must help break down cultural barriers to help job seekers explore new types of careers.

Ms. Boronkas reviewed further policy recommendations around results-driven partnerships and noted the work done through the NJ Policy Academy, funded under a grant from National Governor's Association, is helping to shape what we consider high-quality partnerships. These partnership need to be industry-focused, as well as industry-driven. Dr. Fichtner reviewed career pathways, found on page 13 of the Blueprint document. This section articulates the strategies around work-based learning. LWD investments should be focused on the various types of work experiences; such as pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, internships, externships and on the job training. WIOA supports the creation of job experiences that lead to a strong career pathway. Career pathways will be a primary focus of LWD investments and will be represented within the state plan.

Mr. Wise commented on the importance of utilizing mentors within career pathway models. Retirees can be used as both mentors and career pathway educators. Sally Nadler also pointed out the importance of mentors for at-risk populations. The state should explore all its connections, including relationships with associations such as AARP.

Dr. Fichtner discussed the importance of community alliances and relationships, which can be found on page 15 of the Blueprint document. The three major policy recommendations are the creation of a One-Stop Career Center certification process, the continued operations of local area Youth Advisory Councils and the improved accessibility of the local One-Stop system. Job seekers should have seamless access to the full array of services available at the One-Stop Career Centers. Those programs and services should be made accessible to everyone in a variety of different ways.

On page 17 of the Blueprint document, the focus is on improving the integrity of New Jersey's Workforce Training and development system. The LWD technology department is planning to replace the case management database system, AOSOS, with a more advanced case management system. Dr. Fichtner confirmed that staff training will be a key component and the new case management tool cannot be disruptive to the current system.

Julio Sabater expressed the importance of expanding the accessibility of the One-Stop Career Centers. The entire community should be able to access the programs and services offered through the one stop system, regardless of their challenges.

Ms. Willoughby called for a motion to approve the Blueprint and its policy recommendations as the framework for the development of the Combined State Plan. Andrea Karsian commented that she hoped the development of the plan and the membership appointments for both the Commission and the Gender Parity Council would be fully supported by both the Governor and the Legislature. Daniel Frye made a motion to table the vote until the next Commission meeting. This motion was not

seconded. Julio Sabater made a motion to approve, seconded by Dana Berry. Mr. Frye voted against acceptance of the Blueprint; all other members voted to approve the Blueprint and it was approved.

Several commission members noted the importance of moving forward with this Blueprint in order to complete, approve, and submit the new Combined State Workforce Plan by March 3, 2016. Concern was expressed by some members about drafting of the state plan without final guidance from the federal government. The guidance, issued as a Notice of Proposed Rule-Making (NPRM), is still being drafted and may not be finalized until the drafting of the plan is well underway. Ms. Boronkas explained that USDOL is fully aware of our timelines; state plans must be submitted to USDOL by March 3, 2016. The plan may need to be adjusted after final regulations are released, but USDOL has already instructed each state to proceed with the development of their plans. Dr. Fichtner added that the state plan will be a living document that will continue to evolve over time. Alice Hunicutt, DVRS director, asked if the WIOA Workgroup leaders could submit further comments or suggestions for the Blueprint. Ms. Boronkas stated that the additions could be incorporated as appendices to the original Blueprint.

VI. Public Comment and Adjournment

Sally Nadler reported that PSEG has developed a career energy sector pathway model that offers industry recognized credentials. She would be willing to do a presentation on the PSEG career pathway model at the next Commission meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Next SETC Meeting:
Friday, October 9, 2015
10 am – 12 pm
PSEG Training Center, Edison

**STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION MEETING ATTENDEES
JUNE 16, 2015**

<u>PRESENT MEMBERS and ALTERNATES</u>	
Barry, Marie (for Hesper)	Howard, Donald (for McNamara)
Berry, Dana	Karsian, Andrea
Bone, Dennis (via phone)	Mickens, Felix (for Brown)
Ditmars, Linda (for Richman)	McAndrew, Brian
Donnadio, John	Nadler, Sally
Ehrlich, Kim (for Orsen)	Sabater, Julio
Fichtner, Aaron (for Wirths)	Trezza, JoAnn
Frye, Daniel (for Connolly)	Willoughby, Melanie
Gacos, Nicholas	Wise, Robert
Garlatti, Betsy (for Hendricks)	
<u>ABSENT MEMBERS</u>	
Carey, Michael	Reisser, Clifford
Duda, Teri	Sen, Tapas
Hornik, Stephen	Stout, Bruce
Levinson, Jody	Wade, Carolyn
Nutter, Harvey	Wowkanech, Charles
<u>OTHER ATTENDEES</u>	
Arvind, Padma	Molinelli, Tammy
Bicica, John	Montalto, Nick
Bleckman, Sandra	Mombo, Mien
DiLeonardo, Christy	Moran, Patricia
Dunigan, Janet	Piano, Julie
Felder, Sarita	Pierre, Eric
Ferrera, Anthony	Savage, Judy
Franklin, John	Scalia, Donna
Hasenbalg, Gary	Seville, Tyler
Higgins, Eileen	Skelley, Greg
Hunnicut, Alice	Smith, Tiffany
Ielmini, Pete	Starghill, Catherine
Irving, Chris	Stoller, Jeffrey
Janz, Greg	Swartz, Jeffrey
Jean-Baptiste, Jacqois	Treml, Bernard
Kahnowitz, Marcia	Vaccari, Ray
Kurdziel, Kevin	Wallace, Charles
McCloughan, Roger	
<u>SETC STAFF</u>	
Boronkas, Michele	Hutchison, Sheryl
O'Brien-Murphy, Maureen	Lew, Kirk
Herzog, Christina	