

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board  
Innovation Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
August 4, 2023, via Zoom 2:00 PM**

<b>Members Attending</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Staff &amp; Guests Attending</b>
Anne Fugate	Seth Thurman	Marla Rye
Richie Brandon	Tony Adams	Andrea Dillard
Sellittia Johnson	John Alexander	Meagan Dobbins
Jessica Largen		Kim Rye
Greg Jones		Sherry Maynard

The Northern Middle Innovation Committee met via Zoom on August 4, 2023. Attendance was taken, and a quorum was declared. Greg Jones, acting committee chair, called the meeting to order.

Greg called for review and approval of the minutes. Richie Brandon motioned, and Sellittia Johnson seconded. With no other discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

**Contract Service Provider Update**

Andrea Dillard began by updating the Committee regarding the contractors' performance. EDSI achieved its enrollment goal for adult/dislocated workers at 100% and youth at 90%. Because of the contractors' high carryover numbers when they took over, they were given the exit goal that 80% of total new enrollments needed to be exited. EDSI did not meet the exit goal throughout the quarters. The adult/dislocated worker exit goal was probably met because of receiving the NEG grant. They aimed to enroll 61 NEG workers, and they enrolled 313. The contract ended on June 30, and many workers needed something temporary. When the grant ended, these participants were exited. Only 60-65 of 221 exited were placed in employment. While they did well enrolling participants, they were not timely exiting them to employment. This could be attributed to the large turnover with staffing. They met the adult/dislocated worker exit goal cumulatively but not the youth exit goal. They did not meet the Positive Exit Rate goal for adult/dislocated worker or youth. Exiting participants positively continues to be an issue. They exceeded the placement wage goal for both categories.

Andrea went on to review MAC's performance. Cumulatively, MAC has met their enrollment and exit goals for in-school and out-of-school youth. Of 132 exits, 99 of them were positive. This gives them a placement rate of 75%, which does not meet the 80% goal. Andrea expressed that she felt they could continue working and meet the goals set for them.

Andrea informed the Committee that all WIOA Federal Reporting Score Card performance measures have either 90% or 100% passing scores. Quarter 4 shows the estimated scores that will be finalized, and those are all passing. A predictive report was run for the first quarter of the new fiscal year and shows passing scores. These scores are from participants who exited the program a year ago. The current issue of having high caseloads with participants who need to be exited and may not be working will affect our performance outcomes in the future.

### **Eligible Training Provider Requests**

Andrea presented the new providers and programs which need to be considered by the Board. Excel Barber & Style College and Nightingale College request to be added to the Eligible Training Provider List. Excel is a 12-month class. The list says eight hours because the form was filled out wrong. This will be corrected. Nightingale College's corporate headquarters are based in Utah. Their program is distance learning, and they are identifying clinical sites in Tennessee. Very seldom are participants sent to out-of-state schools. Anyone who receives a scholarship has to meet in one of the American Job Centers for assessment. The participant will have to be a Tennessee resident. The cost of this training is extremely high. The policy states only \$6,000 can be awarded for a course. Greg Jones stated that he did like the classes that Nightingale College offers. He expressed concerns about setting a participant up for financial failure if the course is so costly and only \$6,000 would be awarded. Marla explained that participants would need to decide how they would pay for the rest of the course. Anne Fugate asked if there were other nursing courses on the list that are remote learning. Marla answered that other nursing classes on the list required in-person attendance. Marla mentioned that the funding is also for two-year learning. Greg Jones mentioned that he looked at Nightingale's website and couldn't find any clinical sites identified in the Middle Tennessee area. He also expressed concerns that approving this program could tie up career coaches' time with participants who may not be successful in this program. Marla suggested an approval contingent on Tennessee clinical sites being identified. The Committee agreed.

Marla stated that the motion would be to approve Excel Barber & Style College. Nightingale College to be approved on the condition of identification and credentialing of the practical hands-on learning sites in Tennessee. The motion would also approve Competitive Edge, NATS, Volunteer State Community College, and TCAT Dickson which are already approved providers but want to add new programs to the list, which are in-demand occupations. The last approval requests are for Tennessee State University and Volunteer State Community College, requesting to be active on the list again. Andrea added that no participants are currently waiting to enroll in these classes. Richie Brandon motioned to approve the requests. Anne Fugate seconded. With no further discussion, the Committee passed the motions.

### **Innovation-Programs and Grants**

Marla updated the Committee regarding new programs. The Senior Community Services Employment Program serves 115 workers who are 55 and older by placing them in training sites where they can also earn a wage. The Summer Youth Program currently serves 328 youth, mostly 14, 15, and 16-year-olds. They have been placed in government and private industries. Northern Middle serves 61% of the youth participants throughout the state of Tennessee. Montgomery, Stewart, Houston, and Humphreys have the lowest Labor Force Participation Rate, excelled this summer, and placed a lot of participants into job opportunities. Houston has placed 34 kids, which is excellent for such a small county. Young adults were placed in jobs matching their career goals when possible. Phase II of this program doesn't end until August 2024. Plans are being made to use half of the available funding to build a quality program in other counties that didn't have as many participants this summer.

Marla reviewed the career center operations and state KPIs. She pointed out that the Northern Middle Workforce Area consistently operates at higher performance levels than other state workforce areas. Northern Middle often serves the highest number of individuals in each category but does not receive the most funding. This year, Northern Middle is taking cuts in funding while other areas with lower performance are getting increases in funding. Marla has requested that the state negotiate on the KPIs and is awaiting time to discuss this with them in detail.

### **Adjourn**

Marla reminded the Committee that the Board meeting is on August 9, 2023, at Highland Crest in Springfield. With no other questions, Greg Jones adjourned the meeting.