

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board
Full Board
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2022, In-Person & via Zoom 11:30 a.m.**

Members Attending	Members Absent	Staff & Guest Attending
Dan Caldwell	Jennifer Hobbs	Marla Rye
John Zobl	Keith Carnahan	Sherry Maynard
G.C. Hixson	Richie Brandon	Christel Brown
Mark Peed		Meagan Dobbins
Tylesha McCray		Andrea Dillard
Anne Fugate		Freda Herndon
John Alexander		Ginger Fussell
Greg Jones		John Watz
Lynn Seifert		Stacey Books
James Harper		Cheryl Pruett
Paul Webb		Danielle Ellis
Kristi Spurgeon		Liz McLaughlin
Charles Story		Renea Rosson
Seth Thurman		Jacquelyn Scott
Christopher West		Rubin Cockrell
Dan Ryan		Tanya Evrenson
Bo Callis		George Phillips
David Rutledge		Cathy Royals
Carol Puryear		Anthony Holt

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Development Board met in person at the Montgomery County American Job Center and with a virtual option on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at 11:30 a.m.

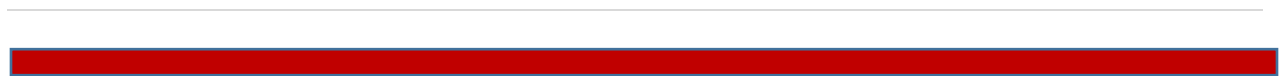
The meeting was called to order by Chairman Zobl. Attendance was taken, and a quorum was declared. Chairman John Zobl asked for a motion to approve the minutes. John Alexander made the motion to approve. Mark Peed seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Serving Justice-Involved Individuals

Marla welcomed everyone and introduced the guest speaker, Dr. William Arnold of the Department of Labor & Workforce Development's Office of Reentry. He spoke of their state-funded program, which aims to get justice-involved individuals back into the workforce and to reduce recidivism. He announced funding that would be available to local boards to support re-entry efforts.

Recognition

Marla recognized Board members that had been active during the quarter and had participated in workforce development initiatives since the last meeting. She highlighted the work of G.C. Hixson and the accomplishments and awards that he had received.



Career Service Provider (CSP) Performance Review

Marla gave a brief overview of CSP goals and their performance to date. The contracts did not get off to a good start but have improved their number of enrollments over time. EDSI met their cumulative exit goals including placement wages. However, Marla explained that the federal performance measures are trending downward possibly due to COVID since the **measue** is over 18 months in arrears. They still struggle with MPCR, although they are trending upward. They also continue to be significantly behind with in-school youth and paid work experience.

MAC achieved their cumulative enrollment goal during the 4th quarter of 2021. However, they are not meeting their exit goals, which is causing their caseloads to climb. Their placement rate is below goal, but they met their placement wage goal. The cumulative MPCR is not at goal. They have only been able to meet their MPCR goal one quarter. They have not met their work experience goal but have the potential to get there. They did not meet their in-school youth ratio goal during their fourth quarter.

EDSI

Danielle Ellis reported they continue to see their enrollment numbers trend upwards even they still have room to improve. Their MPCR is trending in the right direction even after a slight dip during the last quarter. She stated they continue to struggle with in-school youth and work experience. She explained that their biggest obstacle was expanding their reach to get the in-school youth, but their numbers are increasing.

Danielle recognized that case management has been one of the biggest obstacles but said they now have practices in place to improve training and quality standards. They plan to add a quality assurance position to ensure compliance and quality of their case management. She reported that turnover was a problem because of knowledge gaps. She feels they now have a strong roster with talented individuals. Danielle went on to address corrective action plans to address the deficiencies. She also talked about the youth partnerships that have been built and how they are working to build enthusiasm and excitement around the WIOA services.

Marla asked Danielle to talk about the turnover and what they are doing to address that. Danielle explained the steps to include more training and support of employees. She stated the EDSI team feels confident that they would meet the goals over the next two quarters.

MAC

Tanya Evrenson reported that MAC is fully staffed and has met its cumulative contract goals for enrollments as of December 31, 2021. For the current quarter, she reported that they are halfway to their goal for out-of-school youth, have enrolled one in-school youth but are working to enroll more. Tanya then talked about all of the organizations and schools they are working with to enroll more WIOA **eleibgielbe** youth program. She updated the Board about the paid work experience program and talked about the Summer Youth Program called Power Youth.

Tanya continued her report with case management and exits. She reported that all customers and current cases have been contacted, and they are keeping up with case notes to ensure a monthly

contact. They are also working on exiting clients to meet performance goals. Tanya shared the story of Victoria Ramirez, who participated in training and found a job placement with MAC.

Strategic Priorities

Manage Board funds to Support Career Pathways

Ginger Fussell reported that quarter two which ended 12/31/21 was comparable to quarter one at just under \$2.5M in expenditures, putting the cumulative fiscal year expenditure total just shy of \$5 million. Quarter two saw a slight increase in formula grant fund utilization and a slight decrease in other grant activity. The budget is an ebb and flow with additional grant availability. Northern Middle received \$754K additional Dislocated Worker funding. The Board previously approved the repurposing of \$1.5M Dislocated Worker funding for Adult program services. We anticipate the need to potentially request \$500K more. There is a new apprenticeship grant for \$168K. There was approximately \$93K of expired, unused funding netting a budget increase of approximately \$828K, resulting in a revised budget of \$15.7M for fiscal year 21-22. The career service providers have increased their expenditures slightly.

Ginger went on to update the committee regarding MPCR. Northern Middle calculates the minimum participant cost rate to be 48.16% through December, meeting the state's goal of 40%. Both contractors are shy of the MPCR goal cumulatively during the first 12 months of their 18-month contract. The state measures MPCR on the fiscal year beginning in July. For the first two quarters, EDSI exceeded 50%, and MAC was close at 46.29%. Both contractors had a strong MPCR in quarter one, and both dropped in quarter two. As a result, Northern Middle dropped from 54.1% to 48.16%.

Ginger informed the committee about the career service provider billing. This year's billing trend was compared to the prior two years. The new contracts started in quarter three of the prior year. After a slow start, contractor expenditures in quarter four of their contract have reached 92% compared to quarter two of the prior year and with the previous contractor. Quarter two improved \$57K from quarter one of this year. She went on to say that 66% of the contract period elapsed, EDSI spent 58% of their base contract, and MAC spent 43%. These contracts aim to serve participants, so their spending should be higher and more comparable to the 66% time elapsed. MCHRA, as the One-Stop Operator, has spent 58% of their contract of the same time period. OSO expenses, while necessary, are considered overhead costs. Therefore, expenditures less than budget is positive for Northern Middle.

Ginger confirmed Marla's earlier statements regarding the contractors' quarterly and cumulative MPCR, Work Experience, and In-School Youth. The 21-22 fiscal year trend for EDSI and MAC indicates that both contractors' MPCR dropped in quarter two compared to quarter one. EDSI has met the goal for the fiscal year cumulative on the strength of quarter one. MAC is close at 46%, with quarter one being more favorable than quarter two.

Ginger stated that Northern Middle staff continues the desk reviews of EDSI and MAC monthly, analyzing contract progress and performance. Bi-weekly contractor meetings continue. Eligibility documentation has been a key monitoring focus, as is CSP staffing and the Youth challenges mentioned earlier in the presentation. Northern Middle challenged the One-Stop Operator to provide enhanced oversight of partner co-enrollments that support KPIs.

Northern Middle's external audit for FY 20-21 was completed by Thurman Campbell Group. Ankur Singla presented the audit report to the Budget/Finance committee on February 3, reporting a clean audit, no findings, and low-risk auditee qualification. Ginger expressed appreciation of the partnership of

Workforce Essentials and Northern Middle's finance and fiscal teams. She wished Barbara Unruh a happy retirement after 24 years and welcomed Tammy Rowell, who has WIOA experience from South Carolina.

Ginger asked for approval of the 21-22 Quarter two financial report which includes 1.) 21-22 revised budget of \$15.7 million (an increase of \$828K) 2.) \$500K to EDSI for special populations to include \$400K for transitioning soldiers at Fort Campbell, and \$100K for offender reentry programs 3.) \$400K for youth to be awarded through a new RFP.

John Zobl asked for a motion to ratify the Finance Committee recommendations as stated above. Mark Peed made the motion. Carol Puryear seconded the motion. Anne Fugate abstained from the vote due to a potential conflict of interest since she works at Fort Campbell . With no further discussion, the Board approved the motion unanimously.

Connect People with Career Opportunities

George Phillips presented his One-Stop Operator report. He stated that job fair attendance is moving upward, the MPCR including the OSO is 48.16%, and updated the Board about the Partner Programs. George then reviewed the AJC Traffic Counts using a chart that shows the traffic has decreased over the last twoof years. George reported that the unemployment rate for the Northern Middle area is at 2.7%, and only one county has had a slight increase. He then reviewed the KPIs.

Train Workforce to Fill Employer Needs


Freda Herndon presented the ETPL and mentioned the excitement around the new state apprenticeship office and funding availability. Next, she shared the rapid response list of businesses that are closing and what they are doing to support the displaced employees. She also shared a list of businesses that have made inquiries and their current status. Finally, she presented the ETPL changes the Innovations Committee had approved in their meeting. She pointed out that the committee is studying whether or not that programs that don't offer credentials should be on the ETPL.

Improve Efficiency & Effectiveness of Programs

Andrea Dillard reviewed the federal performance scorecard with the committee. Under quarter one, there are several goals that we are meeting at 90%, which is passing, but we prefer to meet that goal at 100%. There are two standards that we are failing at present. They are employment rate fourth quarter after exit with adults and credential attainment fourth quarter after exit with youth.

The federal performance is on a rolling four quarters, and it is not finalized until the fourth quarter is complete. She stated the staff continue to work on the areas that need improvement. Some areas can be improved by checking the system and ensuring that credentials are claimed correctly. While the second and fourth quarters after exit for adults are not quite passing, the second quarter could pass if supplemental data can be added.

This performance measures are reaching back to September 2020 and marla stated that COVID was still impacting employment opportunities then. Marla also explained that she felt the contractor changes also impacted performance measures. Many AJC workers in the field are new and still learning about the impact of federal performance standards.



Marla informed the Board that she and Chairman John Zobl discussed having a strategic planning session to address issues in the AJC. With the downward trend in performance, lack of traffic in the AJC and employers struggling to find workers, we must evolve and innovate to address the workforce challenges in the region. Mark Peed thought it would be a great idea and that we should be focusing more on employers. Marla stated that she would organize a strategic planning session before our next meeting in May.

Adjourn

Marla reminded the Board that the next meeting would be on May 11, 2022. John Zobl asked for a motion to adjourn. GC Hickson made the motion. Mark Peed made the second and the meeting was adjourned.

