



**Northern Middle Tennessee
Workforce Board Inc.**

**APPROVED
February 9, 2022**

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board
Full Board
Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2021, In-Person & via Zoom 11:30 a.m.**

Members Attending	Members Absent	Staff & Guest Attending
Dan Caldwell	Jennifer Hobbs	Marla Rye
James Harper	Keith Carnahan	Andrea Dillard
Mark Peed	Paul Webb	Freda Herndon
Tony Adams	Anne Fugate	Ginger Fussell
Kristi Spurgeon	David Rutledge	Sherry Maynard
Charles Story		Richard Nelson
Seth Thurman		Phillip Wallace
Chris West		John Watz
John Zobl		Beth Duffield
Dan Ryan		Rob Dancer
Richie Brandon		Patty Stansfield Carter
Bo Callis		Mayor Kerry McCarver
Greg Jones		James Starnes
Carol Puryear		Christel Brown
Lynn Seifert		Molly Hewitt
GC Hixson		Joseph Johnson
John Alexander		Jennifer Eppley
Tylesha McCray		Meagan Dobbins
		Jimmy Johnston
		George Phillips
		Liz McLaughlin
		Renea Rosson
		Rubin Cockrell
		Danielle Ellis
		Glen Dahill
		Stacy Books
		Tanya Evrenson
		Rochelle G
		Darla Tea
		James Starnes
		Ellen Gomez
		Ashley Crisp Randall



The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Development Board met in person at the TCAT in Dickson with a virtual option on Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 11:30 a.m.

The meeting was called to order. Attendance was taken, and a quorum was declared. Chairman John Zobl asked for a motion to approve the minutes. GC Hixson made the motion to approve. John Alexander seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Marla Rye recognized mayors in attendance and welcomed our new board member. Marla then recognized members and mayors who participated in activities to benefit the community and spoke of upcoming grants over the last quarter. She then reported that the Northern Middle Region has the lowest unemployment rate of the state.

Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta-Benefits Cliff

Alex Ruder from the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta presented a brief introduction about how the benefits cliff issue intersects with workforce development. As the family earns more, there are times that their disposable income ends up being less, and they are worse off earning more than they were with receiving benefits. When helping the client choose a career path, their earnings need to be mapped to show how each choice will affect them over time. By becoming aware of the issues, we can develop solutions to mitigate the barriers for the worker and increase the talent supply for businesses. The board plans to learn more about this tool and speak with states who are already using it.


CSP Performance Review

Marla gave a brief overview of goals given to the providers and their performance so far. The CSPs were asked to attend the meeting today and update the board on their progress on the corrective action plans and how they are moving forward with their programs.

EDSI

Danielle Ellis reported that they had achieved over 80% of their Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth goals. They have also been maintaining their MPCR since June. Danielle feels that staff turnover impacted their ability to make it to the 90%-100% range of their goal, but she feels they are moving in a positive direction. EDSI has hit its recruitment goal for October and is on track to hit the goal in November. A new Program Manager for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs has joined their team, and an additional role of Career Services Manager has been added as well. She reported that they plan to train their staff to be ready to serve any and all populations in their career centers or within the communities. Danielle mentioned a couple of challenges they are working to improve. One is strengthening the communications with employers so that OJT invoices will be retrieved in a timely manner. The other is working on the intake process, and the way orientation is delivered.

Next, Liz McLaughlin shared about the youth program. Liz reported that they had established relationships with a few high schools in our area. They work with the faculty and counselors to get referrals. Staff is available to answer questions and help youth. They are also holding interview workshops in the high schools. They are partnering with over ten companies to create and have paid work experience opportunities. They are also doing community outreach with many schools and departments within the community. Liz then told the story of Emily, one of their participants, and how she was hired by the company the local radio station where she worked for her paid work experience. She also spoke of challenges they have faced and found solutions to overcome them. Finally, Liz updated the board members about some of their programs and partnerships that are going well.



Danielle answered questions regarding how things were going in Davidson County and how AJC traffic was. She reported that things were going well in Davidson County, and she felt that traffic in the AJCs was about the same as it had been. She also felt that staffing levels are good right now.

MAC

Tanya Evrenson reported that they have gotten caught up and have met their goal of 74 enrollments. She said they have ten in-school youth and 7 out of school youth to enroll by the end of December. They accomplished this by heavily recruiting people for the past three months. They have developed partnerships with Metro Nashville Public Schools, Davidson County Headstart parents, community colleges, TCATs, juvenile court, community-based organizations, AJC partners, Envision Center, and the McGruder Center. Young adults are identified and recruited for a paid work experience which includes an academic component of soft skills employers seek. MAC has 18 employers they have partnered with to provide paid work experiences. Tanya then explained some of the challenges they had while trying to hire candidates to fill their open positions and the challenges of filling out the paperwork for the young adults applying for the paid work experience. She stated that MPCR would increase with the increase of enrollments and expects to be fully staffed by November 15. Although they were short-staffed, she reported that clients were called, followed up with, employments verified, and case notes made.

Tanya then shared the success story of Ashley Williams. Ashley worked hard during her training to become a phlebotomist. She was hired at Ascension St. Thomas in Rutherford County, and it was reported that her pay was around \$27/hour.

Strategic Priorities

Manage Board funds to Support Career Pathways

First, Ginger gave the board a fiscal update. An additional \$550K from an emergency dislocated worker grant was added due to the Humphreys County flooding issue. She then updated the board about Campbell Strong and how well they met their goal over the course of the grant.

Next, Ginger updated the board regarding the CSP contracts. As of September, we have completed 50% of our contracts. EDSI has spent 40% of their contract budget, and MAC has spent 24% of their budget. Currently, the CSPs are about \$300,000 shy of what the spending was in quarter 1 of our fiscal year, so Ginger challenged them to keep pushing towards meeting their goals. Each month the contractors are reminded of how many months are left in their contract, shown where they need to be, and how to best balance by funding stream. MAC's expenditures for October have improved. EDSI has maintained a strong MPCR for four months consecutively. Eligibility has been a key concern and has been a key focus for monitoring efforts. Both contractors find their challenges to be in the area of work experience and in-school youth. Mid-Cumberlands billing has been right on track with their budget.

The PAR monitoring visit is complete, and there were no findings again this year. Financial auditors will arrive next week; the comptroller's office is doing single audit monitoring and the routine monitoring of the grants and budgets division.



The following actions were presented to the finance committee and approved. Acceptance of the quarter one financial report, acceptance of the revised budget increasing by approximately \$2.1 million, \$500,000 contract modification to EDSI for adult and dislocated worker services. Marla added that an additional \$500,000 was made available and needed to be distributed. The Executive Committee approved an increase of \$500,000 in funding to EDSI to plan a large Summer Youth Project for the summer of 2022.

John Zobl asked for a motion to approve the financial report. Seth Thurman made the motion. John Alexander seconded. With no discussion, the board voted unanimously to approve the financial report.

Connect People with Career Opportunities

George Phillips gave his One-Stop Operator report. He mentioned that AJC traffic is down significantly and praised the workers from Humphrey's county AJC. Even though the office had to be closed, they all worked through that time. George then updated the board about MPCR being 54.06% and informed them of the enrollment numbers. The Northern Middle area has the lowest unemployment area in the state. Houston County has the highest unemployment rate, but it also had the most significant drop from the previous quarter. Some of our KPI targets have been met, and there are other KPI targets where improvement needs to be made. The current AJC traffic count does not include the virtual AJC, but they will be included moving forward.

Train Workforce to Fill Employer Needs


Freda Herndon presented the ETPL and informed them that the list was presented to the committee and recommended the changes outlined on the pages in the board materials packet regarding approval for new programs and price increases. Some were extended one year due to performance, and some were extended two years if they met all of the performances. Freda then informed the board that they are on track with the spending of their grants and should finish up by June 30. They have also received notice that they will be receiving an additional \$160,000 for a statewide apprenticeship. A different strategy is being utilized, and they want to partner with labor unions to provide some financial relief to people who are in their apprenticeship program.

Improve Efficiency & Effectiveness of Programs

Andrea Dillard presented two policy changes to the board for approval. Both were presented to the Innovations and Special Populations Committees and were recommended for approval. The first request is to add six additional barriers, which would hopefully allow more young people to be identified and provided with services. The second request is to change when you are awarded retention incentives. The change would be to align the incentive benchmarks to coincide with follow-up quarters.

G.C. Hixson made a motion to approve both policy changes. Tony seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the changes.

Finally, Andrea presented the WIOA Federal Reporting Score Card. It shows that the Northern Middle Workforce Area has passed all of its goals for quarter 4. She then added that the Northern Middle area ranks in the top three of each performance measure.



Marla updated the board about grant opportunities and what grants the board staff has applied for.

Adjourn

Marla reminded the board that the next meeting would be on February 3, 2022. John Zobl adjourned the meeting.

