



Approved  
November 2, 2021

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board  
Special Populations Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
July 29, 2021, via Zoom 1:00 p.m.**

<b>Members Attending</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Staff &amp; Guests Attending</b>
Carol Puryear	GC Hixson	Kiarra Jobe
Christopher West	Jennifer Hobbs	Marla Rye
Lynn Seifert		Andrea Dillard
George "Bo" Callis		Sherry Maynard
James Harper		John Watz
Seth Thurman		Ellen Gomez
		Freda Herndon

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Special Populations Committee met on July 29, 2021, at 1 p.m. virtually via Zoom.

Carol Puryear called the meeting to order, a quorum was declared, and she requested a motion for approval of the minutes. Bo Callis made the motion to approve the minutes. James Harper seconded the motion, and with no discussion, the minutes were approved.

**Contract Service Provider Performance Review**

Marla reminded the Committee that EDSI had an enrollment goal of 455 adults and the Board gave them a 90% benchmark to achieve. They enrolled 413 adults and met the goal. They had a goal to enroll 112 youth. They enrolled 119, so they surpassed their goal. They also achieved the 50% MPCR goal for June. MAC had to enroll 112 youth, and they enrolled 106. They achieved 92% of their goal and achieved their benchmark. They also met their MPCR goal for June.

While they have done well on these goals set for them in May, other areas need improvement. The Executive Committee set new goals. They now must meet their enrollment goals, MPCR, in-school youth funding, and work experience funding for the quarter ending September 30 and December 31. This would bring them back in compliance with all of the rules and requirements. Both contractors have been asked to attend the August 11 board meeting and present a corrective action plan with actionable items to tell us exactly what they will do.

When asked how the contract providers starting performance would affect our business and funding, Marla explained that as of July 1, the state is holding us accountable for all of the targets moving forward with a progressive discipline plan. It starts with a written warning, then moves into funds being withheld. Marla explained that performance goals restarted for the state on July 1. She expressed that she felt EDSI's slow start was due to learning the regulations of Tennessee that go beyond what the federal law requires, and MAC's slow start was due to COVID which caused Davidson County shutdown. MAC has also had staffing issues.

### **Youth Programs**

Andrea introduced Kiarra Jobe to the Committee members. Kiarra is one of our Title I young adults in the youth program. She was invited to share her story. Kiarra began to talk about her high school years and how she got behind due to being out of school with her mom for about a year. When she did attend school, they frequently moved. She got so far behind the school didn't think it was worth her attending, so she moved to Tennessee to live with her dad. She pursued her HiSet, and that is how she got connected with WIOA. Through the WIOA program, she got her driver's license, incentives for earning her HiSet, saved money, bought a car, got the car repaired, learned to build a resume and received job interview skills. Her ultimate career goal is to be a published author.

Andrea went on to talk about the state's Summer Youth Initiative. She explained that because the contractors were struggling to meet the state's youth enrollment goal, they were directed to focus their efforts on that rather than enrolling additional youth in paid work experience for the State's Summer Youth Initiative. We will not enroll 121 youth in the initiative and will not be able to spend all of the money allotted for that program.

Ellen Gomez shared that other regions have a youth committee within their Special Populations Committee to meet a more comprehensive network of individuals within the community. So when the time came to spend this kind of money or develop programs, the connections were already made. Ellen requested that there be a consideration to put together a task force or youth-specific committee that meets regularly to do some forward planning. Marla stated that would be a good idea considering the challenges of our existing youth programs.

Marla then reported that she had been working on an Innovative High School Grant that the Department of Education issued. The Rutherford County School System has proposed that an American Job Center be created with the school system. EDSI would have a career coach operating within the school, which would give us closer ties to the safety programs and the work-based learning program in Rutherford County. Marla thinks this would give us a closer connection to the K12 system and that it is something we should consider. Other Committee members expressed their support for this program.

### **Campbell Strong Workforce Partnership**

John reported that the Campbell Strong program would not receive additional funding after September 30. The program is winding down with all of the partners, but follow-up continues with the clients that are still in the program. The staff has been reduced but are still maintaining services. The Department of Labor has been asked to see how they can find funds and utilize the same model that we've had along with being in partnership with Ft. Campbell and Kentucky.

### **Industrial Readiness Training Houston County**

John reported about the IRT training which occurred in the Houston County Jail with ten men. Pictures were shown of the men and instructors working together, learning about machinery, and getting certifications. A partnership has been developed between Houston and Stewart Counties. Next week, ladies from both jails will learn together in Houston County, then the program will be taken to Stewart County, where the men in their jail will get to participate in the class. Carol stated that this was an exciting program and really met the intent of the WIOA program to give individuals a chance for success.

### **Adjourn**

Carol Puryear adjourned the committee meeting.