



**APPROVED
NOV 6, 2025**

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board
Innovation Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2025, via Zoom 2:00 PM**

Members Attending	Members Absent	Staff & Guests Attending
Seth Thurman	Selittia Johnson	Andrea Dillard
Anne Fugate	Robin Baldree	Meagan Dobbins
Tony Adams		Kim Rye
Billy Givens		Alyssa Spaulding
Kaitlin Salyer		
Brandon Phinx		

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board Innovations Committee met via Zoom on August 7, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. Chairman Seth Thurman called the meeting to order once a quorum was confirmed.

Andrea began by acknowledging that Marla Rye was unable to attend due to a family bereavement and introduced new members joining the committee. Kaitlin Salyer, Senior Vice President of Education and Workforce Development for the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, shared that she previously served as the Talent Development Director at the Chamber for the past four years and has prior experience on the Upper Cumberland Workforce Board. Andrea then introduced Brandon Phinx, Northern Middle Business and Workforce Director for the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Brandon shared that he had previously served as the Middle Tennessee Apprenticeship Director and was promoted to his current role earlier this year. Chairman Thurman then asked for a motion to approve minutes from the previous meeting. Billy Givens made the motion and Anne Fugate seconded. With no further discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

Federal Performance

Andrea presented the Federal Performance Update, reporting that for Quarter 4 of Program Year 2024, all performance measures were at or above 90%, which constitutes passing according to state standards. These figures will be finalized in October, though Andrea noted that outcomes could improve further but will not decline. Preliminary indicators for Quarter 1 of Program Year 2025 also project continued success in meeting or exceeding all performance measures. Andrea commended staff and partners for their consistent improvement and achievement despite higher performance standard requirements.

CSP Update

Andrea then provided an update on the transition of Career Services Provider (CSP) operations to Workforce Essentials following the expiration of EDSI and MAC contracts. She explained that Workforce Essentials assumed the CSP role effective July 1, 2025 under the state-approved waiver and has since focused on onboarding and training staff to ensure continuity of services. Natalie McLimore, who is overseeing CSP operations, has filled the majority of the open positions. Offers have been made and accepted, and training was conducted in June to support the transition. Many former EDSI staff chose to remain under Workforce Essentials, while others moved

on to new opportunities. Andrea emphasized that the focus remains on maintaining high-quality service delivery across all centers in the region.

Eligible Training Provider Requests

The main discussion item of the meeting was the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) review and approval. Andrea explained that this round of ETPL updates was relatively short, with only one new provider requesting to join. She reported that the Clarksville Dental Assistant School is seeking initial inclusion on the ETPL following provisional approval from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), with final approval pending formal notification. TCAT Hartsville, an existing provider, requested to add its Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration (HVACR) program. The Dental Staff School of Tennessee asked to include two new offerings—a Polishing Certification and an Online Nitrous Oxide Monitoring Certification. Both programs lead to recognized credentials and respond to high-demand skill areas. Trotter Lester Academy also requested to add its Instructor Program.

She further noted that Nashville State Community College's Phlebotomy course experienced a 33% cost increase, from \$853 to \$1,137, which exceeds the 25% threshold and therefore requires reapproval by the Board. Finally, she explained that the Tennessee Language Center requested to reinstate its Medical Interpreter Training Course. The program was previously removed from the ETPL only because its recertification window in November 2024 had lapsed.

Andrea noted that all proposed programs align with workforce needs, provide industry-recognized credentials, and support high-demand occupations. She recommended approving the list, with the Clarksville Dental Assistant School's inclusion contingent upon final approval from THEC.

Chairman Thurman called for any questions or discussion. Hearing none, he moved to formalize the recommendation. Tony Adams made the motion to approve the ETPL list as presented, including Clarksville Dental Assistant School pending final THEC approval. Billy Givens seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

Andrea concluded by reminding members that the next full Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 13, 2025, at the Nashville American Job Center. Members were encouraged to attend in person or virtually. She thanked the committee for their time and input. With no additional business, Chairman Thurman adjourned the meeting.