



**APPROVED**  
**August 7, 2025**

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board  
Innovation Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 1, 2025, via Zoom 2:00 PM**

<b>Members Attending</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Staff &amp; Guests Attending</b>
Seth Thurman	Anne Fugate	Marla Rye
Tony Adams	Selittia Johnson	Andrea Dillard
Billy Givens	Robin Baldree	Ginger Fussell
Greg Jones		Meagan Dobbins
		Alyssa Spaulding

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board Innovation Committee met via Zoom on May 1, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

With a quorum confirmed, Chairman Seth Thurman called the meeting to order. Billy Givens moved to approve the minutes, and Greg Jones seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **Federal Performance**

Meagan Dobbins reported that all federal performance measures were passing at 90% or higher for the current quarter. While Adult Measurable Skill Gains was previously projected to fail, staff efforts have brought it up to the 90% passing threshold. For Q4, all measures are expected to pass except Youth Measurable Skills Gains, though Meagan was confident it would also reach the 90% target before finalization. Marla noted that Northern Middle is the only workforce area in Tennessee to meet all federal standards this quarter; the other eight areas each fell short in at least one category.

#### **CSP Performance Update**

Andrea Dillard presented the Career Service Provider performance for Q3. MAC has exceeded enrollment goals for both in-school and out-of-school youth. They remain slightly behind on exits and placements but are projected to meet all benchmarks by the end of Q4, and wage outcomes are strong. EDSI has met all Q3 KPIs and continues working with Board staff to close out older cases.

In Montgomery County, the Board and Workforce Essentials have been serving as the CSP. All standards have been met except for youth enrollments, which were short by two. When the Board took over the Montgomery AJC, there were approximately 620 open cases dating back to 2019. That number is now in the 400s after two quarters of Board oversight. In Sumner County, where the state serves as the CSP, none of the KPIs were met in Q2, but five of ten were met in Q3—A/DW enrollments and exits, exit rates, and A/DW placement wages. Andrea noted that they are still behind on the remaining measures and have not made significant progress in closing out old cases. She attributed this to differing guidance between the Board and the state.

### **Eligible Training Provider Requests**

Andrea presented new training provider requests. Tech Impact, previously contingent on THEC approval, is now fully approved. New applicants included Professional Driving Academy (Class A & B CDL) and Pivot Technology School (Cybersecurity, Data Analytics, Software Development). While all are THEC-approved, the Data Analytics and Software Development programs do not result in credentials. Andrea noted these may not count toward performance metrics. She spoke with the school, and they explained that the two courses would result in a completion certificate and make them eligible for entry-level positions.

Other submissions included TCAT Dickson's Truck Driving course, Vol State's Fiber Optic Specialist programs, and 11 from MTSU—all credentialed with strong job outlooks. Motlow State requested reinstatement of its Paramedic program, and Austin Peay submitted a cost increase for its HR Professional course.

Seth Thurman asked if there was precedent for approving programs that do not result in a credential and whether students from such programs went on to employment. Andrea responded that while a few programs on the ETPL do not result in a credential, it would be up to the monitors to determine if a completion certificate could count as a credential. Seth expressed concern that the lack of a formal credential was unusual and problematic. He recommended approving all the programs presented except the Data Analytics and Software Development courses from Pivot Technology School, due to their lack of credentials. Billy Givens agreed, stating that programs not meeting criteria should not be approved. Greg Jones then made a motion to accept Seth's recommendation, which Tony Adams seconded. With no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

### **CSP Procurement Update**

Marla provided an update on the CSP procurement process. EDSI and MAC's contracts, in place for 4.5 years, are nearing the five-year maximum allowed under state policy. Following the State Workforce Board's February 28 approval of a new procurement policy allowing local boards to serve as CSPs, and in light of a projected \$1 million funding reduction for PY 2025–2026, the Executive Committee and CLEO Mayor Rial approved NM's application to become its own CSP. The state granted conditional approval pending clarification around monitoring. To

avoid a conflict of interest, NM will contract out program monitoring. A revised plan was submitted April 11, and full approval was granted, effective July 1, 2025.

MAC and EDSI have been informed that their contracts will not be renewed. A new organizational structure is being finalized, with Natalie McLimore named AJC Director, who was previously responsible for operating and managing TANF programs in 60 counties. Marla and Andrea will remain in strategic roles to preserve the firewall between the Board and program delivery. Four management roles and four additional positions are being eliminated, totaling approximately \$375,000 in savings. Combined with contractor underspending, this will help offset the funding shortfall. To reduce disruption for existing AJC staff, Workforce Essentials will honor prior service time when determining benefits eligibility and is considering waiving the standard 30-day wait for health insurance. Staff not retained will be offered support and access to dislocated worker services. Marla felt that they should do as much as possible to minimize the pain the AJC staff have to experience by having to change employers.

Seth Thurman commented that the staff has done an incredible amount of work in a short period. He regretted that some staff members would have to lose their positions, but he believes everyone will be in a better situation starting July 1. Greg Jones praised their decision to identify areas for cuts before the issue arose.

### **AJC Locations**

Marla noted the state still wants to limit spending on brick-and-mortar facilities. She reviewed a spreadsheet showing \$756,000 spent on the 13 centers in the first nine months, projecting approximately \$1.1 million for the 2024-25 fiscal year. While the state continues to encourage NM to reduce its brick-and-mortar focus, Marla is reluctant to close rural centers, as they are less expensive to maintain and remain important. She has discussed alternative locations with rural county mayors in case closures are required. Infrastructure costs are allocated by full-time equivalents, and with fewer state staff, remaining partners now absorb about 57% of AJC costs—up from 40-44% last year. Tony Adams requested a cost-per-participant comparison by center, and Marla agreed to provide it at the upcoming Board meeting. Greg Jones inquired about the state's plan if centers were to close; Marla stated that many participants would utilize virtual AJCs, supplemented by partnerships with community organizations, such as libraries, that offer computer access.

### **Adjourn**

Marla reminded the Board that the meeting will be held on May 14, 2025, at TCAT Smyrna. Then, with no further questions, the meeting was adjourned.