



**APPROVED  
MAY 2 2024**

**Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board  
Special Populations Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 8, 2024, via Zoom at 11:00 a.m.**

<b>Members Attending</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Staff &amp; Guests Attending</b>
Christopher West	Corey Johns	Marla Rye
Freda Herndon	James Harper	Andrea Dillard
George "Bo" Callis	Ginger Jarrett	Meagan Dobbins
Jordan Osborne	Nathan Garrett	Kim Rye
		Ginger Fussell
		Sherry Maynard

The Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Special Populations Committee met via Zoom on February 8, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.

Marla started the meeting by welcoming Jordan Osborne and Freda Herndon to the committee. Jordan Osborne is the president of the Robertson County Chamber of Commerce. Freda Herndon is the new Adult Education Director. Nathan Garrett was not present but is also new to the committee. He is the president of TCAT Nashville.

After establishing a quorum, Freda Herndon requested a motion to approve the minutes. Bo Callis motioned, and Jordan Osborne seconded. With no further discussion, the minutes were approved.

**Career Service Providers**

Andrea Dillard gave an update about the career service providers' performance. EDSI exceeded its adult/dislocated worker and youth enrollment goals in the first quarter but did not meet its enrollment goals for the second quarter. Due to the aggressive enrollment for adults and dislocated workers in the first quarter, many were sent to CDL training at the maximum amount; their direct participant expenditure budget was heavily utilized. Now, they must change their tactic by enroll individuals using the work first model, and focus their efforts on placing participants directly in a job. This would also increase the Labor Force Participation Rate. EDSI is meeting its exit rate, positive exit rate, and placement wage goals. Their cumulative enrollment rate does not meet the 50% goal.

MAC, the youth provider in Davidson County, did not meet its enrollment goals for the second quarter. However, due to a strong first quarter, their YTD enrollment is still above their goal. They are on track to meet all of their set goals.

### **Federal Performance Measures**

Andrea reviewed the Federal Score Card. The end of the first quarter was finalized, and all goals were met at 100%. The second quarter goals are 100%, but the quarter is not finalized yet. The third quarter predictive report shows the employment rate for the second quarter after exit for adult and dislocated worker are met at 90%, and the employment rate for the fourth quarter after exit for adult, dislocated worker, and youth are met at 90%. There is still time for these goals to be met at 100%. The other goals are met at 100%.

### **CSP Procurement**

Marla told the committee the original intent was to release the procurement by February 14, 2024. However, the state has engaged KPMG to study the American Job Centers and make recommendations regarding their efficiency and effectiveness. It is difficult to release an RFP when the strategic direction is unclear. Marla said it would be beneficial to hear the results of the study before releasing the RFP and wait until the Summer Youth Program ends on August 30, 2024, to end the current contract so EDSI can finish the program rather than having a new contractor, if necessary, take over in the middle of the program. Marla proposed releasing the RFP on April 1 and having a contractor selected and ready on July 1, then having a transition and training period with the new contractor, which would take over on October 1, 2024, if needed. Freda Herndon asked if the committee needed to make a recommendation and would the vote be at the Board meeting. Marla said it would be a full Board vote and the recommendation would come from the Finance Committee. Chris West agreed with the transition period.

### **Employer Business Engagement Plan**

Andrea then gave a brief summary of the Business Engagement Plan. The state conducted an assessment survey with employers across the state and determined that employers still need employees. This Business Engagement Plan suggests a streamlined system so that AJC employees are aware of which businesses have open positions. Marla added that this would be a way to consistently deliver services to employers, help economic development, and raise expectations for the system as a whole. This system would also assist in retraining the career services providers to place participants into jobs rather than training. Employers need a pool of candidates from which they can hire immediately. In most instances, the employer is offering training.

### **Youth**

Marla gave a brief update about the Summer Youth Employment Program. This program has approximately \$1M to be utilized between now and the end of August 2024 for youth training work experience, placing them in private or public sector jobs. The state plans to implement a marketing plan for this program. Last summer, 300 kids participated in this program. We would like to have more youth participants for summer 2024, but we need to have a strategy for service in each county, including choosing how many youths to serve.

### **Trends-ESL Students**

Freda Herndon shared with the committee some of the updates and trends for the Adult Education Department. A new type of adult learner is becoming more frequent in the department, particularly in Rutherford, Wilson, and Montgomery Counties. They are seeing a higher rate of ELL students who are illiterate in their own language due to not having a formal education. These students also require more learning time. Freda is looking at a partnership with a few counties to provide services to high school students who struggle with English and are illiterate in their own language due to a lack of formal education. Adult Ed also sees students who may have degrees in their own country but are not

recognized in the US. Wilson County is trying to recruit these particular students and develop a pathway for them to become teachers so they can be hired quickly. Immigrant enrollment in public schools is growing. Marla expressed a concern that if schools and parents release these young students to the adult education program, they are obligated to provide instruction. There will be an impact on the workforce, knowing it will take years to make the students proficient in English and then find a job despite their barriers.

#### **WIOA Plan**

Marla told the committee that the Northern Middle staff are in the middle of regional and local planning for the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act. The state WIOA plan was just released. Our local plan will be released for comment in March. She encouraged everyone to review the material and provide feedback. The NM plan will be presented to the Board in May.

#### **Adjourn**

Marla reminded them that the next Board meeting would be on February 14, 2024, at TCAT Clarksville. Freda Herndon adjourned the committee meeting.