

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.
OF
MAHONING AND COLUMBIANA COUNTIES**

Youth Committee Meeting
March 4, 2021
3:00pm
Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present: Jim Burgham, Ed Emerick, Kyle Kiraly, Nancy Romeo for Joe Caruso, and Sharon Woodberry.
Committee Members Absent: Roger Beltz and Michelle Fitzsimmons.
Board Staff: Bert Cene and Sharlene Senediak.
CCMEP Lead Agency Staff: Tonya Hawkins, Mary Ann Kochalko, Susie Kooser, and Leigh Samargia-Pflug.

Jim Burgham, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:00pm after verification of a quorum.

Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the previous meeting minutes as presented.
Motion made by: Nancy Romeo
Seconded by: Kyle Kiraly
Discussion: None
Motion approved.

Extension of Youth Contracts

Area 17 currently has 3 contracts in place for youth services. The required 14 WIOA youth elements were competitively procured in 2018, and the contracts have been renewed twice. The contract in Mahoning County is with Compass Family and Community Services; the contracts in Columbiana County are with The Counseling Center of Columbiana County and Community Action Agency of Columbiana County. MCTA refers participants for the appropriate services and contracts are administered on a cost-reimbursement basis. All contracts have been monitored and met satisfactory performance.

Motion: To recommend to the Executive Committee to extend the current youth services contracts to June 30, 2022.
Motion made by: Kyle Kiraly
Seconded by: Ed Emerick
Abstention: Nancy Romeo
Discussion: None
Motion approved.

This is the last allowable contract renewal; an RFP for youth services will be issued late 2021/early 2022. A new contract will take effect July 1, 2022.

Review of CCMEP Activity Report

As of February 28, 2021, Area 17 has 510 active participants enrolled in CCMEP. Since July 1, 2020, there have been 96 new enrollments. New enrollments are down compared to this time last year due to COVID-19 restrictions and the limited amount of outreach that was able to be done.

CCMEP has the following number of participants in services: 73 in job-readiness, 11 in work experience, 18 in post-secondary training, 133 in high school equivalency preparation, and 71 in unsubsidized job placements. Given the impact of COVID-19 in the workforce, these numbers are commendable.

An inquiry about the significant difference in numbers of participants in high school equivalency preparation between counties (Mahoning - 5; Columbiana - 128) was made. The difference can be attributed

to a demographic difference of participants in each county; Columbiana County has more in-school youth referred to the program, whereas Mahoning County has more out-of-school referrals.

County Updates

Mahoning County

Focus has been on keeping the youth in the program engaged. This time last year, efforts were being made to recruit in-school youth (high school sophomores) into the comprehensive, job-readiness program until COVID-19 restrictions were put in place. Recruiting and reengaging in-school youth virtually has been challenging, particularly since high school classes remain online only.

In an effort to recruit in-school youth this year, guidance counselors have been contacted to determine if any seniors may be interested in the program. At this time, interest has been limited due to the uncertainty of the pandemic. The majority of out-of-school youth enrollments have been referred from MCDJFS.

Compass has redesigned its job readiness program to be offered virtually; the virtual program will begin next week. Work sites are being contacted in preparation for work experience to potentially being in May.

Columbiana County

Preparations are being made for the summer. The Counseling Center is beginning to meet with employers and collect contracts to serve as work sites for youth. During the pandemic, there has been a decline in students' grades and attendance. Tutoring has been utilized much more this year to address the decline in grades and to provide some motivation while completing online classes at home.

With some of the COVID-19 restrictions being lifted, some out-of-school youth have recently been placed back into work experience. All work sites are required to provide a COVID-19 policy. A few seniors have the option to work 120 hours and earn an elective credit, as a way to meet graduation requirements.

The curriculum for the job readiness classes offered by The Counseling Center was recently monitored and updated. Classes are also being offered alternate times every other month; classes will be offered in the morning one month, and late afternoon/early evening the next month.

In addition to the participants listed on the CCMEP report, participants are also in follow-up services before they exit the program. 45 participants recently completed follow-up services, and 36 remain in follow-up services.

This time last year, there were 517 total enrollments in CCMEP compared to 510 this year. Although there has not been a significant number of new enrollments, participants are staying in the program longer. Participants will not be exited from the program before they are ready; staff are still actively working with participants on their caseloads.

Member Updates/Other Business

Retirement – Bert Cene announced that he will be retiring at the end of the month, and Mary Ann Kochalko will be the new WDB Director.

Next Meeting – The next Youth Committee is scheduled for June 3, 2021 at 3pm.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.