

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.
OF
MAHONING AND COLUMBIANA COUNTIES
One-Stop Committee Meeting
September 9, 2021
8:00 am
Dutch Village Inn – Best Western Plus

Attendees: Tom Andrews, Paul Anthony, Cyndy Bresnahan, Ishmael Brown, Barbara Bush, Megan Cowden, Kelly Darney, John Dilling, Brian Eskridge, Lynn Esposito, Sandy Furano, Lindsay Hildreth, Jack Hile, Susie Kooser, Gloria Mathews, Mary Mihalopoulos, Christina Miller, Audrey Morales, Rakia Naze, Jennifer Pancake, Carol Ramsay-Loomis, Robert Ritchey, Sharlene Senediak, Holly Swartz, Sheyra Vazquez, and Sharon Woodberry.

Call to Order/Introductions

Kelly Darney, One-Stop Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:05am, and introductions were made.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Motion:	To approve the consent agenda items as presented.
Motion made by:	Tom Andrews
Seconded by:	Ishmael Brown
Discussion:	None
Motion approved.	

Old Business

Budget to Actual Report

Both OhioMeansJobs centers are on track to spend 25% of their PY21 budgets by September 30th, and the budgets will be fully spent by June 30th.

In Columbiana County, additional air scrubbers and new public computers and printers to replace the outdated equipment will be expensive purchases for this year. Efforts are being made to certify the computer lab through Pearson VUE in order to conduct computer-based TABE and GED testing. Since wellness barriers are in the computer lab, a camera system is required by Pearson VUE in order to monitor the testing.

In Mahoning County, technology needs are being reviewed and sound barriers are needed for the offices and conference rooms.

At this time, it is uncertain if funding will need to be transferred between line items.

New Business

Business Services

Business services continued to be offered during the pandemic, with many companies requesting services for the first-time, particularly to address their hiring needs. The following comparison of business services activity in 2019 and 2021 was provided respectively: job orders – 329, 265; OJTs – 134, 84; recruitments – 70, 6; BRN interviews – 11, 23. More BRN interviews were able to be completed this year due to additional staff hired through a grant received from the State. Aside from hiring needs, other challenges businesses are dealing with include supply chain issues, limiting their products/services, and diversifying their products/services. Many businesses are considering the OJT program to address their hiring needs, as well as re-evaluating their wage and benefits package to attract employees. Staff also participated in two job fairs this year which served as an outreach opportunity to both employers and job seekers regarding services available through the OMJ centers.

Ohio to Work Initiative

The Ohio to Work initiative was created by JobsOhio to help displaced workers reskill and restart their careers. The four key partners to reach displaced workers for the initiative include MCTA, Trumbull County OhioMeansJobs, Flying High, Inc., and National Center for Urban Scholars. Employers and training providers will also be part of the initiative. MVMC and the Regional Chamber are facilitating the collaboration among the partners.

Industries of focus are IT, healthcare and manufacturing. The intent of the initiative is to work within the existing service delivery system, with the goal to increase traffic through more extensive outreach efforts. Funding is available for outreach and will be used establish a presence on social media. Quotes are currently being requested from media firms.

OMJ Center Updates

Customer traffic remains low compared to pre-pandemic levels, which may be attributed to many reasons. In Mahoning County, the average is 18 customers per day, with most coming in for eligibility appointments, the career exploration workshop, or the OMJ orientation. It is anticipated that the outreach efforts being provided through the Ohio to Work initiative will help with the onsite, customer traffic. The OMJ center in Mahoning County also moved to the back of the building during the pandemic, and signage on the building is no longer as visible to the public, leading many to think the center permanently closed. The plaza manager has been contacted to determine what signage options are available to be placed on the building.

The RESEA program has been progressing well, and a State monitoring will be scheduled soon. In addition to tracking basic services offered through the OMJ centers, efforts are also being made to track the various partner services being provided to RESEA participants.

Precautionary measures in response to COVID are still being taken, and any State mandates are being followed. Areas are cleaned regularly, and masks are available to customers. Customers have been very cooperative with adhering to protocols in place.

Although many job openings remain unfilled, there is still a lot of activity at the OMJ centers. Since the March meeting, there were 2,831 total visits, which includes repeat visits. Initially, 79% of the visits and services were virtual, however now, most of the visits and services are onsite. Since March, 578 individuals have participated in workshops. Virtual workshops continue to be offered as an option.

Since the March meeting, 4,600 services have been provided. The primary services include: eligibility appointments, information about training and funding opportunities, job search assistance, creating/updating resumes, RESEA, registering on OhioMeansJobs.com, reviewing recommended services based on completed self-assessments, and UC referrals.

In order to encourage more partner participation, cross-trainings will be held virtually. It is vital for partner staff to be aware of other partners' services in order to make appropriate referrals for customers. OMJ staff can also come to the partner agency to provide an overview about the OMJ system to partner staff.

WDB Director's Update

The State has provided notification that the local workforce boards will be required to certify their OMJ centers again through an evaluation process by the end of the program year. Under WIOA, the State is required to establish objective criteria for local areas to use for the certification process. When Phases 1 and 2 of the OMJ certification process were completed previously, the criteria was very complex and required a significant investment in time for the operator and Board to complete. Specific guidance has not been issued yet, but the State indicated that the evaluation criteria will be simplified. Area 17 will plan to conduct its certification process by February so it can be approved at the full WDB meeting in April.

Partner Updates

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) – Local ODJFS staff are currently working 3 days onsite and 2 days remotely. This schedule may change; if so, OMJ managers will be notified.

ARIES, which will be the State's new case management system, is scheduled to be released during the first part of 2022.

ODJFS representatives in Columbus are requesting local areas to remove outdated State forms from OMJ centers and ensure current State forms are made available. Forms can be ordered through the ODJFS website.

Local ODJFS staff have 112 RESEA participants in case management for Area 17. Case management will continue until employment is attained. Employed individuals will also be reported to the Ohio to Work initiative, when appropriate.

Veteran lanyards will be replaced with stickers. An initial order was placed and will be provided when available. Additional stickers can be ordered, if needed.

Columbiana County Port Authority (CCPA) – CCPA recently received an EDA grant to implement a business recovery program, and businesses will be surveyed about their needs. The program was launched in August and coordination is in place with other economic development agencies. Over \$3 million was also received from ODOT for river businesses to use for equipment, dock replacement, and other building needs. CCPA can also provide assistance to businesses to research and apply for grants or loans that can help fund expansion or other needs identified.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) – The OOD office was scheduled to reopen to the public this week, however, the reopening has been delayed until June due to the COVID variant. OOD staff are reporting to onsite work locations one day a week and are also able to see individuals in the community.

Community Action Agency of Columbiana County – \$465 million of federal funding has been provided to 47 community action agencies in Ohio for rental and utility assistance as a result of the pandemic. The CAA of Columbiana County provided over \$1 million in assistance, and more funding is available. MYCAP also has this funding available in Mahoning County. Individuals needing assistance can contact the office in their respective county.

A transitional program is also available for youth and can be a resource for CCMEP.

Mom's Meals – Mom's Meals is actively recruiting at the Eastwood Mall until September 26th.

Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio (ESCEO) Presentation

Sandy Furano, Director of Career Counseling Services at ESCEO, provided an overview of career counseling services offered through the ESCEO. Currently, career counselors go into 20 school districts within the Mahoning, Columbiana, and Trumbull County area, to provide career counseling to middle school and high school students. The career counselors complement guidance counselors in the schools by reaching out to businesses and building trades and scheduling job shadowing, guest speakers, lunch and learn events. Career counselors also utilize the OhioMeansJobs website to facilitate career exploration with students to determine their interests and understand what options are available. Soft skills and life skills are also focused upon.

A business advisory council (BAC) meets every month and all school districts must be aligned with a BAC. The BAC creates initiatives for students to gain more real-world experience.

More information can be found on the website: www.esceasternohio.org

Columbiana County Educational Service Center (CCESC) Presentation

John Dilling provided updates regarding the initiatives being offered through the CCESC.

All 14 building trades will be participating in the Skilled Trades Expo being held on September 22nd and 23rd.

The 3rd Kids STEAM University will be held on September 11th at Kent State University – Salem campus. Over 30 exhibitors will be participating, and over 200 students with their parents, are expected to attend. It is a K-5, all hands-on program.

Grants were received for 21st century after-school programs in Wellsville, Lisbon, and Crestview. The programs offer intervention and allow business partners to provide hands-on activities in school.

CCESC was one of the 12 pilot sites selected by the Office of Workforce Transformation to place students in tech intern programs. The interns worked up to 150 hours work during summer at \$12/hour. Businesses were reimbursed 2/3 of the pay for the interns with grant funds. The program was successful, and it is expected to expand moving forward.

The CCESC and BAC was selected as the only pilot site in Ohio for career advising. Crestview local schools is participating in it, and the intention of the pilot is to identify gaps between policy and practice in career advising throughout the year.

Silver Apple continues to offer soft skills to students in 7 school districts, with 9 businesses providing soft skills and project-based learning.

InventToMake and AmericaMakes is designing STEM kits for students to take home and examine the different aspects of STEM.

Funding was also available to do a project with the BAC called One Book, One Community. In November, Homer Hickam, the author of the book Rocket Boys will meet with students through Zoom to discuss the parallels of

the economy between his hometown of Coalwood, WV and Columbiana County. A NASA engineer will be scheduled to talk in December.

On October 21st, representatives from CCESC and the BAC will participate on the Education with Purpose live stream event. It is a town hall, and provides an opportunity to share that college is one option that can lead to a career, but it is not the only option – many options are available.

Meeting Evaluation

Partners were asked to complete the meeting evaluation form provided.

Next Meeting – The next One-Stop Committee meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2021.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:35am.