

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

Individuals with Disabilities Committee Meeting
October 24, 2023
9:00am
OhioMeansJobs Center Mahoning County

Committee Members Present: Ed Emerick, Brian Eskridge, Dawn Haines for Joe Caruso, Melissa Maiorano, Meribeth Noble, Julie Rupert, and Susie Wickline
Committee Members Absent: Shirley Bowald, Matt Golladay, Brenda Heidinger, and Marcy Patton
Adjunct Members: Jack Hile, Ashlee Iannucci, and Patty Koehnlein
Board Staff: Mary Ann Kochalko and Sharlene Senediak
Guests: Janine Martindale and Sarah Trout

Mr. Eskridge, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05am after verification of a quorum.

Approval of July 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the July 13, 2023 meeting minutes as prepared.
Motion made by: Ed Emerick
Seconded by: Julie Rupert
Discussion: None
Motion approved.

Approval of 2024 Meeting Schedule

Motion: To approve the 2024 meeting schedule as prepared.
Motion made by: Julie Rupert
Seconded by: Ed Emerick
Discussion: None
Motion approved.

OOD's Ohio Transition Support Partnership (OTSP) – Connecting High School Students with Career Opportunities: OOD OTSP VR Counselors Sarah Trout, Patty Koehnlein, and Janine Martindale

The OTSP initiative through OOD focuses on reaching high school students and help them decide what career path they would like to pursue after graduation.

The OTSP counselors begin reaching out to 14-year-olds who have an IEP, ETR, or ISP, and the counselors can help throughout a student's entire time in high school. The counselors will assess the students' disability to determine what they can do to work towards college or vocational skills, which can lead to a fulfilling career.

Students can participate in a summer youth program, career exploration, resume building, job shadowing, and post-secondary options. Vocational evaluations can also be completed to determine a student's interests, the number of jobs in the area, the potential earnings, and if it fits within their scope. Students can also transfer to another county or state and still receive services.

Referrals to the program can be made by anyone at any time. A counselor will reach out to the student to begin the process. If the student is determined to be eligible, an individualized plan for employment and a job goal will be developed. When developing the job goal, local labor market information is taken into consideration, and the OhioMeansJobs website is utilized. After the job goal is established, services that will

help achieve the job goal is determined. The objective is to reach the job goal and work independently for 90 days; if this is accomplished, the case is closed successfully. The case can be reopened if anything changes.

The pre-employment transition services are extremely valuable as they provide a gentle introduction to the world of work, where students can learn about a job before actually starting it. When they start a job, they are more confident because they are more familiar with what to expect. This leads to more success and has a lifelong impact when students engage in the workforce early.

OTSP works closely with schools and other related agencies. Meetings with students are conducted during school hours.

The OOD website also has additional information for individuals to diver deeper into the services that are available.

Grant Updates

No updates are available for the RETAIN grant. Mercy Health continues to handle the grant program and make referrals to the OMJ centers when needed. OMJ staff will conduct follow-up with those who are referred.

The Fresh Start grant is scheduled to end in March 2024, unless it is extended. The State has advised areas to continue spending as usual. There has been an increase in individuals being served under the grant. The State will apply for additional funding if the opportunity arises. If the upcoming amendment regarding marijuana passes in Ohio, this may present another challenge for businesses.

Member Updates

No partner updates were reported.

Guest Invite Ideas

Suggestions for guest speakers can be emailed to Brian Eskridge.

Other Business

No other business was reported.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25am.