



Nebraska Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2019
Administrative Services Building
Development Center, Lower Level
1526 K Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Agenda item 1. Call to Order

Chair Mark Moravec called the meeting of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board (the Board) to order on March 8, 2019 at approximately 9a at the Administrative Services Building, located at 1526 K Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Agenda item 2. Roll Call

Lindsey Sullivan called the roll and determined that a quorum was established.

Members in attendance

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. John Albin | 6. Susan Martin | 11. Jennifer Sedlacek |
| 2. Brian Deakin | 7. Mark Moravec | 12. Dannette Smith |
| 3. Jason Feldhaus | 8. Don Nordell | 13. Becky Stitt |
| 4. Allan Hale | 9. Terri Ridder | 14. Lisa Wilson |
| 5. James Hanson, Jr. | 10. Bradley Schroeder | |

Members absent

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Governor Pete Ricketts | 3. Michael Geary | 5. Carol Swigart |
| 2. Senator Joni Albrecht | 4. Dave Rippe | |

Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) Board support staff in attendance

1. Stan Odenthal, Director, Office of Employment & Training
2. Brian Potters, Workforce Services Administrator, Office of Employment & Training
3. Erin Cooper, Workforce Services Administrator, Office of Employment & Training
4. Libby Elder, Attorney III, Office of the General Counsel
5. Dawn Carrillo, WIOA Program Analyst, Office of Employment & Training
6. Deb Andersen, WIOA Policy Coordinator, Office of Employment & Training
7. Lindsey Sullivan, Administrative Assistant II, Office of Employment & Training

Guests in attendance

1. Phil Baker, NDOL
2. Scott Hunzeker, NDOL
3. Shauna Smith, NDOL
4. Madhavi Bhadbhade, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
5. Valentina Obafunwa, Nebraska Department of Economic Development

6. Shari Clausen, Job Corps
7. Jody Stutzman, Proteus
8. Jan Norlander-Jensen, Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Area
9. Michelle Olson, Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Area
10. Kelsey Miller, Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Area
11. Ashley Mathers, Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Area
12. Karly Hernandez, Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Area
13. Susan Nickerson, Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Area
14. Joanna McGarvey, Greater Omaha Workforce Development Area
15. Andy Huls, Greater Omaha Workforce Development Area

Agenda item 3. Notice of Publication

Lindsey Sullivan announced that the Notice of Public Meeting was duly published, in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, in the Beatrice Daily Sun, Grand Island Independent, Lincoln Journal Star, North Platte Telegraph, Omaha World Herald, and Scottsbluff Star-Herald and on the State of Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar.

Agenda item 4. Approval of Minutes

James Hanson, Jr. motioned to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2018 meeting of the Board (Handout 1), and Brian Deakin seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted by voice vote on the motion, which carried unanimously.¹

Agenda item 5. WIOA – Update

Stan Odenthal provided an update to the Board on waivers submitted by NDOL regarding certain legislative and regulatory requirements established under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and its implementing regulations. Stan reminded the Board of waivers which were submitted in 2018: a waiver of the prohibition against stand-alone Wagner-Peysner offices (denied) and a waiver of the prohibition against assigning a local workforce development area to more than one planning region (approved). Stan advised the Board of six additional waivers NDOL would be submitting at the end of March:

1. waiver of the requirements established under WIOA Sec. 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR § 681.410, which mandate that not less than 75 percent of funds allotted to states under WIOA Sec. 127(b)(1)(C), reserved under WIOA Sec. 128(a), and available for statewide activities under WIOA Sec. 129(b) must be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for out-of-school youth (OSY); and available to local workforce development areas (local areas) under WIOA Sec. 129(c) must be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for OSY;
2. waiver to expand the definition of recognized postsecondary credential, which is defined under WIOA Sec. 3(52) as an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree; and a waiver of the requirements outlined in WIOA Sec. 116(b)(2) and 20 CFR § 677.155(a) as they relate attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials during participation in a Title I program or within one year after program exit;

¹ Agendas, minutes, and handouts for meetings of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board are available electronically and accessible at <https://dol.nebraska.gov/EmploymentAndTraining/LCRWP/WIOA/NWDB>.

3. waiver of requirements of WIOA Secs. 116 and 122 and 20 CFR §§ 677.230 and 680.400 – 680.530 mandating the collection and reporting of performance data on all students participating in training programs listed on the Nebraska’s Eligible Training Provider List;
4. waiver of the one-stop operator requirements of WIOA Sec. 121(d) and 20 CFR § 678.600, which require that each local area have a separate entity carrying out its one-stop operator duties;
5. waiver of the determination to exclude certain other one-stop partner programs from being counted towards the co-location requirement of WIOA Sec. 303; and
6. waiver of the definition of new local area as mentioned 20 CFR § 683.125(c) for the purposes of minimum allocation provisions.

Discussion was heard on the proposed waivers. Don Nordell asked about the timing of submission of waivers, whether there was a submission deadline. Stan advised that states may submit waivers at any time.

Agenda item 6. Subcommittee Assignments and Meetings

Chair Mark Moravec directed the Board’s attention to Handout 2, roster of members of the Board’s three newly formed subcommittees: Evaluation and Review; Policy and Oversight; and Strategy and Innovation. Chair Moravec reminded the Board that the first meeting of the subcommittees would be held immediately following adjournment of the Board’s meeting. Chair Moravec stated that future subcommittee meetings would likely be held immediately after each quarterly meeting of the Board and asked if there were questions or concerns on that approach to subcommittee meetings. No questions were asked or concerns voiced.

Agenda item 7. Possible State Plan Modification – Discretionary Allocation Methodology

Stan Odenthal advised the Board on the possibility of modification of Nebraska’s Combined State Plan. The modification would, if approved, implement a discretionary allocation methodology for Nebraska’s WIOA youth and adult programs, as permitted under WIOA Secs. 128(b)(3) and 133(b)(3), respectively. In both cases, allocations made to local workforce development areas (local areas) for the programs would be based on a discretionary methodology.

Currently, program funds are allocated to local areas based on formulas defined under WIOA Secs. 128 (b)(2) and 133(b)(2). Under a discretionary methodology, 70 percent of the funds allocated to local areas for the programs would be allocated based on the formulas defined in WIOA Sec. 128 (b)(2) and 133(b)(2), with the remaining 30 percent allocated on the basis of formulas that:

- incorporate additional factors relating to
 - excess youth poverty in urban, rural, and suburban local areas; and
 - excess unemployment above the state average in urban, rural, and suburban local areas; and
- were developed by the Board and approved by the Secretary as part of the state plan.

Discussion was heard on the proposed plan modification. Jason Feldhaus asked about the purpose of the modification. Stan explained that NDOL feels the discretionary methodology would more effectively distribute funds within Nebraska based on conditions that are specific to Nebraska, ultimately improving the impact of the programs. John Albin indicated agreement with Stan’s remarks. Brian Deakin commented similarly, saying he felt the discretionary methodology would likely result in greater impact. Jason agreed with Brian’s remarks. Regarding the factors to

be identified by the Board, James Hanson commented that the data used to determine allocation amounts should be based on current data rather than year-old data.

Agenda item 8. Nebraska Industry Partnership Grant Program

Valentina Obafunwa and Brian Potters presented to the Board on the proposed Nebraska Industry Partnership Grant Program. Valentina directed the Board's attention to Handout 3, a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. Valentina provided an overview of past and ongoing efforts regarding sector partnerships in Nebraska. Valentina described the focus of the proposed grant program, to provide matching financial support for emerging and active sector partnerships across Nebraska. Brian advised the Board on the status of the proposed program, saying that grant guidelines, applications, and forms were currently under review by NDOL Legal. Brian also described next steps and timelines regarding program implementation, including planned technical assistance for potential grant applicants.

Discussion was heard on the proposed grant program. Dan Curran asked if potential applicants would be provided with examples of sector partnership initiatives. Valentina stated that examples are provided in the grant guidelines and would be discussed during technical assistance. John Albin asked if other states have implemented such a grant program. Valentina indicated that Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Oregon have sector partnership grants programs similar to Nebraska's proposed grant program. Jason Feldhaus asked if the financial match to be made by the potential applicants could be based on in-kind contributions. Valentina advised that the required financial match must be a cash match. Mark Moravec asked when NDOL Legal was expected to complete its review of the grant guidelines, applications, and forms. Libby Elder estimated that the review would be completed within three weeks.

Agenda item 9. JAG Nebraska

Erin Cooper presented to the Board on JAG Nebraska. Erin advised the board that JAG Nebraska was established to help high-barrier youth graduate from high school and make successful transitions to postsecondary education or meaningful employment. Nebraska began implementation of the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) model in the fall of 2018; and in January 2019, three sites were launched with nearly 75 youth enrolled. By 2020, JAG Nebraska is planning to have 12 sites. JAG Nebraska serves high-barrier youth through an in-school, for-credit course consisting of more than 80 competencies leading to successful outcomes. These competencies focus on building workplace skills and life skills necessary to graduate high school and obtain employment or transition to another positive post-graduation outcome (military enlistment, college enrollment, etc.). The combination of workplace readiness and life skills training, coupled with intensive supportive services, has proven successful for more than 1.25 million youth in 35 states since 1980. These high-barrier youth, often labeled "at-risk" and unlikely to complete high school, have beat the odds with the support of JAG. Nationally, the JAG Class of 2017 had a graduation rate of greater than 95 percent. In addition to high graduation rates, JAG graduates are 2.3 times more likely to be employed full time compared to the general population of 18- to 20-year olds. Further, research conducted by Drexel University on post-high school employment outcomes for JAG graduates shows significant gains in weekly earnings, higher hourly wages, and better non-wage compensation, including health insurance and retirement benefits.

Discussion was heard on JAG Nebraska. Lisa Wilson asked for a definition of "at-risk youth." Erin stated that there are 40 criteria used to identify at-risk youth. Youth that meet any one of the 40 criteria would be considered "at-risk." Dannette Smith asked how the parents of the JAG Nebraska students are supported during their children's participation in the program. Erin

indicated that parents are provided support through community providers. John Albin asked if JAG Nebraska is a year-round program. Erin confirmed that it is year-round. Terri Ridder asked if the JAG Nebraska students are co-enrolled in other programs. Erin confirmed that they are whenever possible. Mark Moravec asked if information on JAG Nebraska is available online. Erin stated that those who are interested may access information at jjag.org.

Agenda item 10. Local Area Reports

Representatives of Nebraska's local workforce development boards presented to the Board regarding their respective adult programs, addressing three topics described in Handout 4:

1. program design and services;
2. program funding; and
3. one successful program initiative implemented by the local board during Program Year 2017 (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018).

Michelle Olson presented on behalf of the Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Board (Handout 5); Ashley Mathers presented on behalf of the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board (Handout 6); and James Hanson, Jr. and Joanna McGarvey presented on behalf of the Greater Omaha Workforce Development Board (Handout 7).

Discussion was heard on the local area reports. Regarding the Greater Nebraska report, John Albin asked how individuals are selected for participation in the SNAP/WIOA Program. Ashley indicated that the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS) refers individuals who are receiving SNAP benefits to the SNAP/WIOA Program. Jason Feldhaus asked if there are eligibility criteria for participation in the program. Ashley indicated that the individuals must meet eligibility requirements for participation in the WIOA Title I program. Mark Moravec asked if data is collected on programmatic outcomes. Ashley indicated that programmatic outcomes are tracked by NDHHS and that she would provide statistics on outcomes following the meeting.

Agenda item 11. Member Updates

Chair Moravec asked Members of the Board for updates on their respective industries or organizations and local workforce development area activities for the Members who also serve on local workforce development Boards. Members of the Board provided updates as requested.

Agenda item 12. Public Comment

Chair Moravec opened the floor for public comment. No public comments were made.

Agenda item 13. Adjournment

Chair Moravec asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bradley Schroeder motioned that the meeting be adjourned, and Lisa Wilson seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted by voice vote on the motion, which carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30a.