

**Governor's State Workforce Development Board
November 14, 2023, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Thomas Freeland*
Ms. Valerie Richardson*
Mr. William Floyd
Mr. Warren Snead
Mr. Pat Michaels
Dr. Windsor Sherrill
Mr. John Uprichard

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Charles Brave, Jr.

Welcome and Opening Remarks Mr. Thomas Freeland, SWDB Chair

Mr. Thomas Freeland, State Workforce Development Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

Mr. Freeland acknowledged that the SC Secret Shopper presentation will take place prior to moving into the second quarter Executive Committee meeting.

SC Secret Shopper Findings Ms. Teria Coleman, MPH

The deployment of the SC Works Secret Shopper Initiative was created to increase business and job seeker use of the SC Works system by assessing customers' experience when interacting with the SC Works system.

Ms. Tara Dixon, MPH, Contract Manager, and Ms. Teria Coleman, MPH, Lead Data Collector with EvalGroup, presented the SC Works Secret Shopper Pilot Program findings. The Aiken Center, McCallister Square (Greenville) Center, Charleston Center, and Coastal (Conway) Centers were chosen as the target centers for the program. Phase I was conducted between January 24 - February 23, 2023, with business and job seekers. During Phase II, Secret Shoppers visited the selected SC Works Centers.

Overall, the findings showed that the staff was professional and courteous; customers had a short wait time, a good physical environment, a high level of engagement, and availability of language translation services.

Mr. Adam Paige, Director of Workforce Initiatives, reviewed the action plan to implement recommendations from the Secret Shopper findings. To improve customer satisfaction, the plan included reviewing the universal protocol or checklist for all SC Works Center staff to be utilized during an in-person job seeker visit. Additionally, the plan included ensuring brochures and hot job boards are readily available to job seekers. A State Instruction Letter (SIL) will be developed, including guidance on collecting customer feedback and using that feedback for continuous improvement. The SIL will include questions and annual reporting of customer satisfaction data requirements.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 30, 2023* Mr. Freeland

Mr. Warren Snead motioned to approve the August 30, 2023 meeting minutes. Ms. Valerie Richardson seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the meeting minutes.

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Request for Waiver Authority Recommendation*Ms. Sheleena Rios

Ms. Sheleena Rios, Workforce Policy and Research Manager, reviewed the recommendation to amend State Instruction Letter (SIL) 21-05, Waiver of State Specific Requirements, and clarify the language to reinforce that local plan modification is required when a waiver request has been approved. The amendment would allow requests made in the 4th quarter to waive current program year requirements if there is reasonable cause or the requirements inhibit the workforce priorities from being delivered. The amendment would also remove the requirement that DEW must annually obtain approval authority, from the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), before approving or denying any waiver requests, submitted by Local Workforce Development Areas, each program year. She reminded the Committee that failure to remove the annual requirement for staff to request authority, would require the Board to grant the authority to approve or deny waiver requests to staff each program year.

Mr. Freeland facilitated the discussion on the waiver recommendation request. Ms. Rios explained that the appropriate SWDB subcommittee will continue to be updated upon approval or denial of an LWDA waiver request. Allowing waiver decisions to be made in the 4th quarter, removes barriers that would hinder an area's ability to serve participants in any way. This recommendation will only be applicable to state performance requirements. Mr. Warren Snead motioned to accept the recommendations to amend State Instruction Letter 21-05, advancing them to the State Workforce Development Board for a final vote. Ms. Valerie Richardson seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the recommendations, advancing them to the State Workforce Development Board for a final vote.

Unified State Plan Review Mr. Charles Appleby

Mr. Charles Appleby, Senior Advisor, Coordinating Council for Workforce Development, provided an update on the Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act (Act 67) activities, focusing on the Unified State Plan, a comprehensive education and workforce development plan.

The Unified State Plan (USP) is a systematic approach to statewide education and workforce development to streamline and unify the efforts of entities involved throughout the state. Mr. Appleby noted that the USP does not replace nor negate the required program and agency-required plans. The USP is an opportunity to address and collaborate around the state’s workforce and educational needs. The USP’s vision, “Achieve and sustain South Carolina’s workforce potential,” has been adopted as the vision for the 2024 Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan. Both plans include strategies in three topic areas: awareness, skills, and obstacles.

Committee Activity Reports..... Committee Chairs

Board Development Committee – Mr. Pat Michaels

The Board Development Management Committee did not meet during in the 2nd quarter. In alignment with the Committee’s priority, the Committee hosted Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training. The DE&I Training, delivered by Ms. Nina Staggers, reviewed the roles and responsibilities of SWDB members, compared the State’s demographics and the population served

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by the SC Works System, and the significance of understanding DE&I as a Board member. The training also included actions the Board can take to understand the population it serves.

Committee on Workforce Innovation – Dr. Windsor Sherrill

During the 2nd quarter Innovation Committee meeting, Mr. Scott Ferguson, provided an update on the Shared Case Management System initiative, to support intake, referral, and co-enrollment. Gartner Consulting was awarded the project and will conduct a feasibility study to identify options, for DEW and its partners, to integrate data more effectively to support service delivery. Mr. Ferguson shared the Shared Case Management System project timeline and explained the project will be executed over three phases that began in September, with completion to be completed around mid-November.

SC Works Management Committee – Mr. Warren Snead

Mr. Adam Paige updated the SC Works Management Committee on the SC Soft Skills Certificate. SC created the SC Professional Skills Certificate in partnership with WIN Learning. The credential is earned after successfully passing the Digital Literacy and Essential Soft Skills Assessments. At the time of the Committee meeting, 19 credentials had been earned.

Mr. Zach Nickerson provided an update on PY'22 WIOA program and state fiscal performance. Each of the 12 LWDBAs met the 80% obligation rate for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. Eleven areas met or exceeded the 70% Fund Utilization Rate (FUR) for adult programs, ten areas met FUR for Dislocated Workers, and eight met the Youth FUR. Ten areas met the 30% participation Cost Rate (PCR).

Overall, the State met or exceeded all WIOA Program performance measures. The six (6) local areas that did not meet fiscal performance have triggered progressive sanction measures in which this is the second year of failure for two (2) local areas. For each of the four (4) local areas, for which this is the first year they have failed the measure(s), the LWDB will be required to submit a Corrective Action Plan within 45 days of the formal notice, describing how it will improve and meet performance. Upon acceptance of the CAP, the LWDB will submit progress reports to DEW on a mutually agreed-upon schedule.

The two (2) areas, in which this is the second year they have failed the measure, in addition to the formal notice, DEW will present to the full LWDB the performance, sanctions, and potential consequences to the Local Workforce Development Board and Local Workforce Development Area of continued failed performance. The Local Workforce Development Area will be required to commit funds for dedicated external technical assistance. DEW will work with appropriate Local Workforce Development Area staff to amend the Corrective Action Plan as needed. (Per 19-04, Change 1, WIOA Title I Sanctions Policy). Both areas failed the Youth FUR requirement and are unable to receive Youth Discretionary funding until compliance with this measure is met. If each local area does not meet the Youth FUR for Program Year 2023, then the excess Youth funding (any amount over the 30% allowed) will be recaptured by the State and reallocated to those local areas that met the requirement for Program Year 2023.

Mr. Charles Appleby, Senior Advisor to the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development(CCWD), presented to the Committee on Workforce Innovation and the SC Works

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Management Committee during Q2. He updated the committees on the progress of the Unified State Plan (USP), a comprehensive education and workforce plan, which is a requirement under the Education and Workforce Act (Act 67). He explained that the USP does not replace the strategic plans that individual entities create but brings them all into alignment. The 2024 WIOA Combined State Plan, for example, is being crafted in parallel with the USP adapting its vision and mission statements.

Other Business/Adjourn.....Mr. Freeland

Mr. Freeland reminded members that the next full board meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. and will be held at the Edgar Brown Building, Columbia, S.C.

Mr. Freeland acknowledged the success of the SC@Work: Road Trips. Director William Floyd explained that the Road Trips are Phase I of DEW's Rural Initiative to serve predominately rural counties, traveling to Tier 3 and Tier 4 counties. The Road trip, partnering with employers and community services, made 17 stops beginning in May in Dillion County and ending in November in McCormick County. The SC Works System interacted with over 850 job seekers, with 700 on-site interviews.

Director Floyd explained that Phase Two of the Rural Initiative will begin in January 2024. The state has been divided into four quadrants, and with a Rural Manager overseeing it all, staff will be added to provide sustainable and more systematic support to the state's rural areas.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

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