

ANOKA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Thursday, April 7, 2022

7:30 A.M.

BUNKER HILLS ACTIVITY CENTER – ANOKA COUNTY
550 BUNKER LAKE BLVD. NW, MAPLE ROOM
ANDOVER, MN 55304

***** A G E N D A *****

- I. ROLL CALL

- II. APPROVE ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- III. APPROVE March 3, 2022 MEETING MINUTES (Attached)

- IV. APPROVE PY22 WORKFORCE INNOVATIONS & OPPORTUNITY ACT YOUTH PLAN AND SFY23 MINNESOTA YOUTH PROGRAM PLAN (see attached summary) – Bridgett Backman, Job Training Center – Manager – Employment Services

- V. APPROVE PARTICIPATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES REFUGEE FOCUS (FAMILY OPPORTUNITY THROUGH COORDINATED AND UNDUPLICATED SERVICES) PROJECT – Matt Derosier, Manager – Employment Services

- VI. TIM TALK – Tim O’Neill, Labor Market Analyst – Department of Employment and Economic Development (Attached)

- VII. OTHER BUSINESS
 - Director Update – Nicole Swanson
 - Partner Sharing

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- Empowers Success Story (Item IV)
- Resettlement Service Networks (Item V)
- Agile Project Management Program

ANOKA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Meeting Minutes of Thursday, March 3, 2022

The Anoka County Workforce Development Board Meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Johnson at 7:30 a.m., members and guests were welcomed.

I. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Elaina Bleifield, Shym Cook, Lori Higgins, Becky Johnson, Paul Johnson, KC Kye, Molly Liberto, Jessica Lipa, Samantha Markman, Patrick McFarland, Jennifer Mudge, Jim Nimlos, Stacie Sayre, Michael Scholl, Don Wellman

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim O'Neill, Jessica Leth, Brad Hasskamp, Julie Dincau, Nicole Swanson, Krista Peterson and Mary Rohr

II. APPROVE ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOTION by Patrick McFarland to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Elaina Bleifield. The MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. APPROVE JANUARY 6, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION by Jim Nimlos to approve the January 6, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Seconded by Elaina Bleifield. The MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD REVIEW OF INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION GRANT APPLICATIONS AND FEDERAL ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COMPETITIVE PROVIDER APPLICATIONS – Brad Hasscamp, Director, State Adult Education and Julie Dincau, ABE Program Quality Specialist, MN Dept. of Education

Federal ABE Competitive Provider Applications

- Adult Education Providers can submit one application per area.
- March-June WorkForce Development Boards will decide which representatives will read and review their area's ABE provider applications.
- March 31-June 15 applications will be reviewed, and feedback provided by June 15.
- Board members reviewing applications should not have any conflict of interest.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Grant Applications

- \$1M available across the State to prepare adult immigrants and other English language learners in improving reading, writing, speaking and comprehensive skills in English; and math skills and acquire an understanding of the American system of government.
- Outcomes of the grant will prepare adults who are English language learners for employment in in-demand industries that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

- Grant applications and review forms will be sent to Nicole by March 14 and review forms are due by April 14.
- Thank you to Jim Nimlos and Stacie Sayer who volunteered to review the applications.

V. TIM TALK – LABOR MARKET INFORMATION UPDATE – Tim O’Neill, LMI Analyst, Dept. of Employment and Economic Development

- Retention is challenging for employers and labor force participation is down due to COVID concerns, retirements, childcare, etc.
- In 2021 employment grew by approx. 47,000 for the State.
- Unemployment for the State is 3.1% or 94,000 people, the same level as pre-COVID.
- Unemployed are experiencing complexities and barriers to employment such as housing, transportation, remote work, and childcare.
- Manufacturing and construction for Anoka County shows the highest industry growth and construction was the first industry to return to pre-pandemic levels.
- The labor force is down 3.2% for Anoka County from pre-pandemic levels but the diversity of the workforce for Anoka County has increased dramatically.

Questions/Comments:

- What is the impact of the immigration on our workforce? Tim will research and respond.
- How do we retain older workers? Offer flexible schedules and part time employment.
- Anoka County’s employment demographics are accelerating at a higher rate than the State of MN. How does Anoka County compare to other counties? Tim will research and respond.
- K-12 students are experiencing a gap in education due to the pandemic and many students may not graduate. Graduation rates may go down due to years of distant learning and may impact workforce predictions. Also experiencing behavioral and discipline issues making teaching very difficult. We are entering a new normal and don’t know when we will return to pre-pandemic times.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

- BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL GRANT – Samantha Markman, Economic Development Director, Anoka County
 - o The Federal EDA was allocated \$3B from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) which was broken down into 6-federally funded programs including the Build Back Better (BBB) Regional Challenge.
 - o The BBB Regional Challenge is a two-phase application targeted to regional economic development agencies, with the potential to fund up to \$100M towards transformational economic development strategies.
 - o Greater MSP (GMSP) submitted a Phase 1 application titled Bold North Bio Innovation Cluster and was one of 529 applications. GMSP was announced as one of the 60 finalists invited to Phase II. This announcement came with a \$500,000 technical assistance grant.

- Grant applications like this provide regional opportunities to use these connections and platforms to connect across the public and private sector, government and education institutions and private industry clusters.
- The Board will continue to be updated as more information is received.
- DEED's LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET PRIORITIES – Nicole Swanson, Director, Job Training Center
 - MN Labor force participation rate is at 67.7% or 3,030,000 workers (down 97,000 from predictions)
 - By 2030, tech jobs will grow twice as fast as other occupations. \$15M budget priority to focus on tech job pipeline for youth, \$13M for technology re-skilling training, and \$8M for clean tech workforce training programs.
 - Digital services provide convenient options to access training and support. \$15M priority to modernize workforce tools and transform workforce digital services.
 - \$11.7M for paid family and medical.
 - \$4.53M to expand marketing campaign and attract talent and business opportunities.
 - \$50M for nonprofit resiliency and recovery fund to help nonprofits scale operations to meet current demand.
 - \$470,000 to establish an office focused on supporting immigrant and refugee integration.
 - \$255,000 to establish an office of ombudsperson for the safety, health, and wellbeing of agricultural and food processing and \$252,000 to fund the extension of the agricultural worker wellness committee.
 - Overall strong support for workforce. The session scheduled to end May 23rd.
- DIRECTOR UPDATE – Nicole Swanson
 - Summary handout reviewed.

ADJOURN

MOTION by Lori Higgins to adjourn. Seconded by Elaina Bleifield. The MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, and the meeting adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

**Program Year 2022-23 Local Youth Plan
PY22 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Formula Funds
and SFY 23 Minnesota Youth Program (MYP)**

Annual Plan:

Local Workforce Delivery Areas are required to submit to the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) annual plans to secure funding to deliver WIOA and MYP program services. Plan documents are due to DEED by April 8, 2022.

Budget:

DEED has not received final allocation information from the Federal Department of Labor for WIOA or MYP however local plan narratives need to be completed at this time.

Plan Overview:

The annual plan outlines the local area's key service elements for Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), WIOA In-School Youth (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) for individuals ages 14-24 including outreach and recruitment efforts, eligibility determination, comprehensive assessment, case management, career counseling, paid work experience and/or internships, career pathway opportunities, incentives and supports for post-secondary academic completion. It is the responsibility of the Standing Youth Committee to assure that the youth strategies align with the overall vision of the local board to reduce racial inequities, reduce homelessness, and increase education and work experience leading to a high skilled workforce which will contribute to the success of businesses in our community. The committee met on February 24, 2022, and recommends approval of the plan for Program Year 2022-23.

The plan focuses on partnerships to decrease high school dropout rates (given the virtual learning shifts) and racial inequities; prevent homelessness; and improve outcomes for justice involved youth, youth aging out of foster care and youth with disabilities. These partnerships include the YMCA, Hope4Youth, Hope Place, Anoka County Juvenile Corrections, Anoka County Foster Care Unit, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, TRIO, Metro North Adult Basic Education, Job Corp, Stepping Stone Shelter and local secondary, transitional, charter and alternative schools. The goal is to leverage resources and opportunities that help young people who have significant barriers to employment and/or youth who are under-served and/or under-represented in the workforce by empowering while helping them navigate various systems to achieve skills, gain knowledge and confidence resulting in educational, workplace and personal success.

Best practices include the balance of service delivery between virtual and a safe return to face-to-face services and the development of new partnerships with the YMCA Stay Safe program and the city of Columbia Heights Police Department and other new worksites for paid work experiences and/or internships. We continue to broaden our partnerships with Hope Place, serving youth in transitional housing and youth receiving TANF and/or SNAP services. Continued community initiatives and projects include Youth at Work and PRE-ETS (Pre-Employment Training Services under contract for youth with disabilities for work experience/Internships). Planned outreach to reach potential participants includes a gradual return to outreach at in-person community events such as hosting a Young Adult Hiring Event at Rum River library and continued information provided at food shelves, on social media and by connecting youth to our virtual kiosk to help them connect to available resources in the Career Lab and for community-based service referrals.

Career services and training supports have been evolving to provide online career counseling, job placement assistance, and resume development. Youth are interested in Leadership development, transportation careers, environmental work and small business options. Many youths have expressed interest in barbering school or CDL classes with the hopes of operating a small business in the future. Youth drop-in services were made available on virtual continuum using phone, text messaging, social media and community drop boxes. The safety of staff and those we serve is critical during this pandemic transition and services need to be flexible and meet the needs of the young people and employers we serve.

Performance Goals

WIOA Youth Performance Measure	PY 2017 (ACTUAL)	PY 2018** (ACTUAL)	PY 2019 (GOAL)	PY 2020 (PLANNED)	PY 2021 (PLANNED)
Employment/Training 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of WIOA Young Adults who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit.	74.2%	79.5%	67.0%	75%	76%
Employment/Training 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of WIOA Young Adults who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit.	71.6%	76.5%	62.5%	73%	74%
Credential Attainment:	49.7%	65.3%	47.4%	62%	62%
Median Earnings: The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit.	\$3,524	\$3,984	Baseline	\$3,700	\$3,700
Measurable Skills Gain: The percentage of participants enrolled in an education or training program who attained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma during participation in or within one year after exit.	44.1%	45.6%	Baseline	49%	49%
* A participant who attained a secondary school diploma also needs to be employed or enrolled in postsecondary training within one year after exit.					

Note: TBD – To Be Determined

Program	Plan to Serve	Youth Served
MYP Program Year (7/1/19 – 6/30/20)	140	210 (to date)
WIOA IS (4/1/19 – 3/30/20)	10	14
WIOA OS (4/1/19 – 3/30/20)	60	40

Project Consideration Request

Refugee FOCUS (Family Opportunity through Coordinated and Unduplicated Services) Department of Human Services – Resettlement Programs Office

Background

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is committed to ensuring economic equity throughout Minnesota. At the end of 2020, Minnesota was awarded federal funding to implement the Family Opportunity through Coordinated and Unduplicated Services (FOCUS) as a demonstration project for enhanced services for TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) eligible participants. FOCUS will serve families granted certain forms of humanitarian protection status (refugee, asylum, victim of trafficking, Cuban/Haitian entrants, and special immigrant visa) and qualify for MFIP during their first 36 months after being granted an eligible status.

Under DHS, the Resettlement Programs Office (RPO) currently funds diverse community partners which provide expertise on immigration, education, basic needs support, employment services, and student success. In collaboration with these community partners, leveraging resource expertise from all partners will provide the necessary support to families to build wellbeing and economic stability in Minnesota.

DHS will provide expanded funding to establish a statewide network of FOCUS coordinators. The Anoka County Job Training Center (ACJTC) FOCUS Coordinator will ideally, meet face-to-face with families to plan, check in, and work toward individual family-identified goals and benchmarks. Remote services will also be made available to each family. With all services, Coordinators will show an emphasis on communication and collaboration. The term of any contract is one year, and may be renewed annually, based on availability of funds and performance for up to a total of five years. ACJTC will participate in this project, providing customized, culturally and linguistically appropriated services while partnership with the ACJTC MFIP (Minnesota Family Investment Program) Career Counselor and other partners to assist the enrollees meet their family and employment/training goals. Anoka County anticipates a project start in May-June 2022 and will request \$130,000/annually.

Project Summary

FOCUS aims to provide services for 20 – 30 eligible families in a coordinated effort. An evidenced-based Check and Connect mentoring model will provide family-centered service coordination during the course of a family's earliest years in the U.S. The Family Wellbeing Inventory (FWI) will be administered as the first step in service enrollment. Subsequent FWIs will be given every six months while active in the program, to assist in gauging family progression. Coordinators will support families as they transition in their resettlement journey, leveraging family strengths and capacities, and serve as mentors as families progress toward self-sufficiency. Families are the center in this model where family priorities drive planning. Family plans are adjusted to be responsive to changing family needs or priorities over time. Promoting sustainable family wellbeing and economic stability is the overarching goal of services provided.

One family goal plan will be created for each family. Plans will incorporate employment and training activities as well as family goals and supports for the entire family with benchmark goals reviewed regularly. For example: father's GED plan, mother's job skills training plan, children's school plan, and a senior family member's healthy aging plan. Each family plan is not linear and requires ongoing communication and coordination amongst all community partners.