

YOUTH COUNCIL

October 10, 2007

Meeting Minutes

Dr. Karen Knox, Chairperson

The SWWDB's Youth Council met on Wednesday, October 10, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. at the Rock County Job Center, Room D/E in Janesville. Attendance was as follows:

Members Present:	Ms. Darla Burton	Mr. Steve Michek
	Mr. Steve Huth	Mr. Gary Smith
	Dr. Karen Knox	Mr. Geoff Upperton
Members Absent:	Ms. Lynn Daniels	Mr. Greg Quam
	Ms. Pam Jenson	Mr. Walter Orzechowski
Others Present:	Mr. Jeremy Brown	Ms. Mary Johannesen
Staff Present:	Dr. Robert Borremans	Ms. Shannon Moe
	Ms. Amy Charles	Ms. Mary Kay Runde

Dr. Knox called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. Dr. Borremans initiated introductions around the table and gave a brief background on the Youth Council and its re-activation.

1. Election of Chairperson

Motion by Mr. Upperton, second by Mr. Huth to appoint Dr. Karen Knox as Chairperson of the Youth Council. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2. Discussion of Goals and Purpose of Youth Council under Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

Ms. Charles spoke on the goals and purpose of the Youth Council. The goals and primary functions of the Youth Council, as contained in the WIA legislation, are to: improve coordination among programs and youth-serving organizations, conduct strategic planning for youth programs, identify eligible providers for youth services, and conduct oversight of youth programs. The purpose of the Youth Council is to provide expertise in youth policy and to assist the Workforce Development Board (WDB) in several aspects including guidance.

Dr. Knox opened discussion about membership on the Youth Council. She added that it would be important to include a minority and possibly a former participant. Mr. Upperton suggested a parent of a current participant be included for representation.

3. Career Pathways

Ms. Charles updated the Council on the Career Pathways Model which was approved by the Board in March as the primary service delivery system for Job Center services. Career Pathways provides short-term coursework and training programs to help workers gain skills and advance in an occupation or an industry. By orienting job seekers to the training process, and by making training more accessible and manageable for working adults and part-time students, Career Pathways provides a greater continuum of options for workers to achieve their career and wage goals.

Dr. Borremans addressed the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) 35% High-Wage Training requirement. DWD has set a goal for Workforce Development Areas (WDA) to spend 35% of WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for training and training-related support services that assist participants obtain high wage jobs. DWD has defined high wage jobs as those jobs that pay a wage at or above the median wage for all jobs in the WDA. The six county, median wages for the Southwest Wisconsin WDA for Program Year (PY) 2007-08, is \$14.10 per hour.

The 2007-2008 List of Eligible Training Programs through the Wisconsin Technical College System was distributed by Ms. Moe. Dr. Borremans explained that an eligible training program is one where the entry-level wage of graduates meets or exceeds the median wage for the area. The group discussed the issue of a training program being eligible one year, but not the next year. After discussion council members expressed concern about how difficult it will be to maintain an accurate list of eligible training programs.

Ms. Charles showed a video on Career Pathways from the KnowledgeWorks Foundation in Ohio. It provided an overview on how the system can be effective in identifying job competencies and helping workers (both new and incumbent) prepare for jobs of the future.

Ms. Charles explained that CESA 2 will be making efforts to implement Career Pathways. Beginning in January 2008, students may enroll in either the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) training or the Personal Care Worker. Approximately fifteen (15) high school juniors will participate in the four modules of the online MSSC and fourteen (14) students in the training for Personal Care Worker.

Dr. Knox said it is important for young workers to get basic skills and as well as career-based job training. Ms. Burton mentioned several basic skills programs being used by area schools such as Read 180, Academy of Reading, Academy of Math, and Plato.

Mr. Huth asked if Career Pathways was comparable to the Career Ladder, which Ms. Charles confirmed. She also stated that the Board will work to make Career Pathways compatible with the 21st Century Skills Project being developed by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

4. Update on Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative

Dr. Borremans gave an overview of the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative. SWWDB, along with the WDB of South Central Wisconsin, submitted a grant application in May to the Department of Labor (DOL) and in July were notified that the project had been funded. The Initiative provides funding of \$5 million dollars over a three year period to improve economic development and workforce training in a twelve (12) county region.

A WIRED implementation meeting was held on September 27, 2007 with representatives of DOL, local business, education, Job Center partner agencies and workforce development in attendance. Ms. Charles and Dr. Borremans spoke on the activities of the work groups in moving ahead with the Sector, System and Talent Development Strategies of the Initiative, and how they relate to the driver industries of our area.

5. Approval of 6th Local Eligibility Criterion for Enrollment in Younger Youth Programs

WIA Section 101(13) defines the criteria a younger youth must meet to be eligible for WIA Title 1B services. The following are the barriers/eligibility criteria for younger youth:

1. Not less than 14 years old and not more than 21 years old; and
2. Low income (defined as 70% of the Lower Living Standard); and
3. Possess one or more of the following characteristics:
 - a. Deficient in basic literacy skills,
 - b. A school drop-out
 - c. Homeless, a runaway, or a foster child
 - d. Pregnant or a parent
 - e. An offender

The WIA regulations allow the local WDB to establish a “sixth eligibility” requirement. At the March 9, 2005 SWWDB Meeting, the Board approved using the DPI “*Employability Skills Deficiency*” as the “sixth eligibility” criteria used to determine youth eligibility for WIA funded services in the Southwest WDA.

The Youth Council discussed whether this “sixth” criterion is still appropriate for the area and the Council felt that the criterion is still good and thought that it should continue as the recognized sixth criteria for eligibility.

6. Update on Status of funding for WIA Youth Programming

The 2007-2008 Program Year allocations from the DWD to SWWDB included a 22.2% reduction in funding to Younger Youth (YY) program operators. For CESA 2, the Program Operator in Rock County, the allocation was reduced from \$86,000 to \$66,900 and for CESA 3; the Program Operator in the Southwest Counties, the allocation went from \$82,502 to \$64,173.

The reduction reflects the 50/50 split between younger youth and older youth programs approved by the Board several years ago. The change was approved in the youth program dollars allocation to providers of older and younger youth programming, which was an effort to implement a proposed DOL switch of youth funds. However, that change never materialized. WIA regulations continue to use an allocation formula at a minimum of 30% for Older Youth (OY) and 70% for Younger Youth (YY). Due to the declining resources for YY programs, SWWDB staff has recommended the focus switch from the disabled to high-risk students in danger of dropping out of school or not continuing their education post-high school.

CESA 3 will move to this new strategy in the 2008-2009 school year, while CESA 2 will begin the switch this year. CESA 2 will close out high school seniors who have participated in the program through the traditional work experience model, and will begin to implement the new strategy, noted under the Career Pathways discussion, for students in the Spring semester of the 2007-08 school year.

Students will either take the Safety module of the MSSC, a nationally recognized manufacturing certification program, or participate in the healthcare training for Personal Care Workers. All the students will participate in an Employability Skills Training program instructed by CESA 2 staff. This will provide students with an additional certification upon graduation, in addition to their diploma, and will provide them with transferable workplace skills that are aligned with the Career Pathways Model.

7. **Other Business**

None.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m. The next meeting will be held at a more central location, probably in Monroe at a date and time to be determined.