

Workforce Development Board (WDB)
Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2025
10:00 a.m.
Otsego County Library, Gaylord

I. CALL TO ORDER – 10:00 a.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. INTRODUCTIONS

WDB MEMBERS PRESENT

Todd Miner
Jason Campbell
Sheryl Coyne
Michelle Martel
Kristi Bristley
Pam Schaudt
Katrina Burtwell
Kevin Klapish
Kayla Berry
Heather Proctor- Alternate
Lauren Ososki- Alternate
Whitney Dettmer
Erine Wescoat- Alternate

WDB MEMBERS ABSENT

Courtney Ryan
Doug Baum
Lisa Bolen
Jason Reed
Seth Reichard
Barbara Walden
Robert Wilson
Julie Waldron
Deb Larson

STAFF PRESENT

Jessica Topp, Chief Executive Officer
Ashley Udell, Youth Programming Manager
Alicia Wallace, Marketing & Communications Manager
Kristina Ferguson, Clerical Support/Fiscal Dept
Abby Stark, Career Advisor

Nicole Welsh, Business Solutions Manager

GUEST

Laura Percival, MiSTEM Network

Jamie Huber, COP ESD (Cheboygan, Otsego, Presque Isle Education Service Network)

Gary Brasseur, Michigan Dept of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential (MiLEAP)

IV. WDB ACTION ITEM: CONSENT AGENDA

- July 9, Meeting Minutes
Motion to approve the Consent Agenda items as listed made by Sheryl Coyne and seconded by Jason Campbell. Voted: All Ayes. Motion Carried.

V. PARTNER PRESENTATION: COP ESD

Jamie gave a presentation regarding the work COP ESD does and why the November 4th vote to approve a Career & Technical Education Millage would be beneficial to our service areas.

- COPESD is currently one of 15 districts in Michigan without a CTE millage, and our cumulative property levy rate is the fourth-lowest among Michigan's 56 educational service districts.
- The annual property tax impact of a voter-approved millage would be one mill, which is equal to \$1 per \$1,000 of taxable value.
- 95% The average high school graduation rate for students concentrating in CTE programs compared to the overall graduation rate of 80.5%
- Today, CTE programs are in place at only four of the 10 school districts in our region. This means many students reside in CTE deserts without access to the hands-on training and resources that would help prepare them for a variety of high-wage and high-demand career fields.
- Results of a community survey showed solid support:
 - *94% of respondents said enhancing and expanding CTE programs would be beneficial to their communities
 - *69% of respondents indicated likely support for a tax increase of up to 1 mill to fund CTE
 - *67% of respondents said there is a growing need for high school graduates to have CTE skills

VI. CEO UPDATE

Strategic Priorities & Progress

-Awarded multiple grants from local and statewide entities

- MCAN BOLD Adult Student Attainment \$5k
- MCAN Educated Workforce \$5k
- OCF Disaster Relief \$5k
- CFNEM Women's Giving Circle \$1500
- CFNEM Community Impact Grant \$3k
- LEO/State Workforce Board Regional Innovative Project \$125k to NE (\$500k project)

-Regional marketing campaign: training assistance

External Engagement & Advocacy

-Spoke with Reps/Senators regarding the State budget:

- Going PRO Talent Fund (GPTF)-> zeroed out, final budget lost \$22k (40%)
- Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG)-> zeroed out, final budget lost \$515k

- Apprenticeship-> zeroed out, remained at zero
 - Barrier Removal-> zeroed out, remained at zero
- Spoke with Congressman regarding federal budget:
- WIOA Youth at zero, WIOA Adult 20% cut + gap year

Operational Highlights & Challenges

- Federal Government shutdown
- Potential for WIOA reauthorization as “A Stronger Workforce for America” (ASWA) and/or the implementation of “Make America Skilled Again” (MASA)
- MW! Association: Shining Star Award to Kim Shultz, Program Specialist
- MW! Association: Employer of the Year Award to Cheboygan County Sheriff’s Office

Looking Ahead

- Continued advocacy, showcasing the importance of our programs and the knowledgeable staff who administer them
- Leadership Learning Lab through Rotary Charities
- Cycle III monitoring (fiscal) and Audit in October

VII. YOUTH UPDATE

- Getting back into the schools after the start of the year
- Presentations on MW Youth services
- Talent tours scheduled through the month of October – Manufacturing day was Oct 3, we typically promote manufacturing tours throughout the month
 - Cadillac Products; AJD, Monarch and KCC – last week
 - Talent tours are not limited to manufacturing – we promote all sectors and work with the POCs at the schools to determine where the kids want to go
 - Also looking at Careers in Energy week (week of Oct 20)
- Holding FAFSA workshops in office the months of October and November
 - Virtual option also available at the end of each month
- YCAs attending FAFSA nights at schools to assist when needed/requested
 - 3 YCAs are FAFSA Specialist certified
 - 2 others are participating in this year’s cohort
- Have been seeing an interest in postsecondary visits this year, has not been the case in previous years
 - Posen students to ACC this week
 - Working on potential visits at SVSU and Delta College for Onaway, possibly Indian River
- Continuing to brainstorm ways to enhance youth programming

VIII. BUSINESS SERVICE UPDATE

- **Employer of the Day-** Hiring event where we feature an employer in our office and conduct on the spot interviews. This event is shared through social media

*Employer of the days are great ways for your business to be highlighted by our organization. We help you find the talent you need.

*Amazon held on in our Gaylord office they had a great turn out and hired 5 individuals.

- **Going Pro-** Competitive Grant that helps business gain targeted high quality training for their new and existing workers.

*Held Multiple in person and virtual info sessions

*We have added a Pre-recorded info session for employers to watch on our website under Going Pro. This will allow more accessibility to employers that could not make our virtual or in person sessions.

*Employers are encouraged to reach out to their Business Solutions Professionals if they would like one on one sessions, more information, or help with applications.

*Our Business team is patiently waiting for FY26 C1 to open. We are ready to help employers prepare their application for this competitive grant.

- **On the Job training-** This allows businesses to hire and retain individuals that do not have all of the skills needed for a job opening by providing funding to help with training. We can cover up to 50% of the wages during this time frame.

*This training program provides an effective opportunity for businesses to onboard individuals who may not yet possess all the required skills for a particular role. It enables employers to invest in their new hires and supports their successful integration into the position through a structured training plan, ensuring a strong start in their new role.

*We have had multiple successful On the Job trainings this year and are currently collaborating with numerous employers across our counties to utilize this program.

- **Talent Tours-** Providing students with firsthand experience in high-demand jobs across our region. They have the opportunity to visit businesses, gain valuable insights into different industries, and better understand the training required to secure these careers. These tours are crucial for showing students the opportunities for jobs within their communities.

*Recently completed Talent Tours celebrating Manufacturing week.

October 2nd Cadillac products was visited with 18 students from Onaway.

October 7th touring Monarch Millworks, KCC, and AJD Forest Products with CTE kids.

*Business Services team is also working on firming up details to highlight Energy Employers later this month.

*Businesses who have not held Talent Tours are highly encourage to reach out to their Business Solutions Professional to learn more. These tours are great opportunities for employers to reach that next generation of Talent.

- **Apprenticeship-**

*Next Race to Talent Event will be November 5th at Otsego Library. This will be a lunch and learn event and we highly recommend any business curious about apprenticeships to attend.

Apprenticeships are a great way to start your own talent pipeline creating highly trained individuals for your specific occupations.

*Our team is continuing to work with local employers to build and create Apprenticeship programs.

*Currently we have 7 employers who are in various stages of developing their apprenticeship programs.

Proactive ways we are trying to help employers

*We are continuing our efforts to identify and track the training needs and requests from employers. This will enable us to inform training partners and facilitate connections among employers for Employer-Led Collaboratives within the Going Pro Talent Fund initiative.

*Our Business team met with Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center and KCC to discuss training opportunities, potential collaboration, and ways to support employers in obtaining the training they require.

IX. FRONTLINE STAFF SUCCESS: CAREER ADVISOR

In my role as a Career Advisor, I wear a few different hats. I provide case management services for both the PATH and WIOA programs across eight counties in Northeast Michigan. I specifically serve Crawford and Oscoda Counties, sharing Crawford with our Lead Career Advisor, Tracy Bohl.

*PATH stands for Partnership, Accountability, Training, and Hope. It's a collaboration between the Department of Health & Human Services and Workforce Development, offered through the Michigan Works! network. PATH serves individuals receiving Family Independence Program cash assistance and helps them work toward self-sufficiency.

*Our main goals are to identify barriers, create individualized employment plans, and connect participants to the resources they need to find and keep work — while also helping Michigan meet federal work participation goals.

*Whether it's building job readiness skills, connecting someone to training, or helping them find stable employment, my focus is always on long-term independence and self-sufficiency.

-I'd like to share two quick success stories-

1. One PATH participant, a single mother of three, came to us facing financial strain and unreliable transportation. Through PATH, we helped her restore her driver's license, renew her tags, and secure short-term auto insurance. She later earned her GED — opening doors to new opportunities for her and her family.
2. Another participant, a single mother of five and a survivor of domestic abuse, moved from a shelter into her own home while working with us. With support from PATH and WIOA, she completed a phlebotomy program and is now preparing for her certification exam.

*The other "hat" I wear is with WIOA — the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This program helps individuals gain the skills, training, and resources to find sustainable employment. Training may include occupational skills, apprenticeships, or adult education combined with other opportunities.

*As Career Advisors, we stay current on scholarships, FAFSA updates, and programs like Michigan Reconnect to guide participants toward the best education and training options available. We also stay active in the community by visiting local colleges for career fairs and outreach events. Next week, for example, we'll be attending the Senior Summit at our local community college to share resources and connect directly with students as they plan their next steps.

*Programs like PATH and WIOA don't just provide services — they provide hope, opportunity, and lasting change.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

- Alicia Wallace gave a MiCareer Quest update, and discussed the October 21, 2025 ECOCareers Expo at the APlex in Alpena

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Sheryl Coyne encouraged all members to participate in the drawing for Lions Thanksgiving Day game tickets.
- Jamie Huber thanked us for the invite and opportunity to speak on his organization.

XII. ROUND TABLE

- Erine Wescoat mentioned the Business after hours event at Kirtland
- Whitney Dettmer spoke on her programs and the importance of Adult Education

XIII. ADJOURN- 11:25 a.m. Motion made by Sheryl and seconded by Kristi.

Next meeting will be the annual combined, scheduled for December 1 @ 11:00 a.m., Location: Otsego County Library