

MEETING SUMMARY

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON  
WORKFORCE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

Monday, December 4, 2017

1:00 P.M.

Room 207, State Capitol

Little Rock, Arkansas

Senator Jane English, the Senate Co-Chair of the Legislative Task Force on Workforce Education Excellence, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON WORKFORCE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE IN ATTENDANCE:** Senator Jane English, Senate Co-Chair; Senator Lance Eads; Senator Blake Johnson; Representative Rick Beck; and Representative Dan M. Douglas.

**NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON WORKFORCE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. Kenneth Calhoun; Mr. Randy Henderson; Mr. Stephen Horton; Mr. Mike Rogers; and Mr. Greg Taylor.

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE:** Representative Jana Della Rosa; Representative Johnny Rye; and Representative Nelda Speaks.

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of November 13, 2017, were approved as written.

Exhibits:

Exhibit C – 11/13/2017 Minutes

Remarks by the Chairs

Senator English made comments on building a system to produce an educated and skilled workforce; and reiterated the objectives of the Task Force.

Handout:

*State chamber chief says educators must “step on the gas” with career, workforce development*, Article by Aric Mitchell, Businesstalk Politics, December 3, 2017

**Mr. Nate Klinck**, Vice President, Thomas P. Miller and Associates, Indianapolis, IN, was recognized. Mr. Klinck, in his role as meeting facilitator, briefly reviewed the meeting of November 13, 2017, the focus of which was the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (ADWS) and its programs. He stated the focus of this meeting would be the Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE) and its programs.

## Overview of the Arkansas Department of Career Education

### Presenter:

**Dr. Charisse Childers**, Director, Arkansas Department of Career Education, was recognized. Dr. Childers stated that ACE is comprised of four Divisions, and is responsible for overseeing Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in secondary schools, Secondary Area Technical Centers, Adult Education, workforce training grants, the state Apprenticeship Office, and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS). She said ACE is also the agency which approves state educational programs for veterans for the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA), and has oversight authority for the Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) 1033 and Department of Defense (DoD) 122 programs. Dr. Childers noted that the passage of Act 892 of 2015 established the Career Education and Workforce Development Board to create and administer a coordinated approach to workforce development in Arkansas. She said the Office of Skills Development (OSD) was also created under this legislation to enhance the state's workforce development efforts. Dr. Childers commented that, among other things, ACE is purposed with administrating funds targeting workforce needs as informed by employers, and working to improve coordination among various state agencies and resources that are working to address similar needs. She said the mission of ACE is to prepare a job-ready, career-bound workforce to meet the needs of Arkansas's employers. Dr. Childers additionally discussed the strategic plan, partnerships, and program funding.

### Handouts:

CTE Funding Chart

Career and Technical Education in Arkansas's K-12 Schools, BLR Report

Review of the Findings of the Thomas B. Fordham Institute Report, *Career and Technical Education in High School: Does It Improve Student Outcomes?* and of a follow-up report, *The Condition of Participation, Outcomes, Expenditures and Funding of Secondary Area Career Centers in Arkansas*

### Presenter:

**Dr. Shaun Dougherty**, Assistant Professor of Education & Public Policy, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut, was recognized. Dr. Dougherty said he had been engaged in research in Arkansas for upwards of four years. He said it began by having conversations with Dr. Jake Walker, Projects Director, and others, at the Arkansas Research Center (ARC), noting that, at that time, Arkansas was one of the relatively few states that had an integrated longitudinal data system that would allow one to understand how participating in career and technical education or workforce training in high school or in college articulates, in terms of impacts, throughout the life cycle. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Dougherty discussed two reports. He said that, for the first report, he had been enlisted by the Fordham Institute to study whether students who participated in CTE were achieving better outcomes than their peers. Pertinent to that report, he discussed research questions, data sources, key findings, most popular courses, concentrators, and outcomes. He transitioned to the report on Secondary Centers in Arkansas. His discussion included trends in participation, student outcomes, program of study offerings, funding structure, and findings and recommendations. Dr. Dougherty summarized that CTE participation has had positive effects for students in Arkansas.

### Issues Included in the Discussion:

- expansion of the longitudinal study,
- differences in scale of costs per student for participation in CTE programs in traditional high schools vs. in Secondary Centers,
- student demand for programs offered,
- funding for CTE programs in traditional high schools vs. in Secondary Centers,
- training on dated equipment, and
- decision-makers for CTE programs offered at Secondary Centers.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Participation, Outcomes, Expenditures, & Funding for CTE in Arkansas

Handouts:

2017-18 Secondary Technical Centers

Career and Technical Education in High School: Does It Improve Student Outcomes?

Participation, Outcomes, Expenditures, & Funding for CTE in Arkansas

The Condition of Participation, Outcomes, Expenditures and Funding of Secondary Area Career Centers in Arkansas, Report

Discussion of the Programmatic Responsibilities of the Divisions of the Arkansas Department of Career Education

A representative from each of the four Divisions of ACE presented an overview of the Division's programmatic responsibilities. Dr. Childers moderated the presentations.

**1. Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

**Ms. Kathi Turner**, Deputy Director for Career & Technical Education, was recognized. Ms. Turner stated the mission of CTE is to prepare a job-ready, career-bound workforce to meet the needs of Arkansas's employers. She stated that CTE serves 106,000 students in grades 7-12; and that approximately 75% of all students are CTE students. She discussed the Keyboarding, or KeyCode, requirement for students in grades 7 and 8, and the Career Development class in grade 8. Ms. Turner continued with a discussion of programs of study in high school: Agriculture, Business and Marketing, Career Planning, Family & Consumer Sciences, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), Trade and Industry, and several other career preparation programs. Additionally, Ms. Turner presented information on how CTE programs serve teachers, awarding of grants, federal and state funding, responses to outcomes of Advisory Committee Meetings, partnerships, the Nepris online system, and Special Projects funds.

Handouts:

Arkansas Career Coach Program

Work Based Learning, Diagram

**2. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)**

**Mr. Alan McClain**, Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, was recognized. Mr. McClain stated that ARS is the designated state agency for administration of the federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act which provides services and coordinated activities to prepare persons with physical or mental impairments to achieve gainful employment. He said the mission of ARS is competitive integrated employment, meaning employment outcomes with competitive wages and in a setting that is integrated among peers, both with and without disabilities. He said the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 included reauthorization of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, and requires ARS to coordinate services with other workforce partners. Mr. McClain explained that ARS provides services within the context of a counseling relationship to help ensure a successful vocational outcome. He said the ARS has 19 offices throughout the state where staff vocational counselors meet with individuals and form individualized plans for employment. He commented that vocational counseling is a highly interactive process that includes the requirement to give informed choice to individuals with accurate labor market information so a course of study can be chosen. Mr. McClain also discussed partnerships with business and industry, and relationships with other state agencies.

**Mr. Joe Baxter**, Deputy Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, was recognized, and presented a brief overview of federal and state funding for ARS.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- number of individuals served by ARS, and
- regional level of demand for cosmetology programs.

Handout:

ARS Field Services Map

**3. Adult Education (AE)**

**Dr. Trenia Miles**, Deputy Director, Adult Education, was recognized. Dr. Miles discussed services provided by AE to unemployed or underemployed adults for transitioning into postsecondary for training or into the workplace. She said individuals served by AE must be at least 16 years of age, not be enrolled in secondary schools, not have a high school diploma, or are those who need training in English as a Second Language (ESL). She said the Division serves about 25,000 students a year in 51 locations in 75 counties across the State of Arkansas. Dr. Miles briefly discussed programs offered, including preparing students for GED® testing; WAGE™, a work readiness program; the ESL program; working with employers in the Workplace Education program; and re-entry education for those who have been incarcerated. Additionally, Dr. Miles discussed partnerships with other state agencies, businesses, and industry, and grants and funding.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- efforts among the Divisions to collaborate as a team with business and industry,
- measuring the success rate of students, and
- tracking of students; employment outcomes.

Handout:

Adult Education Districts Map

**4. Office of Skills Development (OSD)**

**Mr. Cody Waits**, Deputy Director, Office of Skills Development, was recognized. Mr. Waits stated the Division is responsible for aligning career and technical education programs with skills needed by business and industry throughout the State of Arkansas. He explained OSD provides grants to business to invest in training to maintain the increased competitiveness, efficiency, and economic status of the Arkansas workforce. He said OSD also oversees 100 programs which provide education, instruction, and on-the-job training to cover 5,000 apprentices, primarily professionals, requiring certifications and licenses; also, Secondary Centers overseen by OSD are designed to provide career and technical education programs to classes for local high school students. He noted the Secondary Centers are typically sponsored by high schools, postsecondary institutions, technical institutions, or education service cooperatives. He said there are currently 26 Secondary Centers and 22 related satellite locations designed to serve high school students within a defined region. Mr. Waits said, additionally, two pilot programs were established in 2016-2017. Mr. Waits continued with a comprehensive discussion of three programs which OSD oversees: Apprenticeship Programs, Workforce Training, and Secondary Centers. He included information on grants and funding.

Contributor to the Discussion:

**Ms. Stephanie Isaacs**, Associate Director, Office of Skills Development

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ❖ providing approval for apprenticeship programs,

- ❖ initiative for apprenticeship programs,
- ❖ better outcome to measure funding than enrollment at Secondary Centers,
- ❖ incentivizing school districts and Secondary Centers to fund programs pertinent to industry and business,
- ❖ strategies for getting apprenticeship/internship initiatives rolled out,
- ❖ replicating national models for apprenticeship/internship programs,
- ❖ structure of funding for Secondary Centers,
- ❖ availability of tools and data for developing a curriculum geared to high-demand occupations in the state, and
- ❖ limitations, if any, placed on programs offered.

Next Scheduled Meeting:

Wednesday, January 24, 2018, *time and location TBD*

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

*Approved: 01/24/2018*