

MEETING SUMMARY

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON  
WORKFORCE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

Wednesday, January 24, 2018

9:00 A.M.

Association of Arkansas Counties Building  
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 9:00 a.m.

**LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON WORKFORCE EDUCATION EXCELLENCE IN ATTENDANCE:** Senator Jane English, Senate Co-Chair; Representative Bruce Cozart, House Co-Chair; Senator Eddie Cheatham; Senator Lance Eads; Representative Sonia Eubanks Barker; Representative Rick Beck; Representative Dan M. Douglas; and Representative Dan Sullivan.

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

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ATTENDANCE:** Senator Missy Irvin; Representative Fred Allen; Representative Bob Ballinger; Representative Ken Bragg; Representative Jana Della Rosa; Representative Charlotte V. Douglas; Representative Kenneth B. Ferguson; Representative Vivian Flowers; Representative Roger Lynch; Representative Brandt Smith; Representative James Sorvillo; Representative Nelda Speaks; Representative Jeff Williams; and Representative Carlton Wing.

**Morning Session**

Minutes:

Without objection, the minutes of December 4, 2017, were approved as written.

Exhibit:

Exhibit C – 12/04/2017 Minutes

Senator English requested members of the Task Force to introduce themselves.

**Mr. Nate Klinck**, Vice President, Thomas P. Miller and Associates, Indianapolis, IN, was recognized. Mr. Klinck, as meeting facilitator, discussed the importance of work-based learning to the State of Arkansas, and introduced pertinent items on the agenda.

Overview of Work-Based Learning Models

Presenters:

**Mr. Cody Waits**, Deputy Director, Office of Skills Development, Arkansas Department of Career Education, was recognized. Mr. Waits presented an overview of the responsibilities of the Arkansas State Apprenticeship Office. His discussion highlighted: budget, programs, funding and available grants, certifications and licenses, and partnerships developed to increase awareness of apprenticeship opportunities.

**Mr. Mark McManus**, Accountability Specialist, Department of Workforce Services (DWS), was recognized. Mr. McManus explained that part of his responsibility is to manage and coordinate competitive discretionary grant awards that come down from the U.S. Department of Labor to the agency. He discussed the 2015 launch of the American Apprenticeship Initiative with related directives to grow the number of apprentices and programs nationwide, and to expand in non-traditional sectors. He updated Task Force members on three currently active registered apprenticeship-focused grants the agency has received. He noted the Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative (AAPI) Grant and the Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship (AREA) Grant are workforce training-based grants. He said the third, the Arkansas Apprenticeship Accelerator Grant, is a state planning grant. Mr. McManus mentioned that under the AAPI grant, DWS is in the running to be selected for a research-based demonstration project that will study the impact of reaching out, educating and engaging employers, and marketing registered apprenticeships.

**Ms. Kathi Turner**, Deputy Director, Career & Technical Education, Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE), was recognized. Ms. Turner stated that through work-based learning, students can develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, and can make connections between classroom theory and actual job tasks. She detailed work-based learning opportunities in Arkansas's high schools; and said examples include job shadowing, internships, and pre-apprenticeships. Ms. Turner additionally discussed ACE policy pertinent to requirements and recommendations for work-based learning; and referenced credits, the Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates program, the KeyTrain® Curriculum, school-based enterprises, and certifications.

**Dr. Trenia Miles**, Deputy Director, Adult Education, Arkansas Department of Career Education, was recognized. Dr. Miles stated passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014 initiated the move for adults to achieve a high school diploma while also earning a credential. She said partnerships have supported this effort, including those developed by the Adult Education Program at Black River Technical College and by the Pulaski County Adult Education Center. She commented on Experience Works, which offers employment and training services through the Senior Community Service Employment Program. Dr. Miles added the Fort Smith Adult Education Center offers an apprenticeship program through the Arkansas Construction Education Foundation, enabling students to learn basic academic skills while earning a credential.

**Dr. Debbie Faubus**, Director, Crawford County Adult Education Center, was recognized. Dr. Faubus discussed career pathways available at the Center. She commented on introduction to craft skills, career development workshop, participation, employers, and partners. She said students come from various spheres, including those qualifying for alternative sentencing, those who are incarcerated, and those from the general population.

**Mr. Alan McClain**, Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), 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 ARS has offices throughout the state and within Arkansas Workforce Centers. He said ARS services can be delivered to a student whether in or out of high school. He commented that over the past year ARS has developed work-based learning initiatives within high schools as strategies for pre-employment transition services. Mr. McClain additionally discussed the transition employment program at the Arkansas Career Training Institute in Hot Springs.

*Contributors to the Discussion:*

**Mr. Randy Prather**, Program Manager, Apprenticeship and Applied Sciences, Arkansas Department of Career Education

**Mr. Jonathan Bibb**, Director, Arkansas Career and Training Institute, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

**Dr. Ivy Pfeffer**, Deputy Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- profile of the typical apprentice,
- why hygiene is addressed under “workforce,”
- development of work readiness skills,
- standards for soft skills in K-12 being developed by ADE,
- selection process for work-based learning and internship programs,
- number of graduation requirements impeding student participation in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs,
- providing students with support and access to practical work experience in the arts and related fields,
- balancing the question of arts vs. science, and
- trade-offs necessary to ensure each student has an opportunity to pursue a career interest.

Handouts:

ACE, Arkansas Apprenticeships

ACE, Industry Certification List

Crawford County Adult Education Center, Career Pathways for Students

Crawford County Adult Education Center, Overview

Discussion of Work-Based Learning Models in Other States

Presenters:

**Ms. Ashley Carter**, Chief Strategy Officer, CareerWise Colorado, was recognized. In a PowerPoint presentation, *Youth Apprenticeship*, Ms. Carter discussed how CareerWise Colorado, a nonprofit intermediary, connects industry and education to create a modern, statewide youth apprenticeship system. She stated the organization’s vision is to build a system modeled after that of the Swiss. She commented on how the apprentice system works, what follows after apprenticeship, expected impact for businesses and students, and partnerships. She projected over the next 10 years, CareerWise Colorado will evolve from its pilot phase to national leadership in developing talent for the workplace. Ms. Carter ended her presentation with a video.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- issues employers may have with youth apprentices resulting from legalization of marijuana,
- annual funding from state agencies, from philanthropic funding, from fees,
- nationally recognized certifications available,
- employers’ concerns about specialized licensing credentials,
- requirements of and commitments from employers,
- whether apprenticeship programs are registered with U.S. Department of Labor,
- efforts to get employers on board,
- determining regional focus/development, and
- opportunities for development in rural counties facing lack of partnerships and transportation.

**Ms. Claudia Cummings**, Vice President, Workforce & Strategic Initiatives, COO, Conexus Indiana, was recognized. Ms. Cummings made her presentation via phone. Initially, a video, “Together, We Make Opportunity,” was shown. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Cummings explained Conexus Indiana’s involvement with work-based learning programs in the advanced manufacturing and logistics industries. She said statewide partnerships include industries in aerospace and defense; automotive; INVETS, tackling issues faced by veterans; and ICON, connecting suppliers with the world. Her presentation included a discussion of the crisis in the workforce; the need for talent; Hire Tech, a high school program which combines classroom instruction with real-world experiences; the Excel Center® at Goodwill; partnerships; internships; and funding for programs.

**Ms. Vicki Thompson**, Assistant Director of Workforce, Thomas P. Miller & Associates, was recognized. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Thompson gave a historical perspective of the Greater OH-PENN Manufacturing Apprenticeship Network. She continued with a discussion that included: American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI), Goals/Grant Requirements, The AAI Grant Footprint, Grant Funding, AAI Sector Partners, Greater OH-PENN Apprenticeship Partners, Governance Structure, State and National Partnerships, Benefits to Manufacturers, Apprenticeship Innovations, Pre-Apprenticeship Component, 3 Parts of a Registered Apprenticeship Program, Group Sponsored Model and Individual Programs, Apprenticeship Tool Kit, and State Support.

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ❖ declining numbers over length of program,
- ❖ issue of sustainability,
- ❖ management and distribution of funding, and
- ❖ initiatives in rural areas.

Videos:

CareerWise Colorado, "Tomorrow's Talent Today"  
Conexus Indiana, "Together, We Make Opportunity"

PowerPoint Presentations:

CareerWise Colorado, Youth Apprenticeship  
Conexus Indiana, Presentation  
Thomas P. Miller & Associates, Thoughtful Solutions. Empowered Communities.

Handouts:

CareerWise Colorado, Key Lessons Learned  
CareerWise Colorado, Youth Apprenticeship  
Conexus Indiana, Presentation  
Thomas P. Miller & Associates, Thoughtful Solutions. Empowered Communities.

The Task Force recessed for lunch at 12:03 p.m.

Afternoon Session

Senator English called the afternoon session of the meeting to order.

Discussion of Work-Based Learning Models in Arkansas

**Mr. Greg Taylor**, Training and Development Manager, Georgia-Pacific, was recognized. Mr. Taylor introduced a PowerPoint presentation on the Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME) program, which blends college courses and on-the-job training. Students made the presentation and also showed a video.

Presenters:

**Mr. Timothy Griffin**, Student  
**Mr. Oratio Martinez**, Student

**Mr. Nate Klinck** moderated a panel discussion of practitioners involved in work-based learning in Arkansas.

Panel:

**Ms. Karen Breashears**, CEO, National Apprenticeship Training Foundation (NATF) – *discussed pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs; providing real-world role-playing*

**Ms. Catherine Hillier**, Training Manager, Georgia-Pacific, Crossett Paper Operations – *discussed industry perspective on apprenticeship programs, aligning programs with college courses, and recruiting partners and students*

**Ms. Laura Howard**, Career Coach, Batesville School District – *discussed pre-apprenticeship program the district has with NATF in the Batesville School District; providing career pathways for students*

**Mr. Tim Klinedinst**, Tech Recruiter, Tyson Foods, Inc. – *discussed building career pipelines and developing apprenticeship/internship programs; providing direction to students*

**Mr. Mike Rogers**, Director, Industrial Maintenance and Refrigeration Management, Tyson Foods, Inc. – *adding value to workers; worker training and pipeline to work; successful apprenticeship programs*

**Ms. Stephanie Whitesell**, Specialist Recruiter-Operations, Tyson Foods, Inc. – *discussed challenges and process for student participation in a work-based apprenticeship program*

Contributor to the Discussion:

**Ms. Kathi Turner**, Deputy Director, Career & Technical Education, Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE)

Issues Included in the Discussion:

- ✓ manufacturers involved with the FAME program,
- ✓ FAME as a model for the ACE Career Pathways Program of Study,
- ✓ students needing to be taught to show up on time,
- ✓ legislators making room for industry to have available capital to invest,
- ✓ allowing students to tour plants,
- ✓ certifications from registered apprenticeship programs,
- ✓ union apprenticeship programs,
- ✓ recruitment efforts to fill skills gap; working with Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), and
- ✓ combining efforts to market resources.

PowerPoint Presentation:

Arkansas FAME

Handouts:

Arkansas FAME, Brochure

Arkansas FAME, PowerPoint Presentation

Arkansas FAME, Presentation

Discussion of Task Force's Next Steps

Following a request by **Mr. Nate Klinck**, Task Force members had a brief discussion about key actions that should be taken as next steps for the Task Force.

Next Scheduled Meeting:

*Date, time, and location TBD*

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

*Approved: 03/27/2018*