

STARK TUSCARAWAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
September 4, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.
Kent State University at Stark Conference Center

PRESENT	ABSENT	STWDB STAFF
Marla Akridge	Lisa Gould	JoAnn Breedlove
John Aldergate	Mike Lauber	Rebecca Harris
Rick Baxter	Steve Rippeth	Maddy Miller
Stephen Carson	Tracy Sabo	
Damus Cole	Patrice Yacko	LEO
Andrew Fowler		Commissioner Chris Abbuhl
Para Jones		
Alison Kerns		
Susan Lenigar		
Marc Manheim	Guests	
Rick Moss	Mary Kate Hastings	ONE-STOP OPR/FISCAL AGENT
Scott Robinson	Jeffrey Johnson	
Joseph Sekely	Rebecca Kuzma	Chuck Byrd
Sarah Spies	Abigail Logar	Amy Miller
Darren VanWinkle	John Richard	Dan Sipe
	Jeremy Vittek	Lori Yager
	Thomas West	

BUSINESS MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Scott Robinson, Chair called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Guest / LEO Introductions..... Scott Robinson, Chair

- Chris Abbuhl**-Tuscarawas County Commissioner
- Jeffrey Johnson**-Ohio Department of Job & Family Services Office of Workforce Development
- Thomas West**-Greater Stark County Urban League
- Abigail Logar**-Team NEO
- Mary Kate Hastings**-Office of Lt. Governor John Husted
- John Richard**-Stark Education Partnership
- Rebecca Kuzma**-Strengthening Stark
- Jeremy Vittek**-East Central Ohio Educational Service Center

Officer Elections / Results..... D. Cole, Secretary / Nominating Chair

Cole announced all board members present have a ballot to elect the vacant position of the Vice Chair. John Aldergate has been nominated previously and is on the ballot. If there are nominations from the floor, the following board members are eligible if present at the meeting: John Aldergate, Rick Baxter, Andrew Fowler, Lisa Gould, Mike Lauber, Tracy Sabo, Darren Van Winkle, and Patrice Yacko. A candidate nominated from the floor must accept to be placed on the ballot. If a candidate is nominated from the floor and accepts the nomination, they will be written in on all ballots. There were no nominations from the floor. Ballots were collected and tallied. Cole announced the new Vice Chair for 10/1/24-9/30/24 is John Aldergate.

ODJFS Special Project Funding Overview..... J. Breedlove, Executive Director

Presentation by:

Jeffrey Johnson, Project Director, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services

Thomas West, Executive Director, Greater Stark County Urban League

Breedlove gave a historical perspective on the ODJFS Special Project funding. Late 2020, an opportunity was presented to our Workforce Development Board to serve as a funding “pass through” entity to receive special project funding for an Employment Navigator pilot project. The funding would be provided through Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and support employment navigation services to individuals through the Greater Stark County Urban League (GSCUL). The Workforce Development Board would take on the role as the contracting and monitoring entity through our Fiscal agent for this funding. This information was presented to the Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board in December 2020 as an action item and board approved. All members believed it was a good project for the community as it brings resources to the community and helps individuals get connected to employment opportunities in 2021 and 2022. An additional opportunity to get additional funds to provide the Greater Stark County Urban League (GSCUL) for another pilot of this funding and this was presented to the STWDB at the January 2023 Board meeting to serve individuals piloted through this program again for 2023 and 2024. The STWDB approved this funding/opportunity at the January 2023 meeting for the funds to pass through the board and the funds to go directly to the GSCUL on a cost reimbursement basis. We know there is a need and a good opportunity to get people gainfully employed. This funding/agreement will end December 31, 2024.

Jeffrey Johnson shared the Labor Market Information (LMI) can help us better understand the demographic trends. He shared the state maps by county giving the example of the Hispanic population growth of 35% since 2010. He noted they have created programs “Spanish to English” and “English to Spanish” as the goal is to make those connections to a job with a skill (mentioned the “Skilled Trades”). We have people working at the food banks to find the people needing our help as the goal is to get people hired. He shared charts by Unemployment Rate by Ethnicity and Unemployment Rate by Age with ages 16-24 highlighted.

Breedlove shared "Why Stark County?" Demographics indicate that in many Stark County neighborhoods, high poverty and low employment exist. In Stark County, the average poverty rate is at 41% (Ohio 14%), average labor force participation is 43.4% (Ohio 62.6%), Percent African American is 46% (Ohio 12.2%), Average Unemployment Rate is 26.9% (Ohio 4.2%), Average Per Capita Income is \$10,961 per year (Ohio \$21,0003) and Percent Hispanic is 4% (Ohio's 3%). This data was cited in the GSCUL's 2020 Navigator Program proposal to ODJFS.

Thomas West shared the Employment Navigator Summary Results. In Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023), there were 80 engaged participants which started in Quarter 3 & 4. In Program Year 2023 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024), there were 193 engaged participants. A total of 359 intakes were performed with a total of 194 placements with a placement rate of 54%.

West shared the goal is to connect participants to in-demand jobs. The Navigator program provides "wrap around services" so individuals can maintain their jobs. GSCUL partnered with Strengthening Stark in Career Connect to get other dollars so participants can get work shoes / tools, bus pass and other needed necessities for the job. Some of the other services participants received was resume assistance. The economic impact of 2023 & 2024 data showed an average hourly wage of \$16.35, average annual income of \$34,000, and 90-day retention rate of 60%. Some of the top industries in 2023 & 2024 were Manufacturing, Healthcare and Customer Service, and the Placement Demographics were 65% African Americans, 22% White, 2% Mixed Race, 2% Hispanic and 9% Other.

Leveraging YouScience Student Aptitude & Career Discovery: Connecting to In Demand Industries in Stark & Tuscarawas Counties..... J. Breedlove, Executive Director

Presentation by:
Abigail Logar, Manager Research, Team NEO

Breedlove gave a brief narrative prior to Logar's presentation. The YouScience assessment tool is used in several Stark County and Tuscarawas County schools. The YouScience assessment was used in the Ohio to work program during the pandemic in major cities. This assessment assesses a student's interest and aptitude.

As the Board, we had the opportunity to apply for some Business Resource Network (BRN) funding from the state to be able to do a little bit more data deep dive regarding the YouScience assessment data in Stark and Tuscarawas County schools to see how we can better connect young talent to opportunities in our local workforce area region (Stark & Tuscarawas Counties). There is no other tool to give us this information so with the assistance of Team NEO through this data project they have prepared a report on these details. Abigail Logar, Team NEO will share some of this information from the report. This project was a collaboration with John Richards and his team at Stark Education Partnership who have been very involved and instrumental in expanding within the Stark County schools as well as Strengthening Stark and Stark Economic Development Board and serving Tuscarawas County schools is East Central Ohio Educational Service Center. We had to work

through both educational entities since their schools had access to the disaggregated data from the students to do this project. It was a team collaboration effort.

Abigail Logar with Team NEO will be sharing some of the results in her presentation. A bonus extra came out of this project were the career guides for each career cluster, and there were 2 sets of the career guides on each table for reference. These career guides will be a resource in the schools when talking with students on their future career plans.

Abigail Logar with Team NEO showed her PowerPoint presentation. She highlighted the background on YouScience- "YouScience is used by nearly a million students in thousands of school districts to create hyper-personalized pathways. They used proprietary artificial intelligence to uncover student aptitudes, then connect these aptitudes to careers and educational pathways designed to help students find relevance in school and confidence beyond." The 2024 project covered 615 careers, grades 7-12, 4460 students, in Stark and Tuscarawas Counties.

Logar shared on the screen highlighting the **sum of the gaps** that were either **positive** or **negative** for each of the career clusters. A negative number means there is **MORE APTITUDE than interest** shown by students. A positive number means there is **MORE INTEREST than aptitude** shown by students.

Logar shared, where there is a positive number, this is where we are going to highlight the importance of skills-based learning and outcome-oriented learning. When a student is interested in a certain occupation, they may not have the aptitude for it so educators can support the student with skills needed to go in this field. Educators can access through O*NET since O*NET gives you all the hard and soft skills necessary for a particular field. In addition, Logar looked at through skills-based career pathway perspective which is what you will see in each career guide. If a student has a lot of aptitude for a career cluster but they are not necessarily interested in it so she sampled a few of top titles of the career cluster and based on the skills of the foundational level which are similar in cross occupations so this brings up the question of "how can the students get into that career cluster they are not showing an interest in?" One example would be to expose students to different careers-for example, Talent attraction to these companies where the numbers are negative for this career cluster.

Logar shared highlights of her report. In the Report Highlight #1, which was shared on the screen, she notes "Increasing Career Exposure and Skills-Based Learning as a Solution." The career clusters with the largest negative gaps (high aptitude, low interest) correlate with growing industries: Health Science, Advanced Manufacturing, Computers & Technology. Teaching, Arts & Media, Law & Public Safety have the largest positive gaps (high interest, low aptitude). Soft skills remain critical and are ranked as the #1 company hiring concern in Stark and Tuscarawas counties based on a survey of 201 companies ran in 2023. The **High Aptitude, Low Interest Career Clusters**-how can employers in these industries better implement career exposure opportunities to promote student interest in growing fields? The **High Interest, Low Aptitude Career Clusters**-how can educators approach career clusters, where interest is high, but aptitude is low?

In the Report Highlight #2, which was shared on the screen, she notes "Are Today's students prepared for future job market demands?" There is high demand, lower aptitude in Business, Sales & Marketing, and Finance (13,000 jobs projected), and the **call to action** is "Outcome-based learning through in-demand skills can help close labor market gaps. She also notes "High demand, strong aptitude score, but a lower interest in Health Science, Distribution & Logistics, and Advanced Manufacturing jobs. The **opportunity** would be companies in these industries can benefit from increased focus on talent acquisition and partnerships with educators.

In the Report Highlight #3, which was shared on the screen, she notes YouScience Aptitude/Interest Gaps in Stark & Tuscarawas reflect the National Teacher shortage. The largest misalignment in interest to aptitude is in the Teaching career cluster, with 3389 Aptitude Fits and 7915 Interest Fits. The **call to action** is the YouScience gap data highlights the critical need for career-connected learning and talent attraction efforts. The **opportunity** is the Teaching cluster is ranked as the top cluster for interest, and 4th highest when it comes to aptitude overall, meaning many Stark and Tuscarawas students have interest and the innate skills to pursue the career.

Logar shared one example of the "Advanced Manufacturing" career guide on the screen, but she noted several packets of all 16 career cluster guides are on each of the tables for all to view. In addition, these career guides will be emailed to all after the meeting. The career cluster guides groups 615 occupations into 16 distinct clusters. She noted featured jobs have: 1. High aptitude, overall fit, high demand, strong projected job openings in Stark & Tuscarawas 2. Exposure to opportunities across various levels of education/training.

Logar shared some of the key takeaways are: It is critical for companies and educators to bridge the career exposure gap as the data reveals high in-demand jobs with strong aptitude scores, but little interest from students. There is an overall gap in aptitudes to interests in career clusters for Stark and Tuscarawas students, especially in Health Science, Advanced Manufacturing and Computers & Technology career clusters. Outcome based learning and skills-based career pathways can support students with high interest in certain careers, but low aptitude. Educators can take advantage of the free resource (Occupational Information Network) O*NET to learn about the hard skill requirements of different careers, as well as related occupations. Soft skills can be the difference that makes a person successful in their job and should be a major focus in curriculum, as soft skills demand spans across all careers. Soft skills are the most sought-after talent issue by companies in Stark and Tuscarawas.

Breedlove said the reports and career guides will be shared via email to all board members and guests.

WIOA / CCMEP Performance..... J. Breedlove, Executive Director

Breedlove noted the PY22 Final Adjusted Data for WIOA /CCMEP Performance report was sent out in the email prior to the meeting, and there are a few copies at each table. She said we did successfully pass all of the measures.

She said every 2 years the boards are required to go through a performance standards process with the state. Every 2 years, the state negotiates performance measures with the Department of Labor (DOL), and they have since done this process. Local workforce areas negotiate the performance standards shared with them by Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS). This information was shared with our board a few weeks ago, and we reviewed these standards and based upon standards that have been provided we moved forward and accepted them and submitted them back to ODJFS. As shared, we have successfully met our performance for PY22.

Breedlove shared a PowerPoint presentation on a **Quick Refresher** on Funding. The **WIOA** Title Funding is the funding received by our local system; 3 Funding Streams to serve Adults, Dislocated Workers and Adults. CCMEP is Ohio's Youth/Young Adult Program that blends federal WIOA Youth and Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) funding to serve youth/young adults ages 14-24 (our local areas serve 16-24). Workforce Initiative Association (WIA) serves as the Lead Agency for CCMEP and receives the TANF funding for this program. Locally, the board authorizes use of WIOA Youth funds for the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program. The board and WIA blend these two youth funding streams together to procure, contract and fund youth/young adult service delivery providers in Stark and Tuscarawas Counties.

In February 2024, a Performance Measures webinar was scheduled with the board, and Dan Rizo-Patron provided an overview.

Several key points were shared:

- Performance measures apply to participants enrolled in programming and is meant to evaluate outcomes of overall participants and is one piece of the story assessing the goal of the program.
- WIOA Performance is measured by Workforce Area which we are Stark & Tuscarawas and CCMEP is measured by County.
- After the program year (End of June) is completed, ODJFS's pulls the data on August 20th from the state's case management system and submits to Department of Labor (DOL) in the fall; DOL applies the statistical adjustment model to the data in 2025 and a final adjusted report is sent to state and local area in June/July of the following year. For example, PY22 final performance results were just received.
- States negotiate WIOA performance measure standards every two years with DOL; Local workforce areas do the same with the state; PY24 and PY25 local area performance standards have been accepted.
- A WIOA performance measures "hold-harmless" provision for Program Year 2021 and 2022 was requested by Ohio Workforce Association and approved by ODJFS because a new state

case management system "ARIES" had a lot of issues and concerns with the validity of the data. The state approved and issued a "Hold Harmless".

- Failure of the same performance measure two years in a row may impact subsequent Local Workforce Area designation.

Adjourned: 1:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: November 6, 2024, 12:00 PM at Kent State University-Tuscarawas