

PA WDB Quarterly Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 3rd, 2022

10:00AM to 2:00PM

Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Members:

- Chair Jeff Brown
- Idayat Adewunmi
- Will Allen
- Denise Andahazy
- Senator Camera Bartolotta
- Tim Bean
- Secretary Jennifer Berrier
- Richard Bloomingdale
- Julene Champion
- Senator Amanda Cappelletti
- Representative Morgan Cephas
- Wendie DiMatteo-Holsinger
- Jessica Eberley
- Brian Funkhouser
- Acting Secretary Eric Hagarty
- James Harper, Jr.
- Ryan Hyde
- Sarah Hollister
- Gerardo Interiano
- Timothy James
- Secretary Allison Jones
- Marguerite Kline
- Andrea McArthur
- Representative Ryan Mackenzie
- Jodi Pace
- Commissioner Michael Pipe
- Lisa Risboskin
- Representative Melissa Shusterman
- Laura Wand
- Terry Wiltrout
- Matt Yarnell
- Deputy Secretary Tara Williams for Governor Tom Wolf
- Gwen Ross for Secretary Dennis Davin
- Amy Schwenk for Acting Secretary George Little
- Billie Barnes for Commissioner Robert Harvie, Jr.
- Sara Gligora for Secretary Russel Redding
- Hoa Pham for Acting Secretary Meg Snead
- David Miles for Secretary Robert Torres

Presenters:

- Deputy Secretary Tara Williams, Governor's Office
- Secretary Jennifer Berrier, PA Department of Labor and Industry
- Acting Deputy Secretary Dan Kuba, PA Department of Labor and Industry
- Acting Executive Director Ryan Hyde, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Gwen Ross, PA Department of Community and Economic Development
- Hoa Pham, PA Department of Human Services
- Amy Schwenk, PA Department of Corrections
- Sara Gligora, PA Department of Agriculture
- Secretary Eric Hagarty, PA Department of Education

- Marlyn Barbosa, Judd Pittman, Marty Turner: PWDA Fellowship Presentation
- James Martini, PA Workforce Development Board
- Rick Bloomingdale, Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee
- Brian Funkhouser, Continuous Improvement Committee
- Matt Yarnell, Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee
- Sarah Hollister, One-Stop Service Delivery System Committee

Staff: Executive Director James Martini, Deputy Director Josh Towzey, Shuana Davis, Michelle Lengel, Shannon Austin

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Brown began the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Chair's Updates

Chair Brown sought a motion to approve the May 3, 2022 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Secretary Allison Jones made the motion. Laura Wand seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Brown began new member introductions and introduced Will Allen. Mr. Allen said he was excited to join the Board and that he is currently a managing partner at a venture capital firm, Magarac Venture Partners, in Pittsburgh. He is also the founder of the Will Allen Foundation where they help high school students prepare for life after high school. This means that they look at career trajectory and opportunities, as well as life skills. He started the work at 24, in Tampa, Florida. He noted that he ended in Pittsburgh after playing for the Steelers. He serves on the Allegheny County Workforce Development Board and the Allegheny Conference Board. He is looking forward to learning about how the state runs workforce.

Chair Brown then introduced Terry Wilttrout. He currently works for Washington Health System as the President of Washington Health System Greene and then the VP of Operations for their total health system. He has been in healthcare for 31 years. He is very active with the workforce group in the Southwestern PA. He noted that the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board and Ami Gatts worked closely with him and the healthcare industry to help recruit medical assistants, phlebotomists, etc.

Chair Brown then introduced Lisa Risboskin. She lives in Lackawanna County and has been a PA native her whole life. Ms. Risboskin has been in HR and manufacturing for over 25 years. She currently is with Ball Corporation which is brand new to that area of PA. They are a beverage can manufacturer and currently employ about 250 people but they are looking to grow until the end of 2024. They will be one of the largest manufacturers in that area. She is thrilled to be on the PA WDB.

Chair Brown then introduced Acting Secretary of Education Eric Hagarty. He noted that he was looking forward to continuing the work with the Board. He had previously served as Governor Wolf's Deputy Chief of Staff working closely with the Department of Education and the Department of Labor and Industry.

Governor's Office Updates

Deputy Secretary Tara Williams then noted that at the last PA WDB meeting, the Governor's Office was ramping up for budget negotiations but the budget is now in place. There are historic investments that impact education and the workforce. The budget includes transformative investments in the education system at all levels from Pre-K to post-secondary education with a \$1.8 billion increase that contributes to stronger and healthier communities and a prepared workforce. It specifically includes some support to underfunded school districts, a significant increase for early education, and increases for public higher education including support for the PASSHE transformation efforts. It also includes \$200 million to focus on mental health and safety efforts in schools. A few other highlights include the fact that there is \$90 million to stabilize the childcare workforce, \$25 million for a new childcare tax credit to benefit Pennsylvania's families, and \$2 million for women's reentry initiatives. The PAsmart initiative continues to be funded and the budget also includes reforming the corporate net income tax to support a stronger economy. In addition to all the money, updates to the Pennsylvania School Code that happened with the budget include several important workforce related items which will be included in the agency updates. Credentials will now be included on transcripts and there will be some dual-enrollment provisions. There is a new Commission on Education and Economic Competitiveness along with other initiatives.

The second thing Ms. Williams wanted to talk about was digital skills. She was excited to share on behalf of a wonderful team that is part of a National Governor's Association initiative, that they developed a PA digital skills plan and a set of recommendations. Addressing the digital divide is more important than ever in ensuring that Pennsylvanians are not left out of the education, workforce, or healthcare systems. While broadband efforts are underway under the new Broadband Authority, any new technology must come with the knowledge of how to use said technology. They are grateful for the input that Board provided in a few ways. They obtained initial input from the Industry Partnership and Employer Engagement Committee and the One-Stop Service Delivery System Committee. In addition, they sent a survey out to the Board as well as some other employer networks to better understand the future needs of employers and what their concerns are around digital skills. She thanked everyone who participated in that survey. The plan recommendations ultimately focus on foundational digital skills. They are the basics like turning on a computer and basic Microsoft Office functions. They are also prioritizing working age adults. As part of the project, they worked with a vendor to create a map that identifies where digital skills training is occurring across the state. It will help connect people to existing training and highlight where there might be training deserts. They just finalized the plan as of August 2nd, so they will be sharing the plan with partners and will be getting started on implementation. They are also going to be working closely with the Broadband Authority and planning under the Digital Equity Act to ensure that digital skills are included in planning efforts to address the digital divide.

The third thing she touched on was providing an update of what is happening from the federal Infrastructure Act. She invited the state infrastructure coordinator, Jack Groarke, to give a brief update. Mr. Groarke said at the end of last year, Congress passed a bipartisan infrastructure law. Since then, the state has started to receive some money and are expecting to receive \$18 billion in formula funding over the 5 year lifespan of the bill. That fund is broken down into roads and bridges, electric vehicles, broadband, water infrastructure, public transit, clean power, airports, ports, and a number of other categories. To date they have been working on the plans and already submitted several and are waiting formal approval from the federal government. They have already received roads and bridges funding for this fiscal year. The relevance for the Board is that it is a lot of funding to receive in a relatively short amount of time. Every other state in the country will also be receiving funding and while it will create a lot of job opportunities, there are some workforce gaps that they want to be mindful of. They want to work with the private sector to create training programs and create partnerships. He thinks there are a lot of opportunities but a lot of work to be done as well.

Ms. Williams noted that earlier in the summer the Governor convened several leaders to think of workforce needs and solutions so that they are able to take full advantage of the funds and projects while also creating good pathways to quality jobs. The scope requires workforce and education systems to think innovatively and work together in new ways. They know that apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship models are extremely important as well as connections to the higher education system. They also need to ensure that they are reaching communities that may traditionally be left out of workforce initiatives. The Department of Labor and Industry has put together an initial set of information after discussions with some of the main agencies responsible for the project to help prioritize occupations that the state will need to focus on and the associated skill level to develop short term and long term plans. The

Apprenticeship and Training Office is looking at which ones might be apprentice able and exploring opportunities for new investments that prioritize those occupations. They have also started working with the Markle Foundation to specifically focus on initiatives that will develop a workforce for the clean energy sector. They are excited to continue navigating those projects with the funding as it unfolds.

Chair Brown said this was historic. Chair Brown asked Secretary Jones if she had anything to add. She said she did not and that it is a really exciting time for the Commonwealth and education. Chair Brown said he thinks the biggest challenge they are going to face is finding people to do \$18 billion of work since unemployment is so low.

Agency Report- Department of Labor and Industry

Secretary Jennifer Berrier noted that the unemployment rate was down one-tenth of a percentage point in June to 4.5%. They have recovered approximately 87% of the jobs lost in the first two months of the pandemic. Pennsylvania's economy is rebounding quite nicely. They are still working within the agency to clean up the historic unemployment compensation workloads that they encountered during the pandemic. The workload was approximately more than ten times the highest load during the Great Recession of 2009. They have a lot of work to do. Right now, they have in-person appointments for unemployment compensation at 58 of the PA CareerLink® locations across the commonwealth. That is part of a federal grant that the Department was awarded to promote equity within the unemployment system. They are reaching out to the members of the community that might not have the digital skills they need to apply for benefits online. They are currently offering that service and it is the first time for in-person service in over 20 years.

Another great thing happening in the world of unemployment, is that they have a grant opportunity. They were awarded another competitive grant through the federal Department of Labor to allow PA to offer \$2.5 million in grant money to community based organizations to help Pennsylvania workers learn about, apply for, and receive unemployment benefits. That grant opportunity expires August 22, 2022, so they are excited to get additional help from community based members. On the apprenticeship front, they received \$3.9 million in federal grants to build and modernize PA's registered apprenticeship program. The Apprenticeship and Training Office is going to expand DEI and access to apprenticeship programs in underrepresented communities. They are focusing on embedding apprenticeships within their local workforce areas and making sure it is a model that can be used at the regional and local level. Furthermore, in July they awarded \$4.9 million in PAsmart money to 14 PA registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship programs within the building and construction trades. They are looking to build diverse talent pipelines and reach underrepresented workers and expand apprenticeship across the Commonwealth.

Secretary Berrier then noted that the following Friday, they were going to be having new minimum wage regulations going into effect. Those regulations impact tipped workers and impact the calculation of the fluctuating workweek.

Acting Deputy Secretary Dan Kuba then noted that workforce had been quite busy and he wanted to highlight a couple of areas. He noted that the Bureau for Workforce Development and Administration (BWDA) provided information on the School to Work grants and some information on active statements of work. He noted that they also wanted to make sure that they talked about the good things that are occurring in workforce. The Bureau of Workforce Partner Operations (BWPO) provided a good SkillUp PA overview for the briefing book. They are working to get information about the SkillUp PA initiative to other agencies. He then talked about some reports they got back that highlighted the need for training for case management staff. They are currently in the process of building a portal for state workers so they can go in and utilize the catalog of almost 6,000 trainings. The business service delivery evaluation, which was an initiative to determine if workforce development and economic development was effectively serving businesses, has been contracted with KPMG. They have now met with the local areas and opened a line of communication for the evaluation. There is also an update in the briefing book about the CWDS digital intake form initiative. They were able to have the vendor visit the selected 5 pilot areas. There was tremendous knowledge gathered. Acting Deputy Secretary Kuba gave kudos to Matt Flinner for all of his work on that project.

Acting Deputy Secretary Kuba said that one of the things that came out of the career advisor reports was that there was a communication issue. He said there is a biweekly update that goes out to staff. They later found out that a lot of information was not getting fully disseminated. That has since been solved. The deputate is very excited overall about their outreach efforts. They have started to have more of an internal discussion on educating staff about the inner workings of what workforce is trying to accomplish. He noted it has helped strategically address issues that have occurred. He commented that one of the results is that they have fewer issues and complaints coming in. The final thing he wanted to talk about was the Trade Adjustment Assistance program and the fact that the TRADE act has been phased out. It went into sunset on July 1, 2022. Over the years, this is a typical activity that takes place in the TRADE program. They have been told through resources at the federal government that a continuing resolution or additional changes will come forward and get put back in place. A few key things to remember is that even though the grant is sunset, participants will continue to receive all of the services that they have been promised and supported throughout their length of training. Also, all of the staff will continue to work on the TRADE program. They will continue to offer the services. The funding is for a three year timespan. Pennsylvania is very unique in that the staff do a very good job on educating the public about the TRADE Act program. Pennsylvania receives a very large portion of the funding. In the case that the TRADE Act is not reupped, the staff that currently work on that project would be redirected to work on other projects. Chair Brown asked if there any questions and there were none.

Agency Report- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Executive Director Ryan Hyde remarked that they are focused on a variety of priorities. First, they are focused on hiring. The pandemic decreased their complement as they have over 150 positions posted. They are looking for human service degrees. One of the other big things they are focused on is their financial situation. Investment in the program was down due to the pandemic as well as customer service so they have some carry over money. In June, the OVR Board approved several motions to allow them to further invest funding into customers in different areas, especially college and post-secondary training. They got the Board to raise the rates of reimbursement that they are permitted to give their students who attend college or vocational institutions. They made several motions to change the formula on how money is awarded to the students so it will increase the amount substantially. They also got the Board to change the financial needs test. The new limit is \$100,000 which will allow more people to be able to receive services. On August 8th they were planning to expand their order of selection. Within vocational rehabilitation, they are mandated to maintain an order of selection which is like a priority list. They were expanding the order to those with significant disabilities and those with non-significant disabilities. Mr. Hyde then mentioned that they were very pleased to say that were able to achieve 5,420 successful vocational outcomes last year. That number is down compared to prior to the pandemic but numbers are starting to climb. Along with those increases in referrals, they are seeing an increase in expenditures and investments in customers. He noted that he was on his way to Philadelphia to see the MyWorks program. He noted that MyWorks had projects in 31 counties and it is a partnership with a local municipality, OVR, and a vendor. They are giving students with disabilities an opportunity to work to improve their local community. They were investing over \$13 million in students over the summer giving them work-based learned experiences, college exploration, career exploration, and job readiness programs. He noted that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Summer Academy had just wrapped up. It is a collaboration between the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, OVR, the Hiram G. Andrews Center, and other experts. It was for students transitioning to college in the near future. He noted that their next Board meeting is in September. He then noted about the Commonwealth Summer Internship Program and how they had 30 students participate this year. He just found out that at least 4 interns were asked to stay on and help their agencies into the fall.

Agency Report- Department of Aging

David Miles remarked that he did not have an agency update.

Agency Report- Department of Community and Economic Development

Gwen Ross noted that the Broadband Authority's new Executive Director, Brandon Carson, started over the summer. Since coming on board he hit the ground running working on PA's Digital Equity Planning Grant as well as working on PA's BEAD (Broadband Equity Access and Deployment) Planning Fund grant. The Authority has a robust website with a list of all of their meetings. Ms. Ross then

commented how a skilled workforce remains a priority for employers. She noted that with their workforce grant programs, they still continue to see a demand for them with no slowing in sight. She highlighted a program that they funded through their Manufacturing Training to Career grant. The grants allow for short-term training, work readiness programs, as well as awareness so students can become aware of the industry. The Challenge Program, based out of Johnstown, was awarded one of the grants to help expand a program they had in place with their local high schools. Businesses in the region sponsor a local high school and work with them. She highlighted Martin Baker and Highland Tank as they have been a part of the program for some years. However, they noticed that students were not becoming employees so they stayed involved and worked to turn the program around. They came up with a “Why Not You” work readiness program. The employers provided students with a bus pass, a meal card for the cafeteria, and a stipend for their work. 19 students participated in the program. The impact that the program had on the students was immediate. Ms. Ross then shared the story of a student. The work of the private-public partnerships is very impactful.

Agency Report- Department of Human Services

Hoa Pham then presented on behalf of the Department of Human Services. The Department has been diligently working on the initiatives that they shared at the last meeting so she was pleased to give an update. The Office of Income wanted to share that earlier in the year they received federal approval for updates to the state plan that governs how they track work activities for TANF recipients. That is the first time they have received approval since 2008 for that plan. The Department released a series of policy and system updates for their TANF Employment and Training Programs. The updates are designed alleviate administrative burden for clients and program providers as well as increasing access to services. Those changes went into effect for the new program year on July 1, 2022. Separately, the Office of Income Maintenance would also like to share an update regarding their SNAP programs. During the last update in May, DHS shared that without federal action that approximately 170,000 adult SNAP recipients would be subject to time limitations and extra work requirements starting in October as a condition to keep receiving their SNAP benefits. Ms. Pham noted that DHS was pleased to share that they were granted to safeguard receipt of those benefits. The final update from the Office of Income Maintenance was that the Department recently launched a new initiative through the KEYS program which partners with 14 community colleges across the Commonwealth to provide a suite of intensive supports for TANF and SNAP recipients while they are earning their associates degree. This fall the Department would be dispensing what they are calling GRIPPs (Grants to Relieve Inflation and Pandemic Pressures) that will effectively zero out tuition costs for students. Those grants were made available through funds from the American Rescue Plan and the support of the community colleges.

She then shared updates from the Department’s offices of Long-Term Living, Developmental Programs, and Child Development and Early Learning. Those offices continue to allocate American Rescue Plan funds as well. The Department is continuing to investment approximately \$1.2 billion into childcare workforce stabilization efforts. With Governor Wolf’s signing of Act 54 earlier in the year, the Department has allocated roughly \$250 million to support facility and care workers across a broad range of long-term care facilities and providers such as nursing facilities and personal care homes. Those investments are a part of the Department’s ongoing efforts to stabilize multiple care sectors. She then noted that they recently released an RFA to implement an agency with choice model service with its home and community based services for Medicaid recipients.

Chair Brown said at some point within the last year or so, there was a question from the Secretary about if they wanted to use the workforce system to deploy its resources. He asked that at a future meeting the Board gets an update on how that is going and whether the local workforce boards went to the table and made the changes they were looking for. Hoa said they were very happy with their continued partnership with the local workforce development boards. The work to braid their TANF Employment and Training programs with the boards and WIOA services is ongoing and they would appreciate the opportunity to continue the discussion. Chair Brown summarized that progress is being made and that it will continue.

Agency Report- Department of Corrections

Amy Schwenk noted that she wanted to highlight their partnership with other agencies. They were currently working with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the PA Turnpike Commission, and PENNDOT, on

things happening both in the SCIs and outside of the SCIs. They are looking at the Department of Agriculture for how they can partner with them, similar to their farm at SCI Rockview and how they can expand upon that at other SCIs. They are working with DCNR to see how they can partner with them at a bootcamp similar to what they do with their forestry area at Rockview. In terms of their partnership with the Turnpike Commission, they are looking to develop a transitional workforce program by rehiring reentrants. The most exciting thing to report is that they have reached an agreement with PENNDOT to assist inmates in attaining their CDL prior to release. Dorenda Hamarlund continues to meet throughout the state with several areas to tout the benefits of hiring reentrants and work through any difficulties they may have.

Agency Report- Department of Agriculture

Sara Gligora provided the update. First, the Department has continued to work on expanding and supporting apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeships within agriculture. They have three of their ag sponsors participating in the Keystone Development Partnerships Apprenticeship Navigator program. The Department is participating as well. They hope to have a network of individuals who are skilled in apprenticeship as well as agriculture. Additionally, the Agriculture Education Commission has been busy working with stakeholders to develop a statewide strategic plan focused on increasing equity in higher education. The ag education system has been experiencing issues recruiting ag education teachers. Also, the Department is in the final stages of a project with eConsult to collect data on farm workers. The data will be made public soon. Additionally, the Department has been working closely with the Department of Corrections to identify some opportunities for trainings and workforce development programs. They have visited two state correctional institutions so far that have ag related programs and they think there is some potential for possible pre-apprenticeship programs and other opportunities. They are so excited to be working with the DOC. The Department has multiple Farm Bill grant programs that are now open, many of which can be used to fund workforce development and education opportunities. One of them that is open is the Urban Ag grant.

Agency Report- Department of Education

Acting Secretary Haggarty noted that they are thrilled by the results of this year's budget process. This brings the Governor's increased investment in education over last eight years to nearly \$4 billion coming off of a prior administration that saw \$1 billion cuts to education. They are proud of the work over the past eight years. The education system does have its own set of challenges with one of those being the educator workforce. Ten years ago, around 20,000 new educators entered new classrooms each year, last year it was 6,000. There has been a dramatic decrease in those entering the field and educators are also leaving the field at an accelerating rate. They are concerned about the long term viability of the educator workforce. If they do not take action to address some of the issues what they are going to see is much larger class sizes, reduced program offerings, difficulties getting students to and from school if there are not bus drivers and things like that. Two weeks prior to the meeting, Deputy Secretary Tanya Garcia and the Secretary were proud to unveil a plan to work through the educator workforce issues between now and 2025. They have over a hundred action steps that they were going to be taking at the Department of Education. The steps include things like grant opportunities to strengthen relationships between schools and educator prep programs and modernizing the teacher certification process at the Department. He said it currently takes them about 10 weeks to certify a teacher and they want to get it down to 15 days. They are also implementing new pathways for teachers that move into Pennsylvania from out of state to have their teacher certifications be recognized here. They are also looking at reducing additional unnecessary barriers like the basic skills assessment, developing data collection, and improving the reporting processes so that they understand where there are vacancies.

Sarah Hollister echoed what Acting Secretary Haggarty was saying. In the Philadelphia Region they were working with all of the LEAs, charter schools, districts as it is a huge need. She wanted to encourage the Board to lean into it as there are a lot of ways to support people on the career pathway to being teachers through career exposure, School to Work grants, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeships. She noted it is a great opportunity to meld the two systems together.

Chair Brown also noted that there was a question if the 100 point plan was anywhere online. Acting Secretary Haggarty said there was but they are not listed. There are two different documents. One is on the research and the other is the actual action plan. The tried to

synthesize the 100 plus items into 50 to make it more readable. They also have their own internal tracker with about 132 action items. He then noted that he saw Senator Bartolotta's comment in the chat and wanted to thank her for work in championing a lot of it throughout budget negotiations.

PWDA Fellowship Presentation

Marlyn Barbosa, Dillon Moore, Judd Pittman, Mary Turner

Judd Pittman began the presentation and noted that he was the Director of K16 initiatives at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology. Mary Turner is the director of the KEYS program at Reading Area Community College. Marlyn Barbosa is a director for Tec Centro in Lancaster County. Mr. Pittman noted that their last team member, Dillon Moore, was not available to be on the meeting but contributed a lot.

Mr. Pittman said they had wanted to dig into job retention and the services and opportunities to support people. Part of what the fellowship did was challenge teams from cross-agencies to get together to try to figure out what are some challenges in the workforce that they can try to provide some solid solutions for. He noted that their group looked at the barriers to retaining employment, specifically around supportive services such as transportation, childcare, etc. After identifying some of the policy challenges they looked at the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and saw that the requirements prohibit the use of funding to provide supportive services after someone is placed. They concluded that if they could extend the supportive services for a little while someone has their employment, then the rate of retention would be higher. They looked at two levels of policy recommendations between federal and state. The first was to dig into the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and make it so that through the follow-up period, that the supportive services that people come to rely on follow them. For the state policy, they want to look at a pilot initiative to build the evidence and the value proposition around supportive services post-placement. There was two potential funding streams that might be right for that initiative and they are the American Rescue Plan Act and WIOA state set-aside funding that can be used for discretionary grantmaking. He noted that they had deep dialogue about what the profile of vulnerable employees are that use the services and tried to think through what the best way to operationalize it would be.

Marlyn Barbosa then talked about the story of Octavia and how they were putting a face to the issue. She noted that Octavia is a single mom of two kids and that some of her barriers were uniforms, childcare, and reliable transportation. Through SNAP 50/50 she was eligible for childcare and was later hired by UPMC.

Mr. Pittman said that not only did they want to personalize the story by they wanted to dig into the evidence. They dug into information around total separation and quit/discharges/layoffs. They wanted to understand why an employee was separating from an employer. They discerned that the supportive services are not only beneficial for the employee but also the employer. It also reduces the turnover cost for employers. A lot changed since they started the project though, particularly the numbers. However, the bottom line is that the supportive services really help employees stick with their job.

Mary iterated that it makes fiscal sense to invest in the time where the benefits cliff starts to appear. She then shared some examples of TANF and SNAP of when supportive services end. The retention services are really important to the long-term impact that they are making on students and participants. She noted that before COVID there was a long waiting for individuals who would be eligible for the low income childcare funding to support them while they are working. When they are in the job retention services, if there is a waiting, list it could be extremely beneficial to give them a three month buffer to help them with childcare.

Mr. Pittman shared some updates since they first presented their policy paper. Recently the U.S. House of Representatives in their update of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act put in a line that allows supportive services to be provided to WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers for up to 12 months following job placement. It still needs to pass the Senate to be enacted. He noted that in the absence of Federal action, states can take their own actions. Mr. Pittman then reflected on the PWDA Fellowship and noted that was awesome to work with people across agencies and sectors. Mary Turner shared that she really grew and learned from the program. Marlyn Barbosa said she appreciated the opportunity.

Committee Update- Industry Partnerships and Employer Engagement

Executive Director Martini presented on behalf of Chair Sygielski. He is excited about the work that the Industry Partnership and Employer Engagement Committee was doing. At every meeting they have been bringing business representatives from targeted sectors in the Commonwealth to listen and hear what their challenges are. He noted that there was a list in the briefing book of the challenges and opportunities from each group they met with, including IT, hospitality, agriculture, and healthcare. He noted that manufacturing and construction would be the next two industries that the committee heard from. He highlighted the interest in apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship across the sectors. He also noted that some of the barriers that the Board has talked about are featured including childcare, especially in sectors that do not operate on the nine to five schedules.

Committee Update- Career Pathways and Apprenticeship

Chair Rick Bloomingdale noted that they are continuing to pursue their goals outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. He particularly wanted to lift up the work that the Apprenticeship and Training Office was doing. He echoed that there is increased interest in apprenticeship from the federal level and state level beyond the traditional industries.

Committee Update- Youth

Executive Director Martini presented on behalf of Chair Chekemma Townsend as her daughter was participating in the Junior Olympics. He noted that there were three things that the committee was excited to explore in the next quarter. There is a lot of interest around Act 158 which are the high school graduation standards. The committee would be getting a presentation from the Department of Education on that. The committee is also looking into income disregard, specifically around the TANF program. Finally, PDE is working on facilitating communication so that the committee can dedicate some time to learning about the new science standards. STEM education has been a big focus for people on that committee.

Committee Update- Reentry Ad Hoc

Executive Director Martini then provided the update for the Reentry Committee. One of the things the committee is interested in getting into the weeds on some of the issues so the committee would be splitting up into three different subcommittees. One is specifically focused on employment issues like applications and the interviewing process. The second is on transportation and infrastructure. The third group is making sure that electronic information is clear and easily accessible for reentrants.

Committee Update- Continuous Improvement

Chair Brian Funkhouser noted that the pilot program has started for the common digital intake form. The pilot offices include Cumberland, Allegheny East, Bradford, McKean, Lehigh, and Lawrence. The next highlight was the PA Workforce Development Act

and the Governor's Office asked the committee to look at it and respond. The committee had also developed three recommendations for changes to the Workforce Performance Dashboard. The first is to move/duplicate the dashboard to the L&I Workforce web site.

MOTION: Matt Yarnell made the motion. Senator Camera Bartolotta seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

The second recommendation is to provide qualifier for wages and adding a note that the results are quarterly.

MOTION: Matt Yarnell made the motion. Rick Bloomingdale seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

The third recommendation was to provide comparisons to negotiated levels and the ability to compare across regions.

MOTION: Matt Yarnell made the motion. Rick Bloomingdale seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Update- Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc

Chair Matt Yarnell provided context to the forthcoming recommendations. He noted about the challenges to Certified Nursing Assistants. There was also a significant drop in CNAs being added to the registry after the pandemic began. He noted that they are working to increase the amount of testing for CNAs but it is hard to find RN proctors.

The first recommendation is that they create a dashboard and publish monthly to the public of how many CNAs are on the registry at the present time.

MOTION: Wendie DiMatteo Holsinger made the motion. Terry Wiltrout seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The second recommendation is that the Commonwealth engage with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on a TNA testing deadline extension. Chair Brown asked if the extension was for a certain period of time. Zach Zobrist noted that they were not going to specify what it should be. Chair Brown summarized that the people actually negotiating with CMS would have to decide on an appropriate timeline. Chair Yarnell said yes.

MOTION: Tim Bean made the motion to approve. Senator Amanda Cappelletti seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Yarnell said that he wanted to appreciate the Wolf Administration and the Legislature for including in this year's budget a much needed investment in Medicaid rates and additional ARP funds to be moved to the industry to prop up the workforce.

Committee Update- One-Stop Service Delivery System

Chair Sarah Hollister said the committee continues to be briefed about the development of the career pathway work for staff. They also receive updates about the digital intake process. Chair Hollister then summarized the proposed recommendation. There are currently two processes that exist to determine training providers that are eligible for state training dollar reimbursement. The

committee would like to propose combining the two policies. The committee talked to officials from both the Department of Human Services and the Department of Labor and Industry and there is interest from both.

Chair Brown asked for more explanation. Chair Hollister noted that PA CareerLink® has one list on the WIOA side but the TANF side has a completely separate list. Chair Brown summarized that that the end user just wants to receive the training, it does not matter what list it comes from. Chair Brown asked if there was any legal prohibition in doing it. Mr. Martini said that they do not know but other states have figured out a way to do it.

MOTION: Matt Yarnell made a motion to approve the recommendation. Rick Bloomingdale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Recommendations Report

Chair Brown introduced the next presentation. He noted that the report shows what the Board has recommended during the Wolf Administration. Chair Brown remarked that all of the Board members are volunteers and they do it to help people.

Mr. Martini said up until February of 2022, there were 26 recommendations made to the Board. He noted that once it was finalized it would be posted online. Mr. Martini noted that he wanted the Board to understand how serious the Administration took the recommendations. The report is organized by date.

Mr. Martini started with a recommendation from October 2018. It was for the PAsmart Ad Hoc Committee. The committee put forth many recommendations about a grant program that later was included in PA's budget. They outlined several principles and funding priorities for the program which included data driven innovation, cross-sector partnership and alignment, stakeholder engagement, diversity, equity, and inclusion, capacity building, leveraging resources and tracking participant and performance outcomes of the program. \$13 million has been put into Industry Partnerships, \$28 million into registered apprenticeships and around \$60 million around STEM and computer science training around the Commonwealth. That is \$100 million investment into PA's workforce around principles that the Board identified.

The next recommendation was from May 2019. The Youth Committee put together some principles of a career readiness definition. That definition was taken by the Department of Education and used in several different ways including developing a toolkit for PA Career Readiness Skills. They have also found their way into several grant programs including Schools to Work, Pre-Apprenticeship, Teacher in the Workplace, and others.

A recommendation from November 2019 was on public performance reporting. Mr. Martini said that at this meeting the Board heard an update from the Continuous Improvement Committee on work that was being done from that recommendation. Part of the recommendation was around including outcomes and ROI calculations for the discretionary funding that goes out. He noted that at the moment they were working on a statement of work to bring on a contractor that can help them build capacity so that they can get into not just the outputs of the people served but the nitty gritty evaluations to understand what is working.

May of 2020 saw a Healthcare Workforce Committee recommendation about a Direct Care Worker Crisis Statement. The statement outlined a lot of challenges like turnover, retention, difficult working conditions, challenging pay. A number of things have been taken on from that. The Department of Labor and Industry put out almost \$5 million in Direct Care Worker Training Grants. Governor Wolf also signed Act 54 of 2022 which put another \$250 million into nursing facilities, personal care homes, assisted living residences, home and healthcare, and more.

The next recommendation came from the Youth and Continuous Improvement Committees. They adopted definitions of evidence tiers of where programs are operating. They defined everything from pre-preliminary evidence all the way up to strong evidence. They wanted to do it in a way that was thoughtful. They piloted the evidence tiers in the Industry Partnership grants in 2021. They made it so that 25% of an applicant's score was based on their ability to collect data and report out on the success of their program. PA also contracted with the Government Performance Lab from Harvard University to make sure the work transcends just being a pilot program and becomes standard procedure. Work that has been done in that space also received Honor Roll designation from Results 4 America in moving the needle on being a thought and action leader.

The Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee made a recommendation that they should prioritize career pathways development in discretionary funding. They asked all programs to provide a clear equity plan when asking for funding. They have asked for sustainability plans as well. Some examples of that work include the Digital Literacy grants, Youth Reentry grants, the PAsmart Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship grants, as well as many others.

The Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee recommended in the space of a pathway for Temporary Nurse Aides. The committee had come up with three different pathways to help Temporary Nurse Aides become Certified Nurse Aides. He was happy to report that they were all incorporated into Act 138 of 2020. Unfortunately, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid did not agree so the Governor's Office has been working with them to help TNAs find a path forward. The Healthcare also had a recommendation around supporting self and family sustaining wages for direct care workers. The Wolf Administration has been committed to raising the minimum wage for all workers in PA, first to \$12 with a path to \$15. Some facts around that is that a \$15 minimum wage would benefit 60% of restaurant workers, nearly 30% of wholesale trade and retail workers, a quarter of ag, fishing, forestry, and mining workers, as well as almost 14% of educational service, healthcare, and social assistance workers. At \$12 an hour nearly 38,000 adults would leave Medicaid and 15,000 would leave SNAP. At \$15 an hour approximately 58,000 fewer people would need Medicaid.

The Reentry Committee had put forth a government issued IDs for reentrants recommendation. The committee had recommended that all inmates in state and county run facilities have the opportunity to get their government issued IDs before reentering society. The Department of Corrections does it for all state inmates and continue to work with county jails to ensure the same for their inmates. They also issued a recommendation around digital literacy for reentrants. The Department of Corrections earlier this year started a technology workshop in the reentry services offices in PA State Correctional Institutions. DLI also worked with the Department of Corrections, the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency, and the Governor's office to submit a grant application for some funding out of the First Step Act to provide those services to provide those services to people leaving federal penitentiary. There was another recommendation around making sure that reentrants have access to digital devices so they can access the internet. The Department of Corrections continues to work on the issue. The committee also had a recommendation on increasing the staffing at the Board of Pardons. Mr. Martini said the Board of Pardons had been able to bolster their staffing.

The Continuous Improvement Committee had a recommendation around piloting the enhanced use of evidence and data collection.

Mr. Martini then noted about the recommendation for the incorporation of the TANF Youth Development program data into the Commonwealth Workforce Development System. He noted that the information was still being tracked manually but the recommendation will align it with how all other information is tracked. The first steps for that include a preliminary screening tool being developed in CWDS. That allows youth program development providers to identify if an applicant meets program eligibility. That is the first step towards full data integration of that program.

The next two recommendations came from the Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee. The first is on nurse education flexibility and the other is on nurse educator flexibility. For increasing the pool of certified nursing assistants, they wanted to make sure there was a viable option for folks to engage in those training opportunities virtually. PDE wanted to share that they now allow for blended education in nurse aid training in competency evaluation programs. There are now two approved programs to be offered in a virtual synchronized format. For the nurse educator flexibility, there was previously more rigid rules on who was allowed to provide nurse aide training. The Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the Department of Human Services were recommended

to work together to make sure to increase the pool of people that were qualified to provide that training. They have developed a system that now allows Licensed Practical Nurses to provide the training and they do not need a Registered Nurse on site anymore, the RN just has to be available while the training is happening.

The Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee also recommended to increase the roles of medication technicians. Right now, they play a role in long-term care settings but the goal is to have them play a role to supplement RNs and LPNs in nursing homes. That continues to be a priority. The committee also recommended competency based Alzheimer's and dementia training as well as cultural competency training. Mr. Martini did not have a specific update but highlighted that Governor Wolf signed House Bill 1082 which is now Act 9 that specifically focuses on support for Alzheimer's and dementia detection and care for those individuals.

The One-Stop Service Delivery Committee's recommendation focused on professionalizing the jobs for individuals in the PA CareerLink® offices. There were some specific items that the committee wanted in the training which included but was not limited to: cultural awareness and trauma informed care practices, technology and digital literacy skills, customer service and leadership development. There was a recognition by the committee that the more tools that the PA CareerLink® employees have, the better the outcomes for everyone involved. The Bureau of Workforce Partner Operations got a report from Career Consciousness that identified several of the same areas of training need. He noted about SkillUp PA and 26,000 people around the Commonwealth registered for the program and completed 13,000 courses, as well as 15,000 training hours.

The Reentry Committee recommended increasing the usage and marketing of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the federal bonding program. The Department has developed new marketing materials for those programs. The real goal is increasing the employability of returning citizens, as well as making sure that the employers that hire them are receiving financial benefits in doing so. The next recommendation was around workforce reentry funding. They wanted to make sure that there was dedicated funding and programming for working with returning citizens who are unemployed or underemployed. The Department of Labor and Industry provided \$4.2 million in Youth Reentry grants to support those individuals. They served over 500 youth reentrants and one of the grantees that was funded said that all participants who were actively involved in the program have had their lives positively impacted forever. He also shared that the 2022 budget includes \$2 million specifically dedicated to women reentrants. The next recommendation from the reentry committee was ensuring that some of the IJJA funding went to supporting reentrants. The IJJA includes the Justice 40 initiative and that requires that 40% of the federal money coming down goes to underserved communities and marginalized or underserved populations.

The Youth Committee in August 2021 recommended that local Youth Committees within local workforce development boards have adequate representation to make sure that all stakeholders viewpoints are being taken into account. The Youth Committee came up with several categories to be included on those committees that encompass educators, employers, service agencies, parents, organizations with youth activities, and roles that are focused on STEM or computer science. The updated local government policy that is under development will include those requirements.

The Reentry Committee recommended the development of a webpage for reentry resources for those looking to hire justice-involved individuals. The committee was currently working on building out that webpage.

In November of 2021, the Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee flagged the TNA issues and encouraged stakeholders to invest and support success of the individuals serving as Temporary Nursing Assistants. PA was conducting outreach to those TNAs and their employers to make sure they were aware of the requirements to move from TNAs to CNAs.

The Reentry Committee recommended that the Pardons Board take all steps necessary to ensure that all pardon applications were reviewed within one year. That was specifically for individuals who completed their sentence five or more years ago on convictions that did not include crimes of violence and remained arrest free.

Finally, the Continuous Improvement Committee in November 2021 made a recommendation to update the PA WDB bylaws and develop a process for giving Board members information on the status of recommendations. The Office of General Council was reviewing the bylaw recommendation and Mr. Martini was expecting to hear back soon.

Mr. Martini noted that the PA WDB members expertise has helped improve the workforce development system of Pennsylvania.

Wendie DiMatteo Holsinger commended Mr. Martini for such a thorough report and remarked that as someone who has been on the Board for a while that it is hard to see some of the things that have improved so it is impressive to see everything that has been accomplished. Mr. Martini thanked her and commended everyone that participates in workforce development across the state.

Chair Brown said that all of the committees and their chairs have done a great job.

Mr. Martini commented about Sarah's question in the chat about the benefits gap and said they can look into it. Chair Brown said that he thinks that the question is if anything has changed. Mr. Martini mentioned the ALICE report and said they can see if there is an updated analysis that is available.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

Chair Brown closed the meeting.