



***Joint Newark & Essex County Workforce Investment Board  
Youth Investment Council Committee Meeting***

Thursday, January 14, 2016

50 S. Clinton Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room

2:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:**

Mary Alexander, Marsha Armstrong, Kelli Bell-Taylor, Apryl Caldwell, Judith Celestin, Wendy Cubano, Elizabeth Davis, Qonisha Earl, Tourae Freeman, SanDonna Jones, Kirk Lew, Tom Puryear, Janine Schaeffer, Jeff Shulman, Shelton Thurman, Nicole Vazquez-Wise, Sonja Williams, Shanequa Wilson

**Welcome & Opening Remarks:**

**Apryl Caldwell- Co-Chairperson, ECWDB**

**Committee Business**

Apryl Caldwell thanked everyone for being present. Mrs. Caldwell explained the role of the YIC within the Joint Workforce Development Board. The WDB is responsible for creating and maintaining an active Youth Investment Council. This council effectively leads to the development of the local youth investment system. The mission is to engage business, community and educational stakeholders around local needs and priorities for youth services. The work of the YIC and the WDB helps to provide strategic direction and coordination with other community based programs/initiatives to make the best use of limited resources. She briefly discussed the sub-committees of the YIC which include the Readiness Credential, Business Engagement and Mentorship.

**Kirk Lew, SETC**

Mr. Lew conducted a presentation on the State Plan, the Youth Transition Plan and how the sub-committees fit into the plans.

***State Plan***

WIA/ WIOA plans were signed by President Obama in the summer of 2014 and implemented in July 2015. The performance measures will be implemented in July 2016. The state is operating under WIOA now. Most local areas have already begun to target 100 % out-of-school youth. A state plan is currently being developed to motivate how WIOA funds are invested throughout WIOA (Title I), Literacy (Title II), Labor Exchange (Title III) and DVR (Title IV). All four components are forced to collaborate and abide by the same performance measures. This promotes local systems to create a hub at One-Stop Centers. A consultant was hired to design the plan which is going through the process of approval. Regional Plans are due in October and Local Plans are due in December.

***Youth Transition Plan***

- 75% of the population serviced must be out-of- school youth
- 20 % of the allocation to a local area must be dedicated to work experience.

The state is looking to change the way business is done. The work of this council is more important because young people with more intense needs are being engaged. Each area must complete a WIA to WIOA Transition Plan by January 25<sup>th</sup>. Some of the components assessed in the plan include youth recruitment, retention strategies, career pathways, mentorship, internships/externships, best practices, challenges, policy and procedures and business engagement. Mr. Lew advised that the committee should ensure that the Readiness Credential is recognized on the Industry Value Credential List which will guarantee that it is recognized by the state and employers. The state is moving towards locally driven systems and control through the One-Stop Centers.

There are 5 new program elements and all 14 elements must be made available to all young people. These elements include tutoring/study skills/drop-out prevention and recovery, alternative school, year-round employment, occupational skills training, leadership development, supportive services, adult mentoring, comprehensive guidance, counseling, follow-up (2 months), apprenticeship model, financial literacy, entrepreneurship skills training, labor market information and transitional activities.

### **Sonja Williams, Co-Chairperson NWDB**

Ms. Williams asked representatives from each YIC Sub-Committee to report on any progress that has been made thus far.

### **Work Readiness Sub-Committee**

This sub-committee had a conference call in which they discussed the sixteen standards of work readiness. They researched the National Work Readiness Credential. Mrs. Caldwell communicated that she has been working closely with Mitchell Cahn, Chairperson of the Business and Economic Development Committee (BEDC). Mitch advised that an employer from Barnabas Health Care was interested in signing on as a business through a Work Readiness Pilot Program. Members of the sub-committee agreed that they would continue to brainstorm and perform the work of the committee in spite of any possible upcoming changes on credentials.

The committee discussed incorporating soft skills, business etiquette, work experience, work ethic, and entrepreneurship as valuable components of the sub-committees. Ms. Alexander suggested that we might be able to reach out to Ms. Pankey who is on the ETPL. She has a Work Readiness Training already in motion and might prove to be a valuable resource.

### **Business Engagement Sub-Committee**

This sub-committee discussed the store where students would be hired to work volunteer hours. The idea of a store provides an opportunity for students to gain a variety of soft and hard skills and for those skills to be assessed. The group initially struggled with the idea of who should run the store and whether it should be pre-set up or whether the students should be charged with the set up. The committee has been working with the Readiness Sub-Committee to attempt to incorporate needed skills into the long-term strategic intent for the store. Ultimately, the group agreed that it would be easier for the store to be pre-set up to ensure that all students are able to have the same experience and gain that same skills. A few New York based companies have committed to work with the students.

## **Mentoring Sub-Committee**

The sub-committee discussed collaborating efforts of multiple mentoring programs. They set up qualifications and expectations for potential mentors. Mr. Lew advised that all mentees must be participants of Newark and Essex County's Youth One Stop Offices. He also communicated that the mentorship should be linked by skills and student goals. It was recommended that the group come up with an action plan to incorporate youth who are participants in Newark and Essex County's Youth Programs. Mr. Lew spoke of a Newark-based mentorship that connects college students to mentors who work in the field of their field of study. In this particular program, technology is used to connect mentors and mentees via email, video conferencing and go-to meetings. He suggested that if we utilize platforms that our youth are likely to use, then we are better able to captivate and engage them. A few New York based companies have committed to work with the students. The sub-committee is looking into group-based mentorship workshops.

Mr. Lew advised that each student must commit to at least two years to the program (one year of service and one year of follow-up). The new WIOA regulations are individually based, holistic and geared towards preparing youth for career paths. The ISS plan will help to coordinate the system to best service the participant based on the need. He stressed that WIOA is great because it allows us to work concurrently.

Touree Freeman of DCPD expressed that the number of referrals are low and voiced that the agency will be actively working to improve.

## **Services and Resources**

**April 30<sup>th</sup>** - Scholarship Awards for high school students will be held at the Mary McCloud Bethune Center in Jersey City, NJ (contact Marsha Armstrong)

My Girls on the Rise Mentoring Program is a collaboration with Essence Magazine. If anyone knows of any girls who might benefit from the program, they may contact Marsha for more information.

**January 25<sup>th</sup> at 12 p.m.** - DRC Youth Services Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

- The Juvenile Day Reporting Center, Youth Resource Center and the Youth Service Commission will be housed in the same building. The Juvenile Reporting Center consists of court adjudicating youth between the ages of 16 to 18. They are offered life skills, work readiness, GED prep and driver's licenses.

Newark Youth One-Stop Career Center is recruiting for RFP's. If you know youth who are interested in training, please send them to 500 Broad Street.

Essex County is working on a recruitment plan to target out of school youth. There are WIOA funds available for youth who are interested in training, please forward them to 50 S. Clinton Street to the Youth Department.

Apryl Caldwell thanked the meeting attendees for their participation and input. She asked everyone to review the minutes from the last meeting. Motion made to approve minutes. Meeting is adjourned.

