MINUTES – MEETING OF THE

CAREER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (CEWD)

# December 13, 2022

**12:00 PM**

The Career Education and Workforce Development Board (CEWDB) was called to order by Chairman Kenneth Calhoun at 12:01 PM. The meeting was held at the Arkansas Department of Commerce and CEWDB Board members were given the option to either attend in person or virtually. The board meeting was also broadcast on PBS ARCAN.

A record of member attendance is as follows:

PRESENT (In-Person) Ex-Officio Nonvoting Members

Kenneth Calhoun (Chair) Dr. Charisse Childers

Mr. Scott Copas Dr. Andrea Henderson (Ms. Kyla Waters)

Mr. Michael Garner Dr. Mike Hernandez

Mrs. Stacy Gunderman Ms. Esperanza Massana

Mr. Hugh McDonald Mr. Johnney Key (Dr. Ivy Pfeiffer)

Mr. Stephen Percival Mr. Cody Waits, Ex-Officio Secretary

Dr. Jeff Standridge

Mr. Kevin Tipton

PRESENT (Virtually) Ex-Officio Nonvoting Members

Dr. Maria Markham

ABSENT Ex-Officio Nonvoting Members

Mrs. Gina Radke Mr. Solomon Graves (Ms. Tracy Dowell)

Ms. Cindy Gillespie

Mr. Mike Preston

Mr. J. D. Lowery

Mr. Ross White

# ACTION ITEM 1– Minutes from September 13, 2022

Dr. Charisse Childers stated she was in attendance for the September 13th board meeting and that her name had been omitted from the attendance portion of the agenda. This information was noted, and revisions would be made immediately after the meeting.

After discussing the necessary changes, a motion was made by Scott Copas and to accept the minutes with the correction and was seconded by Stephen Percival, the Career Education and Workforce Development Board (CEWDB) unanimously approved the minutes from June 21, 2022.

# ACTION ITEM 2 – Approval of Vacant Seat for State Electrical Committee

# Derrick Daniels, Apprenticeship Program Advisor for The Office of Skills Development, is seeking to add Brian Williams to the State Electrical Apprenticeship Committee (SEAC). The position Mr. Williams would fill is for an employer representative who employs electrical apprentices. Mr. Williams currently works for Thompson Electric. If approved, Mr. Williams will complete the requirement for all four state districts.

On a motion made by Jeff Standridge and seconded by Scott Copas, the Career Education and Workforce Development Board (CEWDB) unanimously approved the State Electrical Apprenticeship Committee Board Appointment.

# ACTION ITEM 3 – Approval of Secondary Technical Center

Sheri Bennett, Dean of Enrollment Management at Northwest Arkansas Community College, requested the operation of a secondary career center. During her presentation, she discussed some key areas such as:

* NWA Strategic Vision

1. Launch a robust regional talent retention program
2. Expand the region’s talent development system
3. Better align education and career goals
4. Focus on inclusive talent initiatives

* Onboarding, Culture-Building, and Up-Skilling
* Enrollment Projections
* Growing industries: Construction, Healthcare Government, Wholesale Truck, Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trucks

Ms. Bennett stated that with the approval they will be able to expand to other locations. This will allow smaller districts to have access to the resources they need.

After much discussion, a motion was made by Stephen Percival and seconded by Hugh McDonald, the Career Education and Workforce Development Board (CEWDB) unanimously approved the Secondary Area Technical Center.

# ACTION ITEM 4 – Transition to State Apprenticeship Agency

# Cody Waits, Director of The Office of Skills Development discussed the position of the agency to seek a state apprenticeship agency status for the US Department of Labor. In Mr. Waits’ presentation, he discussed why we should consider transitioning, a comparison chart of the roles of a U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA) versus a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA), a map of OA and SAA States, a list of questions that have been presented to OSD and their answers, an organization chart, and a transition timeline.

# The four main components centered around transitioning to a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA)

# Local/State Oversight vs. Federal Oversight

# Effectiveness & Efficiency

# How do we effectively service companies, employers, program sponsors, and apprentices?

# How do we make that happen in a more efficient manner?

# Data Integrity

# The number of licensed apprentices in the electrical and plumbing occupations we receive from the Arkansas Department of Labor and Licensing and the Arkansas Department of Health don’t match the USDOL RAPIDS database system for Arkansas. This alone causes the information provided by RAPIDS to be skewed.

# Monitoring & Reporting

# Mr. Waits explained the difference between a USDOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA) and a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA). Some of the key differences are:

# The registration process will no longer be taken care of by the federal government. We would be able to act on behalf of the federal U.S. DOL to register and oversee programs.

# Our staff members are the Office of Skills Development staff as opposed to federal representatives.

# May utilize the standard federal paperwork & documentation or may use documentation specific to that state.

# May utilize the same RAPID system as OA or may use a separate system unique to the state. Mr. Waits mentioned that OSD developed its own internal database system to help track apprenticeships here in the state of Arkansas. The system is currently being updated to include tracking of pre-apprenticeships.

# SAA monitors annually due to the allocation of funds.

# After much discussion, the voting committee members voted individually on the agenda topic. The majority ruled in favor of the transition from an Office of Apprenticeship (OA) to a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA).

# INFORMATION ITEM 5 – Tiered Analysis Funding

Stephanie Isaacs, Associate Director of The Office of Skills Development, gave a breakdown of the current tiered funding and how we can utilize the funding to continue to grow our Secondary Area Technical Career Centers.

OSD Goals

* Meet industry workforce needs by incentivizing centers to offer training where jobs exist.
* Manufacturing
* Transportation
* IT
* Healthcare

Determination of Tiers

* State & Regional Workforce Development Needs
* Cost to operate the Program (Per FTE)
* Ms. Isaacs stated that in her research she found that some of the programs had really low costs but there was a big revenue generator. So, the goal is to incentivize our centers not to try to generate revenue but in fact to look at these key industries and where we have jobs.
* Wages
* Industry Demand

Ms. Isaacs also discussed the current budget for FYs 23-25. This year’s budget is $20.6 million. Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) notified her that the budget for fiscal years 24 and 25 has been raised to $21.8 million which is only a $1.2 million increase. She stated that there is a great possibility the current budget isn’t enough to cover the cost with growing enrollment numbers. Ms. Isaacs suggested increasing funding, repositioning programs within the tiered structure, and ceasing funds for programs that don’t align with workforce development priorities.

**INFORMATION ITEM 6 – State Automation & Robotics Training Center**

# Cody Waits, Director of The Office of Skills Development gave details about the culmination of the project and the current status of it. Mr. Waits stated that he traveled with colleagues Stephanie Isaacs and Dr. Charisse Childers to Alabama to see what their facility displayed. Also, they traveled to Georgia to review their Quick Start Program. He believes a model of the two is something we should have in the state of Arkansas as part of our workforce training center. Mr. Waits discussed some of the potential uses for the facility, such as incumbent workers, new hire training for upskilling business and economic development, and recruitment opportunities. This opportunity will allow the state of Arkansas to provide the needed resources to Arkansans while keeping our state dollars within our economy.

# Mr. Waits notified the committee that an acceptance agreement from Conway Economic Development was recently received and signed.

# ADJOURNMENT

Upon the conclusion of Mr. Waits’ announcement, and with no other comments, questions, or concerns from the Board, on a motion made by Scott Copas, and second by Stacy Gunderman to adjourn the meeting, the Career Education and Workforce Development Board (CEWD) adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 PM.

Cody Waits, Director Kenneth Calhoun, Chair

Office of Skills Development Career Education and Workforce

Development Board