

Operations Committee

October 28, 2024

Present: Heather Gleason, Sara Carrigan, Mary Shumski, Christine Hendrickson, and LeRoy Kiecker

Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA): Heather Gleason provided an update regarding the IFAs. A small group is meeting to discuss contributions to resource and reception at CareerForce locations. After the group meets and has a proposal to share, Heather will call a meeting with all the required partners.

Continuous Improvement Team: Heather Gleason shared that the Continuous Improvement Team is on a pause while recruiting additional members. Job Services confirmed that Danielle will remain on the team. Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) reported that they have emailed staff and will share the opportunity with new staff members.

Staffing Updates: Christine Hendrickson reported that VRS has two vacancies, however VRS is currently on a hiring freeze until their projected VRS budget is balanced.

Changes to Pre-ETS: Christine Hendrickson reported that MN Department of Education and VRS met to discuss changes to work experiences provided during the school day. VRS will no longer support paid work experience during school hours, as it will be considered the school's responsibility. VRS has sent a letter regarding this change to partners. A survey was also sent to schools regarding this change and Christine will share the survey with local partners.

Partners Training Day and Training Team members: Sara Carrigan shared that they anticipate 58 attendees at the South Central CareerForce Partner Training tomorrow. Sara mentioned that they are looking for training team members from Job Services and Life-Work Planning Center.

Program Year 2024 Report: Sara Carrigan announced that a request for partner results and program success stories will be emailed out soon in preparation for the Program Year 23 program results report. Sara requested success stories and partner results by November 25, 2024.

Outreach to Schools: Sara Carrigan shared that the Construct Tomorrow event will take place on November 12, 2024, in Mankato. Over 900 students from 30 plus schools will be in attendance. A few volunteers are needed to help at the event. Sara mentioned that there are three Partners in Career Exploration interns placed at TCU, Waseca, and Butterfield-Odin School districts. Interns provide career exploration and counseling to students one day a week. Sara shared that Sarah Longtin has been busy providing Skills for Success

presentations at a variety of school districts and will be attending the Sibley East College Application Day this week.

Mankato Job Fair: LeRoy Kiecker provided an update for the Mankato Job Fair which was held last week. He reported that the event had a lower turnout than in the past. Job Services staff connected with around 18 job seekers during the event.

Employer Engagement Specialist: LeRoy Kiecker shared that Justin Olson was hired as the Employer Engagement Specialist. Justin will be located at the Rochester office but serving Southwest, South Central and Southeast MN. LeRoy shared that one of the focuses for this new position will be working with employers in the 5 industries listed in the Drive for Five grant.

DEED Leadership Conference: There is a leadership conference being held this Wednesday for all DEED leadership staff.

Labor Market Training for DEED Staff: Mary Shumski shared that Job Services staff are required to attend a Labor Market Training annually. Training has been scheduled for November 22nd from 10am to 11am. Mary offered that other staff could attend if interested.

Sterling Drug: Mary Shumski reported that Sterling Drug in Fairmont announced it would be closing its gift shop. About 18 individuals will be affected.

Dislocated Worker & P2P Updates:

Itron & Nortech Updates: Mary Shumski reported employer specific Dislocated Worker grants are going well. Staff are planning to TABE test around 18 individuals at Nortech. Sarah McDonald is reaching out to individuals laid off in October from Itron. Job Services is also making phone calls to individuals that completed a Rapid Response survey but have not enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program

Incumbent Worker Training: Mary Shumski reports Incumbent Worker Training is going very well. Staff are connecting with employers and five employees have expressed interest to date.

Pathways to Prosperity (P2P): Mary Shumski indicated that things are going well for P2P programs. The Bridge course started today. A date has been scheduled to help recruit participants for P2P and Drive for Five programming.

Miscellaneous: Christine Henderickson shared that Associated Finishing Inc. in Mankato received an award for their partnership with VRS in the Access to Good Jobs for All initiative.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be November 25, 2024.

The meeting adjourned.