



# SWDB BOARD NOTES

**Date: 12/4/24**

**Location: ZOOM**

## Minutes

### Iowa Workforce Development Board Meeting

December 4, 2024

11 am – 1:00 pm

Virtual via ZOOM

#### Agenda item 1. Call to Order

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Chair Teresa Hovell called to order the meeting of the Iowa Workforce Development Board (the Board) on December 4, at approximately 11 am.

#### Agenda item 2. Roll Call

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##### Members in Attendance

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| 1. Director Beth Townsend                    | 9. Kelly Barrick    |
| 2. Keri Osterhaus, proxy for Sarah Willeford | 10. Carrie Duncan   |
| 3. James Williams                            | 11. Charlie Wishman |
| 4. Teresa Hovell                             | 12. Nancy McDowell  |
| 5. LuAnn Scholbrock                          |                     |
| 6. Jessica Dunker                            |                     |
| 7. Ofelia Rumbo                              |                     |
| 8. Alex Severn                               |                     |

##### Members Absent

1. Laura Book as Proxy for Governor Kim Reynolds
2. Senator Dawn Driscoll
3. Representative Dave Deyoe
4. Jack Hasken
5. Scott Naumann
6. Brad Elliott
7. Nick Glew
8. Jayson Shanks
9. Tiffany O'Donnell
10. Director McKenzie Snow

Shelly Evans called roll and advised Chair Hovell that quorum was established.

### Agenda item 3. Approval of Agenda

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Chair Hovell called the next order of business which was the approval of the meeting Agenda for December 4, 2024. The agenda was previously emailed to the Members of the Board.

- ACTION ITEM: Motion to Approve the Agenda for 12/4/24.

LuAnn Scholbrock motioned to approve the Agenda and Kelly Barrick seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

### Agenda item 4. Approval of 9/11/24 Minutes (9/11/24 Minutes, Attachment 1)

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Chair Hovell called the next order of business which was the approval of the meeting Minutes for September 11, 2024. The minutes were previously emailed to the Members of the Board.

- ACTION ITEM: Motion to Approve the Minutes for 9/11/24.

Nancy McDowell motioned to approve the Minutes and Beth Townsend seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

### Agenda item 5. Welcome by Teresa Hovell, Chair

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Chair Hovell welcomes attendees.

- Welcome.
- Noted future quarterly meeting dates at the end of the Agenda.
- Important board and would like all members to participate.

### Agenda item 6. Discussion on 2025 Legislative Priorities (Iowa Code 84A, Attachment 2)

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Michelle McNertney, Division Administrator Workforce Services, discussed the upcoming legislative session. Session is around the corner and we will be watching this for you to make sure you are kept abreast of important things going through the session related to this board. If there is any specific information that will be shared at the February quarterly meeting. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me directly or Tim Goodwin, our legislative liaison. I do not think there will be much of an agenda for IWD.

## Agenda item 7. Discussion on Red Tape Review Chapter 877 (Executive Order, Attachment 3)

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Michelle McNertney, Division Administrator Workforce Services, shared that about two years ago the Governor signed an Executive Order requiring all agencies to complete a review of all administrative rules. This is referred to as the red tape review. The review is to reduce and simplify all administrative rules. Chapter 877 is the section of the code that covers Iowa Workforce Development, specifically all things related to this board. 2025 has been scheduled for this chapter. The review process is already underway. Most of the rules are from two prior federal workforce legislations. Extremely outdated so a lot of changes to remove all outdated language. We will keep you posted as we work through this process in revising and simplifying the rules related to workforce development.

## Agenda item 8. Discussion on One-Stop Operator Certification Standards (One-Stop Center Certification Standards, Attachment 4)

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Wendy Greenman, Title I and II Bureau Chief, provided a presentation on One-Stop Certification Standards. Created in partnership with this board. Standards were created by the core partner working group. The local areas implemented the processes. Today will be a review of the requirements. Certification is a WIOA requirement. This board along with the core partner working group is responsible for establishing standards. A review is required every two years. Local board requirements must have one comprehensive center within the local area. Plan designed by the local boards and certification is required every three years. Boards must vote on criteria established by this board. Previously done in 2022. Local boards can add additional criteria.

Brandy McOmber, VR Deputy Division Administrator, discussed the local area process. Certification is a critical component of maintaining quality and consistency across the centers. Mandated to receive funding for services. Critical to provide technical assistance at the local area level to avoid any issues of funding. Core partner working group operates on behalf of this board. Local areas take over to certify with three buckets of evaluation.

Program effectiveness. Evaluating the integration of available services for participants/customers/businesses. Ensures workforce needs. Focuses on how a center operates. Operations are cost efficient. Coordinating and reduction of duplication of services among partner programs.

Physical and programmatic accessibility. Focus on how center ensures equal opportunity for individuals with barriers to participate or benefit from center services. Reasonable accommodations occurring to policies/practices to avoid discrimination. Programs administered in integrated setting and effective communication or plan in place. Providing physical accessibility, assistive technology.

Continuous improvement. Centers support achievement of negotiated levels of performance. Established regular processes for responding to technical assistance needs. Continuous staff development. Effective capturing of and response to customer feedback.

Buckets are comprehensive and provide valuable information that helps centers continuously improve services and operations. This board oversees the guidance and establishment of requirements, local boards take the lead on managing the local process. Includes ensuring the certification of each of those centers within the local area based on these standards.

Kyle Clabby-Kane, WIOA Title II & III Bureau Chief discussed the timeline. January/February 2025 will be looking at certification standards in consultation with the chief elected officials and the local boards. Core partner policy group will be updating certification standards. Will bring the standards back to this board for approval. April through June the core partner working group will be providing technical assistance to the local boards and the one stop center partners. Webinars and providing updated one stop certification guide. Reviewing the local processes and completing the required activities. July through September the local boards and one step center partners will be conducting their self-assessments. October 2025 through September 2026 the local boards will be working on certifying their comprehensive and affiliate centers doing certification reassessment and renewal. Put on your radar for approval by this board. March 2026 the Unified State Plan will be submitted to USDOL with updated criteria and local plans.

Keri Osterhaus, Vocational Rehabilitation Program Administrator, Iowa Department for the Blind. Want to ensure resources moving forward. Guidance is available online on the board page. Guidance, considerations, assessment tools, and more resources which are all available to the local areas to help complete this process. Federal resources also noted. Training and Employment guidance letter for one-stop operations for AJCs. Basic guidance about implementation of certification process. Federal regulations focus on how centers are certified for program effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility and continuous improvement. Certification requirements were reviewed and need to update every two years and updates to be included in the state plan. Proposing to move forward in January.

#### [Agenda item 9. Discussion and approval of Iowa Plains LWDA Local Policies \(LWDA Local Policies, Attachment 5\)](#)

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Linda Rouse opened discussions on Iowa Plains LWDA Local Policies. Iowa Plains is a local workforce development area that is operated by Iowa Workforce Development. Since the start of Iowa Plains we have been diligently working on all requirements. Michelle and her phenomenal team helped us through this process. A part of this was to develop our own local policies. Met with core partner groups, worked with workforce services committee, our workforce committee and reviewed and approval all of our local policies.

- ACTION ITEM: Motion to Approve Iowa Plains LWDA Local policies.

Kelly Barrick motioned to approve Iowa Plains Local LWDA Local Policies and Nick Glew seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

#### Agenda item 10. Discussion and approval of Iowa Plains PY24-PY27 Local Plan (LWDA Local Plan, Attachment 6)

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Linda Rouse opened discussions on Iowa Plains LWDA Local Policies. This board has heard about the local plan and the requirements. We have developed the local plan. Plan was reviewed by workforce services team and suggested edits were made. The plan was posted to the website for public comments. None were received.

- ACTION ITEM: Motion to Approve Iowa Plains PY24-py27 LWDA Local Plan.

Kelly Barrick motioned to approve Iowa Plains Local LWDA Local Policies and Nick Glew seconded the motion. Members of the Board in attendance voted on the motion by voice vote, which carried unanimously.

#### Agenda item 11. Director's Report

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Director Townsend provided her report.

- Does not appear that Congress is going to reauthorize. Bipartisan bill that has passed both houses. Final technicalities before being sent to the President's desk. Anticipate it will get passed. Not significant changes. Once there is a final approval we will prepare and provide you a summary for changes that affect this board.
- USDOL has entirely withdrawn the proposed regulation changes totaling over 800 pages. If passed this would have drastically and adversely affected registered apprenticeship programs and the new Iowa Office of Apprenticeship. Happy to get this news.
- Hired new Deputy Director Georgia Van Gundy. A bit of restructuring. Ryan West left to take a position with the Department of Administrative Services in October. Consolidated the two Deputy Director positions into one deputy position. Promoted Jon Peppetti to the Chief Operating Officer. We are in a really good structural position.
- Getting into our busy season. Iowa's unemployment rate is at 3% and ranked # 12 with other states. Labor Force Participation Rate is persistently continuing to decline a bit. Not surprising. More baby boomers retiring. At 66.2% labor force participation rate, national rate is 62.6. Ranked # 9 in the country. A lot of states that have low unemployment rates but higher labor force participation rates. North and South Dakota and Nebraska are other similar states with Iowa. Mississippi is 2.9% unemployment rate but labor force participation rate is in fifties. Iowa is well positioned. In 2025 want to focus on how to reverse the trend. What does the state need to do to bring more people back into the workforce.

- Success in the American Job Centers (AJCs) with career / disability career navigators. Started as pilot program created by Linda Rouse and James Williams. We have been able to expand to all AJCs. Helps individuals with a disability become ready to work. Helps connect them to jobs much quicker. Goal is to have individuals employed within 90 days. Historically it has taken several months, if not more. This could impact the labor force participation rate. Realignment work with AJCs are helping make jobs available for better connections. Moving the needle in the right direction. Governor recently announced two workforce training programs. Second round of teacher paraeducator, registered apprenticeship grant programs. Excited about the success of this program. Governor also announced childcare business incentive grant program. Help offset the cost of inflation and scale successful programs and facilities. Opens up for other businesses who may have not gotten in the first round. In process of receiving applications so if you know anyone interested in starting a child care facility or partnering with local child facility for expansion, please refer them to the Iowa grants web page, <https://www.iowagrants.gov>. Michelle has a great grant team who are more than willing to provide technical assistance to apply.
- Job market shows employers not hiring prior to the national election. Moved from buyer market for employees to buyer market for employers. Down to 51,000 open jobs. Employers are indicating they are getting enough applicants and can be more selective in hiring.
- Working more closely with employees who have been affected by large-scale layoffs. Tyson closed the Perry facility at the end of June. Using the mobile unit to go to those specific areas has been highly successful. John Deere Waterloo layoffs. Inundated with claims in that area. Large immigrant and refugee population that are looking for work.
- Not sure of what changes will be made by new administration in January. Will keep you informed with the new Secretary of Labor with any changes that may affect workforce programs or opportunities.

Rob Denson – congrats on hiring Georgia. What is she over and how does that affect workforce?

Director – she is over unemployment insurance, business engagement, the AJCs and working closely with VR – all customer facing operations.

- Modernization of UI benefits program hopefully go live in mid-2025. System will be more efficient for customers and staff and all data will be in one system instead of two.
- VR is looking at purchasing a new case management program and will be interactive with the new UI system.
- Georgia was the government relations person for Principal Financial and previously helped us establish Future Ready Iowa, working closely with Dan Houston. Became Director for Iowa Business Council for several years. Then Vice President at Hy-Vee during the pandemic. Thrilled to have her part of the IWD Team.

## Agenda item 12. Update from Iowa Plains Committee. (Holly Espenhover, Committee Chair)

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Update from Iowa Plains Committee by Committee Chair Holly Espenhover.

Iowa Plains did solidify one-stop operator starting on October 1. Tammy Earl Bacher has already been out visiting all centers and getting connected to the work that is happening. Identifying how she can be best resource. Very excited about that and the work that is going on in that space. Kathy Leggett joined us for the last meeting and provided work base learning strategy and survey responses. 643 returned surveys. Some indicated interest in meeting on WBL and job training. Iowa Plains is a 42-county region. Committee focusing initially on Crawford, Woodbury, Pottawattamie, Sioux and Webster counties. Focusing on high demand job areas. Excited to get with the IWD partners moving forward.

## Agenda item 13. Update from System Committee by Committee Chair, Jack Hasken

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Update from System Committee by Wendy Greenman, Title I and Title II Bureau Chief.

Update on the data dashboard. It is now updated with the 2023 data which would show each quarter as well as the annual results of the prior program years.

## Agenda item 14. Update from Disability Access Committee by Committee Chair, James Williams

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Update from Disability Access Committee by Committee Chair James Williams.

- Worked on updating the committee membership list. Added replacements for those not attending. Really happy with current group. Everyone is attending and engaged. Robust discussions.
- Created guidelines for basic framework with minimum functions for good structure.
- October was National Disability Employment Awareness month. Collaborated with local offices and local disability access committees and events. Topics identified included discussion/exposure of benefits planning and connection to work. Impact of work earnings on disability benefit income. SSI, SSD or Medicaid. Do better messaging and awareness. Misinformation of what you can and can't do while receiving disability benefits or losing benefits.
- Focus on the difference between school readiness and work readiness. Used to school structure. School provides structure. Work is more self-directed activity. Focus on getting kids ready for life, school and work. Some at good at one of those skills and struggle with others and vice versa.
- Focus also on adult individuals with disabilities. Employers are focusing on older individuals. Really want to see more students with disabilities and partnership with schools and younger students. Engage parents who have a big role.

- DOL Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODE). Champions idea of employment first. Both us and HHS have the same policy at state level. Putting together a task force for discussion on what employment first really means in Iowa. If we are not hitting that mark, what else can be done. Engagement with employers and schools.

Agenda item 15. Public Comments (limit to 2 minutes)

No public comments received.

Agenda item 16. Adjournment.

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Chair Hovell adjourned the meeting of the Board at approximately 11:58 am.



Shelly Evans - Executive Assistant to the SWDB