IOWA PLAINS COMMITTEE

Date: November 13, 2026
Time: 8:30 AM
Facilitator: Kent Heronimus – Interstates

IN ATTENDANCE

Alison Malone – Elevate Roofers
Andrea Pohlsander – Life Skills Connections
Andrea Mann – Iowa Workforce Development
Andrew Sheffield - CJ Bio America
Brittney Gutzmann – Iowa Workforce Development
Chris Wurth – Siouxland Human Investment Partnership
Faith Miller – Iowa Workforce Development
Guadalupe Tapia de Nevarez -
Jason Landess – Parker Hannifin
Kathy Leggett – Iowa Workforce Development
Kent Heronimus – Interstates
Kevin Grell – Iowa Workforce Development
Kirstin Burrows – Iowa Workforce Development
Kristin Russell – American Athletic Inc (Fruit of the Loom Inc)
Luke Hugghins – McClure Engineering
Melissa Haukap – Iowa Lakes Community College
Micheal Cockrum – Iowa Workforce Development
Nicolas "Omar" Valentine – Iowa Workforce Development
Ofelia Rumbo – Merrill Manufacturing
Renea Anderson – Harrison County Development
Sara Blair – Country Maid
Suzanne Johnston – BUNN

Tammi Erlbacher – Life Skills Connections

Teresa Larson-White – Iowa Workforce Development

Wayne Pantini – Southwestern Community College

AGENDA

Veteran's Day Acknowledgement (Kent Heronimus)

Recognizing all Veterans both on the committee, in the committee and all who serve and have served in the area. Flag raising, they flew a flag that was flown in Iran and did a retreat. Thank you to all who have served and continue to serve.

Update on Iowa Plains becoming an Intermediatory for Registered Apprenticeships and Sector Partnerships (Kathy Leggett)

- 6 or 7 manufactures attended the meeting
- Shared challenges that they are all facing
- Group decided that they would like to continue to meet to share the different items that they have in common
- Identified – Development for "soft Skills" the skills that all companies are looking for and also opportunities with the school partners to work with the school to define what these skills are
- Two employer's setup to co-lead this effort
- 2 virtual and 2 in-person, they will meet quarterly
- 12-13 manufactures are interested in being apart

Crawford County Hospital would like to use Iowa Plains, working with Todd to get the standard that they are looking for.
Working with Cass Health and Cherokee as they have both already done registered partnership

Comments: Professional skills or Foundational skills as other names suggested for "soft skills"

RCM/RESEA - Dislocated Worker Programs (Mike Cockrum)

- RKCN Reemployment Case Management – to connect with someone as soon as they are applying for unemployment. They reach out in the first week that they are applying for unemployment. 18 career planners across the state. They complete about 60 appts a week per career planner
- 26,357 appointments completed in the year
- Review UI claim, review work searches and verify one certified application, share reemployment services that are available, complete virtual recruiter.
- Making sure that they are not applying for jobs that they are overqualified for and would not access. They are making sure that people are not just going

through the motions. They are sharing events that are coming up and helping them know of available positions.

- Register Customer for Required Workshops – certifying your week claim, create a great resume, interview 101
- RCM is state funded and only one in the country, RESEA is a federal program
- RESEA – These customers come to the centers and hopefully can connect with someone in the center that is best suited to help them
- 17,464 appointments completed in the year
- They get to select the 3 workshops that will be best for them to be completed (24 unique workshops on a monthly basis)
- Iowa Plains Pilot – In the initial RESEA appointment help in Iowa Plains the claimant is asked four questions, if they answer yes to the first two, they are set up for the appointments with Title I buddies for further assessment

Questions:

- Kent-Go through all the different services that we provide. How do we measure success in the program? Success stories get to hear a lot more of them because they have to cancel their appt. They track how doing, which does affect their funding, number tracking of how many get employed.
- Kent-Barriers that get in the way? They have done there best, one mentioned in that doing virtual meetings make it easier to not attend. They loose their benefits if they refuse
- Kent-Anything our committee can do? Just making sure they are knowledgeable of the program and know what all is out there to help.

OSO Report, Pillars Report, LEAD Project (Andrea Pohlsander)

OSO Update

- 87.4 for the month
- 88.7 for the year – the satisfaction is trend up from last year.
- Large jump in the number of attendees at the meetings

Hiring expo that was very well attended

178 Referrals in October

25 self-referrals that came through as well

Initiatives: referral quality training and transitioning meetings to being self-sufficient

New Report that is separate from the OSO. Will share the full results later

We are here to build a workforce that gives our businesses confidence and our communities opportunity. Built on 3 pillars

1. Build the Pipeline
2. Close the Gap
3. Lead with Accountability

This first report is going to help set our baseline-see attached

Lead Project – has many different names – this is to help us build a strong plan. The state has asked that each local area works through this.

Areas that will be focused on: a stronger MOU and local plan, a better experiences for customers, and continuous improvement

Timeline given for 12/11/26-7/28

Local Plan and Memorandum
Who attends: core partners and required partners in our centers. Results will be reported if don't attend

Question:

- Brittney G.-Is the 12/11 training for Andrea or core partner managers? It is for Andrea but there are opportunities to assist and if wish to assist then would need to attend the training.

EO Officer (Andrea Pohlsander)

Make sure that everyone uses IowaWORKS

Business Round Table

Does entering the winter change your hiring needs?

- Ofelia – their business is busiest in the summer and even when work needs drop off in the winter they keep all of their employees
- Interstate-hiring slows down, but the weeks in January are some of the largest onboarding and training. Normally able to work all winter long
- Parker-demand goes up for them in the Winter. Holidays to work around and snow days, they tend to overhire based on the two items listed before
- Kent-What about in our centers? Do we have more people coming in?
  - Faith M. We did see a lot more people coming in during that time, whether because of seasonal layoffs. Traveling in rural Iowa in the winter weather becomes a real struggle for people.
  - Sara B. Sioux City does see a large influx in the winter, slow down the out reach because of it so that there are enough people in the offices.
  - Teresa L. Title I this is our busy time as there are people coming in to start classes in the spring.

- Sara B. for years we have been talking about we need to start a program for gig work. They are extremely seasonal-July and Thanksgiving is 80% of their work. She is calling it gig work but there are actually employees. They are going to start testing this in 2027. She is struggling to find software that would support being about to pick up the shifts, a scheduling software. This is all production work, which all this gig work would all be the same pay.
  - Faith M. responded that Amazon does have an app that does just what she is describing, can find out more if needed.
  - Andrea M. suggested 7Shifts
- Kent-how do we get information out there for temp/seasonal employees. How do we make a connection between the people that get laid off in the winter and companies looking for employees.
  - Faith M. Likes the ideas of gig work. As most companies are looking for FT/PT. How can we get this information for these companies looking for short-term
  - Andrea P-Facebook group/Linked-In group where all of the information can be share? Kent-follow-up that we would then be able to communicate the information out

    - Kathy L.– this is something that has been discussed before. This would be a great way to reach out and connect with the BEC's on how to get this information out. She likes Andrea's idea with the groups. Though making it clear what they group would be for.
- Kent-anyone interested in helping out? Sara B (never heard of anything like this and would love to help), Kathy L. Kent, Sara and Kathy are going to get together after Thanksgiving and will come back at the next meeting in December and talk about what they came up with.

- Update from Randall – 75 effective workers, Spanish speaking career planners to help, did a job fair on site prior to the closer. 11/10 BEC helped employees find positions at a job fair. 25 people came and applied in person. Council Bluffs great job reaching out and helping getting people employed.

ACTION PLAN

Next meeting – December 11th, 2026 / 8:30am – 9:30am

Equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

OSO Update: October 2026

Provided to Committee: 11/13/2026

Monthly Survey Results

- Paper/QR Code surveys submitted: 80
- Statewide surveys submitted: 23
- Total surveys submitted: 103 (18 Council Bluffs, 7 Denison, 27 Fort Dodge, 28 Sioux City, 20 Spencer, 3 Other/Online)
- Overall satisfaction rate, October: 87.4%
- Overall satisfaction rate, PY26 year to date: 88.7%
- Overall satisfaction rate, PY25: 87.6%

Staff/Partner Trainings

- 10/7: Disability Etiquette, April Stotz
- 10/14: Individual center trainings
- 10/21: GAP/PACE training
- 10/28: Referral Quality Training

Partner Meetings

- 10/20: Iowa Plains Quarterly All Partner Meeting (virtual). Partner attendance rose from 56% to 80%.
- 10/26: Sioux City + Denison Local Core Partner Meeting
- 10/27: Council Bluffs + Creston Local Core Partner Meeting
- Fort Dodge + Spencer Local Core Partner Meeting rescheduled to the first week of November due to the Fort Dodge ribbon cutting.

OSO Center Presence

- 10/1: Denison AJC
- 10/6: Council Bluffs AJC
- 10/8: Denison AJC
- 10/13: Denison AJC
- 10/15: Sioux City AJC
- 10/20: Denison AJC
- 10/27: Council Bluffs AJC
- 10/29: Fort Dodge AJC

Events & Observations

- 10/13: HUB Networking Event, Missouri Valley
- 10/29: Fort Dodge IowaWORKS event day, hosted with IVRS:
    - Celebrating Value and Talent, a National Disability Employment Awareness Month session on ADA and accommodations, with SHRM credit available
    - Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting for the new Fort Dodge IowaWORKS location, open to the public with facility tours
    - Pathways & Possibilities Hiring Expo for area employers and job seekers

Iowa Plains Referrals

October had 178 referrals, with 25 self-referral form submissions included in the program counts as applicable below.

Program	# Referrals
American Indian Council	1
GAP/PACE	6
HSED/ESL/ABE	25
IDB	0
IVRS	16
Job Corps	0
SCSEP	6
SNAP E&T	14
Ticket to Work	0
Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker	87
Title I Youth	14
Title III	0
Unknown	9
TOTAL	**178**

Current OSO Initiatives

Current initiatives the OSO is leading or supporting:

- Referral Quality Training: completed 10/28. Ops managers are checking referrals regularly.
- Local Core Partner Meetings transitioning to self-sufficient
- 2027 Wednesday training calendar
- Iowa System Alignment Integration Assessment: OSO serves as the Iowa Plains point of contact (POC)
- Update and launch the Iowa Plains Business Survey
- Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer role transitioning to the OSO, effective 11/1/2026. The EO Officer receives, investigates, and reports discrimination complaints, trains staff on equal opportunity best practices, and reviews IowaWORKS job postings to make sure equal opportunity law is followed.