

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (SAWDB)**

SAWDB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

January 9, 2024

10:00 AM

Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, also available via Zoom Meeting Platform
Altoona, PA

AGENDA

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>NAME</u>
Welcome and Introductions	Cory Sisto, SAWDB Vice- Chair
Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2023*	Cory Sisto
Director's Report	Jennifer Sklodowski, SAWDB Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Red/Green Report• Annual Report• Local Board Compliance Review• Request for Support: Bedford and Blair Counties*• Notice of Grant Application – Schools to Work• L&I's Line Items for Budget	
One-Stop Operator Report	Bradley Burger, Lead OSO Representative
Other Business	All
Adjournment	

*Requires Formal Action

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, December 12, 2023
Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission, also available via Zoom
Meeting Platform
Altoona, Pennsylvania**

ACTION SUMMARY

Following are the major actions taken by the SAWDB Executive Committee at its regular meeting held on December 12, 2023, at the Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission office, participation via Zoom as well.

1. Approved the minutes of the SAWDB Executive Committee meeting held on October 10, 2023, as presented. Motion was made by Mr. Keith Baker and seconded by Mr. Bob Parsons. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
2. Motion to approve the increase of the per person cap for all Supportive Services from \$2,000 to \$4,000 was made by Mr. Craig Schield and seconded by Mr. Keith Baker. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

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December 12, 2023

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Members Participating

Bob Parsons	B & B Designed Systems
Brock Kull	Manpower
Cory Sisto	IFC Services
Craig Schield	OVR
Jesper Nielsen	Croyle-Nielsen Therapeutic Associates
Keith Baker	BWPO
Rosalie Danchanko	Highlands Health

Non-Members

Amy Kimmel	Tableland Services
Barb Covert	E & T
Brad Burger	Goodwill
Deb Hoover	Tableland Services
Debbie Ankney	Tableland Services
Gwen Fisher	Goodwill
Heather Saly	BWPO
Judy Lutz	E & T
Linda Stranka	Tableland Services
Lisa Phillips	Tableland Services
Sarah Helman	Goodwill
Jen Sklodowski	SAP&DC
Steve Howsare	SAP&DC
Jill Reigh	SAP&DC
Jim Walker	SAP&DC
Tim Baranik	SAP&DC
Renee Best	SAP&DC

Call to Order

SAWDB Chair, Mr. Jesper Nielsen, called the meeting of the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board Executive Committee to order at 10:00 a.m. and roll call was taken. The meeting was open to the public and also available virtually using Zoom.

Mr. Nielsen welcomed Ms. Heather Saly who is the new site administrator for Cambria and Somerset Counties.

Approval of Minutes from October 10, 2023

Mr. Jesper Nielsen asked for a motion for approval of the minutes from the October 10, 2023, Executive Committee meeting. There were no questions, concerns, or discussion regarding the minutes.

Mr. Keith Baker made a motion to approve the October 10, 2023, Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Bob Parsons seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Director's Report

Red/Green Report

Ms. Jennifer Sklodowski referred to the Red/Green Report and noted that it reflects four months of expenditures. Invoices are expected into SAP&DC today which will reflect expenses for the month of November. This report reflects Title I provider expenditure rates as measured against the 80% expenditure requirement. Looking at the quarter targets, as a region the SAWDB is on their way to meeting the 80% expenditure requirement.

Regarding Adult, Goodwill has spent 30% of their budget and has met the quarter target with 38% of the goal being spent. E & T and Tableland are slightly behind, not meeting the quarter targets. Providers have met the quarter target and are on track to meet that 80% requirement for DW. Both Goodwill and E&T are on track in meeting Youth targets with Tableland falling behind. SAWDB did meet the quarter target with 42% of the goal being spent for Youth.

Regarding TANF, providers are spending at a quick rate and are meeting quarter targets. E & T are at 50% of their budget, and Tableland is at 79% of their budget being spent which is 98% of their spending goal. This is a concern for Tableland as they are almost out of funds and will not have any for the remainder of the program year. E & T needs to be concerned that they could be at risk of running out of funds if they continue with their rate of spending. Ms. Sklodowski will continue to monitor this.

Mr. Bob Parsons questioned why the rate of spending is high.

Ms. Barb Covert stated that the TANF spending rate was high in July through September due to E & T's summer programs. During the school year, counselors continue to provide career development classes. E & T has set aside \$24,000 in their budget as a jump start for their summer program. There is no wiggle room for a year-round work experience program for in school youth; every dollar is accounted for.

Ms. Lisa Phillips noted that Tableland had a lot of young people who joined the summer program. There were a few youth who came in mid to late summer in their program. Tableland is also budgeting ahead and being mindful of what is needed to start the June summer program.

Ms. Sarah Helman stated that Goodwill's summer program was robust in addition to a few co-ops that were running.

Ms. Sklodowski referred to page 2 of the Red/Green report and stated that it tracks expenditure rates as measured against the 20% and 75% WIOA expenditure requirements. Providers are on track for the region, but Tableland is falling short with WIOA Youth Work Experience at 2% of their budget being spent and at 8% of their goal. This could be a concern moving forward as the SAWDB is held as a region to meet the 20% requirement. Ms. Sklodowski will be monitoring this closely.

Providers are meeting the quarter target and are on the way to meeting the 75% requirement, but Tableland fell a bit short with 24% of the budget spent with 32% of their goal spent. If

these requirements are not met within a 2-year span, the SAWDB is subject to recapture of funds. Ms. Sklodowski noted that providers are on the right track, but it is early in the program year and it is important that expectations are met/exceeded.

Update on Regional School-To-Work Proposal

Ms. Jennifer Sklodowski provided an update on the School-To-Work Proposal. This was released from the PA Department of Labor & Industry to offer a grant for this program which focuses on apprenticeships. Ms. Sklodowski met with the CTCs in the region, and it was left up to those partners to decide if they should move forward with the grant submission which is due on January 4th. After much discussion, it was decided to table it for now due to the short turnaround time and the concern of coming up with a program that quickly for the school year. The grant is geared more towards schools that already have apprenticeships in place.

SAWDB LEO Agreement

Ms. Jennifer Sklodowski stated that Mr. Nielsen signed the SAWDB LEO Agreement which will run to 2027. Ms. Sklodowski will also have the County Commissioners sign the agreement.

Commonwealth Update

Mr. Keith Baker provided an update on state-wide initiatives that are currently taking place:

- BWPO is working on an outreach campaign to review data where UC claimants filed claims in 2020 through 2022 and received at least one payment but have not yet returned to the workforce. There are currently 420,000 claimants on this list. Surveys will be sent out to those individuals asking a series of questions and if they would like to be contacted by PA CareerLink® staff. Barriers to returning to work include: background checks, documents, transportation (personal and public), training (GED to post-secondary), childcare, and taking care of a family member.
- Commonwealth Workforce Transformation Program – The program uses federal dollars to incentivize contractors to hire new employees. The contractors are able to receive up to \$40,000 per employee for up to ten employees. The employers must be in industries that IJA and IRA work within.
- Digital Intake Form - Customers visiting a PA CareerLink® office will go to a device to complete an intake form that includes a series of questions. This data will be compiled into their CWDS participant profile so that all of the PA CareerLink® partners will have access to the information. This was rolled out in five phases; the last phase rolled out on December 11th and the form is now being used statewide. Mr. Baker provided a Digital Intake Summary Report in which he reviewed detailed data for the Southern Alleghenies region.

Discussion centered on migrant workers and documentation that is required for employment. Mr. Brad Burger stated that anyone can receive basic PA CareerLink® services without providing documentation status. If they go for any type of eligibility such as Title I eligibility, then they need to provide status. Mr. Brock Kull noted that if employers have concerns, they can run potential employees through a staffing service to ensure there is correct documentation on file.

One-Stop Operator Report

Mr. Brad Burger shared that the Digital Intake data has aligned well with some of the deep dive data the OSOs have collected where individuals need additional training.

Mr. Burger reported that the PA CareerLink® Bedford moved to the Bedford County Technical Center on October 20th. It was to be a temporary location until April 2024 with state staff and Title I staff working a hybrid work schedule. They are currently in negotiations for this location to be permanent for several more years. The OSOs need to keep their model flexible due to shrinking resources, and they need to continue to try to stay agile. Centers in other regions look the same as ours regarding the number of clients in the centers.

Mr. Nielsen spoke of reskilling and upskilling as a function of the Real GDP and if there is anything that can be done to affect some of the funding models that are coming from the state and federal side. Mr. Burger stated that the existing post-secondary ecosystem has to be mapped to find out where the gaps are. This information needs to be cross walked against vulnerabilities with AI and then overlay programs with AI.

Mr. Nielsen discussed the disconnect between the allowed use of funds versus the needs and if there are alternative ways to pay for the retoolings. Mr. Burger shared that WIOA is making changes to legislation to allow greater flexibility in training. There is work to be done regarding mapping in the region; Mr. Burger will be working with Penn Highlands on this issue.

Apprenticeship Policy Discussion

Ms. Jennifer Sklodowski stated that she and Ms. Jill Reigh have been in contact with the Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO) and there will be guidance coming out on the wording used when setting up the Apprenticeship Policy. It is important that the workforce funds and apprenticeship funds stay within the Southern Alleghenies region. Ms. Sklodowski will be receiving guidance from the state as to how to keep these funds in the area.

Mr. Walker discussed the dynamics of the way apprenticeships are approved and noted that they are through the Office of Training and Apprenticeship in Harrisburg. They are approved based on an application that includes two requirements: a classroom component and an employer based hands-on component. The training dollars locally can be used to support one or the other component. In our region, the training dollars are dedicated towards the classroom component. The ATO has agreed to consult the local areas and give some advice.

Ms. Reigh stated that there will be times with registered apprenticeships that classroom training will take place somewhere outside of our region. Discussion centered on the current training process and if individuals have to go to training outside of the region. Mr. Nielsen suggested that possibly an after-apprenticeship agreement could be created to ensure the funds stay in our region. This topic will need to be discussed further as to how to address the issue.

Supportive Services Policy

Mr. Jim Walker reported that the SAWDB is looking to increase the per person cap for all Supportive Services to \$4,000; currently the cap is \$2,000. This would be for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services. The \$400 cap on the work attire allowance would go toward the \$4,000 overall cap. The meeting packet included information on the Youth Supportive Services Policy revision.

Mr. Tim Baranik shared that the reason for the cap increase is due to transportation costs, which prompted the need for the policy change. Mr. Parsons questioned if a stipulation could be added regarding the dollar amount that is available for services. Mr. Walker stated that Career Planners work with the clients to find the most reasonable situation. There is not a stipulation made, but the client is told that they should find a local provider if possible. Mr. Burger noted that it is going to be difficult to put geographic restrictions on federal funds for eligibility.

Mr. Craig Schield made a motion to approve the increase of the per person cap for all Supportive Services from \$2,000 to \$4,000. Mr. Keith Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

The next meeting of the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board Executive Committee will be held on **Tuesday, January 9, 2024, 10:00 a.m.**

