

Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board
YOUTH COMMITTEE MEETING
 September 8, 2025
 11:00 a.m.
 Zoom Meeting

BUSINESS MINUTES

Present: Alison Kerns, Wendy Azzardi, Angela Cantwell, Susan Lenigar, Danelle Lightner, Amy Miller, Lori Yager
Absent: Dan Sipe
STWDB Staff: JoAnn Breedlove, Rebecca Harris, Maddy Miller, Aleisha Stout

Meeting Called to Order: Alison Kerns, Chair at 11:01 a.m.

New Member IntroductionA. Kerns, Chair
 The committee welcomed Wendy Azzardi, who assumed committee responsibilities previously held by Deborah Whitney, following Whitney’s transition to another role within the agency.

Youth Committee Meeting Minutes 3/10/25– (Attachment A) A. Kerns, Chair

MOTION: LENIGAR MOVED TO ACCEPT THE 3/10/25 YOUTH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. LIGHTNER SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Vendor Agreements / Budget Updates J. Breedlove, Executive Director
 Breedlove provided an overview of the status of CCMEP youth vendor agreements and recent budget impacts. Earlier in the year, the committee recommended extending existing youth vendor contracts rather than conducting a full procurement, and the Workforce Development Board approved this approach in May 2025. However, following receipt of the PY25 WIOA youth allocation, the area experienced a 7% decrease in federal WIOA funding, along with the expiration of several supplemental grants that had previously helped offset costs.

As a result, all youth vendor contracts were extended only through September 30, 2025 (from the original end date of June 30, 2025), with the intent that new youth vendor agreements will begin October 1 going forward, better aligning contract start dates with the timing of WIOA funding allocations. Due to the reduced budget, all programs experienced funding decreases, and several vendor agreements could not be continued after October 1. Programs ending October 1 include Project REBUILD, Coleman Health Services, Stark County Community Action Agency’s TANF-funded summer program, CommQuest’s in-school youth program, and the Early Childhood Resource Center’s CDA program.

Existing providers that will continue to provide services after October 1, but with reduced funding, include Jobs for Ohio Graduates, CommQuest’s out-of-school youth program, Goodwill’s programs serving Stark and Tuscarawas counties, and HARCATUS programs. Breedlove noted these were difficult community conversations, but necessary given the funding reductions and the need to manage WIOA and TANF resources responsibly.

Performance (Attachment B & C) J. Breedlove, Executive Director

PY2023 WIOA / CCMEP Final Adjusted Performance

Breedlove reviewed the PY2023 Final Adjusted WIOA and CCMEP Performance reports for Workforce Area 6 (Stark and Tuscarawas counties), noting that PY2023 officially ended in June 2024 and the final adjusted results were released in July 2025. She explained that these reports are generated after the state extracts data from the ARIES case management system and submits it to the U.S. Department of Labor, where a statistical adjustment model is applied. This model considers numerous factors (roughly 50–60) and may raise or lower the performance standards, resulting in the “Adjusted Success Level” shown on the reports. For PY2023, the area’s CCMEP WIOA youth measures were all met, with strong results when comparing the area’s actual performance rates to the adjusted success levels.

Breedlove noted that the WIOA report is presented at the workforce area level, while the CCMEP report is county-based, reflecting that CCMEP is administered by county with the Workforce Initiative Association as lead agency. Both reports also provide helpful demographic information and specify the cohort periods used for each measure, which clarifies which participants are included in each outcome. She pointed out that Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) was not assessed by USDOL for PY2023 and appears shaded on both reports; however, MSG will be evaluated again for PY2024. Breedlove emphasized that the PY2023 data are now considered final and adjusted.

PY24 WIOA/CCMEP Performance

Breedlove reported on the status of PY2024 WIOA and CCMEP performance. She explained that the State has already extracted PY2024 data from the ARIES case management system (in August 2025) and submitted it to the U.S. Department of Labor, beginning the performance review process for the current year. The area expects to receive preliminary “final” PY2024 performance numbers in late fall 2025; however, these results will not yet be statistically adjusted. Similar to prior years, the Final Adjusted PY2024 performance reports—reflecting application of the federal statistical adjustment model—are anticipated to be released next summer 2026. Breedlove noted that, unlike PY2023, Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) will be assessed for PY2024, and those results will be included once the adjusted reports are issued. She indicated that preliminary PY2024 performance outcomes will be shared with the committee when they become available and noted that, based on current information, no major changes to performance measures or reporting structure are expected for PY2024, but any state or federal updates will be communicated to the committee when received.

CCMEP Current Overview (CCMEP Lead Agency)A. Miller, Deputy Director, WIA

- **Lead Agency Updates**

Amy Miller provided a detailed update as Lead Agency representative regarding CCMEP referrals and participation trends. She reported that Job & Family Services (JFS) referrals have increased compared to the previous year, while volunteer referrals have declined. In July of PY25, there were 39 referrals from JFS and 6 volunteers, compared to 27 JFS referrals and 12 volunteers in July of PY24. For the full prior program year, there were 344 JFS referrals and 129 volunteers, up from 270 JFS referrals and 123 volunteers in the previous year. Miller noted that the increase in mandated JFS referrals, combined with steady volunteer numbers, is keeping staff very busy and has implications for caseload management. To support this growing caseload, a new staff member has been hired to provide framework services. Amy also highlighted a positive trend in participants completing their GEDs and earning high school diplomas, emphasizing that these educational gains are both difficult to achieve and critically important to overall program performance.

- **2025 Youth Working Group Updates**

- **Vendor Technical Assistance and Case Note Quality**

Miller reported that, in addition to state-level supports, Angela Cantwell has initiated bi-monthly local vendor check-ins to provide technical assistance tailored to the area’s needs. The first session, held in July 2025, focused on two primary topics: participant incentives and case notes. Due to budget reductions, incentive levels have been decreased, although they remain in place as an important tool for supporting engagement and completion. The training clarified how incentives differ for individuals exiting under the previous program year versus the current one, in order to reduce confusion for both staff and participants. The session also revisited expectations for case notes, underscoring the importance of timely, complete documentation and recognizing that case notes will remain an ongoing area of training and quality improvement.

- **Youth Working Group – Case Notes and Goal4It!**

Lori Yager provided an overview of the Youth Working Group meeting held in May 2025. She reminded the committee that state monitoring in July 2024 identified issues with participants not being contacted every 30 days and with incomplete or insufficient case note documentation. In response, the same case note training was delivered four times to provide multiple date options in July 2024 for all vendor staff and WIA staff. While these efforts resulted in improvement, the May 2025 Youth Working Group was used to address remaining gaps. During that meeting, Yager and the team presented examples pulled from administrative review to illustrate what the state is looking for in case notes and to clarify expectations around frequency and content. The meeting also featured a success story from a participant connected

with the Early Childhood Resource Center, who shared how engagement with CCMEP had supported their education and career path. In addition, Emma Walsh from Goodwill presented best practices on the Goal4It! process, including how Goodwill structures Stepping Stones and integrates goal setting into ongoing case management, and vendors were able to ask questions to strengthen their own implementation.

- **Future Youth Working Group Meeting**-November 17, 2025

Miller gave an update on the upcoming training at the next Youth Working Group session, which is scheduled for November 17, 2025, and will feature trainer Deb Easton, who will focus on generational differences and strategies for working effectively with Generation Z. This topic was identified as a top priority by vendors in a post-training survey conducted after last year's session.

- **Technical Assistance Visit by ODJFS (10/14/25 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)**

Miller announced that the State of Ohio will conduct a technical assistance visit on October 14, 2025. During this visit, the new CCMEP leadership team at the state level will meet with local staff and vendors to share updates and expectations, and to learn more about local implementation, challenges, and successes across the CCMEP program.

CCMEP Success Stories (shared by Lead Agency)..... A. Cantwell, WIA

Angela Cantwell shared a recent CCMEP success story that highlights the long-term impact of the program. While working at the Stark County Fair 2025, Cantwell was approached by a woman who recognized her from CCMEP services. The participant explained that she had originally been referred to CCMEP as a JFS mandate and was assigned to case manager Chelsey Bitonti. Through CCMEP, she enrolled in the Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC) program and successfully completed her CDA (Child Development Associate) credential, despite the program's demanding schedule and historically low completion rates. At the same time, she was also attending college and earned an associate degree in addition to the CDA. She is now on track to complete her bachelor's degree by May of the coming year.

Cantwell noted that the participant had previously shared her journey at a Youth Working Group meeting but was not immediately recognizable at the fair because she has alopecia and now wears a wig, underscoring how far she has come personally and professionally. The participant expressed a strong desire to continue telling her story and to support others in reaching their goals. Cantwell has kept her contact information with the intention of involving her in future outreach and success-story efforts, as an example of the transformative potential of CCMEP services

Updates / Other Discussion..... A. Kerns, Chair

- **Discussion of Capturing and Sharing Success Stories**

The committee briefly discussed the importance of collecting and sharing CCMEP success stories to demonstrate program impact to the community and funders. Kerns noted that, while stories are highly valuable, they can be difficult to obtain due to participant's reluctance and limited staff time. Cantwell added that many front-line staff are unsure what qualifies as a "success" and do not feel confident writing narrative stories. Breedlove emphasized the Workforce Development Board staff as a resource to offer support, and share/suggest helpful options.

Next meetings –

- March 2, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.
- September 14, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.

MOTION: Lenigar moved to adjourn. Lightner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourned -11:45 a.m.