

Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board
Governing Board Meeting (Executive Committee & Local Elected Officials)
August 25, 2025 (11:30 a.m.)
Zoom

PRESENT:

D. Cole
A. Kerns
S. Robinson
R. Regula (LEO)

ABSENT:

J. Sekely
G. Ress (LEO)

STWDB STAFF

J. Breedlove
R. Harris
A. Stout

FISCAL AGENT

C. Byrd

Business Minutes

Call to Order

Chair, S. Robinson called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m.

Approval of Minutes – (Attachment A)

Robinson called for a motion to approve the August 13, 2024, meeting minutes.

MOTION: REGULA MOVED FOR THE APPROVAL OF AUGUST 13, 2024; MINUTES AS PRESENTED. COLE SECONDED.

Governing Board Purpose / Meeting Schedule (Attachment B) S. Robinson, Chair

Breedlove shared the Governing Board Purpose as listed in the STWDB Board Bylaws: There shall be a Governing Board consisting of representatives from the Board of Local Elected Officials of the Workforce Development Area and members of The Workforce Development Board. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees shall be the representatives of the Workforce Development Board on such Governing Board. The Executive Committee of the WDB shall meet at least once each program year with the Board of Local Elected Officials.

The powers, duties and responsibilities of the Governing Board shall be:"

- 1.** To ensure implementation of the local and/or regional workforce development plan as duly approved by the LEO and the WDB for the Workforce Development Area. Breedlove noted the Regional Plan will not be making any changes for 2 years. Breedlove referenced the LEOs are Commissioner Regula and Commissioner Ress.
- 2.** To establish policies and operating guidelines for the Workforce Development Area
- 3.** To provide a forum for joint WDB/LEO communications and public relations activities
- 4.** To provide a forum for dialogue between the WDB and LEOs regarding amendments to this Agreement
- 5.** To act as forum for dialogue on issues where the WDB and LEOs have not reached agreement, including specific program activities and the local and/or regional workforce development plan. The Governing Board, in being granted this authority, does not assume the authority to supplant the WDB or LEO's responsibilities outlined in the Articles
- 6.** To provide for the hiring and general supervision of an executive director through the Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board (STWDB) Council of Governments to serve the Board, as appropriate
- 7.** All powers not expressly delegated are reserved by the Governing Board.

Breedlove noted she would like to schedule every August as a regular meeting of the Combined STWDB Executive Committee and LEOs (Governing Board).

Director Updates J. Breedlove, STWDB Executive Director

- **Compliance Activity Updates (Attachment C)**

- **Regional Plan (Attachment D)**

The East Ohio Workforce Region includes Stark, Tuscarawas, Mahoning, Columbiana, and Trumbull counties. Per federal WIOA legislation, a regional plan is required to be updated/completed every 4 years. Included in the regional plan is each workforce development area's local plan. A copy of the East Ohio Region plan was provided to the Stark Tuscarawas Workforce Development Board (STWDB) and Local Elected Officials (LEOs) before the public comment period. The public comment period was from July 14-August 13, 2025, on the East Ohio Region workforce development board websites, and there were no comments to our regional or our local plan. This plan is due to Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) by September 30, 2025. The next steps include signatories (local elected officials (Regula & Ressa) and STWDB board chair (Robinson) to review and provide signatures for the plan. This Plan will be included in the September 2025 Board Meeting packet as an agenda item: not for approval but for status update. Signature requests will be sent out via DocuSign to the LEOs and STWDB board chair after September's Board meeting.

- **Job Center Certification**

The Job Center Certification is due every 3 years, and this year it is due by 12/31/25. The STWDB board certifies the American Job Centers (AJC) to ensure they meet standards for effectiveness, accessibility, and continuous improvement.

The Job Center Operator (Workforce Initiative Association) will make a request to the board to be certified. There are documents that must be in place/submitted as part of this request. Breedlove had asked for that request by September 25, 2025. A team will be formed to physically review the Stark & Tuscarawas Cty OhioMeansJobs centers which will take place in October 2025. The goal is to include the certification as a November 5, 2025 board meeting agenda item and submit to ODJFS, once approved/accepted after the meeting.

- **PY24 Program Monitoring (In Process)**

The PY24 Program Monitoring is currently in process by the state oversight agency (ODJFS). The annual program monitoring is to ensure programmatic integrity, compliance with applicable laws and effective service delivery.

As part of the monitoring, ODJFS has shared with us a "continuous improvement" area reflective of entering data/information into the state's case management system (ARIES) and Breedlove will provide a response. Once ODJFS receives, accepts, and responds to the response, Breedlove will share these details with the board.

- **PY23 & 24 Fiscal Monitoring (In Process)**

Fiscal Monitoring is still in process for PY23 and PY24, and it is led by the state (ODJFS). This annual monitoring is to ensure fiscal performance, proper use of funds and compliance with federal and state financial requirements.

- **Performance Updates**

- **PY23 WIOA & CCMEP WIOA Final Adjusted Performance (Attachments E & F)**

The PY23 data was pulled from the Case Management system (ARIES) in August 2024. ODJFS submits data to Department of Labor (DOL) in November 2024, and we receive final adjusted performance the following year (Summer 2025) after a statistical adjustment model has been applied to the data.

There is a negotiated area standard. The statistical adjustment model may adjust the area's standard either higher or lower. The Area's Adjusted "Success Level" is then adjusted. Our local area rate then determines if we were successful or fail a performance standard.

The area did not meet the standard for Dislocated Workers' Median Earnings in the second quarter after exit. The state has created a webinar for local board staff that provides additional information on performance and the statistical adjustment model.

The CCMEP results are also included in the packet, and the Comprehensive Case Management Employment Program (CCMEP) is the young adult program (16–24-year-old) that is county based and blends the WIOA and TANF funding. The WIOA Youth funded individuals are included in the aggregate data.

In addition, PY24 Performance- ODJFS will extract the data from the ARIES case management system on 8/26/25.

- **Other Updates**

- **Pathway Home 6 DOL Grant**

Breedlove discussed the Pathway Home 6 grant which is a Department of Labor (DOL) re-entry grant for which the STWDB board is a subgrantee. The STWDB board approved the Request for Proposal (RFP) for a service provider; the grant details require a Program Manager for the grant.

Three proposals were received, and a review team was formed to review proposals to select a service provider.

A Program Manager has been hired. Armon Cook will oversee the grant activities for our area and report to Stout and be the liaison with the service provider/Grantee (Midwest Urban Strategies).

In September 2025, Cook, Stout and Service Provider staff will travel to Milwaukee for the grant orientation meeting.

- **GRIT (Growing Rural Independence Together) Initiative)**

Breedlove noted the GRIT initiative aims to grow rural communities through career assessments, coaching, and local collaboration.

Funding was made available through the Ohio Department of Development / Governor's Office of Appalachia. This year that funding will move over to ODJFS for oversight of the activities as

the workforce board in southern Ohio manages the funds currently. These funds can be used for assessments/coaching, career navigation, professional development, remote work ecosystems, and training/work experience. The GRIT program is available to and through Ohio’s Appalachian Counties.

Workforce Initiative Association as the designated career services provider has applied/was approved for GRIT funding (approximately \$230,000 over a 2-year period) to utilize for individual assessments/coaching, and training funding assistance. When approved, the funding would help offset a portion of the WIOA funding utilized to pay for staffing/training services and cost of training. It would complement their work as a provider with the hope of serving more people through the OMJ Tuscarawas County center.

- **Executive Committee Updates..... S. Robinson, Chair**
 - **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Policy Proposed Updates-(September 2025 Board Meeting)**

Breedlove presented proposed updates to the Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Policy (Attachment G) including a cap on reimbursements and eligibility criteria. The current policy reimburses up to \$25,000 per company per program year but the proposed update caps it at \$10,000 and employers must reapply only after 24 months have passed since their last reimbursement. The updated policy aims to increase the number of eligible companies and align with the board’s budget constraints. The policy updates would be retroactive to July 1, 2025.

The average IWT reimbursement over 5 years (2020-2024) was \$6462, and the number of applications was forty-two as four did not start/complete the reimbursed trainings which left thirty-eight applications being funded.

The Board reserves the right to delegate approval and employer-eligibility discretion to the Designated Service Provider (Workforce Initiative Association) in the application process, gathering training documentation and entering information into the required systems.

The information on the IWT Policy proposed updates will be presented to the STWDB board members at the September meeting to be considered for approval.
 - **Future Meeting Schedule (Executive Committee)**

Breedlove suggests scheduling future Executive Committee meetings in December and April to review policy updates. The board aims to update all policies by June 2026 with the Executive Committee providing input in advance.
- **Adjournment..... S. Robinson, Chair**

Meeting Adjourned at 12:20 p.m.