

ONE STOP OPERATIONS / WORKFIRST COLLABORATIVE COMMITTEE

County of Middlesex- New Brunswick One Stop Career Center - Office of Workforce Development
550 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901
WIOA Conference Room B

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 23, 2016 – 1:30 PM

Attendees: Mariana Beshai-Ascander, Edward Faver, Sherri Goldberg, Sharon Hartman, Luis Ortega, Sandra Panton, Lin Poo, Miriam Ruiz, Roni Salkin, Wanda Segarra-Cruz, Irma Shaw, Timothy Timberlake, Linda Urbach, Henrietta Wilson

Staff: Julie Piano (Chair), Lori Miranda, John Ross, Diane Seavers, Helina K. Wisniewski

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Approval of Minutes: March 31, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Julie Piano called the meeting to order at 1:40 pm and welcomed members and guest to the first meeting of the collaborative for 2016. The minutes of the March 31, 2016 meeting was presented. John Ross made a motion for the approval of the minutes. Edward Faver seconded and the minutes was unanimously approved.

III. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Update - Julie Piano

a) Update on the MC Office of Workforce Development Program/Funding

- The NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA 2016 can be viewed on the SETC website at <http://www.njsetc.net/njsetc> . It is about 398 pages long.
- Thus far, no Notices of Obligation (NOO) has been received except for the DFD TANF Transportation Block Grant.
- The Youth Request for Proposal (RFP) is completed and ready to be posted on the county website.
- Middlesex County College Youth HSE Program was extended through the month of July, 2016. For the coming program year, the cycle will be changed to September to August program cycle.

b) Update on Projected Changes at the One Stops – Career Connections

- The Career Connections training will be held at the Middlesex County College on July 6, 2016 for the WIOA staff.
- The Career Connections is the new digital platform that is scheduled to be launched in July, 2016. It will be replacing Jobs4Jersey.
- There are expected changes in the One Stops and there are discussions about functional alignment - roles and responsibilities among the key partners.
- There will be a meeting on June 27- 28th on the NJ Combined State Plan Implementation

c) Update on Regional Planning

- Middlesex is part of the Central Region which includes the counties of Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean County. The regional partners has been conducting regular meetings. One of the proponents in the plan is to work together as a region on the RFP Procurement Process.
- The various regions are working with the consultant who is hired by the NJ SETC in writing the Regional Plan.

IV. Literacy/ High School Equivalency – Tim Timberlake

- New Brunswick Adult Learning Center will have a graduation on Friday, June 24, 2016. There will be 166 graduates from New Brunswick. The numbers are down from the previous two years. There used to be 200 graduates each year.
- NBALC Testing facility has 30 computers. They accommodate 20 people at any one time and have 40 re-testers per month.
- The HSE test results are immediate – you can print results within 5 to 10 minutes after testing. The writing results takes longer – results are available within two days.
- The NB ALC is booked thru summer for the testing schedule. ALC have been taking students for testing referred from other centers.
- The Perth Amboy Education Center will have their graduation today, June 23, 2016 at six o'clock. Forty two (42) students are expected to graduate.

V. Work First NJ Update – John Ross/Jean Zwingli

Work First Agreements for PY-16

The Middlesex County College and the New Brunswick Adult Learning Center responded successfully to the Statement of Work released in April, 2016. Both Entities accepted increased requirements in services. The increase costs as compared with the current Agreements was less than 5% and those increases were largely due to increases in salaries and the increased cost of health benefits. Sixty day (60) Agreements were approved by the Middlesex County Freeholders on June 16, 2016 to cover the operation of the Work First Activities from July 1, 2016 through August 31, 2016. When the County receives Notice of its funding by the State of N.J., the twelve month Agreements will be presented to the Workforce Development Board (scheduled for July 26, 2016) and the Board of Freeholders (August 18, 2016) for final approval.

Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD)

Effective May 1, 2016, the waiver was lifted for the implementation of the requirements of the Able Bodied Adults without Dependents provisions of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Middlesex County. The challenge of identifying those individuals who were receiving SNAP benefits and engaging them to implement increased requirements has been shared by NJ DOLWD, NJ DHS, Middlesex County Board of Social Services, NJ ES personnel in both One Stops and the County Office of Workforce Development. Since March 1, 2016, the following number of ABAWDs were scheduled and responded in our One Stops:

New Brunswick:	663 scheduled	118 responded
Perth Amboy:	531 scheduled	68 responded

In addition, about 300 individual already involved in various programs at the One Stops were engaged and screened for inclusion in ABAWD Activities.

There is an ongoing process between the One Stops and the Board of Social Services to identify and engage additional ABAWD participants. Those who take advantage of additional requirements and secure employment exceeding 20 hrs. a week will be excused. Those who do not respond or wish to continue receiving benefits and comply with additional requirements will be discontinued. Those who do not have exemptions and agree to participate will received increased services.

Middlesex County's plan to address the State and Federal Government's requirements (20 hours of work related activities) are as follows:

1. Middlesex County College through the College's Continuing Education Division will provide instruction through a Skills Enhancement Center for 10 hours effective May 4, 2016. This Program will include literary skills inclusive of instruction in math, reading and writing. Occupational course instruction will include work related training topics including soft skills and computer essentials. The program is limited to 50 participants and has been funded by N. J. DOLWD until August 31, 2016. Continuation of funding is not known at the present time.
2. Monitored Independent Job Search for 10 hours a week has been implemented by the WFNJ Vendors and the One Stop Case managers. Participants assigned to the College will also be expected to demonstrate attempts to secure employment on a basis equivalent to 10 hours a week. Weekly job logs will be examined and suggestions provided to improve the methods of job search when necessary.
3. Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) has been requested of the WFNJ Vendors for PY-2016. Selected participants will be placed with municipal and or non-profit organizations to assist these entities with normal workplace operations. The Board of Social Services has agreed to provide the hourly limitations for individual participants commensurate with the value of their SNAP benefits.

Preliminary results indicate an increase of employment within the last 90 days. This is the result of increased services as well as possibly the disclosure of previously unreported employment prior to implantation of increased requirements. More time is needed to accurately evaluate the results of the increased services.

VI. Update from Collaborative Members

- Edward Faver
 - Janice Fishbein has been promoted to a chief's position within the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and will be relocating in four weeks
 - Job Fair "Schedule A" on June 28, 2016 in North Bergen, NJ to promote individuals with disabilities who have skills required to do the job. DVR can write a letter on behalf of the individual for a job position. If you need additional information please send an email to edward.faver@dol.nj.gov.
- Sherri Goldberg
 - The Career Fair in Perth Amboy on June 15, 2016 was very successful. There were 45 employers and about 100 job seekers.
 - Two Preparation Workshops were conducted for Public Housing Voucher Program Section 8 clients. The workshops were to prepare clients for career fair, (how to dress and what to expect).

- A grant was awarded for the Health Center located on Oak Tree Road, Edison, NJ. Still waiting for an ambulance license to open the facility.
- Biggest Loser Community Challenge starts on June 27, 2016 between 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm located at 149 Kearny Avenue, Perth Amboy, NJ.
- Luis Ortega
 - Perth Amboy Testing Center has 25-30 computers for TAASC - HSE testing that will start in September, 2016.
- Julie Piano
 - Middlesex County College - 41 HSE students graduated on June 14, 2016.

VII. Old Business/Other Business

- Julie Piano
 - There is a job opening for a Career Development Counselor in the New Brunswick office. Please send resume to julie.piano@dol.nj.gov. Job is posted in the Home News and Jobs 4 Jersey.
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being worked on and will be given out for signature
 - Middlesex County will be using the Electronic Referral System for the GA population. Training will be provided to staff either by the MCBOS or State

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:25 pm.

Information/ Handout Distributed to Members

- Sherri Goldberg – Flyer for the Biggest Loser Community College

**NEXT MEETING: September 29, 2016 – 1:30 pm
550 Jersey Avenue, NJ 08901**