

Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT)

May 23, 2024

10:00 a.m.

GOOGLE MEETS

**ATTENDEES:** Alyce Almond, Maria Larry, Amanda Cranfield, Amy Crook, Andy Richardson, Angela Petry-Muslin, Annie Sumpter, Ashley Puffenbarger, David Rogers, Barb Dawes, Bridgit Arnold, Carol Howerton, Carrie Sizemore, Chad Ketchum, Charla Austin, Clinton Burch, Criss McCauley, Cydney Eades, Gary Blankenship, Glen Hughes, Jason Roberts, Jonathon Compton, Kent Nowvskie, Kristy Deem, Lisa Lilly, Lori Turner, Lorrie Smith, Malissa Dishman, Matt Martin, TJ VanMeter, Maureen Persons, Michael Crown, Nick Nunnery, Rosemary Guida, Erin Kittle, Pisnu Bua-lam, Sandra skins, Scott Adkins, Tara Martinez, Tiffany Ellis-Williams, Trenton Hilbert, Bill Monterosso

- Michael Crown opened the meeting at 10:00 am. He welcomed everyone and then turned the meeting over to Tara Martinez.
  - **Tara Martinez** - We are really trying to engage with our SWDB and make sure we are highly involved with the committees that were established back in December. We want everyone involved and we want input from our partner organizations. We would like to invite all of you to be involved. You won't be a formal member of the board, but be a part of the advisory committees. Here is the link to the committees, <https://workforcedb.wv.gov/about/Pages/default.aspx> please look at what is available. There is a good description of each committee and we'd love to have you. If you are interested in participating please get a hold of me via email. [tara.n.martinez@wv.gov](mailto:tara.n.martinez@wv.gov)
- Michael then turned the meeting over to Lorrie Smith.
  - **Lorrie Smith** - For quite some time West Virginia has been trying to capture as much Federal funding for the State as we can. There is a lot of funding available. West Virginia now has a partnership with AECOM which is a national engineering firm. We first began working with AECOM for the broadband infrastructure. AECOM has found a niche in identifying opportunities and sharing them. Every two weeks Michael, Jonathan and I meet with them to talk about opportunities that might relate to or touch workforce opportunities in our state. I send an email out periodically that includes a lot of these grant opportunities. Many of the things they share with us aren't things that the state can apply for, so we're looking for nonprofits and other partners that can work together to try and capture just as much funding for the state as possible. If you aren't currently receiving that email from me, reach out to myself [lorrie.a.smith@wv.gov](mailto:lorrie.a.smith@wv.gov) or Tara Martinez and we'll get you included on the distribution list. We can also assist with grant writing, if anyone needs assistance applying for grants. We can also use AECOM to help access statistical data.
- **Michael Crown** - Just an example of the importance of talks between partners and what fruit that can bear; in working on a grant and conversing with potential partners, one of our staff members was made aware of a need for individuals to have assistance for pet care while seeking treatment for SUD. We communicated that need to AECOM and they found a funding opportunity for that specific need. Our staff shared the funding opportunity with the partner so that they could look into applying. Conversations matter. Our agenda for today calls for update from partners, so let us begin;

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- **DRS - Alyce Almond** - Employment Service Manager
  - DRS has a new website [www.wvdrs.org](http://www.wvdrs.org). There is a red button at the top of the screen that says “Make a Referral” that makes the referral process to DRS a lot easier. You just enter the basic demographic information and it shoots the referral to the right office. The local office then contacts the customer. I also wanted to thank all of our partners for working with us in looking at appropriate referrals and supporting our consumers as they receive services. Everyone is an integral part of what we do. We’ve been able to promote a lot of successful closures and we wanted to share some of the data and expand awareness. We have a wide array of occupations ranging from white collar to blue collar. It’s amazing what our counselors can do when they have the right support services, which our partners provide. I would also like to extend my services as a trainer in a program called Windmills. It is a disability inclusion training and how to integrate people with disabilities. We also do disability etiquette training. We can do it virtual or in person. Reach out to me at [alyce.k.almond@wv.gov](mailto:alyce.k.almond@wv.gov) to schedule a training. We have also been focusing on increasing apprenticeship opportunities for the consumers we work with. We have met several times with Criss McCauley and some industry leaders. We decided to do a joint info session with both our staff and consumers at the same time. We’ve gotten really great feedback from that. If any partners would like to participate in future meetings, please let me know.
  
- **DoHS - Ashley Puffenbarger**
  - We are currently writing our plan for E&T as it relates back to the WIOA plan. Our plan has to be submitted to the Food and Nutrition service by August 15 of every year along with all of our SNAP plans. We need your feedback. One requirement of our federal plan is that we seek consultation from our workforce development partners, and of course that is all of you on the ICT. Part of the consultation is making sure that our plan aligns with the WIOA plan. After the meeting Michael will send the FY24 plan to everyone. Please take a look at it and give us some feedback as far as how it relates to your programming and anything special you would like to see in there. You can send feedback directly to me at [ashley.n.puffenbarger@wv.gov](mailto:ashley.n.puffenbarger@wv.gov)
  
- **DoHS - Kent Nowvskie**
  - We are getting our TANF grants in place for the July one grant cycle. We are bringing all of the funded grantees together for a meeting in Charleston to help them get to know one another and ensure collaboration across the TANF funded ecosystem. The one thing that underpins what we are all trying to accomplish is child care. There have been significant changes to the Child Care Development Fund rules federally. They have just come out with a lot of new requirements. They are essentially an unfunded federal mandate for many things including that we pay by enrollment rather than attendance. We did that with all the extra Covid money that was flowing into the State. Those monies have dried up and we have been using some of our dedicated TANF funds. We are hopeful that we will be allotted some State funding for this. Child care represents not only about 1400 small businesses across West Virginia that are reliant on that funding to continue operating but also thousands and thousands of families that they service who need these services so that they in turn can go to work. So, if anything places those businesses in jeopardy there are going to be ripple effects across the entire workforce spectrum.
  
- **CSBG - Trenton Hilbert**
  - We’re just now getting our training and technical assistance grants out for 2024. We’ve just finished spending for 2023. We are in the process of starting our other discretionary grant as well by pulling any money that did not get spent in 2023.

- **SCSEP - Charla Austin**
  - We have a new sub-grantee on July one, HRDF. We are hopeful they will assist us in revamping the program and some of the changes DOL has brought forth and increase performance measures.
  
- **Adult Education - Sandra Adkins**
  - Right now we are standing at about 9,400 students served so far this year. A lot of classes close for the summer months because the structures are 200 or 220 day contracts. We do maintain a list of classes that are open during the summer though. The student may be served virtually, but we will assist with the continuity of study. We are also in the process of reviewing sub-grantee applications and seeing what we can fund and how we can fund it. We have done some customer service training for the WorkForce call centers both in Charleston and Morgantown.. We also have TABE testing scheduled for a Union, we are definitely looking for opportunities. [wvadulthood.com](http://wvadulthood.com)
    - Lori Turner asked about Adult Ed going back to GEDs.
      - Yes, as of July 1, 2024 GED will be the only option available. It doesn't matter what class or certification test the student has taken. We have a third party vendor called Diploma Center. They receive all the scores and use software to determine if the student has passed.
  
- **CTC - Tiffany Ellis-Williams**
  - Most of our colleges are still forming partnerships with business and industry creating new programs and expanding some existing programs. Some highlights:
    - In Spring of 2025 Blue Ridge will have a newly created academic degree program in radiology technology.
    - Bridge Valley has created a business data analytics academic program and automotive technology.
    - Eastern West Virginia has created a cyber security degree program.
    - Mount West has created a solar energy program, a physical therapy aide program, an engineer construction program, as well as a technical marketing program.
    - WVUP has created a radiology technology degree program.
  - The upcoming fiscal year 2025 focus will be mainly on Health Sciences to address the workforce needs in that field. There will be new or expanded programs in behavioral health along with emergency services and paramedic training. We will still focus on other areas too such as manufacturing, information technology, and tourism. We are a sub-awardee from the Department of Tourism. They he granted us approximately two million dollars to help our colleges develop programs for tourism and hospitality.
  
- **CTE - Clinton Burch**
  - We've been working on a lot of pathways to better align the K12 world and the community college world. With new legislation there has been five million dollars set aside to pay for dual credit. That means that more students are able to achieve part of their Associate's degree, and in some cases a full Associate's degree before leaving high school. We are also excited to announce we now have 41 of our counties participating in Middle School CTE. We had 38,000 students go through a middle school CT course this year. We will expand that this fall. We plan on bringing back courses like home economics and wood shop as well as continuing focus on agriculture pre-engineering and introduction to careers in general. We have partnered with WVU the Speakers Bureau series. People from industry talk to students about careers. We do that through in person and field trips. Anyone interested in becoming a speaker for schools you can follow this link: <https://k12speakersbureau.wvu.edu/> . I'm also excited to say that

there will be a new pathway created for those working in industry who would like to come teach a CT course. It will be a hybrid module for students or potential educators.

- **WorkForce West Virginia - Glen Hughes UI**

- We have received some grant funds from USDOL for an initiative that was designed to improve equitable access to unemployment, improve the timeliness of benefit delivery, and also improve the integrity of the UI system. Two of our five are already going on or will launch soon. We have launched a plain language initiative to improve the notifications that we send to both claimants and employers to make them more understandable. We're utilizing a large language model AI for our current notifications and then editing that so those notices make more sense and they are able to understand what they need to do. We're also launching verification using the USDOL national nID verification. So in June anyone who files an unemployment claim will need to verify their ID either through GSA login.gov application or they can do it in-person at any retail United States Postal Service location. There's over 200 locations just in West Virginia. We are also working to implement Senate Bill 841. The law is being changed to define the number of job contacts someone who is receiving unemployment needs to make in a week, it also defines what is considered a work search activity. Another provision in the law is that if someone is receiving unemployment and finds part-time work and their earnings are less than their weekly benefits, the earnings will not be deducted from their benefits. Currently any earnings over \$60 are deducted from the weekly amount. The claimant will still be required to complete work search activities.

- **Lisa Lilly - Field Ops**

- RESEA Program (ReEmployment Services program) has made some changes such as self enrollment along with a video for customers to click and watch online. The video talks about services offered under WorkForce and partner agencies. It has saved our staff time and increased the number of people participating in the RESEA program. It has also reduced the number of no shows by 6% and we've increased participation by 16%.

- Michael Crown closed the meeting at 10:57am.

**The next ICT meeting will be June 27, 2024 at 10:00am via Google Meets.**