

**MIDDLE GEORGIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
YOUTH COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 18, 2024**

MINUTES

A meeting of the Middle Georgia Workforce Development Board Youth Committee was held at Noon, on April 18, 2024 at the Middle Georgia Consortium, Inc. The following were in attendance:

Members Present:

Tishua Green
Sam Dorsey
Dan Brandon
Keith King
Patrick Manuel

MGCI Staff Present:

Darrell Stillings
Terrell Mitchell
Teresa Ragan

Guests Present:

Michele Mason, TCSG-Ticket to Work (Virtually)
Melodi Robinson, CGTC

WELCOME – Sam Dorsey chaired the meeting in the absence of Chairman Clifford Holmes. He called the meeting to order at 12:09 PM and welcomed everyone. There was a quorum present.

MINUTES

1. **Approval of the Minutes from the February 15, 2024, Youth Committee Meeting** –A motion was made by Dan Brandon and seconded by Tishua Green to approve the February 15, 2024, minutes as written. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Ticket to Work Virtual Discussion** – Michele Mason, the Disability Services Lead/Employment Network Program Coordinator, with TCSG, OWD, conducted a presentation on the Social Security Administration’s Ticket to Work Program. She explained that the Ticket to Work Program is in place to assist individuals ages 18 through 64 who are receiving Social Security disability benefits (SSI or SSDI) and want to work. The program is free and voluntary. The program’s main goal is connecting individuals with disabilities to gainful employment and to provide an accessible path to self-sufficiency.

She further explained that, if an individual answers yes to having a disability and wanting to return to work, which these are questions that are imbedded in the WIOA application process, then they are a good candidate for referral to the Ticket to Work Program. She provided the website address – <https://www.tcsg.edu/worksource/worksource-georgia-employment-network/>. The website allows self-referrals or partner referrals and once submitted an Employment Network team member will follow up within 1-2 days to discuss program details and complete suitability screening. The Employment Network team member is also responsible for communicating with local WIOA staff on the progress of the referral.

In response to a question of if the individual is disabled will they lose their cash benefits once they become self-sufficient, Ms. Mason added that “it depends” and that’s why it is important for them to

be enrolled in the Employment Network (EN). The EN team members are certified benefit counselors and will educate the individual on their benefits during pre-employment, employment and near exiting status. If the individual receives SSI benefits, there is a spenddown formula which is set for every two dollars earned then the individual typically loses a dollar of their benefits. However, in the spenddown formula, expenses for housing, food, transportation and etc. are factored in. If the individual is receiving SSDI, then there is a nine-month window (which can be any nine-months during a 36-month period) where they have a threshold of \$1,050 per months. During the nine-month period, they get to keep their benefits and their earning from their employment. Once the threshold is met, then the clock starts ticking and (a three-months grace period with an increased threshold amount of \$1,575 starts) this is done to make sure they are gainfully employed and are stable. Once they meet the new threshold amount, the EN sends the SSA notice stating, they are gainfully employed with a stable history and its okay to terminate their cash benefits. It is a comprehensive level of services and the only expectation of the local areas is, they know they have somewhere to send applicants with disabilities and know they will be taken care of and will be communicated with on the services that are being provided.

In response to a question of if the Ticket to Work Program is an extension of the Title 16 program of SSI she added that the Ticket-to-Work Program is to supplement any program that Social Security has in place for individuals to go to work or to be reviewed for permanency of their disabilities.

There were no other questions and Ms. Mason encouraged members to feel free to contact her by any contact source that was provided but her cell is the best method. Her contact information was provided as follows:

Michele Mason, CWIP, CPM
mmason@tcsg.edu
(404) 679-5440 (Office)
(470) 445-3071 (Cell)

2. **CGTC Recruitment and Enrollment Report** – Melodi Robinson, with CGTC Career and Case Management Contract, provided an update on recruitment and enrollments. She apologized for not being able to share Ms. Brown’s reported. She reported that they are actively enrolling and are coming to the conclusion of spring semester for credit students and that the Adult Education program will not stop for break until the end of June. In response to a question of where all the locations are that someone can walk into to get Adult Education services, Melodi added that there are locations in all the counties except Wilkinson which is not a CGTC county, however, Wilkinson County participants are attending the Baldwin County location.
3. **Approval of Revised Youth Program Element 10 – Optional Mental Health Evaluation** – Darrell Stillings provided copies of and discussed the State’s Youth Program Element 10 “Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling” WIG. He explained that in the recent past the State mandated that participants complete the Mental Health Evaluation and the local policy was revised to reflect the requirement, however, the State has revised their policy again and made the Mental Health Evaluation optional and the local policy was revised again to reflect the State’s policy change to make it optional.

A motion was made by Keith King and seconded by Dan Brandon to approve the revised Youth Program Element 10–Mental Health Evaluation Policy as optional as presented. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

4. **Youth Expenditure Report** —Darrell Stillings provided copies of and discussed the Expenditure Report for all Youth Grants. He pointed out that Middle Georgia Youth Grants ending June 30, 2024, has been completely expended and all spending requirements of the Grant have been met, however, we are still expending the Youth Grant that was received from Macon-Bibb after the merger took place. He noted that we are currently at 43.2% of the Out-of-School 50% requirement, therefore, more

resources will be allocated for out-of-school youth before completely expending the Grant. He also reported on the grants for the next program year for both the regular formula grant and the Macon-Bibb transferred grant which both grants run from April 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. He pointed out that both of these grants as of February 29, 2024, showed admin expenditures only. He also reported that he has received the allocations for the next round of formula grants and once again there was a cut in funding for PY 2024. The cut this round was 9% for PY 2024.

5. **Youth Enrollment and Performance Updates** – Terrell Mitchell, MIS Coordinator provided copies of and discussed the PY2023 Enrollee Report which showed enrollments from July 1, 2023 through April 11, 2024. She reported that the total number of enrollments as of April 11, 2024, was 156 which is an increase of 31 from the February 8, 2024, report.

Also provided was the Performance Report for the 2nd Quarter of PY 2023, dated April 12, 2024. She pointed out that the Entered Employment for 2nd Quarter was met but the Entered Employment for the 4th Quarter is not being met which is at 68.9% and the negotiated rate is 70%. She also reported that the Credential Attainment measure is not being met which is currently at 22.96% and the negotiated rate is 55% and the Measurable Skills Gain is also not being met with 25.29% and the negotiated rate is 38%. This report does not include all of the 2nd Quarter data and there is still two more quarters left so these measures could be met in the end but it is possible that they will not be met. She added that Follow-up will be conducted to see if anyone received a credential that has not been counted. Darrell Stillings added that a lot of the youth that was exited was due to them electing not to receive services and we may not meet performance this year.

MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

There were none.

MATTERS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. Darrell Stillings reported that with the end of the program year approaching it will be a busy time of the year. All the contracts will have to be renewed, the Regional Plan, the One-Stop MOU as well as the Budget will have to be completed by June 30.
2. Next Meeting – Sam Dorsey reminded everyone that the next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on June 13, 2024, at noon, at the Middle Georgia Consortium office.
3. Youth Incentive – Melodi Robinson added that at the last WDB meeting it was approved to add a youth incentive based on grades, however, CGTC High School Equivalency (GED) students do not receive grades but do receive a measurable skills gain at the time of entering the program which is a performance measure that needs to be met. Therefore, CGTC is proposing to add an incentive for the High School Equivalency students that are attending classes as well. Darrell Stillings added that the addition of the previous incentive is to reward students that performed beyond the average (3.0 GPA or 75% average) and for the proposed students there does not appear to be a quantifiable way to measure the student's performance beyond what every student is required to do to enter the program. Darrell Stillings requested that at the next Youth Committee meeting that CGTC shows exactly how the system works so everyone has a clear understanding of what the students have to achieve to get in the program.

ADJOURNMENT

Sam Dorsey thanked everyone for participating. There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 12:55 PM.