

Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council
 Adult & Employer Linkage Committee
 August 20, 2020, at 8:30 a.m.
 Microsoft Teams

<u>Present</u>	<u>Excused</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Staff/Partners</u>
Adolfo de Leon Jamie Rasmussen Jennie Weber Karl Dye Melanie Olson Todd Samuel	Michael Lee	Lori Mattson	Tiffany Scott, BFWDC Diana Hamilton, BFWDC Cynthia Garcia, BFWDC Jessie Cardwell, BFWDC Crystal Bright, WSO Israel Delamora, OIC Heather Woodruff, CPS

Call to Order

Due to technical difficulties, Todd stepped in to start the meeting, welcomed everyone, and called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

Approval of Committee Minutes

Minutes of the July 16, 2020, Adult & Employer Linkage Committee Meeting were provided for members to review.

Jennie Weber moved to approve the July 16, 2020, Adult & Employer Linkage Committee Meeting Minutes as presented, seconded by Todd Samuel. Motion carried.

Program Highlights – Diana

Diana shared that the Adult and Dislocated Worker Contracts were signed by the Benton and Franklin County Prosecuting Attorneys and are now waiting to be signed by the County Commissioners. We now have a fully executed Disaster Recovery Contract with the Consortium. On Monday, we received the fully executed Employment Recovery Contract between the WDC and the State. Now we will be working to develop a contract between the WDC and our sub-recipient, Career Path Services.

Diana shared that program staff continues to utilize platforms that allow customers to serve themselves for program services as well as complete and sign enrollment documents electronically. They are also working to accommodate those that do not have access to or have difficulty with technology. They have developed a weekly three-part online training seminar for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. These are designed to keep customers engaged and to help them improve their skill sets so that they are prepared to apply for employment opportunities when they arise.

For the Disaster Relief Grant, Kayci Loftus and Rebecca Williamson, members of the Consortium, have been doing a lot of work within the community. They have been holding stakeholder meetings and listening tours to try to identify the current needs of our community. These meetings have identified the need for additional disaster relief positions. We have since found out that DOL will not be funding any additional disaster relief positions, but if additional funding comes to the grant down the road, they will consider adding them then. The Consortium is currently exploring alternative ways to fund the data technician and administrative support positions identified. We will either utilize disaster relief funds in the form of WEXs, or we will tap into our WIOA formula funds to ensure that we assist the organizations that have identified this need due to COVID.

One of the challenges we are dealing with is helping people address their mental health needs during this time. They are developing some webinars to help in this area.

Diana spent time walking through the Program Reports. Todd asked that they add the costs for serving customers to the reports.

Jessie Cardwell has joined our team as Programs Coordinator. She comes to us from Career Path Services. She will primarily be working with the Disaster Relief and Employment Relief programs.

EcSA Update – Cynthia

Cynthia reported that the EcSA numbers continue to be below target. COVID-19 has drastically affected the program model, partnership expectations, and program outcomes. All recipients of this grant are facing the same challenges across the State. Jamilet has been working with the State and other areas to overcome these challenges and come up with new strategies to continue to increase outreach. Now that zip codes have been added to the area, and the SNAP requirement has been removed, we have seen an increase in enrollments in the last quarter. We have completed phase one of the State evaluation and do not yet have a time frame for phase two. We still have time to turn this around as the program does not end until March 2022.

Families Forward Washington (FFW) Updates – Cynthia

This program has met the goal of the study by enrolling 56 non-custodial parents. Congratulations to Goodwill for their work on this contract. We have executed a contract modification to extend the program through December 31, 2020. The number of enrollments will be contingent on the budget.

One-Stop Operator Contract Update – Cynthia

Cynthia reported that we have a fully executed contract. We are looking forward to seeing the ongoing work, ensuring that customers get the very best experience, especially during these difficult times. She thanked the Consortium and Crystal for all they have done.

WorkSource Update – Crystal

Crystal reported that some great things have been happening at WorkSource. We continue to see a decrease in traffic numbers. We are still seeing a lot of customers seeking to meet basic needs related requests as well as unemployment insurance needs. Some of the services or phone calls we take may not be able to be captured as a meaningful service in ETO. So, this number of who and how many we are serving is not all-inclusive of the work being done. We do anticipate a rise in job seekers needing our services as the additional \$600 and the job search waiver go away.

The survey satisfaction rates are down. A lot of this is due to people being frustrated because they are unable to get ahold of anyone to help with their unemployment. Not only are survey numbers down, but customers are also a lot less likely to want to engage when reached out to. With the one-stop operator contract, they have a built-in opportunity to get some consultation from subject matter experts on data, customer surveys, and outreach work. Work has begun to create a more robust survey to get more actionable feedback. This work will include the Barriers and Access Solutions Committee, who has been heavily involved in the development of the survey.

They have been working hard to create more robust, local virtual service delivery options for our customers. Last month, we released our very first workshop online that is available on demand. They are working on building in a live Q & A session.

They have been focusing on outreach. We need to make sure that customers know that WorkSource is available for services, the kind of resources they can expect to receive, and how to contact us. They have also been working on technology that will make it easy for customers to get in touch. They are also working on how to reach out to partners during this time.

They are looking at training opportunities related to staff. They are working diligently to make sure that the staff feels connected and providing more ways for interaction.

There have been active conversations around staffing and customer flow. Many of our ESD staff have shifted and are supporting unemployment and workshop needs. Should we experience an uptick in customer flow, we are working to ensure that we can bring these staff members back into our center to serve customers.

Crystal is working to procure signage to add to the reader board and the front doors. These signs would share our services and how to get in touch with us and would also include a QR code to help them reach out.

Other Business:

Tiffany shared that our formula allocation is up 18%. The Disaster Recovery and Employment Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants we are also adding an additional \$1 million. As many of our non-profits in our community are lacking in resources this year, the BFWDC is fortunate that we can support our FTEs and have been able to add staff members to help with the new scopes of work. It is excellent to know that at this time when we are focusing on recovery that we have foundational resources. We are mindful and intentional about taking on new work this year. We don't want to grow too fast, but we need to keep an eye on the needs of job seekers and employers in our community.

Roundtable

Partners shared some of the innovative things they are doing to serve customers.

Next Meeting: The next Adult & Employer Linkage Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. on Zoom.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

DocuSigned by:
Melanie Olson 9/22/2020
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Meeting Chair Date

DocuSigned by:
Becky Smith 9/22/2020
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Becky Smith, Office Manager Date