

BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

Wendi Secrist
Executive Director



Deni Hoehne
Chair

B. J. Swanson
Vice Chair

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

317 West Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735-0510

Workforce Development Policy Committee Minutes

Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Committee Members: BJ Swanson, Jason Hudson, Christi Gilchrist, Todd Schwarz, John Smith, Scott Syme, Lori Wolff, Jani Revier, Tom Kealey, Tom Schultz, Clay Long

Staff: Wendi Secrist, Jeffrey Bacon, Paige Nielebeck, Amanda Ames, Matthew Thomsen, Caty Solace

Guests:

Call to Order at 2:07 p.m.

Roll Call – Quorum Met

Review Agenda

Ms. Secrist requests that February Launch Course approvals be added to the end of the agenda.

Review January 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Unanimous consent by Ms. Swanson to approve the January 19, 2021 meeting minutes as written. No objections.

Review Draft Registered Apprenticeship “Incentive” Policy

Several months ago, the Committee started identifying a streamlined way for employers to receive WDTF funding to start or hire registered apprentices.

The Committee reviewed a draft Registered Apprenticeship “Incentive” Policy. Please see attached document.

Discussion:

What is the intent of the streamlined program?

- To incentivize the use of the Registered Apprenticeship Model. It helps offset some of the startup costs.
- Businesses are wanting to start non-traditional Registered Apprenticeship programs (e.g., healthcare).
- IDOL has a \$6 million grant to expand apprenticeship in Idaho. A portion of that grant is used for incentives. Would this be a competing program?
 - This is meant to be a complimentary program to IDOL.

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- If the National Apprenticeship Act of 2021 passes at the federal level, it is going to significantly increase the amount of funding available for Registered Apprenticeships. The federal government is opening the door for these funds to be used for states to operate their own apprenticeship agency/entity.

Does the Committee want to limit the funding to startup registered apprenticeship programs or any registered apprenticeship program?

- There is a limited amount of funding for these incentives, so it is important that the Committee is clear about the intent of the funds. This will need to be decided before the policy goes before the full Council.

Will this program impact Idaho's federal funding eligibility in the future?

- USDOL will view this program as leveraged resources and complementary to their programs.

Will only 150-170 of these grants be awarded to Idaho businesses?

- The draft does not include a funding cap on WDTF funds for the program, but can be revised to do so.
- Why is the definition of who is eligible so narrow when so much funding is available?
 - The policy could state that the Council may set a maximum on how much funding one employer can receive from the WDTF. This would allow for any employer to apply and if the funding starts to diminish then a cap can be applied.
 - It makes sense to implement a max benefit in the policy whether it is per year or lifetime.
 - One way to formulate a cap is to tie it to the WDTF balance. When the balance is high, then the program would receive a higher amount of funding. If the WDTF balance is low, then the program would receive a lower amount of funding.

The Committee would like Ms. Secrist to take the above discussion and make a few revisions to the presented policy. The Committee will revisit the policy at the next meeting.

For-Credit Training for Launch

Currently, Launch is focused on not-for-credit courses. The Committee has previously discussed whether Launch should venture into the realm of for-credit programs.

Discussion:

Mr. Schwarz talked with a financial aid expert about Launch and for-credit programs and provided him with some valuable information. Financial aid does not apply to any for-credit program that is less than 16 credits. There are a significant number of programs that fall into that category. If a student is receiving Launch funding for any program over 16-credits, then that will affect their eligibility to receive financial aid. This information could give the WDC an opportunity to fill the gap in funding for programs under 16-credits.

More research is needed to determine if this could work within the current system, including a workable process for the IDOL Career Planners, colleges, and students to get the information they would need.

Will the 16-credit threshold be affected if the individual is also taking general education courses?

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- The institution will need to look at the student's intent and course taking behavior. General education courses would not fit within the parameters to receive Launch funding.

Update on In-Demand Occupations Updates

This discussion will be moved to the March meeting.

February Launch Course Approval

The Committee reviewed the February Launch Courses for approval. Please see attached document.

Currently, there are other PLC courses under Launch. This would be the first PLC course that is offered online. The program includes mailing hands-on kits to students to use during the program and the instruction will be completed remotely. The CNA course price increased by \$160.

Discussion:

Does it make sense to conduct the PLC program online?

- Given that it is an entry level course, and the students are receiving hands-on kits, the program should work well remotely.

Is the PLC training as a standalone course going to make someone employable or is the course simply introductory?

- Employers identified electrical wiring and the PLC training as in-demand skillsets. A lot of the Launch courses are entry level to help an individual get on a pathway to a career.

Motion by Ms. Gilchrist to approve adding the Idaho Launch courses as presented. Second by Ms. Revier.

Mr. Schwarz abstains from voting.

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Kealey to adjourn. Motion carried.

Adjourned at 3:02 p.m.