WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
514 W. Jefferson St. Boise, ID 83702

Quarterly Council Meeting Minutes

Date:	Wednesday, June 11, 2025
Time:	8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Mountain Time)
Location:	**State of Idaho Chinden Campus**

Council Member Attendees: Amanda Logan, Anna Almerico, Ben Davidson, Bill Reagan, ~~Senator Carrie Semmelroth~~, Daniel Puga, ~~Debbie Critchfield~~, Allison Duman proxy for Debbie Critchfield, Deni Hoehne, Donna Butler, Hope Morrow, James Smith, Jani Revier, Jeff Greene, Jeff Hough, ~~Jody Hendrickx, Joe Maloney~~, Judy Taylor, Kelly Kolb, Linda Clark, Lori Barber, Marie Price, Russell Barron, Sarah Griffin, ~~Lt. Governor Scott Bedke~~, Sean Coletti, Sergio Mendoza, Stephanie Pfeifer, Tia Davis, Todd Putren, Jake Reynolds proxy for Tom Kealey,

Staff: Wendi Secrist, Amanda Ames, Matthew Thomsen, Denise Hill, Sherawn Reberry, Chad Lahti, Halle Fultz, Monica McDonald

Call to order at 8:33 a.m.   **Deni Hoehne, Chair**

Roll Call/Introductions – Quorum met.
- The Chair thanked Linda Clark for her service to the Workforce Development Council for well over a decade. Dr. Clark's term on the State Board of Education is also ending and this is her last meeting.

*Review/Approve Agenda
A unanimous consent motion was made by Mr. Puga to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Mr. Greene. There were no objections.

*Approve Minutes of March 13, 2025 Meeting
A unanimous consent motion was made by Ms. Logan to approve the March 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented. Second by Mr. Puga. There were no objections.

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Budget Updates
- FY25 Budget Report
  - Fiscal year ends in two months, no concerns with budget.
  - Transfers into the Workforce Development Training Fund from IDOL exceeded projections; interest totals just over a million. Collection costs are higher than expected but interest offsets it. Continuing to distribute it per Council directive at 60% for Adult LAUNCH and 40% for WDTF grants (after administrative expenses are deducted).
  - YARG will disappear starting in FY26 – we just had a few expenditures in early FY25 to close out the grant.
  - ARPA:
    - View shows the 2-year budget.
    - All (Adult) LAUNCH dollars are obligated and nearly expended.
    - TPM is now being funded under the WDTF.
    - Creating a ramp down plan for CHIPS Act funding to ensure we have the human resources aligned. Must be spent by December 2026.
  - ARPA CCEG:
    - Similar ramp down plan being developed. Have a few grantees that won't fully expend their grant. Working to adjust funding up for other grantees that were provided less than they requested. Any adjustments after December 2024 have to go to existing grantees – we can't enter into new contracts.
  - In-Demand career fund:
    - Actuals well under budget – we were given $4M ongoing for "start-up" and will be adjusting that down in FY26 budget reports, and permanently in the FY27 budget submission.
    - Plan to move what we don't need in Personnel and Operating into Trustee Benefits to award more grants.
    - Other Transactions:
      - $5M to CTE in September – this will be an annual transfer as they are appropriated $5M of the In-Demand Career Fund to support secondary CTE programs.
      - $62,200 to State Board of Ed. in February – this will become about $220K annually as they were appropriated for college and career coordinators from the In-Demand Career Fund.

*FY26 Operating Budget

- **305 - WDTF**
  - Will use full Personnel amount moving forward as we shifted a position back to this fund from ARPA.
  - Small increase in Contract, Events & Other Council Activities to support Amplifund (new grant management software) implementation - merging into STEM AC's instance so cost will be shared between budgets.
  - Government Overhead & Insurance costs increased, due to growth and need for legal and IT services.

- $7.684M spending authority doesn't include reappropriation from $15M general fund transfer for semiconductor workforce training. Whatever is remaining will be added in at fiscal yearend.
- WIOA
  - Only change is increase to personnel costs for CEC and benefits. Covers half of salaries for Executive Director and Management Assistant. Remainder is for Council costs - $50K.
- ARPA – WT and Child Care
  - Both show decrease to 1 full time position, as per ramp down plan.
  - All funds must be spent by December 2026.
  - Funds set aside to cover personnel cost through that time.
- In-Demand Career
  - Shows what we believe we will spend in FY26 – could be some minor adjustments along the way as we dial in remaining costs.
  - Originally provided $5M start-up funding for program. $1M was one-time for FY24 only. Ongoing it appears we will be able to operate program at just under $3M.
- Big picture from FY25 to FY26:
  - Reduced headcount by 6.
  - Reserves built into ARPA funds to cover the salaries as we finalize spending.
  - In-Demand Careers has been trimmed up to ~4% of total.
  - Legislature appropriates actual funding – but for transparency, we appreciate the Council taking action to approve the operating budget.

Motion to approve FY26 Operating Budget by Dan Puga. Second by Hope Morrow. Motion carried

Additional Information
- Update on state revenue agencies are being asked to plan for 2/4/6 percent reductions in general funds. Dedicated funds not impacted but we always prepare to meet same expectations.
- The reductions will affect STEM AC budget – already have enough anticipated salary savings and reduced contract costs to meet it.
- FY27 200K in returning funds.

*WIOA Funding Distribution
- Every June the Council needs to approve Title I grant distributions per our policy.
- Reminder on how funds flow from federal government to service delivery areas.
- Update on performance of service providers:
  - Quarterly performance calls between WDC, IDOL, and service providers.
  - Will provide these twice per year to Council in June and December.
  - All performance measures have a target & actual. Targets are negotiated bi-annually with USDOL.
- Budget:

- o If an area can serve more, we have ability to shift funds between service delivery areas as a local board.
  - o We can also shift between Adult and Dislocated Worker streams – we've been doing this the past few years as we haven't had the types of large layoffs that would cause us to use all our DW funding.
- Discussion:
  - o Are our unemployment rates comparable to former year's rates?
    - ▪ Have fluctuated.
    - ▪ Data is available.
  - o No challenges meeting performance.
  - o Might be helpful to look at dislocated worker program more closely, are there trends that we may need to look at more closely and how do the displaced workers align with in-demand careers?
    - ▪ We could look at which industries they are coming out of and going into.
  - o We decide what we are going to hold back for local area activities (see list)
    - ▪ Memo in packet, shows available funds, what we must hold back funds for:
      - • Overall, $562K more to Adult program, $79K reduction to Dislocated Worker program and $584K more to Youth program.

Motion by Ms. Price to approve the WIOA PY25 Local Area Allocations and Set-Asides funding for the One-Stop Operators as presented. Second by Mr. Puga.

Additional Discussion
- Why is Idaho seeing an increase? – Its formula driven, our unemployment rate has gone up to 3.7% - last year it was 3.1%. Lots of other economic factors.
- Surprised there was no overall federal funding reduction.
- If Congress appropriates more we will likely get more, and if they appropriate less, we will see cuts. Next year's budget is up in the air.

Motion carried

*LAUNCH and WIOA – Work Search Waivers
- As part of our continuous improvement strategy, we've identified a policy issue that could be addressed by Director of Dept. of Labor.
- LAUNCH funded training isn't included as an automatic waiver of work search for UI recipients. WIOA funded training is.
- Idaho Code says Director can approve waiver if the training is providing skills that the individual lacks to compete in the labor market.
- IDOL and Equus staff do all the assessments/enrollments for LAUNCH – if they don't believe the individual needs training they can deny LAUNCH.
  - o If a waiver isn't provided, the individual has to do work search activities and if offered a job and they turn it down to complete their training, they would lose UI benefits.
- Asked IDOL research team to look at how many people are enrolled in both LAUNCH and WIOA and/or UI. While numbers are small, goal is to have people finish training.

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- Potential (small) impact to employers as they may have to pay UI benefits for a few additional weeks.

Motion by Mr. Reagan to send the prepared memo to Director Revier on behalf of the Council encouraging her to provide a waiver for LAUNCH funded training with UI recipients. Second by Ms. Barber.

Discussion:
- Understand need, feel for employers if there are small unintended consequences; however, we want to protect LAUNCH investments.
- Consequence already exists if participant is enrolled in WIOA – and since we use LAUNCH to pay for training for many WIOA participants to stretch our funding, this makes sense.
- If individual drops out of training, WDC would need to inform IDOL. WDC gets reports from providers that can be shared with IDOL.

Motion carried.

Executive Director's Report
- Federal Programs Update:
  - The President's FY27 budget has big implications across the workforce system.
  - Consolidate 11 programs, including WIOA Title I, into Make America Skilled Again block grant.
  - Can't tell yet which set of rules would apply if funding streams are combined.
  - Adult Education (Title II) is zeroed out in the President's budget. Not good for Idaho as we've streamlined programs to point those needing GED and literacy support to Adult Ed versus duplicating services in other programs.
  - Title IV (Vocational Rehab programs) are ok for now; challenge is there is no funding for Disability Rights Idaho which is required to receive state grants.
  - Job Corps and Senior Community Service Employment programs are zeroed out.
  - Discussed in One-Stop Committee - ready to make adjustments if needed.
- USDOL Monitoring & One-Stop Operator Contract:
  - Title I monitoring was conducted in March, expecting letter tomorrow.
  - Positive feedback from monitors on WDC and IDOL governance structure along with efforts to engage other partners.
  - May have 1 finding or area concern:
    - Grey area – USDOL says to procure One-Stop contract every 4 years while following state procurement laws – Idaho says we can procure every 6 years. Given upcoming changes in federal budget, we chose to use the State flexibility to extend for another year.
    - Will be corrected by next monitoring – going to initiate procurement in August.
- Marketing/Communications Contract:
  - End of six-year contract with Strategies 360 on June 30.
  - Combined procurement completed with STEM AC and State Board of Ed. – Stoltz won the contract.
- Idaho Code Clean-up:

- All agencies asked to review statutes and rules to update or eliminate.
- Will be proposing STEM AC integration.
- Some overlap with State Board and State Department of Education. Working closely to coordinate responses.
- Will go forward with same proposals.

Linda Clark shared her perspective on being engaged with the WDC for over a decade. It was an amazing honor and she feels the Council carries forth her personal mantra that the quality of and access to education should not be a reflection of their zip code. She shared that it is her belief that the WDC has played a large role in keeping Idaho's economy strong.

Break

Policy Committee Updates
*WDTF Employer Grant Policy Update

- Grant Review Committee has been providing feedback to the Policy Committee and collectively the two committees are recommending a few updates to the Employer Grant program.
- Recommended changes:
  - Minimum wage to qualify increased to no lower than 25% for the occupation.
  - Fund availability:
    - Limit available funds to $250K per employer.
    - Add that the committees may convene 2 times annually to make changes recognizing that needs are changing.
    - Delete first come first serve.
  - Applications:
    - Adding 25% as minimum for leveraged resources. This will provide more transparency about the investments being made in training.
    - Adding a description for "outside normal training cost".
  - Reimbursable expenditure:
    - Remove.
    - Not reimbursable - add.

Motion by Ms. Revier to approve policy changes as written. Second by Ms. Logan. Motion carried.

*In-Demand Career Matrix Methodology

- Only update for Class of 2026 is to use BLS data for training metric. This aligns to a public resource that we won't have to pay to have updated.

Motion by Ms. Revier to accept update to the In-Demand Career Matrix methodology as presented. Second by Ms. Barber.

Discussion:
- Interesting there are in-demand careers that are leadership roles versus specialists.

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- Our shrinking labor force makes careers across the board (entry level to leadership level) available. BLS has standardized ~860 occupations that we use as our base.
- When we think about pathways, we may want to consider bundling the training for specific occupations.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics update the SOC codes every 7 years, jobs have changed but some things get pulled into the "Other" category because there is nothing else or the job is too new.
- Staff action to draft a cover page for the in-demand methodology that is in layman's terms.
- To be on the list – there is a required amount of training, why are Legislators on it?
  - We use what the BLS says for each of the 800+ occupations at the national level. It's the most reliable dataset that is publicly available and the methodology is consistent.
- If we don't have training for specific occupations in Idaho, why do we keep the occupation on the list?
  - It provides data for our training providers on what may be needed and it keeps the entire process data driven.
- Is the list too big? Should it be narrowed down?
  - If we concentrate on too narrow of a scope, then other jobs in labor market suffer and we risk creating "too many" for a specific occupation.
- Methodology follows statue.
- There's a balance between employers providing training and what's expected of postsecondary education. Small employers don't always have the resources to pay for training for their employees.
  - As far as we know, there is not a list of which companies provide in-house training.
- The matrix looks at multiple variables because there are challenges with each data source. Policy Committee is continuously evaluating whether there are better data sources and are pushing for better data from both public and private sources. We aren't the only state grappling with these issues.

Motion carried with one nay from Representative Tanner.

*LAUNCH Framework Update for Deceased Students
- Recommended addition to allow staff to not pursue repayment from a student's estate if they pass away while using grant.
- Three instances happened in the first year with the Class of 2024.

Motion Ms. Revier to approve updated LAUNCH Framework as written. Second by Mr. Greene.

Discussion:
- What does federal contract say on student loans?
- Not sure, but will look - can bring back for amendment if needed.

Motion carried with one nay from Representative Tanner.

WDTF Grants Update – Semiconductor Investments + CHIPS Plan:
- Total investment of $47M (ARPA and WDTF) in STEM programs statewide with four areas of focus:
    o Students (K-16).
    o Educators.
    o Community partners.
    o Educational infrastructure.
- 25 total grants, 13 specific for semiconductor industry.
- Programs planned to impact 4,700 individuals.
- 5 community and technical colleges and 4 universities received funding.
- Grant report from Boise State, Semiconductor for All program:
    o $5M grant over 3 years.
    o Streamlines College of Engineering programs to provide pathways for K-12 students and transitioning adults into industry.
    o Certificates for students in- and outside engineering.
    o Teaching teachers to include semiconductor related content.
- Discussion:
    o Micron heavily supports all programs – some with cash, others with in-kind curriculum, instructors and other support.
        ▪ Does Micron still pay for employee education? Yes, they also invest by providing employees to teach.
- Next Steps for CHIPS investments:
    o Working with Micron – direct CHIPS funding for workforce development is $65M.
        ▪ $17 - 18M will be used in Idaho.
        ▪ WDC will bring together partners and support application development.
        ▪ NY intermediary will be fiscal agent.

Lunch

Connecting Employers to LAUNCH Activity - Report out
1. Group 1 – Is there a difference we should be considering between connecting student and adult LAUNCH participants to employers? Are students different from adults? If so, what would the different approaches look like?
    o Yes, there is a need to differentiate.
    o Mentality and motivators are different. Students are driven more by passion, adults know what they need.
    o Educate them and employers on differences:
        ▪ Adults have more experience - focus with employers on where to market and what to look for in the interview.
        ▪ Employers need to understand generational differences with students, types of questions to draw the answers they need from the student.
        ▪ Talk about common/transferable skills.
        ▪ Adults may not have recent experience with interviewing.

- IDOL offers training – resumes, interviewing, job search.

2. Group 2 – What type of (technology) tool is needed to facilitate work-based learning opportunities between LAUNCH participants and employers?
   - Employers need repository where they could post their opportunities.
   - Include links to videos, etc. to generate interest.
   - May need to consider subscription-based service - employers might have to pay to post.
   - Inform counselors – find ways to connect with them to get to students.
   - Look at options to "market" through gaming platforms.

3. Group 3 – How should we engage employers in Waypoint and other opportunities that provide training to college and career advisors/school counselors?
   - Group 3 simplified their question – what can employers do to get more connected with those helping students make choices about their next step?
     - Publish field trips, job shadow, interns, externs.
     - Connect alumni back to students.
     - "Rolodex" reference guide for counselors.
     - Leverage existing networks of employers.
     - Many employers not incentivized to engage with students – need to share the "why" so they are more connected.
     - How to guide to communicate with schools. Who do I talk to?
     - Discussed Waypoint for Industry and how this conference can help employers, counselors, and college/career advisors work together.

4. Group 4 – How could we facilitate engagement between LAUNCH participants and employers for networking and/or employment opportunities?
   - Annual LAUNCH fair/career fair – at regional level.
   - Publish success stories.
   - Work with industries to share more data on jobs.
   - Identify LAUNCH participants when hiring.
   - Career pathway awareness in schools.
   - Leverage existing associations.
   - Provide materials for companies to share.
   - Create an exploration tool that lists employers in state.
   - Flag job postings tied to LAUNCH training.
   - Handshake program at state level.
   - Employers hosting mock interview days.
   - LinkedIn.
   - LAUNCH coordinator per region.
   - Leverage TPM Project Managers.

5. Group 5 – How could we leverage Talent Pipeline Management collaboratives to conduct a gap analysis on the availability of training programs for in-demand careers?
   - Fatigue for employers being asked all the time to serve on advisory committees. They also have survey fatigue.
   - Infrastructure is in place with other organizations, utilize it for TPM.
   - Have TPM Project Managers report to us on employer needs.

- o Asking TPM to help with LAUNCH may be a stretch – TPM is supposed to interact with the employers to define the skills needed and adapt education/training to align.
- o Ask TPM partners to participate on post-secondary technical advisory committees – including information from TAC meetings that highlight industry needs educational partners are unable to provide or don't currently provide for industry. Include data in quarterly reporting to Council.

Industry Deep Dive – Technology
- **Dan Puga**, EVP In-Time Tec, Moderator
- **Elenor Taylor**, Program Manager, Workforce Development, National & Homeland Security at Idaho National Laboratory
- **Reid Stephan**, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, St. Luke's Health System
- **Nancy Lomeli**, Director of Advanced Packaging Technology Development, Micron

- Mr. Puga led discussion centered around the current and future picture of technology within different industries and the projected impact on the Idaho workforce and the educational needs aligned with those projections.
  - o Elenor Taylor, Idaho National Laboratory presented:
    - Protecting the nation's energy systems from physical or cyberthreats is one of the most important missions at INL.
    - Highlighted national workforce capability gaps and that cybersecurity is one of the top 20 fastest growing fields in the country and workforce pathways may not be limited to linear pathways, constant learning will be required.
    - 2030 INL demonstrate how we are working together.
  - o Nancy Lomeli, Micron
    - Micron's growth is causing need for adaptation.
    - Golden age of AI including innovative software and algorithms to ubiquitous connectivity and massive bandwidth requiring constant learning from team members.
    - Huge value in mixing team members with and without experience.
    - Micron Foundation work throughout our communities helps create awareness of future skills and careers so students have inspiration and understanding about pathways into Micron.
    - Skills-based hiring is becoming more accepted.
  - o Reid Stephan, St. Luke's
    - Technology is changing healthcare so we need a workforce that can learn faster.
    - Increase in virtual care – 1,600 last month.
    - Healthcare is # 1 use case for ChatGPT.
    - Challenges include nursing shortages and aging workforce.
    - AI can be used in healthcare but need to balance with non-disclosure of personal information and have started to train employees in AI basics.
    - Roles will be replaced, but there will be more meaningful roles to replace them.
    - Considering internships for younger students but challenges for students under 18.
  - o All Panelists:
    - What skills would you like to see?

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- Flexible – open to learning.
- Desire for continuous learning.
- Focus on the power skills, AI won't pick them up.
    - Teambuilding, communication.
- Teaching employees to synthesize data, teamwork and cooperation emotional intelligent skills.

Break

Staff Updates
- Aerospace Tech Hub Updates from North Idaho:
    - Applied in 2024 for $78M. Awarded in last month of previous administration but overturned by new administration.
    - Looking at different opportunities.
    - 50 partners.
- STEM Action Center Outreach:
    - I-Stem:
        - For educators, held in June in six locations across state.
        - Over 500 educators participating.
        - Receive kits that they take back to the classroom.
        - Each location has 7 – 10 strands/tracks.
        - As we move into WDC – connecting these strands to in-demand careers is a priority.
        - 75% of those attending are K-8 educators.
    - EcosySTEM Contract:
        - Supports local, community-based programs.
        - Hosted at Idaho Business for Education previously.
        - Legislature passed a new law, can work with universities directly through a simplified procurement process.
        - In negotiations with University of Idaho Extension to take on contract.
    - Extern program:
        - 6th year, 104 working at employer host sites.
        - Stipends funded by WDTF, no costs to host sites.
    - STEM AC Foundation – evolving and modified bylaws to give directly to community organizations rather than STEM AC. New board members, in transition.
- Childcare Grant Impact:
    - Program started with 2022 supplemental appropriation of ARPA funds.
    - Lost over 5,000 seats in Idaho during pandemic – need multiple options.
    - $15M to spend first year (FY2023)
    - 71 applications, over $40M in requests
    - Awarded 27, to create 2,635 seats
    - Received another $15M in FY2024, set aside $3M for public safety, $4M small providers
    - Brought on Wonderschool to help recruit and provide technical assistance to 50 small providers.
    - Awarded 36, to create 1,383 seats.
    - Totals across both funding years – 63 projects, 4,018 seats.

- LAUNCH – Class of 2025:
  - New infographic:
    - This includes public institutions only.
    - Increase of 3 percentage points in the go-on rate.
    - Number of students with 2.7 or lower GPA increased the most - 18%.
    - Gender – more males are engaging (female still higher but closing the gap).
    - Adults – over 10K adults served by program:
      - IDOL and EQUUS are our partners in making this program work.
      - Wage gains of 22%, average for general public during same time period is 6%.
  - Class of 2025 Report:
    - April 25th - final awards were sent.
    - 9,975 sent, so far 3,100 accepted, 88 declines, 3,800 need to accept, 2,800 waiting for high school diploma to be uploaded, 6 extensions.
    - Waitlist of 500, will be making offer soon.
- WDTF Evaluation – Research Questions & Timelines:
  - Will include Adult LAUNCH now, next time will start incorporating Student LAUNCH. No complete data at this point.
  - LAUNCH reports are done quarterly, WDTF requires annual report to JFAC.
  - Evaluation is approximately every 2 years – have to have sufficient number of grants close out. IDOL research team conducts the evaluation.
  - Reports are more focused on outputs, evaluation is more focused on the outcome.
  - Provide thoughts on research questions to Kimberly of Wendi.
  - Will share draft report at September meeting, final report done mid-October.
  - Partnering with Hoover Institution to publish independent evaluation.

Chair's Report
- September meeting will be in Twin Falls. Industry focus will be food processing.

Unanimous consent motion by Ms. Revier to adjourn.   No objections.

Adjourned 3:44 PM.