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**STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**Draft Meeting Minutes Pending Board Approval**  
GENERAL BOARD MEETING

DATE: Thursday, January 9, 2025  
TIME: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
LOCATION: DWS South County Employment Center  
5735 South Redwood Road, Taylorsville, UT 84123  
Google Meet: [meet.google.com/enu-ixea-vko](https://meet.google.com/enu-ixea-vko)  
Phone: (US) +1 516-268-6796  
PIN: 240 363 432#

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**MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

Deanna Hopkins  
Debra Fiori  
Greg Paras  
James Jackson III  
Megen Ralphs  
Michael Lanoue  
Sara Dansie Jones  
Sarah Brenna  
Shawn Newell  
Stephanie Patton  
Tannen Ellis Graham  
Tonya Hales

**EXCUSED:**

Casey R. Cameron  
Gary Harter  
Jennifer Saunders, Ph.D.  
Matt Loo  
Michelle Hill  
Tonya Hales  
Tracy Gruber  
Sydney Dickson

**ABSENT:**

A. Cory Maloy  
David Gray  
Jeff Worthington  
Shawn Milne  
Wayne Cederholm

**MEMBERS  
PRESENT  
(VIRTUAL):**

Jeremy Haslam  
Jordan Leonard  
Kendall Thomas  
Lauren Navidomskis  
Nikki Walker  
Sherry Stevens  
Spencer Loveless  
Stacey Taylor  
Vic Hockett

**QUORUM:**

Yes



**BOARD  
STAFF:**

Elizabeth Carver  
Heather Mousley  
Kimberley Bartel  
Lindsay Cropper  
Natalie Garrett  
Nycole Tylka  
Amira Mijic (virtual)

**OTHER  
ATTENDEES:**

Aaron Thompson  
Amie Graff  
Helen Hanson  
Weston Miller  
Zac Whitwell

**OTHER ATTENDEES (VIRTUAL)**

Allison Keller  
Celina Sinclair  
Christina Guevara  
Janette Hernandez  
John Talcott  
Leah Lobato  
Rich Fullmer  
Tashina Williams (ITEC)  
Stephen Ward

**BOARD STAFF EXCUSED:**

Alexia Murphy

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**1. Welcome and Opening Business**

**Megen Ralphs**

**a. Acknowledgments and Introductions**

- i. The meeting was called to order by Chair Ralphs at 1:04 P.M.
- ii. Chair Ralphs confirmed the presence of a quorum, allowing for motions and voting to proceed.
- iii. Attendees were reminded to review the 2024 meeting calendar and note key meeting dates. The calendar was included in the physical and digital packets that were distributed to board members, and can be found online at [jobs.utah.gov](https://jobs.utah.gov).
- iv. Chair Ralphs provided an official welcome to two new board members, Michelle Hill and Steven Olson, who are replacing Dan Walker and Jim Boyd. She excused Michelle Hill from this meeting due to a prior commitment.
- v. To further recruitment efforts, Board members were encouraged to recommend potential candidates to the Board Chair and Board Liaison, with particular emphasis on identifying a Senator to represent the Board and a representative from the agricultural sector.

**b. Approval of Minutes from SWDB General Board Meeting held 10/03/2024**

- i. Motion to approve the meeting minutes: Shawn Newell
- ii. Second: Tannen Ellis Graham
- iii. In favor: All
- iv. Opposed: None
- v. Motion passed unanimously

**2. One Stop Recertification, Metro Employment Center**

**Megen Ralphs**

- a.** The Metro Employment Center certification was conducted in November 2024. Board members who participated in the recertification of this center included Debra Fiori, James Jackson and Megen Ralphs. These board members provided their observations from their site visit to the Board during the meeting.

- i. Debra Fiori highlighted the unique nature of the Metro Employment Center, noting the diverse clientele it serves, including some of the region's most vulnerable populations due to its proximity to homeless services. She commended the Center's employees for their patience, in-depth knowledge, and skilled approach in assisting clients, particularly in offering alternative solutions and crucial soft skills.



- ii. James Jackson echoed Debra's praise for the staff's patience, attentiveness, and knowledge. He also emphasized the emotional and mental strength required by staff to effectively serve the Center's clientele. He cited a specific observation of a front desk staff member demonstrating exceptional listening skills and a calm demeanor while addressing a client's complex needs.
- iii. Megan Ralphs inquired about employee support mechanisms from an HR perspective, such as the availability of quiet spaces for staff breaks. She observed genuine concern and care demonstrated by staff towards clients. Chair Ralphs shared an anecdote illustrating the staff's dedication and patience in assisting an elderly client with understanding his mail.
- b. Recertification:
  - i. Motion to recertify the Metro Employment Center: James Jackson
  - ii. Second: Debra Fiori
  - iii. In favor: All
  - iv. Opposed: None
  - v. Motion passed unanimously
- c. Chair Ralphs proposed that the Board organize a field trip to the Metro Employment Center in July 2025, incorporating small group shadowing opportunities for Board members to observe the staff at the center. This suggestion will be added to the agenda for a future meeting.

### **3. Utah Registered Apprenticeship for Teachers**

**Christina Guevara**

- a. Christina Guevara presented an overview of the Utah Registered apprenticeship for Teachers (U-RAPT) program.
- b. U-RAPT creates a new pathway for individuals to become licensed teachers, particularly targeting those without bachelor's degrees. The program is currently enrolling participants and actively working to increase awareness. Individuals with bachelor's degrees interested in special education licensure can pursue a different pathway.
- c. The program features two phases:
  - i. Pre-Apprenticeship: For high school graduates with 0-41 college credits, this phase can be completed in 1-2 years.
  - ii. Apprenticeship: For high school graduates with 42+ college credits or an associate degree, this phase can be completed in 1-3 years. Apprentices are paired with a mentor teacher and work as an extension of the student teaching model.
  - iii. Youth Apprenticeship: This phase is in development.
- d. Apprenticeship does not require prior completion of the pre-apprenticeship phase. Apprentices are not the teacher of record; they work under the guidance of a mentor teacher.
  - i. Discussion and Questions:
    - 1. Debra Fiori: Inquired about the timeline for program development and approval.
      - a. Christina reported that the program received approval from the Department of Labor in September 2024, with an expansion approved in December to include pre-apprentices. The overall development process spanned several years, with the final approval process taking approximately six months.
    - 2. Leah Lobato: Asked for clarification on the distinctions between U-RAPT and the "Apple" program. Christina explained that "Apple" is designed for individuals with bachelor's degrees seeking specific content area or grade-level licensure, while U-RAPT provides a

pathway for those without bachelor's degrees to earn licensure while gaining practical experience under the guidance of a mentor teacher.

3. Megan Ralphs: Asked about the number of participating school districts.
  - a. Christina noted that the program intentionally started with a limited number of participants in its first year to ensure program quality and success, based on data from similar programs in other states. Currently, there are just under 30 pre-apprentices and approximately 15-18 apprentices enrolled.
  - b. Fourteen Local Education Agencies (LEAs), including school districts and charter schools, have partnered with U-RAPT. They plan to begin onboarding apprentices in the next school year.

#### 4. Performance Outcomes

**Aaron Thompson, Lindsay Cropper & Stephanie Patton**

- a. Aaron Thompson, Lindsay Cropper and Stephanie Patton provided an overview of the Department of Workforce Services' (DWS) performance outcomes related to customer service, employment gains, wage increases and credential attainment.
- b. Performance Measurement:
  - i. DWS tracks six (6) key performance measures (listed at the bottom of the presentation slide) to assess the effectiveness of its core programs.
  - ii. Every two years, each core program negotiates performance goals with federal partners. These goals are based on previous years' data, state economic information, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state plan.
  - iii. The Program Year (PY) runs from July 1 to June 30.
  - iv. Federal performance reports are submitted annually in October.
  - v. DWS career programs, including WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker (DW), and WIOA Youth, provide training and support services. Wagner-Peyser (WP) serves all customers, while Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Adult Education cater to specific populations.
  - vi. Achieving at least 51% of the negotiated goal is considered a passing score, indicated by green markings on the performance report.
  - vii. Federal partners evaluate both overall and individual performance measures.
- c. Performance Highlights:
  - i. Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Aaron Thompson, Assistant Director): The Vocational Rehabilitation program served over 14,000 individuals with disabilities, with over 4,000 successfully exiting programs after receiving services. Efforts are focused on:
    1. Improving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities through employer training and client coaching on disclosure and accommodation requests.
    2. Providing counselor training on early intervention strategies to prevent job loss.
    3. Utilizing labor market information to guide clients toward high-demand, high-wage occupations.
    4. Collaborating with businesses to facilitate connections with clients seeking higher-paying jobs.
    5. Supporting credential attainment, including assistance with graduate-level programs and connections to vocational and occupational training.
  - ii. Adult Education Program (Stephanie Patton, Adult Education Coordinator): The Adult Education served over 14,000 students, with over 23,000 seeking services. Key trends include:

1. Steady increase in student numbers since 2020.
  2. Maintaining service quality despite a 40% increase in English Language Acquisition students.
  3. A significant portion of students are aged 16-18, seeking to complete their high school diplomas.
  4. A decrease in the high school diploma completion rate was observed, attributed in part to previous underreporting by a third-party student information system. A new in-house reporting system is expected to provide more accurate data.
  5. Federal requirements mandate that graduation rates reflect both high school diploma attainment and successful transition to employment or post-secondary education.
- iii. Discussion and Questions
1. Debra Fiori inquired about the calculation of median wages.
    - a. Lindsay Cropper clarified that the median wage is calculated for individuals who were employed two quarters after exiting DWS services
  2. Stephanie Patton noted that negotiated goals are often largely determined by federal partners within a narrow percentage range.
  3. Steven Olson asked if any studies have been conducted to analyze the wage differential between individuals who received services and those who did not.
    - a. Liz Carver explained that most program participants have very low incomes due to eligibility guidelines.
  4. Stephanie Patton emphasized the expectation of continuous improvement from federal partners. The DOL uses a detailed rubric to determine the number of individuals served from different populations, considering state economic factors, to calculate negotiated rates.
  5. Megan Ralphs asked Lindsay to explain the WIOA Narrative that was referred to in the Executive Committee Meeting.
    - a. Nycole Tylka shared the link to the WIOA Narrative with the Board members who were attending virtually and mentioned that a link would be shared with the meeting minutes.
    - b. [WIOA Annual Report](#) 2023
    - c. Lindsay Cropper explained that the [WIOA State Plan](#) is a comprehensive document (300 pages) outlining Utah's strategic workforce development goals and strategies
    - d. The Utah WIOA 2023 Narrative provides a more accessible overview of DWS activities and accomplishments, highlighting key successes and collaborative partnerships.
    - e. Board members were encouraged to review both documents, with particular emphasis on the narrative's success stories, which showcase the positive impact of DWS programs and services.
    - f. Aaron Thompson highlighted that the narratives effectively demonstrate the collaborative approach and comprehensive "wrap-around" services provided through partnerships with various core agencies.

## 5. Workplace Literacy Programs

Stephanie Patton



- a. Stephanie Patton, Adult Education Coordinator, provided an overview of workplace literacy programs, with a focus on their impact and customization options.
- b. Program Benefits and Impact:
  - i. Research indicates that Adult Education participation of at least 100 hours can lead to an average increase of \$9,000 in annual earnings for individuals.
  - ii. Workplace literacy programs can be tailored to meet the specific needs of employers.
  - iii. Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) are assessed through pre- and post-testing to demonstrate the effectiveness of instruction.
- c. Program Examples:
  - i. Granite School District successfully implemented a program for bus operators that integrated English language instruction. Three cohorts have completed the program, with a high percentage of participants securing employment.
  - ii. Sara Dansie Jones shared an anecdote about the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) program for immigrants and new Americans. An employer raised a concern about potential employee turnover after English language training. UTA responded by expressing their commitment to community development and the benefits of providing employees with valuable skills.
    1. In response to a question from Sara Dansie Jones about transition pathways, Stephanie Patton explained that because public funds are used for these programs, employers are encouraged to offer incentives to maintain employee engagement.
    2. UTA's program, which provides part-time employment during training, was cited as an example of effective incentivization.

## 6. Workforce Development Outreach Report

**Zac Whitwell**

- a. Zac Whitwell, Service Area Director for the Uintah Basin, Castle Country, and Eastern Utah service areas, provided a few highlights from the report and an overview of recent and upcoming workforce development outreach activities.
- b. [Workforce and Employer Support Update, October-December 2024](#)
- c. Recent Events:
  - i. IRS Pathways Hiring Event (Ogden): A hiring event focused on connecting high school students (ages 16-18) with seasonal paid internships at the IRS. Potential expansion to other employment centers is under consideration.
  - ii. Cedar City - On-Site Layoff Support: DWS provided on-site support services at SMEAD manufacturing in response to layoffs.
  - iii. "Get the Scoop" (Summit County): Workforce Services staff participated in a "Get the Scoop" event at Wasatch High School in Heber City where approximately 1500 students had the opportunity to explore careers and post-secondary educational opportunities.
  - iv. Carbon County Career Fair: Local high schools hosted a career fair where employers presented career options and pathways to students.
  - v. Apprenticeship Summit: An apprenticeship summit was held, with participation from an Australian delegation. Approximately 110 employers and 130 job seekers attended this event. For more details on the summit, Board members were encouraged to contact Scott Romney, Commissioner of Apprenticeships.
    1. Scott Romney: [sbromney@utah.gov](mailto:sbromney@utah.gov) or (801) 628-4051



- vi. Work Ability Career Exploration and Job Fair: A career exploration and job fair focused on individuals with disabilities. For more details on the Work Ability Career Fair, Board members were encouraged to contact Leah Lobato.
  - 1. Leah Lobato: [leahlobato@utah.gov](mailto:leahlobato@utah.gov) or (801) 887-9538
- d. Upcoming Events:
  - i. Board members were referred to the map on the back of the outreach report for details on upcoming events and updated contact information.

## 7. Committee Report Out

## Committee Chairs

- a. Apprenticeship Committee (Michael Lanoue)
  - i. Mike Lanoue provided an update on recent and upcoming apprenticeship related activities for the Apprenticeship Committee.
  - ii. Recent Events:
    - 1. National Apprenticeship Week (November 18-24): Celebrated Apprenticeship Week with events in Price and Cedar City, including job fairs.
    - 2. DWS Apprenticeship Summit: DWS Hosted a well-attended apprenticeship summit with 110 employers and 130 job seekers.
    - 3. Utah School Counselors Association Meeting (November 14-15): Participated in the Utah School Counselors Association meeting to educate counselors about apprenticeship career pathways and encourage counselors in their guidance of students towards these opportunities.
    - 4. Utah State Prison Tour (January 6): Toured the Utah State Prison to explore potential apprenticeship pathways for incarcerated individuals and those in halfway houses, including distance learning options for electrical trades training. Certain trades can complete much of their training online and this committee is exploring ways to use distance learning in collaboration with the prison.
  - iii. Upcoming Events:
    - 1. Changes to National Apprenticeship Week: Mike announced that National Apprenticeship Week will be moved to the spring, with a single-day event on April 30, 2025, and expanding to a full week in 2026 and moving forward.
    - 2. Granite School District Advisory Board Event (January 23): Granite School District Advisory Board will host an event on January 23rd to connect CTE students, parents, employers, and apprenticeship programs.
      - a. Board members may contact Mike Lanoue for more information.
    - 3. Utah Electrical Training Alliance Open House: The Utah Electrical Training Alliance will host an open house to promote electrical trades apprenticeships, with outreach efforts including advertising to students and Spanish-language radio.
    - 4. Granite School District is implementing an interviewing program to help students develop job search skills.
- b. Youth (Debra Fiori for Matt Loo)
  - i. Debra Fiori presented to the Board on behalf of Committee Chair Matt Loo regarding the Youth Committee. Matt's goal for this committee is to increase collaboration between the Youth Committee and the other committees to support the work across the board and reduce working in silos.



- ii. This committee hosted a meeting where they invited Scott Romney to present regarding apprenticeships. Key takeaways from the presentation included:
  - 1. Over 3,000 eligible occupations for apprentices nationwide. 93% of the time, the apprentice will remain with the employer.
  - 2. DWS provides two (2) apprenticeship navigators to assist with policies, procedures, and employer needs. Contact information for apprenticeship navigators was shared with board members.
  - 3. Apprenticeship program length varies by occupation.
    - a. Scott Romney commented that apprenticeship programs can be tailor made to the occupation and the length can vary.
- iii. The Youth Committee members were asked to identify their biggest challenges to help the committee determine a focus. As a result, this committee has decided to expand the apprenticeship opportunities for youth and will be connecting with the Apprenticeship Navigators before the end of March 2025.
- iv. Another goal for this committee will be working to get both youth and adults to complete the FAFSA.
  - 1. Chair Megan Ralphs made a comment that the FAFSA application process could use improvement.
  - 2. Committee member Rebecca Armitage (SLCC) will get a good contact for the committee regarding the aspects of FAFSA, what the current process is, what barriers are there for FAFSA, and ways these can be improved.
- v. The board members had no further questions for this committee.
- c. Serving Individuals With Disabilities (Committee Chair Deanna Hopkins)
  - i. Deanna Hopkins presented on behalf of this committee. Board members were encouraged to review the flyers included in their packets.
  - ii. This committee worked with Morgan Stanley and UTA to host two mentoring events in October. A [video of this event](#) is available on the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) website.
  - iii. Fall Work Ability Career Fair: The USOR and Business Relations Team partnered for a Fall Work Ability Career Fair on October 8th. This event hosted 27 business professionals and 320 job seekers.
  - iv. The Business Relations Team presented to Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) on work- based learning (WBL) and the Center for Assistive Technology.
  - v. Upcoming Events:
    - 1. January 15: Lunch and Learn: Cracking Your Credit Score 101
    - 2. February 12: Lunch and Learn: Investing 101: Planting Seeds for Your Financial Future
    - 3. February 24-March 7: Flash Mentoring Opportunity
      - a. Leah Lobato is seeking employers and business professionals to mentor individuals with disabilities.
      - i. In response to a question from Megan Ralphs, Leah Lobato clarified that the time commitment is approximately one hour. Mentors can choose their activities (mock interviews, virtual space review, dress code advice, etc.) Typical mentoring sessions last 30-45 minutes.



- ii. Steven Olson shared his experience with previously participating. He mentioned that he has had very positive experiences and they have not lasted more than one hour, more typically 30-45 minutes.
    - b. Board members were encouraged to contact Leah Lobato to participate.
    - c. Debra Fiori inquired about the mentor registration process.
      - i. Leah Lobato and Aaron Thompson clarified that mentors can register using a provided QR code on the flyer included in the packet.
  - 4. March 11: Employer Workshop on Hiring and Retaining Individuals with Disabilities
    - a. Lunch provided. For more information, board members were encouraged to review the flyer included in their packets.
  - 5. March 25: Lunch and Learn: Clean Slate Utah
  - 6. April 8: Work Ability Career Exploration & Job Fair: For Employers and Job Seekers
    - a. Location: Robert G. Sanderson Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
  - 7. Sept 25: Golden Keys Awards
    - a. Board members were encouraged to save the date for the annual Golden Keys Awards in September.
    - b. Leah Lobato commented that the Golden Keys Awards Nominations will be opening soon and she will provide the information to be distributed to the board. Board members are encouraged to nominate individuals to be recognized.
- d. Career Pathways (James Jackson III)
  - i. The Career Pathways Committee held a joining meeting with the Apprenticeship Committee during the past quarter. Both committees brainstormed ways to collaborate in the future to better align their missions in support of apprenticeship opportunities.
  - ii. The Career Pathways Committee has a robust amount of resources available for building and strengthening career pathways and James proposed increased collaboration between all committees moving forward to maximize the impacts of all committees.
- e. Operations (Kim Bartel for Gary Harter)
  - i. Kim Bartel presented for the Operations Committee on behalf of Committee Chair Gary Harter.
  - ii. Upcoming One-Stop Recertifications (tentative dates):
    - 1. March 2025: Ogden Employment Center
    - 2. June 2025: George Employment Center
    - 3. September 2025: Spanish Fork and Lehi Employment Centers
  - iii. Kim explained the WIOA American Job Center criteria that the Operations Committee reviews biannually and presents to the Board. It is the responsibility of the State Workforce Development Board to review the criteria and approve any changes. The Operations Committee and all the WIOA partners have reviewed the criteria and recommended to the Board that no changes be made at this time.
    - 1. A brief discussion arose regarding the possibility of the meeting having lost a quorum. A recount was conducted, confirming that a quorum was still present, allowing the meeting to proceed with any necessary motions and voting.
      - a. Motion to keep the criteria for the American Job Centers the same: Deanna Hopkins
      - b. Second: Shawn Newell

- c. In favor: All
    - d. Opposed: None
    - e. Motion passed unanimously
  - iv. Board members that would like to participate in an upcoming recertification should contact:
    - 1. Kim Bartel: [kbartel@utah.gov](mailto:kbartel@utah.gov)
  - v. Sara Danise Jones commented that there is a small work group in the Operations Committee with a few members who are focused on employer engagement which provides a very valuable service. She mentioned that this committee is under-represented with actual business leaders and asked for board members to volunteer or to recommend business members from the community to serve on this committee.
    - 1. Chair Megan Ralphs volunteered to assist with this committee.
- 8. **Public Comment** **Megan Ralphs**
  - a. No public comment
  - b. Board members were notified that the meeting in October 2025 may have the possibility of being rescheduled due to the annual One Utah Summit hosted in Cedar City. The date for the One Utah Summit has not been set yet.
  - c. Meeting adjourned at 2:53 PM.
    - i. Motion to Adjourn: Sarah Brenna

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**UPCOMING SWDB MEETING:**

Thursday, April 10, 2025, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
Department of Workforce Services, South County Employment Center  
5735 South Redwood Road, Taylorsville, UT 84123  
[jobs.utah.gov/edo/statecouncil/index.html](https://jobs.utah.gov/edo/statecouncil/index.html)