

Workforce Information Advisory Council

Summary of Virtual Meeting

December 10, 2020

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET

The Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) was convened for a virtual meeting at 1:00 PM on Thursday, December 10, 2020. The Council was convened pursuant to Section 308 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Pub. L. 113-128), which amends section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 (29 U.S.C. § 491-2) and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (5 U.S.C. App.) and its implementing regulation at 41 CFR 102-3.

Mr. Steven Rietzke, Chief, Division of National Programs, Tools, and Technical Assistance (DNPTTA), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Council, convened the meeting. The entirety of the meeting was open to the public and concluded at 4:00 PM on Thursday, December 10, 2020.

In Attendance:

Members of the Workforce Information Advisory Council

Bruce Madson, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (Chair)

Thomas Anderson, Wellons Land Company and Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Alicia Crouch, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Adrienne Johnston, Florida Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research

Dean Jones, Greenville County Workforce Development Board

Chelsea Mason, International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District 751

Andrew Reamer, George Washington Institute of Public Policy

Jennifer Zeller, Georgia Power

Members of the Council Not in Attendance

Daryl Basset, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Deborah Carlson, Texas Workforce Commission

Alexandra Hall Bovee, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Staff

Steve Rietzke, Chief, DNPTTA, ETA (DFO)

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting

Don Haughton, ETA

Annette Summers, The GA Team

Pam Frugoli, ETA

Sheila Crowley, The GA Team

Julie Hatch, BLS

Torrie Nickerson, The GA Team

Rebecca Rust, BLS

Kevin Powell, The GA Team

Ken Robertson, BLS

Betsy Roberts, The GA Team

Michael Wolf, BLS

Kris Speller, The GA Team

Staff Not in Attendance

Lauren Fairley, ETA

Members of the Public Offering Comments or Called Upon to Address the Council

Robert Rudnitsky, National Institute of Standards in Technology (NIST)

Others Attending for All or a Portion of the Meeting

Dhruva Chakravorty, Texas A&M

Tom Gallagher, Retired

Lesley Hirsch, NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Lan Nguyen, YouthBuild USA

Christopher Robison, State of Nevada

Teresa Theis, ETA

Breakout Groups Reporting During this Meeting

Breakout Group 1: Skills

WIAC Members

Alexandra Hall Bovee (absent)

Alicia Crouch

Adrienne Johnston

Jennifer Zeller

Subject Matter Experts Consulted

Pam Frugoli, ETA

Don Haughton, ETA (facilitator)

Michael Wolf, BLS

Members of the Public

Christopher Robinson

Lesley Hirsch

Breakout Group 2: UI Wage Record/Changing Nature of Work/Non-Degree Credentials

WIAC Members

Dean Jones
Andrew Reamer

Subject Matter Experts Consulted

Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting (facilitator)
Sara Johnson, ETA
Ken Robertson, BLS
Rebecca Rust, BLS

Members of the Public

Tom Gallagher, Retired

Breakout Group 3: COVID-19

WIAC Members

Thomas Anderson
Bruce Madson
Chelsea Mason

Subject Matter Experts Consulted

Julie Hatch, BLS
Steve Rietzke, ETA (facilitator)

Members of the Public

Dhruva Chakravorty
Lan Nguyen
Teresa Theis

Proceedings: December 10, 2020 1:00 PM ET

Welcome, Review of Agenda and Introduction to Breakouts

MR. RIETZKE convened the meeting of the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC). He provided opening remarks on the agenda for the day and thanked the Council members for their work and participation at the meeting on December 3rd. **MR. RIETZKE** noted that the minutes from the September 8 – 10, 2020 meetings had been approved and posted online.

The Council members who were present at the meeting introduced themselves.

MR. RIETZKE reiterated the three key discussion areas for the breakouts, introduced the facilitators, and reminded the Council members to select a spokesperson for the report out discussions. The goal of the breakouts is for each group to identify areas of outstanding questions, needs, and priorities so that by the end of the third meeting in the series, the Council members would be able to organize into subcommittees.

MR. RIETZKE turned over the platform to Council Chair, **Bruce Madson**.

Breakout Sessions

MR. MADSON reminded the Council members, that they would have the opportunity to weigh in on issues being discussed by other groups, during the report out discussion. **MR. MADSON** also informed the Council members that they were encouraged to weigh in on the broad variety of issues that had been referenced in earlier discussions. He indicated that if Council members identify specific issues with high levels of urgency, they have the option to deliver a recommendation sooner than the standard timeline.

MR. MADSON introduced Veteran WIAC Member, **Jennifer Zeller**.

MS. ZELLER encouraged the Council members to consider the larger questions: "What do we need to learn more about and what do we already know?"

The Council moved into breakout sessions. Pages five and six of these minutes outline the three breakout groups and summarizes their discussion.

Public Comment

MR. RIETZKE opened the platform for the public attendees to ask questions and provide comments and feedback.

DR. REAMER introduced public attendee, Robert Rudnitsky, Associate Director for Policy at the National Institute of Standards of Technology (NIST) Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office (AMNPO).

MR. RUDNITSKY thanked **DR. REAMER** for inviting him. He provided background information on the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) and how MEP supports workforce programs in addition to small and medium sized manufacturers. **MR. RUDNITSKY** expressed his pleasure with being able to participate in dialogue like this with the WIAC and the importance of making connections with individuals who have a vast understanding of workforce data. He indicated to the Council that the biggest challenges facing the manufacturers in the MEP is the lacking applicant pool of skilled workers and how to fill in the resulting skills gap. He also outlined the lagging indicators and the leading indicators most commonly presented in the feedback from manufacturers in the MEP.

Julie Hatch, BLS commented that she sees potential partnership opportunities as it relates to the US Census Bureau (Census) and the US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) data, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, and state partnerships and collaboration.

MR. RIETZKE thanked **MR. RUDNITSKY** for his comments. He also thanked **DR. REAMER** for connecting **MR. RUDNITSKY** with the WIAC.

Large Group Discussion and Report Out

Former WIAC Chair, **Cynthia Forland, Forland Consulting** facilitated the large group discussion and report out. She called upon the spokespeople from each breakout group to share the conversations they had, based upon the guiding questions:

- Why is this area important?
- What is missing in this area, or most needs to be addressed?
- If you had a magic wand, what would you change or create in this area?

Breakout Group 1: Skills

MS. ZELLER spoke for the first breakout group. She outlined the importance of skillset transferability and the power it holds in helping individuals to understand their skillsets and how those skillsets could translate into another occupation to support career and income progression for the future. Skillset transferability is also a key economic development tool for relocating and expanding companies so that they can easily tap into knowledge bases that do not typically exist when analyzing a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code. **MS. ZELLER** explained how skillsets could influence the job training opportunities ultimately effecting career ladder progression for employees.

The supply of skills was identified as an area that needed to be addressed through the example of developing Learning and Employment Records (LER). **MS. ZELLER** outlined the initiatives surrounding the mapping of Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes and why it would be important to build that intelligence for individuals preparing to go into, or come out of, a field of study. The group also addressed the missing component of a common language surrounding skillsets along with the technology to support that initiative. **MS. ZELLER** shared the group's hope for a national initiative to define a taxonomy tool that could be used to one day to advance someone's career or business and the potential to find that data by geography. The group also identified the need for a national initiative regarding K-12 aptitude and assessment for career pathways and transitions.

MS. ZELLER reported the group shared different state and national initiatives with which they were familiar. The group discussed their desire to explore current events surrounding skillsets in order to inform the best recommendations. Lastly, **MS. ZELLER** shared that if the group had a magic wand, they would create a structured platform to house the skillset initiatives and efforts from across the nation to serve as an intelligence resource. They recommended that the structured platform would allow for greater flexibility in order for the skillset information to expand into the future. She concluded the report back by defining skillsets as the key to understanding employability and enabling people to change and transition to realize their full potential.

Breakout Group 2: UI Wage Record/Changing Nature of Work/Non-Degree Credentials

DR. REAMER spoke for the second breakout group. He indicated that there was synergy between **MS. ZELLER**'s summarization and the second breakout group discussion. **DR. REAMER** shared that the group discussed adding occupation, hours worked, and place of work to unemployment insurance wage records. In addition, they discussed the need for creating consistency across the states in terms of definitions and data collection in order to have a richer set of nation-wide details regarding the operation of labor markets and the outcomes of education and training programs. **DR. REAMER** shared the group's wish is to understand what the WIAC can do in terms of recommendations to the Secretary in order to get the federal and state governments and employers all on board with the T3 Innovation Network project and open data standards.

The second topic discussed was the changing nature of work. **DR. REAMER** indicated that his breakout group commended the US Federal Statistics System on taking every job in the nation and classifying it by industry and identifying wage and salary workers versus self-employed workers. **DR. REAMER** shared that his breakout discussed the need for more resources so that BLS can conduct a supplement to the annual population survey in order to identify the missing data. He shared that the group's wish would be for BLS to field a survey every year, on the changing nature of work, and that the WIAC's aim should be to provide a recommendation to the Secretary so that BLS has the resources it needs to accomplish this work.

The third area discussed within the breakout was non-degree credentials. **DR. REAMER** shared that the group discussed the National Training, Education, and Workforce Survey and the hope for the federal government to categorize and estimate the workforce in relation to what percentage of the workers have non-degree credentials. The breakout discussed ETA's initiative to make the WIOA annual performance outcome report for eligible training providers public. **DR. REAMER** reported that his breakout group recommends the WIAC build upon and promote these initiatives and ultimately ask, what additional data is needed?

Breakout Group 3: COVID-19

MR. MADSON spoke for the third breakout group. He explained the cross-cutting nature of the COVID-19 topic in relation to the other two breakout groups. **MR. MADSON** stated that the COVID-19 discussion did not revolve around the issues of creating new data types or sources in response to COVID-19. Instead, the discussion highlighted the urgency that has been forced upon the workforce system. He highlighted the areas in which workforce and labor market information personnel have seen a barrage of requests for information in order to assist parties in figuring out how to respond to the pandemic. **MR. MADSON** presented to the Council, the opportunity to accelerate or gain support for existing recommendations by dividing them into two sets of time tables:

- Expedited recommendations that could prove helpful in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic that could be implemented and take effect quickly.
- Full set of recommendations that follow the existing schedule.

MR. MADSON also explained to the Council members that the previous set of recommendations were made in terms of the enhancement and the availability of enhanced wage record information. At this time, those recommendations have the possibility of being recharacterized with a level of urgency. For example, having state and local level data available to help us understand the impacts of COVID-19 would be immensely useful to the workforce system. He urged the Council to consider how this relates directly to the WIAC Charter: "Data system enhancements to support the workforce development system."

MR. MADSON stated his breakout group discussed the importance of knowing the impacts and the likelihood of the recovery of industries and occupations is needed. This is the key way to adequately prepare our citizens for productive employment and to prepare our businesses to return to profitability. At the current time, local areas and states are forced to make priority decisions on how to invest their limited resources. This breakout group discussed that there is an immediate challenge with the degree of local level, real time data in order to understand the impacts of the pandemic and inform good decisions.

MR. MADSON indicated the group's recommendation is the creation of a system, at the practitioner level, that is designed for workforce development. The system would provide guidance on how to utilize existing data to invest appropriately in a community. Specifically, to get the most out of the available resources in preparing a community for economic recovery, based upon the unique aspects of that community (i.e., economic mix, skillsets, education levels, etc.). He suggested that there is a great deal of data, but there isn't a consumable way to assist individuals in using that data to make employment and training investment decisions at the local level.

In the discussion that followed the report out, the Council members unanimously agreed to the potential of providing an expedited set of recommendations to the new administration.

MR. RIETZKE provided a brief outline to the Council members of what the expedited process may involve in order to realistically accomplish this goal.

Closing and Next Steps

MS. FORLAND charged the Council members with thinking about potential expedited recommendations before the next week's meeting.

MR. RIETZKE thanked the Council members for their time and productive conversation. He shared that in one week, their goal will be to finish the meeting with a strategy for moving forward. With the newly added level of urgency, they will need to define the two paths and determine the best way to organize.

The meeting was adjourned.