



**Indiana Department of Workforce Development SWIC Work Ethic Taskforce  
Indiana Government Center South Conference Room A  
10 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204  
June 27, 2016  
11:00 am- 12:30 pm**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Kevin Wachtel, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:03am. Members introduced themselves and their organization.

Committee Members Present: Kevin Wachtel, Brianna Morse, Leslie Crist, Kelly Brown, Kristina Blankenship, Thom Hayes, Jonathan Kraeszig, Nancy Zemaitis, Tammy Stump, Eryn Craven, *Dr. Andrew Melin, Michael Denny, Jody French, Carol Auslander (via conference call)*

### **Review June 2, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Wachtel asked for a motion to approve the June 2, 2016 minutes. Tammy Stump motioned to approve and the committee passed.

### **Statewide Implementation and Statement of Work Discussion**

Brianna Morse, Associate Director of Youth Initiatives, provided the committee with an overview of the Statement of Work being utilized by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) as a guide for the statewide implementation of the Work Ethic certification. As of July 1, 2016, DWD will enter into an MOU with the Greater Clark County Schools to support and expand Mr. Michael Denny's work being done through the PRIDE program, which is an initiative focused on ensuring all students transition to post-secondary opportunities and have the academic and employability/soft skills necessary to succeed.

Discussion ensued on consulting other school districts implementing similar standards that grew organically to identify best practices and provide input and feedback on the development of an implementation guide to be utilized by school corporations statewide. Employers will also be consulted when developing the guide to identify if there are unique or key areas that require more emphasis for obtainment of employment. The committee also discussed timelines and various scenarios for when a school district could utilize the guide. The committee determined there is not enough time to roll out by the first school semester; therefore, the committee will utilize the upcoming calendar year

to 1) identify and vet existing programs, 2) conduct outreach to school districts and employers to gauge interested parties, 3) identifying best practices from existing programs, and 4) draft an implementation guide to be utilized statewide by school corporations. The goal is to have approved programs implement at the beginning of the school year in 2017 but school districts who submit a program for approval in time to implement for the second semester will be considered. The implementation guide will be developed by July 27<sup>th</sup> and the Work Ethic Committee will review at the August meeting to discuss inconsistencies and identify missing criteria. When reviewing, the committee's main focus will be to ensure the standards are consistent and vetted for Governor Pence's signature.

Potential expenses incurred for the Work Ethic Certification were discussed. Dr. Melin stated PRIDE program expenses were minimal and consisted of purchasing the cord/tassel and sash, certificates, food for meetings, and personnel expenses for overseeing coordination of the program in the school. Discussion ensued of how the State could potentially incur the cost of the certificate with the Governor's signature and Seal. Other discussion focused on the Works Council support for the statewide launch.

Discussion also focused on marketing and branding of the Work Ethic Certification and ensuring key partners are involved, such as the Department of Education (DOE), State Board of Education, State Workforce Innovation Committee (SWIC), and Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Morse mentioned utilizing DOE's Moodles to provide technical assistance to the community, school corporations, and employers on the Work Ethic Certification.

Ms. French informed the committee Perry Central plans to launch a portal that will allow student and teacher data to be entered for the Work Ethic Certificate and for employers supporting the Work Ethic Certification to list contact information on the website. It is also a goal for students pursuing higher education before employment to be able to utilize the portal to print their certificate years later, once they begin the interview process. Ms. Crist mentioned a portal would be a great avenue for an interested school district to submit an interest form or their program for consideration/approval. The development of a website and portal is something the committee will discuss further as an avenue to house data, links, contacts, resources, interest forms, and a drop box for school districts seeking program approval.

Ms. French asked the committee if earning the Work Ethic Certification could also be connected to a Technical Honors Diploma. Ms. Stump stated LaPorte High School has implemented the certification since inception and added a Career and Tech Ed (CTE) component for students who plan on working after graduation. Dr. Melin mentioned to not just tie to CTE as the Work Ethic Certification incorporates and teaches vital skills and elements for any occupation pursued by students.

The committee discussed action steps for identifying existing programs, marketing to interested school districts, the importance of the Counselor's support and knowledge of the Work Ethic Certification, and how the program will continue to be implemented and thrive after a change in leadership/administration. Ms. Zemaitis asked the committee

how the Work Ethic Certification standards will be monitored, if certification approval is only awarded once, or every three years, or after a change in leadership to ensure the program elements are carried out as intended. This topic will be re-visited at the next committee meeting; however, Mr. Wachtel informed the committee that criteria will need to be established by the taskforce for screening and validating existing programs as well as how the school district will be measured. Ms. Crist stated after the Work Ethic Taskforce concludes, the SWIC Youth Committee will continue to oversee implementation. Ms. Morse suggested the Youth Council could be responsible for monitoring and progress check-ins and school corporations could present to the Youth Council for re-certification.

Mr. Hayes asked the committee if and how data will be tracked of students who've earned a Work Ethic Certification, the value to employers of those students who've earned a certification versus those without, the number that took advantage of incentive rewards (i.e. gift card and/or employer bonuses) and how to ensure students and employers continue to report over the next five or more years. The committee will re-visit this topic at the next committee meeting.

Dr. Melin also discussed outreach efforts as the first year of the program, the certification was obtained predominately by college-bound Caucasians. Efforts were increased in the second year to be more diverse and data indicated over a 20% gain in students of color earning the Work Ethic Certification. Outreach efforts will not only need to focus on ethnicity/demographics but also on individuals who plan on entering employment after graduation from high school. Mr. Wachtel recommended it would be important to include guidance to school corporations in the implementation guide. Ms. Zemaitis also asked the committee to be cognizant that African Americans are notoriously disciplined over others in the classroom and asked for this to be addressed during future meetings.

Mr. Hayes asked the committee how individuals on an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) will participate in earning a Work Ethic Certificate as this population tends to have higher behavioral issues and are more likely will be excluded from achieving. Mr. Denny stated 8.3% on an IEP earned a certification during the first year of the PRIDE Program and 9.4% earned the second year. Ms. Zemaitis stated that kids make up 14-15% of the state population and recommended the committee not only ensures the Work Ethic Certification is ethnically-diverse and self-inclusive, but also needs to ensure kids understand the value of achieving a Work Ethic Certification their senior year.

### **Next Meeting Date**

Mr. Wachtel recapped that a draft implementation guide will be developed by July 27<sup>th</sup> and the committee will meet in August (date to be determined) to discuss. Dr. Melin and Mr. Denny will assist DWD in reaching out to other Indiana school systems implementing similar Work Ethic Certification standards for assistance and support in the development of the statewide implementation guide. Mr. Wachtel adjourned the meeting at 12:29pm.