
Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
803 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN
February 24, 2026

Members present: Jerry Arneson, Carol Anderson, Terry Blake, Ed Bolas, Troy Haugen, Justin Holley, Duane Johanning, Amy Johnson, Darrell Lende, Julie Sachs, Tammy Schatz, Lori Schwartz, Leigh Shebeck, and Sandy Voigt

Members excused: Jeff Bjornson, Kathy Cottew, Amanda Hanson, and Lisa Hanson

Members unexcused: Brittany Nordick

Staff present: Stacy Belen, Heather Bergseid, Arlyce Cucich, Jaclyn Hicks, Tina Jaster, Chrys Kirschbaum, and David Smith

Guests: Curtis Anderson, Beltrami County

MINUTES

Business Committee Meeting – Arlyce Cucich/David Smith

Ms. Cucich and Mr. Smtih reviewed reports for the month ending January 2026. This included the Program Progress, MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards, WIOA Performance Standards, SNAP, and Ticket to Work reports.

Program Progress

Mr. Smith reviewed all current programs. Overall, there are no concerns.

MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards

Beginning of the new year program:

- ✓ MFIP
 - Entered Employment Rate: 3 counties are exceeding, and 1 is meeting.
 - Successful Placements: 3 counties exceeding, and 1 is meeting.
 - Wage at Placement: 5 counties are exceeding.
- ✓ DWP – Program ends at the end of March.
 - Entered Employment Rate: 5 counties are exceeding.
 - Wage at Placement: 5 counties are exceeding.

WIOA Performance Standards

Quarter 3 of PY25. There are no concerns.

Adult:

- Employment Q2: 87.30% of goal
- Median Earnings: 115.41% of goal
- Employment Q4: 99.78% of goal
- Credential: 93.72% of goal
- Measurable Skill Gain: 39.75

Dislocated Worker:

- Employment Q2: 104.69% of goal
- Median Earnings: 135.18% of goal
- Employment Q4: 96.69% of goal
- Credential: 100.28% of goal
- Measurable Skill Gain: 55.55% of goal

Youth:

- Employment Q2: 116.33% of goal
- Median Earnings: 129.75% of goal
- Employment Q4: 119.21% of goal
- Credential: 117.55% of goal
- Measurable Skill Gain: 39.10% of goal

SNAP Slots

Region IV is at 1 of 17 slots enrolled.

Region V is at 12 of 12 slots enrolled. Awaiting additional Pledge funding.

Ticket to Work

- There are currently 17 active enrollments with 72 cumulative enrollments.
- Revenue to date (DEED and ADEN) is \$453,231.92.
- Remaining Ticket to Work funds are \$151,532.10.
- Revenue from 2014-2018 (DEED) is \$104,574.67.
- Revenue 2018-present (ADEN) is \$348,231.92.
- 2026 Revenue to Date is \$4,034.25.

Call to Order – Carol Anderson, Chair

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Agenda additions: 5.A. Eligible Provider of Youth Services

January 27, 2026, Minutes – Ms. Anderson

Moved by Terry Blake and seconded by Leigh Shebeck to approve the minutes from the January 27, 2026, meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Youth Key Priorities for 2026 – Jaclyn Hicks

The Youth Council approved the 2026 Youth Key Priorities at its January 26, 2026, meeting and is recommending approval by the Workforce Development Board.

Youth Key Priorities for 2026:

- 1) **Mental Health Support:** Professional development opportunities will be provided for staff to gain knowledge, and an understanding of how overall mental health, physical health, trauma, or adverse experiences can affect participant’s lives, their needs, and the services they receive through participation in our programs. Staff will then use this information to provide resources and referrals that can make a difference for participants who are struggling because of these experiences.
- 2) **Financial Literacy practices** will be embedded within the Individual Employment Plan and the services each participant is provided. Staff will help participants to understand and effectively use various financial skills, including personal financial management, budgeting, and investing.
- 3) Staff will prioritize personal advocacy skills with each participant to help them navigate the barriers that they face, with the goal of providing participants with the skills necessary for making decisions, asking for assistance, and gaining confidence in what they are learning and doing.

- 4) Participants will improve their employability skills to enhance success in their entry into the workforce. This will include discussion, promotion, and work with the youth to identify one caring adult relationship which models responsibility and success in meaningful and relevant activities and roles. Staff will provide information on ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and social media to participants and parents.
- 5) Participants will engage in Career Planning Activities to make informed career decisions, which may include conversations on Local Labor Market Information (LMI) and post-secondary employment and training options.

Moved by Troy Haugen, seconded by Justin Holley, to approve the Youth Key Priorities for 2026 as recommended by the Youth Council. Motion carried. It will now be brought to the Board of Directors for approval.

Retain Summary – Chrys Kirschbaum

Ms. Kirschbaum presented the Retain Grant Summary.

Planned Participants:	Engage regional employers through promotion of MN RETAIN at ten employer events and through ongoing outreach, resource sharing, and connections to mental health and wellness supports.
Budget:	\$40,583
Operating Period:	February 2, 2026 – March 8, 2026
Funding Source:	MAWB, Regional Planning Dollars

Moved by Ed Bolas and seconded by Terry Blake to approve the Retain Grant. Motion carried.

Eligible Provider of Youth Services – Jaelyn Hicks

A motion was made to approve RMCEP as the sole provider of WIOA Title I Youth Services under WIOA Section 123(b), based on the Workforce Development Board’s determination that no other eligible providers exist in the RMCEP region.

Moved by Terry Blake and seconded by Duane Johanning to approve RMCEP as the Sole Provider of WIOA Title I Youth Services. Motion carried. It will now be brought to the Board of Directors for approval.

DEED Job Search Experience Survey Results – Ms. Jaster

Ms. Jaster shared the results of DEED’s Job Search Experience Survey. The blog stated that “Nearly 63% of CareerForce Staff and Partners who responded to the most recent Job Search Experience Survey said it was harder than a year ago for their Job seeking customers to find work.”

2025 County Outcomes – Ms. Cucich

Ms. Cucich provided an overview of MFIP services for 2025. The year-end MFIP/DWP report was reviewed as well as a sampling of participants by county that left the MFIP program to Unsubsidized Employment. Ms. Cucich and Ms. Jaster answered questions as they arose.

Drive for Five PY25 Review – Stacy Belen

Ms. Belen shared a presentation showcasing the PY25 Drive for Five program activities and outcomes. Highlights included:

- Program Overview
- Grant Purpose
- Program Components
- Approved Supporting Training Providers
- Training Providers Used
- Enrollment Summary (as of 2-17-26)
- Employment Outcomes & Wages
- On-the-Job Training (OJT) Contracts
- Placements & Retention Incentives (as of 2-17-26)
- Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo Chamber (FMWFCC) Collaboration
- Q&A

Rural Workforce Discussion: CareerForce Strengthening – Ms. Jaster

As part of the DEED’s strategic planning work, it is employing an Objectives and Key Results (OKR) goal-setting framework to identify and advance key department priorities. Ms. Jaster is participating in the Workforce System Innovations LWDA subgroup, which consists of two rural Directors and three metro Directors assisting with the Objectives and Key Results. Objective Two, CareerForce Strengthening, was reviewed with the Workforce Development Board and feedback was requested. Great discussion was held, and member comments were appreciated.

Question: “How well are CareerForce locations meeting the local needs right now?”

- Leigh Shebeck: The nearest Career Lab is 22 miles away and is just not near enough to work closely with.
- Justin Holley: His employer had some successful new hires from the Anderson Fabric layoff.
- Carol Anderson: Asked the question, “How important do you think it is to have a brick-and-mortar office?” Feedback was given.
 - o Makes acquiring job openings easier in larger communities.
 - o Assistance with succession planning is needed in small communities.
 - o The importance of face-to-face assistance for vulnerable persons.
 - o Discussion ensued on how to market RMCEP/CareerForce services.

Director’s Report – Ms. Jaster

Ms. Jaster provided an update on Recent Accomplishments and Current Activities, Staffing Changes, and Agency Outreach Efforts.

Regional Planning/Career Advising – Chrys Kirschbaum

Regional Planning

- Ms. Kirschbaum is working with Janelle Klinke to acquire a tour of the Wabigwan Mashkiki facility at the April Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA) meeting.

- The Community Workforce Inclusion Council (CWIC) continues to create and implement the Good Jobs initiative.

Career Advising

Staff are currently providing services in 13 schools.

Member Updates – Roundtable Contribution

- Terry Blake
 - o Provided some housing inflation statistics/information. Discussion ensued on rental and building costs.
 - Jerry Arneson
 - o 2025 was not a good year for the Ag Industry.
 - o New generations of farmers will struggle with land and equipment costs.
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Celebrate Wins – Ms. Jaster

A Success Story was shared in the packet.

Adjourn – Ms. Anderson

A motion was made by Terry Blake, seconded by Darrell Lende, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Ms. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Terry Blake, Secretary
Workforce Development Board**