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

Members present: Jerry Arneson, Carol Anderson, Terry Blake, Ed Bolas, Kathy Cottew, Darrell Lende, Julie Sachs, Tammy Schatz, and Leigh Shebeck,

Members excused: Jeff Bjornson, Amanda Hanson, Lisa Hanson, Troy Haugen, Justin Holley, Duane Johanning, Amy Johnson, Brittany Nordick, Lori Schwartz, and Sandy Voigt

Members unexcused:

Staff present: Heather Bergseid, Arlyce Cucich, Jaclyn Hicks, Tina Jaster, and Chrys Kirschbaum

MINUTES

Business Committee Meeting – Arlyce Cucich

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

Program Progress

Ms. Cucich reviewed all current programs. Overall, there are no concerns.

MFIP/DWP County Performance Standards

- ✓ MFIP
 - Entered Employment Rate: 9 counties are exceeding.
 - Successful Placements: 9 counties are exceeding.
 - Wage at Placement: 9 counties are exceeding.
- ✓ DWP
 - Entered Employment Rate: 7 counties are exceeding.
 - Wage at Placement: 9 counties are exceeding.

WIOA Performance Standards

Quarter 3 of PY25.

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: 63.59% of goal

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: 62.49% 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: 54.74% of goal

SNAP Slots

- ✓ Region IV is at 2 of 17 slots enrolled.
- ✓ Region V is at 12 of 12 slots enrolled.
- ✓ Additional Pledge funds have now been received.

Ticket to Work

There are currently 18 active enrollments with 73 cumulative enrollments.
Revenue to date (DEED and ADEN) is \$453,231.92.
Remaining Ticket to Work funds are \$150,725.95.
Revenue from 2014-2018 (DEED) is \$104,574.67.
Revenue 2018-present (ADEN) is \$348,657.25.
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.

February 24, 2026, Minutes – Ms. Anderson

Moved by Leigh Shebeck and seconded by Ed Bolas to approve the minutes from the February 24, 2026, meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Youth Council Report – Terry Blake

Mr. Blake reported on the March 23, 2026, Youth Council meeting. Highlights included approval of the 2026 Local Youth Plan, Grants Overview, and editing the Youth Survey.

Local Youth Plan – Jaclyn Hicks

The Local Youth Plan for 2026 (Plan) was approved by the Youth Council at its March 23, 2026, meeting. Ms. Hicks reviewed the Plan in its entirety. The Youth Council is recommending approval of the Plan by the Workforce Development Board.

A motion was made by Julie Sachs, seconded by Terry Blake, to approve the Local Youth Plan for 2026 as recommended by the Youth Council. Motion carried. It will now be brought to the Board of Directors for approval.

Grants – Ms. Cucich

The RESTART program supports the advancement of workforce readiness skills and the attainment of employment for ex-offenders ages young adults (ages 18-24 years old).

RMCEP will leverage relationships developed through previous reentry programs and current connections with local service providers within the justice system. The goal will be to prioritize individuals 22-24 years old.

Planned Participants	60
Budget	\$300,000
Operating Period	07/01/2026 – 12/31/2029
Funding Source	DEED – DOL/E&T Administration

A motion was made by Ed Bolas, seconded by Tammy Schatz, to approve the RESTART grant. Motion carried.

Workforce Pell Introduction – Tina Jaster

Ms. Jaster explained the differences between the newly passed Workforce Pell Grant and the existing FAFSA when applying for educational funding. Additional information will be shared on the Workforce Pell as it is available. It is anticipated to be implemented by Fall 2026.

SCSEP Monitoring Report – Ms. Cucich

The SCSEP program was monitored on February 12, 2026. The monitoring went well and there were no Findings. Identified Areas of Concerns and Promising Practices were discussed.

Rural Workforce Discussion: Outreach and Communications – 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 Three, Outreach and Communication, was reviewed with the Workforce Development Board and feedback was requested. Great discussion was held, and comments were appreciated.

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

- Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA)
The April 16 Regional Workforce Alliance meeting will be held in Mahanomen at the Shooting Star. A tour of the Waabigwan Mashkiki facility will be provided. A flyer was shared in the packet.
- Community Workforce Inclusion Council (CWIC)
The Good Jobs Initiative continues to be developed.

Member Updates – Roundtable Contribution

Tammy Schatz

- An ABE Mobile testing unit is now being utilized.

Darrell Lende

- A strong Plasterers contract for Minnesota and North Dakota has been secured.

Jerry Arneson

- Crop fertilizer prices have skyrocketed since the Middle East conflict began.
- Banking is seeing the results of stress and mental health issues due to the low Ag economy.

Carol Anderson

- A guest speaker from the Center for Rural Development reported on the State of Rural Minnesota for 2025 at a Farmers Union meeting. A new study will be released in April tracking students through high school to post-secondary schooling or employment.

Celebrate Wins – Ms. Jaster

A Success Story was shared in the packet.

Adjourn – Ms. Anderson

Ms. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Terry Blake, Secretary
Workforce Development Board**