

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 2023 Interim

August 23, 2023

Call to Order and Roll Call

The 3rd meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Economic Development and Workforce Investment was held on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 9:00 AM, in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Max Wise, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Max Wise, Co-Chair; Representative Russell Webber, Co-Chair; Senators Jason Howell, Reginald Thomas, Phillip Wheeler, and Mike Wilson; Representatives Shane Baker, Josh Branscum, Josh Calloway, Daniel Elliott, Al Gentry, Mark Hart, Thomas Huff, Kevin Jackson, Kim King, Nima Kulkarni, William Lawrence, Matt Lockett, Phillip Pratt, Rachel Roarx, Ashley Tackett Laferty, and Timmy Truett.

Guests: Donovan Blackburn, Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer, Pikeville Medical Center; Erich Blackburn, Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer, Pikeville Medical Center; Dr. Reed Adkins, Superintendent, Pike County Schools; Jessie Schook, Vice President of Workforce and Economic Development, Kentucky Community and Technical College System; Tanelle Sawyer, Executive Director of Workforce Talent Development, Kentucky Community and Technical College System; Beth Hargis, Associate Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education; Regan Satterwhite, Executive Advisor, Kentucky Department of Education; Matt Chaliff, CTSO Program Advisor, Kentucky Department of Education; Bo Matthews, Superintendent, Barren County Schools; and Paul Mullins, Superintendent, Elizabethtown Schools and Logan County Schools.

LRC Staff: Janine Coy, Helen McArthur, Eric Rodenberg, and Sasche Allen.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 31, 2023, meeting was made by Representative Webber, seconded by Representative Truett, and approved by voice vote.

Project HEART – Healthcare Employment Around Regional Training

Senator Wheeler gave an introduction of the speakers and briefly spoke about the importance of collaborations like Project HEART to communities across the Commonwealth.

Project HEART is Pikeville Medical Center's approach to increasing its region's talent pipeline. The program includes new and expanded nursing partnership programs and customized on the job training. The program has created additional employment opportunities for certified nursing assistants, radiologic technologists, medical laboratory technicians, respiratory technicians, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, pharmacy technicians, and many others. Project HEART has allowed Pikeville Medical Center to create a total of 550 medical career seats thus far.

Also discussed was the Workforce Innovation Center at Pikeville Medical Center which focuses on career exploration for K-12 students. Mr. Donovan Blackburn elaborated on employee benefits and the Center's tuition assistance program.

Answering a question from Representative Gentry, Mr. Erich Blackburn confirmed that Pikeville Medical Center is an equal opportunity employer and said the Center will be taking part in upcoming conferences that specifically focus on individuals with disabilities.

Replying to Representative Tackett Laferty, Mr. Donovan Blackburn said the Center has employees from 32 counties across the Commonwealth and has a service area of 450,000 residents. Answering a follow up question, he stated he would like the General Assembly's support in expanding Project HEART and programs of the Workforce Innovation Center. He noted that the General Assembly previously passed legislation crucial to expanding the workforce in the healthcare sector.

Addressing Senator Howell, Mr. Donovan Blackburn explained that Pikeville Medical Center has retention bonuses and a high retention rate but the number of available nurses began to decline with retirements and nurses choosing to pursue travel nursing assignments. Replying to a follow up, he elaborated on the hospital's retention philosophy.

Responding to a question from Representative Lockett, Mr. Donovan Blackburn stated he did not know the workforce participation rate in Pike County.

Answering a question from Representative Calloway, Mr. Donovan Blackburn said the Pikeville Medical Center follows all national standard procedures concerning COVID. Mr. Erich Blackburn added that there were certain COVID vaccine exemptions for hospital employees.

KCTCS Workforce and Economic Development Initiatives

A broad overview was given of KCTCS's workforce and economic development programs that focus on employment success initiatives, partnership programs, labor force

expansion strategies, innovations and rapid response programs, customized training, and employer concierge services. In conjunction, employers are engaged through upskilling of their current workforce, recruitment and training of new hires, and positioning the employer for increased productivity. KCTCS emphasizes active employer partnerships through asset mapping, program alignment, faculty recruitment, career exploration, mentoring, and earn and learn opportunities. Asset mapping is being conducted to identify viable workforce partnerships between employers and KCTCS facilities. Thus far, 267 workforce solution partnerships have been identified. KCTCS Education First Employers program was discussed which focuses on talent attraction, retention, and development for 47 confirmed companies. Ms. Schook also discussed KCTCS-TRAINS funds allocated by the General Assembly to help companies willing to invest in workforce development for their employees. There are 17 total commitments totaling over \$7 million with 617 created jobs.

Answering a question from Senator Wheeler, Ms. Schook discussed the challenges to supporting KCTCS's technical programs and said she would follow up with specific details regarding Big Sandy Community and Technical College. Senator Wheeler briefly commented on the advantages of receiving a technical degree or certification.

Replying to questions from Representative Webber, Ms. Schook stated that she would follow up with more information regarding courses available to high school students participating in KCTCS's dual credit program.

Representative Tackett Laferty made remarks about the benefits of KCTCS's dual credit program.

Addressing questions from Senator Howell, Ms. Schook clarified that currently in the asset mapping process, eight of 16 KCTCS facilities have responded with data regarding their workforce solution partnerships, but all data is due to be submitted by September 30, 2023.

Local Area Vocational Education Centers

A presentation was given on career and technical education (CTE) funding with testimony from school district superintendents that discussed how they have utilized the allocated funds. During the 2021-2022 school year, approximately 70 percent of secondary students were enrolled in CTE and 98 percent of 12th graders that had at least two pathway credits earned graduated.

There are over 138 state approved career pathways with alignments to postsecondary education. There was a total of 20,696 industry certifications approved, 20,596 CTE end-of-program assessments conducted, and 309 Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in KY (TRACK) certificates awarded. Prior to 2022, approximately one-third of secondary CTE locations were funded, no funding was available for CTE programs located

in comprehensive high schools, and equipment and supplies did not meet industry standards. As a result, the General Assembly passed 22 RS HB 1 which provided an increase of \$58 million to secondary CTE, and it is the first time in the state's history that all CTE programs received funding. Bo Matthews, Superintendent of Barren County Schools, and Paul Mullins, Superintendent of Elizabethtown Schools and Logan County Schools, discussed the improvements to their CTE programs due to the increased funding. Future funding goals were discussed that included creating an equitable funding system for all CTE programs by codifying a new funding formula.

Senator Wise made comments about the historic investment in CTE and commended the Department of Education and Office of Career and Technical Education.

Representative Jackson applauded Mr. Matthews and Mr. Mullins for their work in their respective counties.

Senator Wilson made remarks about Mr. Matthews and Mr. Mullins' work over the years and the facilities in their counties.

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.