

**STATE OF NEVADA**  
**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**Full Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, April 19, 2023 - 2:00 p.m.**

**South: Grant Sawyer Building**  
**Attorney General's Conference Room**  
**555 E. Washington Ave. #4500**  
**Las Vegas, NV 89101**

**North: Desert Research Institute**  
**Stout Conference Center**  
**2215 Raggio Pkwy.**  
**Reno, NV 89512**

**Teleconference Line**  
**1-669-900-6833**  
**Meeting ID: 868 6722 2434**  
**Passcode: 960415**

**Zoom Link**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86867222434?pwd=YW5PdDJCQkRHbzZkbjB3TUNFUUdDUT09>

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Present:** Hugh Anderson (Chair), Kenneth Evans, Lisa Levine, Scott Black, Irene Bustamante Adams, Jerrie Merritt, Ryan Woodward, Susan Brager, Edward Estipona, George Gault, Crystal Slaughter, Leslie Mujica, Lynda Parven, Robert Thompson, Derrick Gyamfi, David Dreibelbis, Cecil Fielder, Kevin Landry, Michael Bolognini, Maureen Schafer, Robert Benner, Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert

**Absent:** Roberta Lange, Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Gina Bongiovi, Lawrence Montrose, Lori Calderon, Sherri Mantanona, Brittany Brown, Thomas White, Drazen Elez, Nancy Olsen, Jennifer Keiser

**Also present:** Katie Gilbertson, Tamara Atkinson, Jaime Cruz, Brett Miller, Milt Stewart, Maria Wortman-Meshberger, Arianna Florence, Kara Abe, Ben Daseler, Mechelle Merrill, Mike Yoder, Karlene Johnson

- 1. CALL TO ORDER - OPENING REMARKS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**  
**Chair Anderson** called the meeting to order, welcomed participants, and led the participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.
  
- 2. ROLL CALL - CONFIRMATION OF A QUORUM**  
Per direction from Chair Anderson, **Katie Gilbertson** took roll call and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

**3. VERIFICATION OF PUBLIC NOTICE POSTING**

**Katie Gilbertson** affirmed that the agenda and notice of the Governor’s Workforce Development Board (GWDB) meeting on April 19, 2023, was posted pursuant to Nevada's Open Meeting Law, NRS 241.020.

**4. FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT(S) NOTICE**

**Chair Anderson** read the notice into the record as follows: “Members of the public are invited to comments at this time. No action may be taken on any matter during public comments until the matter itself has been included on an agenda as an item for possible action. Public comments will be limited to three minutes per person.” Please clearly state and spell your full name for the Record.

**Chair Anderson** invited comments. There were none.

**5. \*FOR POSSIBLE ACTION - Approval of GWDB February 15, 2023 meeting minutes**

**Chair Anderson** called for comments/changes to February 15, 2023 meeting minutes. **It was moved by Michael Bolognini and seconded by Kevin Landry to approve February 15, 2023 minutes.**

**6. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – GOWINN Updates**

**Lisa Levine, GOWINN**, informed the Board that GOWINN has received great feedback from the community, particularly the business community, following the Board's approval of the childcare policy report in February. Ms. Levine explained that the Reno Chamber, the Vegas Chamber, and the Silver State Chambers of Commerce are interested in holding business symposiums in partnership with GOWINN, the Children's Cabinet, and other external partners to build awareness around the 45-F childcare tax credit. Ms. Levine noted that according to the business survey conducted by GOWINN between December and January, more than 90 percent of businesses are unaware of this federal childcare tax credit.

**Chair Anderson** added that the Vice Chair is in the process of creating a working group so as to get the pilot program running and in the design phase by the fall.

**7. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY – Impact of Childcare Assistance Funds on American Job Centers and getting people back to work**

**Jaime Cruz, Workforce Connections**, introduced Tamara Atkinson, noting that she and Mr. Cruz are both members of the National Association of Workforce's High Impact Board, which convened to help shape advocacy on the Hill.

**Tamara Atkinson, CEO, Workforce Solutions Capital Area**, commended Jaime Cruz for his innovative approach to workforce solutions in Nevada. Ms. Atkinson discussed the state-level perspective and childcare integration into the workforce system in the state of Texas. Ms. Atkinson indicated that there are 28 Workforce Development Boards in the state of Texas working in coordination with one another, including the one she oversees, which serves Austin, Travis County, a county with a population of approximately 1.3 million, more than 944,000 of whom are employed. Ms. Atkinson explained that the average median household income in the community is more than \$80,000, which is approximately \$16,000 more than the national median household income. Ms. Atkinson further indicated that more than 33.5 percent of Travis County residents possess a bachelor's degree, which is 12.7 higher than the national average. Ms. Atkinson next discussed the history of Texas' workforce system and its inclusion of childcare and workforce development, beginning with House Bill 1863 in 1995, followed WIA in 1998, and then the adoption of new rules relating to the one-stop delivery system in 2000. Ms. Atkinson indicated that in Texas, the workforce system creates and supports an employment ecosystem and includes universal services to create that employment ecosystem. Ms. Atkinson next discussed how childcare onto the scene, citing that in early 2000, the

Texas Workforce Commission began administering other funding sources in through the Workforce Board system, including TANF, SNAP, WIOA, and childcare programming. Ms. Atkinson explained that because of this shift, childcare became a key focus of Texas' efforts toward integrating and supporting all of these services. Ms. Atkinson next described how Texas integrates childcare, including use of the American Job Centers, in which all benefits are discussed with applicants. Ms. Atkinson discussed the income guidelines required within WIOA and how Texas has changed its income guidelines to align with 85 percent state median income as the eligibility criteria for the childcare program so as to make access more seamless for customers to both childcare services and WIOA benefits, thus allowing the opportunity for a single application for enrollment into the system that unlocks the potential of multiple different services based on what an individual needs to fulfill their individual employment plan. Ms. Atkinson next discussed the setup of the centers, noting that this provides opportunity to have a two-way referral process between workforce programming and childcare programming. Ms. Atkinson summed this up by noting that the staff addresses this from a service orientation to determine what it is that a person needs, and what it is that a person needs now. Ms. Atkinson informed the Board that more than 20 percent of her budget comes from federal funding sources because of the position as the hub in the employment ecosystem. Ms. Atkinson further indicated the allowance of apprenticeships and training opportunities for individuals wanting to go into a field and discussed the policy change from a few years earlier that recognized a new priority group for who can receive childcare, a piece of which allows the Board to determine who is a priority.

**Michael Bolognini** asked who owns the budget.

**Tamara Atkinson** explained that this the money associated with childcare is the largest piece and lives within her budget. Ms. Atkinson indicated that the money is at the Texas Workforce Commission level, who then subcontracts out.

**Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert** asked if there are any restrictions to in-demand sector jobs.

**Tamara Atkinson** explained that this is based on the eligibility of the child, and as such, there must be parental activity, noting that in order to receive childcare, the parent or caregiver must be actively working or in a career education program a minimum of 30 hours a week. Ms. Atkinson explained that in addition to this, a parent copay is required. Ms. Atkinson informed the Board that because this is entirely based on the eligibility of the child, there is no target occupation list and childcare will be funded regardless of the job or career choice. Ms. Atkinson noted that the demand for subsidized childcare outstrips the resources, even with almost \$54 million under management, indicating that across the state of Texas, subsidized childcare only represents about 11 percent of the total need, thus creating a significant barrier to families being able to work. Ms. Atkinson explained that in order to move toward the front of the line, an applicant would need to take career training in one of the targeted industry sectors, thus incentivizing people to get trained into good jobs. Ms. Atkinson next indicated that the system is locally customizable to meet the needs of its customers and community. Ms. Atkinson explained that the state of Texas does have requirements, but the Boards themselves have a significant amount of autonomy and authority within the guidelines set by the state to meet the needs of the individual communities. Ms. Atkinson next discussed some of the benefits provided, including quality early childhood education rather than simply daycare. Ms. Atkinson reiterated the importance of cities and counties co-investing in the system.

**Vice Chair Evans** asked if private sector dollars are included along with public sector dollars.

**Tamara Atkinson** indicated that private dollars are included and have been in the past, but do not currently constitute a significant portion of the budget because of the limited ability to fundraise in the private sector. Ms. Atkinson discussed some of the challenges to this system, including sustaining systems to keep up with the funding, citing stimulus dollars as an example. Ms. Atkinson further noted that turnover in key positions can be an issue. Ms. Atkinson described the funding provided for early childhood as a scholarship, a down payment on a child's education and noted that much time is spent on building up the quality of the industry, including accreditation of childcare centers, and the rates paid to providers. Ms. Atkinson further noted that through this initiative, business coaches

are provided to the childcare providers as many of these are small businesses run by people who have never had any business school training.

**Vice Chair Evans** indicated his interest in seeing some of the statistics of this approach.

**Tamara Atkinson** noted how the childcare program is set up to benefit the child and the impact of this program, noting that on average, families increase their wages over \$6,000 per year when they are supported with childcare. Ms. Atkinson indicated that the average hourly wage of a childcare worker in Texas is \$10.87, and next discussed the Jeanette Watson fund, which intentionally augments the salaries of childcare workers who continue their education toward an associate or bachelor's degree.

**Michael Bolognini** asked if the scholarship provided plus the parent copay matches the actual rate for somebody who is not getting assistance.

**Tamara Atkinson** noted that this is dependent upon the provider, but that currently the Board pays the maximum allowed per the rules and market rate standards.

**Michael Bolognini** asked if there is a shortage of childcare providers in Ms. Atkinson's geographic area and questioned why somebody with a business would take a lower rate from the Workforce Development Board as opposed to what they could potentially get at market rate.

**Tamara Atkins** discussed the reasons why, noting that many of the directors of these programs have said their purpose was mission-driven, their desire to serve the community and to give back. In addition, Ms. Atkinson noted that the directors want to be able to attract diverse customers and children in their centers and not only cater to the elite. Ms. Atkinson further explained that many benefits are offered to these providers, including: the Jeanette Watson scholarship; a wage subsidy; training symposiums for continuing education for directors; purchase of equipment for childcare providers; sending teachers to professional training; small business coaching. Ms. Atkinson further explained that because they take the subsidies, these providers are eligible to receive many benefits that are not reflected in the market rate. Ms. Atkinson indicated that the largest percentage includes people who are income-eligible, including 250 children of parents who identified as being homeless. Ms. Atkinson further indicated that the average monthly income of families receiving these benefits is a little less than \$2,000 per month and noted that the parent share of cost is based on monthly income and the age of the child needing care, as well as whether the child is enrolled in home care versus facility care. Ms. Atkinson next shared the breakdown of her nearly \$83 million budget with the Board, noting how much of the budget is allocated to childcare, as well as the \$19 million provided through city and county funding. Ms. Atkinson informed the Board that she is able to draw down 50 cents in additional federal dollars on everyone non-federal dollar spent on childcare, which is a significant benefit to the state and the community. Ms. Atkinson concluded her presentation by noting that the value in the community comes from the variety of resources that can be administered.

**Edward Estipona** asked for clarification regarding where the \$52 million childcare assistance dollars come from.

**Tamara Atkinson** explained that this money is a combination of the Texas Workforce Commission formula funding, federal dollars, ARPA funds, and stimulus dollars, along with the city and county investment in childcare.

## **8. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ONLY -- Title Program Reports, lightning talk from each Title**

**Jaime Cruz, Workforce Connections**, discussed the importance of networking and interacting with peers from around the country, citing today's presentation by Tamara Atkinson as the result of this type of interaction. Mr. Cruz next presented some of the output from Workforce Connections' industry sector partnerships, including the student showcase at Cimarron Memorial High School. Mr.

Cruz reminded the Board that there are 42,000 people between the ages of 18 and 24 in the valley that have graduated high school but are not meaningfully employed or engaged in post-secondary skill acquisition who could be recruited by employers into the labor market. Mr. Cruz discussed the launch of the newest EmployNV career hub at Hope for Prisoners, noting that this is one of three total new launches, two of which are still to come. Mr. Cruz explained that the Hope for Prisoners system is built to serve employers to help with economic development and to help small businesses grow. Mr. Cruz noted that southern Nevada will be the first region in the country to have a private business, Movement Fitness, host an American Job Center, and explained that part of the resources included finding the 18–24-year-olds in places like YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, and gyms, and this hub is intended to reach this particular dynamic.

**Derrick Gyamfi** asked about digital outreach in terms of social digital channels rather than in the physical spaces, citing TikTok as an example.

**Jaime Cruz** explained that Workforce Connections is relying on the newer generation for these skills as that generation has a stronger skillset in social media and noted that the Board has also been very intentional with its social media in hopes of digitizing the message using outlets like Twitter, LinkedIn, TikTok, and a podcast on YouTube.

**Susan Brager** questioned whether Workforce Connections looks into things like Project 150.

**Jaime Cruz** indicated his belief that Workforce Connections is not directly connected to Project 150 but would like to be and requested that Ms. Brager help the two entities to connect.

**Derrick Gyamfi** discussed the number of individuals between the ages of 18 and 36, predominately males, home playing video games and expressed his concern that the return may not be as great a return as hoped.

**Jaime Cruz** indicated his desire to hear any ideas Mr. Gyamfi can offer to better focus on those possibilities.

**Milt Stewart, Nevadaworks**, explained that through the EmployNV hubs, Nevadaworks is dramatically increasing the number and types of workshops being provided, including: resume writing; job interview; job fair tips; how to work a job fair. Mr. Stewart further indicated that Nevadaworks, in conjunction with the EmployNV career hubs and business hubs, is increasing its number of industry specific job fairs and hiring events. Mr. Stewart explained that the findings include the fact that a good number of the people who come to the job fairs are not in the system and have not been engaged with in any way, and as such, Nevadaworks is actively working on this issue. Mr. Stewart announced that effective July 1, Nevadaworks services in the rural counties will be provided in the EmployNV hub in hopes of providing better alignment and a one-stop model. Mr. Stewart noted that Nevadaworks, in conjunction with DETR, is holding active conversations with other localities and municipalities on how that model can be replicated in other areas.

**Chair Anderson** noted that the geographic footprint for northern Nevada is significantly larger than in the south and therefore it is critical for these hubs to go where potential customers are.

**Milt Stewart** concurred, adding that for some of the rural counties, to get to one of these hubs can take several hours. Mr. Stewart further concurred with Chair Anderson's assertion that the needs are different based on the areas. Mr. Stewart informed the Board that Nevadaworks is working with the office of Small Business Advocacy and the Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce, as well as with the Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Stewart indicated that Nevadaworks introduced the Renoworks program, which is a homelessness to self-sufficiency program. Mr. Stewart further indicated that Nevadaworks is working with OSIT by providing them space and support for their broadband listening tour. Mr. Stewart next discussed the incumbent worker training grant from the state, which allows Nevadaworks to provide training to employees where the employer has identified willingness to provide one of the following four incentives for employees successfully completing

the training: wage increase; promotion; title change; layoff aversion. Mr. Stewart indicated that Nevadaworks is establishing a pilot program with Metrics Learning under a contract to work with employers and develop a skills track based on employers' needs. Mr. Stewart next thanked DETR for providing both Boards with additional funding and extension of the grant period so as to provide more of these upskilling opportunities through June of 2026. Mr. Stewart next discussed the Good Jobs Challenge Grant of nearly \$15 million awarded to Nevadaworks, which has been rebranded as Good Jobs Northern Nevada. Mr. Stewart explained that Nevadaworks is in the process of outreach and recruitment to employers, as well as holding 13 industry sector partnership meetings, with training expected to start in 2023. Thus far, Mr. Stewart indicated, Nevadaworks has been able to get almost 40 community-based organizations to commit to partnering and leveraging their resources to help spread this as far as possible. Mr. Stewart further noted that Nevadaworks has obtained multiple additional letters of support and employer commitments for this program, with the idea behind it being regional workforce training systems that are employer-driven, indicating that if what employers are looking for is known, trainings can be developed to meet those needs and supports provided for things like childcare, and transportation, following which these trained individuals can be presented to these employers for hiring.

**George Gault** asked if the rural community outreach will include Southern Nevada.

**Milt Stewart** replied that it only applied to Northern Nevada.

**Derrick Gyamfi** questioned how Nevadaworks is leveraging technology as part of its strategic planning process to become a higher performing Board.

**Milt Stewart** explained that these are some of the things on which Nevadaworks is working now, noting that Nevadaworks is currently in the infancy stages of this and is currently focusing primarily on outreach to identify the potential composition of the Board perspective, taking inventory and identifying gaps, and continuous improvement. Mr. Stewart indicated that technology is a piece of this and noted that Nevadaworks is in the process of bringing an outreach company on board so as to better utilize technology as an outreach tool.

**Maria Wortman-Meshberger, DWSS**, informed the Board that the Division's Workforce Development Unit has created a partnership with the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority for the TANF Community Work Experience Program (CWEP). Ms. Wortman-Meshberger further noted that they are working to make this an on-the-job training site for successful CWEP participants with the goal of permanent, full-time employment. Ms. Wortman-Meshberger indicated that the Recovery Friendly Workplace Unit is working to design pathways for underserved youth in our communities. Ms. Wortman-Meshberger explained that a collaborative meeting was held in March with various partners and next discussed some of the initiatives. Ms. Wortman-Meshberger concluded her presentation by noting that the WDU has reached out to the high school students who will be graduating in 2023 and was able to identify 166 high school students across the state who are interested in state careers specifically with the Division.

**Ryan Woodward** questioned what kind of jobs will be part of the on-the-job training for the CWEP participants.

**Maria Wortman-Meshberger** indicated that she does not have the list of specific jobs in front of her but explained that usually CWEP participants go into jobs that the agency needs after which they could be supported through the on-job training program in TANF, and explained that at this particular site, the jobs would be for the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority.

**Chair Anderson** called on a member of the public **Mike Yoder, DWSS**, to explain that there are seven TANF recipients that have been recruited for positions with the Section 8 program. Mr. Yoder explained that the project was designed to transition from just the CWEP, which is basically a volunteer with a stipend being paid through the TANF program, to OJT, where the employer intends

on hiring our TANF participant permanently. Mr. Yoder explained that the wage is subsidized by 50 percent.

**Vice Chair Ken Evans** indicated his interest in the longitudinal statistics for looking ahead six months, a year, and 18 months after completing the program.

**Irene Bustamante Adams** asked how many of the high school students mentioned are from Southern Nevada.

**Chair Anderson** called on a member of the public **Mike Yoder, DWSS**, who noted that he did not have the breakdown between Southern Nevada and Northern Nevada but indicated that he can provide that information as a follow up.

**Chair Anderson** indicated that it would be very helpful if this data could be tracked.

**Michael Bolognini** asked how many students were actually approached to reach the 166 identified.

**Chair Anderson** called on a member of the public **Mike Yoder, DWSS**, who indicated that he does have that information and would get back to the Board with it momentarily.

**Arianna Florence, Nevada Adult Education**, indicated that she is filling in for Nancy Olsen today as she is currently out on medical leave. Ms. Florence informed the Board that the seven adult education programs are still having issues with hiring. Ms. Florence explained that [nevadaadulthoodeducation.org/students](http://nevadaadulthoodeducation.org/students) lists all programs available throughout the state and all students can now use that portal to apply for any Title II program in the state. Ms. Florence discussed HiSET, and the issues experienced with that through the transfer of power from the Educational Testing Service to PSI but noted that these issues have lessened lately. Ms. Florence next noted that enrollment figures have been trending upward this year although not at the rate expected, and that measurable skill gains have been holding steady. Ms. Florence explained that the team is changing from a yearly employment data match to a quarterly data match for employment and wages and has been working DBDriven to facilitate this.

**Ryan Woodward** asked for clarification regarding the existing growth and the target growth.

**Arianna Florence** noted that this number is up 31 percent compared to the same time last year and noted that the original hopes were for pre-pandemic levels of over 6,000 students, but realistically will be more like 5,000 to 5,500 students at the end of the year.

**Kevin Landry** noted that the targets for FY '21-2 and FY '22-23 are listed as N/A and asked what the meaning is.

**Arianna Florence** indicated that only outcome targets are set.

**Lisa Levine** indicated that as the strategic planning subcommittee is working on the WIOA plan, she recommends that this type of feedback be brought back to the subcommittee.

**Michael Bolognini** asked if this is an overarching goal for the strategic subcommittee.

**Chair Anderson** noted that the overarching is to make sure that WIOA guidelines from DOL are being obeyed. Chair Anderson further indicated that historically, they have been flying with nothing to shoot at, and that is what they are asking for on the state level.

**Edward Estipona** noted that this is the exact plan that is happening right now with a small subset group working to ensure that everything is in line to address any federal necessity from the planning standpoint. Mr. Estipona explained that following this, the subcommittee plans to come together and

create a shorter version plan that will act as an actionable playbook that can be followed and against which measurable outcomes can be measured.

**Chair Anderson** asked what measurable skills gains actually means to the end users. Chair Anderson also questioned what efforts have been made to reach out to the seasoned, potentially retired, professional who would be willing to work part-time and bring their skillsets to the table for this type of endeavor.

**Arianna Florence** explained that the measurable skill gains outcomes can be achieved either through pre and post-testing after instructional hours, as well as the achievement of a high school diploma or equivalency, along with other potential various measures. Ms. Florence indicated that the target for the year is 42-43 percent, a target that has been nearly met and will likely be exceeded. Ms. Florence informed the Board that the programs have gone through different routes to try and recruit more teachers and discussed the benefits and drawbacks. Ms. Florence indicated that adult education teachers do not have to be licensed, a benefit, but that not all K-12 trained teachers are able to teach adult education classes effectively, a drawback.

**Kara Abe, DETR**, presented the quarterly update report for Title III Wagner-Peyser. Ms. Abe highlighted the fact that the Fallon EmployNV Career and Business Hub recently began working with the local high school on a grant that targets students preparing for graduation but not looking to immediately attend college. Ms. Abe explained that this grant is designed to connect those students with their local business community and the EmployNV career hub for all of the Wagner-Peyser employment services available to them. Ms. Abe further indicated that the southern Nevada EmployNV business hub is working closely with the business and industry on the small business resource fair that will be held on May 3 at the Sahara West Library. Ms. Abe discussed performance measures, explaining that Wagner-Peyser performance measures are a combination of monthly and quarterly goals toward which the program works to achieve during the given program year, and noted that that for the current quarter, the total number of job seekers is down approximately 37 percent from the planned goal. Ms. Abe noted, however, that the number of job listings posted within the EmployNV system is up 82 percent from the planned goal. Ms. Abe next discussed program initiatives and highlighted three key points: the Grow with Google Project will be ending in December; Western Nevada College's ROADS program remains strong, with an anticipated 34 participants graduating the following month; and that WISS has engaged with local colleges to contract on accelerated early childhood education certification programs to promote the need for certified childcare workers within the state. Ms. Abe further noted that the WISS Office is also in early discussions with Great Basin College to reach out to rural communities to provide the early childhood education certification training as well. Ms. Abe concluded her presentation by informing the Board that the TMCC contract was executed and is moving forward with implementation, and the WNC contract will go before the Board of Examiners at their June 13 meeting for approval.

**Vice Chair Evans** commended the detailed report and indicated his interest in whether or not individuals that do not remain employed or complete training are surveyed to determine if there are systemic continuous improvements that need to be made in order to better serve the client.

**Kara Abe** indicated that staff are trained in follow up and does survey as many as possible. Ms. Abe noted that case managers will follow up with those who did not complete the training to determine struggles and potentially get these folks into a different type of training or an alternate way to find employment. Ms. Abe further noted that the same is done with those who don't retain employment on a case-by-case basis.

**Vice Chair Evans** requested an offline meeting to discuss the systemic changes that may be needed to provide a more professionally and culturally competent system that can potentially later be brought back to either the full board or the subcommittee for barriers and underserved communities.

**Leslie Mujica** requested information about the event on May 3.



**Kara Abe** noted that she would forward the information to Katelin to disperse.

**Lisa Levine** questioned how the early childhood education funding is determined per college.

**Lynda Parven** noted that the amounts were determined by the colleges.

**Lisa Levine** asked if Nevada State University was included in the conversation.

**Chair Anderson** called on a member of the public **Karlene Johnson, DETR** who noted that the school was not yet approached but will be added to the list.

**Lisa Levine** indicated that this would be a good approach given that southern Nevada's unemployment rate is the largest not only in the state, but also one of the highest in the country.

**Mechelle Merrill, DETR**, explained that she is presenting for Drazen Elez, who is presenting at a fiscal conference in DC. Ms. Merrill indicated that in January, rehab and 11 other states were identified for monitoring by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, who will be onsite in Carson City to perform the fiscal monitoring from June 13 to June 15. Ms. Merrill next indicated that following the January soft launch of the new VRNevada.org website, the website is now available in the five most prevalent languages spoken in the state with a link to real-time ASL interpretation assistance. Ms. Merrill explained that the site is fully ABA compatible and adds many new features to improve the user experience and to cater to the needs of people with disabilities while adding transparency and accountability for the program. Ms. Merrill next discussed the adoption of new logos by the Bureau of Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) and the Blind Enterprise of Nevada (BEN) Program in February and explained that both programs are dedicated to serving individuals who are blind and visually impaired. Ms. Merrill further noted that a page specifically for the blind and visually impaired was also added to the VRNevada website. Ms. Merrill explained that February also saw the development of the first pre-employment Transition Services camp for the deaf and hard of hearing for students in Nevada, called Camp Sign Shine, which will be held on the UNLV campus from June 26 to June 30. Ms. Merrill next indicated that March 22 was celebrated with a proclamation from the governor on celebrations across the state at VR Nevada for National Rehabilitation Counselor Appreciation Day. Ms. Merrill further explained that in March, VR Nevada and the NDE Office of Inclusive Education finalized a data sharing agreement that will facilitate data-driven decisions for the two agencies. Ms. Merrill indicated that the Q1 intake report found that March of 2023 was the busiest month yet for intakes with VR Nevada completing 281 new intakes and in pre-employment transition services doing 150 new intakes statewide. Ms. Merrill further indicated that the current vacancy rate is down to 16 percent from a program high of more than 27 percent during the pandemic and concluded her presentation by informing the Board of the influx of wonderful and new qualified applicants.

**Vice Chair Evans** indicated the Board's interest in how many individuals from identified underserved populations are in the program, noting some of the identified populations by the underserved and barriers subcommittee are: 18- to 24-year-olds; single-parent households; and individuals with varying abilities.

**Chair Anderson** requested that the next report be more data-driven to help the Board understand more about how the programs work.

**Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert** indicated that the Board would also like information on how many have dropped out of the program following the intake potential enrollment.

- 9. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY -- Updates on the Strategic Planning Subcommittee**  
**Arianna Florence, Nevada Adult Education**, noted that discussion during the last few meetings of the strategic planning subcommittee have revolved around making the document more of a guiding source so that everyone can work together as a system to meet the needs of the state. Ms. Florence

indicated that after aligning the most important needs of the state, all Title partners will work together to respond in a way that keeps the participants needs as the focus. Ms. Florence further indicated that they are also working on concentrating efforts on a smaller number of strategies than the previous document, with a likely end goal being around five achievable goals that would enhance the work that is done as a system. Ms. Florence explained that the hope for the next meeting is to review the need for the state as will be provided by David Schmidt from the Research and Analysis Bureau, and to start crafting a combined response that takes into consideration how partners contribute to serving and alleviating the need. Ms. Florence further noted that separate meetings have been held with various states to discuss the strategies for rewriting and implementing a new state plan and indicated that these connections were made with the help of the National Governor's Association. Ms. Florence thanked Katie Gilbertson for coordinating these meetings, then discussed some of the strategies these other states use and how they achieve their goals. Ms. Florence noted looking forward to making all these findings available to the strategic planning subcommittee workgroup to see if they wish to incorporate some of these ideas into plan and strategy.

**Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert** asked if the workgroup or any of the states have discussed having participation of the students as stakeholders at the strategic planning.

**Katie Gilbertson** said up to now this has not been mentioned in the meetings but is a topic that can certainly be discussed with other states.

**10. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ONLY -- Updates on the Barriers and Underserved Populations Subcommittee**

**Vice Chair Ken Evans** explained that some of the childcare issues for one of the populations discussed in earlier topics is currently being addressed by the childcare working group. Vice Chair Evans noted that at the subcommittee's meeting on Wednesday, April 26, at the West Side School, there will be a deeper dive into some of the systemic things needing discussion, as well as some presentations on barriers that exist in the market and things that need to be considered moving forward. Vice Chair Evans ended his presentation with an emphasis on the importance of reaching African American males and the male Latinx population to see if they are accessing the system.

**Derrick Gyamfi** indicated the need to implement consistent reporting across the board, noting that this has to happen in the common metrics. Mr. Gyamfi also noted the importance of thinking about technological advancements and their integration from a workforce development standpoint and indicated the necessity of including this in the strategic plan moving forward.

**Chair Anderson** informed the Board that one of the key things in the works is a dashboard that stands on its own merit, and where the committee can see the data consistently presented from all programs.

**11. PUBLIC COMMENTS NOTICE (SECOND)**

**Chair Anderson** invited comments.

**Edward Estipona** asked Mr. Thompson to provide some data or information on the funding the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) received, citing his belief that this will tie back to the Board's childcare initiatives.

**Robert Thompson** offered to present this information in either a presentation or a report, depending on the Board's preference.

**Chair Anderson** noted that the Board would take this under advisement.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**The April 19, 2023 meeting was adjourned.**

**Notice of this meeting was posted on or before 9 a.m. on the third day prior to the meeting on the Internet at:**

[http://owinn.nv.gov/GWDB/GWDB\\_Workforce\\_Meetings/](http://owinn.nv.gov/GWDB/GWDB_Workforce_Meetings/) and  
[Nevada's Public Notice website at https://notice.nv.gov/](https://notice.nv.gov/), as required by NRS 232.2175.

Supporting public material provided to Committee members for this meeting is posted on OWINN's Website at [http://owinn.nv.gov/GWDB/GWDB\\_Workforce\\_Meetings/](http://owinn.nv.gov/GWDB/GWDB_Workforce_Meetings/) may be requested from the Executive Director's Office at 555 E. Washington Ave. Ste. 4900, Las Vegas, Nevada 89101; or call (702) 486-8080.