

## Area 14 Workforce Development Board

**CEO Meeting: February 4, 2026**

**The Chief Elected Officials of the Area 14 Workforce Development Board (WDB) met for a scheduled meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026, both in-person at Athens County Community Cares Resource Center/OhioMeansJobs – Athens County and virtually via Zoom.**

**Commissioner Owen opened the meeting at 9:11am and attendance was taken by Director DeLay:**

**Commissioners Present Virtually: Scott Owen (Perry County Commissioner) and Lenny Eliason (Athens County Commissioner).**

**Also in Attendance In-Person: Morgan DeLay (Area 14 Director) and Jean Demosky (ACDJFS Director)**

**Also in Attendance Virtually: Vince Reiber (MCDJFS Deputy Director), Theresa Lavendar (MCDJFS Director) and Mendra Hupp (PCDJFS Assistant Director/Area 14 Fiscal Agent)**

**A quorum was established following roll call by Director DeLay. Commissioner Owen made a motion to approve the agenda for February 4, 2026, Commissioner Eliason seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner Owen made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 5, 2025, meeting, Commissioner Eliason seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

### **Fiscal Update**

Mendra Hupp presented the fiscal update. Fiscal documentation was provided and added to the meeting folder.

**RESEA:** The Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment program is a federal grant program designed to allow states to provide intensive re-employment assistance to individuals who are receiving unemployment benefits and are determined likely to exhaust their benefits before becoming re-employed. PY24 cycle ends and liquidates June 30, 2026. The Area received three separate distributions: \$37,218, \$85,866 and \$75,000 for a total of \$198,084. Balance remaining is \$34,707.52. PY25 cycle end and liquidates September 30, 2026 and the Area received \$36,288.25 with \$11,258.03 remaining. An additional \$120,000 was requested and received for the Area. PY25 supplemental and PY26 allocations will be shared once we know more from OWD/DOL.

**FY26 Vets O.N.E. Incentive Awards:** Ends and liquidates September 30, 2026. Awarded to OhioMeansJobs centers that provide extraordinary and commendable service to veterans and improves service delivery to veterans. Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) annually sets aside funds for this award. There are 3 Ohio recipients and OhioMeansJobs – Meigs County was one of them for a second year in a row. It is used to enhance both the awareness of and access to employment services for Ohio’s military veterans through an outreach and awareness campaign, veteran-focused career training programs, job fairs and networking events, and veteran support services. Meigs County received \$6,334.70 for this grant and it currently all remains unspent.

**FY25 Rapid Response Funding:** Perry County applied for and received funding as a result of a large business layoff – Post Holdings. These funds helped to cover costs associated with trainings, supportive services and RMS. \$29,504.32 was requested and was 100% spent.

**Recovery Works Update:** Sonia Tillman, Project Manager with ODJFS connected with Area WDB’s on 12/23/25 with an update on the Recovery Works submission. Department of Labor (DOL) is not granting awards at this time for the Opioid National Health Emergency DWG. DOL reported that they plan to publish revised guidance for TEGL 9-24 and will consider new grant applications after the release of their new TEGL. The State does plan to reach out to local WDB’s and will be submitting a new application for the grant from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

**Auditor of State (AOS) Audit:** HINKLE financials deadline for audit is May 30, 2026 for calendar year January 2025 – December 2025. The audit costs are required and estimated to remain under \$10,000. Last year’s single audit was \$7,956.

**Real Workforce Solutions:** The Area’s monitoring contract with Real Workforce Solutions expired March 31, 2025. The agreement allowed two one-year extension. The first extension was granted via Executive Committee vote for April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. It was recommended to extend the agreement for one additional year, from April 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027. This will be brought to the full board meeting for a vote.

**Innovation Center Lease:** Mendra advised the Commissioners that the lease for office space for the Area 14 Workforce Development Board Director at the Ohio University Innovation Center was set to expire February 28, 2026. She explained that the Innovation Center requested confirmation regarding lease extension by January 30, 2026, which occurred prior to the next scheduled CEO meeting. The Innovation Center granted a one-month extension through March 31, 2026, at the existing rate of \$284 per month. Mendra further advised that the new lease rate would increase to \$496 per month.

Commissioner Eliason moved to approve a one-year lease extension for the Ohio University Innovation Center office space from April 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027, to allow time for CEO input prior to the next lease term. Commissioner Owen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Commissioner Owen moved to approve the fiscal update, seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All were in favor.

### **WIOA Updates**

Director DeLay started her presentation by informing the Commissioners that two new board members will be introduced at the full board meeting. Additionally, Vitruvian will be presenting on a project they are working on with Area 14 Director.

Director Morgan DeLay presented the following WIOA and grant updates.

### **Upcoming Certifications and Contract Timelines**

**Board Certification:** The board certification expires June 2026. This certification is to ensure WIOA compliance for the board and ensures performance accountability measures are met. Director DeLay will prepare this for the board during the scheduled May meeting.

**WIOA Subgrant Agreements:** These are agreements between the county commissioners and Job and Family Services agencies, who currently act as the lead agencies for the OhioMeansJobs centers in Area 14. This also expires in June 2026, however the current agreement allows for two one-year extensions, neither of which have been utilized at this time. Director DeLay will meet with OhioMeansJobs operators and lead agencies to discuss and will likely bring first one-year extension to the scheduled May meeting.

### **OhioMeansJobs Center Certifications/Recertification**

OhioMeansJobs center certifications and recertifications were due to the state December 31, 2025. All three Area 14 OhioMeansJobs centers had successful on-site reviews. Meigs and Athens County had their review on December 1<sup>st</sup> and Perry County had their review on December 4<sup>th</sup>. Athens and Perry County are both in new locations since their last certification, and Meigs is in the same location. The board was provided with the complete checklist from the review team in their folder. All three counties received approval from the Bureau of Civil Rights verifying ADA compliance. The operators took note of what improvements were suggested and some changes have already been implemented. Although reviews were completed and all documentation was received timely, Director DeLay requested an extension from the state on the deadline in order to bring the reviews to the full board for a vote. An extension was granted through February 6, 2026. Director DeLay also thanked the review teams, which consisted of board member Jeff Circle,

Stephen Carson and Buddy Malone. The certification information will be presented at the full board meeting for an official vote.

### **RREAF Layoff Aversion – Hocking Hills Garment Center**

Director DeLay briefed the Board on a pending Rapid Response Emergency Assistance Funds (RREAF) Layoff Aversion/Incumbent Worker Training request for Hocking Hills Garment Center totaling \$49,800 to support training for 12 incumbent workers. She explained that the application must be submitted by the Area 14 Workforce Development Board, with associated fiscal and compliance responsibility. Director DeLay noted concerns raised during State review related to cumulative public investment, evolving project scope and budget, and the need to determine whether the request aligns with the intent of Layoff Aversion funding. Board guidance to be requested on how to proceed, including whether to continue, pause, condition, or withdraw the application.

### **Meigs VETS O.N.E Award**

OhioMeansJobs – Meigs County was selected as a recipient of the 2026 Ohio Network for Employment (O.N.E) VETS O.N.E award for the second year in a row. This annual award recognizes OhioMeansJobs Centers that go above and beyond in serving veterans and improving how services are delivered to them. Meigs County plans to use the award to conduct an outreach and awareness campaign, to provide veteran-focused career training, to expand job fairs and networking events, and to offer transportation and employment support services.

### **Unemployment Information**

- Unemployment Information: December
- Athens: 4.8%
- Meigs: 6.4%
- Perry: 4.8%
- State: 4.0%
- Employed Persons in Area: 51,100
- Labor Force in Area: 53,900
- Unemployment in Area: 2800 (5.2%)

### **Performance Reports**

Director DeLay presented the PY25 Q1 Unadjusted Performance Reports for WIOA and CCMEP. It was noted that many measures, especially Measurable Skill Gains, will continue to populate through June 30. Employment outcomes are strong across CCMEP and WIOA. Credential attainment currently exceeds statewide averages in multiple programs and

median earnings are above the state average. This is early quarter data and nothing in these reports raises compliance or performance concerns.

### **Area 14 OhioMeansJobs Reports**

For the months of October – December 2025:

- On-Site or Virtual Visits: 2071
- Staff Assisted Resumes: 114
- Jobs Reported: 57
- Occupational Skills Certificate Participants: 43

### **Help Wanted Reports**

As an Area we are starting to see an increase in job ads being posted. Customer service remains top skill in job ads. Ohio University has the most ads in the area. Top certifications include driver's license and CDL.

### **Grants**

**RESEA:** Area 14 surpassed 2025 goals and has a fresh start in 2026. New area goals have not been shared with us yet.

**ARC ARISE:** Area 14 was invited to participate as a partner in a multi-state ARC ARISE Implementation pre-application titled *Tri-State Apprenticeship Consortium*, led by the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board (PA). The proposal seeks five years of implementation funding to expand registered apprenticeships and strengthen K-12 to apprenticeship pipelines across Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, with 11 workforce boards participating, including Areas 1, 14, 15, and 16 in Ohio. The submission is a pre-application only and does not commit Area 14 to participation or funding. Director DeLay advised that if the project advances to a full application with defined scope, budget, or match requirements, the matter would be brought back to the Board for consideration and approval.

**Ohio to Work Connectors:** WorkOhio is a statewide initiative launched by the Governor's Office to create a centralized access point connecting Ohioans to in-demand jobs, training programs, and workforce supports, with referrals to OhioMeansJobs centers as appropriate. Ohio University's application for the grant was not selected; however, Area 15 was chosen as the regional lead, with Area 14 included as part of the region and represented on the steering committee. Director DeLay noted she attended a January 21 press conference with Lt. Governor Jim Tressel and that additional details will be shared following an upcoming regional kickoff meeting.

## **Upcoming Workforce Events**

### State of the Local Workforce

- Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>
- 9am – 11am
- OhioMeansJobs – Athens County

### Workforce Professionals Roundtable

- Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>
- 9am – 11am
- OhioMeansJobs – Athens County

### TriCounty Employment Extravaganza

- Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>
- TriCounty Career Center

### Southeast Ohio Regional Summit

- Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>
- 8am – 3:30pm
- Lafayette Hotel, Marietta, OH
- More information to be provided

### Area 14 Partner Meeting

- Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>
- 1pm – 2pm
- Ohio University Innovation Center

### Area 14 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Job Fair

- Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>
- 10am – 2pm
- Athens Community Center

## **Motion to Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Owen and seconded by Commissioner Eliason. Motion was carried without opposition. A reminder was given for the next scheduled board meeting on May 6, 2026 @ 9am in a hybrid format, virtually via Zoom or in person at the Perry County Opportunity Center. Motion to adjourn was approved at 9:43am.