

Southern Middle TN Local Workforce Development Board Meeting

January 22, 2026 at 10:30 AM

The meeting of the Southern Middle TN Local Workforce Development Board was held in person and virtually through the Zoom application on January 22, 2026, at 10:32am.

Those in attendance: Robby Moore, Brian Crabtree, Stacey Shedd, Hardin Franklin, Sara Plant, Mark Short, Dave Van Buskirk, Will Johnson, Trent Mitchell, Kelli Kea-Carroll, Linda Maddox, Rob Mitchell, Selina Moore, Linda Fisher, Lynda Botsch.

Absent: Matthew Boner, Roxanne Patton.

Proxies: None

Welcome and Roll Call:

Southern Middle TN Local Workforce Development Board Chairman, Mark Short welcomed everyone to the meeting at 10:32am. Roberta Brazier was instructed to start the roll call by Chairman Short. All participants were able to verbally state they were present, use the chat box, or utilize the "hand raise" option on the zoom application to make their attendance known. A quorum was established and present.

Review and Approval of Previous Minutes:

Chairman, Mark Short asked the board to review their minutes if they had not already done so. Robby Moore motioned for approval of the minutes. Hardin Franklin seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

Approval of Proxies:

Chairman, Mark Short approved the proxies as presented, no vote required.

Receive Year to Date Quarterly Financials:

Lisa Moore presented the financial report. She stated that, in the first six months, \$1.5 million has been expended, which reflects positive performance. She noted that over half of these funds were spent on participants, resulting in an MPCR of 53%. She indicated that we are still in budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026. Selina Moore made a motion to receive the financials. Dave Van Buskirk seconded. The board voted unanimously to receive the year-to-date quarterly financials.

Operations Committee Recommendations:

Kelli Kea-Carroll spoke regarding the Operations Committee that met on January 15, 2026 to review several programs. The committee recommended continuance for all of the programs, but each of the seven programs does require a vote from the board.

ETPL - (7) Programs for Continuance

- **Columbia State Community College (1)**
- **TCAT at Hohenwald (6)**

Columbia State Community College (1):

Pre Apprentice Lineworker - The program is 7 weeks and offers an occupations skills certificate or credential. Robby Moore made a motion to approve. Linda Fisher seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

TCAT at Hohenwald (6):

Aesthetics Technology - The program is 750 hours and offers an occupations skills certificate or credential. Dave Van Buskirk made a motion to approve. Sara Plant seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

Building Construction Technology - The program is 20 months and offers an occupations skills certificate or credential. Stacey Shedd made a motion to approve. Linda Botsch seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

Computer Aided Design (CAD) - The program is 16 months and offers an occupations skills certificate or credential. Linda Maddox made a motion to approve. Sara Plant seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

Criminal Justice – Correctional Officer - The program is 34 weeks and offers an occupations skills certificate or credential. Selina Moore made a motion to approve. Sara Plant seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) - The program is 8 months and offers an occupations skills certificate or credential. Dave Van Buskirk made a motion to approve. Robby Moore seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

Truck Driving - The program is 6 weeks and offers an occupations skills certificate or credential. Robby Moore made a motion to approve. Linda Fisher seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve.

LWDB Certification Initiative Results Presentation:

Tamera Parsons with the UT Institute for Public Service gave a presentation summarizing the results of its formal Board Assessment and Certification process, conducted by an external assessor. The process included a board orientation, a self-assessment survey (completed by 15 of 19 board members), standards interviews, and individual board member interviews.

Overall Rating: Highly Functional: The Board received an overall achievement level of *Highly Functional*, indicating that practices are in place for many key governance elements and standards, and that those practices are accessible and understood by those responsible for carrying them out.

Governance Element Findings: The assessment evaluated five elements of governance:

Structure, Roles, Relationships & Responsibilities – Functional: Board members demonstrated confidence that bylaws are regularly reviewed and fully WIOA-compliant. Members see the LWDB's role as a hub within a broader workforce ecosystem. An opportunity was identified to develop a more formalized onboarding process, as most members reported learning primarily "on the job" after an initial information-heavy orientation.

Governance System – Effective: This was the highest-rated element. The Board was recognized for strong fiscal accountability, diverse stakeholder representation, and effective internal controls. Staff were noted as engaged, knowledgeable, and trusted. Opportunities identified include developing a formal succession planning process and improving the frequency and digestibility of board communications.

Strategic Insight – Functional: Local plans are developed collaboratively with staff and are industry-driven, aligned with state initiatives. Opportunities include building greater capacity for rapid change and innovation given shortened planning cycles, and developing localized strategies to address persistent disparities in funding, services, and awareness across the 13-county region.

Performance Management – Functional: The Board reviews KPI performance and is actively engaged in the assessment process. An opportunity was identified to move beyond informal signals of success toward a more formal set of process and outcome measures that go beyond fiscal compliance.

Legal & Ethical Behavior – Functional: 100% of board members surveyed and interviewed expressed full confidence that the LWDB operates legally and ethically. Existing safeguards include annual conflict of interest disclosures, external audits, a code of conduct, and oversight training. An opportunity exists to further formalize ethical practices as a model for other sectors.

Next Steps: The Board will receive the full written assessment report with detailed recommendations and links to best practices, review key learnings shared across all Middle Tennessee LWDBs and the Tennessee State Workforce Development Board, and may participate in an optional deeper-dive discussion to prioritize action on the findings.

Amy Mayberry thanked the **Board** and staff for their participation in the assessment and congratulated them on a job well done. She stated that the **Board** should feel encouraged, as it is performing on par with similar boards, and that the findings identified as opportunities are consistent with those observed across other boards. She noted that the Department of Labor can use these findings to identify common areas for growth and better support improvement efforts. She explained that the assessment serves as a system-wide evaluation, beginning with the State Board, and highlights opportunities to strengthen communication and innovation across the system. Amy referenced opportunities for innovation through state-guided initiatives, including U.S. Department of Labor guidance encouraging states to apply for waivers related to certain restrictive provisions of WIOA. She reported that outreach has been conducted with local Executive Directors to gather input on barriers and potential benefits. The Department is currently drafting waiver requests in collaboration with local boards and state program directors. Additional information will be shared at the State Workforce Board meeting in February. She stated that the Department is prioritizing innovation and exploring ways to better support the workforce system. She noted the existence of an Innovations Committee and the need for clearer communication and defined pathways to support local innovation. In her role, Amy Mayberry serves as a liaison between state and local boards and encouraged **Board** members to share ideas for innovation and coordinate with Ashley to connect with the Innovations Committee. She also noted that the Department is not waiting until the end of the contract period to implement changes. Monthly Executive Director meetings are being used to provide training and share best practices, addressing both immediate and long-term improvements.

AJC Certification Approval:

Ashley Clevenger reported that the AJC certification was received in December and will remain valid for three years, after which the recertification process must be completed.

WIOA Program Director's Report:

Ashley Clevenger reported that a formal ribbon cutting for the Lawrenceburg AJC will be held on February 19 at 1:00 p.m. She also shared that the PAR audit is ongoing. An entrance meeting was held on January 7, and the auditors are currently reviewing submitted files. On-site visits are scheduled for February 2 and 3. She stated that Southern Middle has apprenticeship funding available, with 10% required to be allocated to teacher apprentices. She indicated that they are in the process of applying for additional apprenticeship funding, which will carry the same requirement. She requested that **Board** members share any contacts within local school districts to support outreach efforts regarding teacher apprenticeship opportunities. Ashley Clevenger further reported that Southern Middle applied for and received a rural health grant through the Department of Labor last year and plans to apply again this year to support training and healthcare programs. She noted that incumbent worker training funds are available and that staff are actively meeting with local employers to identify workforce needs and upskill existing employees. She also shared that TYEP and VR funding remain available and that VP participants began enrolling in December.

WIOA Dashboard:

Jessica Rivers presented the dashboard report. She stated that, in the last quarter, there were 13 Title I participants, with a total of 63 participants across the first two quarters. She reported 39 new Tennessee Youth Employment Program (TYEP) enrollments, 11 new youth enrollments, and 38 new adult enrollments. She noted that there are currently 162 active youth participants and 264 active Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. The MPCR rate stands at 53.78%. Jessica further reported 188 enrollments in Adult Education, with 132 individuals earning their HiSET. She also shared that there were 446 orientations conducted, resulting in 76 job placements. She stated that Southern Middle operates 12 locations and has served 4,088 individuals to date, with a goal of doubling that number by next year. Regarding KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), she reported that the goal of 90% was met for Title I and Title III co-enrollments. She noted that there have been 65 new Title I enrollments, and while the enrollment goal of 90 has not yet been met, there is still time remaining in the reporting period. She also reported that the goal for Title III enrollments has been met, with 1,675 enrollments.

Business Service Update:

Regina Locker presented the Business Services report. She stated that, at the previous meeting, staff were working with OP Mobility and attended an onsite job fair on November 13. A representative from UI from the Unemployment Agency was there and they held a Q&A session with employees onsite and also had their own private room. The event had strong participation with six employers and several support service partners, with an estimated 65 employees in attendance. Regarding rapid response activities, Regina reported that a WARN was received from Linamar, an automotive parts manufacturer in Shelbyville, on January 13. She stated that staff have initiated contact with company management to assess the level of support needed for approximately 80 affected employees. Linamar has announced a permanent closure, with a final operating date of July 31, 2026.

Old Business:

No old business to discuss.

New Business:

Hardin Franklin referenced the LWDB Certification Initiative Results Presentation and posed a question to the **Board** regarding opportunities for improvement. He noted that the **Board** has been identified as highly functional but asked whether members are satisfied with that level or would like to strive for a higher level of performance. He suggested that the **Board** consider holding a joint meeting with all **Board** members and committees to review the current status, identify desired goals, and develop strategies for improvement. He emphasized the importance of establishing clear methods and a timeline to advance the **Board's** effectiveness in preparation for future evaluations. Ashley Clevenger responded that she supports this idea and will work to coordinate and schedule such a meeting.

Adjournment:

Dave Van Buskirk motioned to adjourn the meeting. Trent Mitchell seconded. The board voted unanimously to adjourn at 12:05pm.



Mark Short, Chair



Selina Moore, Secretary