



Division of Higher Education

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Secretary

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Minutes

State Board of Private Career Education Arkansas Division of Higher Education – Meeting by Zoom Wednesday, October 30, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Alice Obenshain, Brock Thompson, Sterling Penix, Jasmine Wilson

Others Present: Alana Colburn, Tracye McKeown, Alisha Price, Jamie LaFave

Approval of Minutes of the August 7, 2024 Meeting

Chair Alice Obenshain asked for a motion to approve the August 7 meeting minutes. Brock Thompson made a motion. Sterling Penix seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Report on Private Career Education Work at ADHE

Alana Colburn reported that on October 7 the Arkansas Department of Education sent letters to 22 Private Career Education schools with expired licenses. Colburn said only one school responded and renewed its license.

Tracye McKeown reported that 52 transcript requests had been fulfilled since the last Board meeting in August. McKeown added that instructor inventory forms were sent in August to 102 schools with 60 schools returning the instructor form. McKeown said there were 21 new instructors approved in September and October.

Credential Engine

Jamie LaFave, Skills Data Analyst with the Arkansas Data Team with Transformation and Shared Services, updated the Board on her team's work to make information about Private Career schools more accessible to Arkansans. The Skills Squad supports workforce development across Arkansas and collaborates with state agencies, private and public organizations, and nonprofit partners to promote credential transparency and connect job seekers with essential training and educational opportunities. LaFave added that their nonprofit partner Credential Engine's mission is to organize data so training providers are easier to find online and in one place. LaFave said that by creating the online platform, Arkansas Credential Registry, detailed program information can be accessed quickly, including skills taught, program length, and cost, and makes finding the right educational opportunities easier. LaFave reported that 148 private career school locations have been added to the Credential Registry. LaFave said 22 of those schools are on the Eligible Training Provider List

allowing 84 credentials from those schools to be added to the Registry. LaFave added the next step is to connect with the remaining Private Career schools to capture their full list of programs and credentials.

LaFave said there are plans to roll out the Launch Program within the next two weeks. This is a centralized online tool that allows students, job seekers, and employers to find training programs and job openings.

Penix asked if the Launch Program website can help students connect to a school based on geography and/or interest areas. LaFave said yes, that was possible.

Colburn said workforce development is a priority for the Governor and added the Credential Engine is a tool students can use to connect them with ways to obtain skills to enter the workforce.

Obenshain asked if there is a section for apprenticeships. LaFave said they are working on apprenticeships as well as CTE training programs for high schools. Jasmine Wilson commented that the CTE training programs could be a pathway for high school students to learn skills to help them find employment. Thompson added that he liked hearing the integration into K-12 and the mindset that a four-year degree may not necessarily be the path and other skill sets can be found. Obenshain asked if how to pay for college would be included. LaFave said there would be resources to connect to including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), and eventually scholarships in Launch and the Credential Registry. Obenshain commented that there is information on private scholarships and FAFSA on Arkansas Welding Academy's website, arkansasweldingacademy.edu.

Input from SBPCE Members

Obenshain mentioned that the Financial Transparency Regulation, Beneficial Owner Information Act filing deadline is January 1, 2025, and the penalty for not filing is up to \$500 per day. Obenshain said it is a one-time filing unless ownership changes. Thompson noted that non-compliance could also result in incarceration. Alisha Price asked for the resources on the Act.

Obenshain said the Gainful Employment Regulation rule has the potential to impact everyone since it applies to both non-profit and for-profit, publicly owned institutions offering two-year programs that lead to a credential.

Next Steps

Colburn said she would be sending out an email with all 2025 meeting dates by December 1, 2024.

Obenshain added that Jail Resource Day was an excellent event and was well attended with great interactions and questions. Penix thanked Obenshain for her excellent presentation.

Obenshain encouraged everyone to vote for Issue 1, a constitutional amendment to provide that lottery proceeds may be used to fund or provide scholarships and grants to Arkansas citizens enrolled in vocational-technical schools and technical institutes.

Obenshain asked for a motion to adjourn. Penix made a motion. Thompson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.