



**WDB Meeting Minutes (Hybrid)  
December 12, 2025  
7:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.**

**Members Present**

Jenny Batista  
Peggy Kershner  
Nic Thomas  
Cindy Line  
Patricia Shermont  
Kristina Houck  
Ryan Breisch  
Karyn Troxell  
Crystal Houser  
Debra Millman  
Barry Unger  
Kimberly Schneider  
Dr. Radha Pyati, Ph.D

**Members Absent**

Marianne Brown Egolf  
Kimberly Baskett  
Christy Pisker  
William Dorward  
Michael Fischetti  
Alexia Pursley  
Ashley Chambers  
Brian Noecker  
Ed Bernitsky  
Dr. Michael Stauffer

**WDB Staff Present**

Amber Columbo  
Megan Noll  
Rory Stevenson  
Jesenia Santos

**Guests Present**

Aidelsa Calaman	PA CareerLink® Berks County Site Administrator
Tristin Prostovich	PA CareerLink® Berks County Young Adult Program Director
Dilika Tissera	PA CareerLink® Berks County Adult & Dislocated Worker Program Director
Elizabeth Reddinger	PA CareerLink® Berks County EARN Program Director
Amanda Wilson	PA CareerLink® Berks County Business Services Director

This meeting was held as hybrid, via MS Townhall and in-person at County of Berks South Campus on December 12, 2025. WDB Chairperson, Ms. Batista called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Ms. Columbo announced that the meeting was being recorded for minute purposes only and would be deleted after their completion. Board members were asked to state their names when commenting, making, or seconding any motion to assist staff in taking the minutes.

Ms. Batista then introduced Dr. Radha Pyati, Ph.D who serves as Chancellor and Dean of Penn State Berks. Dr. Pyati will complete the term of Dr. Campbell, who resigned from the Board recently due to retirement. Ms. Batista introduced Kimberly Schneider Vice President of Human Resources at Tower Health. Ms. Schneider will complete the term of Ms. Groff, who resigned from the Board recently due to a change in employment.

Ms. Batista asked the members if there were any items the board would like to have moved from the consent agenda. Hearing none the board will move to adopt the consent agenda. No objections. Ms. Batista asked if any members would like to abstain from accepting the agenda with one abstention from Ms. Kershner.

**I. Executive Committee Report**

Ms. Batista then invited Ms. Noll to comment on the Budget vs Expenditures report. Ms. Noll reported on the budget and actual expenditure results through October 2025, showing all expenses are within budget.

Next, Ms. Noll presented a revised PY2025 budget with the following changes: (1) Transfer of \$250,000 from Dislocated Worker to Adult (2) Addition of \$7,366 in TANF Youth funds (3) Reduction of \$7,999 from PA CareerLink® Day Funds from the Operator contract that were not expended. (4) Addition of \$225,000 in WDB Operational costs due to the increased YTD allocation to WIOA programs.

Ms. Columbo asked the committee for a recommendation to approve the PY2025 revised budget as presented. Ms. Shermot motioned for a recommendation, and Mr. Unger seconded the motion. All committee members affirmatively voted their approval. There were no objections, but one abstention from Ms. Kershner.

Ms. Columbo reviewed PY25 Quarter 1 statewide performance metrics. The State and Berks did not receive the desired “green check mark” for Q1. Ms. Columbo worked with Youth Program Director and found that some individuals should not have been included in the denominator, so individuals were counted that did not need a measurable skill gain. Ms. Columbo stated she is hopeful in Quarter 2 those individuals will fall off the report to achieve the green check mark. A new feature on this report is effectiveness in serving employers which is tracking individuals that have maintained employment for a full year from exit of the program with the same employer at the time of exit.

## **II. Planning Committee Report**

Ms. Millman shared that the TPMA consultants gave a presentation at our last board meeting in September and the intention of the report is to guide the Workforce Development Board as they are looking to allocate resources for the future of labor in the workforce. This report is finalized and will be implemented to track recommendations going forward.

Ms. Millman asked the board members for a motion to adopt the TPMA Workforce 2030 report. Ms. Schneider approved the adoption, and Ms. Houck seconded the motion. All board members affirmatively voted their approval with no abstentions.

## **III. Access & Opportunities Committee Report**

Ms. Kershner referred the board to the “By the Numbers” report and provided a brief update. All the numbers from PY2025 are up specifically foot traffic, welcome orientation and businesses served. We learned about PA CareerLink® on the move which is taking PA CareerLink® services to community organizations and to different areas of the county so that it reduces the barriers for folks being able to access those services.

Mr. Stevenson asked what services are being presented during the PA CareerLink® on the move sessions?

Ms. Calaman shared that they are at Phase 1 of this initiative which is intended to build relationships and establish locations. Staff are taking their laptops to locations so job seekers can access their accounts, watch welcome orientations and answer any general questions about programming. A business services information section has been added for employers, so this initiative serves both employers and job seekers.

Ms. Kerschler reported the fall job fair took place on October 23, 2025, at the Redner’s Event Center at the Reading Fightin’ Phils Stadium. This event served 881 job seekers with 54 employers in attendance. The spring job fair will take place in April 2026.

## **IV. Youth Committee Report**

Ms. Shermot reported that the 3rd Annual “Undecided Career Fair” is scheduled for April 16, 2026, and will be held in the multi-purpose room located at the County of Berks South Campus building. Last year 10

school districts and 54 students were in attendance. The goal is to not only increase school district participation, but to engage with over 100 students. School districts that attended last year now have a better understanding of the purpose of this event and, if a high school senior does not have a post-graduation secondary education or employment plan by April 1, 2026, then the goal is to encourage their attendance.

#### **V. Training & Industry Partnership Committee Report**

Mr. Stevenson reported on the Training and Industry Partnership Committee and informed the board that over the past few years we have not seen a lot of utilization of Incumbent Worker Training Funds (IWT). Mr. Stevenson provided the committee with the PA Dept. Of Labor & Industry Workforce System Guidance (WSG) #06-PY2015 (dated April 1, 2016) which specifies the non-federal share that employers receiving funds for incumbent worker training are required to pay toward the cost in providing such training. The employer's share is based on the size of its workforce as follows: a) At least 10 percent of the cost for employers with 50 or fewer employees; b) At least 25 percent of the cost for the employers with 51 to 100 employees; and c) At least 50 percent of the cost for employers with more than 100 employees. He then advised that Local boards are required to establish the non-federal share of such cost in accordance with the WIOA legislation.

Mr. Stevenson shared that the Berks County WDB Work-Based Training Policy's IWT/RA sections which specify percentages of required company match that, while following WIOA scales, were moderated at the 2017 start of the initial IWT allocation based on a preliminary safeguard to counter possible over-obligation of available funds per employer applicant. The WDB Work-Based Training IWT/RA policy, as it currently stipulates, continues to cap the acceptance company match under scales b & c listed above (75% & 50% IWT reimbursement, respectively).

Ms. Columbo asked the committee for a recommendation to approve the change in Berks County WDB Work-Based Training Policy. Ms. Troxell motioned for a recommendation, and Mr. Breisch seconded the motion. All committee members affirmatively voted their approval with no abstentions.

#### **VI. Director of Workforce Report**

Ms. Columbo shared her Director of Workforce report by discussing the board meeting schedule for 2026, March will be hybrid, June will be at PA CareerLink®, September will be at South Campus and lastly December will be hybrid.

Next, Ms. Columbo reminded members of the monthly board member engagement sessions to help increase board member engagement and understand what board members do in their day-to-day roles. Ms. Columbo stated she has strategically picked three to four board members from different sectors and roles to not only increase engagement but to help get to know each board member, their potential hiring needs, community involvement, review of the Berks Workforce 2030 report, and to aid us in our market intelligence discussions for future board meetings. The first group will meet on January 16, 2026, at Visions Federal Credit Union.

Ms. Columbo shared that Berks Workforce 2030 will start presenting informational sessions to several groups around the county throughout 2026. Ms. Columbo will be working with Keith Stamm (GRCA), Derek Harris from County of Berks Economic Development department, Rory Stevenson and the Business Services Team from PA CareerLink®. Presentations are already scheduled for January and February.

Next Ms. Columbo announced a new employer resource hosted virtually by the PA Business Services Team. This Employer Information Network is supported by the US Department of Labor and is designed to keep employers connected and informed. A new topic will be presented every two months at no cost to the

employers. There will be two sessions in January, and the topic will be “ Workforce Data for Employers”. Ms. Columbo stated due to the federal shutdown, the local labor market is only available through the end of August 2025. A new report will be released in January with updated information.

Following the Director of the Workforce Report, Ms. Columbo asked Amanda Wilson to open the market intelligence discussion.

Ms. Wilson reported that some key factors that have been impacting employers in the workplace include talent shortages, skill mismatches, increased onboarding, higher turnover, more interest in on-the-job training and incumbent worker training programs.

**Public Comment** – Ms. Columbo then asked for any comment from the public. There was no public comment presented.

**CY2025 Meetings** - The next 2026 Berks Workforce Development Board Meeting will be held as follows:

- Friday March 20, 2026 (Hybrid: In-Person @ PA CareerLink® Berks County & Virtual via MS Townhall)
- Thursday June 18, 2026 (In-Person @ PA CareerLink® Berks County)
- Friday September 18, 2026 (In-Person @ County of Berks South Campus)
- Friday December 18, 2026 (Hybrid: In-Person @ County of Berks South Campus & Virtual: MS Townhall)

*Following a motion to adjourn, Ms. Batista announced that the meeting officially adjourned at 9:55 am.*