

State Steamfitting Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Meeting

May 21, 2015

WTCS Foundation
Waunakee, WI

DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present	Employer/Organization
Christensen, Paul	H & H Industries
Hayden, Terry	Local 434
Stramowski, Gary	J.M. Brennan
Sturdivant, Mike (Co-Chair)	Tweet-Garot Mechanical
Weinfurter, Greg	Tweet-Garot Mechanical, Inc
Zielke, Joel	Steamfitter Local 601

Members Absent	Employer/Organization
Clark, Roger	UA Local 118
Knaus, Jeff	Local 400
Lauer, Joe	EGL Mechanical Inc

Consultants & Guests	Employer/Organization
Cappetta, Darrel	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Christensen, Mike	H & H Industries
Cook, Jim	Madison Area Technical College
Destree, Sandy	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Gerhardt, Gail	MCA
Johnson, Allan	UA Local 118 - KRW
Morgan, Karen	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Nakkoul, Nancy	Wisconsin Technical College System
Nielson, Julie	Local 118
Rice, Vincent	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Scheldroup, Bob	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
Smith, Owen	BAS
Toutant, Brian	Local 601
Wegner, Scott	UA Local 400
Zenisek, Hal	Worldwide Instructional Design System

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Mike Sturdivant, Committee Co-Chair, in conformance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.
2. Roll call was conducted, and a sign-in sheet was circulated to record those in attendance.
3. The current roster was reviewed by committee members. The resignation of former Kevin LaMere left the Employee Co-Chair and one Employee seat vacant. The committee agreed that the vacancy will be filled by Local 601.

4. Old Business

a. Review the follow-up items from the previous meeting.

***Action:** a motion was approved to elect Terry Hayden as the new Employee Co-Chair.*

***Action:** a motion was approved to accept the minutes as written.*

***Action:** a motion was approved to mandate that all new contracts as of June 8, 2015, will be either Steamfitter (Construction) or Steamfitter (Refrigeration/Service). All existing contracts with other trade titles will be allowed to finish. Concerns raised by local committees that the new titles may prevent journey worker steamfitters from being hired as instructors were viewed by the state committee as irrelevant; the trade titles should reflect the needs of the registered apprenticeship program, not potential employers of instructors, and the qualifications of an instructor candidate could be assessed through various other means than the title of his or her apprenticeship.*

***Action:** a motion was approved to convene a focus group to review the work processes and hours.*

Co-Chair Hayden led the remainder of the meeting.

b. Apprenticeship Completion Award Program

Owen introduced ACAP, the WI Apprenticeship Summit and the American Apprenticeship Grants as three examples of current unprecedented regional and national support for registered apprenticeship. He noted that ACAP is an excellent example of state support for apprenticeship, because the program was conceived by the state legislature and passed into law by Governor Walker.

Owen briefly reviewed the program. He noted that ACAP reimburses apprentices, sponsors, and employers for tuition, books, and required materials for paid related instruction; an apprentice is eligible when he or she completes either the one-year calendar year of the contract start date or the entire apprenticeship program; the reimbursement(s) are awarded to the party or parties that incurred the costs; and the sponsor can nominate their payment be designated to the training trust.

The report shows that the cost of related instruction is more expensive than previously thought. ACAP reimburses either \$250 or 25% of total costs up to \$1,000, so many apprentices submitted all of their paid related instruction costs for reimbursement. Consequently, the Bureau denied all requests for funds beyond the maximum reimbursement. As a result, the total for funds denied is much higher than the total for funds approved.

Owen noted that the program is included in the Governor's proposed budget, but it is not known whether it will pass, be modified, or be denied.

A general discussion followed. A member asked whether both the apprentice and the sponsor could apply for and receive reimbursements. Owen confirmed that multiple parties could apply for and receive reimbursements, if they were party to the apprentice contract and incurred eligible expenses. However, in such cases, the parties' reimbursements are deducted from the same maximum award. For example, if the apprentice requests \$500 and the sponsor requests \$250, both reimbursements would be deducted from the same \$1,000 maximum allotment, leaving a remainder of \$250.

Co-Chair Hayden commented that he has not heard of any problems with applying for or receiving reimbursements. He believes the process is coordinated well between the local committees and the training trusts.

c. WI Apprenticeship Summit

Co-Chair Hayden introduced the discussion, commenting that he attended and was very impressed to be a part of it. He explained that the Summit was a three-day event designed to have "thought leaders" in Wisconsin apprenticeship listen to the latest national and international research and practices on registered apprenticeship and workforce development; and then propose an action plan.

Karen Morgan elaborated. When Congress released the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act, they incorporated apprenticeship into the workforce system. In doing so, Congress and President Obama stated that apprenticeship is a valuable solution to workforce needs, which workforce development boards need to incorporate. Therefore, the primary goal of the Summit was to position the Bureau and Wisconsin apprenticeship ahead of the curve to harness and drive all potential changes.

A general discussion followed. The committee expressed support for the goal and objectives of the Summit and was impressed by the comprehensive list of participants. Several members inquired into the next steps, timeline and mechanisms for accomplishing the action plan. Karen stated that DWD is reviewing the action plan as a whole to determine which recommendations to pursue first. The first priority will likely be to establish and convene an employer outreach consortium. Many other recommendations would depend on funding, such as furthering the links between youth apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs. The primary means of funding these activities would be to receive an American Apprenticeship Grant.

d. American Apprenticeship Grant

President Obama's administration released \$150 million to the U.S. Department of Labor to release in the form of competitive grants, Karen continued. The grants are the prime example of national support for registered apprenticeship. With a maximum award of \$5 million, the grants are to be used for launching apprenticeship models in new high-growth fields; aligning apprenticeship to pathways for further learning and career advancement; and scaling apprenticeship models that work.

The Bureau's application is titled, "WAGE\$," which stands for the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Growth and Enhancement Strategies. WAGE\$ focuses on bridging youth apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship, as well as expand readiness training for the underemployed and unemployed. The second focus is to expand apprenticeship into information technology and health care.

Karen noted that several focus groups asked how the Bureau would use an American Apprenticeship Grant to improve existing apprenticeship programs, such as construction programs or manufacturing programs. The Bureau will use the grant to improve pipelines into registered apprenticeship as a whole, because existing programs have proven that they provide quality training but frequently cite a lack of qualified candidates. Therefore, WAGE\$ would target opportunities to improve the general skill level of apprentice applicants, such as funding curriculum for youth apprenticeship programs that would expose high school students to the foundational skills of occupations that train through registered apprenticeship.

A general discussion followed on work-based learning programs in local high schools and efforts of local committees to engage high school students. Karen noted that funding from the grants would be pass-through- dollars, which means the Bureau would award it directly to workforce development boards for the purpose of developing programs in their local areas. A small amount of funding would be sub-granted to the Wisconsin Technical College System for curriculum development. The board could allocate their funding to technical colleges to develop new programs where there are none or support struggling programs related to developing the foundational skills of youth, the underemployed or the unemployed.

Members commented that grant efforts within the K-12 system need to address the parents' perception of careers in the skilled trades, as well. Karen agreed, and informed the committee that parents are involved in the students' choice to pursue both youth apprenticeship and a bridge program to registered apprenticeship. Members shared their previous experiences dealing with guidance counselors and the historical preference of the K-12 system for four-year institutions.

Mike Christensen commented that stakeholders' interest in European approaches, such as aptitude tests, seems to be growing. He expressed his opinion that some curriculum could be adapted to be more applicable to the skilled trades. Karen replied that several efforts are going in that direction. For example, all high school students in Wisconsin will soon be required to develop a career and academic plan. In addition, beginning in 2016, all high school students in WI will be required to take the ACT assessment in order to graduate.

Karen concluded the discussion by commenting that the world of apprenticeship and work-based learning programs is certainly changing, thanks to increasing interest and support for multiple stakeholder groups.

e. Other

No additional items were raised.

5. New Business

a. BAS Personnel Updates

Owen reported that the Bureau hired three new apprenticeship training representatives since the previous meeting: Tracy Jallah will serve the Madison area; Joshua Johnson will serve the Waukesha area; and Rob Ecker will serve the Eau Claire area.

b. For action: review the apprentice-to-journey worker ratio.

Owen informed the committee that its state standards do not include a minimum ratio for employers that employ seven or more journey workers. The Bureau recently received a request for guidance on the ratio, and is therefore asking the state committee to clarify its intent by establishing a minimum ratio. D

A general discussion followed on what the appropriate ratio should be, considering the various sizes of employers and the various hiring cycles within the industry. Karen reiterated that the state committee must clarify its intent and provide guidance for this specific situation so that the Bureau can treat all cases that come forward equally and fairly.

***Action:** a motion was approved to maintain the current ratio and, to address employers with seven or more journey workers, add, "Thereafter, an employer may have one apprentice for every two journey workers."*

c. For action: should ACT scores be added to testing procedures?

Karen reported that the Department of Public Instruction mandated that all high school students must take the ACT in order to graduate, beginning in 2016. The ACT assesses students in many of the subject areas in which local committees assess them using the Accuplacer or other tests, such as basic math and reading comprehension. Thus, in the future, local committees may receive many applicants that have been assessed recently. Rather than re-test the applicants in the same subject matters, local committees could accept the ACT scores, and save a duplicative administrative procedure. Therefore, the Bureau is asking each state construction committee whether it would like to amend its standards to include ACT scores and determine a maximum timeframe in which the scores would be accepted, such as three years.

Karen emphasized that including ACT scores would not replace current testing procedures; in fact, the current testing procedures would stay in place. Applicants with valid ACT scores would not have to be assessed again in those subjects; applicants without valid ACT scores would continue through the standards assessment procedures already in place.

Karen added that the Bureau will bring a crosswalk of scores to the fall meeting.

A general discussion followed. The committee asked questions about related administrative procedures, such as which party would be responsible for keeping the record of the Act. Applicants would be responsible for providing a certified copy of the test. If an applicant scored below the desired level on the ACT in a subject area, the local committee could require the applicant to re-test in that area using the Accuplacer.

***Action:** a motion was approved to not modify the state standards at this time, but to leave the matter to the discretion of the local committees.*

d. Other

Darrell Cappetta updated the committee on the Veterans in Piping program. Interviews for the third class have concluded. Recruitment for the program is ongoing, and Darrell will present at a job fair next Friday. He continues to disseminate recruitment information via the DWD Job Center of Wisconsin every month and a half. Many interviewees demonstrated strong interest in a career in the skilled trades rather than simply a job.

The committee inquired into the status of class one and class two. Darrell replied that all apprentices in the first class have been placed with employers. The second class recently completed the first phase of the program, classroom training, so only one apprentice has been placed with an employer at this time.

The committee asked how VIP participants are placed if the sponsor uses a rank list. Darrell replied that the VIP candidates do not bypass the rank list; rather, they are receive a rank and are placed on the list.

The committee asked whether other trades operate programs similar to VIP. Karen replied that not many do, but many trades that have learned of the VIP program want to adopt something similar. For example, the Operating Engineers created a similar program called "Combat to Construction." Construction Electricians will soon start a similar program called, "VICE." And Associated Builders and Contractors have discussed starting a program, too.

The committee requested that future briefings on VIP include updates on similar programs. Karen advised the committee to keep in mind that differences in programs likely stem from different needs unique to the trade or sponsors. For example, many participants in the Operating Engineers' Combat to Construction program operated similar machinery while on active duty. In addition, Wisconsin allows veterans with related experience to receive a CDL.

The committee asked whether Darrell will oversee additional related programs. Karen replied that he will at first, but as programs expand and more begin, the Bureau would research additional funding and positions. It's important that Darrell and any additional staff have time to fully support he candidates.

Darrel concluded by informing the committee that the next VIP class will begin on June 15.

6. WTCS Update

Nancy Nakkoul reported that the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation and the Jim Elliot Scholarship Fund have really expanded the opportunities for registered apprentices. Between the two organizations, 170 scholarship were granted, 14 of which went to steamfitting apprentices across six different college districts. That demonstrates that word of the scholarships has gotten out well. The sponsors have committed to awarding the scholarships for the next ten years.

In 2015-16, the WTCS and local districts will research professional development activity for faculty in response to their feedback that there is a lack of opportunities to discuss best practices. The effort is being conceptualized now.

The WTCS website has apprentice instruction requirements by trade, and another part of the website will include curriculum model summaries. The Steamfitter trade is one of the last large trades that does not have a summary model of course competencies, sequences, outcomes. Hal Zenisek commend that the curriculum models have proven very helpful and useful because many instructors have relied on verbal summaries. As they retire, the WTCS as a whole stands to lose the historical base of knowledge between all instructors.

Hal asked the state committee if it is interested in working with the WTCS next year to develop a curriculum model summary. Karen Morgan asked whether the steamfitters paid related instruction is

uniform. The committee replied that 80% of it is core and 20% focuses on regional differences, such as welding or HVAC and controls. Hal commented that WTCS would not want to take that away. Karen added that even though paid related instruction is a small part of the overall apprenticeship program, the state committee needs to ensure that all apprentices are getting the training they need. The curriculum summary model functions as the minimum standards and a barometer, which helps the Bureau determine which contractors and organizations can train in the state. Brian Toutant commented that the curriculum is proprietary, so the summary is unnecessary.

Nancy concluded by stating that the WTCS Foundation will move to a new office off of Odana Road between August and October. The goal is that the new location will be fully operational by the start of 2016.

7. Review of Program Participants

Program participants include 412 apprentices and 96 employers with a contract in active or unassigned status as of May 14, 2015. Both totals are higher than their respective annual totals since 2011.

A member noted that the non-union apprentice for the Lacrosse JAC is incorrect; he is now a union apprentice.

8. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 10, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. at Local 601 in Madison.

9. The meeting adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

Follow-up Items

- i. BAS will notify all ATRs and local committees about the new limitations to trade titles.*
- ii. BAS will update the ratio in the state standards and notify local committees.*
- iii. BAS will convene a focus group to review the Exhibit A.*

Submitted by Owen Smith, BAS, Program and Policy Analyst