

HARFORD COUNTY
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
MINUTES OF MEETING

March 4, 2025

8:00-10:30 a.m.

Attendees: Joe Connolly, Jeanne Donlick, Matt Johnstone, Shawn Krout, Rob Limpert, Erin Mock, Joshua Oltarzewski, Becky Pensero, Sara Saacks, Wade Sewell, Lisa Snodgrass, LaWanda Brown, Mikale Brutus, Mike Brockmeyer, Katie Eckstein, Savannah Feist, Austin Hill

Mr. Connolly welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 8:30 AM. Mrs. Eckstein moved, and Mrs. Saacks approved the minutes from the January meeting. Mr. Oltarzewski motioned for approval of the current meeting's agenda.

Apprenticeship Update: Mr. Johnstone shared that there are currently 277 students in apprenticeships. The numbers have leveled off because of course scheduling for next year, but increases are coming again in April/May. We have exceeded our SMARTIE goal of a 20% increase from the prior year. A Career Fair is being held at Swan Creek School on 3/26/25 for juniors looking for apprenticeships and seniors looking for full-time employment after high school. Over 50 companies and around 400 students are expected. Harford Business Roundtable is holding an apprenticeship/internship event in conjunction with Harford Community College in April.

There is now a GIS map of apprenticeships and internships, courtesy of North Harford students. They will also be presenting to MSDE on 3/5/25. The Advanced Marketing class at North Harford is making a one-page information sheet for the career fair, with students competing to create the best one.

Workforce Investment Update: Ms. Pensero is planning an event for HCC's Spring break. APGFCU will teach Financial Literacy, students will have activities in Xello, and Susquehanna Workforce Network is providing a career information session. They are currently working on Fall course registration. 179 students are interested in Harford Youth Workforce Investment courses, but we are waiting on the MOU from SWN to see how many seats will be available; a lottery will likely be needed. There will be no new courses, only what is currently offered. She and Emily Greene are streamlining the registration process to try to have student paperwork finished before the school year ends. 51 are interested in CNA, 23 in Dental Assistant, and 13 in EMT programs. Ms. Pensero, HCC, and SWN will go to schools to meet with students on completing their paperwork and to help them understand the requirements.

Evening courses are going well. 21 students are enrolled, including some 11th graders.

Mr. Connolly explained that our MOU with SWN continues through the next school year, but we need to plan ahead to have funding for the program in future years to continue HYWI.

HCC Updates: Dr. Hill shared that classes are going well at the Belcamp location, and they are planning their Fall course offerings with some courses possibly being redesigned. Due to positive

community feedback, they are planning to offer the Automotive Service program in the fall. Currently, they are looking for a community partnership to provide access to a bay to give students hands-on experience.

Industry-Recognized Credentials Update: Mr. Connolly shared that the CTE Committee noted that students and teachers are very engaged and overall connected to the workforce. They also see limited funding, space, and instructors for expansion that's needed for scaling. Transportation is a barrier. MSDE is hiring someone who will handle reenvisioning the high school schedule, including the block schedule and start time.

The CTE Committee wants to standardize the course order for each program, including which Industry-Recognized Credentials are recommended for College & Career Readiness status, finishing in 10th grade.

Career counseling has been emphasized by MSDE and the CTE Committee, to provide individualized career counseling to every middle and high school student.

Ms. Brown that shared ICAP (Ind. Career & Academic Plan) came from Pillar 3. Its purpose is to help counselors with individualized work with students; this tool explores students' interests and shows how many times counselors meet with each student. It is currently being used to help 10th graders who do not meet CCR status, but in the future, it will be used with all students, beginning in 7th grade, starting next school year. During the first semester, counselors and students will use the tool for goal setting and finding weak spots to work on. During the 2nd semester, this will help counselors evaluate student progress.

In response to Ms. Donlick's question, Ms. Brown explained ICAP could possibly merge with Xello, but the extent of this will be determined by OTIS as the tool is further developed.

Mr. Connolly discussed School Enrollment Options regarding part-time attendance. Mr. Johnstone, Ms. Brown, Mrs. Saacks, and several specialists created modules to prepare students for work in terms of workplace readiness, career exploration, resume writing & interviewing, and personal finance. Specialists can help steer students in terms of apprenticeship opportunities and careers paths as they meet with students before they begin a part-time attendance schedule.

Mr. Johnstone said that all extra work for this will fall on apprenticeship specialists, not counselors or principals. This is starting with current 11th graders.

Mr. Connolly shared that we have three new National Board-certified teachers (Glen Matthias, Aimee Densmore, and Jason Guarino), and Matt Bayne earned his Ph. D.

There are groups looking at advisory lessons to strengthen career skills for students (focus areas include time management, employee empathy, etc.) 8th graders are learning Java in Computer Science this year, but Python to be implemented next year. We held a review of the Career Compass course and worked on creating the curriculum over the past summer; teachers are providing constant feedback.

The DLLR manages registered apprenticeships, and we expect to have one next school year. 75-80% of our youth apprenticeships currently align with a program of study. Starting next year, these must align to an IRC for credit toward the Blueprint 45% goal.

Perkins Funding Update: Mr. Connolly shared that the application for next school year is already out and will be shared with program heads this week. This year's form requires that teachers explain how each potential purchase aligns with one of our five SMARTIE goals. He also discussed needing to know if digital components are involved because of MSDE/HCPs accessibility and data privacy requirements.

New IRCs have been approved, though some will not go into effect until the next school year. OSHA 30 has been added to our offerings and is being given in Bel Air and C. Milton Wright High Schools' advanced classes, and the CAMM program at Harford Tech will infuse this into courses as well. There are 60-75 students at Edgewood and Harford Technical High Schools taking ParaPro and will take their assessment at the HCC testing center. Working with the Science supervisor, we are offering the Erosion & Sediment Control credential. Edgewood High School had 45/88 students pass the test. Mr. Durette created a Canvas module for the credential, which he will make available to all teachers. Dr. Bayne and Mr. Hunter will work on lessons for Six Sigma, a certification which can be applied to any CTE course. ServSafe will be recognized as of July 1st, in addition to ProStart, for IRC numbers.

Mr. Connolly will work on obtaining letters from local businesses to get our conditionally approved IRCs fully approved by MSDE. One of these is Southwest Professional Communications

Mrs. Saacks shared how important it is to integrate credentials earlier in high school and infuse them into regular courses, which do not require additional staff as a technical program would.

Mrs. Eckstein asked that business partners help us keep up with the credentials available that we could offer to students to give them an idea of what is available and may interest them.

Mr. Sewell recommended that Mr. Connolly share information with the board about IRCs and the other positive work taking place in CTE. He also asked if the volunteer fire cadet program was something we could tap into. Mrs. Eckstein said we have Maryland Fire Rescue Institute, with 2-3 students currently participating in the county. Work-based learning is only offered at Bel Air High School currently. She would like to see fire, EMT, and water rescue bundled into a program together. Mr. Johnstone said that Mrs. Poust is working to revive this throughout the county before she retires. The volunteer fire cadet program will be present at the upcoming career fair.

Open Dialogue: Mr. Brockmeyer is looking to connect regarding CNA and CMA students for career opportunities.

Ms. Brutus shared that APG's K-12 program goes into schools to make students more aware of STEM in everyday life. Rise internship program provides mentors as students work in labs with APG engineers.

Ms. Snodgrass shared that Freedom Federal Credit Union is currently offering \$10,000 total in grant awards to educators. The application window closes 5/30/25. They are also looking for opportunities to teach financial education in classrooms and with groups.