



MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING OF THE  
MARICOPA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD YOUTH COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 11, 2025 – 9:30 am - 10:30 am

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**Members Present:** Anne Landers, Anna Yap, Brittany Holmes, Che Collins, Dr. Meredith Critchfield, JakinDee Kosaka, Marie Raymond, Robert Garcia, Tina Drews

**Members Absent:** Barbara Coakley, Danielle Lertique, Jessica Putton, Jessica Rivera-Garcia

**Call to Order.**

Chair Anne Landers called the meeting to order at 9:32am and requested roll call.

**Roll Call.**

MCWDB Nancy Avina, Management Analyst, called roll. Quorum was established.

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**Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Meeting Objectives.**

Chair Landers welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the objectives and goals for the committee.

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**Consent Agenda.**

**Meeting Minutes:** May 1, 2025

Chair Landers asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Robert Garcia moved to approve the consent agenda. Che Collins seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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**Information/Discussion Only.**

**H5-Coalition to Redesign High Schools Presentation**

Dr. Chad Getson, Founder and Executive Director of NAU Arizona Institute for Education & Economy, shared a presentation for redesigning high schools.

- **Current Misalignment:**

Dr. Getson described the growing incongruence between what students experience in school and the realities of the modern world, contributing to issues such as disengagement, absenteeism, and workforce readiness gaps.

- **Vision for Reform:**

The Institute proposes transitioning to “future-ready” high schools. This includes:

- A State 48 Graduate Profile focused on ensuring every graduate is prepared for multiple pathways: college, employment, military, or entrepreneurship.
  - Emphasis on digital literacy, critical thinking, life skills, and career-connected learning.
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- A move toward learner-centered, agile, and project-based school models.
- **Coalition Building:**  
Dr. Getson highlighted a growing, bipartisan, statewide coalition—including educators, business leaders, policymakers, and community members—committed to transforming Arizona’s education system. This coalition spans all 15 counties and includes rural, urban, suburban, and Indigenous communities.

### **MCWDB Youth Success Story**

Workforce Development Program Supervisor, Zach Lynch, presented a success story.

### **ElevatedEdAZ Presentation**

Isabel Gonzalez, Greater Phoenix Chamber Vice President of ElevateEdAZ, presented an overview of current initiatives.

- **Program Footprint:**  
The initiative emphasizes a data-driven strategy to identify priority CTE pathways and collaborates closely with schools and employers. Currently, ElevateEdAZ operates in 27 campuses across seven districts, primarily in Maricopa County, with pilot expansion underway in Southern Arizona. ElevateEdAZ has established a statewide dual enrollment coalition and a consortium of district partners to advocate for policy improvements, share best practices, and coordinate funding efforts.
- **Incentives & Growth:**  
They promote incentives such as a \$1,000 dual enrollment teacher certification bonus. The program has seen significant growth in dual enrollment rates and school participation since 2020, with plans to support 100 schools statewide by 2030.
- **Employer Engagement:**  
The ongoing challenge is fully engaging local businesses in work-based learning initiatives. She emphasized the importance of employer investment in internships and job shadowing as key to strengthening the talent pipeline and called for greater community collaboration to develop effective strategies for employer involvement.

### **Youth Workforce Services Update**

Workforce Development Program Manager, Jinkee Pacifico, gave an update on youth workforce services:

- FY24 Performance Outcomes
  - Performance Indicators (e.g., credentials earned) surpassed the 90% goal.
  - Program Participation and Services
  - Top Program Elements Utilized:
    - Adult mentoring, counseling, entrepreneurial/financial literacy, WEX, and support services (e.g., transportation, professional attire)
    - All youth receive career path presentations
    - Emphasis on occupational skills training and post-secondary preparation
  - Youth Trainers & Workshops:
    - Two new youth trainer positions
    - Workshops offered: resume writing, financial empowerment, leadership, entrepreneurship, passport to employment series
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- Program Innovations
    - New Passport to Employment initiative for non-enrolled youth seeking job readiness support
    - Planned improvements to orientation and application processes to increase accessibility and engagement
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**Call to Public.**

The Call to the Public was made by Chair Landers; no comments were received.

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**Adjourn.**

Chair Landers asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Robert Garcia moved to adjourn. Marie Raymond seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The MCWDB Youth Committee meeting adjourned at 10:35am.

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