

**NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM (“NOC”)
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 19, 2025
10:30 a.m.**

Geauga County Offices, Meeting Room A334
12611 Ravenwood Drive,
Chardon, Ohio 44024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Casey Kozlowski
 Commissioner Jim Dvorak
 Commissioner Sabrina Christian-Bennett

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Carly Spencer (OMJ-Portage), Rebecca Abbott (OMJ-Portage),
 Matthew Blevens (OMJ-Geauga), Hattie Grubke (OMJ-
 Ashtabula), Richard Szasz (OhioGuidestone), Alyssa Steinhoff
 (GCJFS), Craig Swenson (GCJFS Director), Lisa Milgate
 (GCJFS), Craig Sernik (Area 19 Director), Denise Gehring
 (Area 19).

Mr. Kozlowski called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

Approval of Past Business

Approval of the Minutes from September 24, 2025.

Ms. Bennett moved to approve the minutes from October 22, 2025. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Reports

Administrative Report. Mr. Sernik reported the unemployment rate numbers for September 2025 have not been released yet due to the government shutdown. Ms. Grubke reported they had an issue with RESEA there is a Geneva, Ohio in Fairfield County, so that everyone who lives in Geneva, Ohio in Ashtabula County is being sent to Fairfield County. Ms. Grubke stated the issue has been resolved. The CCMEP Secret Shopper report was received showing Portage was not shopped only OMJ-Geauga and OMJ-Ashtabula and the report was not very detailed had to insist from ODJFS the data for the individual counties. Overall, the report results were good showing the individual indicated they waited 10 minutes and did get referrals to community providers but would have been nice to have a warm handoff to the youth providers right there in the center. The Lake to River Region applicant is the Mahoning Valley Manufacture’s Collation who we talked to and support. An Industry Sector Partnership currently exists with Geauga Growth Partnership in Geauga County of which we are actively talking to Geauga Growth Partnership regarding how we could use some of the funds we have for Incumbent Worker Training for the medical industry and

to possibly do one or two job fairs. A similar partnership is currently being set up in the Lake to River Region with the application being headed up by the Mahoning Manufacture's Collation. The Government recently re-opened but looks like ASWA is deadlocked all of this year. Our area expects to be monitored by DOL now that the Government is reopened and we are waiting to hear more. And had a PY2025 MOU partner negotiation this morning about having ASPIRE Geauga back in the building to provide GED classes. Board Certification documents were submitted to ODJFS, but we are in need of one more board member's code of disclosure signed to send to ODJFS in order to complete the certification of the Area 19 Workforce Board. The certification of each of the OMJ Centers will need to be completed by the end of this year. The certification of the OMJ-Geauga Center was completed this past Monday, OMJ-Ashtabula Center was completed yesterday, and OMJ-Portage will be completed this Friday. The OMJ-Geauga Center certification went well with only two areas that were deficient and were also the same for OMJ-Ashtabula it was about having a business plan and a participant outreach plan that had been prepared and approved by the local OMJ Center partners. In both cases the committee felt this should not hold up the certification of the centers but recommend this be addressed by the end of the quarter of next year. The ADA checklist was completed for the OMJ-Ashtabula all is up to code only issues are the handicapped parking lots need restriping and putting up signs and two bathroom doors need to have the closer adjusted. This report will be presented to the ACJFS Director to make those corrections. The Workforce Board when they meet on December 3rd will accept the reports and certify the centers. Certifying the OMJ-Portage this time as a comprehensive center with the only issue is that they are missing three mandated partners those are a Wagner/Peyser, community block grant, and Perkins. The CCMEP procurement planning memorandum was emailed out to all of the OMJ Managers last week this memo outlines what can and cannot be assigned to the CDJFS'.

Fiscal Report. Mr. Sernik reviewed the over/under report with those present. He stated Portage was overdrawn on PY23 CCMEP of \$160.00, but the State will close this out. Did send back to the State \$27.80 in FY24 adult and \$14,021.02 in FY24 dislocated worker. Put into ODJFS a request for \$176,000 in additional RESEA funding for Ashtabula and Portage Counties who are running low on RESEA funds. ODJFS responded they are currently in the process of applying to DOL for supplemental funding but in the meantime they could not fill the full request but will be sending us \$75,000 in RESEA funds.

Reports of County OMJ Centers

OMJ Ashtabula County. Ms. Grubke reported that one individual was sent for CDL-A training in October, as of November 10th the yO! program has 671 youth with 246 in follow-up, yO! Program has found a new location for their HUB, and the certification of the OMJ-Ashtabula Center has been completed.

OMJ Portage County. Ms. Spencer reported a Job fair was held on November 13th at the Reed Memorial Library that had 50 participants and 20 employers, waiting to hear if selected for the Veterans grant, and pursuing the fatherhood initiative grant again this year.

OMJ Geauga County. Mr. Swenson reported they have two new Auburn Staff hired to assist in the resource room and Matthew Blevens has been hired as the Workforce Program Specialist for the OMJ Center.

Old Business

None.

New Business

NOC COG and Area 19 Resolutions.

Ashtabula County:

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to authorize the provision and delivery of a WIOA and TANF CCMEP, that serves both eligible and enrolled in-school and out-of-school Ashtabula County participants for the remainder of PY25 and for all following PYs until a contrary motion is passed or a new competitive procurement of CCMEP occurs. Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Mr. Kozlowski abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Ms. Christian-Bennett moved to (1) allow ACJFS as the lead agency for Ashtabula County, for the remainder of PY25 and for all following PYs until a contrary motion is passed or a new competitive procurement of CCMEP services occurs, and (2) to allow the Area 19 WDB executive director to enter into a contract with ACJFS to provide the following identified WIOA CCMEP program elements and services for a period beginning January 1, 2026, and for a period not to go for more than an additional two (2) years. ACJFS shall deliver all of the following services to WIOA CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants, which it also delivers to all of the TANF CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants:

- i. Outreach, intake, eligibility determinations.**
- ii. Framework design including assessments; development of an individual service strategy as part of pre-enrollment planning, and post enrollment case-management for those that are mandated to be in the program (OhioWorksFirst) cash recipients.**
- iii. Program Services Elements:**
 - (4) Training. Occupational skills training, OJTs, customized, and all other trainings that may be provided as a career service.**
 - (13) Labor Market Information for educational and career planning, and labor exchange activities, resume development and job placement. During the program and follow-up.**

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Mr. Kozlowski abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Ms. Christian-Bennett to authorize the Executive Director of the Area 19 WDB, in conjunction with ACJFS, to prepare, issue, receive, review, and score, an Ashtabula County service based joint request for competitive proposals (“RFPs”), seeking the provision of all of the following program services from third party providers for all CCMEP participants except where it is specifically limited to just one of the funding streams:

- i. **Limited Outreach to be better defined, and assistance as needed with intake and eligibility determinations.**
- ii **Framework design including assessments; development of an individual service strategy as part of pre-enrollment planning, and post enrollment case-management for all individuals not mandated to be in the program as a recipient of OhioWorksFirst cash assistance.**
- iii. **Delivery of the following 14 elements and program services associated with the same as identified as part of the individual service strategy:**
 - (1) **Tutoring and study skills.**
 - (2) **Alternative secondary school offerings.**
 - (3) **Work experience:**
 - (a) **Case management for unpaid, paid (subsidized and unsubsidized).**
 - (b) **Employer of record.**
 - (5) **Workforce preparation/life skills.**
 - (6) **Leadership.**
 - (7) **Supportive services in general including, transportation and all immediate/emergency needs, food, housing. During the program and follow-up.**
 - (8) **Mentoring. During program and follow-up.**
 - (9) **Case management for follow-up services, except for those mandated TANF CCMEP participants, whose case management for follow-up will be done by ACJFS.**
 - (10) **Counseling (mental health and substance use/abuse).**
 - (11) **Financial literacy. During the program and follow-up.**
 - (12) **Entrepreneurship.**
 - (14) **Post-secondary exploration and transition. During the program and follow-up.**

Ms. Christian-Bennett seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Mr. Kozlowski abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Portage County:

Mr. Dvorak moved to authorize the provision and delivery of a WIOA and TANF CCMEP, that serves both eligible and enrolled in-school and out-of-school Portage County participants for the remainder of PY25 and for all following PYs until a contrary motion is passed or a new competitive procurement of CCMEP occurs. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Ms. Christian-Bennett abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Mr. Dvorak moved to (1) allow PCJFS as the lead agency for Portage County, for the remainder of PY25 and for all following PYs until a contrary motion is passed or a new competitive procurement of CCMEP services occurs, and (2) to allow the Area 19 WDB executive director to enter into a contract with PCJFS to provide the following identified WIOA CCMEP program elements and services for a period beginning _____, 2026, and for a period not to go for more than an additional two (2) years. PCJFS shall deliver all of the following services to WIOA CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants, which it also delivers to all of the TANF CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants:

- i. **Outreach, intake, eligibility determinations.**
- ii. **Framework design including assessments; development of an individual service strategy as part of pre-enrollment planning, and post enrollment case-management.**
- iii. **Program Services Elements:**
 - (3) **Case management for unpaid, paid (subsidized and unsubsidized) work experience, job shadowing, internships, etc., if permitted by ODJFS.**
 - (4) **Training. Occupational skills training, OJTs, customized, and all other trainings that may be provided as a career service under WIOA.**
 - (7) **Supportive services in general including, transportation and all immediate/emergency needs, food, housing. During the program and follow-up.**
 - (9) **Case management for follow-up services.**
 - (13) **Labor Market Information for educational and career planning, and labor exchange activities, resume development and job placement. During the program and follow-up.**

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Ms. Christian-Bennett abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Mr. Dvorak seconded the motion to authorize the Executive Director of the Area 19 WDB, in conjunction with PCJFS, to prepare, issue, receive, review, and score, a Portage County service based joint request for competitive proposals (“RFPs”), seeking the provision of all of the following program services from third party providers for all CCMEP participants except where it is specifically limited to just one of the funding streams. Delivery of the following enumerated program elements and services as identified as part of each CCMEP participants’ individual service strategy:

- (1) **Tutoring and study skills.**
- (2) **Alternative secondary school offerings.**
- (3) **Work Experience.**
- (c) **Employer of Record.**
- (5) **Workforce preparation/life skills.**
- (6) **Leadership.**
- (8) **Mentoring. During program and follow-up.**
- (10) **Counseling (mental health and substance use/abuse).**
- (11) **Financial literacy. During the program and follow-up.**
- (12) **Entrepreneurship.**
- (14) **Post-secondary exploration and transition. During the program and follow-up.**

Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Ms. Christian-Bennett abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Mr. Dvorak moved to authorize the Executive Director of the Area 19 WDB to prepare, issue, receive, score and recommend for award, a request for proposals (“RFP”), and allow PCJFS as the lead agency for CCMEP in Portage County, along with all other qualified bidders to bid on the request for proposal (RFP) for the following WIOA CCMEP funded youth program services and activities:

- (3) **Case management for unpaid, paid (subsidized and unsubsidized) work experience, job shadowing, internships, etc., if required by ODJFS.**

Geauga County:

Mr. Kozlowski moved to authorize the provision and delivery of a WIOA and TANF CCMEP, that serves both eligible and enrolled in-school and out-of-school Geauga County participants for the remainder of PY25 and for all following PYs until a contrary motion is passed or a new competitive procurement of CCMEP occurs. Ms. Christian-Bennett seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Mr. Dvorak abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Mr. Kozlowski moved to authorize the Area 19 NOC COG Director in conjunction with GCJFS as the lead agency for Geauga County, to negotiate an extension with OhioGuidestone, effective January 1, 2026, for a period not to exceed September 30, 2026, unless terminated early, the following identified WIOA and/or CCMEP program elements and services. Ohio Guidestone may deliver some or all of the following services to WIOA CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants, which it also delivers to all of the TANF CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants:

- i. Limited Outreach to be better defined, and assistance as needed with intake and eligibility determinations.
- ii. Framework design including assessments; development of an individual service strategy as part of pre-enrollment planning, and post enrollment case-management for all individuals.
- iii. Delivery of some or all of the following CCMEP elements and program services associated with the same as identified as part of the CCMEP participants' individual service strategy.
 - (1) Tutoring and study skills.
 - (2) Alternative secondary school offerings.
 - (3) Work experience
 - (a) Case management for unpaid, paid (subsidized and unsubsidized).
 - (b) Employer of record.
 - (5) Workforce preparation/life skills.
 - (6) Leadership.
 - (7) Supportive services in general including, transportation and all immediate/emergency needs, food, housing. During the program and follow-up.
 - (8) Mentoring. During program and follow-up.
 - (9) Case management for follow-up services, except for those mandated TANF CCMEP participants, whose case management for follow-up will be done by ACJFS.
 - (10) Counseling (mental health and substance use/abuse).
 - (11) Financial literacy. During the program and follow-up.
 - (12) Entrepreneurship.
 - (14) Post-secondary exploration and transition. During the program and follow-up.

Ms. Christian-Bennett seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Mr. Dvorak abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Motion to (1) allow GCJFS as the lead agency for Geauga County, beginning _____, 2026 and for all following PYs until a contrary motion is passed or a new competitive procurement of CCMEP services occurs, and (2) to allow the Area 19 WDB executive director to enter into a contract with GCJFS to provide the following identified WIOA CCMEP program elements and services for a period beginning _____, 2026, and for a period not to go for more than an additional two (2) years. GCJFS may deliver some or all of the following services to WIOA CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants, which it also delivers to all of the TANF CCMEP eligible and enrolled participants:

- i. Outreach, intake, eligibility determinations.
- ii. Framework design including assessments; development of an individual service strategy as part of pre-enrollment planning, and post enrollment.
- iii. Delivery of some or all of the following CCMEP elements and program services associated with the same as identified as part of the CCMEP participants' individual service strategy:
 - (4) Training. Training. Occupational skills training, OJTs, customized, and all other trainings that may be provided as a career service under WIOA.
 - (7) Supportive services in general including, transportation and all immediate/emergency needs, food, housing. During both the program and follow-up.
 - (9) Case management for follow-up services.
 - (13) Labor Market Information for educational and career planning, and labor exchange activities, resume development and job placement. During the program and follow-up.

Ms. Christian-Bennett seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Mr. Dvorak abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Motion to authorize the Executive Director of the Area 19 WDB, in conjunction with GCJFS, to prepare, issue, receive, review, and score, a Geauga County service based joint request for competitive proposals ("RFPs"), seeking the provision of some or all of the following program services from third party providers for all CCMEP participants except where it is specifically limited to just one of the funding streams, sometime on or after _____, 2026:

- i. Limited Outreach to be better defined, and assistance as needed with intake and eligibility determinations.
- ii. Delivery of the following elements and program services associated with CCMEP as identified as part of each participants' individual service strategy:
 - (1) Tutoring and study skills.
 - (2) Alternative secondary school offerings.
 - (3) Work experience
 - (a) Case management for unpaid, paid (subsidized and unsubsidized).
 - (b) Employer of record.
 - (5) Workforce preparation/life skills.
 - (6) Leadership.

- (7) Supportive services in general including, transportation and all immediate/emergency needs, food, housing. During both the program and follow-up.
- (8) Mentoring. During program and follow-up.
- (9) Case management for follow-up services.
- (10) Counseling (mental health and substance use/abuse).
- (11) Financial literacy. During the program and follow-up.
- (12) Entrepreneurship.
- (14) Post-secondary exploration and transition. During the program and follow-up.

Ms. Christian-Bennett seconded the motion which was approved by all members present with Mr. Dvorak abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn the Meeting

Mr. Dvorak moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kozlowski seconded the motion which was approved by all members present.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Denise Gehring