

Quarterly Meeting Minutes
South Central Region 8 Workforce Board, Inc.
Stonegate Arts & Education Center, Bedford, IN
June 24, 2026 – Noon to 1:30pm

Board Members Present: Brenda Reetz, Scott Baker, Jordan Sherman, Linda Henderson, Blayze Damron, Kendra Langford, Terry Pittman, Marce Johnson, Jennifer Kelley, Michelle Ellis, Scott Adams, Lisa Hein, Apryl Kidd, Sam Craig, Patrick Todd

Board Members Present via Zoom/Call-In: N/A

Others Present: Rob King, Susan Neal, Don Kent, Erin Brewer, David Tucker, Mandy Mahurin, Sam Perkins, Sandy Friedman, Carla Crowe, Brian Rawlins, Gail Mitchell, Arin Pritchard, Jill Campbell, Randy Wells, Richard Rampley, Joanie, Tincher, Robert Merritt

Board Members Absent: Adam Gross, Derek Cronin, Michael Stieglitz, Teresa Dukate, Pam Metz, Jeff Pipkin, Scott Wilcoxon, Mike Norris,

Call to Order

Brenda Reetz called the meeting to order at Noon. Rob King welcomed Board members and a quorum of the Board was confirmed as present.

Approval of Minutes

Scott Adams moved to accept the minutes of the 04/22/2026 meeting of the South-Central Region 8 Workforce Board, Inc. Scott Baker seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the minutes were approved.

Financial Reports

Carla Crowe, with Crowe LLP, the Board's Fiscal Agent, distributed and presented the financial report for the period ending May 31, 2026. Carla noted that 68% of the Total Annual Budget was expended through May 31, 2026. Carla reviewed adjustments to the Budget and Expenditures. There were no funds added/adjusted to the budget for this report.

Carla discussed PY'26 funds to include carry-in funds from PY'25 and new funding allocations for PY'26. Carla explained what carry-in funds were and how that amount is calculated into the overall annual allocations. She also stated that 20% of total funding is earmarked as carry-in funding for the next program year. Susan Neal provided updates for the NLJ Power-Up Grant, Workforce Ready Grant and Home Pathway 6 Grant. Susan also advised the Board that Region 8 recently received an award for \$88,000 for the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) for work in the advanced manufacturing area. Region 8 will be partnering with Oliver Winery in Monroe County on this initiative. Susan also noted that more funding could be available as we move forward.

Patrick Todd moved to approve the financial report and budget, authorization of PY'25 carry-in funds, and PY'26 new allocation of funds to Vincennes University (VU), and State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) funds for up to \$88,000

to VU. Michelle Ellis seconded the motion. Blayze Damron abstained from the financial budget vote, all other Board members voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Guest Presentation

Robert Merritt, CEO and Co-Founder of SlateUp, provided the Board with an overview and operational update on their Talent Infrastructure Platform Development since their last presentation to our Workforce Board. SlateUp connects critical infrastructure employers with motivated workers, builds a path for workers to grow, and unlocks the government funding that makes it sustainable. SlateUp is currently working with employers in Regions 2, 4 and 10. Mr. Merritt demonstrated the On-the-Job (OJT) collaborative effort they are currently implementing in other regions successfully. SlateUp works side-by-side with local WorkOne staff to create an AI generated OJT skills assessment based on data input into their platform that can be used to identify eligible participants and a detailed skills assessment for establishing OJT's with employers they work directly with in the communities served. There are no direct costs to Workforce Boards for this platform as SlateUp works with the employers served based on a cost structure that appears to be well worth their time and energy to explore. Mr. Merritt will be working with Region 8 local staff in the near future to connect with regional employers.

Region 8 Website (Pics) Update

Rob King reminded Board members that the new Region 8 Website is currently up and running and is officially active. Rob advised Board members that Richard Rampley is on hand today to take Board Member Pictures for the Website.

Regional Four-Year Plan Modifications for 2024-2027

Rob King informed the Board that the Local Workforce Four-Year Plan modification is due to the State by September 30, 2026. WIOA requires Workforce Boards to develop and submit a comprehensive four-year local plan to the State for approval. This plan addresses current and future strategies to advance workforce system programs and support a customer-centered system. The regional Workforce Board vision and service provision operational goals are included as part of the workforce plan. This plan aligns with the State plan and includes information such as labor market trends, regional sector partnership collaborations, employer engagements and community resources identification.

The workforce modified plan must be published for public comment for at least 30-days prior to submission to the State. It is anticipated that the draft modifications will be ready to post for public comments no later than August 27th. The plan will be ready for discussion and approval by the Board at our next meeting on September 30th. Rob stated that he will e-mail timeline schedule to Executive Committee Board members within one week. Rob also stated that all Board members will receive a copy of the updated regional plan to review as well.

Election of PY'26 Officers Reminder

Rob King discussed election of Board Officers for PY'26 and reminded the Board that this will be done at the September 30, 2026 annual meeting, which is the first Board meeting of Program Year 2026-2027 (PY'26).

Regional Leadership Changes and Grant Proposals by Region 8

Susan Neal informed the Board of several leadership changes within Region 8, effective July 1, 2026. As part of Region 8's ongoing efforts to maximize the effectiveness of its regional leadership team, the region recently reviewed the skills and strengths of current leadership staff. Based on this review, staff responsibilities will be realigned to better match individual strengths with the requirements of each position while also providing opportunities to further develop leadership skills across the team.

Effective for Program Year 2026 (PY26), the following leadership changes will take place:

- **Don Kent** will assume the role of **Region 8 Business Services Manager**.
- **Sam Perkins** will assume the role of **Executive Director of Workforce Services** for the **Region 8 Service Provider**.
- **Gail Mitchell** will be dedicated exclusively to the role of **Region 8 Registered Apprenticeship Manager**

Susan Neal then informed the Workforce Board of Grant proposal opportunities Region 8 is currently bidding for on behalf of the Workforce Board as follows:

- **Re-entry Employment in Skilled Trades, Advanced Manufacturing, Registered Apprenticeships, and Training (RESTART)** Grant: RESTART program is an \$81 million U.S. Department of Labor initiative launched to fund workforce training and job placement for formerly incarcerated individuals. The Region 8 Workforce Board, in partnership with Midwest Urban Strategies (MUS) and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), will apply for funding to serve justice-involved young adults between the ages of 18-24 to support their connection to prosocial supports, education, and employment.
- **Managed Health Services (MHS) Serves:** The **MHS Serves Workforce Support Program** is a grant initiative by MHS Serves providing **\$50,000 to \$500,000** to Indiana nonprofits. It helps Medicaid members overcome work barriers, gain skills, and secure jobs. The Region 8 Workforce Board will apply for up to **\$150,000** in funding to support this training initiative.
- **RESKILL Grant:** Program designed to help displaced or unemployed workers transition into high-demand industries. Working in partnership with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Region 8 will try to secure additional funding to serve Dislocated Workers in South-Central Indiana. Although the final funding amount is undetermined, Region 8 hopes to receive at least \$500,000 in support of this initiative if received.

JAG Final Update

Sam Perkins, Region 8 JAG Program Manager, provided the Board with a final update on the Region 8 JAG Program. Sam stated that Region 8 met its "6 of 6" metrics and was officially

recognized for doing so for its final Program Year. Due to Indiana State funding elimination for JAG Programs last year, the following JAG Programs will officially end on June 30, 2026:

- 1) Bloomfield High School
- 2) Eastern Greene High School
- 3) Owen Valley High School
- 4) Paoli High School

WorkOne Report

The WorkOne report was distributed to the Board for review. Don Kent, Executive Director of VU WDS – Region 8, highlighted the report. Don provided updates on regional WorkOne office operations, UI Data, Performance Highlights, JAG Program, Rapid Response and Business Services activities, and Power-Up/NLJ-ETG Jobs Data. A copy of the complete WorkOne Region 8 Report is available on the South-Central Region 8 Workforce Board's at: <https://www.vinu.edu/south-central-region-8-workforce-board/index.html>.

Workforce Board Meeting Dates (2026-2027)

Rob King provided Board members with upcoming Workforce Board meeting dates as follows:

- September 30, 2026 (In-Person Annual Meeting)
- January 27, 2027 (Via Zoom)
- April 21, 2027 (In-Person)
- June 23, 2027 (In-Person)

Other Business – Public Comments

With no further business, Scott Adams made a motion to adjourn, Brenda Reetz seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25pm

Prepared By: Rob King