Work Ready COMMUNITY

Kentucky Work Ready Communities

Steering Committee Meeting Agenda

Thursday, October 15, 2021
9:30-11:30 a.m. ET
Virtual Zoom Meeting –
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83629104720?pwd=YUtpTmhlazVteGxpcGhYRUJOaFpvZz09

CALL TO ORDER

 A. **WELCOME/ROLL CALL (Lori Ulrich, Chairperson)**
- **Introducing new committee members:**
 Joseph Paul - Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Srvs
 Dr. Robert Boone - Chief Officer of Career Team
 Rolando Thacker - Bluegrass Area Development District
 Myra Wilson - Lake Cumberland Area Development District

 B. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Lori Ulrich, Chairperson)**
- **Review and approve meeting minutes from July 30, 2021.**

 C. **WORK READY RECERTIFICATIONS**
- **Boyle County (WR)**
- **Fleming County (WRIP)**
- **Grayson County (WRIP)**
- **McCracken County (WR)**
- **Spencer County (WR)**
- **Woodford County (WR)**

 D. **WORK READY EXTENSIONS**
- **Ballard County – 1 year**
- **Bath County – 1 year**
- **Carlisle County – 1 year**
- **Fulton County – 1 year**
- **Jessamine County – 3 year**
- **Johnson County – 1 year**
- **Magoffin County – 1 year**
- **Marshall County – 1 year**

 E. **REVIEW PROCESS FEEDBACK (Lori Ulrich, Chairperson)**
- **Review document – any suggested changes?**
- **Process improvement – any thoughts on the review process?**

F. OVERDUE COUNTIES – These counties failed to meet the September 3, 2021 deadline, per the probationary letter notifying them they are to be taken back to the formative stage of the Work Ready process.
- **Clark County**
- **Harlan County**
- **Laurel County**
- **Owsley County**

G. UPDATED WEBSITE/MARKETING (Sara Jaggers)
- **Demo Updated Website – The test site is available to demo, but hopefully will be live by the end of this calendar year.**
- **Marketing Toolkit – Describe plans for certified counties to use materials/logos to market Work Ready Communities.**

H. OTHER ITEMS (Lori Ulrich, Jacob McAndrews)
- **November 2021 meeting to discuss criteria/application changes and meeting schedule for 2022.**

I. ADJOURN

Work Ready Communities

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)

Friday, October 15, 2021
9:30-11:30 a.m. ET
Virtual Zoom Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Lori Ulrich, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m. ET.

Attendance

Lori Ulrich - CHAIR	x	Kristina Slattery	x
Jeremy Faulkner	x	LaKisha Miller	X
Cody Davidson		Jon Sowards	
Anna Larson	x	Sara Jaggers	x
Moochie Hart		Jacob McAndrews	x
Rolando Thacker		Myra Wilson	
Robert Boone			

Other attendees: Elizabeth Bishop.

Approval of Minutes

➢ **Introduction of new committee members:**
  o Joseph Paul -   Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services
  o Dr. Robert Boone -   Chief Officer of Career Team
  o Rolando Thacker -   Bluegrass Area Development District
  o Myra Wilson -   Lake Cumberland Area Development District

➢ **July 30, 2021 Meeting Minutes** – there were no changes to minutes as presented.
  o Motion to Approve – Jeremy Faulkner
  o Second Motion – Kristina Slattery
  Minutes are approved by vote.

Work Ready Communities Business

➢ **WORK READY/ WORK READY in PROGRESS RECERTIFICATIONS**
  Four (6) counties submitted applications to **recertify their Work Ready Community** status.
  o **Boyle County (WR)** – LaKisha, Lori, and Kristina agreed that there were questions they had with initial review, but each answer demonstrated that the Danville-Boyle community is working together to make improvements. Kristina mentioned that the associates degree or higher is the only piece that is trending down, so she would try to figure out what is working and build upon those elements. All are agreement with moving them forward with approval.

  Motion by LaKisha Miller and second by Kristina Slattery. All voted to approve the recommendation.

- **Fleming County (WRIP)** – Lori gave the back-story on Fleming County, as they were Work Ready but they don't meet the requirements, and they submitted their application last round and was asked to add more information and resubmit as WRIP. Jon felt that they were slightly under the goal for working age population, but their virtual high school completion program was a good idea. Anna felt comfortable to move them forward for an approval based on the fact that Jon and Cody's notes matched what she thought of their application.

  Motion moved by Anna Larson and Kristina Slattery second the motion. All voted to approve the recommendation.

- **Grayson County (WRIP)** – Moochie and Robert Boone did not attend, so Sara and Jacob read the notes submitted. Moochie said they needed some work on some college and Robert noted that their graduation rate detailed specific plans including work-based learning. Jeremy felt they did not put a lot of work into their application and they were low in most of the categories. Jeremy mentioned he never received answers to his questions, but Sara was not aware of any questions to be submitted. In order to provide the best answer, the group agreed to give Grayson a week to provide the feedback needed and then a decision can be made via email before the Board meeting in November.

  Motion to table this county until the additional information is provided; the motion was moved by Jeremy and LaKisha second the motion. All voted to table this county until information is submitted.

- **McCracken County (WR)** – Cody and Jon weren't available on the call today, so Sara and Jacob read their feedback. Cody is in favor of approving their recertification without any follow up questions. Jon made notes that are similar with no questions. Kristina mentioned that since McCracken and Ballard are similar work ready committee groups, then she thinks they are probably similar. Anna stated that she felt that they did good in their application and agree to move forward with recommendation.

  Motion moved by Anna and Jo Paul second the motion. All voted to approve the recommendation.

- **Spencer County (WR)** – Jeremy felt that their application was very good, descriptions were solid, people that needed to be involved were involved, and it made a lot of sense. He enjoyed reading it. No questions were sent via Robert or Moochie.

  Motion moved by Jeremy and Anna second the motion. All voted to approve the recommendation.

- **Woodford County (WR)** – Kristina felt the same about Woodford as she did about Boyle County, most of their data trending positive especially working age without a high school diploma or equivalent. She even thought they might have a potential best practice, since it jumped to the positive. Associates Degree or Higher was still a solid number, but trended down instead. LaKisha was impressed by their Transitions to Transformation (T2T) Program and felt that their follow up information satisfied all three, all three agreed to move forward to approve.

Motion moved by Kristina and LaKisha the motion. All voted to approve the recommendation.

Jacob mentioned that we would follow-up with Woodford County, to see what they are doing with the high school equivalency to use as a best practice. Kristina asked if we could send the applications assigned to her to Elizabeth Bishop.

➢ **WORK READY / WORK READY in PROGRESS EXTENSIONS**
  Seven (7) counties submitted applications for extensions. Two extension options are available: (12-month COVID Extension (available through 2021) or the 3-year Extension request)
  o **Ballard County (WR)** – 1 year – Kristina explained that most of their data is trending to positive, some college or higher was trending down, and they need more industry representation within their committee. LaKisha noted that they needed more work on work-based learning opportunities, they are starting to work on a plan but they need more detail on working with the industry partners. The committee feels that an extension is worth approving. All voted to approve the recommendation.

  o **Bath County (WRIP)** – 1 year – Jeremy stated that he was fine with their application. Moochie and Robert didn't have any additional questions either. Everyone is good with moving to approve this extension.

  o **Carlisle County (WR)** – 1 year – Cody and Jon both noted that the high school graduation rate has declined over the last five years, but still above the threshold. Anna felt that they were pretty close to the metrics that they don't meet and thought they could use the extension to improve those numbers. The committee is good with moving to approve this extension.

  o **Fulton County (WRIP)** – 1 year – LaKisha said their associates' degree has had a small decline, but the other data was good. Kristina noticed that the high school graduation rate has been trending down and she mentioned that they had some good representation in their local industry. Lori mentioned that she was impressed with the percentage of an associates degree or higher, being a rural area. The committee is good with moving to approve this extension.

  o **Jessamine County (WR)** – 3 year – Cody didn't have any additional questions. Jon mentioned that they were doing well in the main pieces of criteria. Anna felt they have met or exceeded the benchmarks with the exception of work-based learning opportunities, engagement of underserved populations, and supply & demand of the workforce, which they outlined strategies to improve. The committee is good with moving to approve this extension.

  o **Johnson County (WRiP)** – 1 year – Lori explained that this application was submitted last round, but the committee asked for additional information, which is why they resubmitted this round. Jon meet or exceed the benchmarks and they provided information about the work-based learning that was satisfactory. Anna also felt that they addressed the questions that the committee had the last round. The committee is good with moving to approve this

extension.

- o **Magoffin County (WRIP)** – 1 year – Jacob went over Moochie and Robert's feedback, which Jeremy all felt that they met expectations and there weren't any additional questions for this application. The committee is good with moving to approve this extension.

- o **Marshall County (WR)** – 1 year – Jeremy thought their application was good and explained that the school shooting has changed some of their community and school district priorities. No additional questions from Moochie and Robert. The committee is good with moving to approve this extension.

- ➢ **REVIEW PROCESS FEEDBACK –** Lori asked the committee for their thoughts on the review document that was used for the first time during this round.
  - o **Review document – any suggested changes?**
    Several committee members asked if the criteria and KYSTATS Dashboard data could be added to the form. This would prevent the committee from going back and forth between the KYSTATS Dashboard, application, criteria, and review document.

  - o **Process improvement – any thoughts on the review process?**
    Overall individuals like the form, which helps to standardize the process. Jacob and Sara will work on updating the review document before the November 2021 meeting.

- ➢ **OVERDUE COUNTIES – Jacob and Sara explained that we started last year with 13 counties that were overdue. The list below reflects those counties that weren't able to submit their application by the last round of this calendar year. They received the overdue letter earlier this year and now they will be reverted back to the formative stage of the process.**
  Lori explained that it might beneficial for counties that have lost their committees, which allows them to start from the beginning and let them know that Jacob and Sara are here to help in anyway.

  - o Clark County
  - o Harlan County
  - o Laurel County
  - o Owsley County

- ➢ **UPDATED WEBSITE/MARKETING IDEAS**
  Sara walked through the new website and marketing ideas for newly certified counties.

  - o Demo Updated Website – Sara explained and deadline has been pushed back due to unforeseen circumstances, so we hope it will be live by December 31, 2021. (Screenshot is available within the meeting packet.)
  - o Marketing Toolkit – Sara updated everyone on materials drafted for counties to use to market their work ready status. For example, a logo to fit their email signature, websites, documents, etc. Other elements available within the toolkit are social media posts, talking points drafted, and a power point slide template. Since the new website is linked within the materials, we feel that we can't use the toolkit until the new website is live. (Screenshots are available within the meeting packet.)

➤ **OTHER ITEMS**
  o **New Schedule –** Lori mentioned that meetings would move from Fridays to Thursdays starting in 2022. Anna and LaKisha both mentioned they have limited availability on Thursdays because of prior set meetings. Lori mentioned that we could revisit the schedule if there is a need to select a different date/time.

  o **Additional Meeting** - There will be a special meeting on **November 18, 2021** meeting to discuss criteria/application changes and meeting schedule for 2022.

➤ **ADJOURN –** Lori moved to adjourn at 11:08 a.m.; Anna motioned to approved; LaKisha seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Getting Started
It's as easy as 1, 2, 3

01 STEP

Get Organized

1. Review the application package [https://workready.ky.gov/Pages/Getting-Started.aspx]

2. Form a committee or consider using an existing community committee, such as a P-16 Council, and select a committee leader.

3. Submit your county's letter of intent for Work Ready [Link to new website when live]

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Engage business and industry as much as possible during this step.

- Keep sign-in sheets and meeting notes from all meetings, calls and events.

- You can submit these as part of your community commitment evidence.

02 STEP

Inquire/Inform

1. Review your county's data [Available on the Resources page of the web site]

2. Committee leader should assign tasks and create sub-committee leads and teams for each criteria.

3. Committee leader should establish and manage a time-line and subcommittee goals.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Do not be discouraged if you discover there is a lot of work to do. Remember, success only comes before work in the dictionary, not life.

- Ask for technical assistance from the state or your local workforce partners.

03 STEP

Write Your Application

1. Committee leader selects the application editor and a back-up editor.

2. Draft of the sub-committee plans are submitted to editor to compile the complete application.

3. Committee members review and comment on the application and final product is submitted by the committee leader.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Be innovative because the panel looks for creativity and unique approaches to challenges.

Application Process Summary

While the application preparation requires a good amount of data gathering, planning and goal setting by collaborators in each county, the application steps are simple and clear.

The application process includes roles for the county, the review panel and Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) as follows:

COUNTY
- Initiate application materials
- Make decisions and gather support
- Gather data
- Complete the application
- Submit the application to the Work Ready Communities coordinators at workready@ky.gov.

REVIEW PANEL*
- Verify initial data
- Review plans
- Make a recommendation to KWIB

FINAL APPROVAL
KWIB votes to certify and the certificate package is issued by KWIB staff.

* The review panel is appointed by the KWIB and includes representatives from:

- KWIB (Member)
- KWIB (Staff)
- Kentucky Association for Economic Development
- Cabinet for Economic Development
- Kentucky Association of Counties
- Kentucky Community & Technical College System
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Kentucky Adult Education
- Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
- Kentucky Labor Cabinet

Engaging Employers

Engaging employers is a critical component to being a certified Kentucky Work Ready Community. As you meet with employers in your county, here are some IMPORTANT MESSAGES to keep in mind:

- A Kentucky Work Ready Communities certification will help our local businesses compete in a global economy.

- The Kentucky Work Ready Communities program was developed with input from business and industry, the workforce and economic development communities, education and more. As a result of this approach, Kentucky's program is the most comprehensive and innovative Work Ready program in the U.S.

- A lot of companies are competing for the same talent, so counties across Kentucky are enlarging the pool of qualified talent with the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program.

- The five criteria required to become a certified Kentucky Work Ready Community are of value to employers: high school graduation rates, community commitment, educational attainment, soft skills development, and Internet availability.

- Employers say the most important thing lacking from today's workforce is soft skills such as a strong work ethic, attendance, teamwork, and respect. As a Kentucky Work Ready Community, the county plan will include sustainable programs for high school students and postsecondary adults to learn these essential skills.

Common Questions about the Program

1. Does being a certified Kentucky Work Ready Community help us?

Absolutely! Employers and potential employers who may consider your community as a location for their business want a community with a well-trained, competitive workforce. The quality of the workforce plays a crucial part when corporate executives decide where to locate or expand their operations. A Kentucky Work Ready Communities certification is a tangible assurance to business and industry that the community is committed to providing the highly skilled workforce required in today's competitive global economy.

2. Why does Kentucky have a Kentucky Work Ready Community certification program?

If Kentucky businesses are going to compete in a global environment, we need to have a workforce that is highly skilled and ready to go to work. The quicker we can create the best workforce, the quicker we can differentiate our state to attract and grow jobs.

3. Are Kentucky Work Ready Communities promoted by the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development?

The cabinet is very supportive of the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program. When considering talent, the cabinet pitches Kentucky Work Ready Communities as a differentiator.

4. How were the criteria and thresholds selected?

The Kentucky Work Ready Community Steering Committee, which consists of representatives from all major stakeholders in the project worked to define the criteria initially while business and industry gave final input.

5. Can multiple counties make a Kentucky Work Ready Region?

YES – While Work Ready Regions are not officially a part of this program currently, as long as the counties each meet the Kentucky Work Ready Community criteria individually and become certified, contiguous counties within Kentucky can promote themselves as a Work Ready Region.

6. Can any unit smaller than a county apply (such as a city or region not defined by county lines)?

NO – Standardized data for the criteria are generally tracked at a county level.

7. Our community does not meet the minimum criteria yet – can we still apply?

YES – In order for the program to have real value for business and industry, the criteria are intentionally stringent. Most communities will apply for Work Ready Community in Progress – with detailed plans to meet the criteria where they fall short. Please use the Work Ready Community in Progress Application Package to apply for this status. (WRIP application from the new Work Ready website when it is live)

8. How long will we have to meet the criteria if we become a Kentucky Work Ready Community in Progress?

You will have up to three years to meet the minimum criteria. You will need to show continuous improvement during this period.

9. What if a Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress does not meet its goals in three years?

If you can demonstrate continuous improvement, the selection committee may decide to extend your goal deadline. If the committee does NOT extend your deadline and you lose Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress status, you must wait one year before reapplying.

Kentucky Work Ready COMMUNITIES

10. **If our community meets the criteria and becomes a Kentucky Work Ready Community, how long will that status last?**

Kentucky Work Ready Communities status will last for two years, at which time each community must be recertified to ensure they have not fallen below required criteria levels. The recertification process will be a shorter process than the original application and should be fairly easy as long as the local committee stays actively involved.

11. **Is there a cost?**

NO

12. **When can we apply?**

You may submit an application at any time. The review panel will meet at least three times per year to review applications that have been submitted at least 30 days before the review panel meeting.

13. **What if I need help getting started?**

We are here to help in any way that we can. You can contact us by phone at (502) 564-0372 or by email at workready@ky.gov.

Endorsements

The following organizations support and endorse the framework and criteria of the Kentucky Work Ready Communities initiative:

- Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education
- Kentucky Association of Counties
- Kentucky Association of Economic Development
- Kentucky Association of Manufacturers
- Kentucky Board of Education
- Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
- Kentucky Community & Technical College System
- Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts
- Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (KY Adult Education)
- Kentucky School Boards Association
- Kentucky Society for Human Resource Management

Community Outreach

The Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) in conjunction with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC) presents the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program. The board certifies counties as Work Ready or Work Ready in Progress based on the quality of their labor force and the community commitment to continuous improvement of the workforce.

The program builds on the concept of "certified employability" from the individual level—as indicated by a person's attainment of diplomas, degrees, certificates or other credentials—to the community level.

Benefits

Telling economic developers you have a skilled workforce is one thing, but earning Kentucky Work Ready Communities or Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress status provides tangible evidence that your workers are skilled and the county is committed to keeping them skilled.

Kentucky Work Ready Communities status can help communities:

- Attract new businesses and investment;
- Gain a competitive advantage over other communities;
- Help existing companies grow and add jobs;
- Recruit creative, talented and innovative people; and
- Revitalize their economies and keep them growing.

We know many other communities are pursuing this, and we need to be in the game. We're not a big city and not near an interstate, so it is even more important to prove how great our people are.

– Sandy Cole, Pike County

Because certification requires collaboration and cooperation among key stakeholders such as community college, and secondary education staff, economic and workforce development professionals, elected and appointed officials, employers, chambers of commerce, school boards, and local organizations, communities can reduce duplication of services and leverage resources to fill gaps and improve quality.

Process

Each community must gather local support and commitment to apply for the Kentucky Work Ready Communities designation. To be certified, counties have to meet and maintain five key criteria based on input from economic development and business and industry representatives. Counties with a realistic plan to meet all five criteria can apply for Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress status. Once submitted, a review panel representing key organizations reviews the application and makes recommendations to KWIB for certification.

workready.ky.gov

A Kentucky Work Ready Communities certification is a measure of a county's workforce quality. It is an assurance to business and industry that the community is committed to providing the highly skilled workforce required in today's competitive global economy.

The program was developed with input from business and industry, the workforce and economic development communities, education and more. Kentucky Work Ready Communities is the most comprehensive and innovative Work Ready program in the U.S. The certification not only addresses educational attainment, but also soft skills and digital literacy.

Strengthen Your Community

The Kentucky Work Ready Communities program has the ability to transform a community. It encourages counties to take a credible inventory of the current and future workforce, identify the gaps and carry out strategies to achieve a more knowledgeable, trained workforce. The quicker we can create the best workforce, the quicker we can attract and grow jobs.

Getting Certified

On behalf of the Governor, KWIB certifies counties as Kentucky Work Ready when they meet the following criteria.

Internet Availability
Internet availability and speed of 25 Mbps.

Graduation Rate
A high school graduation rate of at least 90%.

"*Although we had several organizations focused on economic development, a centralized effort was not realized until work began for the Kentucky Work Ready Communities initiative. Now that all the key players are at the same table, we are focused on the economic future of our county and are now on the same page.*"

– Heather Ray, Hopkins County

Educational Attainment/GED®

- At least 25% of working-age (18-64) adults in a community must have at least an associates degree and community must have a plan to increase the rate to 32% within three years (Kentucky average) and 39% within five years (national average).

- 43% of the population should have some college or higher eduaction degree.

  Check your county's status of adults with a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma by visiting the Work Ready Dashboard at https://kystats.ky.gov/Latest/WRC.

Supportive Information
Communities must have a sustainable program in place to address work ethic/soft skills development (attendance/punctuality, communication, teamwork, leadership, critical thinking, etc.) and credentialing for both the secondary school and postsecondary adult populations.

Communities also must demonstrate support from the following stakeholders: economic development, elected officials, education, workforce development and business and industry.

In addition to soft-skill development and community commitment, other criteria focuses on work-based learning opportunities and engagement of underserved population. The application includes narratives that require a 2-3 paragraph explanation of your county's plan to achieve the related piece of the Work Ready criteria.

More
Details about the program, including an application is available on the Kentucky Work Ready Communities website: http://workready.ky.gov/.