



MINUTES

Land of Sky P20 Council: Executive Committee

May 18, 2026 3:30pm - 4:30pm

Location: Teams

Present:

Dr. Gene Loflin, Emily Martin, Melissa Zenz, Tracy Parkinson, Emily Nicholson (Executive Director),

[Link to agenda](#)

1. Welcome & Opening Remarks

Mrs. Nicholson opened the meeting by welcoming members and reviewing highlights from the previous Executive Committee meeting. She noted that April had been an especially active month across the region with counselor events, partnership activities, and multiple workforce and education initiatives.

The committee briefly revisited discussions from the prior meeting, including updates on grant activity, the student representative program redesign, and YouthBuild-related work.

2. My Future NC Workforce Act Update

Mrs. Nicholson provided an update on the My Future NC Workforce Act and shared communications materials related to the legislation, including links to promotional resources and advocacy toolkits.

Discussion included:

- The introduction of companion bills in both the North Carolina House and Senate.
- Ongoing efforts by My Future NC leadership to work through legislative details during the short session.
- Opportunities for P20 members and partners to help promote the legislation through social media and local networks.
- Clarification that My Future NC is not currently requesting local resolutions or formal letters of support due to the limited timeline of the short legislative session.

Members discussed the importance of supporting statewide workforce attainment efforts and remaining engaged with legislative developments.

3. Committee Updates

Workforce & Industry Engagement Committee

Mrs. Nicholson shared updates on behalf of Ivry and reviewed draft materials designed to help employers more easily navigate partnerships with school systems.

Discussion included:

- Development of a one-page industry engagement resource for businesses.
- Plans to gather feedback from school districts, CTE directors, and counselors following the end of the school year.
- Suggestions to include district-specific contact information and clearer pathways for employer engagement.
- Reference to the DPI employer engagement portal as a possible model for simplifying school-business connections.
- Interest in exploring a shared calendar or coordinated scheduling system for business engagement opportunities with schools.

Members praised the visual layout and accessibility of the draft materials.

Workforce Recognition / Career Signing Day

Emily Martin provided a summary of a recent workforce signing day event held at Irwin High School.

Highlights included:

- Recognition of graduating students entering the workforce directly after high school.
- Participation from local employers who attended the signing event and celebrated students alongside school staff.
- Emphasis on career pathways that include growth opportunities, employer-sponsored education, apprenticeships, or tuition support.
- Positive feedback from employers and counselors regarding the importance of recognizing workforce-bound students alongside college-bound and military-bound peers.

The committee discussed opportunities to expand the initiative to additional schools and continue using the “Grown Here, Hired Here” branding and promotional materials for future events.

Postsecondary & Adult Learner Outreach

Tracy Parkinson and Mrs. Nicholson reviewed ongoing collaboration with CollegeAPP and outreach campaigns focused on prospective adult learners.

Discussion included:

- Review of recent campaign summaries and prior outreach efforts.
 - Exploration of future messaging related to AI and workforce disruption.
 - Consideration of locally developed marketing concepts before pursuing additional contracted campaigns.
 - Opportunities to gather feedback and test messaging during the upcoming AI Summit.
-

4. Governance & Membership Discussion

Dr. Loflin led a discussion regarding council membership participation and future governance considerations.

Topics included:

- Reviewing attendance and engagement levels across sectors.
- Potential implementation of existing bylaws related to inactive membership.
- Consideration of annual membership renewal or commitment processes.
- Strategies for re-engaging organizations with limited participation.
- The importance of maintaining representation from all counties and sectors while also encouraging active involvement.

Members also discussed the possibility of hosting a future executive leadership or CEO convening focused on regional workforce and education priorities. Potential timing for such an event was discussed, with late fall identified as the most realistic window.

5. Morehead-Cain Scholars Summer Project

Mrs. Nicholson shared that Land of Sky P20 was selected to host a group of Morehead-Cain scholars from UNC-Chapel Hill for an eight-week summer project.

Key points included:

- Scholars arrived in Asheville and officially began work the following week.
- The project will focus on improving and redesigning aspects of the P20 student representative initiative.
- Students represent a variety of academic disciplines and backgrounds by design.
- The scholars will conduct self-directed research and develop recommendations or deliverables related to student voice and engagement.
- Staff created resource materials and supporting documents to help orient students to regional education and workforce challenges.

Members discussed opportunities to connect the scholars with community partners and underrepresented student populations, including opportunity youth, homeschool students, and students with disabilities.

6. AI Summit Update

Mrs. Nicholson provided an update on the upcoming regional AI Summit scheduled for June 4–5.

Discussion included:

- P20's involvement in planning and promotion efforts.
- Development of a K–12 focused panel discussion.
- Potential opportunities to gather community feedback related to AI workforce messaging and outreach campaigns.
- Interest in future collaboration with regional educational institutions to host future AI-related convenings.

Members were encouraged to attend and support the summit.

7. Next Steps & Action Items

- Continue promoting awareness of the My Future NC Workforce Act.
- Gather district and employer feedback on the industry engagement resource materials.
- Explore expansion of workforce signing day recognition efforts to additional schools.
- Continue development of AI-focused workforce outreach and marketing concepts.
- Review membership participation and renewal strategies.
- Explore planning options for a future executive leadership convening.



Support onboarding and engagement of the Morehead-Cain scholars. • Finalize planning details for the June AI Summit.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned following completion of agenda items.