

*Testimony of Larry Melf  
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Pennsylvania House of Representatives  
Human Services Committee  
West Side Career and Technical Center  
75 Evans Street, Pringle, PA*

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Good afternoon Representative Kaufer, committee members, and staff. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you. I am here today representing EDSI and our workforce programs in Luzerne County.

EDSI (Educational Data Systems, Inc.) is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker service provider in Luzerne County and the Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) TANF service provider in Luzerne and Schuylkill Counties.

EDSI implements the delivery of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker and EARN services in Luzerne County through the PA CareerLink® Sites for the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Incorporated (LSWIB).

In order “to ensure a demand-driven, world-class workforce system,” EDSI operates integrated cross-program services with the goal of delivering services to employers and job seekers in a way that establishes a career for the jobseekers that produces a family-sustaining wage. EDSI integrates our services with other partner programs, such as Wagner-Peyser, Youth, Veterans, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and the Trade Act.

EDSI is a private, for-profit workforce development and consulting company that successfully operates more than 60 contracts in nine states. In the Luzerne County region, EDSI delivers high quality services to job seekers and employers by working with our partners to identify opportunities for collaboration, cooperation and leveraging of resources to implement more effective job matching services to assist all job seekers. EDSI works closely with partners to ensure that every interaction with an employer or a job seeker is an opportunity to create a positive image and to promote the CareerLink® brand.

In collaboration with CareerLink® partners, EDSI has established a framework for customer service that emphasizes problem-solving and teamwork. Highlights of our WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program design and services include:

- Implementing a Welcome Center where every new customer receives a staff-assisted service and is introduced to career-track employment
- Moving from WIA to WIOA by utilizing our national experience to transition to “no sequence of service (eliminating separate core and intensive services)” for customers and an increased focus on the employer base

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- EARN service provider's responsibilities, including our role in developing and monitoring the client's active service plan and progress through the program.

A service plan is then developed by us and the client to address the needs of the client and his or her household. It contains all recommended services, activities and supports, and addresses all barriers and any concerns. In order to remain enrolled in EARN, the client must agree to the terms of the Service Plan and sign and date the document at the time of completion, as well as at the time of any updates. The number of participation hours, broken out between core and non-core hours, a client is required to participate in is determined by the CAO. We ensure the client participates for their required hours in the program.

A breakdown of the participation hours is as follows:

- Core Hours: Required for all individuals who are mandatory to participate in Road to Economic Self-Sufficiency through Employment and Training.
- Non-Core Hours: Available if additional hours are needed to meet the minimum work requirement after the required core activity hours are met or when all opportunities to participate in a countable core activity have been exhausted or are not available.

An individual can participate in more than one core activity to meet the work participation requirement. Once the required number of core hours is met, an individual may choose to participate in any core or non-core activity. Breakdown of required hours are as follows:

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION	MINIMUM HOURS per WEEK
<b>SINGLE PARENT</b>	
child under age 6	20 hours in a core activity.
all children over age 6	30 hours with at least 20 in a core activity.
pregnant/no other children	30 hours with at least 20 in a core activity.
under age 22, head of household	Meeting participation requirement if satisfactory attendance at a secondary school or GED program. Enter 20 hours.
<b>TWO PARENT</b>	
both parents under age 22, heads of household	Meeting participation requirement if satisfactory attendance at a secondary school or GED program. Enter 20 hours for each parent.
not receiving federally-funded child care	35 hours combined. One parent must participate in at least 30 hours in a core activity.
receiving federally-funded child care	55 hours combined, at least 50 hours in a core activity. One parent must participate in at least 30 hours in a core activity. Either parent may participate for any remaining activity hours in non-core activities.
one parent DS, NS or DF not receiving federally-funded child care	One parent must participate in 35 hours, at least 30 hours in a core activity.
one parent DS, NS or DF receiving federally-funded child care	One parent must participate in 55 hours, at least 50 hours in a core activity.
one parent disabled – J parent	20 or 30 hours depending on the family composition. One parent must participate for 20 hours in core activities and child care does not affect the number of participation hours.
one parent ETP code 53	30 hours. One parent must participate for 20 hours in core activities and child care does not affect the number of participation hours.

Vocational Education	Vocational education provides training in specific occupational skills needed in the current job market.
Paid Work Experience	PWE is an opportunity for clients to enhance workplace skills and employability. PWE is subsidized employment.
Unsubsidized Employment	Unsubsidized employment is full or part-time employment, including self-employment, in which neither the employer nor employee receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds.
Job Search / Prep Training	Job search is an activity that consists of seeking full-time or part-time employment that is combined with organized training that prepares an individual for the workplace.

For last Program Year 2015-16, EDSI met and exceeded our performance goals as set forth by the Department of Human Services (DHS).

EDSI achieved a participation rate of 69.71% for our program participants, with the goal being set at 65% for last program year by DHS.

EDSI also helped participants gain employment and transition off cash assistance and achieved a placement rate of 56% (placing 164 individuals into employment) with the goal being set at 50% for last program year by DHS.

EDSI also achieved 781 individual monthly job retentions, with the goal being set forth of 634 individual monthly job retentions for last program year by DHS.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the committee members for the opportunity to provide testimony to the committee regarding the workforce development programs that EDSI operates in Luzerne County.