

## PCED looks at youth out-migration

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By Kyle Arnoldy

Reducing the out-migration by the youth has become an issue of the utmost importance for the Phillips County Economic Development board.

With the intent of identifying students' perceptions of their community, future education and career plans and their desire to live locally in the future, a survey was distributed to students in Phillips County in grades 7-12.

Results from the survey were reported during the Tuesday, Jan. 28 East Phillips County Hospital District board meeting. PCED executive director Julie Worley was on hand to update board members on the work being done by PCED.

"This problem is not unique to Phillips County," Worley said. "Even metro areas complain about the out-migration of their youth. Every rural area complains about the out-migration of their youth, so we are working on that."

Worley said it will be an ongoing process to encourage the youth to stay or return to the area in the future. She stated she wanted to visit the board meeting because she believes there is a misconception about jobs available in the county.

As an example, she stated that many youth believe the only positions available at the hospital are for doctors and nurses, while there are several other key positions that help Melissa Memorial Hospital run smoothly.

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