

WORKSmart

Kentucky

A Strategic Transformation of
Kentucky's Workforce System

May 2010



KENTUCKY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Introduction

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May 20, 2010

Governor Beshear,

Over the past year, the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board has engaged in an aggressive and open planning process to create a strategic action plan that will transform Kentucky's workforce development system. The need for transformation was made clear to the Board when considering the current financial and unemployment crisis coupled with the dynamic nature of business, industry and the world of work in a new and emerging economy.

In order for Kentucky to compete in an economy that looks very different from the past, we must redesign our workforce services to adapt to the changing needs of employers; i.e., a focus of green jobs and energy efficiency, leaner manufacturing, small business, entrepreneurial growth, and a talented/skilled workforce as an increasingly important differentiator in economic development.

This plan looks at the current system with a critical eye and proposes a set of strategies to realign nearly every aspect of our delivery of services in some way to provide our customers with a demand-driven, business-led, solutions-based approach to workforce investment decisions.

Like any investment portfolio, Kentucky should insist on a return on its investment in our workforce. The ultimate return is realized in a Commonwealth where skilled workers retain family-supporting jobs with employers who are competitive in the new economy.

The members of Kentucky Workforce Investment Board are pleased to present you with a plan that not only articulates a vision for moving Kentucky forward in the field of workforce development, but also prescribes specific strategic action steps required to realize that vision.

Respectfully,

Chair, Edward Holmes
President
EHI Consultants

Vice-Chair, Hugh Haydon
CEO
Biotech Company

Benny Adair
Directing Business Representative Machinist Union
Machinist Union District 154

Betsy Flynn
President and CEO
Community Financial Services Bank

Kenneth Allen
Vice President of Operations
Armstrong Coal Company

Oliver (Keith) Gannon
CEO
BONEAL, Inc

Beth Brinly
Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Workforce Investment

Crystal Gibson
Vice President of Public Affairs
Citi

Rick Christman
CEO
Employment Solutions

J.R. Gray
Cabinet Secretary
Kentucky Labor Cabinet

The Honorable Larry Clark
Speaker Pro Tem
Kentucky State Representative

Larry Hayes
Cabinet Secretary
Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development

James Cole
Northern Kentucky Central Labor Council

Sandra Higgins-Stinson
President
The Thomas Group

The Honorable Leslie Combs
State Representative
Legislative Research Commission

Dr. Terry Holliday
Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education

Adam Edelen
Chief of Staff
Office of the Governor

Kimberly Huston
President
Nelson Co. Economic Development Agency

Frank Ikerd
Executive (Coal Operator)
Ikerd Companies

Joseph U. Meyer
Secretary (acting)
Kentucky Education Workforce and Development
Cabinet

Dr. Robert King
President
Council on Postsecondary Education

Colonel Mark Needham
Base Realignment and Closure Advisor
Office of the Governor

Mary Lassiter
Secretary, Governor's Cabinet
Office of the Governor

Dr. Lara Needham
Department of Communications, Faculty
Bellarmine University

Robert Lekites
President
UPS Airlines

Kelly Nuckols
CEO/General Manager
Jackson Purchase Energy Corp.

Paula Lillard
Senior Vice President
Murakami Manufacturing USA, Inc.

Dr. Judith Rhoads
Community College President
KCTCS-Madisonville Community College

Roger Marcum
Executive Vice President
Saint Catharine College

Gerry Roll
Executive Director
Community Foundation of Hazard & Perry County

Heidi Margulis
Senior Vice President
Humana, Inc.

Kevin Shurn
President
Superior Maintenance Company

Dr. Michael McCall
President
Kentucky Community & Technical College System

Marcheta Sparrow
Secretary
Kentucky Tourism Arts & Heritage Cabinet

The Honorable Vernie McGaha
Kentucky Senator
Legislative Research Commission

The Honorable Diane Whalen
Mayor
City of Florence

Eugene Woods
CEO, Saint Joseph Health System
Catholic Health Initiatives

Tom Zawacki
Commissioner
Department of Vehicle Regulation

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Honorable Steven L. Beshear, Governor

Joseph U. Meyer, Acting Secretary Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board

Chair

Edward Holmes (e)
President
EHI Consultants

Vice-Chair

Hugh Haydon (e)
CEO
Biotech Company

Members

Benny Adair (w)
Directing Business Representative
Machinist Union District 154

J.R. Gray
Cabinet Secretary
Kentucky Labor Cabinet

Kenneth Allen (b)
Vice President of Operations
Armstrong Coal Company

Larry Hayes
Cabinet Secretary
Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development

Beth Brinly
Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Workforce Investment

Sandra Higgins-Stinson (w)
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The Thomas Group

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CEO
Employment Solutions

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Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education

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Speaker Pro Tem
State Representative

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Nelson Co. Economic Development Agency

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Northern Kentucky Central Labor Council

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Ikerd Companies

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BONEAL, Inc

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Senior Vice President
Murakami Manufacturing USA, Inc.

Crystal Gibson (e) (b)
Vice President of Public Affairs
Citi

Roger Marcum (e) (p)
Executive Vice President
Saint Catharine College

Heidi Margulis (e) (p)
Senior Vice President
Humana, Inc.

Gail Martin (w)
Owner
Martin Management Group

Dr. Michael McCall (p)
President
Kentucky Community & Technical College System

The Honorable Vernie McGaha
State Senator

Colonel Mark Needham (e)
Base Realignment and Closure Advisor
Office of the Governor

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President
Superior Maintenance Company

Marcheta Sparrow
Cabinet Secretary
Kentucky Tourism Arts & Heritage Cabinet

The Honorable Diane Whalen (p)
Mayor
City of Florence

Tom Zawacki (b)
Commissioner
Department of Vehicle Regulations

(p) Partnerships Committee; (b) Employers Committee; (w) Employees Committee; (e) Executive Committee

Staff

Tom West
Executive Director

Elizabeth Hack

Eboney Whiteside

Special Acknowledgement

Helen W. Mountjoy
Former Secretary
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Partners

Deborah Anderson
Kentucky Department of Education

Lindy Casebier
Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet

Deborah Clayton
Cabinet for Economic Development

DeDe Conner
Office of Employment and Training

Ron Crouch
Office of Employment and Training

Robert Curry
Cabinet for Economic Development

Kentucky Community & Technical College System

Jeanne Devers
Office of Employment and Training

Mike Dixon
Kentucky Labor Cabinet

Mike Donta
Kentucky Labor Cabinet

Stacey Games
Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs

Stuart Johnston
Education Workforce and Development Cabinet

Donna Davis

Mike Kindred

Office of Career and Technical Education

John Marks
Office of Career and Technical Education

Linda Prewitt
Office of Employment and Training

George Scott
Office of Employment and Training

Daryl Smith
Kentucky Association for Economic Development

Reecie Stagnolia
Council on Post Secondary Education

Tom Volta
UPS Airlines

Local Workforce Investment Areas

Chairs:

Representative Rocky Adkins
EKCEP

Wendell Emerson
Cumberlands

Randy Sexton
Barren River

Kevin Wilkins
Bluegrass

James Worthington
Greater Louisville

Kim Huston
Lincoln Trail

David Fleischer
Northern

Clyde Elrod
West Kentucky

Byrd Perry
TENCO

Directors:

Sheila Clark
West Kentucky

Michael Gritton
Greater Louisville

Sherry Johnson
Lincoln Trail

Lori Collins
Bluegrass

Tonya Logsdon
Green River

Darryl McGaha
Cumberlands

Debbie McCarty
Barren River

Barbara Stewart
Northern Kentucky

Denise Wietelmann
TENCO

Jeff Whitehead
EKCEP

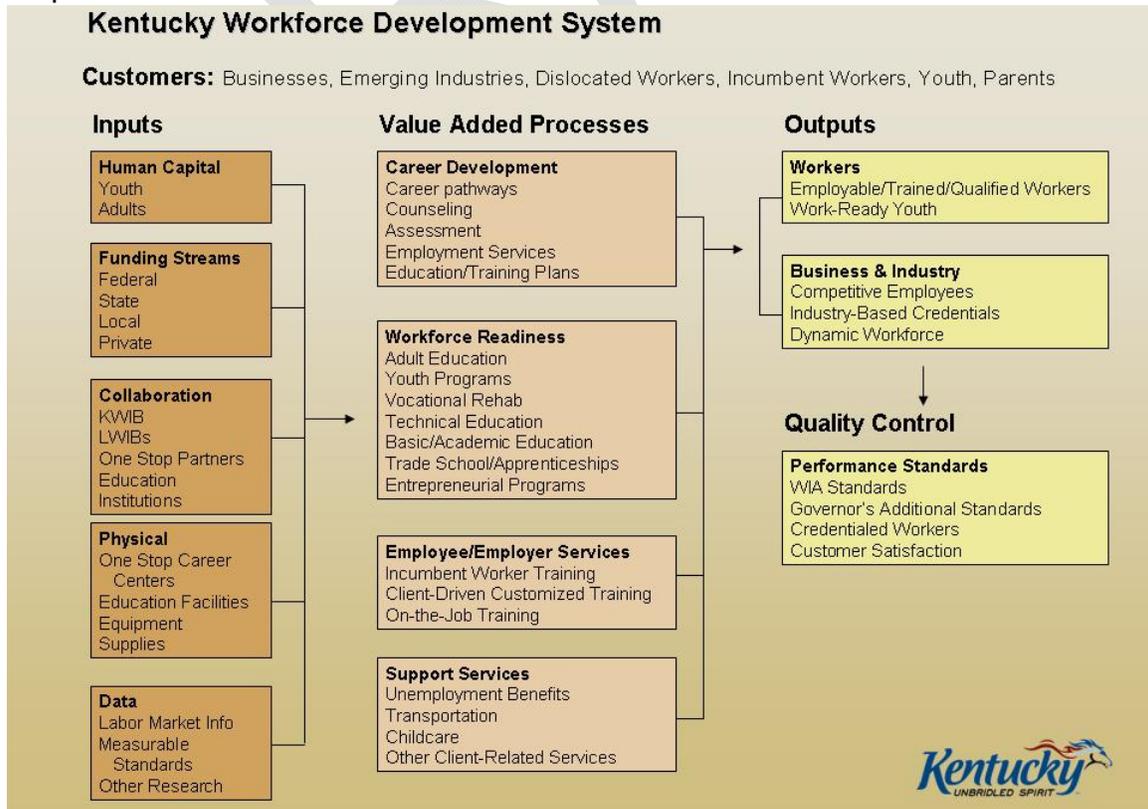
Workforce System Overview

As initially presented to the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board, the model of the Commonwealth's workforce system is extremely complex and program-focused.



The sight of this system diagram generated audible groans and even one call to “blow up” the system by business members of the board.

A new way of looking at the system from a private-sector standpoint focuses not on programs and funding streams, rather on inputs, value added processes, outputs and customers.



Strategic Planning

- Planning Process
- Stakeholder Participation

Planning Process

At the first meeting of the newly appointed Kentucky Workforce Investment Board on June 11, 2009, members adopted a process for developing a strategic plan that would serve as the blueprint for transforming Kentucky's workforce system to meet the changing needs of business and residents in a new economy.

The board saw the development of this plan as a core responsibility in fulfilling its role as an advisor to the Governor on matters relating to the Commonwealth's workforce system.

Philosophy

Rather than looking at the system at the program level, the board took a "big picture" approach to examining how the system needed to function and how it fit into the greater role of state government as a provider of services to individuals, business and industry. The board also encouraged members from the private sector and others outside state government to actively lead the process, in order to deliver a strategy that would focus on the demand side of service delivery.

The development of a vision and lofty, but achievable goals, was central to the philosophy of designing a demand-driven system based on the needs articulated by employers (the ultimate end user of the system), with input from resident clients, partners and other stakeholders in the system.

Approach

In order to articulate a demand-driven, business-led, solutions-based vision for the state's workforce system, the process followed by the board included a review of existing data and recent input, stakeholder and public involvement and research into best practices.

Three committees were appointed to undertake the development of goals and input into a vision statement. Each committee was instructed to look at the system from the perspective of an assigned stakeholder group. These included employers, employees and partners. The Executive Committee with representation from each of the committees would synthesize the work of each committee into a vision and provide the forum for addressing issues that were of common interest to all of the stakeholder groups.

A review of notes generated from meetings held by, then-Secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, Helen Mountjoy provided a foundation for each of the committees to make an initial identification of topics of interest. The groups Secretary Mountjoy met with include: Economic Development professionals, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, workforce partners, local workforce investment board members and

staff, and members of the previous iteration of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board.

A draft white paper, also developed by Secretary Mountjoy was reviewed and issues identified for study.

Each committee held a series of meetings, where issues were discussed and developed into proposed goals and objectives. Some made site visits to One Stop centers and held focus group meetings with customers of the system. Others invited individuals with technical expertise to provide input on their work.

The Executive Committee developed a vision statement and four goals based on the work of the committees. These were posted on the board's web site and public input was sought regarding the document. At the December 10, 2009 board meeting, the draft vision statement and goals were approved by the board and staff instructed to forward them to the Governor for his approval.

Following approval by the Governor, four committees received new assignments to begin drafting specific action steps required to achieve the goals and fulfill the vision.

Working through a rigorous schedule of meetings, committee members met and dedicated themselves to developing detailed documentation for more than 30 individual initiatives. Each committee identified projects that could have the greatest impact, those that could be achieved quickly to build a foundation for the more complex initiative that would follow and forwarded those recommendations to the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee identified action steps that were common to more than one goal and established a process for presenting the draft and gathering input from the full board at the May 20, 2010 meeting.

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE WILL SUMMARIZE THE MAY 20TH ACTIONS OF THE BOARD. THIS WILL BE ADDED FOLLOWING THE MEETING

Stakeholder & Public Participation

In developing this strategic plan, one of the guiding principles the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board established was to embrace a process which included gathering input from as many stakeholders and users of the system as possible.

While the draft Vision Statement, Goals & Objectives, and Implementation Action Steps were posted on line for public comment, throughout the process, committees sought out and engaged others to enrich the plan with robust and meaningful participation.

Stakeholder Meetings

Prior to the planning process getting underway, former Secretary Helen Mountjoy held a series of stakeholder meetings to gather ideas for ways to make the system more responsive to customer needs and engaging for partner organizations. The results of these meetings were provided to the planning committees who reviewed and used the data to begin their work on specific topics. The stakeholder groups included:

- Economic Development Professionals
- Kentucky Community and Technical College System
- Local Workforce Investment Boards and Directors
- Partner Agencies
- Members of the former Kentucky Workforce Investment Board.

Committees

Three committees of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board conducted a series of meetings to develop proposed goals. These committees reviewed data and conducted in-depth original research including:

- Field visit to a One Stop Career Center
- Focus groups with customers
- Discussions with technical staff

Following the approval of the vision and goals by the Governor, a fourth committee was added and each was assigned the task of developing a set of action items required to implement their assigned goal. Each committee engaged the participation of partners, local workforce directors and key technical staff with expertise in how to implement a variety of ideas.

Local Workforce Boards

Local Workforce Boards were engaged in the process in a number of ways, including:

- Updates at several local board meetings
- A meeting with local board chairs hosted by the state board executive committee

- A special luncheon for local board executive directors hosted by the state board executive committee
- Discussion of specific topics at local board directors' monthly meetings
- Local board directors encouraged to attend and participate in committee meetings

Partners

Partner agencies and organizations as well as potential new partners were invited to attend and participate in committee meetings, enriching the process and broadening the base for ideas and input.

Advisory Council

Members of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board's Advisory Council, which include representatives of the Governor's office, several cabinet secretaries and commissioners, as well as the heads of the community college system, adult education, military affairs, etc. were interviewed individual to achieve a highly focused level of participation. These interviews also resulted in participation by members and assigned staff in the development of the detailed action steps found in the plan.

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Vision, Goals & Objectives

- Vision Statement
- Goals & Objectives

Vision

Vision Statement

A vision statement is a picture of the future, our inspiration, the framework for all our strategic planning. The vision statement answers the question, “Where do we want to go?”

While a vision statement doesn’t tell us how we’re going to get there, it does set the direction for our planning.

Kentucky’s Vision Statement

Kentucky will transform the workforce development system through innovative practices which enhance sustainable economic and job growth to improve the lives of Kentuckians.

Goals & Objectives

Goals

A goal is a statement of desired outcome that is both lofty and achievable. Goals support the vision statement by breaking it down into key elements stated as a series of outcomes necessary to realize the vision. Goals are expressed in general terms and describe a desired outcome without defining the actions necessary to achieve the result.

Kentucky's Strategic Goals

Based on Stakeholder and public input, the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board and Governor Beshear established four goals to support the vision for the workforce system:

- Align the Commonwealth's workforce development system with Kentucky's education objectives
- Align the Commonwealth's workforce development system with economic development strategies
- Simplify the workforce development service delivery system
- Improve service to achieve a customer-centered delivery system

Objectives

An objective is a statement which brings focus to the essential components of a goal. Objectives do not describe specific actions, rather they support the goal by adding specificity to how the achievement of a goal will be determined.

Kentucky's Strategic Objectives

In order to provide determining factors for the goals of Kentucky's strategic plan, a series of objectives were developed. Each set of objectives supports a specific goal and provides the framework for the development of action steps as well as basis for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this plan by the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board on behalf of the Governor. A process to measure and evaluate implementation of the plan is described in the Implementation section of this document.

The strategic objectives for each goal include:

Align the Commonwealth's workforce development system with Kentucky's education objectives

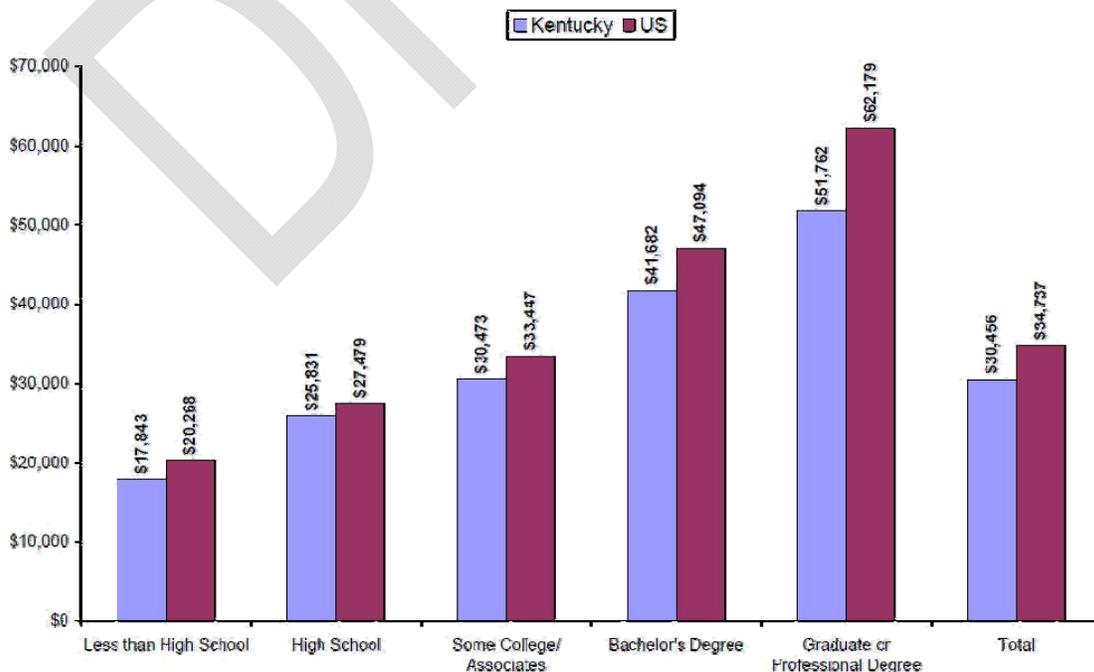
- Increase communication and collaboration between workforce boards and boards of education, technical education, postsecondary education and economic development
- Increase the number of postsecondary and work-ready high school graduates
- Promote educational options, including technical education, two-year and four-year college, apprenticeships and specialty training to younger students
- Increase awareness of educational and skills requirements for high-demand jobs, as well as those in emerging industries
- Establish the concept of life-long learning as a norm in the 21st century

Why this is Important to Kentucky

Data generated by the United State Bureau of Labor Statistics reveals how education impacts the lives of Americans by looking at the average salaries and unemployment rates of workers with a variety of educational and training backgrounds.

This chart demonstrates why education is such an integral component to the financial success of families and individuals.

Median Earnings of 25 years and over by Level of Education In 2008



Align the Commonwealth’s workforce development system with economic development strategies

- Increase communication and collaboration between workforce boards and economic development agencies
- Develop “rapid response” framework for new jobs based on model for layoffs
- Refine and promote evolving methods of projecting jobs and training needs of the future
- Increase opportunities for entrepreneurship in a culture of innovation

Why this is Important to Kentucky

Beginning with the economic crisis of 2008 - 2009, a national dialogue about a “new economy” emerged. According to neweconomyindex.org, a service of the Progressive Policy Institute, core beliefs about economic development strategies are shifting to a system which places a higher value on the quality and characteristics of the workforce than traditional strategies and tactics like financial incentives and cheap labor.

In the old economy, people believed that:	In the new economy, people believe that:
Being a cheap place to do business was the key.	Being a place rich in ideas and talent is the key.
Attracting companies was the key.	Attracting educated people is a key.
A high-quality physical environment was a luxury and stood in the way of attracting cost-conscious businesses.	Physical and cultural amenities are key in attracting knowledge workers.
Regions won because they held a fixed competitive advantage in some resource or skill.	Regions prosper if organizations and individuals have the ability to learn and adapt.
Economic development was government-led.	Only bold partnerships among business, government, and nonprofit sector can bring about change.

SOURCE: Progressive Policy Institute

Most analysts agree the majority of jobs lost during the current recession will not return, therefore new jobs in high-demand and emerging industries are key to economic vitality of communities. Identifying the right business sectors to attract and grow and preparing for their needs is a major area of focus for both economic and workforce development organizations.

The O*NET Resource Center, funded by the US Department of Labor and Developed by the North Carolina Employment Security Commission, serves as a

national on-line resource for job seekers and workforce professionals. According to their research, the following sectors have been identified nationally as high-growth or high-demand in the near future:

Advanced	Education	Homeland Security
Manufacturing	Energy	Hospitality
Aerospace	Financial	Information Tech
Automotive	Geospatial	Nanotechnology
Biotechnology	Green	Retail
Construction	Healthcare	Transportation

While the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was designed to stimulate some sectors, such as energy, construction, automotive and others, others see the recession itself as a form of stimulus that is creating new businesses and employment opportunities.

“This upside-down economy is creating entrepreneurial opportunities aplenty, so long as you can deal with a situation about as stable as a lava flow,” writes Jennifer Wang for Entrepreneur Magazine.

She cites results from Challenger, Gray & Christmas' job market index that indicates that in the second quarter of 2009, nearly 9 percent of people looking for work became reemployed by starting their own businesses.

She also quotes Kauffman Foundation Analyst Dane Stangler, "Ten, 15 years from now, there will be a slew of companies that we'll point to and say they started in the recession. You don't see them yet, but you can be sure they're out there. In fact, more than half of today's Fortune 500 companies were founded during a recession or bear market.”

Simplify the workforce development service delivery system

- Simplify online services and focus on innovative user-friendly applications
- Transform the identify of the “unemployment office”
- Increase the awareness and use of online job matching and training services
- Increase use of job portal (E³) by employers and jobseekers
- Reduce confusion and information overload for those unfamiliar with the system
- Increase communication among all service delivery points

Why this is Important to Kentucky

When asked about the difference between in-person and on-line customer service, Diane Booher, President of Booher Consulting in Dallas/Ft Worth and best selling author of books about communications and customer service, is quoted in an article on About.com, "The primary difference is that you have difficulty in building rapport with customers because there are fewer occasions of real-time interaction. A second difference is that customers seem to be more fickle and hostile because they can chose to remain anonymous. They're in; they're out; they move on without a second thought. First impressions about how user-friendly your site is, for example, get translated to how user-friendly your products and services are in general."

It should be noted that there are more than 12 individual web sites that make up the Commonwealth's on-line workforce presence. Some of the sites provide links to others, some have complex navigation menus, and many use jargon, acronyms and terms exclusive to workforce development. Few, if any of the sites appear like they are part of the same system as each has its own identity and design scheme. In addition, each local workforce area also has its own on-line presence and services. Currently, there is no single point of entry into the on-line system, nor does Kentucky employ a user-friendly, intuitive navigation feature to easily take users to their desired on-line destination.

This lack of consistency is one of the driving forces behind the concept of re-branding the system.

"Commercial marketers have been touting the virtues of a powerful identity for years. Disney, Sony and Nordstrom all have strong corporate identities that translate into better performance and bigger profits. In the last decade, many government organizations have built marketing campaigns based on a distinctive identity. The Postal Service, the Census Bureau and the IRS, to name a few, have all embarked on strategic branding efforts that hit home with their constituencies and advance their missions.

Whatever their nature, organizations creating a brand face two problems: being under-valued and lacking a consistent, organization-wide message."

– Moshe Engelberg, Ph.D., founder and president of ResearchWorks Inc.

Re-branding the system will only be successful if the system itself reflects the brand. Important changes to Kentucky's system are proposed to meet the changing needs of our customers as well as how customers access our systems. The use of interactive, web based service delivery is but one area that is due for an overhaul.

In February, 2010, Forbes Magazine identified four new trends in how job seekers are exploring career options and finding work. The four trends mentioned:

1. Social networking sites
2. Smart phones
3. Podcasts
4. Blogs

While these tools may be used today by job seekers not currently using the workforce development system, we know that as technology advances, it becomes less expensive and more accessible to the entire population. As employer and job seeker clients adapt to new technologies the workforce system must respond in kind to properly serve our customers.

Improve service to achieve a customer-centered delivery system

- Increase awareness within the system that “clients” of the workforce system, include those with jobs to fill as well as those seeking a job
- Decrease wait time for services
- Increase use of workforce system as a resource for employers to identify, screen, match, interview and prepare candidates for work
- Provide customer service training to all service delivery staff
- Increase use of online tools and resources
- Provide up-to-date resources for all clients
- Increase contacts with employers and economic development agencies regarding future workforce needs
- Develop benchmarks and base-line standards for consistency within the system (physical, program and customer services) while allowing for local and regional adaptation

Why this is Important to Kentucky

In an interview with F. John Reh on About.com, Dianna Booher, president of Booher Consultants, Inc., an international communications training and consulting firm in Dallas-Ft. Worth, said, “Customer service is dependent on three things: customer-friendly policies set by the organization's executives, training offered to the staff, and the attitude of the staff about their own organization as generated by the way their company treats them.

If executives don't actually know/see how their policies get executed on the frontline, they're often shocked to discover the actual results of how the policies

get carried out/enforced. If people aren't trained on specifics (not just smile and use people's names), they don't know how to build customer loyalty even when they want to. For example, you may tell a frontline staffer to acknowledge customers when they walk in the door. But they have to know HOW to acknowledge them. Is it appropriate to say, 'Next' to the next person, thereby making them feel like a number rather than person?"

Booher also acknowledges the difference between serving customers in-person and on-line, "They're in; they're out; they move on without a second thought. First impressions about how user-friendly your site is, for example, get translated to how user-friendly your products and services are in general."

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Implementation

- Action Steps
 - System Transformation
 - Education Alignment
 - Economic Development Alignment
 - System Simplification
 - Customer Service

- Evaluation Methodology

Implementation

Action Steps

An action step or an implementation strategy details the who, what, when, and how of the activities, programs, and initiatives required to meet the objectives of the plan. Action steps can include identification of new or modified policies, development of programs, and any other actions necessary to implement the plan. Action Steps answer the question, “How do we get there?”

Kentucky’s Action Steps

Four committees were tasked by the board to create and develop action steps applicable to their assigned goals. Each committee, with input from members of the board, local areas, partners and staff wrote, revised and prioritized these action steps. Because the strategic plan is developed for a system, there was some overlap, common and similar strategies among the committees. Others were specifically focused to a particular goal.

Organization

The action steps included in this plan are organized as follows:

- **System Transformation** – These tactics were common to several of the committees, thus are designed to help achieve multiple goals with the same action item. These actions represent some of the best opportunities to impact the system as a whole.
- **Education Alignment** – Tied to the goal of aligning the state’s workforce and education systems, these tactics are focused on improving training education attainment.
- **Economic Development Alignment** – Action steps designed to leverage state and local economic development and workforce resources are the focus.
- **System Simplification** – Opportunities to create a simpler, more useable system are identified.
- **Customer Service** – Steps to assure the system meets the needs of both employer and job seeker/employee customer bases are presented.

System Transformation

Action Steps

1. Make Investment Decisions Based on Sector Strategies
2. Branding & Identity
3. One Stop Certification Policy
4. User-Friendly On-Line Services
5. National Career Readiness Certificate Adoption & Expansion
6. Eligible Training Provider List Enhancements

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Action Step 1

Make Investment Decisions Based on Sector Strategies

Description

For local communities, tax breaks and infrastructure development are no longer the keys to attracting and retaining employers; businesses are now looking closely at the supply of skilled workers and the educational institutions that can provide the industry-relevant skills they need to grow.

Establishing statewide and regional industry sector strategies to achieve the best return on investment with the limited resources available to train and educate the workforce has proven effective in at least 25 other states.

Sector strategies will be developed by state and regional, employer-driven partnerships of industry, education and training, and other stakeholders focusing on the workforce needs of key industries to develop expertise in the industry of focus; and to coordinate information and resources to develop and implement effective, coordinated responses workforce challenges common across employers.

Sector strategies meet the skill, recruitment, and retention needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. Sector initiatives:

- Address the needs of employers by focusing intensively on the workforce needs of a specific industry sector over a sustained period, often concentrating on a specific occupation or set of critical occupations within that industry, and assuring industry that there will be a pipeline of skilled workers to meet future workforce demands;

- Address the needs of workers by creating formal career maps and pathways to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment, and sustaining or increasing middle-class jobs;

- Bolster regional economic competitiveness by engaging economic development experts in workforce issues and aligning education, economic, and workforce development planning;

As sector strategies are developed, incorporation of energy efficiency and “green” issues must be incorporated in anticipation of the culture shift toward a greener economy with impacts in every sector.

Strategic Benefit

Helps align the Commonwealth’s workforce development system with economic development strategies.

Increases communication and collaboration between workforce boards and economic development agencies, as well as major industries and their employers

Helps evolve our methods of projecting jobs and training needs of the future

Nature of Change

Administrative

Cost

Consultant to facilitate and coach the development of sector strategies - \$200,000

Implementation Timing

It is anticipated that roll out of the first sector strategies would occur within one year of contracting with the consultant

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
Commissioner of Workforce Development
Local Workforce Investment Boards

Consequences of No Action

Without sector strategies in place, investment will continue on a case by case, employer by employer basis. Kentucky will not realize the efficiencies that can be achieved by focusing our investments on specific high-growth, high-demand industries. Achieving these efficiencies could present opportunities to train more workers.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local areas will benefit by increased contact with business clients and greater focus on industry-specific training needs. Local areas should expect a higher return on investment due to the highly focused and efficient use of resources achieved via these strategies. Local boards and elected officials can have greater confidence that the services being delivered are those most valued by their clients.

Potential Obstacles

Defining and limiting the sectors
Participation by stakeholders

Transparency/Accountability

Benchmarking of current return on investment in each local area should be compared to the return on investment in the years following implementation of the strategies.
Common performance measures should be sufficient for this analysis

Additional Comments

The energy sector may prove to be the best sector to begin with as several efforts are currently underway to better understand the workforce needs of this industry.

Action Step 2

Branding/Identity

Description

The current identity of Kentucky's workforce system consists of an alphabet soup of acronyms for agencies and programs which have little or no meaning to the customers we serve. Our one stop career centers are known primarily as "the unemployment office" because of the location of many of these centers in state-owned buildings built in the middle of the last century or to a lesser extent by a variety of names given by local boards in a well-meaning attempt to rebrand the facilities at the local level. Our on-line tools and services are a patchwork of sites which lack a cohesive identity and functionality and are accessed through a complex web of links and search parameters.

A comprehensive rebranding initiative to address the architecture of the entire system including one stops, on-line services, and other public interfaces is required to achieve a positive return on the commonwealth's investment in the system.

The rebranding action item must include establishing the system's foundational elements or values such as:

- quality of customer service
- user-friendly tools
- consistent case management,
- standard menu of services
- etcetera.

In developing the architecture of the system, flexibility for local adaptation must also be considered.

While a unifying and easily identifiable name, logo, message are important communication and marketing tools, these must be developed in support of the overall goals of Kentucky's strategic plan and should enhance the experience for our customers.

Just as a chain restaurant like McDonalds is readily identifiable and promises a consistent experience and expectation of a certain level of quality, so to the identity of the workforce system manifests itself in the facilities and service delivery points where customers interface with services.

Our facilities must be updated and upgraded to ensure that our business and jobseeker customers feel comfortable conducting business with us and realize the value of the services we provide. The involvement of the private sector in re-imagining the physical spaces where we conduct business is critical to achieving a successful return on investment in physical improvements.

Strategic Benefit

Transforms the identify of the “unemployment office”

Increases the awareness and use of online job matching and training services by unifying promotional efforts

Increases the use of our job portal (E3) by employers and jobseekers with increase promotional activity

Reduces confusion for those unfamiliar with the system by simplifying the message and increasing the efficiency of statewide outreach

Increased communication among all service delivery points will be achieved by unifying them under one brand

Nature of Change

This change will require repositioning of all elements of the system and will have impacts at both the state and local levels

Cost

Rebranding consultant and identity development – estimated \$200,000

Additional funding will be required to implement the recommendations of the consultant (signage, printed materials, etc.)

Implementation Timing

Rebranding rollout in fall of 2010 with on-going activities continuing for 1-3 years.

Responsible Parties

Governor’s Office

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board

Local Workforce Boards

Consequences of No Action

Kentucky will continue to fund a patchwork of tools and programs which have limited opportunity to achieve the maximum return on investment due to splintered outreach efforts, a confusion of identities and well-meaning professionals operating in isolated silos.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Jobseeker and employer customers will benefit from a user-friendly system that is memorable, easy to identify and of dependable quality. Attracting business clients as new or return customers will benefit those seeking jobs and new opportunities.

Local boards will benefit by becoming part of a larger effort to unify the system, increase awareness and expand the customer base through statewide promotional activities.

Potential Obstacles

Local boards have made significant investments over time to develop their own unique identities. Flexibility to allow for local adaptation to a state brand is critical to success.

A strong commitment to marketing the rebranded system will be required.

Transparency/Accountability

The involvement of stakeholders at the state and local level will be necessary to achieve the buy-in that will determine success.

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Action Step 3

One Stop Certification Policy

Description

In order to assure the highest possible return on investment for a common branding identity across the state, clients must be able to depend on a baseline level of consistency in the services delivered as well as the point of delivery for those services.

Kentucky's one stop system should take a cue from chain and franchise businesses operations such as McDonalds restaurants. While each individual outlet can reflect the character of the local community, customers can always depend on certain standards in terms of graphic identity, menu of products, convenience of location, customer service, and quality of place.

The Kentucky Workforce Investment Board will establish a policy framework to serve as the baseline standards of a one stop center in the Kentucky workforce system. This framework may address: menu of services, presence of partner agencies, quality of place, facilities to serve employer as well as employee clients, graphic identity, trained staff, compliance with data entry and reporting requirements, and others. The policy structure could be based on a private sector quality framework, such as the Malcolm Baldrige model (see below) to build and maintain quality.

As local workforce boards undertake the certification process there will be an opportunity for centers to be certified at silver, gold and platinum levels. This framework is intended to motivate one stop managers and local boards to innovate and constantly strive for improvement.

Financial incentives such as investment of statewide administration funding for improvements and access to statewide reserve funds could be tied to certification levels and plans for improvement to a higher level.

Strategic Benefit

Develops benchmarks and base-line standards for consistency within the system (physical, program and customer service) while allowing for local and regional adaptation

Increases awareness within the system that "clients" of the workforce system, include those with jobs to fill as well as those seeking a job

Encourages one stop operators to create facilities which serve as a resource for employers to identify, screen, match, interview and prepare candidates for work

Requires customer service training to all service delivery staff

Nature of Change

This change represents a significant departure from the existing culture and will require the commitment of partner agencies and local boards to collaborate to achieve the highest return on investment.

Cost

Costs associated with development of the policy framework can be covered by the administrative functions of the cabinet. Estimate for assessment of 31 centers, development of framework and implementation - \$300,000

Costs associated with improvements to centers will vary dramatically and should be shared by partner agencies as well as local boards.

Implementation Timing

This is a long-term project, implementation will be on going, but certification program should be established within six months of adoption of the system rebranding.

Responsible Party

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
Office of Employment and Training
Local Workforce Investment Boards
One Stop Operators
Partner Agencies

Consequences of No Action

One stop centers will continue to be seen as “the unemployment office,” business and industry will not regard the system as having value in the way private sector employment services are regarded. Services will continue to be delivered in facilities that run the gamut of poor to excellent, reinforcing the inconsistency which undermines the investment in programs and services.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local areas will benefit by having a clear policy framework to guide their improvements as well as those of partner agencies. These new standards will provide local operators with leverage for collaboration and a basis for helping achieve equity in the distribution of responsibility for the success of the one stop centers.

Potential Obstacles

Although responsibility for achieving certification technically rests with the one stop operator, unless there is a clear mandate from the Governor and the Cabinet for equitable participation by all partner state agencies, local boards will be unduly burdened with achieving results without the ability to influence the means.

Transparency/Accountability

All one stop centers will be listed along with their achievement level in all on-line and printed resources. Certificates or plaques suitable for display in the one stop will be provided upon certification and advancement to higher levels.

Access to statewide reserve funds and use of administration funding may be used as an incentive for achievement and progress toward improvement.

The KWIB will review annual status reports as a means of oversight for the program.

Best Practices

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program Excellence is a Journey, Not a Destination

Organizations everywhere are looking for ways to effectively and efficiently meet their missions and achieve their visions. Thousands of organizations use the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence to guide their enterprises, improve performance, and get sustainable results. This proven improvement and innovation framework offers each organization an integrated approach to key management areas:

- Leadership
- Strategic planning
- Customer focus
- Measurement, analysis, and knowledge management
- Workforce focus
- Process management
- Results

Improving Performance

The Baldrige Criteria can be adapted to fit unique challenges and cultures and help evaluate performance, assess where improvements or innovation are most needed, and get results. Participants in the Baldrige program are part of a national effort to improve America's performance and its competitive standing in the world.

Thousands of organizations of all sizes in every industry use the Baldrige Criteria, including:

- Large, Fortune 500 companies, including Boeing Aerospace Support, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, Caterpillar Financial, and Motorola CGISS
- Small businesses, such as PRO-TEC Coating Company, which provides coated sheet steel to the U.S. auto industry; privately-held MESA Products, Inc.; and Branch-Smith, a family-owned, full-service printing company
- Large hospitals and hospital systems, like Poudre Valley Health System and SSM Health Care and single hospitals like Bronson Methodist Hospital
- Large and small schools and colleges, such as Iredell-Statesville Schools, Chugach School District, Richland College, and Pearl River School District
- Nonprofits and government entities, such as the City of Coral Springs and U.S. Army ARDEC

The Baldrige system criteria help organizations assess their improvement efforts, diagnose their overall performance management system, and identify their strengths and opportunities for improvement



SOURCE: National Institute of Standards and Technology

New York State One Stop Certification Program

New York State established a quality-driven, comprehensive system of workforce development services, and access to services, that benefit all New York citizens. One way this was accomplished is a systemic approach in the development of one-stop operator quality standards and measures of excellence that are flexibly applied on the local level. The State Workforce Investment Board ensures consistency of quality across New York State's one-stop system by establishing a State-level certification of local One-Stop System and Center Operators. Achievement of State-level certification allows local Operators to benefit from the "WorkforceNY" statewide one-stop logo and marketing campaign and promotional materials. This "branding" of New York's one-stop system identifies local systems and centers which have attained State certification as those that have met the highest quality standards for the provision of workforce development services in their community. State certified Operators enjoy the benefits of brand recognition and will be able to easily customize marketing products to add their own area/center moniker and logo.

In the New York program, each local WIB must establish a one-stop operator certification process prior to applying for State level certification. In addition, the local WIB must have a written agreement in place with each one-stop operator in the local system. This written agreement provides a basis for accountability, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and promotes inclusion of partners and integration of services. Consistent with the WIA principles of universal access, customer choice, increased accountability, and strong private sector involvement, the local certification process must also advance quality improvement methods, customer satisfaction measures, and staff development.

State level certification uses the locally developed quality standards and criteria as its foundation. In addition to a paper review, State-level site visit teams are dispatched to

verify required elements, partner involvement, service integration and other quality indicators. If any elements are missing or found to be inadequate, feedback and technical assistance are provided to bring the operator up to the level required for State certification. Once State certification has been achieved, it is valid for two years from the date of award. Local WIBs may apply for recertification on behalf of their operators six months prior to expiration. Listed below are the steps involved in achieving State-level certification.

Step 1: The Local WIB develops a written One-Stop Operator certification process and submits it to the NYS Department of Labor as staff to the State WIB. The local certification process may be transmitted for review prior to OR at the time of application for State certification of the local One-Stop System/Center Operator(s). Technical assistance will be provided as requested.

Step 2: The Local WIB submits an application for State certification of locally certified One-Stop System/Center Operator(s) to the state.

Applications will be accepted on a continuous basis and may be submitted for individual One-Stop Center Operators as they become locally certified or may be submitted for a One-Stop System Operator overseeing more than one One-Stop Center. In either case, all One-Stop Centers under the responsibility of the One-Stop Operator must be locally certified prior to submitting an application for State certification.

The application package must include:

- copy of local certification process (unless previously submitted)
- completed State certification application form
- signed Attestation page asserting that One-Stop Operators have met local criteria
- signed Non-Compliance Policy stating local WIB Chair has read and understands consequences of non-compliance
- copy of local WIB/One-Stop Operator Agreement

Step 3: Once an application has been reviewed, a site visit will be scheduled to include members of the local Board, the One-Stop Operator and other individuals as appropriate. Site visits will be conducted by a team consisting of staff to the State Board and state agency workforce development partners. Generally, site visits will cover the areas listed below; however, more specific information will be given prior to the actual visit:

- Customer flow
- Administrative systems
- Service and resource integration
- Information technology systems
- Business services
- Quantitative and qualitative measures
- Financial systems

- Facility

- Step 4: The site visit team will provide written feedback to the local WIB which will result in either Certification or provision of technical assistance.
- Step 5: The site visit team will make annual visits to assist the local WIB in identifying improvement opportunities, training and technical assistance needs. These visits will be prearranged with local WIB Chairs. In addition, unannounced, "secret shopper" visits will take place randomly during the term of certification in order to gauge performance from a customer's point of view. Local WIB Chairs will receive a written feedback report after both the pre-arranged visits and the secret shopper visits. Additional details will be distributed to Local Board Chairs regarding how the secret shopper reviews will be conducted, the components the shoppers will focus on, and the evaluation process that will be used.
- Step 6: A local WIB may apply for recertification of its system/center operator(s) six months prior to expiration of State certification. Local WIBs must ensure that all operators seeking recertification have continued to meet or exceed the local level certification criteria.

SOURCE: adapted from *Guide to Certifying One-Stop Operators*, NYS Department of Labor in consultation with New York State Workforce Investment Board

Action Step 4

User-Friendly On Line Services

Description

Completely overhaul Kentucky's workforce development on-line service delivery by improving and expanding web-based tools and services. In order to create an on-line user-friendly environment for all customers, the new approach will include a single point of entry or front door for both employer and employee customer groups. This portal should be designed around the themes of Kentucky's rebranding strategy and easily guide each user to the appropriate services with intuitive navigation features.

One of the cornerstone web tools employed by the system is "e3", the commonwealth's employment, education, and economic development application. Research during the planning process has revealed that the name "e3" is not widely known by customers and has not been promoted to employers or job seekers effectively. Investments in this system have been significant over the years. However, due to lack of name recognition or possible negative experiences with the current "e3" system, the rebranding of this on-line service should be included in the system branding project.

Enhancement of the current "e3" system to provide jobseekers and employers with a robust menu of services and more intuitive, user-friendly portal and electronic data entry interface which more closely approximates popular job matching services available on the internet, such as Monster.com and Careerbuilder.com

For jobseekers, the enhancements must include a resume building component and automated matching system based on the user's resume profile to identify and rank available jobs best suited to that user.

For the employer, these improvements must reduce the amount of data which must be entered and should be capable of accepting electronic documents already prepared by the employer outside the system. The system must also be able to provide employers with a list of qualified individuals based on resume profiles stored in the system.

Other improvements recommended to the system's on-line tools include: web-based eligibility reviews for unemployment insurance claims, redesign of agency web-sites to conform with a new branding architecture, on-line improvements for employers applying for Work Opportunity Tax Credit , continuous upgrades to create a virtual one stop, and update of the commonwealth's Employ Kentucky Operating System user policy to make user access consistent throughout the system.

In all cases, improvements to any part of the system must employ the same principles of user-friendly, intuitive interfaces, using plain English and providing interactive features. Web sites within the system must also be redesigned to build consistency in navigation, language, graphic identity, and basic features, such as site index, contact us, about, etcetera.

Strategic Benefit

Simplifies on-line services and focuses on innovative user-friendly applications

Increases the awareness and use of online job matching and training services

Increases awareness within the system that “clients” of the workforce system, include those with jobs to fill as well as those seeking a job

Increases use of workforce system as a resource for employers to identify, screen, match, interview and prepare candidates for work

Increases use of online tools and resources

Provides up-to-date resources for all clients

Increase contacts with employers and economic development agencies regarding future workforce needs

Reduces confusion and information overload for those unfamiliar with the system

Nature of Change

This change will require a project champion within the cabinet and the IT department of the cabinet. Developing consistency may require some offices or agencies to be flexible and re-examine their on-line tools and services.

Cost

Estimated at just under \$1.3 million

Implementation Timing

Work will begin immediately and make require 1-2 years to complete. Maintenance and continuous updates and enhancements will be required to remain competitive.

Responsible Parties

Governor's Office

Secretary of Education and Workforce Development

Commissioner of Workforce Investment

Division of Technology Services

Consequences of No Action

Kentucky will continue to invest in a system (e3) which offers little return for either employers or jobseekers. Productivity and efficiency will suffer and Workforce staff will have less time to focus on customers' real needs if they are occupied helping clients complete tasks which could easily be automated.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local workforce staff will have better tools and services to offer employers and jobseekers. Time spent completing manual tasks can be freed up to focus on customers and their actual needs.

More automation in the system should result in short lines and wait times in one stop centers by making many applications available to customers 24-7 on-line.

Potential Obstacles

Buy-in across the system at many levels will be required. Resources to aggressively promote on-line tools and services will also be required.

Transparency/Accountability

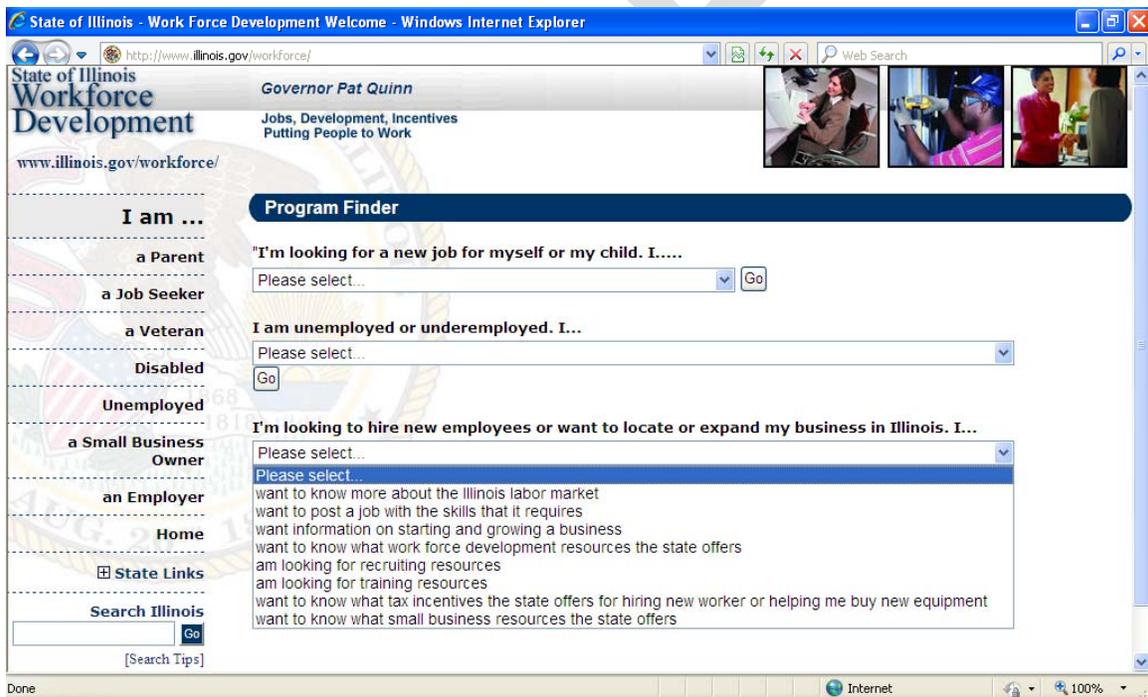
Benchmarking the use of existing sites and comparing to use following upgrades and promotion should indicate the return on investment being achieved.

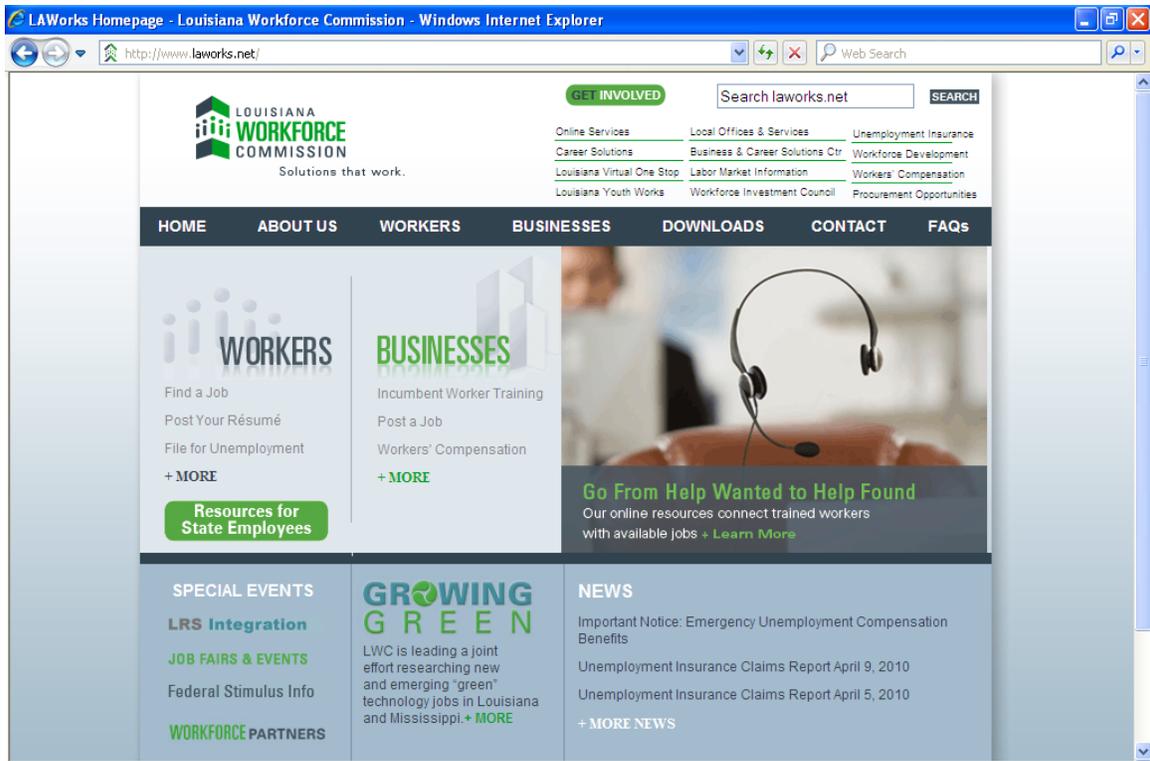
Additional Comments

Upgrades to services currently underway should continue, with an understanding that modifications to conform with a rebranding strategy will be required once that identity has been adopted.

Best Practice

The states of Illinois and Louisiana employ user-friendly front doors or portals to triage visitors based on who they are and what they want to accomplish.





Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

From their 2009 Annual Report

The agency launched its new Web site at www.PositivelyMinnesota.com in December, unveiling a new site that is better organized and easier to navigate.

“Before we began developing the new site, we conducted usability testing with actual users—job seekers, businesspeople, site selectors and local government officials,” said Laura Winge, the agency’s creative director. “They all told us the old site was too confusing.”

Presenting DEED and its programs in a comprehensive yet understandable package online can be difficult. DEED has more than 50 programs, handling everything from veterans issues to employment data to services for people with disabilities. The Minnesota Trade Office, Unemployment Insurance Program, Minnesota WorkForce Centers and Public Facilities Authority all fall under the umbrella of DEED.

How, then, to keep the Web site simple? The solution was to organize the site based on user needs. The home page features three main tabs—one for job seekers, one for businesses and one for local governments.

Customers can easily navigate to pages of greatest interest to them, and bypass information that is irrelevant.

All of the new site’s sections and pages are organized in the same way, providing a uniformity of user experience. That uniformity also extends to local WorkForce Center Web sites, which had varied greatly in their design, content and organization.

A customer who is starting his own business was so impressed with the new site that he wrote DEED to extend his thanks. “The layout of the Web site is very easy to use,” he said. “I can always find what I need very quickly without hassle, and the contained documents are clear, concise and thorough—a difficult balance to achieve.”

POSITIVELY Minnesota
Department of Employment and Economic Development

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- Shovel Ready Site Certification
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Action Step 5

National Career Readiness Certificate – Adoption & Expansion

Description

Kentucky pioneered the work-ready certificate with the implementation of the Kentucky Employability Certificate. That program became later a model for other states.

Based on performance on several Work Keys tests, the Kentucky Employability Certificate was envisioned to provide potential employers with an assessment of applicants basic skills in math, English and locating information. The program met with limited success and is used extensively by some employers in certain regions of the state and not at all by others.

ACT, the organization that administers the Work Keys assessments has expanded upon Kentucky's idea and created a nationally recognized credential called the National Career Readiness Certificate. This credential offers portability between states. ACT offers certificates at four levels, bronze, silver, gold and platinum. A focus group of those familiar with the Kentucky Employability Certificate and the National Career Readiness Certificate have concluded that the Bronze level certificate offers little value to employers. However the remaining three levels can provide employers with a valuable tool in screening applicants.

In an effort to provide business and industry with a screening tool that could prove valuable in the hiring process. These levels also provide certificate holders with a credential that will help them compete in the job market. For those reasons it is recommended that Kentucky adopt the National Career Readiness credential and recognize only those scoring at the silver and above levels with certificates. This will replace of the Kentucky Employability Certificate.

Expansion of assessment sites to include all comprehensive one stop locations is also recommended. It is further recommended that an alliance be formed between the Department of Workforce Development and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce to promote the value of the certificate to business and industry, and that certificates be signed by the Governor and the President of Chamber.

Other alliances to promote the value of the certificates should be formed with the Kentucky Retail Federation, Hospital and Health Care Associations, the Hotel and Motel Association, the Restaurant Association, and the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers.

Strategic Benefit

Increase communication and collaboration between workforce boards and boards of education, technical education, postsecondary education and economic development

Increases the number of postsecondary and work-ready high school graduates

Provides opportunity to promote educational options, including technical education, two-year and four-year college, apprenticeships and specialty training to younger students

Increases awareness of educational and skills requirements for high-demand jobs, as well as those in emerging industries

Helps establish the concept of life-long learning as a norm in the 21st century

Nature of Change

Administrative, no legislation required

Cost

Start up and year one funding - \$420,000

Paid for with 2009 Incentive Grant

Implementation Timing

Roll out in June 2010

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board

Office of Employment and Training

One Stop Career Centers

Council on Post secondary Education

Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

Consequences of No Action

Kentucky will lose a competitive advantage in providing employers with screening tools for new hires.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Opportunity to provide valuable service to local employers, opportunity to meet with applicants to assess and refer for training, if needed, added value to One Stop Centers.

Potential Obstacles

Cost of assessments in future years

Transparency/Accountability

Weekly sweeps of assessments conducted and issuance of certificates.

Annual survey to determine use of certificates by employers in conjunction with partner organizations

Best Practice

In 2005, the Cumberland Workforce Investment Area (CWIA) in partnership with Kentucky Adult Education conducted a pilot program to work with businesses and individuals to raise awareness and use of the WorkKeys assessment and the significance of obtaining a Kentucky Employability Certificate for both. During this pilot, the lack of knowledge by both groups became evident. Major inroads were made to educate and make the use of this certificate in the interviewing and hiring process. The project also revealed the need for access to a large population of workers that would help build a foundation and larger pool of individuals with the KEC to demonstrate the quality of our local workforce for economic development purposes.

After research and thought, a decision to target high school seniors as the focus to build the larger pool was made. During the pilot, a limited number were selected and the results were successful.

As a follow-up to that pilot, the Cumberland Youth Council and Cumberland Workforce Investment Board (CWIB) chose to continue the project. It has been in operation for the past five years.

During that period, 13,421 seniors took the test with 7,809 receiving either a gold or silver certificate. Those that do not attain a certificate or wish to obtain a higher certificate are encouraged to contact their local Adult Education Center after graduation.

This service to youth is a core service assessment that can lead to a certificate that will benefit them as they seek employment for years to come. The Cumberland Youth Council and CWIB consider this a great benefit to both the individual and the business community and one step in creating and showing the quality of workforce in our area.

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Action Step 6

Eligible Training Provider List Enhancements

Description

Overhaul the Eligible Trainer Provider List process and eligibility criteria to reinforce priorities around high demand occupations, sustainable wages and career ladder goals.

Strategic Benefit

Ensure the training dollars provided meet the needs of business and industry, provide a livable wage for workers and support the regional and state economy.

Nature of Change

Develop a new statewide eligible training provider policy and redesign the state and local process to support that policy.

Cost

Programming - \$10,000

Implementation Timing

Examine best practices around the process (1 month)
Draft the new policy for KWIB review and approve (1 month)
Retool the process (3 months)
Train state and local staff (3 months)

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
Office of Employment and Training Division of Workforce and Employment Services

Consequences of No Action

Training resources may not be strategically invested based on state and regional business needs or economy demands.

Job seekers may not be trained in high demand, high growth occupations limiting their economic potential.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Individuals that receive training will be equipped to meet employers' needs in their regional economy.

Potential Obstacles

Resistance to an expanded state role in the Eligible Trainer Provider List process.

Transparency/Accountability

Ensure that taxpayer resources are being invested in high demand, high growth occupational training

Education Alignment

Action Steps

1. Tech – High
2. I-Best: GED in Context
3. Apprenticeship Sales Force
4. High School Outreach
5. GED Express: Lodge & Learn

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Action Step 1

Tech-High

Description

Much like many of our One Stop Centers suffer from an outdated identity of “unemployment offices”, Kentucky’s secondary technology centers also suffer from an outdated identity as the place to send the “undesirable” or “not-college-material” students. The fact is that these alternatives to traditional secondary education offer programs which can prepare students for work and/or continuation of their education into post-secondary skills training options such as associates degrees, occupational certificates, and registered apprenticeships.

Also similar to the identity problem with One Stop Centers, simply changing the name is not enough to realign the image of this educational alternative effectively. In order to shift the image, meaningful relationships with Kentucky high schools and Area Technology Centers around career development must be established and nurtured.

Providing Career Counselors in all Area Technology Centers, as well as those technical education facilities operated by local school boards, should be an area of focus for promoting relevant career pathways. This action is viewed as one of the most efficient and effective ways to transform the technical education system.

These services should be predicated on and supported by partnerships of local government, business and industry, industrial development authorities, and local workforce boards.

The infrastructure and equipment needs of technical education programs must be addressed on a regular basis. There are examples of businesses threatening to leave the state based on outdated technical education facilities and equipment which limit the competitiveness of the Commonwealth’s workforce.

By engaging local industry in the development of programs and facilities, technical education in Kentucky will be better positioned to respond to the needs of businesses as they thrive in an increasingly competitive environment. Institution of cutting edge programs, such as those associated with the green movement will also make our students more competitive in the job market.

Kentucky’s technical education system, regardless of what entity administers the facilities, should be viewed in the same light as a magnet school, where students aspire to attend rather than seeing it as a warehouse of last resort for non-traditional students.

Strategic Benefit

Increases communication and collaboration between workforce boards and boards of education, technical education, and business and industry.

Increases the number of postsecondary and work-ready high school graduates

Promotes educational options, including technical education, two-year and four-year college, apprenticeships and specialty training to younger students

Increases awareness of educational and skills requirements for high-demand jobs, as well as those in emerging industries

Nature of Change

Change in the culture of technical education to one of collaboration and aspiration to lead and become a sought after service, rather than a last resort. Adding counselors to area technology centers would require legislation already proposed but not passed in General Assembly.

Cost

Estimated annual cost for a full time counselor's salary/fringe = \$63,000

54 Area Technologies Centers

@ \$63,000 = \$3,402,000

Implementation Timing

Because the change requires action by the General Assembly, implementation is likely to occur on a mid-long term schedule. The earliest possible opportunity to pass the required legislation will be January of 2011.

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Department of Education

Office of Career and Technical Education

Local Workforce Investment Boards

Consequences of No Action

Technical education will continue to be viewed in a more negative than positive light, programs have the potential to loose touch with skills in demand locally without strong business and industry involvement.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Technical education has the potential to be viewed like other magnet schools with special focus and become a valuable resource to local employers and true preparatory experience for the world of work or continued education. Students engaged in such a program will become more competitive in the job market and help employers become more competitive in the world market.

Potential Obstacles

Culture shift and attitudinal realignment at all levels within the education system.

Funding for career counselors

Transparency/Accountability

The legislative process will determine accountability measures and structures for this action step.

Action Step 2

I-BEST: GED in Context

Description

Develop integrated contextualized curriculum to meet the basic literacy skills needs and professional-technical certificate requirements to accelerate learning to prepare low-skilled adults for work and to increase their contributions to the state's economy while increasing their capacity for obtaining higher wage positions and career advancement opportunities.

Creating contextualized curriculum to be used in the 120 adult education programs across Kentucky is a way to accelerate this learning process. Currently, KYAE awards approximately 10,000 GED® diplomas and KCTCS awards 13,000 certificates a year. Each of these credentials can take several years to earn independently. However, a partnership to develop contextualized curriculum will accelerate the learning process enabling the student to enter the workforce much quicker than if each credential were earned separately.

The curriculum should be modeled after the nationally recognized Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Model (I-BEST) developed by Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and aligned with Kentucky's sector strategies. I-BEST programs are based on professional-technical programs that lead to an approved professional-technical certificate or associate degree program from a community college that result in high wage employment.

I-BEST pairs adult education instructors and professional-technical instructors in the classroom using contextualized curriculum, thus contributing to a learning experience for students that combines both literacy and workforce skills simultaneously. This process allows for the student to gain the necessary education and skills concurrently thus greatly reducing the amount of time the student spends in the classroom.

Strategic Benefit

Increases communication and collaboration between boards of education, technical education, postsecondary education and economic development

Increases awareness of educational and skills requirements for high-demand jobs, as well as those in emerging industries

Helps establish the concept of life-long learning as a norm in the 21st century

Enables low-skill adults to simultaneously achieve basic literacy skills plus a college credential while decreasing the amount of time students spend in study

Learning basic skills in the context of technical professions increases basic skills completion rates

Nature of Change

Changes the philosophy that students must complete their GED prior to entering training or educational programs which provide them with occupation-specific skills development. Allows for simultaneous work toward a GED and career credentials.

Cost

Estimated at less than \$1 million

Implementation Timing

Short term, curriculum development

Longer term, incremental integration into postsecondary technical training programs

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Adult Education, Council on Postsecondary Education

Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Consequences of No Action

Kentucky's ability to grow its human capital infrastructure and raise the educational attainment level necessary to compete economically will suffer. Kentucky will continue with business as usual and see programs diminish or disappear as budget cuts limit the resources to achieve gains in education attainment.

Employers see a value in the GED, in some cases as better than a high school diploma. Not implementing this program will constitute a missed opportunity to demonstrate the Commonwealth's commitment to innovate and provide business and industry with the skilled workforce they need to be competitive.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

The program will help local areas develop a more competitive workforce in a shorter period of time.

Participants in the program will find the curriculum for obtaining their GED more relevant to their career choices, increasing chances for successful attainment of both education and occupation credential attainment.

Potential Obstacles

Funding for curriculum development

Transparency/Accountability

The Adult Education and Kentucky Community and Technical College System will be required to report progress to the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet at major milestones as the project is implemented.

Additional Comments

Individuals who attend community college occupational degree programs are eight percent more likely to be employed and earn \$4,400 per year more on average than similar individuals in the labor force who do not enroll in any training programs (Research Report No. 06-2 Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges 2005).

Best Practice

Washington State's I-Best Program

Washington State's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) began as a pilot program at 10 community and technical colleges and has since been implemented in all 34 colleges in the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) system.

The program was developed in response to studies performed by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges SBCTC that indicated that students were unlikely to complete a long-term basic skills class and then successfully transition to college level vocational programs. The I-BEST model challenges the traditional notion that students must first complete adult basic education (ABE) or English as a second language (ESL) before moving to college level course work. The I-BEST model pairs ESL or ABE instructors with vocational or content area instructors to co-teach college level vocational courses.

State and national research conducted by the SBCTC revealed that low-skilled adults often begin their educational process in either ESL or ABE courses, and few make the transition to workforce skills training programs that allow them to reap the benefits of higher wage and higher skills jobs. The intention of the ten demonstration projects was to test "traditional notions that students must first complete all levels of basic education before they can begin workforce training."

I-BEST has historically been tied to economic development, with I-BEST courses at individual colleges aligning with high-wage, high-demand jobs within their communities.

A study conducted by the Community College Research Center at Columbia University concluded that Washington's I-BEST students were "more likely than others to: continue into credit-bearing coursework; earn credits that count toward college credentials; earn occupational certificates; and make point gains on basic skills tests.

The study also used a propensity score matching model to track students for two years. This model revealed that the probability of I-BEST students earning at least one college credit was 90 percent while the probability for students in the non I-BEST control group was only 67 percent. Persistence into the second year of college was 78 percent for the I-Best students, compared to 61 percent for the control group. Chances of earning an occupational certificate proved to be 55 percent for I-BEST students compared to a mere 15 percent for the control group.

Action Step 3

Apprenticeship Sales Force

Description

Establish a partnership to market the benefits of registered apprenticeships (union and non-union) to Kentucky business. This “earn while you learn” approach to skills development for a wide variety of crafts and trades in Kentucky has not come near reaching its potential as a tool for building a highly skilled workforce, helping business and industry increase their competitiveness, and providing sustainable wages for Kentuckians willing to work hard to raise their standard of living.

In order to reach its potential with registered apprenticeships, a marketing partnership is recommended to promote the benefits to business and industry. This opportunity must be understood and promoted by the business service representatives of each local board and become an integral part of the solutions-based business services model.

Registered Apprenticeships benefit employers by providing them with a pipeline of skilled workers with industry-specific training and hands-on experience. Registered Apprenticeship programs are customizable to match employers' needs, and highly flexible to always to meet employers' changing requirements.

The growing interest in energy efficiency and environmental sustainability (Green) should be monitored by the partnership to assure that Kentucky's apprenticeship programs are competitive with those in other regions and states.

The partnership should also look at marketing this educational/work alternative to secondary students through the promotion and development of pre-apprenticeship programs.

Strategic Benefit

Increases communication and collaboration between workforce boards and boards of education, technical education, postsecondary education, labor organizations and business.

Promotes educational options, including technical education, two-year and four-year college, apprenticeships and specialty training to younger students

Establish the concept of life-long learning as a norm in the 21st century

Nature of Change

Collaborative effort between existing organizations.

Cost

Training of Workforce staff - \$25,000

Implementation Timing

This training should occur in advance of any outreach program rollout for re-energized business services.

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Labor Cabinet
Office of Employment and Training
Local Workforce Investment Boards
One Stop Centers
Kentucky Community and Technical College System – Apprenticeship Studies
Kentucky Department of Education
Office of Career and Technical Education

Consequences of No Action

As apprenticeships grow in importance and evolve with new technologies, Kentucky could fall behind the rest of the nation, leaving our business and industry sectors less competitive and our workforce lacking the skills necessary to compete in the 21st century.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

As an alternative to traditional post-secondary education, registered apprenticeships will appeal to a segment of the population concerned about earning a wage immediately while developing skills through a combination of hands on and classroom work. Apprenticeships also offer local workforce agencies an opportunity to discuss career pathways and training alternatives with customers.

Local business contacts will increase as the partnership promotes the benefits of the programs, opening the door to promote additional services offered by the state and local workforce system.

Potential Obstacles

Economic conditions could limit the expansion of the program during recovery until additional funding becomes available and demand is realized.

Additional Comments

Kentucky currently has 300 registered apprenticeship programs

Currently funded through the General Fund expansion package

Shortages are anticipated in the following trades – Welders, Lineman, Pipefitters, Diesel Mechanics

Action Step 4

High School Outreach

Description

Encourage local workforce boards to develop strong working relationships with middle and high schools in their regions. These relationships should be based on the One Stop centers' capability to deliver assessment and career exploration services, and the direct linkages to the local business community these boards can provide.

Participation in such efforts as career fairs, college recruiting events, innovation and entrepreneurship programs, "reality stores", etc. local workforce boards can better position their clients for the realities of the world of work and postsecondary education. As a third-party "expert", the local workforce system will be positioned as an objective resource for career, education and training information for youth.

Based on strengthened relationships, local workforce boards should position themselves as expert problem solvers by targeting services to youth identified by the schools as at-risk of dropping out.

Strategic Benefit

Increases communication and collaboration between workforce boards and boards of education, technical education, postsecondary education and economic development

Increases the number of postsecondary and work-ready high school graduates

Promotes educational options, including technical education, two-year and four-year college, apprenticeships and specialty training to younger students

Nature of Change

This action item must be based locally and depends entirely upon the buy-in of local workforce investment boards. However, changing the perception of the One Stop centers and the workforce system as whole may include such outreach efforts as part of the branding architecture of a revitalized system.

Cost

Costs will vary depending upon program specifics developed by local boards.

Implementation Timing

This is mid-range action step (2-3 years)

Responsible Parties

Local Workforce Investment Boards
Local Boards of Education

Consequences of No Action

Local areas will continue to deal with high school drop outs as customers of the workforce system and dedicate increasingly scarce resources to remedial education

rather than using those resources for career training and other services. Funds will be used to catch people up rather than advance the quality of the workforce.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local workforce boards benefit by repositioning themselves within their regions as expert problem solvers, rather than just a service delivery organization.

An “intervene now, rather than expend greater resources later” approach should help local areas in the long run to advance the quality of their workforce by dedicating fewer resources to remedial skills development and greater dedication to advanced education and training.

Local schools and their students will benefit from early(ier) intervention to help prevent drop outs and better prepare students for the realities of employment and education.

Potential Obstacles

Local workforce areas will likely be challenged to identify resources they can dedicate to these programs.

Transparency/Accountability

Local workforce boards should monitor local efforts and report success stories and best practices to the state board

Best Practice

Cumberlands WIA High School Assessments

In 2005, the Cumberlands Workforce Investment Area (CWIA) in partnership with Kentucky Adult Education conducted a pilot program to work with businesses and individuals to raise awareness and use of the WorkKeys assessment and the significance of obtaining a Kentucky Employability Certificate for both. During this pilot, the lack of knowledge by both groups became evident. Major inroads were made to educate and make the use of this certificate in the interviewing and hiring process. The project also revealed the need for access to a large population of workers that would help build a foundation and larger pool of individuals with the KEC to demonstrate the quality of our local workforce for economic development purposes.

After research and thought, a decision to target high school seniors as the focus to build the larger pool was made. During the pilot, a limited number were selected and the results were successful.

As a follow-up to that pilot, the Cumberlands Youth Council and Cumberlands Workforce Investment Board (CWIB) chose to continue the project. It has been in operation for the past five years.

During that period, 13,421 seniors took the test with 7,809 receiving either a gold or silver certificate. Those that do not attain a certificate or wish to obtain a higher certificate are encouraged to contact their local Adult Education Center after graduation.

This service to youth is a core service assessment that can lead to a certificate that will benefit them as they seek employment for years to come. The Cumberlands Youth

Council and CWIB consider this a great benefit to both the individual and the business community and one step in creating and showing the quality of workforce in our area.

Region 1 West Virginia - Tipping Point Program

The Region 1 Workforce Investment Board has developed a youth initiative that encompasses the stated goals and objectives of the WIB, specifically: "Promote effective economic and workforce development partnerships that develop and sustain productive workers for business and create prosperous communities for our citizens."

The Tipping Point program was developed as a Youth Enrichment Service to introduce youth to the WORKFORCE West Virginia Career Center system and the services available including job preparation, job search activities, investigation of specific careers, required educational levels for specific jobs, labor market information, and demand occupations within the region / state.

An instructional and entertaining video containing the career information was transferred to computer-disk format, and 16,000 DVDs, CDs and videos were distributed to students in area high schools. The purpose of the project was to engage youth to think about career choices, and provide information to help them prepare to achieve in their chosen career. This process will be repeated each year for students entering high school. Each youth can access the WORKFORCE West Virginia website through their DVD's or CDs.

The Region 1 Board is aware of the need for youth career awareness and job training, as was brought into sharp focus by the U.S. Department of Labor statistics that report 11% of West Virginia teens (aged 16 to 19) are not attending school and are not working. The national average is 8%.

Action Step 5

GED[®] Express Lodge and Learn

Description

Create an opportunity for dislocated workers and other unemployed individuals without a high school diploma to complete their GED in a compressed timeframe. Participants in the program will be required to meet certain selection criteria, including Test for Adult Basic Education minimum scores.

The program will compress the classroom work required to prepare students to take the GED exam into a four-week period. State and, possibly, university facilities (such as state park lodges and university dorms and classrooms) will be used as sites for the program so that classroom and sleeping accommodations can be provided on-site, immersing the students in a controlled environment and minimizing distractions during the program. Such locations also provide an environment that is not associated with prior failed attempts at completion of high school studies.

Rather than one-on-one, on-demand instruction, participants will receive instruction in a structured classroom environment with other students testing in at or about the same level. The instruction provided will be in the GED content areas of reading, writing, math, science and social studies.

Participants completing the program will receive free room and board during the program and will be able to spend weekends at home. The program will be scheduled around non-peak demand times at state parks and possibly universities in order to obtain reduced rates for lodging, meals and classroom rentals.

Career exploration opportunities will be incorporated into the program curriculum as a means of breaking up the day, maintaining the interest of students, and providing a context for importance of skill attainment.

Local workforce boards will also be asked to provide an orientation to the participants about the services offered through the one stop system, including employment services, occupational training and postsecondary education.

Other opportunities can also be integrated into the program, such as Dress for Success, interviewing skills, resume preparation, etc.

Career-readiness will be a key component of this model. In addition to obtaining a GED, students who complete the program will have to opportunity to test for and receive a national Career Readiness Certificate, based on ACT's WorkKeys assessment, adding to their work-ready credentials.

Strategic Benefit

Increases the number of college- and career-ready GED graduates

Promotes educational attainment, including transition to postsecondary education, technical education, apprenticeships and specialty training

Increases awareness of educational and skills requirements for high-demand jobs, as well as those in emerging industries

Establishes the concept of life-long learning as a norm in the 21st century

Nature of Change

Removes the barrier of time investment required by individuals to obtain the academic and skills preparation necessary for the jobs of the future.

Cost

Implementation Timing

It is anticipated that several pilot projects in strategic locations will begin within one year. If successful, the program can be expanded throughout the state and throughout the year.

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Adult Education, Council on Postsecondary Education
Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet
Public University Partners
Kentucky Community and Technical College System
Local Workforce Investment Boards

Consequences of No Action

Kentucky's ability to grow its human capital infrastructure and raise the educational attainment level necessary to compete economically will suffer. Kentucky will continue with business as usual and see programs diminish or disappear as budget cuts limit the resources to achieve gains in education attainment.

Employers see a value in the GED, in some cases as better than a high school diploma. Not implementing this program will constitute a missed opportunity to demonstrate the Commonwealth's commitment to innovate and provide business and industry with the skilled workforce they need to be competitive.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local leaders have the opportunity to participate in an innovative and highly visible program designed to increase the competitive characteristics of its workforce.

Individuals who may not have had an interest in obtaining their GED due to the length of time required to achieve it will have an opportunity to see quick results.

Local areas will have an opportunity to market their services to a group of interested customers.

Potential Obstacles

Funding for the program will be an issue. Assuming that the program has enough appeal to secure funding for the pilot projects, the sustainability and expansion of the program will need to be addressed. Other barriers may include childcare, transportation, undiagnosed learning disabilities, and proper screening of individuals and their commitment to the program.

Transparency/Accountability

Initial success of the program will be evaluated based on two or three pilot projects in different locations. Criteria will include: number of applicants, number selected, completions, GED and NCRC certificates awarded.

Additional Comments (optional)

It is anticipated that the pilot projects will generate a significant amount of media attention, increasing visibility of the importance of educational attainment. This increased attention is also anticipated to increase interest in GED attainment for those who may also be unable to participate in the program as well. Kentucky Adult Education should use this attention to increase participation in its more traditional adult education programs throughout the state, as well as incorporate best practices and lessons learned from this program to improve efficiencies and results in those programs.

Best Practices

U.S. Army Prep School

Want to join the Army, but you don't have a high school diploma, or a GED? Previously, this was not possible. However, the Army has now opened the Army Preparatory School at Fort Jackson, S.C. to help young men and women who fall short of the education requirements needed to join the military.

The four-week course is an Army one-year test program to help young men and women who want to enlist in the Army to obtain their General Educational Development, or GED, certificate.

Those accepted for the program enlist in the Army, but instead of attending basic training after their time in the Reception Battalion, they attend the prep school. Upon completion of the program, and receiving a GED, they then attend basic training. In addition to intensive classroom training to prepare for the GED examination, recruits attending the prep school will also undergo daily physical training, be subject to Army discipline, and learn customs and traditions, to help prepare them for basic. Those who fail to successfully complete the program are returned to their hometown and given an entry-level separation, with no prejudices.

To be eligible, applicants must meet the normal enlistment standards (except for education requirements). The program is only open to applicants who score at least a 50 on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and those who aren't eligible to return to high school.

Once fully operational, officials said the prep school could accommodate upwards of 60 new students each week. The school will have the capability of educating 240 recruits at a time in core academic subjects over the course of four weeks. It is expected to yield

nearly 3,000 graduates in its first year who, upon completion, will continue directly to basic combat training and advanced individual training.

"The APS will help provide the Army with dedicated young men and women who until now were unable to serve their country," Capt. Brian Gaddis the APS company commander, told the Army News Service.

"Because of education requirements, there are high-quality, motivated citizens who can't join," he said. "The APS gives them an opportunity to serve their country."

The Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is also working with the South Carolina Department of Education to explore the possibilities of the state granting students with an actual high school diploma.

Gen. William S. Wallace, commanding general of TRADOC, believes that the health and fitness of America's youth is rapidly becoming a national security issue.

"Today only 28 percent of the 17 to 24 year-old population qualifies to wear a military uniform. The other 72 percent fail to meet minimum standards on education, character and health," said Wallace. "We will not lower our training standards so we're faced with helping to raise the health and education standards for our young people who want to serve."

A visit to Fort Knox by Cabinet and Adult Education representatives in March, 2010, included a briefing by Colonel Kevin Shwedo of the U.S. Army Preparatory School at Fort Jackson, SC. Col. Shwedo provided the following results of the school to date:

- Goal of 90 percent graduation rate has been exceeded, actual rate is 99 percent
- Majority of graduates show interest in postsecondary education opportunities
- Created a charter school on post so high school diplomas could be issued
- Currently able to issue a high school diploma from each candidate's original high school

New Opportunity School for Women – Berea, KY

The New Opportunity School for Women was founded in 1987 with the mission of improving the educational, financial and personal circumstances of low-income, middle-aged women in Kentucky and the south central Appalachian region.

Twice a year, the New Opportunity School for Women chooses 14 women to attend their Berea College Campus to spend three weeks in extensive career exploration and leadership development. Included is placement in an internship on campus or in the community. Through testing and counseling, job skills are identified and program participants learn to write a resume and practice job interview skills.

Educational and cultural opportunities are also provided through field trips to museums, music programs, lectures, courses in Appalachian literature, writing and computer basics. Participants examine their personal situations and possibilities for their future through group and individual counseling. Seminars are held to build self-confidence and to help participants return to their community and family with new self-awareness.

There is no cost for attending the New Opportunity School. Room and meals are provided as well. Grants for travel and childcare are available; however, childcare cannot be provided on campus during the three-week school.

Women living in Kentucky and the south central Appalachian region who have completed high school, have a GED® diploma (or actively working on a GED diploma) and do not have a college degree are eligible to apply. Participants should be between the ages of 30 and 55, of low income and should demonstrate motivation and eagerness to learn. Participants will remain on campus for the entire three-week program.

The school operates two sessions each year. The Winter Session begins on the first Sunday in February and the Summer Session begins on the first Sunday in June.

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DRAFT

Economic Development Alignment

Action Steps

1. Mind Your Own Business – Entrepreneurship Initiative
2. Work Ready Communities
3. Rapid Response Redesign
4. Economic Development Academy

DRAFT

Action Step 1

Mind Your Own Business

Description

Promote entrepreneurship and innovation as employment and economic development options with training available through every One Stop center and Area Technology Center throughout the state. Innovative thinking and local adaptation is encouraged by this strategic plan therefore, a standardized statewide curriculum is not recommended.

Local areas are encouraged to work with education, business and finance partners as well as small business development centers and the state's Innovation and Commercialization Centers to develop a comprehensive entrepreneurship training program that is responsive to local needs while meeting certain minimum standards to be established by the Governor.

In addition to providing opportunities for entrepreneurship training, local alliances are encouraged to link successful participants with venture capital, micro-finance, and other financing resources.

Area Technology Centers operated by the Kentucky Office of Career and Technical Education should work with the local Workforce Investment Boards to create secondary-level versions of the entrepreneurship training opportunities.

Strategic Benefit

Provides increased opportunities for entrepreneurship in a culture of innovation

Nature of Change

Administrative, no legislation required

Cost

Estimate to develop and staff program - \$175,000

Does not include training costs, as those will be covered by local formula funds.

Implementation Timing

Program rollouts should occur no later than Jan 1, 2011

Responsible Parties

Governor Beshear
Education & Workforce Development Cabinet
Office of Career and Technical Education
Local Workforce Investment Boards
Small Business Development Centers
Colleges and Universities (2 and 4 yr)
Innovation and Commercialization Centers

Consequences of No Action

Entrepreneurship and small business growth is expected to drive economic recovery in the United States. Without the availability of entrepreneurship training and support, Kentucky will lag behind other states and likely miss opportunities to innovate and grow locally owned businesses, which are less likely to relocate and create unemployment issues in the future.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local areas have the opportunity to invest in creating businesses and employers with local roots providing more stability to the local economy. This also provides local workforce officials with additional opportunities to partner and collaborate with economic development professionals in the creation of new jobs.

Potential Obstacles

Local areas are unable to count new business start ups as placement in employment in their performance measures.

Transparency/Accountability

Local workforce boards and area technology centers will provide quarterly reports to the state describing number of participants enter and completing training, approved business plans, referrals to financiers, and new businesses and jobs created by trained individuals.

Additional Comments

"Intel believes that entrepreneurship is crucial to building local innovation capacity. It brings new technologies to market, and supports economic development through building strong local and regional economies. Both the public and the private sectors have important roles to play in advancing entrepreneurship around the world, including through enabling effective entrepreneurship education."

– **Craig R. Barrett**, Chairman of the Board, Intel Corporation

"Entrepreneurship education for young people is the most powerful idea in youth development today- every young person on the planet should be exposed to the principles of entrepreneurship, ownership and socially responsible wealth creation."

– **Steve Mariotti**, The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship

Action Step 2

Work Ready Communities

Description

“Although the exodus of manufacturing from the United States to offshore locations that became more pronounced during the past 20 years was devastating to many communities, it can be argued that the loss of these lower-skilled production operations made room for the next generation of manufacturing and production that is still occurring today. New industries such as biotechnology and advanced manufacturing require higher-skilled workers and flexible labor forces that many less-developed nations do not offer.” – Area Development On-Line, March 31, 2010

In order for Kentucky to remain competitive for these new industries, our communities must promote the availability of that skilled workforce. To provide business and industry with the assurance of the availability of this resource, the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board proposes the certification of communities as “work-ready.” Communities must apply for this certification and meet certain high standards for education attainment and credentialing in order to receive the status.

Once certified, communities will receive a certificate and sign template that may be used to create signs for posting at gateway points and business areas within the community. Achievement of Work-Ready status will be announced by the Governor and communicated to the media and appropriate state agencies. They will also have the right to use this status in their own marketing and promotion.

Communities will be monitored on a regular basis to assure they continue to meet the “Work-Ready” standards.

Five or more contiguous counties with Work-Ready status may apply for Work-Ready Region status.

Strategic Benefit

Increases communication and collaboration between workforce boards, economic development agencies, technical, secondary and post-secondary educators, and elected officials

Encourages an increase in the number of postsecondary and work-ready high school graduates

Recognizes educational options, including technical education, two-year and four-year college, apprenticeships and specialty training to younger students

Increases awareness of educational and skills requirements for high-demand jobs, as well as those in emerging industries

Reinforces the concept of life-long learning as a norm in the 21st century

Nature of Change

Administrative, no legislation required

Cost

Program Development and outreach in year 1 - \$200,000

Implementation Timing

Program should be designed and rolled out within one year of plan adoption

Responsible Parties

Governor's Office
Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
Cabinet for Economic Development

Consequences of No Action

This is a new project, however in the increasingly competitive world of economic development, such a program provides economic development professionals with additional differentiators when courting new businesses and industry. Numerous Economic Development and Workforce publications rank a skilled workforce in the top five factors in the site selection process.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local areas have the opportunity to bring together elected officials, economic development agencies and educators in an effort to focus collaboration on the improved competitiveness of the workforce.

Potential Obstacles

The political will to establish sufficiently high standards so that the certification is meaningful to business.

Transparency/Accountability

Work-Ready requirements and applications will be available for public review via the web. Counties will be monitored regularly to assure continued compliance with program standards.

Best Practice

Georgia's Work Ready Program

The following are excerpts from the program's web site.

As part of Georgia's Work Ready initiative, counties throughout the state have made a commitment to earn Certified Work Ready Community status, a designation showing they have the talented workforce that business demands and the means to drive economic growth and prosperity.



Earning Certified Work Ready Community status ensures citizens have the talent necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require in the future. By taking part in the effort, Georgia counties are transforming their economies and giving themselves a competitive advantage in attracting new businesses and jobs.



To be designated a Certified Work Ready Community, counties must drive current workers and the available workforce to earn Work Ready Certificates, demonstrate a commitment to improving public high school graduation rates and build community commitment for meeting these goals. Each community has created a team of economic development, government and education

partners to meet the certification criteria. Counties are given three years to reach the goals necessary to become a Certified Work Ready Community. Those counties willing to complete the process in 18 months are eligible for state-funded grants and serve as models for the initiative, showcasing successes and best practices for others to follow.

Built on a unique partnership between state government, the state chamber of commerce, local chambers, economic developers, education, private industry and the state's workforce, Work Ready provides a concrete way to understand what businesses need from their workforce and what Georgians must know to fill those jobs. Through the Work Ready Certificate, job profiling and skills training components, the initiative guarantees workers have both the talent necessary for existing jobs and the skills to master the innovative technologies tomorrow's jobs will require.

Going further, Work Ready is assisting Georgia's communities in designing economic development strategies to attract new business and preserve the health of their existing economic base. The Certified Work Ready Community initiative offers a means of demonstrating that a county's current labor force can fill existing jobs and meet the changing labor needs of tomorrow, and Work Ready Regions encourage multiple counties to work together to build regional talent pools aligned to a common, existing strategic industry.

Action Step 3

Rapid Response Redesign

Description

Evaluate and enhance Kentucky's delivery structure based on best practices across the country focusing on the following elements: the infrastructure; relationships with stakeholders; policies and procedures; gathering intelligence; promoting the services; assessing potential dislocations; and analyzing worker survey data.

The objective of which would be to provide support to Kentucky companies throughout the business lifecycle as opposed to predominantly times of dislocation. These efforts will link with the Cabinet for Economic Development's Department of Business Development.

Strategic Benefit

Maximize the Commonwealth's rapid response resources aligning them with economic development goals around business development and the Kentucky Reinvestment Act resulting in a more proactive systemic approach.

Nature of Change

Administrative – Moving the rapid response system from a fundamental level of performance to an enhanced level of performance at both the state and local levels.

Cost

Training - \$25,000

Implementation Timing

Evaluate State and Local status (3 mo)

Refine Policies and Procedures (3 mo)

Develop and deliver training (3 mo)

Responsible Party

Office of Employment and Training Division of Workforce and Employment Services

Consequences of No Action

Maintain reactive rapid response practices.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Broaden the portfolio of services offered to the business community as well as foster a deeper relationship between economic development and workforce development professionals.

Potential Obstacles

Resistance to a broader interpretation of rapid response services.

Best Practice

Use Education and Training Administration's Rapid Response action plan tool that includes best practices from across the nation as a launching point.

Action Step 4

Economic Development Academy

Description

Establish a one-day program to be conducted throughout the state at various locations designed to bring together local workforce investment board members, economic development authorities, local elected officials, and members of the General assembly representing the region.

The purpose is to explore how each can work together in a collaborative manner to achieve community and statewide economic development goals by integrating a workforce system that serves as a tool for recruiting and expansion of business and industry and the quality jobs they bring.

As a spin-off of the Academy, a half-day session focused on innovation leadership is recommended. This can be conducted in conjunction with or as a stand alone supplement to the Economic Development Academy. The Innovation Leadership Forum will expose local elected officials and economic development professionals to the importance of focusing on innovation for economic growth as an alternative to reliance solely on chasing the “big win” of a major manufacturing operation.

The Academy will also create a user-friendly directory of key players in workforce investment and economic development at the state, regional and local levels that can be used as a resource by business and industry as well as economic development, workforce and elected officials.

The directory should be available on-line in a format that allows users to search by county and region. Hard copies will not be printed, however an option for the user to print the directory themselves should be available. Entries should include the roles and responsibilities of listed agencies and individuals, as well as brief information about programs, resources, and funding sources.

Strategic Benefit

Increases communication and collaboration between workforce boards and economic development agencies by bridging differences in “language”, goals and cultures

Focuses a seamless delivery of services provided by Kentucky or the community, not individual agencies

Helps improve and evolve methods of projecting jobs and training needs of the future by building and strengthening relationships between all parties prior to a crisis situation

Increases opportunities for entrepreneurship in a culture of innovation

Nature of Change

This is a program that can be developed and implemented at the administrative level and does not require legislative change.

Cost

Estimated cost per Academy - \$2,000

Includes: Presentation materials, space rental, participant meals, travel for leaders

Estimated directory costs - \$40,000

Includes: research, writing, and information technology services

Implementation Timing

First Academy to be held in Fall 2010

Responsible Parties & Partners

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board

Commissioner of Workforce Investment

Cabinet for Economic Development

Kentucky Association for Economic Development

Local Workforce Investment Boards

Consequences of No Action

An inconsistent level of coordination between local workforce areas and the economic development and elected officials within the region will produce mixed results and does not make the best use of leveraged resources and community collaboration opportunities.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local areas will benefit by the presence of a third party (the Academy) carrying messages that integrate best practices and bring with that, the attention of Frankfort officials such as Commissioners, directors and possibly Cabinet Secretaries.

The citizens and businesses in Kentucky benefit from opportunities to better leverage resources and align the workforce system to be responsive to the needs of local businesses and economic development prospects.

Potential Obstacles

Interest of local officials will need to be developed

Scheduling to assure participation of key individuals in each location to assure return on investment

Transparency/Accountability

Publication of notes from the Academy and all presentations on a state web site, also made available to local agencies for posting, encourage media coverage of the Academy before, during and after the event.

On-line survey emailed to all participants within 30 days of the event

System Simplification

Action Steps

1. Alphabet Soup – Eliminate Acronyms
2. Partner for Success
3. Beyond Measure – Statewide Reserve Investments
4. Case Management Consistency
5. High Performing Local Workforce Investment Boards

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Action Step 1

Alphabet Soup

Description

The use of acronyms in many government systems has become a confused jumbled mess of letters leading to confusion and the creation of exclusive languages; the workforce system is no exception.

When a system's purpose is to serve clients, be they business and industry leaders, or workers who are un or under-employed, communications must be inclusive and employ terms which can be quickly and clearly understood by all.

All communications intended for public or customer consumption should be free of all but the most common abbreviations and acronyms, such as USA, GED, IRS. In no instance shall system acronyms appear in a communication with a client, electronic or printed, without a definition of the acronym upon first reference.

The following acronyms may be common to those engaged with the workforce system on a daily basis, but are not within the basic lexicon of our clients and should be avoided in their abbreviated form: UI, TANF, WIA, WIB, DOL, ETA (unless you mean estimated time of arrival), DW, TABE, AE, ATC, OET, OCTE, OFB, OVR, NEG, etcetera.

Strategic Benefit

Increases understanding by clients

Simplifies online services and focus on innovative user-friendly applications

Reduces confusion and information overload for those unfamiliar with the system

Nature of Change

Change will require scrubbing of all existing online resources and monitoring of all new communications tools

Cost

None

Implementation Timing

This will be an on-going effort but can begin immediately.

Responsible Parties

Everyone who writes or approves any communication material for client or public consumption.

Consequences of No Action

As more programs are added to the system, so too the number of acronyms increase exponentially. Currently, levels of frustration by clients, the public and even those within the system will lead to missed opportunities because of poor communications.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Better understanding should lead to better results in performance as well as participation by volunteer board members, who may not have the interest or time to learn a new language.

With a better understanding of programs and funding tools communicated in plain English, clients will have better opportunities for success.

Potential Obstacles

Old habits are hard to break

Partner organizations should be encouraged to buy-in to this approach as well.

Transparency/Accountability

State and local review of materials prior to publication or posting

Additional Comments

This is an actual memo from the state department redefining its acronyms.



Office of Origin: A/LM/OPS
Announcement Number: 2007_02_047
Date of Announcement: February 6, 2007

Washington Logistics Center Division - Name Changes and New Office Acronyms

Effective immediately, the Office of Logistics Management's Washington Logistics Center Division (A/LM/OPS/WLC) will be known as the Secure Logistics Division (A/LM/OPS/SL).

The Washington Distributions Branch (A/LM/OPS/WLC/WDB) will be known as the Warehouse Branch (A/LM/OPS/SL/W). The Motor Vehicle Branch acronym is now A/LM/OPS/SL/MV and the Management Operations Branch acronym is A/LM/OPS/SL/MO.

Please direct any questions to A/LM/OPS/SL's customer service office via email at SpringfieldWarehouse@state.gov.

According to acronymfinder.com, there are more than 8 million acronyms in use throughout the world.

The site lists 34 possible meanings for UI, 14 for WIA, 142 for ATC, and 8 for OET (not one of which is our Office of Employment and Training).

Action Step 2

Partner for Success

Description

Within the Kentucky Department of Workforce Investment there are four offices that have meeting the needs of employers, individual training and job placement as a primary focus. There are also opportunities to partner effectively with agencies outside the Department as well, including adult education, housing, economic development, etc.

This initiative will establish an Achieving Success Together team to identify areas of common services and complementary services. This team will be composed of individuals from all levels of the Department's organization. Once those critical services have been identified, this internal group will look at ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness by simplifying service delivery driven by the employer customer and the individual consumer vantage points. This is expected to impact reporting, monitoring and performance outcomes as well.

Some early opportunities for collaboration are being explored such as the Microsoft Information Technology Academy, career coaches in the Area Technology Centers, and Work Now Kentucky. This could pave the way for state level memorandums of understanding for infrastructure costs for state agencies in One-Stops, solutions-based approach to business services, joint policy guidance to the field, integrated case management and cross-training of staff.

Strategic Benefit

Moves the Commonwealth from a confederated set of agencies to a unified system focused on investment in workforce. Streamlines service delivery to employer and individual customers. Leverages resources and shares credit for outcomes. Provides opportunities for individuals at all levels of the system to take ownership in the vision, direction and return on investment made by the department.

Nature of Change

Policy, administrative and operational changes.

Cost

Expenses - \$10,000

Implementation Timing

Identify the team (1 mo)
Conduct a department summit (3 mo)
Develop the action plan (1 mo)
Begin implementing the action plan (6 mo)

Responsible Parties

Commissioner of Workforce Investment
Agency Heads
Achieving Success Together Team

Consequences of No Action

Continued examples of disjointed policy and service delivery in the Commonwealth for employer and individual customers will limit the opportunity to achieve a better return on investment.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

More efficient and effective service delivery based on employer and individual customer feedback. A greater sense of teaming among one-stop based staff will provide customers with a more unified, goal-oriented seamless system.

Potential Obstacles

Myths around the ability to leverage resources as well as turf issues

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Action Step 3

Beyond Measure: Statewide Reserve Investments

Description

Establish conditions for access to statewide reserve funding that encourage implementation of strategic priorities by local workforce boards and partner agencies, promise an increased return on investment, and promote innovation in the delivery of services to customers of the system.

A policy statement developed by the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board and approved by the Governor will focus on smart investment of these limited resources on financing projects and programs that align with the state's goals. The policy will outline the purpose of the funding, eligibility requirements, application contents and criteria, and create a competitive process to level the playing field and focus each investment.

Additionally, when statewide administration funds are used to make improvements which benefit local facilities and service delivery, criteria to assure these investments are also in alignment with state strategic goals should also be employed.

Strategic Benefit

Reduce ad-hoc decisions by creating a strategic process for investment of statewide funding

Incentive for local and partner buy-in that is not tied to the common performance measures for program funds

Nature of Change

An administrative policy statement will define the criteria for access to statewide reserve funding.

Cost

None

Implementation Timing

This is a short-term implementation step and should be accomplished in 2010.

Responsible Parties

Governor's Office
Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Consequences of No Action

Investment decisions made on an ad-hoc basis without established criteria tied to strategic goals will limit the ability of Kentucky to implement its strategic vision and achieve the best return on investment for our clients.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Each local area and partner organization will be assured of a level playing field as they compete for funds. Awards from the statewide reserve will be made on the basis of established criteria that support the realization of the vision.

Potential Obstacles

Political will to adhere to the requirements of the policy

Transparency/Accountability

Criteria established will include reporting requirements.

Recommendations for investment decisions will be made by a committee that includes subject matter experts, technical staff and representatives of the private sector.

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Action Step 4

Case Management

Description

One of the cornerstone elements that local workforce directors agree should be part of the branding architecture for Kentucky's workforce system is a consistent approach to case management. To achieve this level of service and unify the approach across the system, case managers will be required to attend training and professional development on a continuing basis.

Training should be developed which will elevate case management principles and approaches akin to those used in the private sector by employment search firms. This training is foundational to specific programmatic training for each service discipline.

Case management staff should be trained, and possibly credentialed, through a training provider to be contracted by the Office of Employment and Training. This training should be available for frontline staff of partner organizations as well.

Strategic Benefit

Transforms the identify of the "unemployment office"

Reduces confusion and information overload for those unfamiliar with the system

Increases communication among all service delivery points

Nature of Change

This change to the system will require buy-in at the local and individual levels in order to produce a team of case workers who provide consistent approaches to service across the system

Cost

Phase 1 of Training - \$50,000

Responsible Parties

Office of Employment and Training
One Stop Managers

Consequences of No Action

Case management throughout the system will remain inconsistent and not contribute to the implementation of the state's vision. Rebranding efforts will lack the foundational support of consistent service delivery required for success.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Clients will receive case management services delivered with consistency by trained professionals.

Potential Obstacles

Funding and time commitments required for training and continuing education/professional development

Transparency/Accountability

Case managers will be required to receive training and professional development/continuing education

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Action Step 5

High Performing Local Workforce Investment Boards

Description

In order to assure the effectiveness of local workforce boards and enhance the strategic nature of these boards, a technical assistance and recognition program will be developed based on an assessment of the following:

- The LWIB is effectively using current information to guide policy and investments.
- The LWIB is investing resources to promote the development of skills and career ladders in the commonwealth's High Priority Occupations.
- The LWIB has developed partnerships in key targeted industry sub-clusters and is developing innovative approaches to improve their competitiveness.
- The LWIB has a clear strategic direction and has aligned relevant regional resources to that direction.
- The LWIB has both a broad-based and a targeted cluster-linked integrated business services plan.
- The LWIB is ensuring that its One-Stops provide excellent and fully accessible services to both employers and job seekers.
- The LWIB has established a youth strategy aligned with the regional and the commonwealth's high priority occupations.
- The LWIB maintains sound fiscal practices, develops the budget with Board member's input and the budget process ensures that WIA investments are aligned with the strategic direction established by the Board.
- The LWIB is in compliance with the negotiated requirements of the quantitative and qualitative measures in the commonwealth.
- The LWIB is structured, staffed, and funded so that it can carry out its oversight and strategic roles in the local area. The Board itself is industry driven and the membership composition is reflective of vital existing and emerging industries.

A consultant will provide an initial high-performance analysis. A technical assistance and recognition program will be developed based on those findings.

Strategic Benefit

Local boards are in direct control of a large percentage of the workforce investment resources, assuring that they are active and engaged in assuring the desired return on that investment will help realize the Commonwealth's vision.

Nature of Change

This is a new initiative to provide direct assistance to local boards and staff

Cost

Assessment and development of the certification program - \$200,000

Technical assistance to be provided as required and funded by Local Workforce Boards on a fee basis.

Implementation Timing

Initial analysis and report by outside consultant in 2010

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
Local Workforce Investment Boards
Department of Workforce Investment

Consequences of No Action

Local boards will continue to operate with no clear level of performance expectations from the state. Some will operate efficiently and effectively, while others will languish and have little direction for making important investment decisions.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local areas will have a tool to use to measure their effectiveness and provide guidance for strategic direction. Following the best practice model described above will help assure local customers that investment decisions are based on defined strategies and sound data.

Potential Obstacles

Less effective boards may resist or reject findings of constructive criticism and recommendations for improving investment performance.

Transparency/Accountability

This action step in and of itself is a means of helping local boards establish their accountability for directing the investment decision within their regions.

Additional Comments

This action item is intended as a tool to improve performance.

Customer Service

Action Steps

1. Workforce Academy
2. Outreach Initiative
3. Get Back to Work
4. One Stop Operations Improvements
5. Unemployment Insurance Customer Service Plan

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Action Step 1

Workforce Academy

Description

Both state and local workforce officials agree that a high-level of customer service should be one of the cornerstones of the brand architecture for Kentucky's workforce system. In order to achieve system-wide consistency in the approach to customer service, a training program will be developed and provided to all service delivery staff.

Great customer service also depends on knowledgeable service delivery staff with the confidence and knowledge required to perform all aspects of their jobs and an understanding of the system itself. In addition to customer service training, opportunities for training in the following areas are also recommended:

- Workforce System Orientation
- Workforce Programs
- Management
- Media Relations
- Case Management
- Career Counseling
- Partner cross-training as appropriate

Development of the training programs should include a mix of live on-site and on-demand web-based training modules.

Local directors have identified case management as foundational element of what should be part of the brand architecture of the Kentucky workforce system.

As part of the workforce academy model, a collaborative case management approach with an emphasis on providing timely and accurate workforce intelligence to our employer and education partners as well as job seekers is seen as critical.

To accomplish this, it is recommended that each one stop center have a designated "super user" for the data collection and reporting system. That user should be trained in both technical and customer service areas. The "super user" will also work with business service and other case management staff to assure that all local information is accurate and current.

All other case management staff should be trained and possibly credentialed through a training provider to be contracted by the Office of Employment and Training.

In order to maintain a high-level of customer service, development of evaluation methods and customer feedback will be developed and may include customer feedback cards available at the point of service, on-line feedback surveys, and email follow up with business clients.

Strategic Benefit

Increase awareness within the system that “clients” of the workforce system, include those with jobs to fill as well as those seeking a job

Provide customer service training to all service delivery staff

Develop benchmarks and base-line standards for consistency within the system (physical, program and customer services) while allowing for local and regional adaptation

Nature of Change

Buy-in must be created by all partners in the system and a culture that focuses on solving clients’ problems, rather than working in silos must be created.

Cost

Academy Development and Expenses - \$200,000

**Case Management Training covered in another step - \$50,000*

Implementation Timing

Roll out of first training modules expected in Fall of 2010.

Responsible Party(ies)

Office of Employment and Training
Local Workforce Investment Boards
One Stop Managers
Partner Agencies

Consequences of No Action

Rather than a solutions center of choice, our one stop and workforce systems risk falling behind and becoming the last resort for business and individual clients. Without this foundational element, rebranding the system will have little meaning other than a new logo for the same old ad-hoc approach to service delivery.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local areas will have the opportunity to associate with and help build a new paradigm for what the one stop service delivery system should be.

Consistency across the system will help everyone who makes up and uses the system more comfortable with the vision of a solutions based rather than silo approach to serving our customers.

Businesses with operations across the state will become confident in their expectations of the system and its value to their operations.

Potential Obstacles

Changing a culture that has existed for so long will not be easy, individuals may resist training.

Additional Comments

In the future, the Board may wish to consider requiring certification of all front line staff

Best Practice

Virginia Front-Line Staff Certification

Virginia's One Stop Centers are physical locations across the state where job seekers can visit to receive assistance with core employment services (including job search and placement assistance, access to computers, telephones, fax and copy machines, resume and cover letter development, employment-related workshops) and intensive services (including assessments and career counseling), and training and career education services to those who are eligible.

Continuing Professional Development: In June 2007, the Virginia Workforce Council (VWC) approved a policy that mandates every front-line staff member be certified. The objective of this required certification is to ensure that all front-line service providers have the skills needed to provide effective and consistent customer service throughout the entire Virginia Workforce Network.

The VWC's Workforce Services committee discussed the need for continuing the promotion of professional development, questions regarding the number of staff required to be certified, alternative pathways to certification and recertification requirements. Please see frequently asked questions regarding staff certification.

Action Step 2

Outreach Initiative

Description

Among the benefits of a unified branding identity, is a new opportunity to market a revamped, simpler, user-friendly workforce system. Because of the variety of local identities, marketing the entire system on a state-wide basis to all customer groups has been difficult at best.

In addition to a new common name the core values and characteristics of the system, embraced as foundation elements across the system should be emphasized.

“Business should view us in the same light as a private, for-profit headhunter firm,” said one local director.

In order to achieve a status even close to that goal, outreach activities must include emphasis on the regional business service teams and a message that the workforce system is a solutions-based service for employers.

Federal and state regulations may necessitate a distinct division of labor within the one stop system, however, clients should see the system as seamless and one brand not a series of silos to negotiate.

Strategic Benefit

Increase awareness within the system that “clients” of the workforce system, include those with jobs to fill as well as those seeking a job

Increase use of workforce system as a resource for employers to identify, screen, match, interview and prepare candidates for work

Increase contacts with employers and economic development agencies regarding future workforce needs

Develop benchmarks and base-line standards for consistency within the system (physical, program and customer services) while allowing for local and regional adaptation

Nature of Change

Some local areas already do an exceptional job with outreach, including regular meaningful contact with employers. Under a new branding identity, a consistent level of service and approach to outreach should help all local areas become equally proficient.

Cost

Training and program start up - \$25,000

Implementation Timing

While all areas are encouraged to continue to build upon current outreach efforts. Marketing materials associated with the new branding architecture should be rolled out simultaneous with the rollout of the new identity.

Responsible Party(ies)

Kentucky Workforce Investment Board
Local Workforce Investment Boards
Commissioner of Workforce Development
One Stop Partners

Consequences of No Action

Kentucky's workforce system and One Stop centers will continue to live with the identity of "the unemployment office," an image that does not enhance the opportunity to reach business and industry in a competitive way as a solutions-based service provider.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Local workforce areas will become part of a greater whole, with a reliable set of foundational service expectations, while retaining the ability to customize for local and regional responsiveness.

Potential Obstacles

Changing the identity of a public institution in the eyes of the business community will require persistence, time, energy, and consistency of message.

Training business liaisons to be problem solvers will be required.

Action Step 3

Get Back to Work

Description

A partnership between the Office of Employment and Training and Adult Education to develop an education based redeployment strategy for individuals deemed education deficient.

This project targets those without high-school or only high-school education attainment, with special services that can increase their education level and workforce skills. Individuals profiled will be sent a letter indicating that they have been selected for intensive education and reemployment services and called into the One-Stop to participate in information/training session.

Participation will be a condition for receiving UI benefits. Adult Education will participate in the one-stop information session to provide the educational resource. Individuals will be encouraged to enroll in Adult Education classes and provided with information on supportive services available to assist them.

WorkKeys, Test of Adult Basic Education and others may be used as a required assessment component. The intent is to use the period of unemployment as an opportunity to increase education levels and expand future opportunities for individuals.

Kentucky Employment Network classes should be offered to all, not just Unemployment Insurance customers.

Strategic Benefit

It is a fact that wages are higher as the education level is raised. Additional education can reduce the cycle of unemployment which in the long run reduces duration of unemployment.

Provides up-to-date resources for all clients

Develops benchmarks and base-line standards for program consistency within the system while allowing for local and regional adaptation

Nature of Change

This program is a partnership between the two agencies and the One Stop centers.

Cost

Programming - \$10,000

Implementation Timing

This is a short-term implementation project and can be rolled out in 2010

Responsible Parties

Kentucky Adult Education, Council on Postsecondary Education

Office of Employment and Training
One Stop centers
Local Workforce Investment Boards

Consequences of No Action

Continued cycle of unemployment for undereducated clients with limited opportunities to pursue careers with higher wages and job security.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

This program will allow One-Stops to tailor services to those participating in One-Stop classes more effectively. Currently class participation can range from Masters-level participants to those with little to no education.

Potential Obstacles

Resistance to program requirement as a condition for receiving unemployment benefits.

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Action Step 4

One Stop Operations Improvements

Description

Create a tool to collect general information from the customer when entering a One Stop center for the purpose of providing more efficient service and reducing customer wait times. A pilot project will test the potential of automated kiosks to serve this purpose.

Currently, one stop centers manually collect general information from customers and enter the information into an Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet is used to retrieve data on the count of customers and the types of services that are being requested in the offices.

A kiosk system would transition this function to a system similar to an automated teller machine where customers can enter information via a touch screen with a menu of options. The kiosks will be available at the entrance to the one stop. Once customers enter their information, they will be placed in a queue for the staff to view and prepare for the consultation.

The system must produce reports that will allow for better and more efficient and responsive management of the One Stop centers.

Strategic Benefit

Decreases wait time for services

Nature of Change

Pilot project to test for improved wait times, efficiency of service delivery, reporting

Cost

Pilot project hardware and software for kiosks in 3 one stop centers - \$75,000

Implementation Timing

Deployment of pilot kiosks in Fall of 2010

Responsible Parties

Office of Employment and Training
Local Workforce Investment Boards (in pilot areas)

Consequences of No Action

Continued lengthy wait times for customers. Inability to easily track aggregate number of clients visiting one stop centers and for what purposes.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Reduced customer wait times, more efficient operation of one stop centers, management tool for analyzing business operations to improve responsiveness.

Potential Obstacles

Ability to develop and maintain system as envisioned and interface with existing data bases.

Literacy skills of some potential users

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Action Step 5

Unemployment Insurance Customer Service Plan

Description

The dramatic rise in unemployment during the current recession has strained the system in terms of financial solvency as well as the capacity of the system to efficiently and effectively provide service to our customers. Because Unemployment Insurance services are delivered through the One Stop system, the impact of so many customers converging on the centers simultaneously has often affected the staff's ability to provide all of the other services our clients expect.

Improving Unemployment Insurance customer service is expected to have spillover effects to other service areas.

The plan includes both short and longer term improvements:

Short Term Strategies:

- Implement Direct Deposit for disbursement of benefits
- Increase staff supporting the Help Desk
- Analyze Help Desk assistance and develop a FAQ
- Triage the emails to the Help Desk and calls to local offices
- Conduct programmatic training and follow-up Customer Service training

Long-Term Strategies:

- Accounts for claimants - Set up accounts for claimants on line that will allow them to perform self-service functions as well as access account information similar to services offered on line through a bank.
- Expand UI Call Center and on-line services - Include simple UI data retrieval issues (where is my check, reissue my check, reset my PIN, etc). Develop additional on-line UI services that could be self service or at least initiated by the customer via the internet such as eligibility reviews. The Interactive Voice Response unit also has a web chat functionality to address claimant issues during filing which would allow for timely assistance.
- Automate the UI appeals and tax processes - Move the process from a primarily manual and time intensive process to an electronic process

Strategic Benefit

Decreases wait time for services

Provides customer service and other training to service delivery staff

Increases use of online tools and resources by automating several functions which currently require in-person contact with clients

Nature of Change

All of the process changes included can be made internally with administrative policy changes.

Cost

Unemployment Insurance stimulus package funding - \$500,000

Implementation Timing

Short-term strategies to be completed in 2010

Responsible Parties

Office of Employment and Training
Commissioner of Workforce Development

Consequences of No Action

Without changes to our approach and philosophy for delivering quality services, gains in efficiency will not be realized, our clients will continue to feel frustrated, and an already overloaded system will be pushed closer to failure. Other customers of the workforce system will also suffer due to the overwhelming strain put on the system by unemployment.

Benefit to Local Areas/Clients

Clients will benefit by having the opportunity to do more on-line at their convenience, system capacity will be expanded reducing wait times for information and assistance requests. One Stop centers can expect a reduction in the number of customers there for the sole purpose of unemployment benefits.

Evaluation Methodology

Although successful implementation of the recommendations of this plan is dependent upon the actions of a wide array of local workforce boards, partners, agencies and officials, the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board will monitor the progress of each action step.

Evaluation Framework

With input from the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, the Executive Committee will develop a basic framework for the evaluation of both implementation progress and success or failure of programs following implementation.

Committees

Committees will develop specific criteria under a board-approved evaluation framework for each of the action steps assigned to them. On a regular basis, committees will meet to determine the level of progress made toward implementation or project completion as well as determining the level of return on the investment of each action item.

Board

Each committee will provide staff with an update prior to meetings of the full board. These updates will clearly and concisely convey where progress is being made, where projects are stalled or lagging behind, as well as identifying and issues which should be addressed by the full board. As projects come on-line, tracking the results will be an additional component of each committee's update.

Each board meeting will provide an opportunity for presentation of one or more projects which are completed or nearing completion. These presentations will be led by a board member but may include presenters outside the board who are vital players in the implementation of the project.

Following each board meeting, copies of the committee reports and presentations will be made available to the public via the board's web site.

Following the final meeting of the board each year, the board chair will submit a report to the Governor documenting the progress made that year and identifying any issues of concern.

Appendix

- Stakeholder Meeting Notes
- Draft White Paper
- Coordinating Council Interview Notes

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE DISCUSSION
with LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS

Meeting Notes

May 21, 2008 Meeting

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:40 p.m.

Location: Auditorium, Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, Kentucky

Secretary Mountjoy introduced herself and referenced her background in elementary education and experience with a local workforce investment area board and with local economic development entities.

Attendee introductions were made followed by explanatory remarks and a time of directed discussion.

Secretary Mountjoy:

- Discussed rumors, stating that while reorganization is underway, Workforce Development will remain in the Education Cabinet. A new cabinet title is anticipated: Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. This title change will be more reflective of the various agencies within the cabinet, will reflect the value of Workforce Development, and will help Kentuckians know where to go for relevant information.
- Speaking on behalf of Governor Beshear, stated he understands the connection between education and workforce development and he considers both very important when trying to attract companies to Kentucky as well as keep companies in Kentucky. Companies are interested in workforce skills and finding capable employees. A prepared workforce is one of the most important incentives Kentucky can offer.
- Said they want to enhance efforts already in place in creating a workforce development system.
- Noted that workforce development moneys are spread over three or four cabinets with many different providers. A system to benefit all regions is needed, that will enable responders to know where to send people to get the help they need.
- Stated that challenges exist, including inadequate finances and personnel due in part to upcoming retirements.
 - No guarantees of continuing federal funding
 - Look at way we do the work, mesh functions in a seamless fashion
 - An opportunity for those involved to have input into process and changes.
- Want to find how to make the one-stops and WIBs more seamless.
- Want should the system look like?
 - Work together
 - Attendees valued partners
 - Eliminate barriers
- Final plan may not look like what anyone wants but their input, experience, skill, and commitment do matter and will be considered.

Attendees asked something they are proud of in their respective LWIA:

- Business relevancy (EKCEP – Jeff Whitehead)
 - Staff emphasis on business needs rather than what LWIB has to offer
 - Employer consortiums developed: healthcare, coal, energy
- Partnerships developed to meet expressed needs (EKCEP, KentuckianaWorks – Michael Gritton)
 - College access center partnering with one stops focusing on going and returning to college
 - Scholars program – associate degrees
- One-Stop Director to ‘drive the bus’ (Northern Kentucky – Barb Stewart) (WIA/WIB established and paid for one-stop director)
 - Identified industries/clusters
 - Dedicated staff for industry needs/knowledge
 - Increased emphasis on business services
- Enhanced involvement with economic development – developing specialized training (Barren River – George Leamon)
 - Leveraging training dollars with KCTCS and truck trailer building industry
- Building Training Facility – meeting needs of energy industry (Cumberlands – Donna Diaz)
- Coal fields grant participation (Western Kentucky – Sheila Clark)
 - Collaboration with other WIBs and KCTCS-WINS
 - Business / employer relations a priority – meeting needs
- (TENCO – Marlene Duffy) – identified clusters; healthcare, manufacturing, education
 - Cooperation with medical facilities, community colleges, and universities
 - WIRED
 - Frustration of business community with slowness of government response
- Focus on entrepreneurship (Green River – Jiten Shah)
 - New generation of people
 - Need to replace skills and training – employment of future
- BRAC initiative opened new doors (Lincoln Trail – Sherry Johnson)
 - Conveners and facilitators
- (Bluegrass – Lori Collins) Emphasis on youth
 - Manufacturing pipeline developed partnering with KCTCS and businesses
 - 2-year youth manufacturing academy with students going on to study engineering
 - Now expanding to including some adult populations, such as offenders

Discussion comments were summarized by referring to the importance of actively engaging partners, focusing on the future, the importance of pipelines (articulation arrangements) and difference today in manufacturing and coal mining.

Governor Beshear joined the meeting briefly, noting how important workforce development is to the state and that the best incentive to move the state forward

economically is workforce development. He requested the Secretary to get all stakeholders together and noted that Kentucky is not taking maximum advantage of what is available.

After his departure, the Secretary reiterated that the Governor has workforce development very high on his radar, is seriously committed and is working with economic development as well.

Workforce Development Partners were identified:

- KCTCS (KY WINS)
- Local Economic Development
- LWIAs
- Chambers of Commerce
- Adult Education Cabinet Military Bases
- Universities
- Foundations

Discussion followed on what would it take/how to work more effectively.

- Better, more seamless pipeline from high school to community college to university
 - Need to convey information to students so they have realistic expectations
 - Need to start with elementary school students
- Apprenticeship programs / construction trades noted
- Better communication – broaden the audience
- Knowledge of benchmarks

“What gets in the way/barriers of getting the job done?” discussion followed.

- Clarify role of the KWIB and its relationship to the LWIAs/LWIBs
 - Need a vision keeper – big picture oriented
 - Set clear goals for Kentucky
 - Bring all partners together
 - Set priorities for regions
 - Key indicators
 - Workforce preparedness
 - Endorse LWIB/LWIA, have input into LWIB priorities but not micromanage details
 - Need LWIB input to/on KWIB
- Counties / LWIAs all different; therefore, have different organization and personnel needs.
- Lack of participation by required partners an issue – not all partners participate
- “Branding” of education and workforce needed
- Need to differentiate between “what you can control” and “what you can influence”
- Need a champion for adult education at local levels

- In working with economic development activities
 - broad state policy needed
 - consistency is needed
 - incumbent worker training an issue
- Need to be able to react quickly, to be proactive
- Need true collaboration regarding resources and staffing
- Need to try to keep companies open – layoff aversions
- Economic Development needs to revise incentives
- Economic Development needs to incorporate training more
- Need to find a replacement for manufacturing
 - Broadband access
 - Entrepreneurship support
- Turf issues regarding funding, etc. – community colleges compete among themselves
- Identify all sources of training funds; clearing house – online project application
- Universities need to spin off research
- One size fits all type plan from Frankfort
- Need to emphasize strength of local boards
- KWIB – listening to locals, advocate across states and cabinets

“What would a Workforce Development System look like - Who should be involved? - What would the relationship look like?”

- Schools should be involved and aware of changing needs
 - Public School System
 - Adult Education
 - Tech Ed
 - Community Colleges
 - Universities
 - Private Institutions
 - Proprietary Institutions
 - Research & Development
- Michael Gritton (KentuckianaWorks) listed four principles:
 - Elementary and high school testing should be aligned with postsecondary testing requirements – CATS aligned with college entrance tests
 - Transfer credits should be assured from community colleges to universities
 - State Brand (one name!)
 - Demand-driven
- Need leadership at the state level to make the system work statewide
- Economic Development needs to be a partner
- One-stops built on economic development foundation – not “oh this is the unemployment office”

- Partnerships ought to be partnerships: equitable time/money/effort (Being charged for space and equipment with no reciprocal consideration when time, money, and effort are being invested)
- Invest in technology

What are “Next Steps?” – comments provided by Secretary Mountjoy

1. The KWIB is to be moved to the Cabinet Secretary’s office, a move that is both symbolic and real.
2. Make the KWIB role productive
3. Reviewing what other states have done
4. Will meet with
 - a. KWIB
 - b. Economic Development groups
 - c. Bluegrass State Skills
 - d. Adult Education
 - e. KCTCS (Keith Bird)
 - f. Chamber of Commerce
 - g. SHRM

Closing with: Kentucky doesn’t have to mimic other states but neither does it have to reinvent the wheel.

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE DISCUSSION
with KENTUCKY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Meeting Notes

May 27, 2008 Meeting
Time: 10:30 – 11:30 am.
Berry Hill Mansion - Frankfort

Insert meeting attendees:

Nancy Spivey – Chair, opened the meeting and greetings were extended to meeting attendees. Ms. Spivey turned the floor over to Russ Salsman, Executive Director-Office of Employment and Training. Mr. Salsman expressed his excitement on being on board and was thrilled to be working in Kentucky’s workforce development system. Mr. Salsman introduced Helen W. Mountjoy, Secretary of the Education Cabinet.

Secretary Mountjoy referenced her background in education and experience with a local economic development entity and local workforce investment board. Explanatory remarks followed:

- Discussed rumors, stating that while reorganization is underway, Workforce Development will remain in the Education Cabinet. A new cabinet title is anticipated: Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. This title change will be more reflective of the various agencies within the cabinet, will reflect the value of workforce development, and will help Kentuckians know where to go for relevant information.
- Speaking on behalf of Governor Beshear, stated he understands the connection between education and workforce development and he considers both very important when trying to attract companies to Kentucky as well as keep companies in Kentucky. Companies are interested in workforce skills and finding capable employees. A prepared workforce is one of the most important incentives Kentucky can offer.
- A statewide vision is needed
- The KWIB is to be moved to the Cabinet Secretary’s office, a move that is both symbolic and real – elevating its status
- Make the KWIB role productive
- Reviewing what other states have done
- Met/meeting with:
 - Local workforce areas
 - Economic developers
 - Bluegrass State Skills
 - Adult Education
 - KCTCS (Keith Bird)
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - SHRM

- Said they want to enhance efforts already in place in creating a seamless workforce development system, meeting needs of local communities.
- Noted that workforce development moneys are spread over three or four cabinets with many different providers. A system to benefit all regions is needed, that will enable responders to know where to send people to get the help they need.

Mr. Salsman continued to lead discussion due to Secretary Mountjoy's departure.

Discussion on members' suggestions/frustrations in regard to the role of KWIB ensued.

- In the strategic planning process, KWIB should be a team player
- Any time Governor Beshear could attend meetings, would be great
- The board should create and establish policy; reporting to leadership
- Maintain current committee structure
- Cannot be successful if we don't work collectively: workforce, economic development
- In the EKCEP area, piloting a work certified: a three week program, behavior modification
- WIRED initiative - I-65 Corridor

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE DISCUSSION
with ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Meeting Notes

May 28, 2008 Meeting
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Transportation Cabinet

Secretary Mountjoy introduced herself and referenced her background in elementary education and experience with a local workforce investment area board and with local economic development entities. Attendee introductions were made.

Secretary Mountjoy:

- Discussed rumors, stating that while reorganization is underway, Workforce Development will remain in the Education Cabinet. A new cabinet title is anticipated: Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. This title change will be more reflective of the various agencies within the cabinet, will reflect the value of Workforce Development, and will help Kentuckians know where to go for relevant information.
- Speaking on behalf of Governor Beshear, stated he understands the connection between education and workforce development and he considers both very important when trying to attract companies to Kentucky as well as keep companies in Kentucky. Companies are interested in workforce skills and finding capable employees. A prepared workforce is one of the most important incentives Kentucky can offer.
- Said they want to enhance efforts already in place in creating a seamless workforce development system., meeting needs of local communities.
- Noted that workforce development moneys are spread over three or four cabinets with many different providers. A system to benefit all regions is needed, that will enable responders to know where to send people to get the help they need.
- We are merely leading – economic development is full partner
 - You know what works and what are you needs.
- Want should the system look like – what do the difference parts of the machine need to be
 - Work together
 - Attendees valued partners
 - Eliminate barriers
- Final plan may not look like what anyone wants but their input, experience, skill, and commitment do matter and will be considered.

What's changed:

- Speed – faster
- Delivery through technology
- Nature of workforce

- Strength of brains; not backs
 - System has not kept up
- Basic skills – what is expected
 - Problem solving
 - Adaptive
 - Team player

What are successes/barriers:

- Knowing where your partners are
- Cohort programs
- Improve skills of current workers, middle level management
- Services overlap: who does what, when
- Maintain contact
- No continuity/conformity
- No communication
- Need overall regional strategy – focus on where we are going
- Accessibility is different in areas
- Need curriculum that stresses entrepreneurship, business development
- Need way to integrate; put pieces together
- “educators not interested” – instructors do not understand business; not teaching a career
- Bridge the gap
- Ways to keep workers in communities/rural areas
- Make teachers year round – adjust curriculum year to year
- Tourism development
- “why not soft skills component”
- Need to change – but have not
 - Still focusing on “old” jobs
 - Training needs to diversify
 - Skills/curriculum meeting business needs
 - Flexibility across system
 - Respond/future needs
- Get off college track
 - Technical is good
 - Vocational/occupational is “cool”
- Why Western Kentucky
- Accountability - universities
- Drug problem
 - Partnerships with business
- Get away from “regionalism and silos”
- One-stop shops – one person you can go to get answers
- Cultural warfare
- “competitiveness councils instead of WIBs”
- KREDA credits
- Strategic planning process

- Proficiency versus seat time

What are “Next Steps?” – comments provided by Secretary Mountjoy

1. Honest effort to form seamless system
2. Be kept informed
3. Be consulted
4. The KWIB is to be moved to the Cabinet Secretary’s office, a move that is both symbolic and real.
5. Make the KWIB role productive
6. Reviewing what other states have done
7. Met/meeting with:
 - a. KWIB
 - b. Local workforce areas
 - c. Bluegrass State Skills
 - d. Adult Education
 - e. KCTCS (Keith Bird)
 - f. Chamber of Commerce
 - g. SHRM

KCTCS – Community Economic Development Leaders
June 23, 2008
KCTCS System Office - Versailles
Notes

Keith Bird mentioned they were currently re-engineering workforce units to become more responsive to business needs (Workforce Competitiveness Initiative) four pilots. They are also looking at sectors on a regional basis.

Successful activities conducted within the last two years with partnership agencies/groups, or wish you could have done:

- WINS
- Work closely with industrial boards and chambers – used as an incentive
- Agreement with unions – apprenticeships – apply college credits
- Work with Economic Development Cabinet
- Call upon fellow KCTCS partners
- Kentucky Coal Academy
- Research in mining training
- Identify specific workkeys
- Work with county judge/executive
- Partner with chemical plants – concern with retirements
 - Eon, Kentucky Utilities
- Public, private partnerships (business and industry) – dealing with overall workforce issues
- Licensing and certifications – conduct assessment
- Assist educators in understanding technical Education Cabinet
- Business services liaison – Northern Kentucky provided funding
- Owensboro Chamber – Lexmark teacher institute
- Manufacturing as a major
- Teachers on commission

Barriers:

- Perception – ATCs, technical not seen as viable
- Adult Education – out of line with the state
- Different measurements
- Find part time teacher
- Train the trainer
- ATC – look at area before building new facilities
- Flexibility
- Money

Partners:

- Politicians
- Unions
- State government
- Economic development
- Employers
- Chambers
- Local workforce boards/areas
- BSSC
- WINS
- Adult Education Cabinet
- Professional membership societies
- Big brothers Big sisters
- Kentucky Association of Manufacturers
- Articulation agreements

Next steps:

- Everyone kept apprised
- Report to Governor
- Maintain ongoing conversations
- You are valued partner and will be needed for your expertise in developing and moving workforce system forward

WORKFORCE INITIATIVE DISCUSSION
with Partner Agencies

Meeting Notes

March 20, 2009

Time: 9:30 a.m - 11:30 a.m.

Capital Plaza Tower Auditorium

Secretary Mountjoy called the meeting with agency partners to discuss the Workforce System in Kentucky. The question was asked, "If we could design a system, what would it look like?" The following is a listing of answers and suggestions from the agency partners.

What elements would we have to have for providing a workforce to meet employers' needs?

- Employer input
- Research opportunities
- Anticipating/forecasts
- Providers- "what providers do we serve?"
- Enhanced database
- One place to post all information and respond with quality responses
- Way to inform community- public relations effort
- Dual system- Employer/trainee
- Transparency
- Intentional
- Appeal to broad spectrum- Low skills to high skills
- Overwhelming system – need overarching purpose (we are not competing)
- Institutionalize how we react in crisis
- Flexibility
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Four year Institutions- in point/out point
- Job Corps
- Employer- high growth

The Meeting divided into groups to focus the discussion:

Question 1: What can we do that will build something that lasts beyond the 18 months?

- Project Lead the way
- Best practices
- Work readiness
- One Stop to have transition navigators

- Strengthen One Stops
- E³
- Work readiness
- National best practices
- Institutionalizing this process- Trust one another and break down defensiveness
- Innovative partnership efforts

Question 2: What kinds of changes are needed from Cabinet level to be more responsive?

- Building up One Stops
- Statewide Strategic vision- KWIB
- More mandated partners in One Stop
- Survey of One Stop
- LTADD bringing in all centers
- EKOS
 - Need to simplify database
 - Measure common data
- OCTE needs to be more involved
- Referrals too slow
- Cross training in One Stop
- Actions to these discussions
- Single vision
- Accountability
- Common website

In closing Secretary Mountjoy provided comments on the “Next Steps”:

1. Go back and really work on change
2. Look at new partners
3. Commit- will take hard look at EKOS
4. Look at ways to establish chat room
5. Get together quarterly - structured discussion
6. Leverage what everyone brings to the table

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A White Paper on Possibilities for the Future
July 2008

Some Sobering Thoughts

In Kentucky, by 2025 our working-age population (24-65) will decline by 7%. At the same time, our senior population (65 and older) will increase by 64%.

67% of high schoolers’ parents and 78% of high school teachers believe that public school graduates have the skills they need to succeed in the world of work. Unfortunately, only 41% of employers share their view.

Half of the job/knowledge skills of the 65,000,000 people born 1965-1984 become obsolete in 30-36 months.

Introduction

For the past several months we have struggled to meet Kentucky’s challenges of providing more and better services to the citizens of the Commonwealth while coping with revenue shortfalls and the unwillingness of some elected leaders to pursue alternative sources of state income. At heart we understand that for Kentucky to prosper, it must approach economic development in new ways to keep pace with a global economy. And we know that to be successful in economic development we must prepare and maintain a well educated, highly skilled workforce – one that is capable of being retrained as new technologies emerge. Our population is aging and our current methods of preparing the workforce are not capable of producing employees with the skills to master twenty-first century jobs. We need a new system of workforce policies, education and training programs, and funding streams linked to the economic needs of the Commonwealth, its regions, and its communities.

In January 2008, the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Kentucky submitted a study entitled “Economic Growth in Kentucky: Why Does Kentucky Lag Behind the Rest of the South?” to the Partnership Board for the Cabinet for Economic Development. Through the examination of data and interviews with site consultants who assist businesses with relocation decisions, the authors determined that southern states successful in economic development have adopted “a much more expansive view of economic development than we have adopted in Kentucky.” And, after listing and discussing a range of issues which contribute to Kentucky’s difficulty in attracting and retaining the kinds of companies every state courts, the authors state unequivocally, “Until the problem of workforce development is addressed, all other efforts at economic development will be unsuccessful.”

One could argue that this stark analysis is based more on perception than on reality. (After all, Kentucky was recently ranked 5th in the nation for its skills-development efforts in a survey conducted by Expansion Management magazine.) The reality, however, is that we do not have a system of workforce development and the allocation of state and federal dollars to support it in Kentucky has far too often been a hit or miss proposition without significant coordination.

The time has come for Kentucky to join the long list of other states which have taken a hard look at and made changes to the ways they provide and coordinate workforce development resources and training opportunities. To quote from Georgia’s Executive Order for recreating its workforce development initiatives:

“Successfully developing our workforce as our state’s number one asset in a global economy must ally the leadership, vision and resources of the state’s workforce development, education system, employment services, economic development planning, and business and industry initiatives in a strategic enterprise which is built on strong public/private partnerships.”

To begin this work, Kentucky must address two separate but related challenges. The first is to maximize the investment the Commonwealth makes in workforce training by creating a system which is much more focused, flexible and responsive to employer needs. The second is to ensure that workforce preparation, both at the high school level and through postsecondary training, is infused with rigorous academic content that will truly position students to succeed in twenty-first century jobs.

The Investment

Kentucky has a hodge-podge of workforce development activities and funding streams scattered across at least three cabinets and involving federal, state and private funding. We have identified at least fifteen agencies and programs which are involved in the process. Teasing out the amount spent on workforce preparation and training in Kentucky is an almost impossible task. Amounts for some programs are embedded in budgets for others and there is disagreement as to what exactly qualifies an initiative as “workforce preparation” or “workforce training.” We can say with assurance, however, that significant dollars are being expended. In PY07 revenue from the United States Department of Labor for Workforce Investment Act functions \$56,032,511. Most of this money is allocated at the local level to assist with training for displaced workers and for adults and youth who need to attain skills to become employable. Last year, KCTCS had \$6 million available through the Kentucky WINS program and the Bluegrass State Skills Corporation invested an additional \$4,368,000 for employer-based worker training. The Office of Career and Technical Education, Department of Workforce Development, has an enacted budget for FY 09 of \$26,628,300 to provide training to high school students who elect to attend half of each school day at one of our fifty-five Area Technology Centers located across Kentucky.

Overall consolidated planning for the state appears to be minimal. If state-wide priorities for investment are established, they are not widely published or understood. Collaboration to leverage available dollars at the local level is highly effective and efficient in some regions and barely discernable in others. Employers who wish to receive state assistance in paying for skills training for their employees often seem to access appropriate programs more by chance than by design. High school-based, Area

Technology Center-based, KCTCS-based, and incumbent worker-based workforce preparation programs are sometimes duplicative, often unresponsive to employer pleas for flexibility, and irregularly articulated with one another or with degree granting programs at four-year institutions.

Over the past several months we have convened groups of stakeholders to discuss workforce development issues and to begin forging a critical mass of support for some significant changes. 26 Local Workforce Investment Board directors and Area Development District Directors comprised one focus group. 27 local economic development directors from across the state made up another. (This led to an interesting opportunity to meet with a plant manager in Campbellsville/Taylor County who was on the panel convened by Alabama’s governor to improve workforce development opportunities in that state.) We met with the members of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board. And we had a lively session with the directors of the Career and Economic Development divisions at each of the schools in the KCTCS. Private discussions have been held with representatives of the state Chamber of Commerce. Upcoming meetings are scheduled with Bluegrass State Skills Corp., Adult Education, and with leadership in our Office of Career and Technical Education. Yet to be scheduled is a conversation with members of KAM.

Each of these groups has been open to, indeed welcoming of, changes in the ways Kentucky organizes its workforce training investment process. I believe there is consensus that the existence of the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB), required by federal law to administer the funds which come to the Commonwealth through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), provides a framework through which changes may be effectuated and monitored. With that in mind, we recommend the following strategies:

Short Term (within 3 months)

1. Reconstitute by executive order the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB).
Rationale: This board in its current iteration is not living up to its potential. It needs to include decision makers from key segments of Kentucky’s economy who will advise the Governor on workforce training priorities and create an integrated statewide strategic plan for developing the workforce of the future. This plan should create a system of workforce policies, education and training programs, and funding streams linked to the economic needs of the Commonwealth, its regions, and its communities. It should include consideration of the infrastructure necessary to support workforce development activities, the ways the major players can work together more effectively, and available funding from both public and private sources.
We have attached a copy of the current membership of the KWIB, some suggestions of people to consider for appointment, and a draft executive order.
2. Establish a Coordinating Council, chaired by the Governor, comprised of the chief executives of the lead agencies within the workforce development system, to

“Preliminary Draft – For Discussion Only”

serve as a steering committee for the KWIB and to provide direct linkages between the administration and the KWIB.

Rationale: This group should contain the people who will be responsible ultimately for implementing the plan developed by the KWIB.

3. Hire an executive director to manage the work of the KWIB and the Coordinating Council.
4. As a first order of business, ask the KWIB to review and modify if necessary the processes and procedures employed by Rapid Response teams which interact with affected employees in case of a massive layoff or plant closure.

Mid-Term (3-9 months)

1. Establish sector priorities for the investment of state workforce development funds while allowing for regional differences within a statewide framework.
Rationale: To aggressively pursue improved economic and workforce competitiveness, Kentucky must provide cadres of workers trained for success in emerging industries. By targeting areas for investment, the KWIB can begin to shift the emphasis in training toward cutting edge skills which prepare workers for multiple career pathways. The ultimate goal is to align education and workforce training opportunities with economic development efforts.
2. Draw up new guidelines for Local Workforce Investment Board plans and institute a collaborative review process for them. Require that significant cooperation between agencies and funding streams be an integral part of local plans.
3. Develop criteria for the awarding of WIA Governor’s Reserve Fund dollars to reflect the statewide training priorities
4. Initiate further research into states’ best practices as the KWIB begins development of the new Five year Plan of action for submission to the U.S. Department of Labor. Disseminate the best practices to the local WIBs.
5. Appoint committees of the KWIB as necessary to address such topics as career and technical education delivery models, specific strategies to reshape services to youth, and identification of innovative ways to rapidly meet the needs of emerging industries .

Longer Term (post 9 months)

1. Ensure that KWIB remains a vital advisory body for the Governor on workforce development and economic development activities and priorities. Appoint and/or disband committees as needed.
2. Initiate a formal and on-going communications procedure to link stakeholders such as the local WIBs, Area Development Districts, local economic development directors, community and economic development offices at KCTCS institutions, Area Technology Centers, etc. with the work of the KWIB.
3. Adopt the new Five Year Plan.

Workforce Preparation

The second challenge facing Kentucky is more daunting than the first. It entails studying the ways high school students and (primarily) young adults are prepared to enter the workforce and then creating an articulated system of career and technical education which will prepare the students for success in a rapidly changing world. This will require an unblinking examination of current practices and the will to make difficult changes.

High school aged students have several ways to participate in career and technical education depending on where they reside. Many comprehensive high schools offer a variety of courses which fall into the general classification of career preparation. The most common are in the fields of business, agriculture, and information technology. There is growing interest in health care related programs within high schools. Other high school students participate in career and technical programs offered through locally administered technical centers. In most cases these free-standing facilities adjoin high schools or are close by. Students typically spend part of their school day taking specialized work-related courses in these settings. Industrial and mechanical skills are typically taught as well as those offered in many high school settings. A third venue for high school training is the Area Technical Center (ATC). There are fifty-five of these and they are operated by the Office of Career and Technical Education within the Workforce Development department of our cabinet. These each serve several school districts. Students usually attend for half of their school day during their junior and senior years. Offerings vary from site to site as the curricula tend to reflect the needs of local employers. Industrial, mechanical, business, IT, health care, horticulture and a variety of other programs form the core of their curricula.

Each of these models has its proponents and its detractors. Some employers will tell you that there is insufficient rigor in the coursework associated with the ATCs. Others say that the facilities are a God-send to their regions since they teach basic industrial or mechanical skills for entry level workers. Some people complain about the limited number of offerings in the high school-based programs and their relatively slow pace of adding new programs. Others maintain that they don't try to be all things to all people but rather provide skills preparation in areas where students are likely to find employment. The main concern about the locally operated centers is related to the funding discrepancy between what is available to them vs. what is available to the area centers. There are employers who will tell you that no matter where our high school students are receiving their career and technical training, we are essentially preparing them for twentieth century jobs which increasingly do not exist.

These three types of programs have something positive in common. Each uses to some degree the Skill Standards and Assessments developed in 18 areas by educators and employers as a means to “certify” highly skilled students. These are almost universally praised! These assessments are optional so typically only the most advanced and successful students take them. As a result, we do not have very reliable information upon which to judge the overall success of the various programs. The existence of these Skills

Standards and Assessments, however, gives us an important framework for providing a system of high quality training and a track record for partnering with and responding to employers.

High school students may take courses in technical areas through the local branch of KCTCS. These may provide “dual credit” (count both toward high school graduation and towards college credit) or they may provide KCTCS credit only. Some of these courses lead directly to industry certifications. Others provide the basis for further technical training. Most can be incorporated into a career pathway leading to associate’s and/or baccalaureate degrees.

In this whole realm of workforce development, there is a group of students who do not, for whatever reason, participate in career and technical education even though they find “traditional” high school classes irrelevant. This is the group which typically drops out of high school and will likely require training at some point in the future in order to qualify for family sustaining jobs. A comprehensive approach to workforce development must take these students into account as well. Promising work with able students in danger of dropping out of school is being pursued at various sites across the country under the auspices of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The “early college” or “middle college” concept allows selected high school students to attend classes on community college campuses. If they stay in the school for four years, they receive a high school diploma. If they stay five years, they receive an associate’s degree. This program has the dual benefits of keeping students in school and of introducing them to success in postsecondary education and workforce training. North Carolina and New York in particular have worked with this model and are finding impressive results.

The multiple approaches to workforce preparation at the high school level tend to create a series of silos, each pursuing its own sustainability. Some programs are extremely responsive to regional employer needs. Others are very slow to change. Little tracking of students who complete programs at the Area Technical Schools is done. We do not, for example, have solid data on placement of students after graduation, employer satisfaction or related topics. In many parts of Kentucky, the ATCs are still viewed as schools of last resort rather than schools of choice. They are places where a student goes “to learn a trade” instead of places where a student goes “to build a future.” Basic academic skills are frequently sacrificed as technical skills are practiced. Since futurists predict that workers will need to change their skills seven times during the course of their work life, the heavy attention to a specific skill set seems shortsighted at best.

Over the past several months we have had extended conversations with Rodney Kelly, who recently retired as Associate Commissioner for Career and Technical Education with the KY Department of Education and with his successor, Debbie Anderson. We have also spent time discussing future directions with John Marks, Director of the Office of Career and Technical Education within the cabinet. We have also met with Drs. Michael McCall and Keith Bird of KCTCS to gather their perspective. Last week Joe Meyer and I met with Dr. Gene Bottoms who directs the High Schools That Work (HSTW) program for the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). (This highly respected program

ensures that rigorous course work is a hallmark of the career and technical education offered by participating schools. Kentucky has a cadre of high schools who participate in HSTW and a number of them were recognized by the organization at its recent summer meeting. One ATC, along with its partner high school in Lee County, was awarded one of the top seven recognitions made nation-wide.) We have found a willingness among all those with whom we have spoken to continue the dialog about ways to enhance the workforce preparation programs in Kentucky. From almost all of them we found an enthusiasm for undertaking this work. With that as background we recommend the following:

Short Term (up to 3 months)

1. Solicit input on strategies to infuse rigorous academic content into career and technical programs from Dr. Gene Bottoms of SREB. Convene a team to study these proposals and make recommendations about their suitability for implementation.
2. Seek foundation funding for pilot projects within the ATCs to change the culture and position the centers as “schools of choice.”
3. Begin a data-driven review of career and technical programs offered through the ATCs and the Department of Education. This would include such things as enrollment trends, importance in career pathways, placement of students within their field of study upon graduation, admission into postsecondary education without placement in developmental courses, employer satisfaction, certification/licensure exam pass rates, etc.

Mid-Term (3 to 9 months)

1. Conduct research on “early college”/“middle college” programs, seek pilot sites and work with the Gates Foundation on funding and leadership for these. (The director of Gates Foundation educational programming is a Kentuckian, Vicki Phillips. I initiated conversations with her about this at a recent Education Commission of the States meeting and she was very receptive. She will be in Kentucky in October for the Prichard Committee meeting.)
2. Form a team of KCTCS leadership, CPE leadership, KDE staff, and the secretary’s office to explore additional ways students may attain fully transferrable college credit while still in high school.
3. Initiate a communications plan to ensure stakeholders are kept apprised of developments.
4. Begin to outline criteria for “Technology Centers of Excellence” through which career and technical departments within high schools and ATCs can be recognized for delivering training which prepares students for twenty-first century jobs.

Long Term (post 9 months)

1. Continue to develop and offer high quality professional development for ATC instructors to assist them with infusing rigorous academic content into their courses.

2. Support the efforts of those ATCs which wish to become Technology Centers of Excellence. Develop a series of incentives and recognitions to mark their progress toward this designation.
3. Establish at least two new “early/middle college” sites within Kentucky.

The two sets of recommendation outlined above will not magically transform Kentucky into the nation’s most progressive workforce development state overnight. They will, however, head us in that direction and establish an environment in which workers may move seamlessly between employment, relevant workforce development and education throughout their careers. They will also give the Governor a solid record in building the greatest incentive we can offer to any business looking to locate or expand in Kentucky: a well educated and trained workforce.

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
KY Labor Cabinet
Secretary Gray, Deputy Secretary Brown, Mike Dixon
Wednesday, January 7, 2010

Apprentices under utilized. Why? – Not promoting skilled trades to High School students at College Career Days

Opportunities to establish programs in Business

Challenge:

Lack of staff to promote apprenticeships/benefits
300 programs right now
Currently founded through the General Fund expansion package

\$100K Grant:

Software/Developing partnerships
KCTCS – LWIBS – KWIBS
“Apprenticeship Days”

Local/ KY Tech:

Perfect place for pre-apprenticeship
Provides students “taste” of various trades

IBEW – 369 – Louisville – “Green”

Green will be a result of customer demand, probably be there in the future

Green Careers :

Could generate demand by retrofitting public buildings.

Health and Safety Training Programs:

Free to businesses and workers

Cabinet Employees:

Need to market

Hindering:

Kids don’t know that they could make more after apprenticeships than in college
4 to 5 years for apprenticeships can also lead to entrepreneurships

Challenge:

Each program is different
Locals need to visit local

Need to educate guidance counselors/career counselors within Tech Ed

Shortages:

Welders
Lineman
Pipefitters
Diesel mechanics



local businesses and organizations

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
Council on Postsecondary Education
Reece Stagnolia
Thursday, January 28, 2010

* IBEST - need to add training and instructions to manual

Best Practice - Washington State

28 Counties - Adult Ed @ KCTCS

Ability to engage population (men) who don't see context of why education is important

* Add "Adult Education" to post-secondary Education Cabinet

Focus on quality as a performance measure rather than just quantities

Entrepreneurial efforts for rural efforts should include work from home computer and phone skills

Barriers to getting GED

1. Working
2. "Life is good"
3. Educational Apathy
4. Access and convenience (virtual AE website)
5. Undiagnosed learning disabilities – doing professional development for learning disability screening
6. Life crisis inspires – layoffs, school age child
7. Pell grants used for developmental education courses

Power Path - 10 Counties Strategies to addressing learning disabilities

Need early diagnosis of learning disabilities in K-12 system to deal with learning disabilities to prevent drop outs

"Washington 13" – GOOGLE

Adult Ed and One Stops:

Should be in One Stops providing instructional services

Funding is an issue to pay rent and utilities

86 Counties – Local School = 28 KCTCS, Morehead, EKU, 2 CBO (Laurel literary and McClean County Fiscal Court)

General Funds Title II

Barriers:

Space

Funding (formula based on % population without high school diplomas)

Problem is there is not enough funding to cover instruction v/s space – limited to 15% of admin expenses

Looking at change to working age population 18-64

96% of GED grads 16-44

"New framework for adult education"

Berea - Workshops for Women

Contact info from Reecie

Plugged In - Virginia - (Lori Henry @ UK)

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
Cabinet for Economic Development
Secretary Hayes, Deborah Clayton, Robert Curry
Friday, January 29, 2010

Marketing Services to Businesses:

Use cost savings as a hook

Use time savings as a hook

Bureaucracy too big and too inwardly focused

Need to change mindsets

-less about turf and silos

-more about results

Locals looking for opportunities to collaborate

ICC and IC:

Familiar with resources

Consistent message

Consistent identity for businesses

Group of stakeholders on advisory basis regular

Local OJT policies are inconsistent

Too rigid regs, need more flexible and responsive

Need policy manual

Need training sessions for local staff

Lack of vision – view in leadership

How to hook board members? Make relevant.

Rapid Response:

Message is critical not coordinated and tailored

Cannot look the same

Needs to have some common elements

Use economic development to interface with businesses

How to find a job a lot is different that how it was in the past

Need to train how to work with Economic Development

Need to create an impression of single enterprise – “Commonwealth of Kentucky”

Emphasize local knowledge and relationship between LWIBs and local Economic Development

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
Governor's Office
Chief of Staff Adam Edelen, Secretary Lassiter, Susan Dixen
Wednesday, February 3, 2010

(KET apprenticeships show – Larry Roberts)

3 Big Items

Ability to bring strategic focus to distribution of funds
Our ability is limited
What can we do to make a difference in a shorter term?

KWIB's role should be a critical friend to point out issues
Need to be more nimble
Need metrics
KWIB as score-keeper
Need to be liberated to voice criticism

Training must be germane to needs

Action Short Term

SWR – is key to strategic focus

Need to have some strategic influence

*What can KWIB/SWR do to reduce drop out rates

*Kentucky families to survive recession

Study of prior recession and jobs were permanently lost! (Data on what "jobs" lost)

KY "TEK" task Force goals paralleled the KWIB education goal (Ask Joe about this)

David Karem – 90,000 workers in schools

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
Department of Education
Commissioner Holliday, Deborah Anderson
Thursday, February 4, 2010

Murray Ind./Calloway - Collaboration - Career Center - Ec. Dev./ Community College

Sharing Facilities

Increase % of kids who are career/post secondary ready:

How to define "career ready"

"Informatics"

Kentucky OCC Skills Standard Assessment

Industry accepted credentials

WKCTC:

Early/middle college

Dual credit high school diploma/College Assoc. Degrees in Kentucky

Could have focus on tech certificates

Partnerships with businesses:

Healthcare

Early college 9th grade 10th grade then branch out (50-60 college hours)

Started from need for nurses and technicians housed next to hospitals

Partnering with regional consortium starting in 7th grade

Developing plan

How to integrate workforce with education in high school -

Students not able to connect education to careers

Internationally benchmarked standards

GED is last resort for Community College

Communicate to parents and the rest of the state that jobs of tomorrow require more than high schools diplomas

Common Core Standards - SB1

*PR person to serve

Community career pathways

Responsiveness to change in industries – state data, education with business community

Programs suffer and die without business involvement

Communication relating real world skills to education – validating standards with local boards of education and workforce WIB

Pilot 20 school – entrepreneurship

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
Tourism Arts & Heritage Cabinet
Secretary Sparrow, Barbara Atwood
Friday, February 5, 2010

1st largest healthcare 2nd largest private industry's tourism

Tourism:

Hospitality often people's first jobs

Problem – don't create synergism to go elsewhere

Under educated workforce – lack of communications and basic math skills. Service industry servers important to KY's economy.

Retirees bridge HS – college, people working flexibly hours

Shouldn't educate people to just cope

KY lacks entrepreneurship spirit

Most tourism is small business

Rural areas:

Strong work ethic

Education and technical education is key/better

UK getting better understanding

Breakdown in middle school

Teaching to the test (the middle)

To vanilla – removes motivation

Disconnect between education and work life

*Healthy workforce:

Lifestyle

Obesity

Other health industry depends on attendance

Sullivan – Chef's program; other Universities are not really connected with education community or One Stop

Desmond Brown – UK – Tourism/hospitality

Communications, computer, some skills as army retail environment
OJT

Need to get workforce into schools

Need to build relationships with One Stops and community colleges

Stress Value and Dignity

Hispanic influence has leveled off because of economy, but are best workers

Work ethic – work ethic comes back to the parents

Healthy – better educated

Amazon.com – employing snow birds from Arizona as temporary workers when they pass through Kentucky

Unawareness of One Stop Services

Spend too much on services that people know nothing about.

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps

KCTCS

Dr. McCall, Donna Dixon

Friday, February 5, 2010

Concern:

State needs a strong economic development plan.

Where is the state going?

Who are we trying to recruit so we can build pipelines?

Makes it difficult to determine what programs to install (WINS/Workforce/Solutions)

Being on front end v/s back end of economic development

Wants seat @ table with Economic Development – SC model

College-based identification of needs at local level

System can bring a “can do” attitude

Way locals interpret laws and rules

Lack of consistency across the state

Develop innovative solutions

State OET all need to have the attitude of being helpful v/s telling how to do

Communications: partner meeting may need to be even more frequent

How to coordinate data elements, sharing

KCTCS - How

Job match portion

E3 - Really needs to be vamped up

Want to promote to students

Use as a portfolio repository

Communication is big issue

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
BRAC/Military Affairs
Colonel Mark Needham
Monday, February 8, 2010

Trying to align education with workforce

Army Prep School

Adult Ed CTE

Recruit current workforce

Only 28% of youth are qualified to serve

Ken Robinson - CED Defense as industry cluster - Procurement services

KY - 8th largest

NC - 4th largest military

But not military contractors

Military Industrial Contractors - look for knowledge based workforce companies looking around Knox

Critical thinking skills

Problem solvers

How do we get them to locate here?

Need College

Educated workforce

Potential logistics center for Glendale site

Large fiber optic cable – 3 miles

Transformational change in I-65 corridor

1. Companies need to commit to locate
2. Information – based workers need to be available

Cyber Command moving to MD because of availability of skill type.

Army using contractors as bridging strategy to generate workforce

1. How do we keep them?
2. How to replace/replenish?

Challenger Regional Education Center

Niches in education partners – Radcliff

Partnering with IT Industry – contextualized learning

Flexibility of education system is more important to future

CTE Critical - \$9.5 bill sector, 100K workers

How to increase momentum created by BRAC to transform regional identity

Critical Thinking } operating in grey area
Dialogue – Communities } comfort zone issues

4 E's:

Education - invest in it
Energy - must be efficient
Environment - take care of it
Economic Growth - results from the other 3 (balance)

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
Secretary Meyer
Wednesday, February 24, 2010

Communication strategy to local Economic Development and Cabinets

CED – require OET involvement to establish job placement services when state incentives are involved

Entrepreneurship - Every One Stop have classes

Opportunity for UI support – Self Employment Assistance

Micro finance – how to build partnerships

OCTE

WIRED 65

Certification of LWIBs – categorical participation

Transparency and Ethics –

Agencies serving on LWIBS

Governor’s Executive Order/Fed 990

Conflict of interest policies (updated)

WIA Annual Report

Detailed financial report, ALL funds

Identify partners, board members, attendance, vendors, budget and finance

Transparency/ethics

Process Improvement Team

Study of One Stops

One Stop operating Agreements

Comprehensive/standardized

SWR – need to identify conditions

Improve accounting and financial reporting

Monitoring – review and improve

EKOS – authorized user policy

SWR – purpose, application, and process

LWIB

One Stop certification/branding

Local Economic development partnerships

OET staff training

Orientation

Program

Management

Partner training

Training Provider Policy

Case Manager Approval Policy

KWIB Strategic Planning: Action Steps
Kentucky Association of Manufacturers
Wednesday, February 24, 2010

Promote manufacturing friendly environment
#1 economic driver/17% of GDP state
Outcomes other job by 10K year/except mining

Manufacturing and new economy
Advanced manufacturing
High tech products demand higher level skills/higher wages

Last 10 years
Workforce doesn't have kiss or ability to learn
Lack of work ethic
Lack of communication skills
Lack of ability to think
Lack of buy-in to career pathways

Need to develop educator buy-in (improves test scores)

SB 28 – Senator Westwood - mandates career pathways approach into post-secondary – could impact federal funding

*Send Madison Silvert's contact information to Ken Carroll

Basic Skills plus ability to be trained

Students in tech schools no as good here – think the have arrived – tech “degree” is end all

Manufacturing jobs not low level jobs – no longer stand in front of a machine

NCRC – must be disseminated

Bluegrass – Regional manufacturing Collaborative
KCTCS – Toyota
Career pathway reaching into middle school and eventually into elementary
Lacks system to marry industry of education, blending educational experience with work experience

Perception – VocEd is for trouble makers
Curriculum not matching what businesses need

{
Work Ethic
Communication
Ability to think/learn

{
Need to be more selective about who we invest in