

## Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board Executive Director's Report

Meeting No. 204  
September 7, 2016

Workforce Board members, agency staff, and other stakeholders benefitted from a rich retreat, during which we discussed together many ways that Board members can feel more engaged in the meaningful work of the state's workforce development system. Some of that discussion revolved around hearing directly from the system's customers—both employers and jobseekers/workers--and from local providers and administrators. To build in time for such interaction at the meeting, I am providing my Executive Director's report as a written narrative. There will be time on the agenda for Board members to ask for more information or clarification or to provide comment on this report. Members should also feel free to contact me directly with any specific questions ([eleni.papadakis@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:eleni.papadakis@wtb.wa.gov), 360-709-4600).

### **TAP Efforts**

**TAP Implementation Committees Begin Meeting, Drafting Charters:** Leadership of committees have been meeting with Board staff to plan for committee meetings and develop draft charters. Draft charters will be reviewed at the September meeting. Three committees have begun meeting with their members. Following on from the TAP planning phase, we have a great deal of interest in participation from a broad cross-section of stakeholders at the state and local level. Terri Colbert will provide a brief overview of the progress of these committees at the Board meeting. You can also follow the progress of these committees on our website: <http://wtb.wa.gov/TAPcommittees.asp>

**TAP Accelerator: Governor Wants Upskill-Backfill to Advance System Integration:** Gov. Inslee has asked the Board to use the Upskill-Backfill concept highlighted in the TAP plan as an organizing framework to advance system integration. To be successful, the concept requires many components of the broad workforce development system, and must focus concurrently on the needs of both employers and jobseeker/workers. Gov. Inslee is not asking for any new stand-alone programs, but instead to braid existing resources into an Upskill-Backfill approach to how the system provides services. This will take planning and coordination across the six TAP Implementation Committees, and will likely require some testing of new models before policies are adopted. An investment of \$3 million in WIOA Governor's discretionary funds will support this work. An outline of Gov. Inslee's considerations for this TAP Accelerator Project is attached at the end of this document.

**WIOA State Plan Receives "Substantial Approval":** Our state plan was "substantially approved" by the federal agencies that administer the various funding streams within WIOA. A letter was issued with a list of technical fixes required to be corrected by September 1, 2016. The range of items cut across 5 partner agencies. Workforce Board staff coordinated the process of getting all items rectified. The corrections were submitted August 29, 2016. We are not expecting any further modification to be required until the state plan review in 2018.

## Consumer Protection Unit

### **Workforce Board Retains Contract for Approving Programs for Veterans Education**

**Benefits:** In Washington, the Workforce Board is one of two State Approving Agencies (SAA) that creates a catalog of education and training programs approved for GI Bill tuition support. SAAs also perform site visits and compliance surveys of about 40 education institutions per year. Last year, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs stated that they would no longer fund multiple SAAs in a state, putting at risk the Workforce Board's federal contract. (The other SAA agency in WA is the Washington Student Achievement Council.) However, after careful consideration of the Workforce Board's SAA program, our contract has been maintained. For fiscal year 2017 our allocation has increased. Of the five 2-SAA states, only Washington remains.

**Private Career School Licensing Fee Structure Reform:** Licensing and penalty fees for private career schools have not changed in over 30 years. Currently, it costs about twice as much to operate our regulatory program as the revenues we bring in. We are considering technological solutions to streamline staff time and reduce costs. However, new funds will be required. We are also exploring fee structures in other states that better align revenue with program costs.

**Student Protection Study Underway, Report Due in December:** The Legislature directed and funded the Washington Student Achievement Council, in coordination with Department and Licensing and the Workforce Board, to implement a study of private career school oversight in Washington. The Workforce Board licenses and regulates schools below the degree level, while WSAC authorizes degrees (both two-year and four-year) at private career colleges. The Department of Licensing is responsible for licensing cosmetology programs. The Legislature is responding to recent press on unfair business practices of large national education corporations, especially regarding predatory student loan programs and fraudulent data on employment and earnings of school graduates. An initial report is due in December 2016. The study also is looking into the possibility of funding an ombuds position to handle student complaints.

## Other Board Updates

**Board By-Laws Review as Part of Effort to Include More Stakeholders:** The Board asked our Assistant Attorney General, Justin Kjolseth, to help identify ways to ensure the inclusion of stakeholder voices in the Board's decision-making process. Currently, the board has nine voting members from business, education, and government. Justin has begun interviewing Board members and stakeholders to understand what, from their perspective, works currently, what doesn't, and to solicit ideas about what practices might be codified in the Board's by-laws. He will also review the by-laws of other boards and commissions that are perceived to have a consistently high level of stakeholder engagement. He expects to have recommendations for the Board at our November meeting.

**NGA Policy Academy to Scale Work-Based Learning:** A total of 20 education programs have been designated "Learning Laboratories" and provided additional funding thanks to an investment of Governor Inslee's WIOA discretionary funds. The additional funding is intended to help the Policy Academy develop scalable models, create performance accountability metrics,

and further work-based learning across the state. Participants in the “labs” span a wide range of ages, although the identified cohort for the NGA Policy Academy is from 16 to 29. (One site works with middle schools, for example, while another targets transitioning adults into their 60s). There is a good geographic spread across the state, covering rural and urban areas. In May 2017, Governor Inslee will host a summit on work-based learning, that will bring together business, labor, education, apprenticeship, and youth advocates from across the state. The summit is expected to host 1,000 vested stakeholders, and will showcase the 20 Learning Laboratories.

**2017 CTE Showcase of Skills Homeless Shelter Project:** On March 27, 2017 the Workforce Board will sponsor the 1<sup>st</sup> ever (and hopefully annual) Showcase of CTE Skills on the Capitol campus. Some 25 teams of five students each will demonstrate skills and knowledge gained in their CTE programs as they construct 25 portable, energy-efficient homeless shelters. This competition provides an opportunity to demonstrate the education pipeline from high school to college or apprenticeships and into living wage, high demand occupations. The venue will allow us to broaden impact in this highly visible location during the coming Legislative session.

OSPI has agreed to support this effort by providing each participating high school with a \$2,500 grant to cover the cost of materials for this project. DSHS has also stepped up to partner in this project. DSHS offices across the state will donate through the Combined Fund Drive between October and December to provide supplies and furnishings to equip each of the shelters with necessities.

Washington’s Building Trades has agreed to partner in this project, as well, by inviting their Apprenticeship Training Coordinators to act as judges for this competition. They will be looking at the pipeline for students and will be able to recruit.

The Board has filed the appropriate paperwork for this project to be recognized as a charity, allowing donations and sponsorships to be tax deductible. **We are seeking sponsors!**

## **TAP ACCELERATOR: UPSKILL-BACKFILL INITIATIVE**

### **Key Elements**

- I. Overarching goals:
  - a. Businesses will improve their ability to compete.
  - b. Businesses will grow their workforce in the period after the program intervention (measurement period TBD).
  - c. When appropriate, businesses will have plan for succession
  - d. Incumbent workers will see an increase in their income.
  - e. Unemployed or underemployed individuals will secure employment at livable wages at participating employer sites.
- II. Governor Inslee's special considerations for job-seeker/workers:
  - a. Benefit incumbent workers with some college and no degree
  - b. Develop pipeline for backfill opportunities to populations with barriers to employment
  - c. Support new hires, including access to further skill development, once on the job.
  - d. Develop apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities for young people; especially high school apprenticeship programs
- III. Governor Inslee's special considerations for participating businesses:
  - a. Target critical industry sectors
  - b. Projects should engage a consortia of employers whenever possible
  - c. Establish vendor-supplier networks whenever possible
  - d. Design feasible employer matching (cash or in-kind) parameters
- IV. Governor Inslee's special considerations for system:
  - a. Single state strategy, seamless to employers and jobseeker/workers
  - b. Use existing resources first; discretionary funds as gap-filler or funding of last resort
  - c. Assure geographic diversity of funded projects
  - d. Establish performance accountability framework
  - e. Recommendations for sustainability