

**WASHINGTON STATE  
WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD  
MEETING NO. 168  
JANUARY 24, 2013**

**STATE CORE MEASURES**

*High Skills, High Wages 2012* states: “The Workforce Board will lead a full scale review in collaboration with all workforce partners to reconsider core measures for Washington’s workforce system.” At the January meeting, the Board will start this process. The Board will hear a report from Board staff about the history and current status of the state’s core performance measures (paper attached) and will hear from staff of the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices about NGA’s position regarding common measures across workforce development programs. Scott Cheney, Staff Director for the United States Senate Sub-Committee on Employment and Workplace Safety, will also share his perspective.

**Board Action is Requested:** None. For discussion only.

## **Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board**

### **State Core Measures**

#### **History**

##### **The Problem Being Addressed**

The creation of the Workforce Board and its functions regarding performance accountability were based on the recommendations of the governor's Advisory Council on Investment in Human Capital. The Council consisted of legislators, representatives of business and labor, and representatives of education and training programs. The Advisory Council conducted a year-long review of workforce development in Washington. Among other things, the Advisory Council found that:

The adult workforce education and training system currently lacks adequate information for the planning and evaluation required to make the system accountable. Providers use different program definitions, record different participant data, employ different evaluation methodologies, have different reporting requirements, provide inconsistent course descriptions, and use incompatible data automation systems, with some provider information not automated at all. ("Investing in Workforce Education and Training: The Report of the Advisory Council on Investment in Human Capital," 1990)

Similarly, in the statute creating the Workforce Board, the legislature found that, "The workforce training and education system's data and evaluation methods are inconsistent and unable to provide adequate information for determining how well the system is performing on a regular basis so that the system may be held accountable for the outcomes it produces."

##### **Statutory Authority**

Given the problems associated with inconsistent data and evaluations, the Workforce Board's authorizing statutes grant the Board the authority to establish common standards for data and evaluations for the workforce development system (currently 14 programs administered by 7 state agencies).

Board's duties (RCW 28C.18.060):

(7) Develop a **consistent** and reliable database on vocational education enrollments, costs, program activities, and job placements from publicly funded vocational education programs in this state;

(8)(a) Establish **standards** for data collection and maintenance for the operating agencies of the state training system in a format that is accessible to use by the board. The board shall require a minimum of **common core** data to be collected by each operating agency of the state training system;

(9) Establish **minimum standards** for program evaluation for the operating agencies of the state training system, including not limited to, the use of **common** survey instruments and procedures for measuring perceptions of program participants and employers of program participants, and monitor such program evaluation.

(12) Provide for the development of **common** course description formats, **common reporting requirements, and common definitions** for operating agencies of the state training system; (Emphasis added)

### **Creation of the State Core Measures**

The Workforce Board established a very thorough and deliberative process to fulfill its statutory assignment to create common standards for data and evaluations. The Board set up the Performance Management for Continuous Improvement (PMCI) workgroup to develop and propose common standards for the Board's consideration. The PMCI workgroup consisted of representatives of the affected programs, both a representative from each program's state administering agency and a representative from each program's local providers (e.g., colleges, schools, Private Industry Councils). The representatives were generally the lead staff for research and evaluation for their agency/institution. The PMCI workgroup met every three weeks for two years to develop recommendations to the Board.

The Board first established the basic outcomes that should be achieved by the Workforce Development System. The Board determined that these outcomes are increased skills, employment, earnings, customer satisfaction, and return on investment. The PMCI workgroup worked to identify the best possible measures of these desired outcomes.

The process also included approximately a half dozen focus groups around the state consisting of local providers for each of the covered programs. The focus group participants were asked what should be the common performance measures for workforce development programs, if all the programs were to be assessed by the same measures.

In addition, the work of the PMCI workgroup was reviewed by the Board's Inter-agency Committee (IC), including representatives of business and labor.

Based on the recommendations of the IC, the PMCI workgroup, and the focus groups, the Board adopted the state core measures in 1996. (The state core measures are shown in the table on page 6.) Once they were adopted, the Workforce Board proceeded to use the state core measures in fulfilling its responsibilities under state statutes and the Job Training Partnership Act (later the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)), and the Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. These responsibilities include the Workforce Board's own evaluations of the performance of the workforce development system and programs and the Board's standards for evaluations carried out by the operating agencies.

In addition to measuring the results of statewide programs, the Workforce Board applies the state core measures for skill attainment (i.e., completion), employment, and earnings to measure local training program eligibility for the state Eligible Training Provider List.

### **Integrated Performance Information (IPI) Project**

Because of the Workforce Board's work in the area of evaluation and performance measurement, in 2004, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) asked the Workforce Board to lead the states in the design of the next generation performance measurement system. The project came to be known as the Integrated Performance Information (IPI) project.

In 2002 the Bush Administration had attempted to identify common performance measures across workforce development programs. In these discussions, the Department of Labor proposed a set of measures. The other federal agencies did not agree to adopt the measures. However, DOL went ahead and adopted the measures for its own workforce development programs. DOL refers to these measures as the "Common Measures," although they are common for only Department of Labor programs.

Washington began the IPI project with teams from six states (including Washington). Eventually, teams from 16 states were involved. Each state team consisted of representatives of a cross section of workforce development programs, usually including secondary career and technical education, community and technical colleges, Workforce Investment Act Title I, the Employment Service, Adult Basic Education, TANF, and Vocational Rehabilitation. The state teams included representatives from the state and local levels. The state teams identified the desired outcomes and the best possible performance measures if the programs were to be measured by the same measures.

The draft IPI measures were then vetted with the heads of national associations for these programs and with constituency organizations (e.g., American Association of Community Colleges, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce) and with top research and evaluation experts from universities and research organizations (e.g., Manpower Research Development Corporation, Westat, John Hopkins University, MPR Associates). The NGA Center for Best Practices and the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas provided assistance to the project.

In the end, the IPI project identified a recommended set of common performance measures to measure the outcomes of workforce development programs. (See the Table on page 6).

### **National Governors Association Recommended Performance Measures**

After the completion of the IPI project, NGA updated its policy positions regarding the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). A significant issue for NGA was, and remains, the establishment of common performance measures across workforce development programs. During its policy process NGA considered the IPI recommended performance measures and adopted them with the exception of the employer satisfaction measure. (There was concern that the IPI employer satisfaction measure would be difficult and costly to implement well.) During this time, Governor Gregoire chaired NGA's workforce committee. The NGA proposed performance measures were later adopted by the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA). The NGA/NASWA measures are shown in the table on the following page.

With the adoption of the NGA/NASWA performance measures, the similarity of those measures to IPI and Governor's Gregoire's role in NGA, the Workforce Board's advocacy has been in support of these measures. Until the adoption of High Skills, High Wages 2012, however, the Board decided to not move forward with changing Washington's state core measures until the Board saw the measures included in WIA reauthorization.

### **WIA Reauthorization**

As Congress continues to consider language for the reauthorization of WIA, the establishment of common performance measures across workforce development programs continues to be a prominent issue. Workforce Board staff have briefed staff from three of the four Congressional conferences and the Office of Management and the Budget regarding the IPI, and NGA/NASWA common performance measures. The IPI and NGA/NASWA measures were well received, and Congressional staff have drafted language to move in that direction.

## State Core, IPI, and NGA/NASWA Common Performance Measures

Outcome	State Core	IPI	NGA/NASWA
Skill Gain	Percent or number of program participants leaving the program who achieved appropriate skill gains or an education or training credential.	Percent of program participants who obtain an education or training credential.	<b>Same as IPI:</b> Percent of program participants who obtain an education or training credential.
Employment	Percent of former participants with employment during the <u>third quarter</u> after exit. (For programs serving youth—employed or enrolled in education.)	Short-term: Percent of program participants who are employed during the <u>2nd quarter</u> after exit. (For youth, employed or enrolled in education.)  Long-term: Percent of program participants employed during the <u>4th quarter after exit</u> . (For youth, employed or enrolled in education.)	<b>Same as IPI:</b> Short-term: Percent of program participants who are employed during the <u>2nd quarter</u> after exit. (For youth, employed or enrolled in education.)  Long-term: Percent of program participants employed during the <u>4th quarter after exit</u> . (For youth, employed or enrolled in education.)
Earnings	Median earnings of program participants during the <u>third quarter</u> after exit. Measured <i>only</i> among former participants not enrolled in education during the quarter.	Median earnings of program participants during the <u>2nd quarter</u> after exit. For youth, earnings only among those not enrolled in education.)	<b>Same as IPI:</b> Median earnings of program participants during the <u>2nd quarter</u> after exit. For youth, earnings only among those not enrolled in education.)
Employer Satisfaction	Percent of employers who report satisfaction with new employees who are program completers as evidenced by survey responses.	The percent of employers who are served who return to the same program for service within one year.	
Participant Satisfaction	Percent of former participants who report satisfaction with the program as evidenced by survey responses.		

In addition, all three (state core, IPI, and NGA/NASWA) support formal measures of the net return on investment. These measures, however, are intended as general indicators of program performance, as opposed to accountability measures that are frequently measured against numeric targets—due to the expense and imprecision of these measures.