STATE OF WASHINGTON
WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
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July 1, 2010

TO: Governor Christine O. Gregoire

FROM: Cindy Zehnder, Chair

SUBJECT: Recommended Criteria for a WIA 10 Percent Training Program

On behalf of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, I offer you the attached recommended criteria for a training program using Workforce Investment Act (WIA) 10 Percent Funds. On June 3 you wrote me requesting such criteria. You indicated that you might decide to use a portion of the FY 2010 WIA 10 Percent Funds for a new training program and wanted the Board's recommendations on criteria for such a program. You indicated you have not decided yet whether to establish the program, or if it is established, how much funding would be provided.

With that direction, the Board met on June 24 and adopted the attached criteria to recommend to you. We focused on criteria that will advance your goal of increasing employment during these tough economic times. We also wanted to keep the criteria as flexible as possible so we could better respond to your concerns as your thinking evolves on this subject. I hope that you find the criteria useful and look forward to working with you on these vital issues.

RECOMMENDED CRITERIA FOR A WIA 10 PERCENT TRAINING PROGRAM

Grant Allocation

The Employment Security Department (ESD) should allocate the training funds to Workforce Development Councils (WDCs). The allocation method should depend upon the amount of funds that are available.

If there are sufficient funds for a statewide distribution to be effective, then funding should be allotted to each WDC plus some funds should be allocated through a competitive process. The amount allotted to each WDC should depend upon the proportion of program funds each area receives in their annual WIA allocation, and their demographic and economic need. In order to receive their allotted funding, each WDC should submit an application identifying the proposed training. ESD should specify the application requirements. The requirements should include demonstrating the merits of the proposals and the ability to effectively administer the proposals. ESD should provide allotted funding to WDCs whose application satisfies the requirements. If there is sufficient funding, this process should give every WDC the opportunity to receive funds and ensure training proposals that are responsive to state criteria, with a minimum amount of bureaucracy.

In addition, a portion of the funds should be allocated through a competitive process based upon the relative merits of the proposals and the ability to effectively administer the proposals. If there are insufficient funds for a statewide distribution, then all the funds should be allocated through a competitive process in order to fund the best proposals.

Types of Training

Training should be closely linked to employment.

The top priority should be On-the-Job Training (OJT) since this form of training offers the most direct connection between training and employment. OJTs reimburse employers for the cost of training new employees, helping to lower the cost of hiring. Continued employment with the employer is expected at the end of an OJT.

Although OJT is the top priority, other forms of training should be permitted. The other forms of training that should be permitted, in order of preference, are: Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST), Apprenticeships, and Paid Work Experience for individuals without significant work experience who need an initial step into the workforce.

Innovative training should be encouraged; for example, apprenticeship training for occupations that do not traditionally have apprenticeships. And if possible, while still meeting other criteria, training is better if it results in a portable, industry recognized credential, and is part of a career pathway.

Targeted Industry Sectors

The training should be for the growth industries of the 21st century, consistent with the sectors identified by the Governor's Jobs Sub-Cabinet. These sectors may include: clean energy; information technology and software; aerospace; agriculture; advanced manufacturing; and life sciences including health care, biotechnology, and global health. Also, training in additional sectors should be permitted when it is needed to capitalize on specific job growth opportunities as identified by local Workforce Development Councils such as business expansion or the relocation of business from out-of-state.

Targeted Populations

Training should be for individuals--including older youth, disadvantaged adults, and dislocated workers—who are most in need of training in order to be employed. The training should be targeted to individuals who are either unemployed or involuntarily part-time employed. Among this targeted group, preference should be given to veterans.

In addition to the targeted population, training should be permitted for workers who are at risk of losing their employment unless they receive training, and for economically disadvantaged workers.

Accountability

The Employment Security Department should identify performance measures and track the results of the training program.