



Workforce Board

Electronic Newsletter

From the desk of Ellen O'Brien Saunders, Executive Director

Volume 7, Number 6

June 17, 2005

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Governor Launches Washington Learns

In an effort to reduce the dropout rate, improve the number of children prepared to enter public schools, and provide more opportunities for students in higher education, Governor Christine Gregoire has established a 12-member steering committee to take “an unblinking and complete look at the state of our education system.”

The endeavor, to be called Washington Learns, she said, “will not be just another study. We are going to take an exhaustive look at our education system, and determine what is working, and what is not, and we finally will see clearly what it will take to make this state's education system the best in the nation.”

According to the Governor, the committee will address three questions:

- Is Washington using its existing education resources efficiently?
- What defines the quality citizens want in early childhood education, K-12 schools, and higher education?
- What needs to change to achieve the quality we all want?

Among those on the committee are State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Terry Bergeson; Roberta Greene, vice chair of the Higher Education Coordinating Board and

former business member of the Workforce Board; Denny Heck , retired president and founder of TVW and former state legislator who focused much of his work on education; State Representative Bill Fromhold, D-Vancouver, who is vice chair of the House Appropriations Committee and also serves on the House Higher Education Committee; State Senator Rosemary McAuliffe, D-Bothell, chair of the Senate Early Learning, K-12, and Higher Education Committee; and State Senator Dave Schmidt, R-Everett, ranking minority member on the Senate Early Learning, K-12, and Higher Education Committee.

Innovation Highlights July 7 Board Meeting

The Workforce Board's July 7 meeting is all about new—new programs, such as Navigation 101, the student planning curriculum created by the Franklin Pierce School District, new solutions, a new state plan, and new budgets and allocations. Starting at 8:30 AM at the WorkSource Center in Everett, 3201 Smith Avenue, Suite 114, the meeting is expected to end around 2:30 PM.

Items on the Board's agenda:

- Private Career Schools administration and consumer protection policy
- Navigation 101
- State's 2005-2007 plan for Adult Basic Education
- Work Readiness Credential (See story this issue)
- Overview of the state's economy
- Allocation of Perkins funds for 2005-2006
- Agency's operating budget for 2005-2006

People needing special accommodations should contact Darlene Bartlett at 360.753.5677, dbartlett@wtb.wa.gov.



Workforce Strategies 2005 – Pre-conference Event to Build Workforce and Economic Development Ties

How does economic development interact with workforce development? Should it? Could it? These are just some of the questions being addressed in a preconference workshop, sponsored by the Workforce Board, taking place October 24 at the Ridpath Hotel in Spokane from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Moderated by Mark Troppe, National Association of Workforce Boards, *Building Partnerships: Workforce and Economic Development* is designed for Workforce Development Councils and Economic Development Board members and staff as well as other key stakeholders to help them better understand the two systems and what funding sources are available to both. Topics to be covered range from what economic development is, to defining its success and from what the Workforce Investment Act is, to aligning planning for the two systems.

There is an additional \$75 cost for the pre-conference event, and you can register for it at the same time as you register for the conference. Registration for the conference is \$200 by October 7, and \$225 thereafter. Online registration will be available in late July. Special hotel rates have been negotiated at the WestCoast Ridpath Hotel in Spokane, and those interested should call 1.800.325.400 or 509.838.6127 and mention the Workforce Board room block.

Workforce Strategies 2005: Partnering for Strong Communities is the state's premier event for workforce development leaders from business, government, labor, education, community and technical colleges and private career schools, workforce programs, and legislators. It is sponsored by the Workforce Board with patronage so far this year from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Department of Social and Health Services-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; contributions from the Association of Washington Business, the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, Bellevue Community College, Olympic College, and Shoreline Community College; and donations from Grays Harbor College. The conference annually draws more than 500 attendees.

For more details about the conference, contact Patricia Spencer at 360.586.8778, pspencer@wtb.wa.gov.

Wanted: Skilled Entry-Level Workers

Finding skilled entry-level workers just moved a step closer to reality. The Center for Workforce Preparation (CWP) at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce recently announced that the Work Readiness Credential, a new tool to identify entry-level job skills, is to be testmarketed this autumn in Washington State.

Developed initially by the National Institute for Literacy and the National Association of Manufacturers, the credential will be an assessment-based certification affirming that entry-level job seekers have communication, interpersonal, decision-making, and lifelong learning skills. It will have national portability and cross-industry applications.

According to Karen Elzey, a CWP senior program officer, "the credential represents a unique alliance of state government and business leaders to meet critical goals for ensuring a competitive workforce and a productive business sector. It will provide a tool for screening applicants thereby reducing business hiring and rehiring costs."

Marketing plans for the new credential are well underway, and the CWP expect to have:

- An online "Frequently Asked Questions" and webpage on the U.S. Chamber's website
- Business-friendly fliers/brochures including a no-nonsense definition of the credential
- A "brand" for the credential, including graphics linking the project to the U.S. Chamber, and a possible "catchy" name for the final product

To learn more about the project contact Heather Fredericks at 360.586.8679, hfredericks@wtb.wa.gov.

Briefly

Private Career Schools – New Application Process Required for Worker Retraining Programs

Starting in fall 2005-2006, private career schools wishing to participate in the Worker Retraining program will need to follow a new application process. Schools will be required to prepare and submit annual plans to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) by September 1. To facilitate the new process, SBCTC is offering training in July and August for those schools wishing to participate. Contact Amanda Bunch at abunch@sbctc.ctc.edu or call Michele Rockwell at 360.704.4341.

Industry Skill Panel Requests for Funding Due June 27

The Workforce Board has approximately \$670,000 available for Industry Skill Panels in 2005-2006. Step one in obtaining funding is to submit a concept paper which is due by June 27. For more details, contact Patricia Spencer at 360.586.8778, pspencer@wtb.wa.gov.

Union Job Opportunity – Education and Leadership Coordinator

SEIU 775 seeks an Education and Training Coordinator of leadership training programs for long-term care union members. Responsibilities include training curricula and program implementation logistics. Qualified applicants should have experience as a union or community organizer or as a professional trainer, training low-wage workers, and a demonstrated ability to write curricula using adult teaching techniques appropriate for action-oriented education. Cultural competency is a must, and frequent travel required. Please send application, resume, references, and salary history to Field Director, c/o mmaloney@seiu775.org.

Manufacturing Appreciation Week Going Strong in Kent

The Kent Chamber of Commerce's annual Manufacturing Appreciation Week keeps getting better and better. Now in its third year, it has grown to include case studies; behind-the-scenes visits to such companies as Kenworth Trucks and Mikron Industries/Quanex, a leader in plastic-extruded components; and speakers such as Lt. Governor Brad Owen and Bill Center, president of the Washington Council on International Trade. New this year was a legislative reception and a roundtable that discussed outsourcing, the use of temporary workers, and how to attract (and retain) the best and brightest workforce. Congratulations to all involved for a highly successful event.

Gone Fishing for a Good Idea

Where do you get workers for deep-sea fishing? The Alaska State Department of Labor and SEA Link, Inc., a non-profit, are working together to help displaced fishermen obtain the necessary training they need to transition into this career field. Using a combination of federal and state funds, they send displaced fishermen to the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Maryland to brush up on their sea-faring skills and

learn how to become deep-sea mariners. In the past two years, some 80-100 Alaskan fishermen have been trained. U.S. Senator Patty Murray is trying to get federal funding for something similar in Washington for crabbers who have been displaced. For more information on the Alaskan model contact Rich Berkowitz at the Transportation Institute, 206.443.1738, tinstitute@qwest.net.

eZine Online

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) has launched a new online publication called eZine. Written by SBCTC staff, the publication is designed to share best practices and cover issues and trends affecting two-year colleges. For those interested in learning more about Centers of Excellence, check it out at

www.sbctc.ctc.edu/Publications/COMag/.

Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

July 11-13: *Workforce Innovations 2005* is being held in Philadelphia, and is co-sponsored this year by the American Society for Training and Development and the U.S. Department of Labor, Education and Training Administration. Register online at <http://www.workforceinnovations.org> or contact Ed Trumbull, Project Manager for Workforce Innovations 2005, at 202.693.3896.

August 14-17: Mark those dates for the *Washington Association for Career and Technical Education's* annual summer conference in Yakima. Registration is now available online at www.wa-acte.org/summerconf.html. Keynote speakers are Dr. Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Gene Bottoms, Senior Vice President of the Southern Regional Education Board's "High Schools That Work" Initiative, which is the largest effort in America to improve high schools for career-bound students; and Randy Dorn, Executive Director of the Public School Employees of Washington.

October 24-26: The *Workforce Board's* annual Workforce Strategies conference takes place at the WestCoast Ridpath Hotel in Spokane.

November 2-5: The *National Network of Sector Partners'* national conference is taking place at the Drake Hotel in Chicago, and is a 'must attend' for workforce development professionals, public officials, employers, labor leaders, and policymakers. Contact Kaitlin McNally-Murphy at 510.251.2600, ext. 130, kaitlin@nedlc.org.

November 17-19: Mark those dates for the *Washington State School Directors'* annual conference at the Westin Hotel in Seattle. The conference will have a new format this year and include a number of breakout sessions with topics ranging from small schools to nutrition and diversity. To register online, go to <http://wssda.org/wssda/WebForms/EnUs/AnnualConference/GeneralInfo.asp>.