



Workforce Board

Electronic Newsletter

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

Volume 7, Number 2

February 18, 2005

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Blueprint for Simplified Reporting Rolls Out February 24

A blueprint which will provide policy leaders with fewer, more meaningful, measures of job program effectiveness will be rolled out February 24 in Washington, D.C.

Developed by the Workforce Board in conjunction with five other states (Oregon, Florida, Texas, Michigan, and Montana), the National Governors Association's Center for Best Practices, the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas, and the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University, the plan simplifies the currently complex system of measuring the outcomes of multiple state and federal programs.

Speaking prior to the press conference to announce details of the *Integrated Performance Information for Workforce Development: Blueprint for States*, Board Executive Director Ellen O'Brien Saunders said, "The plethora and complexity of the performance measures in our field have frustrated front line staff, policymakers, and program administrators for years. Office of Management and Budget took a helpful step toward developing a common set of performance measures. This Blueprint was created with the involvement of workforce development leaders across the country. Our process was highly collaborative, and we believe the product is responsive to policy leaders' needs for sound information on program results. It is not the sole answer to a state's performance, but rather a tool which is more streamlined and flexible."

The Blueprint addresses such issues as how to create information that responds to policymakers' real concerns; have consistent information for separate programs; and accommodate the different results expected while working with dislocated workers, youth, or people with disabilities.

The project was supported through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

For additional information about the plan, contact Bryan Wilson, 360/753/0891, bwilson@wtb.wa.gov. The complete report, as well as an Executive Summary, will be available at www.wtb.wa.gov/ipi.pdf on February 24.

Perkins/WIA Update

Both the Carl D. Perkins and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) reauthorization bills are moving through the subcommittee stages of Congress.

The House Subcommittee on Education Reform held its first meeting on House Resolution (H.R.) 366 (the Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act, aka Perkins) with positive reactions from both Republican and Democrat members. Three state directors testified along with a career and technical education (CTE) student and the CEO of a public CTE-focused charter school. One member of the subcommittee indicated, however, that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) would require research and data to show that CTE was in fact effective—especially since its own program assessment tool showed it to be ineffective.

Meanwhile the House Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness sent the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27), which would reauthorize WIA, to the full committee for mark-up.

As noted in our Special Budget Summary issued last week, H.R. 27 is nearly identical to legislation approved by the House last year having only a few minor changes. These include the establishment of Personal Reemployment Accounts and Community-based Job Training Grants, as well as a consolidation of WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker, and Employment Services funding streams into a single grant which would be distributed by formula to states and localities.

The substitute bill submitted by the subcommittee has several technical changes but none of the President's proposed job training reforms already announced. Of particular interest would be the reinstatement of the business and community liaison for Job Corp centers, allowance for Governors to designate an agency to provide the labor market information, and removal of the calculation of program efficiency as a core indicator of performance for both adult and youth programs and a requirement instead that states report on the cost per participant. There also was much debate about faith-based groups being allowed to use religious preference in hiring, but efforts to delete this from the bill were rejected.

Continue to watch this space. With rumors rampant that votes might come as early as March, we will continue to keep you updated on the progress of these bills through Congress.

For more information on Perkins contact, Teri Colbert at 360/753/5680, tcolbert@wtb.wa.gov or Bryan Wilson at 360/753/0891, bwilson@wtb.wa.gov.

Apprenticeship Utilization Bill Goes to Governor/Legislative Update
Senate Bill (S.B.) 5097, the Apprenticeship Utilization bill, has been passed by the Senate and House, and is on its way to the Governor's desk. The bill provides that all public works estimated to cost \$1 million or more shall require that no less than 15 percent of the labor hours be performed by apprentices.

Other prominent workforce-related legislation is listed below. For a more detailed synopsis of each bill as well as a weekly hearing schedule, go to www.wtb.wa.gov/leg05.html. Bill status and hearing schedules are updated weekly on Fridays.

House Bill (H.B.) 1345–Financial Aid for Part-time Students passed out of the House Higher Education Committee. The bill would amend financial aid criteria so that students who are enrolled for at least four credit hours per quarter, or the three semester or clock-hour equivalent as determined by the board, at an institution of higher education are eligible for aid.

H.B. 1380 and S.B. 5441–P-20 Finance Study. S.B. 5441 has been heard by the Senate Early Learning, K-12, and Higher Education Committee and been passed on to the Senate Ways and Means Committee. Both bills create a comprehensive education study steering committee to develop recommendations about how the state can best provide stable funding for student learning for young children, students in the public schools, and students in the public colleges and universities.

H.B. 1589 and S.B. 5578–WorkFirst Training and H.B. 1833–WorkFirst Integration. The House bills have been heard by the House Children and Family Services Committee. *H.B. 1589* increases the amount of vocational education that qualifies as a work activity under WorkFirst from twelve to twenty-four months. *H.B. 1833* requires local workforce investment boards specify how the job training and placement services under the Workforce Investment Act and the job training and placement services provided through the WorkFirst program are to be integrated. It also establishes an incentive program in the Governor's office for integrating the delivery of job training and placement services for recipients of the WorkFirst program and other individuals who are seeking jobs.

H.B. 1707 and S.B. 5717–Skill Center Funding Ratio have been heard by the House Education Committee and Senate Early Learning, K-12, and Higher Education Committee. Both bills determine that the funding formula for a skill center student shall be based upon the student's aggregate enrolled hours of instruction, not to exceed 1.2 full-time equivalent.

Substitute House Bill 1708–Dropout Prevention has been passed by the House Education Committee. It requires the superintendent of public instruction to review and evaluate promising programs for dropout prevention. It also requires local school districts to report dropouts in the seventh and eighth grade, and directs the superintendent of public instruction to establish school and school district goals addressing high school graduation rates and dropout reduction goals for students in grades seven through twelve. The goals shall require annual uniform incremental growth.

H.B. 1825 and S.B. 5174–Customized Training Funding have been heard by the House Higher Education Committee and the Senate International Trade and Economic Development Committee. The bills create the Washington customized employment training program to allow employers locating or expanding in the state to receive funds for training for employees. The program is funded by the sale of bonds paid by the state business and occupation (B&O) tax and a public utility tax generated by participating employers.

H.B. 2032 and S.B. 5918–Training Tax Credits. S.B. 5918 has passed the Senate International Trade and Economic Development Committee. The bill provides B&O tax credits for employee training.

House Concurrent Resolution (H.C.R.) 4404 and S.C.R. 8406–Workforce Development Strategic Plan. The House Higher Education Committee has heard H.C.R. 4404. The resolution approves the 2004 update to the state’s comprehensive plan for workforce development.

Jo Jacobson Joins PC3 in Tacoma

Jo Jacobson is the new director of Pierce County Careers Consortium in Tacoma. Jo is well known in the Tech-Prep arena, and prior to joining the Tacoma organization was director of the West Sound Tech-Prep Consortium. She also is on the executive board of the Tech-Prep Directors association and is the group’s statewide chair. Congratulations, Jo.

Port Jobs Receives Grant for Airport University

Thanks to a two-year, \$210,000 grant from the Academy for Educational Development and the Lumina Foundation, low-income airport workers will now have a chance to further their education through a program called Airport University.

The brainchild of Port Jobs, the non-profit organization closely associated with the Port of Seattle, South Seattle Community College, and Neighborhood House, the University will offer a variety of services. Options range from career counseling, scholarship and funding resources, job assistance, and resume preparation to classes that will teach the skills required for work in the aviation field.

More details available from Susan Crane at 206/728/3304, or crane.s@portseattle.org.

Briefly

Workforce Talks to Economic Development



A panel of workforce development experts presented an overview of the overview of programs, functions, and resources available to business at the recent Washington Economic Development Association's Legislative Conference in Olympia. The panel was designed to inform the state's economic development professionals about workforce resources that can be utilized in their day-to-day efforts to improve the economy and their community's family wage job base. Photo

(L-R): Pam Lund, Workforce Board Associate Director; Jerrilee Mosier, Vice President Workforce Development and Training, Edmonds Community College; Colin Conant Director, Tacoma-Pierce County Workforce Development Council; and Patrick Baldoz, Director, Tri-County Workforce Board (Yakima).

WAVE Applications due March 3: Just a reminder that applications for the Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) are due next month. Applications must be postmarked by March 3 and reach the Workforce Board shortly thereafter. For additional details about WAVE, contact either Lee Williams, 360/586/3321, lwilliams@wtb.wa.gov, or Diane Donahoo, 360/753/0892, ddonahoo@wtb.wa.gov.

New Website for Careervoyages.gov: The U.S. departments of Labor and Education have redesigned their career website, www.careervoyages.gov, to provide students, parents, career counselors, and those thinking of a career change with information about high-growth industries and occupations. The website offers national and state-level wages trends for these occupations, detailed education and training options, and in most cases also short videos about those careers listed.

Upcoming Meetings and Conferences:

The Washington Association of Occupational Educators, Tech-Prep directors and the Washington Association for Career and Technical Education will hold its annual conference on **March 3-4** at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane. Sessions are available in four strands: assessment and research; curriculum and instruction; innovative delivery systems; and workforce development. Online registration, and more details, at www.wa-acte.org/futureconf.html.

Mark your calendars for the Center for Learning Connections' Workforce 2005 conference on **March 7** at the SeaTac Marriott Hotel. The conference has six, three-hour workshops that will be both hands-on and interactive. Registration is \$140. For additional information, go to www.learningconnections.org.

The *Homeland Defense Journal* is holding a one-day basic grant writing workshop in Chicago at the Radisson Hotel & Suites on **March 15**. The workshop will provide information about the federal agency's plans for over \$3 billion in grants to first responders for training, communications, and outfitting. Cost for government entities is \$295 per person. More information at www.homelanddefensejournal.com/conf_grantsIL.htm.

The Board of the Workforce Board will hold its next meeting on **March 31** at the State Investment Board in Olympia. An agenda will be published in next month's newsletter.

The *Washington Technology Center* first statewide summit is **April 8** in Seattle at the Bell Harbor International Conference Center. The one-day conference will discuss the state's economic potential in technology during the morning, and in the afternoon, focus on four key industries: Energy, Life Sciences, Defense and Security, and Nanotechnology. More details and registration at www.watechcenter.org.

Mark your calendars for **May 3**. That is the date for the Washington State Quality Award Annual Baldrige Performance Excellence Symposium at the SeaTac Doubletree Inn. Registration is \$195 for the 8-3:30 PM conference. More details at www.wsqa.net.

The Washington Association for Career and Technical Education is holding its annually summer conference on **August 14-17** in Yakima. More information closer to the date.

Save the dates **October 25-26** and watch this newsletter for more details about Workforce Strategies 2005, the Workforce Board's annual leadership conference. Venue this year is Spokane.

Spokane also is the venue for the Washington State School Director's annual conference on **November 16-19**. Check out their website at wssda.org/wssda/WebForms/En-Us/AnnualConference/GeneralInfo.asp for more information.

Funding Opportunities

Transitional Jobs Network offers 18 months of technical assistance to cities, counties, states, and nonprofit organizations to establish innovative jobs programs for residents with barriers to work. Proposals are limited to entities operating within a city or other defined region with a population of more than 50,000. For further information and to download the Request for Proposals, visit the National Transitional Jobs Network website at www.transitionaljobs.net/. Deadline is March 15, 2005.