

Spokane Area Cluster Academy

Davenport Hotel

Marie Antoinette Room

June 12, 2008

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

----- AGENDA -----

Today's Objectives:

- ◆ *To identify ways our region can bolster our Cluster approaches to regional growth, and to guide the State on how to best support our efforts;*
- ◆ *To continue down the path of strong connections across workforce, education and economic development, and to highlight ways for the State to make similarly strong connections;*
- ◆ *To offer input and feedback on the State's key policy statements related to Cluster approaches; and*
- ◆ *To position our region to frame next steps toward even stronger alignment across systems and programs to support our industries, workers and communities.*

Welcome & Introductions

Mark Mattke, Workforce Strategy & Planning Director, Spokane Area Workforce Development Council

Mark Mattke introduced the legislators and other elected officials in the audience, and set the goals for the day.

Joe Dunlap - Community Colleges of Spokane

Joe discussed how industry clusters are viewed and organized by education to most effectively support and expand business.

Jeff Severs, Chief Operating Officer, Greater Spokane Incorporated

Jeff reviewed the collaboration that has been done in the region and pledged continued support from the regional economic development organization.

Eleni Papadakis, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

Eleni spoke to the state team involvement and participation in national policy development on a cluster strategy learning academy that was brought together by CSW, NNSP, and NGA.

Dick Larman, Community Trade and Economic Development

No statement

Larry Williams, Community, Trade and Economic Development

No statement

Introductions of Jack Mills and Lindsey Woolsey as facilitators for the day

Overview of Agenda and Setting the Day's Expectations

Jack Mills, National Network of Sector Partnerships

Lindsey Woolsey, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce

Lindsey: Set the day for the goals and the next steps.

Celebrating Our Region and its Successes: Setting the Bar for Collaboration

Jeff Severs, Mark Mattke Amy Johnson

- ◆ *Cluster Approaches to Economic Development*
- ◆ *Skill Panel – Construction*
 - *WorkSource Connection*
- ◆ *Skill Panel – Manufacturing*

Jeff: Overviewed the regional economic development efforts and focus. He spoke about the connection and coordination of the support systems and the potential of long term sustained growth. (see PP)

Mark: Presented from the workforce side of the operation, noting similar connections in the region. Mark also made note of the WDCs role in the system, and the support that has come from the partnership. (see PP)

Amy: Greater Spokane Incorporated (GSI – the regional chamber of commerce) Presented on their role in the partnership. GSI brings business and employers to the table in support of the region's economic and workforce development process. (see PP)

The National Context: Cluster and Sector Approaches to Regional Vitality

Jack Mills, NNSP and Lindsey Woolsey, CSW

Lindsey and Jack: Summarized the initial presentations and related the details to goals of the day.

Audience Input: *How do these examples relate to your region? Do you like them? What do you like? What don't you like?*

Comments:

- Good reasons for having industry cluster lists.
- Why can't we come together (region/state) and identify similar clusters. The discussions so far have shown why it's good/ rational for having unified clusters for local and state. An agreed on listing would assist us in identifying what our potential is for customer and business development; and it would help us to better provide training for jobs.
- We need to pay special attention to the attraction of young people because of the older workforce retiring soon.
- Research in the schools would help us identify the areas to look at to retain people here. What would make a student stay here and also keep the industry interested in attracting these students?

Jack: What makes these things work in terms of state policy and how you can accomplish these types of goals? Mills presented a power point presentation to better frame the question for discussion (see PP).

Comments:

- Even the nimblest of the systems has to be willing to change.
- Regarding the needs of the businesses as it relates to education. A major constraint in funding makes it hard to respond.

- Convening partners is one thing but the success is the depth of the partnership. Success is where everyone is dependent on the other's success.

Jack: In what ways the state can support the region?

Comments:

- Education - there are so many adults trying to get their education spread out over a longer time to get where they want to go. Family obligations, and the economy make the access time commitment more critical than ever.
- It's critical that the state take the leadership to increase the ability to articulate this agreement.

A State Framework in Development

Skills for the Next Washington

Bryan Wilson, Deputy Director, WTB

Eleni introduced this session and thanked the state folks along with some local area people, this included Beth Thew and Tom O'Brien. This region is more economically diverse than the other regions. She let the audience know about the upcoming HSHW session in July.

Bryan: Presented the agency overview of the Skills for the Next Washington (see PP)

CTED Strategic Plan: Advancing the Next Washington

Dick Larman, CTED

Dick: Presented an overview fo the CTED strategic plan (see handout). He noted that our goals should respond to the facts that poverty and ignorance is our enemy. He asked that we all keep that in mind as we move forward.

Your Input: Promoting What Works in the Spokane Area

- Is the State on track?
- Is it reflecting what is or should happen in regions?
- What works about the Framework? What doesn't?
- Are there legislative or administrative proposals that will benefit your region in ways that fit with the State's new approaches?

Facilitated by Jack Mills, NNSP and Lindsey Woolsey, CSW

Lindsey noted the materials provided and asked for feedback of the above questions.

Comments:

- It is critical to work the coordination with these groups.
- The state needs to know what is happening at the local level, need assessments, a one stop show for state plans and the need for assessments on the internet so everyone knows what is going on.
- Also the timing of funding and coordinating of funds for skill panels and other funding sources for incumbent workers. It's important for panels doing work but they get discouraged if there is no funding.
- The local plans, part of WIA, are much broader based and helpful with scope and so funding will help if in state statue.

- Workforce delinquency - Spokane skill center has lost students due to the WASL test. Then other schools are afraid to lose funds to skill center training. Now there is going to be an increase in requirements for students to graduate. Some students will struggle and possibly drop out. Other students haven't found a pathway or training programs for them. They don't know how to get training. Some wanted to set up a rural skill center to teach people from HS to the senior years. People see the problem but what are we going to do about losing our funds? How can we circumvent the policy and look at the real needs?
- There is a need to look at the way funding is allocated and a new look at how K-12 education is organized because it doesn't take into account that they don't want careers in science and math.
- There are a lot of white adults in leadership positions. Spokane is about 25% students of color and there aren't any mentors for them in businesses and politics to advocate on their behalf. How do we create an opportunity for these kids so they don't leave the area? The issue is that these students are represented by adults. We need their feedback because they are the future workforce. The region and state should make a suggestion to the youth and invite them into these sessions.
- Terry Lawhead, (CTED regional representative) introduced Juliet Sinisterra of Community-Minded Enterprises. Juliet talked about training for youth and youth retention and the issues facing our larger society. This experience gave them the hard skills and the feedback from these agencies was: students recognize what is coming down - but don't know what to do about it or how to do this. Most of the students are at risk or hard to serve youth. There are a set of things that "youth" needs: direction, mentoring, success factors. The youth know where they want to go but don't know how to get there. Their belief is "We believe that the great challenges of our day: life-long education, adapting to the global economy, healthcare, reducing violence, respect and inclusiveness among different cultures, the preservation of the biosphere and the earth itself, to mention a few-are issues that can and must be resolved first and finally in communities."
- Jack commented: Challenges to meet the needs for K-12 system and adults 18-30 year old population needs to be looked at because this is the major workforce.
- Julie Anderson (CTED Senior Policy Advisor) asked the audience: "Does regional cluster development help in our work together"?

Bryan and Dick's presentation comments:

- Haven't heard goals of what the region will look like in 20 years, and haven't heard about the impact of the environment, economy. How do these all work together, and how do we get there; green collar jobs and the clusters.
- We are looking at this to retain a workforce to secure us in this area.
- State comments on green building: Julie Anderson...ESD, CTED, SBCTC, and WTB are working on in HB2815, encourage shifting from green collar jobs words to green economy wording - everything that was talked about is being addressed in regard to green jobs.

New comments:

- Interest in economic development for future clusters and how do we prepare the workforce for this. So far we have heard IT, and youth, as targeted areas. These are kids very interested in these areas.
- We will need to teach hard skills and measure all the students in the programs. This is the workforce for these targeted areas.
- The power of terminology. Encourage terminology on this is: training, motivation, and education so they are not getting short changed. Education vs. training, education is critical thinking vs. training is a trade, WTB is doing training on policy but not actual training.
- We teach engineers - but train pipefitters, language is everything.
- High school and beyond plan is a great program to help students figure out what they want to become. It connects community college, high schools, etc. The disconnect is what we are using for clusters identifying the 16 and taking 5 of them. This is an issue that is separate and different from industry clusters. Its a disconnect in that the education and beyond plan is really good, but it's designed for 9th graders in order to graduate from HS. This isn't going to work for us to gain traction and how it will happen, unless they can have access to the people who know how to get to the student. The state needs to help make this work. What if there was a team of individuals? This could be comprised of counselor, businesses, universities, community colleges. This would be a team to be with these students. Then we would gain traction. The HS student drop out. So, increasing credits may hinder the ability to help students get back on track.
- IBEST is working.

Putting the Pieces Together: What does this mean for the Spokane area?

*A summary of what we've heard so far, followed small group discussions
Moderated by Jack Mills, NNSP or Lindsey Woolsey, CSW*

- ◆ What does strategic alignment (or partnerships) between workforce and economic development mean to you?
 - What outcomes and alignments do we want to see in our region?
- ◆ How do we build and sustain effective regional partnerships to support the changing needs of industry clusters?

Jack and Lindsey put individuals into table groups to answer the above questions.

Summary Report-Outs

Small group note-takers summarize key points and issues, followed by brief reflections.

Summary of report-outs:

- Connect the need of businesses with the skills.
- Small businesses are the bulk of the businesses, they have special needs. Build up the structure to meet these needs.
- There is a big picture in terms of money in order to make this work. We need to maximize the resources and leverage money towards training skills of interest.
- Look at businesses clusters and be focused. There is money we don't see because of the way it comes down. Bring all partners together in a formal

structure so you would understand all the goals so there is a common vision and common outcomes.

- We could get more support if that structure existed at state level. Write one strategic plan among all partners; flexibility in regard to the money limitations.
- The 12 WDAs, although some are rural, all struggle with the same issues to use the money to the best of their ability. We develop multiple partners: economic development, employment, education, businesses and industry to get their message out, be data driven and get it down to the teachers.
- We need to work together so we don't go to the legislature with a mixed message. We need to work jointly so our message isn't fractured.
- There is a theory of change - to commit resources to meet that demand; the onesies and twosies output demonstrates that there is going to be a move toward this.

Why keep this conversation going?

- A cluster works because of trust. We are all on the surface of things to much, so trust needs to happen. We have to do more of it and deliver on expectations.
- One way to identify trust is to have early wins, instrumental success. We all do lots of other stuff, but it is up to those who are really focused on workforce needs to keep it on everyone's agenda and focused.
- How do you make sure everyone keeps focused on this? This is a challenge for some regions. Workforce and economic development need to play a leadership role and be the forefront in keeping everyone challenged.
- Why are we using regions? One guess, historically all regions were bio regions because they were tied to the resources of their region. The economy/labor market is not defined by political boundaries, geography, or disaggregation of regions.
- Where are people living in regards to the industry? The relevance of regions is that you can live anywhere and work anywhere.
- Are regions geographically defined? Colville could hardly be included in the Spokane cluster. We shouldn't get too focused on clusters in small regions because there are people who do specific things but wouldn't necessarily need incumbent training. In Eastern WA the original partnership was mining and farming but it is fading.

Strategic alignment for Spokane:

- Better communication between partnerships;
- Expand those to everyone who isn't represented.
- Need to do a better job for skill panels and businesses.
- Who else needs to be present for the conversation?
- Everyone has a shared fate, if there is a shared destiny it would help get there,
- When you win, I win.

Sustainability for regional partners, regional clusters, workers:

- Flexibility, open the wall and allow new ideas, increase flexibility.
- There are ways to do things. When you bump up against them you realize you aren't going very far. Start challenging those walls in a positive way.
- The cost of energy is a problem.

- We need to convey to businesses that we feel their pain that flexibility and disaggregation could change in 6 months.
- The partnerships have to be really solid. Public/private partnerships are necessary to have to prove value to business and show that it pays to work with us. Show the value.
- Show other resources to help them meet their goal to help partner with us. We need to bring the idea that we have to understand what makes them tick better and mold them in the mold we are in.

Creating the Region's Preferred Future: Increasing Regional Collaboration and Regional State Alignment to Grow our Industry Clusters

- ◆ Set Goals – Where do we want to be as a region in 1 year? 2 years?
- ◆ Recognize Barriers, Identify Partners, Discuss Strategies
- ◆ Plan Next Steps

Comments:

- Depends on what we have to do.
- Go and visit with employers to develop their workforce and solve their problems that day. Once they realize that we have this group of people who want to improve their economic prosperity, they are better served.
- We want a toolkit in order to help business feel they are on the way.
- Resources to attach to that industry so in time it is possible to focus and get to know that cluster so there is success.
- We need to be clear on the cluster and get down to work. Appreciate the diversity of the approach, but we need focus on getting all the pieces together.
- If we are focusing on all strategic clusters it is hard to do the work. One person focusing on that cluster instead of everyone.
- More engagement at the youth level. Working more closely with junior high and high school helps the relationship improve within the region.
- The community needs to know where to go for information for specific needs. Communication centered into one place.
- Continue building on the collaboration happening with industry and academia. There is a lot of momentum going. Continue this so we can reach to the industry and can be more efficient in our process.

What other goals:

- Bring the industry to the people if there is an assessment available to them.
- A performance rating on who is the customer and then base the system on customer service.
- Better information on labor data - quick turn around on labor market information.
- There is a grant being discussed with DOL, \$1.2M to incumbent workers for WA State. We assume we will get a **REED** leadership grant to allow for hiring of project managers. They would be the point person for industry clusters to allow business to give input and managers can get that to the right person to address those needs.
- Connection between business and youth so business can influence the career pathways to get their workforce development and youth the opportunities.
- WDC working together to get grant, the youth of the region can succeed,

What are the strategies for youth....

- The business identifies the need - they can go to educational system and the students can respond. They need to partner together...demand media launch of educational campaign so dialogue can happen, media a partner.

2 year goal: what are the emerging clusters what is staying or going away? Need to do better job of anticipating what is coming next.

What does cluster approach offer:

- Getting industry to trust us with the contract information so we will know what is coming next. We have to do something quickly before creditability is gone.
- Clusters help government see what is coming next. What is next isn't usually something totally different, usually an innovation of a cluster or something related to an existing cluster.
- Look at clusters as a region, state, and locally. Businesses are looking at international basis to keep up with their markets.
- We need to know both markets and keep an eye on the whole cluster both locally and internationally. If the local is looking at their industry then they should see what is happening both locally and internationally and then look back at the education.
- Check with the industry to see what they are saying, and come back with that.

Workforce and shortages:

- Businesses are stealing others workers. The skilled labor pool keeps shrinking. Are we going through it too quickly?
- We need to recognize strategies to expand that labor pool.
- Engage kids to get them into our workforce. The older workforce will be leaving soon and we need to work with employers and boomers to engage them in the workforce.
- Listen to them. What would it take to keep them because they have the skills?
- In two years there would be a conversation with employers that there is a resource there can help them work with the boomers and meet specific needs.
- A JIT system; refresher courses; jump starts in specific or related fields; a life plan to include work. Make a case to workers and employers for the actual programs that could be useful to them.
- How does cluster approach relate to this? It can identify if it is a good fit, examine where needs are, and transition them.
- Also, work with the state to identify the lack of skills. This should include veterans, and diverse populations.
- Networking required of clusters gives the community the durability and flexibility so it can shift if necessary.
- Build some partnerships/networks around cluster and not necessarily the cluster itself.

Final Thoughts

Mark Mattke, SAWDC

Eleni Papadakis, WTB

Comments:

- Add non profit partnerships to the goals.
- What are the barriers to what will get us to progress and behavior changes so people don't get so defensive of their position so they hinder their ability to add value.

Evaluation of the day's activities and findings

Comments:

What worked: the interactivity was good.

- Diversity of the group.

What could have been changed: prefer more concrete action plans for next steps so there is something to take away.

- First part was a little dry, less introductions.
- Don't get into specialized language and assume people know what it means.
- Some reference materials ahead of time so there is better preparation.
- Don't sit with people you know, this helps people learn more, should be done in the beginning.
- More time for networking to share information.

Thank You and Adjourn

Mark thanked everyone. He will take with him the nimbleness, flexibility, and work to establish collaboration and trust to get something back.

Eleni commented on moving forward in the collaboration and the work that has been done. She reminded people about the HSHW forums coming up. This is the bigger plan on workforce development.