

State Workforce Investment Board

Lifelong Learning Committee

September 22, 2010
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Gateway Center
1710 National Ave.

Helena, MT

Committee Members Present: Dave Crum, Chair; TJ Eyer (*Designee for Denise Juneau*)
Linda Guzik; Kirk Hammerquist; Vicki Judd; Jesse O'Hara

Council Members Absent: Michael DesRosier; Kim Gillan; and Hank Hudson (*Designee for*
Anna Whiting-Sorrell) Thomas McKenna;

Guests: Suzanne Ferguson; Mark Maki; Mary Berg; Linda Moodry; Drea Brown, Barbara
Stiffarm; Day Soriano; and Steven Eagle Feathers

Staff: Leisa Smith, Kathy Steil

I. Welcome & Introduction

Chair Dave Crum called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. He welcomed staff, committee members, and guests. He reminded members that the committee conducts business under Roberts Rules of Order. Members of the committee and members of the public introduced themselves and identified their affiliation. Chair Crum announced he has accepted a new position with the Great Falls School District. He is still at McLaughlin Research assisting with the transition.

Roll call, Housekeeping, and Meeting Documents

Leisa Smith conducted roll call (a quorum was not present), addressed housekeeping items, and reviewed meeting materials. Ms. Smith also notes that Mary Moe, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education has resigned and is due to retire in September. Staff is waiting on her replacement appointment from the Governor's Office.

Agenda

Chair Crum reviewed the Agenda. The agenda was accepted as presented by consensus.

Minutes

Action was not taken on approval of the May 5, 2010 minutes due to lack of quorum. Ms. Smith provided some project updates as reported on during the May meeting.

I-Best Model

Margaret Bowles, Adult Basic Education and Literacy Specialist, Office of Public Instruction, presented to the committee during their May 5th meeting a program overview of the I-Best Model (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training). I-BEST programs are designed to provide educational access and support for Adult Basic Education (ABE)/English as a Second Language (ESL) students to progress further and faster along career pathways. I-BEST pairs ABE/ESL and professional-technical instructors in the classroom to concurrently advance student gains in basic and professional-technical skills. Classes are in programs that build toward degrees and/or certificates and prepare students for employment. Washington state currently has 128 different I-BEST programs offered at 34 colleges.

Washington State received a grant from the Northwest Area Foundation to assist certain states develop this model. Montana was chosen and our pilot project is being developed in partnership with Flathead Valley Community College and the Flathead Adult Basic Education Director. The pilot overview was presented at the Governor's Forum on Adult Credentialing. To date, business/clerical/office cluster has been chosen with a focus on medical office receptionist. The pilot began with the beginning of this school year. The pilot will be followed for further updates.

Dave Morey, Bureau Chief with DLI Workforce Services Division informed the committee that the Incumbent Worker Training Program was implemented on April 5th and the program has received approximately 12 applications. **Update:** There are over 90 applications filed. The committee requested a future presentation to learn what business and types of training being accessed.

Mr. Morey also informed the committee on Elevate America, a Microsoft Corporation program. Microsoft offered vouchers through state government for public training on their products. The launch date was May 20th and was open for only 90 days. There are one million vouchers nationwide. Montana received 2,500 standard vouchers and 625 advanced Information Technology vouchers. The vouchers waive all normal training fees. Completion of the standard training will result in a Microsoft certificate of competency. The only qualification to receive the voucher is that you must be a Montana resident. There are currently only eleven cert of ports available to take the proctored tests; however, there is a search to increase that number and a number of Adult Basic Education centers have committed to be a cert of port. **Update:** Microsoft has been to Montana and will be launching a survey to better understand the challenges, completions, and outcomes of this program. Future updates will be provided.

Finally, Mr .Morey pointed out that among Jobs for Montana Graduates states, Montana consistently ranks as one of the top by several measures, and Montana has a 95% graduation rate, even on the reservations. **Update:** JMG has once again ranked number one in the nation by the Jobs for America's Graduate Program (JAG). The national program recognized JMG with the "Number One Outstanding State Organization Award: and the prestigious "5 for 5 Award" for the fifth year in a row along with several other awards.

II. Survey Review

Ms. Smith presented a summary of the survey responses collected from the One-Stop System providers requested by the committee last February. The goal of the survey was to identify any

commonalities or trends pertaining to service barriers and how the committee could assist with more efficient coordination of services and leveraging of funds. The committee is especially concerned about the incumbent worker populations and those outside of the system entering for the first time due to recent economic hardships and displacements. The committee intends to remain focused on available continuous learning opportunities and the integration between the public and private systems as a committee goal.

Committee discussion revolved around coordination with Adult Basic Education (ABE) Centers, on-line options, and the roll the new Personal Employment Plan (PEP Talk) program. Montana's drop-out rate is of concern. TJ Eyer, OPI, reminded members that ABE is a partner in our One-Stop Workforce System and access to PEP Talk is available to the public and private sectors. He also stated that a number of new grants may be pending that look at adult diploma designations and state policies along with Second Net opportunities. Second Net assesses what schools and ABE Centers do or can do to capture kids once they have left the education system.

Committee discussion revolved around the intended outcomes of the College! Now grant awarded to OCHE and the challenge with different collegiate jurisdictions i.e., community college, colleges of technology, university systems and tribal colleges. Outcomes of the Governor's Forum on Adult Credentialing also were discussed and the interest around stackable credentials and pathways leading students from a secondary education experience into a higher education or occupational skills training based on industry standards. Montana Big Sky Pathways is based on this model. Barbara Stiffarm from Opportunity Link mentioned the positive outcomes that have resulted from industry specific training programs on the reservation along with articulation agreements that have occurred with trades programs. TJ Eyer stated the Board of Regents has placed a priority on transferability and relations with all higher education entities.

It was acknowledged that many employment and training and service programs do come from different federal agencies with different funding streams creating some challenges regarding differing rules, regulations, outcome requirements, tracking, and rules changes. However, the one-stop system seems to be doing good work coordinating and sharing resources, co-enrolling clients, and or maintaining a strong referral system. The committee stated the importance of continuing to explore the questions on how to share resources. Another area that has some room for improvement is with federal grants, and how to share grant information with a large contingency of interested persons, accessing and developing tribal workforce, and accessing reservation talent and energy development related projects.

Staff Recommendations were presented and will stay on the table for further discussion when a quorum is present.

Attend Regional Meetings,

- Web page to include information/instructions regarding Governor's Set-Aside, Heads Up on Grants, SWIB Support Process,
- One-Stop/CMT Conversations,
- Repository of Best Practices,
- Continuing to seek partnerships with such projects as College! Now, Pathways Initiative, Governor's Forum Next Steps, and

- Alignment & Coordination with other SWIB Committee's i.e. Youth Councils' GED Campaign, Sector Strategy's Industry Skill Panels, WIA's RFP & Reauthorization.

III. Green Build: Rural Green

Kirk Hammerquist and guests Barbara Stiffarm, Day Soriano, and Steven Eagle Feathers from Opportunity Link presented on Project Green Build. The purpose of the project was to provide training for green construction in North Central Montana. Project Green Build offered construction training as a pre-apprenticeship program focused on integrating energy efficient materials, techniques and new technologies with standard skill sets. The crew was led by Kirk Hammerquist of Hammerquist & Calalegno. LEED guidelines were implemented. The project involved the renovation of Opportunity Link's North Central Montana Transit bus storage facility for the region. The partners in the project included: Opportunity Link, Inc., Montana PEAKS, Inc., Stone Child College, Fort Belknap College, and other area colleges with funding from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Family Economic Security Program.

Additional information was shared on Labor Availability in North Central Montana and recent projects Developing Railway Market for Montana Biodiesel, and Growing our Regional Economy Through Accessible Public Transportation in North Central Montana.

IV. Summary Report – Governor's Forum on Adult Credentialing

The Governor's Office collaborated with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana's COLLEGE!NOW Initiative, and the Montana Economic Developers Association to sponsor a Governor's Forum on Adult Credentialing on August 12, 2010. The National Governor's Association contributed to funding the day-long event. As an integral part of the Forum program, participants were asked to contribute ideas on how more adults in Montana could be engaged in successfully pursuing a recognized postsecondary education credential. The participants' suggestions were grouped into nine categories containing fifteen or more suggestions are discussed in this summary report.

Update: The Governor's office is in discussion with USDOL on "next steps."

Committee members in attendance shared some comments and observations:

Interest in knowing what other business provide training in certified skill sets, the student panel very effective and informative, lots to choose from with six sessions per 2 breakouts, important to continue to have this discussion, need to continue to look at what supports there are for 2 year colleges looking to serve adults differently, what is the status on private internet based training programs such as Penn Foster which is used by apprenticeship and training. The do provide a service University Systems cannot and are very customer based, do one-stops and OCHE need to better identify student needs and available resources.

V. College! Now

College! Now is a grant received by the OCHE addressing Montana's Two-Year Education problems regarding being under-subscribed and under productive. There are four objective over the next four years: Enrollment (increase by 22%), Transfer (increase transfers from 2-year to 4-

year by 75%), Completion (increase # of degrees and certificates by 45%), and Efficiency (decrease expenditures per completion by 25%) Several SWIB members are sitting on workgroups rendering the Lifelong Learning Committee in a possible position to lend continued support. This agenda topic will remain standing until the new appointment from OCHE can address future involvement of the committee.

VI. Credentialing/Pathways Initiative

Montana is one of 10 states selected to receive a new technical assistance award from the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) in the U.S. Department of Labor. The award is designed to meet the Secretary's high priority performance goal of increasing credential attainment and improving training services to disadvantaged populations. USDOL will be leveraging the latest research and best practices in adult learning and workforce development to help states design effective bridge and career pathway programs for adult and dislocated workers.

The Career Pathways technical assistance initiative addresses the need to increase credential attainment and provide more effective training programs for adult and dislocated workers. Specifically, the goal is to increase the capacity of states and local areas to: 1) deliver training that integrates remedial education with occupational skills training; 2) aligns state and local administrative policies to meet the needs of low-income workers for a wide range of supportive services; and 3) forges effective partnerships with training providers, employers, community based organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure programs result in employment and career-enhancing credentials.

The award will support a state team's attendance to two Institutes that will provide guidance on policy and program design as well as access to subject matter experts on adult learning strategies, skills and competency models, credential development, sectoral strategies, labor market analysis, industry engagement and partnership models, workforce, education and TANF policies, and needs-related payments.

Chair Crum sits on the state team and while the project is just getting started it is anticipated there may be some support the Lifelong Learning Committee can provide to ensure sustainability. Further discussion will resume at future meetings. Staff will keep the committee and full board apprised of project activities and outcomes.

VII. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

VIII. Next Steps/Next Meeting

Staff will continue to address the links with the afore mentioned statewide projects and the committee. Staff will visit with Chair Crum once the OCHE appointment has been made to present next steps. Staff can move forward on some of their recommendation under the Survey as it pertains to postings on the SWIB web site. With no further discussion Chair Crum adjourned the meeting at 4:08.