



Agenda Action Report

(Presenters please replace the highlighted text with appropriate/corresponding information)

MEETING Spring SWIB Meeting

ITEM ACO Committee – NGA Work Based Learning Policy Academy

ACTION REQUESTED: Report

PRESENTED BY: Siri Smillie

Information: Report about Montana’s collaboration with the National Governor’s Association and 5 other states to define, elevate, expand, enhance and measure work-based learning for 16-29-year-old youth and young adults with an emphasis on STEM careers/career paths.

Motion: None needed

Synopsis: This year’s Annual Labor Day Report, jointly released by the Department of Labor highlights an impending workforce shortage facing the state. We expect 130,000 retirements in the next ten years but have only 123,000 Montanans aged 16 to 24 that will be entering the labor force in the next ten years. Taking into account improved migration rates and increased labor force participation rates, the Montana labor force is projected to grow by 4,100 workers per year for the next ten years, leaving a shortfall in the amount of workers needed to fill the expected 6,500 jobs per year. The shortfall will be 2,400 jobs per year. In order to meet this demand, we need to redouble our efforts in K-12 and post-secondary to prepare the skilled workers we need and increase overall labor force participation.

Over the last three years, we have been bringing stakeholders from secondary, post-

secondary, Department of Labor, adult basic education, business and industry, economic development agencies, etc. together at unprecedented levels to streamline our workforce pipeline. One of the areas we see great potential for streamlining policies and developing additional opportunities for future workers is work-based learning, particularly in the STEM fields.

Work-based learning epitomizes the essential private-public partnership we need to keep our talent pool strong. We know that students who have opportunities to learn on the job gain invaluable skills—skills that will serve them now and for the rest of their lives and that businesses who are engaged and invested in growing Montana’s talent pool also benefit. The research supports work-based learning; it has been shown to reduce worker turnover and associated costs, and improve productivity and that participants earn significantly more over their lifetime.

After our full engagement in this policy academy, Montana will have:

- A unified strategic plan on work-based learning that builds from the vision and goals for apprenticeship, on-the-job training, and career readiness outlined in Pillar I of the Main Street Montana Business Plan.
- Statewide integration of programs that expand the representation of girls, young women and minorities in STEM fields.
- A clearinghouse of resources and best practices that is available to employers who want to start or expand their sponsorship of work-based learning.
- Aligned outcomes measurements and partner commitments to scale programs in their local communities.
- Expanded work-based learning opportunities statewide, especially in STEM sectors.

Attachment: Powerpoint presentation