

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board Executive Director's Report

Meeting No. 220
July 1, 2018

1. Organizational changes at the Workforce Board: As you all know, Patrick Woods retired June 30. Patrick filled a number of critical roles for us, on both the agency operations and program sides. My first priority was making certain that agency operations remain on an even keel. I am so pleased to announce that Victoria Deboer, who has been serving as our CFO, has accepted a new role as our Chief Operating Officer. Vicki has done a terrific job as our CFO, further developing our fiscal team and processes, and finding new efficiencies. Vicki came to us with many years of experience as an internal auditor and senior manager, which gives Vicki a solid understanding of the importance of each aspect of organizational operations towards meeting organizational objectives. Vicki will keep her fiscal management responsibilities, but also take on human resources, facilities management, and general oversight of the internal workings and health of this agency. We are working on a new staffing plan for Vicki's unit so that she can absorb these new roles. I am very appreciative that Colleen Seto, who has worked in our research unit and with our Making It In Washington Initiative, has agreed to move into a new fiscal operations role to support Vicki. Colleen has so many strengths, but her systems analysis work and extreme attention to detail will be of tremendous benefit to Vicki and the unit. I also want to thank Vicki's current fiscal staff, CJ Teague and Wendy Tang, who handle our incredibly complex fiscal management responsibilities with integrity, professionalism, and good humor. It is with extreme faith and confidence in our fiscal management team that Vicki is able to take on her new role as COO.
2. We have Outlook!!! Patrick will have many wonderful legacies from his 35-year career in state service. But for the staff of the Workforce Board and our partners, this will be what goes down in legend. While Patrick kept the rails cleared—no easy task—to keep our momentum towards transition to Outlook, it was our skilled IT manager, Robert Hinsch, who engineered every detail of this major transition from the dark ages into the light of the 21st Century—with the tiniest budget imaginable for such a task. The transition still has a few bumps to iron out. The agency is quickly re-populating schedules and contact information—and we may have dropped a few e-mail communications during the transition. Please be patient with us, give us a little latitude to catch up, and don't hesitate to resend a message if you haven't heard back. I sure hope that the world doesn't adopt a new e-mail and scheduling system anytime soon!
3. The U.S. Senate Health Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee has passed a bipartisan bill to reauthorize and modify the Carl Perkins Act. Carl Perkins funding supports enhancement of the nation's career and technical education (CTE) programs. Perkins has been up for reauthorization for about 12 years, and the sudden move by the HELP committee came as a pleasant surprise. Workforce Board staff were called on to review and comment on draft language by our national CTE associations and by Sen. Murray's staff. Sen. Murray and Lamar Alexander co-lead the development of the new bill.

The new bill, named the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*, if passed, will require states to develop a state CTE plan in coordination with a wide range of stakeholders, and to establish performance measures and targets in alignment with WIOA and the Every Student Succeeds Act. The bill lessens the role of the U.S. Secretary of Education, and gives more responsibility to the state CTE Board (the Workforce Board in WA)

for performance accountability and implementation of the state plan. The bill specifically emphasizes better alignment with the state's workforce development system, more work-based learning options for students, and interventions to alleviate equity gaps in secondary and post-secondary CTE.

The HELP Committee is now pre-conferencing with the House, which passed a different, but not too dissimilar, Perkins reauthorization bill 2 years ago. Their intention is to bring a bipartisan consensus bill before the full House and Senate for passage in the next few weeks, before August recess. There is also commitment from President Trump to sign the bill when passed out of Congress.

There are many points at which Perkins reauthorization can go off track again, but we are optimistic because there is clearly bipartisan support for CTE and work-based learning in both houses and both parties. The House and Senate both have recommended increasing the appropriation level for Perkins, which we haven't seen in 20 years, and both have added new funding support to expand apprenticeship opportunities in the US.

We will keep the Board apprised of new developments as they occur. We will also keep room on the agenda of the September Workforce Board meeting to provide a deep dive analysis of the impact of a new bill, and identify major decision points for the Board.

4. I was invited to speak before the U.S. Senate CTE caucus on July 28, about the value of and policy recommendations to advance CTE and work-based learning nationally. New America, a non-partisan think tank, coordinated the event for the Caucus, and sponsored my travel. I joined a panel of impressive presenters covering national and local (community college) perspectives. I provided a state perspective and described the work of this Board over the past 10 years, the recent NGA policy academy work to identify policy barriers to scaling work-based learning, Gov. Inslee's Career Connect Washington initiative, and some early findings from our literature review on the future of work. I also stressed the importance of focusing policy reform on populations, communities, and businesses that are not being served well now by our systems. Attached is the outline of policy considerations that I presented.
5. I had the opportunity to present with a panel about health workforce research at the national AcademyHealth conference, which was held in Seattle June 24-26. AcademyHealth is a non-partisan resource for objective, evidence-based, health research and policy, and is the professional association for health services researchers, policy analysts, and practitioners. The panel was coordinated and moderated by Sue Skillman, Deputy Director of the UW Center for Health Workforce Studies (UWCHWS). This is UWCHWS' 20th anniversary, so the panel looked at the 20 year evolution of health workforce research and policy. UWCHWS Director, Bianca Frogner, Michelle M. Washko, Acting Director of the HRSA/National Center for Health Workforce Analysis, were my co-presenters on the panel.

Because the conference attendees primarily represented clinical health research and policy, we did not expect a large turn-out for our session. But we were pleasantly surprised that about 50 people attended, and participated fully in an extended Q&A session. The conference coordinators had to kick us out so the next session could start in the room. There were three main issues that the questions revealed. 1. States and healthcare systems are overwhelmed with the growing demand for long-term care and community-based services, and are seeing huge worker shortages in these fields. 2. They are having difficulty connecting to the education and workforce development systems in their states to anticipate and prepare for the transformations

in the delivery of health care. 3. They recognize that they need a different workforce strategy to address increasing and enhancing services for underserved populations and communities. These are all issues that the WA Health Workforce Council (which Board staff (Nova) staffs by statute) has been grappling with and making headway on for many years.

6. The Health Workforce Council and UWCHWS have gotten national recognition lately in the press and in a developing national report. Notably recognized is our joint recent report on the state of the behavioral health workforce in Washington, and the Health Workforce Sentinel Network that enables over 150 “sentinels” from all healthcare subsectors to report regularly on their changing workforce needs. For more details, see <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/HealthWorkforceCouncil.asp>.

The Sentinel Network, which began in 2016, was initially funded through the state’s Healthier Washington program, and focuses on improving Medicaid service delivery and payment. The federal funding for the project ended in January of this year after the Healthier Washington program had to shift funds to meet other emerging priorities. However, the leadership of the Council knew there was great interest in the Network from healthcare stakeholders and policymakers, as well as attention from other states. We were able to work with Governor Inslee’s office to secure another year of bridge funding through the WIOA Statewide Activities Fund. The Council has met twice since we secured this funding, and is developing a sustainability plan to continue the Network, including identification of potential future funding sources such as industry co-sponsorship and state funds. You may be interested in reviewing the latest Council report at the link above to see an example of how we’ve used the Sentinel Network data. Nova is also working to put together a meeting with education groups to discuss how they could best use the information from the Network.

7. Eric Wolf, Jim Parker, and John Murray were all invited to present at the annual conference of the Northwest Career Colleges Federation (NWCCF). Jim led a panel on recent changes in state laws regarding private career school regulation. John was invited to join a panel discussing veterans’ benefits for private career school training. Eric presented to a plenary session a 101 on the major agencies and the governing structure of the workforce development system in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. The conference, held at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, brings together over 150 private career school administrators, staff, and stakeholders. This year marked the final conference of long-time NWCCF Executive Director Gena Wickstrom, who is retiring after 25+ years of service as the organization’s leader.
8. Phase 2 of the review of private post-secondary licensing and oversight was funded by the legislature this year. Staff from the Workforce Board and Washington Student Achievement Council, have been working together with the William D. Ruckelshaus Center to continue to identify how these functions can be streamlined for efficiency and transparency, especially for students. The first Ruckelshaus report highlighted our Tuition Recovery Trust Fund and performance accountability system as best practices for WSAC to consider. There was also a recommendation that the two agencies coordinate their student complaint resolution processes. In June the two organizations negotiated to purchase a shared software program for this purpose.
9. The 2018 update of the *Talent and Prosperity for All* plan, approved by the Board at their March regular meeting, was approved by the Departments of Labor and Education on June 28. Thank you to all of our TAP partners!

10. The Employment Security Department (ESD) is providing an Economic Symposium in Yakima on July 20, 2018, *The Economic Recovery: Today & the Future*. If you are able to attend, ESD's symposia always provide important economic data in both a state and regional context. This is a good opportunity to learn about the economic conditions of Central Washington. For information, visit the [Economic Symposium](#) resource page and find: full symposium brochure, agenda, directions, campus map and visitor parking permit. Registration is free, but seating is limited. **Reserve your spot** by July 18, 2018.

Education Policy Recommendations Through A Workforce Lens “Future-Proofing” Students and Industry

New education policy must anticipate the future economic and workplace conditions driven by technological innovation, accessible data, artificial intelligence, and the “internet of things.” The U.S. has been through great technological shifts before, but never at the pace of change we are experiencing today and expected to see well into the future. To be successful every individual must develop a solid foundation of basic, universal knowledge; a savviness to use and adapt to new technologies; core employment skills; and the motivation and ability to continue learning throughout their lifetime. To help our students, workers, businesses and communities benefit from this new world, consider the following policy concepts:

Build a Solid Foundation of Skills, Competencies, and Motivation

- Maintain a rigorous focus on knowledge and competency attainment, but also on each student’s ability to apply what they’ve learned in a real world setting.
 - Use technology to support every type of student learning,
 - Prepare students for lifelong learning; make them aware of how they learn best.
 - Help create multiple and permeable education pathways to move students forward toward credential and career goals.
 - Remove barriers to portability and transferability of meaningful credentials, including new transcripting protocols.

Support Lifelong Learning, Career Counseling and Navigation

- Jobs and careers are changing rapidly. Education and credentialing pathways are changing, too. All students or potential students should have access to reliable career and education planning tools to make informed decisions.
 - Require accessible career counseling and navigation support for all students.
 - Report labor market outcomes for all types of programs and credentials.
 - Make the marketplace of credentials as transparent as possible, with reliable information about the value of credentials in the labor market. (*see Credential Engine fact sheet*)
 - Provide education cost details, including loan repayment information.
- Adult Worker-Learners need direct job preparation and continual upskilling.
 - Encourage accessible scheduling and delivery platforms.
 - Support credential pathways that include short-term training and upskilling, as well as credit for work-based learning.
- Remove financial barriers so adult workers can stay engaged in skill development.
 - Revise financial aid eligibility to allow for progressive wage development.
 - Build an infrastructure for Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLA) that are portable and co-invested by employers and workers, and include career and education planning services.

Facilitate Invention and Innovation

- Enable students at all levels, including lifelong learners, to build skills and competencies associated with innovation and invention.
- Invest in basic research in all disciplines, including, and especially in, new, integrated disciplines (i.e., physical and behavioral health, healthcare and environmental science, engineering and business administration, IT and education).

- Sponsored research is one of the most efficient mechanisms to keep faculty and students up to date, while supporting business growth and competitiveness. This opportunity typically exists at universities, but sponsorship levels are often too expensive for most businesses to access.
 - Facilitate the establishment of public-private collaborative applied research (CAR) centers in every region of the country.
 - Bolster opportunities at all education levels, from high school through graduate education, to engage with businesses and their workers at CAR centers.
 - Encourage collaboration between and among all education levels to ensure expertise and learning is shared, enabling partner institutions to create new education and credential pathways in line with industry direction.
- Ensure equity and access to the invention/innovation process.
 - Invest in modern laboratories at institutions with high concentrations of underserved populations.
 - Support and encourage faculty at such institutions to engage in industry externships and CAR centers, including travel and lodging support.
 - Use financial assistance to support credential-worthy, work-based learning opportunities for low-income individuals; allow for paid work experience when possible.
 - Investment in rural areas should be distinct from population-based formulas, since programming is often more expensive per student.
 - Support high speed internet investments.
 - Encourage and support shared faculty and technology among rural education consortia, i.e., mobile training units and circuit-riding expert faculty.

Increase Work-based Learning Opportunities

- Encourage employers to co-invest in the talent pipeline they need now and in the future. Focus on small and mid-sized businesses demonstrating positive competitive position in their industry or region.
 - Establish a network of skilled intermediaries to bridge the divide between business and education. Consider building on the network of workforce organizations funded under WIOA.
 - Support businesses to engage and stay connected with education and workforce development infrastructures and programs, by providing on-going technical assistance and navigation services. For example, a small or mid-size business may be interested in taking on an apprentice, and is willing to accept all the conditions and responsibilities to do so. Yet they are unlikely to be able to shoulder the responsibility of creating the apprenticeship program, managing related supplemental instruction, and handling all the administrative requirements. A trusted business navigator will lessen the perception of business risk and improve the likelihood of future partnerships when workforce needs arise.
 - Encourage and reward employer-paid work experiences for students that link directly to a student's educational pathway.
 - Ensure seamless accessibility for underserved students to meaningful work-based learning opportunities by removing access barriers, such as transportation, tools, and meals, which may require a change in financial aid policy.