

**Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
Executive Director's Report**

Meeting No. 218
March 14, 2018

The “Future of Work” is a ubiquitous phrase across the media, everyday conversations, and certainly policy discussions across many issue areas. The Workforce Board is being asked to participate in many of these conversations. Following are some of the venues in which we participated.

1. Coordinated a 90-minute work session for the Senate Committee on Economic Development and International Trade. Perry, Eric and Eleni presented information on data trends, models where businesses and workers are collaborating to transform work and workplaces technologically, and on the importance of career-connected learning, career pathway development, credentialing redesign, and business engagement. We also brought presenters from Schweitzer Engineering and our Klickitat County Upskill-Backfill project to share their experiences regarding technology and work.
2. Advance CTE, the national association of state directors of Career and Technical Education, hosted a strategic planning session for its Board members on strategic priorities for the nation's secondary and postsecondary CTE sectors. After a brief discussion, the “Future of Work” became the primary influencer of these discussions. There was agreement that CTE must be considered a key part of the solution to preparing young people and transitioning adults for the new world of work and for keeping incumbent workers' skills relevant. Also, there was commitment to modernizing the concepts of Career Readiness to include concepts and characteristics associated with non-traditional employment relationships (independent contractor, gig worker, etc), entrepreneurship, technology management and basic coding, using data, and cyber-security. The sector may also rethink the current structure of the 16 standard Career Clusters and associated career pathways and the 79 specific occupations within those pathways.
3. National Governors Association, State Workforce Board Chairs Association. I was asked to facilitate a discussion of state workforce board directors and state WIOA administrators (ESD counterparts), to identify issues affecting state workforce development systems. The overarching issue was the need to transform public systems to respond to the changes being driven by technology and automation. The key issue areas were: A) encourage better and consistent engagement of the employer community to share relevant, timely skill need and other workforce information; B) develop more flexible pathway systems with portable, stackable, and industry-valued credential opportunities; and C) create services that support the economic security of contingent workers (i.e., independent contractors, gig and temp workers, etc.), and the self-employed.

Workforce Board staff are regularly being asked to comment on this topic regarding potential legislation (from WA's congressional delegation to the state legislature), media inquiries (from The Wall Street Journal to the Tacoma News Tribune), and in a variety of topical in-state meetings relevant to workforce development and the state's system for talent development. While the changing nature of work and the workplace also pervades the Board's discussions, it has not been explored as a topic in itself. The Board might consider whether a deeper exploration of "Future of Work" might be a worthwhile activity of the Board and whether it should be more deeply explored under other strategic priorities, such as enhancing business engagement or removing barriers for underserved populations, or focus on near-term TAP implementation issues. All are important!

National Governors Association, State Workforce Board Chairs Association, Winter Meeting: Board member Creigh Agnew joined me this year for the first day of this 3-day event. The focus of the winter meeting is generally to update on federal policy matters, to highlight issues and key learning from the states, and to gain awareness of the perspectives of the country's 50 governors. I was so pleased that Creigh could join me this year for the first day of the event, which included a first for the Association—a closed door meeting with Secretary of Labor, Alexander Acosta, and incoming Chair of NGA's Education and Workforce Committee, Gov. Dennis Daugaard of South Dakota.

After both had shared their general perspectives and some specifics on the importance of work-based learning, new education and training pathways, and the need to expand apprenticeship opportunities, they answered questions from the states on a number of topics. They couldn't provide very definitive answers, since most of the questions were on topics requiring congressional involvement, legal adjudication or rule-making. We did learn that recommendations from the Apprenticeship Task Force, established under an Executive Order from President Trump, are leaning towards establishing a separate route to apprenticeship outside of the federal or state Registered Apprenticeship systems. It is unclear if state or federal approving agencies will have a role in the new process. Otherwise, I think the general perspective from attendees was quite positive towards the Secretary and Governor, and understanding of the environment or context in which they are operating.

Career Connect Washington Task Force Media Event: Career Connect Washington Task Force Co-Chairs, our own Perry England, and Brad Smith, president of Microsoft, presented Gov. Inslee with the Task Force's recommendations at a Feb. 20 media event held at South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia. The event was well-attended by Task Force members and others, and resulted in some media coverage. To watch the event, see: <https://www.tvw.org/watch/?eventID=2018021326>.

CCW will continue now with a targeted strategic planning effort focused on the business engagement aspects of career connected learning. There will also continue to be a public system-focused effort, which Workforce Board staff (led by Nova Gattman) will co-lead with staff of the Washington Student Achievement Council, in coordination with the Governor's office. This also constitutes Phase II of our NGA Policy Academy on Work-Based Learning. A brochure, which describes the work of the CCW Task Force and the recommendations to Gov. Inslee can be downloaded at http://www.wtb.wa.gov/Documents/CCT2018_8PgFolio_Final.pdf.