

**WASHINGTON STATE
WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
MEETING NO. 172
JULY 30 & 31, 2013**

**OVERVIEW OF BOARD ACTION REGARDING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT
JULY 2011 – PRESENT**

In 2011, the Workforce Board focused on youth unemployment at its annual summer retreat. The retreat included materials centered on the following:

1. The Harvard report “Pathways to Prosperity.”
2. Analysis and review of data regarding youth and youth unemployment.
3. Presentation of the statutorily required agency report on youth unemployment.
4. Ground level responses to youth unemployment as presented by the Spokane Workforce Development Council and the Mount Vernon WorkSource Center.
5. Board discussion of policy and program options for addressing youth unemployment.

In preparation for the 2011 retreat, the Board established a Youth Unemployment Committee to research regional, state, and national programs and initiatives in order to identify promising practices for the Board to consider. Committee members included Mike Hudson, Beth Thew, Lutz Ziob, and Mark Mattke. David Stillman and designee Peter Lahmann joined the committee after the July retreat. The committee met several times leading up to the 2011 Retreat and provided a number of policy and program options to address youth unemployment.

The policy and program options discussed at the July 2011 retreat included:

1. Programmatic ways to engage business and labor in creating more work-integrated learning opportunities for young adults.
2. Policies that support “multiple” or “career” pathways for youth.

The following information provides an overview of the actions taken and outcomes since the July 2011 Board retreat.

Board Action Requested: For discussion only.

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Programmatic Efforts

Workforce Board staff worked with business, labor, and partner agencies to apply for a Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant to expand work-integrated learning opportunities for Washington's youth. The program elements that were established by the Board's Youth Unemployment Committee served as the foundation for the WIF proposal. The Employment Security Department was the state's eligible applicant for the WIF grant.

While the application was not selected to receive a WIF grant, the program development and stakeholder engagement that was a part of the application process established stronger cross sector partnerships and served as the foundation for the Alliance for Student Success in Education and Training (ASSET) proposal that was introduced in the 2013 legislative session as Governor's request legislation (SB5753/HB1871). The main elements of the ASSET proposal are:

1. Development of a web-based matching system to connect students with employers through work-integrated learning opportunities.
2. Utilizing existing relationships and building new partnerships at the local level coordinated by the Workforce Development Councils towards the creation of work-integrated learning opportunities.
3. Development of technical assistance materials for employers and educators for the creation of work-integrated learning opportunities.
4. Strong involvement of statewide business and labor organizations.

SB 5754 was successfully passed off of the Senate floor by a vote of 46 – 3 but failed to pass the House Appropriations Committee. The ASSET proposal continues to be a priority of the Governor's office and may be reintroduced in forthcoming legislative sessions.

Policy Efforts

Policy efforts leading up to and during the 2012 session focused on the Career Pathways Act, whose prime sponsor was Representative Tim Probst. In 2012 the Career Pathways Act passed the House but failed to pass the Ways and Means Committee in the Senate. In the interim of 2012, Workforce Board staff further explored and drafted policy options through an extensive stakeholder process. Using the Career Pathways Act as a starting point, but making some significant changes, the process resulted in the proposed Multiple Pathways Act.

The Multiple Pathways Act provided for enhanced low cost career guidance for students and their families, increased emphasis on student planning, increased opportunities for students to utilize a Program of Study, and increased opportunities for students to participate in Career and Technical Education courses. While the board decided not to submit agency request legislation, elements of the Multiple Pathways Act were incorporated into pieces of legislation introduced by legislators. None of the bills passed. However, the final operating budget established a legislator led Career Education Opportunities Task Force, on which the Workforce Board has a seat. The task force is to examine the following:

1. Career and college ready graduation requirements.
2. Options for expanding career education and exploration into middle schools.

3. Options for increasing student and parent awareness of multiple education and career pathways.
4. Strategies for enhancing work-integrated learning.
5. Recommendations for statewide oversight of career and technical education across the K-12 system.
6. Recommendations for how to implement a statewide list of Career and Technical Education course equivalencies.

A preliminary report from the task force is due December 2013 with a final report due September 2014.