

JAY INSLEE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
Office of the Governor

September 5, 2014

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WORKFORCE TRAINING AND
EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

Cindy Zehnder, Chair
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
128 10th Avenue, 6th Floor
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Cindy:

I want to first express my appreciation to the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board for highlighting the issues facing our young people, especially those who are economically disadvantaged. The Board has been tracking the declining labor force participation of our young people for many years. Both of the Board's 2010 and 2012 reports caution that without intervention we will lose a generation or more of Washington's future producers, innovators, entrepreneurs, and contributors to the economy and our communities. Without access to both education and career success, young people will lose lifetime potential — in earnings, career progress, and the adult milestones of building a family, a home base, and community involvement.

This is a critical issue for our economic growth and I would like to enlist the Board's assistance as part of a new initiative.

We have an opportunity through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) discretionary funds of \$1.9 million to begin changing the prospects for our young people. I ask for your help in establishing and overseeing the implementation of a work-integrated learning initiative, to be called "YouthWorks," which will help more low-income youth get excited about learning and a pathway to a viable career. With adult-guided, career-connected learning opportunities, young people will find relevance to what they learn in the classroom. They will develop an all-important vision of future success that will motivate them to stay in school longer, achieve post-secondary credentials, and progress along a meaningful career pathway.

I have asked the Employment Security Department to administer these funds and our 12 local Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) to design and implement programs that bring industry together with schools and youth service organizations to improve both education and employment outcomes for low-income young people.

I am requesting the Board's assistance on the following:

1. Establish application guidelines for distribution of funds across the 12 WDCs,
2. Negotiate performance targets for each WDC and for the state as a whole,



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3. Capture promising and best practice information that can be shared widely with program operators and policymakers; also capture lessons learned and areas for midcourse correction, and
4. Keep me informed with quarterly YouthWorks progress reports.

After the Board has had a chance to discuss this at the next meeting on September 25th, please reply through my Working Washington Policy Advisor, Alexandre Chateaubriand, who may be reached at (360) 902-4113 or xandre.chateaubriand@gov.wa.gov. I would like YouthWorks to begin in earnest in early October, understanding that each of the 12 WDCs will build on existing successes.

With my appreciation for all the Board's efforts, I look forward to working with you on making YouthWorks a success.

Very truly yours,



Jay Inslee
Governor