

High Skills, High Wages

*Washington's Strategic Plan
for Workforce Development*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**Our Agenda
for Action**

2002



WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD



The Vision

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is Washington State's valued and trusted source of leadership for the workforce development system.

Mission Statement

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's mission is to bring business, labor, and the public sector together to shape strategies to best meet the state and local workforce and employer needs of Washington in order to create and sustain a high-skill, high-wage economy.

To fulfill this Mission, Board members, with the support of staff, work together to:

- Advise the Governor and Legislature on workforce development policy.
- Promote an integrated system of workforce development that responds to the lifelong learning needs of the current and future workforce.
- Advocate for the nonbaccalaureate training and education needs of workers and employers.
- Facilitate innovations in workforce development policy and practices.
- Ensure system quality and accountability by evaluating results and supporting high standards and continuous improvement.

Board Members

René Ewing
Chair

Rick Bender
Representing Labor

Terry Bergeson
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Don Brunell
Representing Business

Geraldine Coleman
Representing Business

Earl Hale
*Executive Director, State Board for
Community and Technical Colleges*

Tony Lee
Representing Targeted Populations

John McGinnis
Representing Labor

Sylvia Mundy
*Commissioner, Washington State
Employment Security Department*

Joseph J. Pinzone
Representing Business

Beth Thew
Representing Labor

Ellen O'Brien Saunders
Executive Director

Participating Officials

Vacant
*Representing Local
Elected Officials*

Dennis Braddock
*Secretary, State Department of
Social and Health Services*

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Our vision is a workforce development system that offers every Washingtonian access to high-quality academic and occupational skills education throughout his or her lifetime, effective help to find work or training when unemployed, and the personalized assistance to make progress in the labor market.

To make our vision a reality we must plan our journey carefully. We must have a clear map—a set of goals, objectives, and strategies—to identify our route and guide the programs of the workforce development system to help us get there. We must have the support of our policy-makers and voters and we must be held accountable for results in making progress. Finally, we must demonstrate commitment to the journey. This plan, updated in 2002, defines the state's goals, objectives, and strategies, and measures of our success.

Challenges

The last two decades have brought about a dramatic transformation in our state's economy with profound implications for the workforce. We live in a knowledge-based economy where the main engine of economic growth is the human mind. While this economy has generated tremendous wealth, it has also sharpened economic disparities between the educated and the uneducated and between urban and rural areas. Demographic trends will make it more difficult to meet these challenges. Population growth has declined, and our labor force growth rate will continue to slow. The population is aging, and an increasing percentage of labor market entrants will come from groups that traditionally have received less education. Now, more than ever enhancing the skills of our workforce is critical for ensuring a productive and secure future for all Washington residents. In an age of global competition for good jobs, the places that thrive will be the places with the best educated, most innovative, and most productive people.

This plan sets forth our goals, objectives, strategies, and performance measures for meeting the three challenges identified by Governor Locke. Meeting these challenges also requires addressing a fourth challenge: integrating services provided by separately-funded workforce development programs so that we can provide the best possible service to our customers.

Recognizing the importance of a skilled workforce, Governor Gary Locke asked the Workforce Board to address three critical challenges for the state's workforce development system.

1. Closing the gap between the need of employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need.
2. Enabling workers to make smooth transitions so that they may benefit fully from the new, changing economy. The board shall develop a coherent strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training.
3. Assisting disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, new labor market entrants, recent immigrants, and low-wage workers in moving up the job ladder during their lifetimes by developing a wage progression strategy for low-income workers. Specific progress should be made in improving operating agencies and reducing the earnings gap facing people of color, people with disabilities, and women.

GOAL 1

To close the gap between the need of the employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need.

Performance Measures

1. The number of community and technical college students, private career school students, and apprentices prepared for work compared to the number of net job openings for workers at that education level: we are meeting 78 percent of demand for newly prepared workers, up from 75 percent two years ago.
2. The number of industry skill panels that are established: 17 skill panels have been established during the past two years (none existed prior to that).

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	LEAD AGENCY/ORGANIZATION
<p>1.1 Create private-public partnerships to enable individuals to move up job and career ladders throughout their lives.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Form industry skill panels especially in high-demand economic clusters such as health care and information technology, to assess emerging and declining skill needs and develop training programs.</p> <p>1.1.2 Provide high-quality labor market information that enables programs to respond to changes in the labor market and informs students and customers about current career opportunities, especially in high-demand clusters such as health care and information technology.</p> <p>1.1.3 Develop modular curricula and assessments that are linked to industry skill standards.</p>	<p>Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board</p> <p>Employment Security Department</p> <p>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</p>
<p>1.2 Increase the number of young people who understand and act on career opportunities available through career and technical education and training programs, including youth from target populations.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Form partnerships with industries to market their career opportunities to youth and their parents.</p> <p>1.2.2 Develop individual career plans for all youth to ensure awareness of links between learning and employment. Ensure all youth are aware of the range of career choices available including high-wage, high-demand occupations, and nontraditional occupations.</p> <p>1.2.3 Enhance educational attainment of career and technical education students with limited English proficiency.</p>	<p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</p> <p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils)</p> <p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</p>

<p>1.3 Expand mentor and work-based learning opportunities for all youth by working with the employer community.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Provide support to employers in supplying work-based learning opportunities based on individual career plans.</p> <p>1.3.2 Increase adult mentoring of youth participating in workforce development programs.</p>	<p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</p> <p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils)</p>
<p>1.4 Increase the capacity of high schools, community and technical colleges, and apprenticeship programs to provide high-quality workforce education and training programs.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Develop new programs and increase student enrollments in workforce training especially in high-demand industry clusters such as health care and information technology.</p> <p>1.4.2 Partner with industries to provide facilities, faculty, and equipment in high-wage, high-demand fields.</p> <p>1.4.3 Expand the ability of higher education institutions to recognize and grant credit for competencies obtained through other educational institutions and employment.</p> <p>1.4.4 Increase availability of applied degrees especially in science technology, engineering technology, and information technology.</p> <p>1.4.5 Expand apprenticeship training in emerging fields and expand preparation programs for apprenticeship in high-demand clusters, including construction.</p> <p>1.4.6 Increase the number of individuals prepared to teach students for high-wage, high-demand fields.</p> <p>1.4.7 Highlight and replicate best practices from around the state and nation in career and technical education.</p>	<p>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</p> <p>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</p> <p>Higher Education Coordinating Board, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges</p> <p>Higher Education Coordinating Board, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges</p> <p>Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council at the Department of Labor and Industries</p> <p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges</p> <p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges</p>
<p>1.5 Increase education and training, and employment services for older workers and retired individuals who want to return to work.</p>	<p>1.2.2 Encourage older workers and retired individuals who want to return to work to pursue education and specialized training, and improve access for seniors to take advantage of these opportunities.</p>	<p>Aging and Long-Term Care Services</p>

GOAL 2

To enable workers to make smooth transitions so that they and their employers may fully benefit from the new, changing economy by putting in place a coherent strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training.

Performance Measures

1. The number of incumbent workers that receive publicly supported customized training linked to specific job needs of employers and the results of the training: 2,323 incumbent workers trained, an increase of about 1,000 from two years ago.
2. The ratio of dislocated workers' earnings compared to their earnings prior to dislocation (with separate targets for dislocated workers from low-wage and high wage jobs): 94 percent earnings replacement among dislocated workers that participated in a workforce development program; 207 percent earnings replacement among dislocated workers from lower wage jobs; and 74 percent among dislocated workers from higher wage jobs (lower wage jobs are jobs with earnings in the bottom quartile, and higher wage are those in the top quartile). The earnings replacement rates two years ago were mostly the same; they were lower among workers dislocated from low-wage jobs.
3. The length of time between worker dislocation and reemployment in a suitable job: 27 months median length of dislocation among dislocated workers that participated in a workforce development program (first time measure).

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	LEAD AGENCY/ORGANIZATION
2.1 Increase economic competitiveness and prevent dislocation by expanding customized incumbent worker training.	2.1.1 Increase publicly supported customized incumbent worker training, and provide incentives to both employers and employees for this type of training.	Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
2.2 Enhance business expansion and retention strategies.	2.2.1 Market retention services to at-risk businesses and their workers.	Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, Employment Security Department
2.3 Return unemployed workers to suitable work in as short a time as possible.	2.3.1 Establish a coherent, flexible, and accessible dislocated worker service strategy and continue best practices such as rapid response labor-management committees.	Employment Security Department, Workforce Development Councils
	2.3.2 Provide retraining in high-demand fields.	State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

GOAL 3

To assist disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, new labor market entrants, recent immigrants, and other low-wage workers to move up the job ladder during their lifetimes by developing a wage progression strategy for low-income workers. Specific progress will be made in improving operating agencies and reducing the earnings gap facing people of color, people with disabilities, and women.

Performance Measures

1. The percentage of the entering ninth grade class of common school students who graduate from high school: 76 percent of ninth grade students graduate with their class. (No change from previous years.)
2. The percentage of participants in workforce development programs whose earnings during the second year after program participation can support their family above the poverty level. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole.): among program participants with individual earnings below the family poverty line before starting, 53 percent had individual earnings above the family poverty line during the second year after participation (50 percent for women, 48 percent for people of color, and 43 for people with disabilities. (This is a first time measure.)
3. The median increase in earnings and hourly wages during the first three years after participation in workforce development programs. (This measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole.): among program participants with individual earnings below the family poverty line before starting, median earnings during the third year after participation were 42 percent higher than during the first year after participation, and median hourly wages were 20 percent higher. For women, earnings were 40 percent higher, and hourly wages were 19 percent higher. For people of color, earnings were 39 percent higher, and hourly wages were 17 percent higher. For people with disabilities, earnings were 68 percent higher, and hourly wages were 18 percent higher (first time measure).

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	LEAD AGENCY/ORGANIZATION
3.1 Increase high school graduation rates.	3.1.1 Ensure all youth achieve the necessary core skills as established by industries in their chosen career pathway, including the achievement of the high school diploma or entrance into a postsecondary education or training program. 3.1.2 Expand summer programs to address the education and employment needs of “at risk” students.	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Employment Security Department and Workforce Development Councils (Youth Councils)
3.2 Assist unemployed individuals to gain and retain employment.	3.2.1 Develop a more effective labor exchange to help individuals get jobs with the greatest potential for wage progression. 3.2.2 Sustain and expand programs with demonstrated success in enabling low-income individuals to achieve wage progression. 3.2.2 Expand access to support services, such as child care, especially for target populations. 3.2.4 Strengthen postemployment services for customers.	Employment Security Department, Workforce Development Councils Office of the Governor Department of Social and Health Services (Economic Services and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), Workforce Development Councils Employment Security Department

<p>3.3 Remove barriers for populations with unique obstacles to employment and increase the number of employers who hire individuals with disabilities, women, and people of color in high-wage, high-demand occupations.</p>	<p>3.3.1 Plan for and implement the Ticket to Work Program.</p> <p>2.3.2 Educate employers, especially employers from high-wage, high-demand industries about the benefits of hiring individuals from target populations.</p> <p>3.3.3 Develop accountability and program improvement mechanisms for increasing employment and earnings for target populations.</p>	<p>Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Services for the Blind</p> <p>Employment Security Department</p> <p>Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board</p>
<p>3.4 Assist low-income individuals to move up a career ladder by increasing training and developing career opportunities.</p>	<p>3.4.1 Expand customized training, apprenticeship preparation and apprenticeship programs, and other training opportunities for low-income individuals.</p> <p>3.4.2 Provide training programs at times and locations that are accessible to working people, and provide support services to assist in overcoming barriers to training.</p> <p>3.4.3 Increase basic skills instruction in the workplace and integrate it into occupational skills training.</p> <p>3.4.3 Support the development of career ladders leading to high-wage, high-demand occupations.</p> <p>3.4.4 Create and offer financial incentives to employers and low-income workers to increase training.</p>	<p>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Employment Security Department, Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council at the Department of Labor and Industries</p> <p>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges</p> <p>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' Office of Adult Literacy.</p> <p>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Business Organizations</p> <p>Office of the Governor</p>

GOAL 4

Integrate workforce development programs to improve customer service.

Performance Measures

1. The percentage of total employers using WorkSource: 7 percent of Washington employers used WorkSource during its first year, not counting electronic self-service (first time measure).
2. The percentage of total workers using WorkSource (this measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole): 10 percent of Washington workers used WorkSource during its first year, not counting electronic services (first time measure).
3. WorkSource customer perception of seamlessness as evidenced by survey responses (this measure will be reported separately for women, people of color, and people with disabilities, as well as for the participant population as a whole): (data not yet available).

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	LEAD AGENCY/ORGANIZATION
4.1 Improve WorkSource services to customers, including target populations by bringing together individual partner programs to craft comprehensive solutions.	4.1.1 Understand and respond to the needs of business customers and implement a coordinated, comprehensive strategy among WorkSource partners. 4.1.2 Improve customer service by collecting and using customer feedback, providing electronic services, and sharing information on customer service best practices. 4.1.3 Include all WorkSource partners in customer service training, including training in serving target populations.	Employment Security Department Employment Security Department Employment Security Department
4.2 Develop and maintain service delivery capacity that is flexible and responsive.	4.2.1 Provide a statewide information system (SKIES) for case management that is shared by WorkSource partners. 4.2.2 Develop systems to track and report core WorkSource services. 4.2.3 Find financial resources to sustain the WorkSource delivery system infrastructure.	Employment Security Department Employment Security Department, Workforce Development Councils, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board Employment Security Department

<p>4.3 Reach out to individuals from target populations in order to increase their use of WorkSource services, and provide services that meet their unique needs.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Provide individuals with disabilities with equal opportunities to benefit from WorkSource services.</p> <p>4.3.2 Increase outreach, recruitment and marketing activities conducted in partnership with tribes and community based organizations serving targeted populations.</p> <p>4.3.3 Encourage diversity among the membership of local Workforce Development Councils and WorkSource staff to reflect the diversity of the community being served.</p>	<p>Employment Security Department</p> <p>Employment Security Department</p> <p>Employment Security Department, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Workforce Development Councils</p>
<p>4.4 Facilitate the integration of workforce development programs that serve youth.</p>	<p>4.4.1 Facilitate the transfer of information among workforce development programs serving youth.</p>	<p>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Workforce Development Council (Youth Councils)</p>

