



Bay Area Workforce Development Board

317 West Walnut Street
Green Bay, WI 54303
(920) 431-4100
fax (920) 431-4101
www.bayareawdb.org

BAY AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

February 15, 2007

Present: Paul Linzmeyer (Chair), Larry Bergner, Louise Blankenheim, John Bloor, Amy Du Bois, Shelly Ghere, Larry Harkness, Penny Helmle, Jill Hennessey, Joe Hilke, Holly Hoppe, Christine Jensema, Sue Kromm, David Lisle, Terri Luebke, Tony Marcelle, Don McAdams, Dan Miller, Jesus Panalez, Brian Pelon, Pamela Phillips, Chuck Rohlmeier, Loretta Shellman, Pat Simonar, Ken Stubbe, Peter Thillman, Mike Troyer

Absent: Karen Besiada-Hansen, Marcia Christiansen, Ben Grigg, Bob Guenther, Sue Hammersmith, John Haugh, Jean Marsch, Ted Penn, Sam Perlman, Noel Ryder, John Schwantes, Corky West, Alex Zacarias

Mr. Linzmeyer called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM at the NWTC Center for Business and Industry. A quorum of the WDB members was present. The Minutes of the January 18 meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by Mr. Harkness with a second by Mr. Hilke. Mr. Linzmeyer opened the meeting with thoughts about energy conservation as a business strategy that were sparked by a thorough energy audit of his company as well as by a recent visit to Thailand.

Committee Reports. Mr. Hilke reported that the Strategic Leadership Committee had reviewed the efforts toward consolidation of services throughout the area and noted progress in several initiatives. The committee also spent quite a bit of time learning about the Shawano Job Center, including the facility issues there, and reviewed the prospects for the future of service delivery in that western part of our area.

WIA Youth RFP Update. Staff reported that three Request for Proposal documents had been released for WIA Youth programs beginning July 1, 2007. Based on the board discussion in January, proposals are being solicited in three areas: 1) continuing services to currently enrolled WIA Younger Youth participants; 2) Younger Youth services to targeted populations, and 3) Older Youth training in demand occupations. In addition to those, the job centers will also receive a formula allocation of WIA Youth funds. Ms. Gregory-Paasch explained that the RFPs were more prescriptive in specifying the kinds of services desired than the Bay Area WDB has been in the past. Previously, local areas could determine what particular group of people they would serve with WIA Younger Youth grants.

Poverty and Learning. Mr. Linzmeyer asked that the board move right into the two presentations scheduled, and he introduced Dr. Dan Nerad, Superintendent of the Green Bay School District. Dr. Nerad, a former WDB member, addressed the members about the connection between poverty and learning, as well as his district's response to the challenges presented by that connection. He provided several handouts of school district data showing significant correlation between economic disadvantage (as measured by the percentage of a school's students on free/reduced lunch) and academic performance. Longitudinal data also showed that students who fall behind academically early in their school careers do not make up that deficit over time. Hence an increasing emphasis on early intervention to address the achievement gap associated with economic disadvantage.

Dr. Nerad suggested several strategies to better prepare all students for success in the workplace. First, he put forward that greater public resolve toward addressing poverty in general would do much to close the achievement gap. This would require action at federal, state, and local levels of government. Secondly, he proposed that we all, as adults, work to change our inherent belief that a certain percentage of students will always be failures. Lastly, and most emphatically, he offered the suggestion that our traditional approach to remedial instruction—slowing down the pace of learning and lowering expectations—is not a strategy for success. Rather, more intensive instruction is required to give students who are behind their peers the advanced skills that they will need to succeed in the workplace. This might mean longer school days or a longer school year, as well as a real plan to offer 4-year old kindergarten.

There were a number of questions and a great deal of discussion around Dr. Nerad's insights. This included the importance of "applied skills" in school curriculum as well as the simple fact that it takes a decade or more, as young people move through the K-12 system, to begin to see the results of new educational efforts.

Youth Offender Program. Several representatives from Forward Service Corporation and Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin provided information about the Youth Offender program that they operate jointly under a contract with the Bay Area WDB. The two case managers, Amada O'Brien and David Edge, work with young men incarcerated at the Lincoln Hills facility, north of Wausau, on life skills and employability. The case managers provide a link between what the young person does inside the institution with the reintegration process upon release. One of the program participants joined in the presentation. He described his situation and praised the two case managers for their assistance in helping him find focus and success since he returned to Green Bay. Currently, this young man is in the Industrial Mechanic program at NWTC and he will graduate in May with a very marketable Associate Degree. He thanked board members for providing the program services and urged them to continue to do so. Ms. Gregory-Paasch noted that the board should consider similar programs for female offenders as well.

Program Updates. Members' packets included a Mission Statement from the Great Lakes Employment and Training Association (GLETA):

The primary mission of the national workforce system is to increase exponentially the number of skilled workers necessary to meet employer demands in a 21st century economy and global market.

In addition, GLETA identified five goals for the workforce system:

1. We will need the whole population of potential job seekers to address our future labor needs.
2. The workforce development system must be embraced as an economic development tool within communities.
3. The focus of relevant oversight bodies needs to be on outcomes, not simply compliance.
4. Regionalism that recognizes the needs of communities must be encouraged.
5. Workforce development must be made a national priority.

Mr. Golembeski pointed out how these goals reflect many of the things that our board has been discussing, and there was general consensus to support GLETA in its efforts on behalf of the workforce development system.

Members also received copies of the *Job Service Performance Report* in their packets.

Questions. With the presentations having gone longer than anticipated and with Mr. Golembeski's sinuses obviously bothering him, this part of the meeting was abbreviated. Ms. Hennessy asked about whether all the various activities that the board has been learning about are coordinated and how members can keep track of them. Mr. Linzmeyer explained that NEW North was a real effort to encourage collaboration and coordination of the various initiatives throughout the region. Mr. Golembeski explained the importance of dedicating staff and contractor time to actively promote coordination efforts and even to create the situations in which new partnerships can be created. It really is a matter of recognizing the value of that activity and dedicating resources to it.

Mr. Hilke praised the efforts of the Strategic Leadership Committee as the kind of partnership that was promoting change and asking tough questions in a time of decreasing resources.

Mr. Golembeski reminded the members that there is no March meeting scheduled for the Bay Area WDB, and that the next meeting, on April 19 will be held at Lakeshore Technical College in Cleveland, WI.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.