Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
Charting the Course for Workforce Development

Strategic Plan January 2014 – December 2016: *Policy Scorecard*

Goals	Strategies	Process benchmarks (*aligned w/DCS recommendations)	Outcomes	Timeline for Outcomes
1). Redesign regional workforce system with clear roles, responsibilities, and authority to leverage community resources ***This is viewed as the Primary Goal of the WIB to effectively achieve Goals 2-4.***	Collaborate with economic development to forecast and plan for emerging industry trends	Identify a steering committee to analyze/review/make infrastructure recommendations, looking for funding and service delivery efficiencies	Clearly delineated roles for the WIB, working with the NB mayor. EDC, the career centers and the Community College system.	Initiate: June 2014 Complete: On or before 1/1/15
	Implement a diverse, collaborative approach to resource development	Assess effectiveness of operational interactions among the WIB, the career center operator, and the state *	Decisions will be made and implemented whether to consolidate or co-locate workforce development services and determine administrative cost savings through reduction in redundancies	Initiate: June 2014 Complete: On or before 1/1/15
	Adopt a more proactive approach to supporting regional industries beyond the city of New Bedford.	Assess effectiveness of current communication among workforce development and partners.*	Identification of system strengths and weaknesses.	Initiate: June 2014 Complete: On or before 1/1/15
	Develop and implement a WIB sustainability plan	Assess program effectiveness (Numbers, partner perceptions, goals, strategies. • Business • Job Seekers • Training providers*	Collaborative grant applications submitted and funded	2014-2016

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1). Redesign regional workforce system with clear roles, responsibilities, and authority to leverage community resources **CONTINUED** ***This is viewed as the Primary Goal of the WIB to effectively achieve Goals 2-4.***	Identify opportunities for WIB members to take on leadership roles	Develop orientation-protocol for new WIB members, explaining responsibilities and expectations	Development of a regional communication plan and new tools around workforce priorities - Translate and share accomplishments to Website and other workforce partners for greater exposure to new and existing employers, and general public - Achieve public perception that views the WIB as an important entity working with partners to enhance employer/job seeker needs.	2014-2015 – Qtr 2 Initiate: June 2014 Complete: On or before 1/1/15

Goals	Strategies	Process benchmarks (*aligned w/DCS recommendations)	Outcomes	Timeline for Outcomes
2). Serve as a Community Resource for Labor Market Information to lead data driven practices.	Collect and share regionally relevant / timely data (labor market information, jobs/positions available) using DCS and HWOL resources - Convene a Partners Clearing House annually to update and refresh LMI that is relevant to all partners.	Partner Work Group to meet semi-annually to assess LMI shifts and needs.	All partners in the education and workforce development systems are operating with the same regional intelligence and moving in coordinated direction	Quarter 3 of FY15/16
	Leverage higher education research partners to develop region-specific reports	Explore relationship with UMass Dartmouth's Urban Policy Institute.		
	Convene employers to better understand their hiring preferences + career ladders within their workforce	Convene employer focus-groups in healthcare, logistics, creative economy, etc. Share LMI data, gather their feedback, and qualitative descriptions to complement the quantitative research		
	Promote newly developed resources to youth and adult audiences	Disseminate regional profile to high schools in region - Conduct follow up sessions with administration	Regional High Schools will be informed of Labor Market needs that may lead to curriculum alignment.	Quarter 3 of FY15/16

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3). Promote the hiring, promoting and retaining employees to support business retention and growth in the region.	Conduct market research to better understand employer perspective on workforce system; Conduct marketing and outreach campaign to high demand industry sectors	Generate a list of target employers with mayor, economic development partners and Bristol Community College.	30 employers are reached	Quarter 3 – FY15
	Streamline process for employers to access services and provide input on priorities	Present to local chapters of industry associations, chambers of commerce to make presentations and educate them on the resources available through the public workforce system. Assess Marine Commerce Terminal project effectiveness (Partner roles, collaborations, active facilitators, goals, strategies)*	15 employers agree to be a part of a WIB initiative 5 new employers join the WIB	Quarter 3 – FY15 Quarter 4 – FY15
	For new business development, dedicate a single point of contact to be ambassador to workforce system.	Workforce designee attends EDC meetings with prospective employers Identify employer workforce development champions for WIB initiatives such as youth jobs and hiring out of the career centers	Improve coordination and alignment of workforce needs in anticipation of new business and industry locating in the region.	Initiate July 2014 - 2016

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Goals	Strategies	Process benchmarks (*aligned w/DCS recommendations)	Outcomes	Timeline for Outcomes
3). Promote the hiring, promoting and retaining employees to support business retention and growth in the region. **CONTINUED**	In partnership with regional economic development partners, convene advisory groups representing existing and emerging sectors to better understand their hiring preferences: • Healthcare • Renewable energy (offshore wind) • Creative enterprise • Gaming + hospitality • Advanced manufacturing (Medical devices	Create relevant career ladder materials to inform the public about the opportunities available + disseminate in career centers and to youth Targeted Priority Populations include: - Unemployed (with priority consideration for long term unemployed over 26 weeks) - Low skilled incumbent workers - Out of School Youth - Non High School Completers	Define and count the number of prepared, successful candidates completing job readiness benchmarks as defined by WIB Scorecard.	Quarterly with Annual Report
	Advocate for training resources to meet the needs expressed by industry advisory groups Promote regional, collaborative, industry-specific training to elevate regional performance (e.g. Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund) Develop community-wide standard for career readiness expectations, employer hiring preferences by sector	Promote WTF and services to write proposals	4 regional applications to the WTF – 100% are funded	Quarter 4 through Quarter 2 - FY16
	Teach job seekers how to navigate public transportation and problem-solve ways to get to education, training, and workplaces	Prominently display and circulate education resources	Collaborate with and utilize the resources of Regional Transit Authorities and advocate for improved service where employers are located that provide good jobs.	Initiate Quarter 1 – FY15

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Goals	Strategies	Process benchmarks (*aligned w/DCS recommendations)	Outcomes	Timeline for Outcomes
4). Support education and job readiness strategies that lead to jobs and career opportunities for youth.	Align youth provider community to maximize system efficiencies through a single system entry point	Evaluate with partners a proposal to transform Annex to a Youth Skills Service Center.	A more aligned and coordinated youth-serving system	Initiate Quarter 1 – FY15 with findings to WIB by 12/31/14
	Develop community-wide expectations of benchmarks to job readiness, shared curriculum and system of recognition of achieving the standard	Youth Council to convene employer champions with the mayor and school superintendents to engage employers	Total youth employed by all programs - 280 youth employed through Youth Works - 100 youth employed by employers directly - 200 number of brokered school-year coops and internships - Improve annually by 10%	Initiate Quarter 1-FY15 with quarterly/annual reporting to WIB Scorecard
	Engage business community to develop community standards	Convene school partners to strategize on how to prepare young people for summer jobs	Publish Soft Skills standards aligned with Work Based Learning Plans	Initiate Quarter 2 – FY15 for potential implementation in July 2015.

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Goals	Strategies	Process benchmarks (*aligned w/DCS recommendations)	Outcomes	Timeline for Outcomes
4). Support education and job readiness strategies that lead to jobs and career opportunities for youth. **CONTINUED**	Convene youth providers to map out: • Assessments used by partners • Determination of youth profiles by provider • Outcomes and other program accountability • Streamline and share service plans across agencies/community case reviews • Explore possibility of data sharing arrangements • Collaborate to provide annual, community-wide events such as the Youth Expo	Align all Youth Programs and vendors with a collaborative vision to serve Youth in the region that may include: • Developing a Youth Engagement Plan in STEM fields including an emphasis on Off Shore Wind and other forms of renewable energy. • Tracking common measures outcomes quarterly • Using data to make training decisions/adjustments. .	Improve enrollment at the Community College in STEM related fields of study. Improve Common Measure attainments that result in new and existing credentials and a training related job.	2014-2016
	Recruit, prepare, and connect mentors with youth (possible utilization of Mass Mentoring Partnership curriculum)	Improve Social Competence and Work Skills of At Risk Youth	50 youth are connected to mentors who were trained in Mass Mentoring Partnership curriculum by June 2015	Initiate Quarter 3 – FY15 to implement in Quarter 2 - FY16
	Promote employer-hired and employer-supervised summer jobs campaign for all youth	Convene Youth Council Working Group to address need for more summer jobs.	100 more jobs in FY16	Initiate Quarter 2 with outcome report to WIB by 12/31/14.
	Support dual enrollment initiatives for at-risk youth.	Achieve 75% enrollment of all youth served by Youth Center Operator	Improve retention/competencies through provision of intensive services	Complete by Spring 2015
	Create campus and area-wide presence of youth services.	Maintain and update youth resource guide through Youth Council Working Group.	Updated Youth Council information on Website	Complete by Spring 2015
	Support high school dropout outreach & recovery efforts.	Collaborate with Non Traditional providers in non performing High Schools to gain knowledge from student focus groups.	Improved Graduation rates of 4 year cohorts	2014-2016

2014 - 2016

Strategic Policy Plan

Greater New Bedford Workforce

Investment Board, Inc.

2014-2016

Executive Summary

Statement of Purpose

In light of recent changes to the political landscape in the Greater New Bedford WIB service area, the WIB needed to affirm its commitment to previously established goals, as well as refresh and modify its course in response to studies commissioned by the Mayor of New Bedford that analyzed the region's workforce system. It also sought to identify how it would respond going forward to internal and external challenges posed by a region facing 10% unemployment.

The Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, acting as the lead convener and collaborator of its regional workforce system, embarked on a system wide approach to develop a set of fundamental principles (Strategic Goals) to guide the organization over the next 3 years. They are intended to strengthen relationships, share resources, and continue to improve delivery of services to achieve the retention and growth of regional employers as well as meeting training needs that will increase the skill sets of incumbent workers and job seekers.

The development of this plan is the result of months of abundant feedback the WIB received and solicited to chart a course that aligns its role as neutral broker that fosters improved good will and collaboration among the many partners in the region's workforce system.

Background

The Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board's (WIB) 2014-2016 strategic plan results from extensive dialogue among the Mayor of New Bedford, the WIB Chair, New Bedford Economic Development Council, and the Associate Vice President for the Bristol Community College Center for Workforce and Community Education. The talks began in the fall of 2013 and culminated in the drafting of this plan. Those discussions considered a DCS system analysis and recommendations drafted in the spring of 2013 and an independent review of the workforce system conducted at the Mayor's request in the fall. Given the timing of these reviews, the WIB was not in a position to submit a fully executed Strategic Plan for Certification in the fall of 2013.

On March 19, 2014, Mayor Jon Mitchell presented his vision for restructuring the existing workforce system, providing the WIB with clear direction of how to proceed with its strategic planning process. The staff of the WIB quickly mobilized to respond and developed a timeline of action steps and deliverables necessary to attain full certification by DCS.[1] The Mayor's office also provided support to identify business representatives to bring the WIB membership in compliance with a majority of members representing business.
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[1] An attachment is provided that outline the efforts.

Methodology

A strategic planning advisory group met to review background materials and chart a course of action in the spring. Over 30 stakeholders were initially convened on April 15, 2014. [2] Two follow up meetings also took place with the New Bedford Economic Development Council's Executive Director and the Mayor's designee, Christina Connolly. This allowed the WIB to probe and better understand their specific perspectives on how the workforce system could improve and be a stronger partner.

An April 23, 2014 report from the working group was drafted and made available for review by the WIB Executive Committee within a week of the first meetings. On April 28, the report was reviewed by the Executive Committee who affirmed much of what was described by the stakeholders and prioritized four key Strategic Goals of the WIB to guide the organization through 2016. These include:

1) Redefine the role of the WIB within the workforce system
   a) Expand the WIB presence throughout the region (i.e. reaching all towns) as well as develop strategic inter-regional partnerships.
   b) Act as a convening body of and for business to broker a shared vision among its partners.
   c) Build resource development capacity through collaborative working groups.
2) Act as the regional labor market information clearinghouse and broker that will convene and share data with:
   a) Regional Education Providers
   b) Employers
   c) Job Seekers – Skill sets for Industry Sectors.
3) Develop training for all job seekers including youth to address:
   a) Integrate soft skills with the education and training system.
   b) Increase use of the Key Train/Work Key system managed by the career center to expand greater participation by employers.
   c) Design system wide apprentice models that are based on employer needs.
   d) Develop systems that will increase capacity and access to training for more job seekers.
   e) Create a collaborative skills center for all youth.
   f) Improve awareness of CORI issues with job seekers and employers to assist in the reduction of barriers to employment.
4) Foster existing businesses' growth and retention by offering information regarding State sponsored training incentives e.g. WTFP and other job training programs for incumbent worker and newly hires employees.

With the board's input, staff revised the planning documents to share with the same stakeholders at a meeting on May 6, 2014 for final review, comments and confirmation of its strategic goals. The Plan was posted to the GNBWIB.org website on May 16, 2014 for public review and

[2] A complete list of attendees is included in the appendix to the plan.

comment. The board voted to approve this plan on X for submission to the state by the June 30, 2014 deadline.

The Plan

The New Bedford region is positioned to support its workers and employers in both traditional priority sectors such as healthcare and advanced manufacturing as well as those emerging in the Clean Energy/Offshore Wind and Gaming/Hospitality industries.

A comprehensive effort to analyze and develop a vision for this plan began in the spring of 2013. The WIB's Chief Elected Official, Mayor Jon Mitchell, requested a DCS analysis of the local system. Fourteen recommendations for his consideration were presented to the Mayor and WIB in October 2013. Subsequently, the Mayor also sought additional outside advice from an independent reviewer. The Mayor's formal review and launch of his vision for the workforce system occurred in March of 2014 at the WIB quarterly meeting.

As a result, the WIB took several actions to proactively develop its strategic plan. They included:

- Working with the Mayor to strengthen Board membership.
- Convening a Strategic Planning Working Group to reaffirm and refresh goals and strategies.
- Developing revenue goals that will enhance traditional WIA allocations.

Through this plan, the WIB will further strengthen partnerships with its education and economic development partners in the region, seeking to maximize opportunities for its workforce, anticipate and meet employer needs, and promote an improved economic climate.

Mapping the Plan

Throughout the planning sessions, it was very clear that engaged partners agreed about the need to reconsider roles and ways of doing business, seek efficiencies, and build from shared priorities. Those partners included the EDC, New Directions South Coast, Bristol Community College, adult education providers and the regional vocational technical schools. All were committed to plan for an efficient exchange of information to address changing technologies, create career pathways and meet real time employer needs. Members of the business community were present to inform the partners of what their respective sectors deemed necessary as its future ready workforce in the next three years.

The Executive Committee of the WIB also had its challenges throughout this process seeking to determine how they and their partners would operate and implement the plan in an expected

climate of diminished resources. Year One of the plan will require the WIB to rethink and reorganize staffing, co-location possibilities with its partners, sharing resources and increasing capacity to meet the needs of priority sector initiatives and priority populations. Goals and strategies were discussed in depth to establish benchmarked decision points.

The planning group provided important intelligence about how to strengthen existing sectoral initiatives through regional and cross regional relationships with other WIBs and workforce system partners. A thorough review was conducted by our sector-specific industry partners who pointed out significant gains in the past three years. Evidence supporting the gains is the development of two industry collaborative, (Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare) that meet regularly, established respective missions and successfully accessed Workforce Training Fund (WTF) Program grants as multi employer consortiums that have improved the skills of their workers.

GNBWIB Priority Industry and Population Sector Goals

Existing Sector Initiatives – Healthcare & Advanced Manufacturing

In 2013 the WIB successfully secured planning resources from the Commonwealth Corporation's Workforce Training Fund Program and Healthcare Workforce Transformation Fund (HCTF), as well as the Innovation Institute of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative to plan for sector needs. WTF and HCTF planning grants have and will result in multi-employer consortium grants. In both cases, the surveys have reinforced the need for training in the areas of improved communication, cultural competencies, and higher developed computer skills in healthcare. The HCTF survey (comprised of surveying 12 employers in two rounds of interviewing) is pointing to a need to develop better care coordination protocols between long-term care facilities and hospitals that align precisely with HCTF funding priorities. Mass Technology funds were made available to the WIB to lead four other WIB regions in determining mutual needs of Advanced Manufacturing employers and developing training solutions to supply them with trained job seekers. Another associated goal is to grow the existing GNBWIB Collaborative to include 50 additional employers among the five WIB regions.

This plan builds upon the strength of the local economy in two robust sectors that show no sign of decline.

Healthcare Labor Market Information

• Employment in this sector is expected to grow in the GNBWIB area by 4.4% (353 jobs) from 2012 through 2014.
• Represents 21% (17,909 jobs) of employment in the region at the end of 2nd quarter 2013
• 26.9% of current employees have a high school diploma/GED and 39% have some college.
• Average weekly wages excluding physicians: $1164
• 2013 vacancy rates at 5.2% represent 3,166 jobs in the southeast region of Massachusetts

Healthcare Industry Research

Based on a 2012 WTF Technical Assistance Planning Grant and supported by an HCTF planning grant in progress:

- There is an identified need to upgrade nurses to Bachelor Science Nursing and upgrade Associate Degree Medical Technician to Bachelor Degree level.
- Soft skills for a majority of non-professional medical staff are a concern ranging from a need to upgrade computer skills, improved customer service and developing cultural competencies.
- Long-term care facilities, identified a need for more and higher level trained CNAs that have Alzheimer's and Rehab credentials to meet their special care needs.
- South coast Hospitals Group is leading a formal effort of Consortium of Employers and Educators to collaborate on regional strategy to further strengthen professional training needs.
- Skills gap achievement is a concern for allied health employers to fill vacant positions that includes Surgical Technicians, Mental Health Counselors and Home Care/Extended Care/CNA segment of Social Assistance. 2012 Federal Reserve LMI study indicates the Southeast region has improved this effort in latter part of past 10 years but still remains a challenge to meet specialty medical personnel needs.

Manufacturing Labor Market Information

• 680 available full time jobs in the Southeast were in manufacturing as of 3rd quarter 2013- a progressive increase since third quarter 2012 when there were 323 available jobs.
• Made up 11.1% of employment in Greater New Bedford in 3rd quarter 2013.
• 29% of employees have a high school diploma/GED and 25% have some college.
Average Weekly Wage: • 2013 Third Quarter (Durable Goods Manufacturing) - $1408 • 2013 Third Quarter (Non-Durable Goods) -$825
• Four major industry sectors provided 49.2% of the jobs in the New Bedford Workforce area. These sectors included Health Care and Social Assistance (16.9%), Manufacturing (11.5%), Retail Trade (12.8%), and Accommodation and Food Services (8.4%). • New Bedford Business Park increased jobs from 1,500 to 4,500 in past 14 years. Average annual salary is $55,000 generating $250mm in payroll and $2b in sales revenue annually.

Emerging Sector Initiatives – Clean Energy & Hospitality

The planning team also examined two sectoral initiatives that more recently have surfaced as priorities from partners – Clean Energy, including Offshore Wind and Hospitality including Gaming. Recent investments in wind energy infrastructure in New Bedford, including Cape Wind's effort to locate its Offshore Wind Staging Area, the nation's first ocean-based wind energy project, will commence in the Spring of 2015. Additionally, the Commonwealth invested $100 million in the staging area located on New Bedford's southern harbor that will be utilized for a multi-purpose Marine Commerce Terminal. In order to prepare to staff these new features of the NB waterfront, industry leaders have expressed a desire to prepare workers for the terminal build out, turbine component assembly, and electro-mechanical maintenance technicians that would provide upkeep in the future.

Clean Energy Labor Market Information

• Massachusetts has a large clean energy cluster with 5557 clean energy firms that employ 79,994 clean energy workers (17,205 of this number work in Southeastern MA).
• Since 2011, clean energy employment has grown by 24.4%. In 2013 clean energy job growth was 11.8% compared to the 11.2% job rate in 2012. It is projected that the job growth rate will be 11.1% in 2014.
• The southeast region of Massachusetts was the fastest growing region in the state from 2012-2013 with a 14.3% employment growth rate.

Industry Research

- Massachusetts Clean Energy Center reports industry needs for workers include: Technicians, Production Workers, Management, and Professional, Administrative and Sales.

- Employers reported that the greatest deficiencies of applicants include lack of required technical skills, lack of industry credentialed education, poor communication, and problem solving and analytical skills.

- Long term concerns of employers include, impending retirement of experienced people, general lack of STEM educated students, and decreased capacity of on-the-job training.

- Most of the new clean energy workers are new positions. Eighty-three percent were newly hired positions while 17% are existing workers.

Offshore Wind Projects

• $100mm New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal construction with plans to host Cape Wind who will build 130 OSW turbines in Nantucket generating 420 MW of power by 2016
• 1000 jobs in assembly and ocean construction will be created in addition to 150 permanent jobs upon completion

Emerging Industry Sector –Hospitality with a focus on Gaming

As one of the three WIB regions working with Penn National who was awarded the license to develop a slots parlor at the Plainville Race Track site, the GNBWIB is planning to develop talent for these opportunities. Types of jobs in the Gaming sector include Slot Attendant Supervisors; Slot Attendants; Cash handlers; Surveillance/Security; Hospitality staff (Managers/front line/housekeeping) and Culinary workers (this will be area of greatest need). Penn National is drawing from the three WIB regions to identify candidates for both workers in the Slots Parlor as well as supporting jobs in the hospitality sector. Plainville is slated to go live in the Spring of 2015, which will open up the more than 500 job opportunities for area residents.

Similarly, a full gaming license is expected to be awarded to an operator in the Southeast Region of Massachusetts in the upcoming year. Initial estimates include 2000 jobs will be created, representing a full array of gaming and hospitality opportunities. Locally, the community colleges are evaluating recommended curriculum originating at Atlantic Coast Community College in New Jersey that will be the core of course offerings to apply for the varied positions available.

- **Priority Industry Sector Development Strategies 2014-2016**

The strategic plan outlines several strategies that illustrate the approach to convening partners for these priority industry sectors. In the case of Healthcare and Manufacturing, each of those initiatives are established and growing their respective Collaborative membership. Support for both sectors includes the ongoing work of employer-led collaboratives that have sought and are implementing Workforce Training Fund Program grants through 2015. The WIB has also supported and is partnering on a Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund grant with the New Bedford Economic Development Council, Bristol Community College and New Directions that is addressing training needs in anticipation of careers associated with Offshore Wind and the New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal. A clear revenue development strategy delineated in this plan for the upcoming years is to further develop proposals and access grants that will leverage WIA resources to meet the needs of the region's current and emerging Priority Industry Sectors. Workforce system partners will be engaged at every level to address accessing and leveraging resources to develop career pathways and developing programs with training that lead to a credential or academic accomplishment in the form of earned college credits. All of these

efforts will focus on seeking employer driven advice in order to develop curriculum that will align with their workforce needs. A special emphasis will be placed on developing community-wide standards for career readiness expectations and employer hiring preferences by sector.

- Priority Populations must align with the Priority Sectors.

The Low Skilled Incumbent Workforce

It was very clear that as this plan was developed that each of the priority populations to be served by the workforce system presents a unique set of challenges. While Manufacturing and Healthcare are relatively vibrant in terms of a stable workforce, the landscape continues to change in each of their environments that continuously will require them to seek new ways of improving productivity, eliminating waste and meet changes in industry standards. Public resources needs including the Workforce Training Fund Programs and the Healthcare Worker Transformation Fund are more likely to meet those. In the past three years, the WIB has been active in pursuing nearly $1,000,000 in funds of this nature as both a lead applicant and as an advocate for individual employers. This strategy will continue over the next three years in support of the incumbent workforce in the area. In addition, the WIB was awarded $330,000 to participate in and lead a Massachusetts Technology Development Inter-regional Manufacturing Consortia grant with South Shore, Brockton, Cape and Islands, and the Bristol WIBs. This grant is intended to further organize itself, determine industry needs and grow its membership. The overarching strategy is to maintain the manufacturing base that exists in the region and assist in the maintenance of its health for now and future generations of workers. To that end, each of the regional WIBs will be developing training strategies and scalable pilot training programs for the unemployed to access employment with participating employers.

A similar regional effort currently is underway in the Healthcare sector with the WIB as grantee of an HCTF planning grant that is currently studying the needs of 12 employers to lead and develop at least one $250,000 application to meet their identified needs. It is anticipated that more than one HCTF grant may be developed as a result of the planning grant that will be led by an applicant other than the WIB. Some of the areas of interest for training include the need for coordinated care training as well as some online advanced degree training of LPN's to BSN.

The Unemployed

Serving the unemployed throughout the WIB region remains challenging as its unemployment rate is one of the highest in the state - currently at 10%. Contributing factors that make it difficult to reduce the UE rate include a cadre of job seekers that do not possess a High School Diploma (22%) or any Post Secondary education (38%). With WIA funds at nearly an all-time low, the Career Center Operator has worked collaboratively with the WIB to set aside some of the funds for Adults and Dislocated Workers to be dedicated for Enhanced Skills Training (EST). EST is intended to provide job seekers with employer identified short-term training skills and a credential to enhance employability. This strategy, coupled with Individual Training Accounts has proven to be one that gets job seekers back to work sooner than later and provides opportunity for some to access longer term training as well. Training related employment has occurred at a nearly 50% success rate in the past year as a result of this strategy.

Other sources of funds that the WIB has to supplement WIA include a statewide Department of Labor National Emergency Grant ($250,000) to develop on the job training opportunities for long term unemployed job seekers. The grant funding will be available to job seekers through 2015.

More recently the WIB also participated in developing a concept paper with other WIB regions to pursue yet another DOL Job Driven NEG to further assist long term unemployed workers to prepare for work through training and be placed via OJT opportunities with local employers. GNBWIB has also indicated an interest in serving as the statewide Primary Operator of the grant based on its successful Primary Operator status achieved in a recently expired DOL OJT NEG.

The WIB and its workforce system partners are also evaluating developing a response to a DOL Solicitation for Grant Applications for a Workforce Innovation Fund Grant intended to improve the delivery of employment and training services that generate long-term improvements in the performance of the public workforce system, outcomes for job seekers and employers, and cost-effectiveness. Due to the magnitude of projected grant proceeds ($8-12million over 5 years), there may be a need to develop an inter-regional application.

Non High School Graduates

As the WIB entered this planning period, two area educational providers have traditionally received DESE funds that historically have resulted in an average of 150 evening school diplomas and 200 GED's achieved in the course of a year for the period 2010 - 2013. The New Bedford Public Schools Adult Basic Education and Umass Dartmouth Worker Education Programs, as the non-traditional GED providers, were also tasked with integrating WIB suggested Career Pathway curriculum as stipulated by a DESE supplementary grant to introduce priority industry career ladders as a means of introducing types of available work and skill sets required for a job. While challenging initially, both providers have been innovative in their approach that has resulted in more motivated students with career aspirations upon achieving educational goals. During the period of July 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013, 200 GED's were attained in anticipation of new State High School Equivalency Testing (HISET) standards implemented on January 1, 2014.

The WIB intends to work closely with its educational providers to monitor the effects of HISET on the non-traditional student population in the region. This is of chief concern as 22% of the region's unemployed lack a high school diploma or similar credential. The first 6 months of 2014 will serve as a base line measure for HISET completions that will require developing strategies to keep pace with prior GED achievements. This is a must in order to continue the eradicating effects on job seekers to attain living wage jobs or to enter post secondary education.

Non-High School Completer Statistics:

- About 33% of New Bedford residents lack a high school diploma. Elevating a portion of this population to "some college" changes this demographic and boosts the overall workforce readiness.
- 24% of the working age population in the area has less than a high school education.
- 37% of those over age 5 speak a language other than English at home.
- Over half of New Bedford residents over age 25 who speak another language do not have a diploma.
- 20% of area residents are foreign born.
- High school graduation rates in the city in 2011 and 2012 were 63.6 and 58.5% respectively.
- Elsewhere in the region, they range from 72-94% with aggregate still below state level of 84.7%

Older Out of School Youth

Serving this population in the upcoming years requires the Youth Council, the WIB and New Directions to consider new strategies to develop and deliver services. This plan calls for a system review of the current training vendor system and its effectiveness operating outside of the Youth Annex. Some of the areas to be examined include:

- Assessments used by partners
- Youth profiles by provider
- Outcomes and other program accountability
- Sharing service plans across agencies/community case reviews and streamlining
- Possibility of data sharing arrangements
- Annual, community-wide events such as the Youth Expo

The plan seeks to address these points of mutual interest to determine where redundancy may exist in the Youth Service system and to develop a more streamlined delivery of services that will result in more positive outcomes and improved measurable achievements. In particular, assessing training vendor effectiveness will be under careful review as the Youth Council will be issuing a new WIA procurement in FY16 that will seek to be more innovative and will offer a wider range of options than those that currently exist. Vendors may be required to co-locate at the existing Youth Annex in order to reduce overhead, improve wrap around service delivery and retention of youth.

Helping Out of School Youth in the region, especially in the New Bedford area, presents some unique challenges. For the past four years, the high school graduation rate in New Bedford has hovered near 60% in contrast to 84% for the entire region.

Some facts and data regarding the youth in the area follows:

- About 2,200 youth (16-24) out of school.
- About 2,800 (14%) youth (16-24) out of work and out of school.
- Estimated number of Black youth (16-24) is about 1,000.
- Estimated number of Latino youth (16-24) is about 2,500.
- 45% of Black youth (16-24) are out of work and out of school.
- 20.6% of Latino youth (16-24) are out of work and out of school.
- The labor force participation rate* for Black youth is 56.9%.
- The labor force participation rate* of Latino youth is 52%.

- 22.1% of people aged 18-24 have less than a high school diploma.
- 3.2% of youth aged 15-17 are not enrolled in school.
- 44.3% of youth aged 18-19 are not enrolled in school.
- 4.5% of males 18 to 24 years have less than 9th grade education
- 19% of males 18 to 24 years have 9th to 12th grade, no diploma.
- 42% of males 18 to 24 years are a high school graduate, GED, or alternative.
- 4.4 % of females 18 to 24 years have less than 9th grade education.
- 16.7% of females 18 to 24 years have 9th to 12th grade, no diploma.
- 31% of all youth within GNB region have been out of work for at least 12 consecutive months.
- Of those working, mean hours average fewer than 29 within a 37 week period.
- 75% of single mothers are between ages 16 - 24; 70% of them are poor.

Revenue Goals for the Plan

Grant strategies over the next three years will be developed collaboratively among the WIB and its workforce system partners. The path to accomplish this strategy requires regular meetings to assess new grant opportunities and to position the partners to be out in front of state and federal solicitations. In the past month the WIB Interim Director convened a Partner Working Group to address the need to develop a standard shared language that can be adapted for future grants. Each of the parties agreed to meet monthly to develop standards for grant responses that addressed shared goals and strategies for innovation. Some of those standards include developing a data driven approach to meeting employer and job seeker needs and strengthening employer commitments to hiring. This grant seeking team will build upon individual strengths to not only seek public sector resources, but also improve its ability to access private foundation sources.

Goals for revenue intended to leverage traditional WIA funding are a mix of state, federal and private foundation sources. The detailed plan is provided as an attachment to this narrative. The WIB and its partners have been successful in accessing nearly $6 million dollars in

supplementary grant funds over the past three years and intend to continue in a similar trajectory over the next three years.

Priority Industry Sector Revenue Plan

Numerous opportunities exist to assist priority industry sector employers through the Workforce Training Fund Program as well as through the Healthcare Workforce Transformation Fund. The WIB is currently administering four WTFP Consortium grants (Advanced Manufacturing & Healthcare) as lead applicant totaling nearly $1 million dollars in training funds benefitting 10 employers that provided advanced training to 491 workers creating 111 new jobs and averting 42 layoffs. The grant applications were developed by working with two WIB organized Employer Collaboratives in the respective aforementioned industry sectors.

The WIB intends to develop grant applications of a similar nature in 2015 and 2016 to benefit members of the Collaboratives that did not participate in the current WTFP grants as well as other grant sources. It also anticipates each of those industry sector groups will continue to grow membership in the upcoming year and newer members will be briefed on the benefits of accessing training funds. This is already occurring in the Healthcare sector through the award of an HCWTF planning grant that is the final stage of surveying 11 employers that will lead to the development of a $250,000 implementation grant application to be submitted by late July 2014. Similarly, the WIB is the current recipient and lead applicant of a $330,000 5WIB inter-regional award intended to expand the Southeast Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative by 50 employers in the upcoming year. The grant also provides three WIBs $25,000 each to develop scalable pilot training programs for job seekers that will result in jobs with participating employers.

Emerging Industry Sector grant planning is ongoing and the WIB can point to participating in a $300,000 Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund grant awarded to the New Bedford Economic Development Corporation in 2013. The grant is preparing 40 job seekers who are receiving training from Bristol Community College that will prepare them for apprenticeship and OJT opportunities associated with the continued development of the New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal and advent of its Offshore Wind (OSW) initiative. New Directions Southcoast will coordinate placements with area employers upon completion beginning in the summer of 2014. When the build out of Marine Commerce Terminal draws closer (April 2015), the WIB and its workforce system partners will work closely with Cape Wind (OSW developer) and Siemans, the principal contractor, to determine onshore and offshore turbine construction training needs for local job seekers.

Development of the Hospitality Sector including Gaming is in its initial stage in the Southcoast region since the issuance of a slots parlor license to Plainville Race Track. While no grant-funded resources for specific training currently exist, the WIB intends to utilize current and future DOL training funds intended to assist the Long Term Unemployed who have exceeded 26 weeks of unemployment benefits.

The WIB and its partners are currently participating with two other WIB regions to staff the slots parlor. Penn National Gaming has indicated that it will need to assess at least 2,500 applicants to fill 500 jobs that range from hotel and culinary staff, slot attendants, supervisors and repair personnel. What is known is all of these positions are highly regulated and new hires will be required to meet rigorous licensing requirements. Much of the current coordination is occurring in the development of training programs at the community colleges and modifying assessment criteria at the career center level.

A more significant casino gambling license for the Southeast Region of Massachusetts will also heighten the need for training funds. The award of this license is currently under review by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission with a forthcoming decision to occur in late 2014. It is anticipated that 2,500 jobs will be created in the course of construction through opening the casino. Depending upon the final location, it is anticipated the host community will be the beneficiary of significant training funds that will be negotiated in its Community Impact Agreement with the Casino Operator. Locations in New Bedford, Fall River and Taunton are currently under consideration. While the location is still unknown, what is known is wherever the casino is located; it will create a huge benefit to job seekers throughout the region.

Priority Population Revenue Plan

Unemployed

The WIB and its partners intend to continue to focus on meeting the needs of its unemployed population over the next 3 years. As referenced earlier within this document the WIB is utilizing WIA funds to provide short term Enhanced Skills Training intended to provide an educational bridge to a job or upgrade a job seekers knowledge base to access long term training for greater marketability. In the case of those accessing additional training, some unique DOL resources currently exist and are projected to be available during this planning period. Those funds are intended to benefit long term unemployed job seekers (in excess of 26 weeks) that provide deeper and richer training experiences that will lead to jobs in demand. In some cases, DOL funds are being allocated to On the Job Training experiences that will benefit job seekers and employers. The current operator of the Career Center is in the process of enhancing its ability to further develop its capacity to create more OJT opportunities over the coming months and years.

Other strategies to assist the unemployed lie embedded in WTF grants with employers in the region. As incumbent workers are increase skills and are promoted, employers will seek new workers to backfill entry level positions. The effects of current WTF grants led by the WIB should begin to yield hiring progress in the second and third quarter of FY15.

Finally, the WIB and its partners intend to pursue Private Foundation resources to supplement the need for improving educational competencies for its unemployed population. Through systematic grant sourcing, the WIB will seek funds to supplement severely underfunded Adult Basic Education programs to increase the number of HISET attainments as well as in the area of ESOL.

Low Skilled Incumbent Workers

The WIB will continue to assist this population through the further utilization of Commonwealth Corporation's WTFP with its local employers. Currently the WIB is leading 4 WTFP Consortium Grants on behalf of 11 employers in the Healthcare and Advanced Manufacturing Priority Sectors that are upgrading the skills of 491 workers and expected to create 111 jobs. The Revenue Plan for this population provides key implementation strategies over the next 3 years that will benefit workers. It is noted that in both Sectors work has already begun to set the stage for additional grant opportunities. They include:

1. A planning grant that surveyed 12 employers through the Healthcare Worker Transformation Fund is nearly complete and a letter of intent to apply for a $250,000 implementation grant on behalf of 2 employers will be submitted in June of 2014. In addition, it is expected that employers who were surveyed, but not participating in HCTF will consider WTFP alternatives.

2. Advanced Manufacturing activity is currently centered in a recent grant that is intended to grow the WIB's current Southeastern Massachusetts Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative membership to 50 employers outside its current boundaries among 4 other WIB regions. Two Manufacturing Marketing representatives will encourage new members to consider WTF applications over the course of the next 12 months. This strategy should yield positive results for workers throughout the region. The plan also delineates incorporating ESOL training through WTFP funds.

Other revenue strategies include marketing to individual employer prospects the WIB's ability to write WTFP applications on their behalf and administer awards through a fee for service. The WIB piloted this concept in the past year and generated close to $25,000 in fees to support a portion of its grants manager salary.

In addition the WIB will work with its system partners to identify Private Foundation solutions that may assist workers in attaining stackable credentials at the regional Vocational Technical High Schools and Community Colleges to improve skills and future employability.

Non High School Completers

Defining Revenue Strategies to assist those without a High School Diploma or equivalency is a complex issue within the region. 33% of the population within this region have not attained this educational level and, as a subset, 24% of the working population similarly exist. The need to improve upon these statistics are not only endemic to the New Bedford region but also exists in WIB regions that include a Gateway City. Funds to address achieving the completion of high school are generally received from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and are generally finite in nature from one award cycle to the next. As a result, the WIB and its partners will primarily seek supplementary funds to address this population through local and other foundation grants. The local strategy will focus on developing a deeper relationship with the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts. This organization serves as a clearinghouse numerous foundations in the area that may assist the WIB in building its capacity to locate supplemental funds to increase High School achievement over the next 3 years.

Older Out of School Youth

Through its Youth Council and in cooperation with the Primary Operator, the WIB will seek grants funding to supplement traditional WIA allocations. Year round out of school YouthWorks funding from DESE in the past year provided the Youth Services division the opportunity to serve 60 additional participants that received assessments and preparatory services for work as well as being afforded opportunities to participate in paid internships in the retail and service sectors. In many cases, participants were offered permanent jobs upon completion of their internships. The WIB intends to continue to monitor future opportunities through YouthWorks to increase the capacity of serving Out of School Youth in the community.

The WIB and its partners will also investigate supplementary funds to address this population through local and other foundation grants. The local strategy will focus on developing a deeper relationship with the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts. This organization serves as a clearinghouse for numerous foundations in the area that may assist the WIB in building its capacity to locate supplemental funds to develop innovative approaches to reaching this population.

Revenue Plan Summary

The goal of the WIB Revenue Plan is to further improve upon its past performance and to sustain its efforts to maximize workforce funding opportunities for the region. This plan exhibits the organization's understanding of numerous revenue sources. It also shows that one organization cannot "go it alone" to meet its goals, but requires an even stronger collaborative effort among its workforce system partners to achieve funding objectives. The work has already begun to develop a stronger system. Through planned meetings and the sharing of thoughts and concepts, the workforce system will improve its revenue prospects for the region.

Overview of Youth Goals for the Plan

Throughout the Strategic Planning sessions there was much discussion surrounding the delivery of Youth Services to the region. The participants agreed that the existing system functions well but could benefit from a system review to assure maximum efficiencies. This will require the Youth Council to convene its youth partners and engage them in a community conversation that will align mutual goals and determine best avenues for accomplishment over the next 3 years. Within the plan, it requires that the partners develop community-wide expectations of benchmarks to job readiness, shared curriculum and a system of recognition of achieving the standard. Among other important points it calls for creating a campus and area-wide presence of youth services that originate at the Primary Operator's Youth Annex. The Youth Council will introduce these goals at its June 2014 meeting and will create Working Groups to address them in the first and second quarters of FY2015. A presentation to and review by the full WIB is to be accomplished at its FY15 mid-year meeting.

Plan Summary

This plan for the next 3 years represents a region wide approach to refresh and develop a new framework for the workforce system infrastructure. As the WIB moves forward with implementation, it will charge its Business Development and Oversight Committee to lead the way on redefining the system and improving communication among the its partners. In addition it is evident that working groups from among the WIB Youth Council are necessary to address challenging goals to serve youth more efficiently and through a single point of contact supporting a full service Youth Skills Center. The workforce system partners as defined in this document are committed to embarking on sharing and making data driven decisions that will define the pursuit of resources external to WIA allocations. The body of this work will operationally create a strong system to assist workers and job seekers with improved skills that will promote business retention and growth. The result of this plan has brought key stakeholders together to accomplish what all parties want to do for the system over the next 3 years.

GNBWIB 2014-2016 Revenue Plan

Healthcare/Social Assistance	**Revenues to Date**	**Revenue Gap**	**Achievement Strategies**	**Resource Inventory**
Revenue Goal: $1,150,000	$30,347	$1,110,653	Convene Southcoast Health Care Collaborative quarterly to discuss ongoing training needs that will align with funding sources. Provide monthly updates to encourage Collaborative growth that will lead to development of new grant initiatives.	Develop Healthcare Collaborative Strategies to position employers to access Healthcare Transformation Trust Fund, Workforce Training Fund and private resources to assess needs; upgrade employee skills through training; and develop transformative in demand career path training.
Goal 1 - $500,000 – FY15 **Goal 1a - $50,000 Admin to support staff**	2/21/14 CommCorp HCWTF planning grant for $30,347 to study Health Care Provider skills gaps for training.		**Strategy 1**: Develop 2 HCTF Implementation grant applications, each totaling $250,000 in FY15, to address needs of the leading HC provider in the region as well as 1 Consortium. Train 50 – 100 incumbent workers and create 20 jobs. **Strategy 2:** Convene at least 6 employers to develop 2 Workforce Training Fund Consortium grants totaling $250,000 each to provide deeper advanced skill training to train 150 incumbent workers and create 25 jobs.	Healthcare Transformation Trust Fund $10,000,000 – Commonwealth Corporation Grant Awards up to $250,000 Workforce Training Fund $18,000,000 Grant Awards up to $250,000
Goal 2 - $500,000 – FY15/16 **Goal 2a - $50,000 Admin fee to support staff**			**Strategy 3**. Position with partners in the local workforce system to develop standard shared language that can be adapted for future grants to respond to state and federal opportunities over the next 3 years to assist Unemployed and underemployed to access training leading to jobs in Healthcare.	DOL Individual Grants up to $250,000+
Goal 3 – Fee for Services to support staff - $50,000 – FY15/16			**Strategy 3:** Assist 1 Health Care Provider per year in the region to write and manage a WTF grant for $25,000 on their behalf.	Employer driven fees for services.
Goal 4 (Supplementary Funding) – Private Sources - $100,000 FY15/16			**Strategy 4:** Develop at least 2 Private Foundation Grant applications to study segmented Health Care issues that have an effect on job seekers/incumbent workers that create barriers to employment or retention. Grants must integrate a sustainable funding strategy beyond funding period or provide data to inform future state and federal grant sources.	Private Foundations.

Advanced Manufacturing Revenue Goals	**Revenues to Date**	**Revenue Gap**	**Achievement Strategies**	**Resource Inventory**
Revenue Goal: $1,150,000	$330,000 grant awarded in Feb 2014 by Mass Technology Collaborative supporting 3 scaled pilot training programs to train 50 job seekers**.** GNBWIB share is $25,000	$1,125,000	Collaborate with Southeast Massachusetts Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative (SMAMC) Management Team to identify grant training opportunities unique to the GNBWIB region. Participate in SMAMC inter-regional initiatives that may include lead applicant responsibilities to generate income.	Research and develop partnerships, needs, and funding strategies to train at least 200 incumbent worker participants and create 50 jobs in any/all of the following: Lean, ESOL/GED, Basic Math, Computer Skills, Precision Machining, Electro-mechanical technicians and advanced management training
Goal 1 - $500,000 – FY15 **Goal 1a - $50,000 Admin to support staff**		$500,000	**Strategy 1.** Develop at least 2 WTF Consortium Grants of $250,000 each that will train 100 workers and create 25 new jobs yielding 10% grant management fee.	Workforce Training Fund $18,000,000
Goal 2 - $500,000 – FY15/16 **Goal 2a - $50,000 Admin fee to support staff**	$25,000 (see above)	$500,000	**Strategy 2**. Position with partners in the local workforce system to develop standard shared language that can be adapted for future grants to respond to state and federal opportunities over the next 3 years to assist Unemployed and underemployed to access training leading to jobs in Manufacturing.	MassInc; UI Reform Training Fund; DOL Individual Grants up to $250,000+
Goal 3 – Fee for Services to support staff - $50,000 – FY15/16		$50,000	Strategy 3. Assist at least 1 Employer annually in the Region to apply for individual WTF grant in exchange for $25,000 management fee or flat fee for authorship.	Employer driven fees for services.
Goal 4 (Supplementary Funding) – Private Sources - $100,000		$100,000	Strategy 4. Develop at least 1 foundation grant that will fund ESOL/GED to supplement adult education provider efforts to address waiting list issues due to inadequate sources of public funds that hinder job seekers from accessing manufacturing jobs.	Private Foundations.

Clean Energy Revenue Goals	**Revenues to Date**	**Revenue Gap**	**Achievement Strategies**	**Resource Inventory**
Revenue Goal: $550,000		$550,000	Collaborate with and align resources with NBEDC Wind Energy Center to determine skill sets required of workers as the Marine Commerce Terminal comes online to host Cape Wind turbine installation Investigate opportunities to develop associated skill sets for job seekers in solar/geothermal installation.	Convene Regional Clean Energy Forum to determine level of need for workers/training with a goal of 5 employers committing to advising on skill sets that will increase hiring opportunities.
Goal 1 - $250,000 – FY15 **Goal 1a - $50,000 Admin to support staff**			**Strategy 1.** Develop at least1 WTF Consortium Grants of $250,000 that will train 100 workers and create 25 new jobs yielding 10% grant management fee.	Commonwealth Corporation Workforce Training Fund Program.
Goal 2 - $250,000 – FY15/16 **Goal 2a - $50,000 Admin fee to support staff**			**Strategy 2**. Position with partners in the local workforce system to develop standard shared language that can be adapted for future grants to respond to state and federal opportunities over the next 3 years to assist Unemployed and underemployed to access training leading to jobs in Clean Energy fields.	DOL Job Driven NEG Massachusetts Clean Energy Center; Mass Tech Collaborative;
Goal 3 – Fee for Services to support staff - $50,000 – FY15/16			**Strategy 3**. Assist at least 1 Employer annually in the Region to apply for individual WTF grant in exchange for $25,000 management fee or flat fee for authorship.	Commonwealth Corporation Workforce Training Fund Program.
Goal 4 (Supplementary Funding) – Private Sources - $50,000			**Strategy 4.** Seek at least 2 Private Foundation Grants that support Alternative Energy initiatives in the areas of solar, geothermal, or wind energy technologies that may supplement study of skill sets required of workers that will influence employer hiring.	Private Foundations

Hospitality/Gaming	**Revenues to Date**	**Revenue Gap**	**Achievement Strategies**	**Resource Inventory**
Revenue Goal: To be determined upon award of Southeast Region Gaming License			Continue to support Plainville Slots employment efforts as member of 3 WIB regions tasked to develop employment pool of candidates.	Penn National Gaming (Plainville)

Priority Populations	Revenues to Date	Revenue Gap	Achievement Strategies	Resource Inventory
Low Skilled Incumbent Workers **Revenue Goal: $1,250,000**	2/21/14 CommCorp HCWTF planning grant for $30,347	$1,219,653	1. See Healthcare Achievement Strategies 1 and 2. 2. See Advanced Manufacturing Achievement Strategy 1.	Healthcare Transformation Trust Fund $10,000,000 – Commonwealth Corporation Grant Awards up to $250,000 Workforce Training Fund $18,000,000 Grant Awards up to $250,000
Unemployed **Revenue Goal: $1,250,000**	$25,000 for Scaled Pilot Training in Advanced Manufacturing	$1,225,000	1. See Healthcare Achievement Strategy 3. 2. See Advanced Manufacturing Achievement Strategy 2. 3. See Clean Energy Achievement Strategy 2.	DOL Individual Grants up to $250,000+
Non High School Graduates **Revenue Goal: $250,000**		$250,000	1. Develop Private Grant Foundation Strategy.	Develop capacity through Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts
Older Out of School Youth **$250,000**		$250,000	1. Monitor DESE YouthWorks Year Round solicitations. 2. Develop Private Grant Foundation Strategy.	DESE and Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts