

**Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board
WIOA Steering Committee
Job Seeker & Employer Subcommittee**

**Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification Workgroup
May 27, 2015**

Meeting Notes

Members in Attendance:

Christine Abramowitz (Regional Employment Board of Hampden County), Gail Brown (Career Center of Lowell), Louise Meyers (Employment and Training Resource), Sheila Sullivan-Jardim, (Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board); Department of Career Services: Tim Dooling , Leslie Seifried , Edward Bartkiewicz, Sacha Stadhard, Diane Hurley

Update on WIOA Implementation

The WIOA Steering Committee of the MA Workforce Investment Board will set the vision for the State with regard to the implementation of WIOA. The WIOA Steering Committee created two functional workgroups and an overarching Job Seeker and Employer Subcommittee to address operational issues. Information from the WIOA Steering Committee and the workgroups will flow up and down.

1. Eligible Training Provider List Workgroup
2. Youth Workgroup
3. Job Seeker and Employer Subcommittee (JS&E)

Working sub-groups of the Job Seeker & Employer Subcommittee:

- Workforce Development Board (WDB) Certification – facilitator: Diane Hurley
- Career Center Standards & Process – co-facilitators: Tim Dooling & Dave Manning
- Performance Measurements – facilitator: Marilyn Boyle
- Employer Engagement – co-facilitators: David Gadaire & Ken Messina

Overview of current Massachusetts Workforce Board Certification standards

In 2008, the Commonwealth embarked on an ambitious initiative to aggressively strengthen the capacity of Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) to address the strategic challenges facing the development of a skilled local workforce.

Toward that end, through state and local partners convened to develop a set of statewide “high performance” standards by which each local board would be measured with regard to its capacity and effectiveness in addressing local workforce issues from a broad, strategic perspective.

The “high performing board” initiative evolved from an initial voluntary process into the standard Massachusetts workforce board certification. All 16 boards have been certified as High Performing Boards. The WDB Certification Workgroup will consider additional components of a strong Board such as a Board that has a strategic vision, plans and works regionally, explores sector-based strategies and considers the interests of employers/partners.

Discussion: General Functions

- REBHC is currently in the process of performing the Board functions required by the new legislation. There are different levels of resources in each local area and all boards should not be expected to meet

the new standards within 3 months. There will be challenges in developing a regional plan verse a local plan.

- Regional Planning will be a focal point of setting high standards for Board certification.
- It's important to have a plan so we are not re-active. Regional planning is ingrained in our partnerships. Currently, Advanced Manufacturing is the focus but we would like to expand. It's important to look at ways to get employers engaged. We need to send a strong message for employer involvement.
- Mass BizWorks has begun the work of consolidating and simplifying employer inroads to the WE system.
- BAWIB is also in the process of putting the required Board functions into practice. Currently has a Manufacturing Consortium which aligns with regional planning. Looking to partner with other agencies.
- Workforce Development is not just WIOA, it also includes a larger population of organizations. A study was recently commissioned in Metro South West to explore issues around employer engagement. Results of the study will be available in June.
- Not every WIB conducts orientation for new members...this should be a standard

Discussion: Board Composition

- Under WIOA the majority of the each local Board shall be a representative of a business.
- The new membership structure will allow local areas to reduce the size of their local Boards.
- It was noted that while there is a benefit to a smaller Board, there can also be a negative impact on members of the Board who are active. Hampden County will take the approach of not asking Board members to leave instead they will let Board members decide on whether they will continue to participate on the Board once their terms are up
- Members of the group agreed this was a good approach to address the change in the Board composition under WIOA.

Discussion: Workforce Development Board Functions

The group discussed the 13 required Board functions with an eye towards Board functions that should be an agenda item for future meetings. Policies may be needed based on the required Board functions. Board functions identified for possible policies will be placed in the parking lot for future discussion.

1. Local Plan
 - Unchanged from WIA. In MA, strategic planning is a high-performance element .
2. Workforce Research & Regional Labor Market Analysis
 - Local areas are already doing this work
 - Labor Market Analysis - compare info across areas & share best practices
 - What LMI is most helpful to State Reviewers?
3. Convening, Brokering, Leveraging – *Agenda item for future meeting-*
 - Standing Committees – what is best practice?
4. Employer Engagement – *Agenda item for future meeting –*
 - What does good employer engagement look like?
 - What does demand driven mean?
 - Common definitions are needed

- Need to be on the same page with Employer Engagement & Career Center standards workgroups
 - Need a better understanding of capturing in MOSES employer “services provided” – though MERLOT worked on this previously, discrepancies still exist
 - Opportunities for cross pollination between workgroups are essential to success
 - WDB Certification Workgroup needs members from the Career Center Standards & Process workgroup as well as the Employer Engagement Workgroup
5. Career Pathways Development
- Youth Workgroup is focusing on a developing a shared vision for a career pathway
 - Local Boards will need to develop strategies for implementation of career pathways
 - Career Pathways should be based on local area industry needs.
 - Ensure there are enough quality vendors to participate in career pathways
 - DESE has funding for adult CP – how do we partner?
 - Impact the Adult Basic Education system
 - Expand the Transformation Agenda and community colleges.
6. Proven & Promising Practices
- Share promising practices across the regions to learn from each other
 - Use promising practices baseline for improvement
 - Process is needed to vet that it is in fact a proven/promising practice
7. Technology
- Not much control of this in the local areas
 - State will need to address Technology
 - Will need to leverage resources and develop MOU’s for use technology in the local workforce system
8. Program Oversight
- Need more information on how to provide oversight of partners who are subject to the performance measures
9. Negotiation of Local Performance Accountability
- Performance Measurement Workgroup will address negotiation with local performance accountability
 - What is the Boards role in common performance measures?
 - What will be the Boards’ role in partners’ common measures?
10. Selection of Operators and Providers
- The WDB Certification Workgroup should assist in informing the process for the Selection of Operators and Providers
 - More information is needed on 4 year procurement requirement

11. Coordination w/Education Providers – need strong State coordination

12. Budget & Administration

- Boards inform the CEO of their role
- Possible meeting to bring all the CEO's together and inform them of their role
- Compare budget templates – does the template we provide serve the purpose?

13. Accessibility for Individuals w/Disabilities – *Agenda item for future meeting* –

- This function needs to be heightened in WDB Certification
- Develop a tool that the Boards could use to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities

Discussion: Workgroup Composition and Expansion

- Other partners are needed to participate as members on the WDB Certification Workgroup.
- Representation from Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Basic Education will be sought.
- Employer participation is essential: how can we engage employers in this work?
 - Local boards engage their employer members in dialogue
 - As ideas for certification changes are developed, present them to interested employers for feedback: board meeting, through the MWB Assn., at other employer gatherings (e.g. Chamber meeting agenda item)
 - Group was asked to give further thought to engaging employers in this work

Timeline

- Interim board certification in-process
 - Interim certification period: Oct. 1, 2015-September 30, 2016
- WIOA Biennial Certification with new standards
 - Certification period: October 1, 2016-September 30, 2018
- Target date for first draft of new certification standards: September 2015
- Target date for final draft policy with new certification standards: February 2016
- Comprehensive timeframe with products and benchmarks to be developed

Next Steps:

- WDB Certification Workgroup agreed to meet bi-weekly
- Alternate in-person meetings and with conference calls.
- Meetings Scheduled:
 - **Tuesday, June 9, 1:00 at ETA Framingham**
 - Tuesday, June 24 – conference call
 - **Tuesday, July 7, 1:00, Workforce Central, Worcester**
 - Tuesday, July 21, 1:00 – conference call
 - **Tuesday August 4, 1:00, Workforce Central, Worcester**