

Governor's Workforce Board RI Career Pathways System Task Force (CPSTF)

June 2, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members present: Brandon Melton, Chair, Marc Amato, Rick Brooks, Andrea Castaneda, Jill Holloway, Kevin McDevitt, Jeffrey Senese, Kathie Shields, Robin Smith, Keith Stokes, Bill Weedon
Committee Members absent: Ray Di Pasquale, Charles Fogarty, Deborah Gist, William McGowan
GWB Staff present: Lisa D'Agostino, Nancy Olson, Dan Brown, Maureen Mooney
DLT Staff present: Sue Chomka, Donna Murray, Matthew Welden
Others Present: Paul Harden, RIEDC; Judy Jones, Poverty Institute; Malcolm Baxter, United Way volunteer; Sharon Lee, RI Department of Education; Carol Holmquist, Dorcas Place; Kathy Sisson, RIHEAA, Way to Go RI; Heather Singleton, RI Hospitality Association; Carmen Ferguson, United Way of RI; Jillian Salerno, Community College of RI; Janet Durfee-Hidalgo, RIBGHE; Gail Mance-Rios, RIHEAA.

Call to Order

Chair Melton called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. He welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the agenda. He commented that a portion of the meeting discussion will highlight career pathway activities that are ongoing within the state. In particular, he mentioned the Industry Partnership Program, the Adult Education Professional Development Center at Rhode Island College, The Stepping Up Program and the Tech Collective IT Boot Camp.

Minutes of Career Pathways System Task Force (CPSTF)

Chair Melton asked for a review of the meeting minutes of the April 14, 2011 CPSTF meeting. He asked if there was a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Vote: R. Brooks motioned to approve the minutes of the 4/14/11 CPSTF meeting. R. Smith seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; the motion passed.

Career Pathways System: Principles, Roles and Framework

Chair Melton asked Andrea Castaneda from the RI Department of Education (RIDE) and Kathie Shields of Tech Collective to present information on building a career pathways system.

A. Castaneda referred to the graphic in the PowerPoint presentation which depicts the components of a developing career pathways system in RI. (DRAFT: RI Workforce System Framework, page 2 of handout). She asked committee members to consider the following 3 questions during the presentation and subsequent discussion:

1. Does this represent major stakeholders with responsibility for delivering services?
2. Are we missing anyone?
3. Can this help establish alignment obligations between agencies and organizations?

S. Chomka suggested that the graphic does not portray that the employers are stakeholders themselves noting that feedback from employers is crucial to the process. K. Shields suggested looking at key stakeholders from a system perspective and that employers are the outlying white section of the model (graphic).

Several discussion points and questions were raised from the presentation on the graphic:

- Define the section relating to adult education and its connection to business and industry training programs and formal On the Job Training (OJT) programs.
- Define the sections of Business and Industry Training Programs and Formal OJT Programs
- What is the role of distance learning in career pathways systems?
- How do credential yielding programs fit in?

K. Shields explained that the graphic presented is suggested as a tool for the CPSTF in planning a career pathways system and in determining an action plan. The four critical activities within a State Career Pathway System were then presented (page 3 of handout).

Role of RI Department of Education (RIDE)

A. Castaneda explained the role of RIDE in the career pathways process recognizing some of the struggles that currently exist within the K-12 system. She acknowledged the pockets of excellence within the school system and noted the entry level credentials listed on the graphic (GED or diploma). She stated that a goal of a career pathways system must ensure that the students have the skills needed to obtain post secondary education and careers. She mentioned the important alignment of work among RIDE, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), the Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) and the CPSTF.

Role of the Department of Labor & Training (DLT)

In the absence of L. D'Agostino, K. Shields explained the role of DLT in the development of a career pathways system. She provided an overview of the One Stop System which was described as a continual referral system. She noted the successful collaboration of the Governor's Workforce Board and the Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) in effectively servicing the business community. B. Melton cited other programs and organizations that relate to a career pathways system including apprenticeship, youth centers and career and technical education.

Role of Adult Education

J. Holloway, Director of the Adult Education Professional Development Center, provided an overview of the adult education system in RI. She mentioned the importance of the *Building the Critical Links Report*, the GWB Adult Education and Literacy Committee and the RI Department of Education's role with adult education programs. She reviewed statistics on the need for adult education services in RI as well as current enrollment statistics. She noted collaborative investments by RIDE, DLT, GWB, United Way and the Rhode Island Foundation for adult education programs. This information is contained in the PPT handout presented to the committee along with a listing of websites cited.

Role of Business/Industry Training Programs and the Role of On the Job Training (OJT) Programs

There was a discussion on programs, partnerships and employers who could serve as models for the career pathway process:

Stepping Up - A partnership between the UNAP/Rhode Island Hospital Health Care Education Trust and Women and Infants' Hospital, local hospitals and healthcare

organizations, education and training providers, labor unions and funders. A goal of this program is to provide education, training and support services to community residents who are interested in developing long-term careers in healthcare by helping employees become credentialed in high-growth, high-demand jobs, and in providing the tools to move up the healthcare career ladder.

Taco Inc. – Provides an example of a self sufficient, OJT program. Taco is a third generation family-owned company, with the corporate headquarters located in Cranston, Rhode Island.

Industry Partnership Program – A GWB funded initiative where Industry Partnerships form powerful coalitions of companies, institutions and organizations which are linked by common markets, labor pools and technology. The partnerships are charged with identifying and ameliorating skill gaps within their existing and emerging workforces. Industries include defense, hospitality, construction, marine trades, health care, green technology, Information technology, bioscience and advanced manufacturing.

There were several general points of discussion on the topic of business/industry/OJT programs:

- High end jobs will drive the economy.
- GWB Industry Partnerships focus on high growth industries.
- From a systems standpoint, a career pathways model must keep up with industry changes and respond effectively.
- It is necessary to identify successful programs and leverage them within other companies.
- How do we deliver the services of a career pathways system and who supports it?
- How does a career pathways system connect and how do we make sure it works?

Director Stokes of RIEDC commented on business and industry from an economic development viewpoint. He stated the importance of making public education a priority to prepare RI in the area of workforce development. He noted an issue in the wider New England market is having a qualified and available pool of employees from RI. He acknowledged substantial skills gaps and mentioned that employers outside of RI do not draw from the RI employee base because of these gaps. Director Stokes stated it is a critical challenge to build a viable RI workforce that can cross the New England borders for work.

Role of Higher Education

There was a general discussion of the role of higher education, both private and public, in building a career pathways system. Janet Durfee-Hidalgo spoke about college readiness, certificates and credentialing, longitudinal data and reporting requirements. R. Smith spoke of remedial education, the governance structure within higher education institutions and the work of the 21st Century Workforce Commission. She noted its recommendation that higher education institutions be more flexible and responsive to business and industry. J. Senese noted the importance of shared access to data, of industry discussion and collaboration between business and education leaders. He commented that higher education will respond to what industry needs. R. Smith spoke of the Newport Skills Alliance (NSA) suggesting it a model the committee might consider in the development of a career pathways model. She explained that the NSA is an interagency partnership that includes RIDE, CCRI and the GWB and is supported by business, education, government and social service organizations that have come together to build on current tools, approaches and best practices and offers a focused model for addressing Newport County's challenges in workforce development.

Selection of Initial Industries and/or Occupations

Chair Melton asked Jillian Salerno, Coordinator of Career Pathways, to discuss the next steps in the selection of initial industries and/or occupations for the career pathways system. She reviewed the handouts relating to the Healthcare and Information Technology fields.

J. Salerno stated these industries were chosen for several reasons:

- Entry level positions are attainable for the basic skills population.
- A career pathways model based on health care and IT needs are replicable and applicable to all industries.
- Opportunities for advancement exist to offer stackable certificates which can lead to higher wages.
- Industries met most of the criteria from her research on career pathways models.

There was a discussion and questions on the selection of these initial industries. Several suggestions and comments were raised:

- Information from other industries should be included for a comprehensive review and analysis.
- The Hospitality Industry should be considered in the initial selection of industries.
- Don't look only at the industries that fit the criteria of the proposed career pathways model i.e. the "easy ones"
- What is the approach? How does the committee put the plan in place around the development and implementation of the selected industries?
- What is the process to demonstrate success with the selected industries or models?
- Do not focus on a particular industry, create the career pathways model and then determine how it satisfies all industries. Use 1 or 2 industries to serve as an example.
- The career pathways model should tie out to high growth jobs utilizing current labor market information (LMI) data.
- The career pathways model should have flexibility and a transferable skill set defined.
- The Hospitality Industry can demonstrate how this model should work.
- The Stepping Up Program was suggested as a model in demonstrating how a career pathways model should work.
- There needs to be an understanding of how training and education programs connect back to careers (connection of delivery and stackable career opportunities).
- High growth industry should be the focus.

Next Steps

After a discussion, it was decided that at the next meeting, the committee will look at the career pathway model focusing on the content of the model and not applying it to a specific industry.

Schedule Next Meeting

Chair Melton noted the importance of holding another CPSTF meeting during the summer. It was decided that several dates would be selected and that committee members would be polled on their availability to meet.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mooney