



THE VOICE OF WISCONSIN'S LOCAL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS

9.2.09 WAJTE Meeting Minutes

Location: Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, 1401 McMahon Drive, Neenah, WI 54956

WAJTE Directors Present: John Milisuskas, Mark Kessenich, Francisco Sanchez, Cheryl Welch, Jim Golembeski, Sally Cutler (via phone for first 20 minutes, then attended in person), Dick Best, Jerry Hanoski, Pat Schramm, and Bob Borremans.

Others Present: Gary Denis (Department of Workforce Development), Mari Kay-Nabozny (WAJTE/WWDA Staff), Angela Cummings (WAJTE/WWDA Coordinator), Michelle St. Clair (Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership), Earl Buford (WRTP), and Brian Solomon (DWD State Business Services).

Sanchez called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m.

1. Approval of the Minutes

Borremans motioned to approve minutes, Welch second. No discussion.

Motion carried 10-0.

2. Statewide grant application update – Energy Training Partnership Grant (WRTP)

St. Clair and Buford presented a draft of the Energy Training Partnership (ETP) grant application executive summary and budget. Directors asked questions regarding the grant application content.

Roles

Buford clarified roles of Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP), the Workforce Development Boards, apprenticeship and labor unions. WRTP will be the fiscal agent.

Buford explained that the boards will “do what they usually do” and WRTP would be the connection to labor union and apprenticeship. Buford stated that the boards have limited information on industry training needs. Apprenticeship is a “different world” with additional sets of “hidden jobs”, information, and relationships that the boards do not have access to.

WRTP will use employer needs assessments to determine priorities, and then link the results to the Workforce Development Board Business Service Units to dovetail services and avoid duplication. The boards will also provide case management services to participants. WIA will be important when workers are hired. Sanchez stated that the Workforce Development Boards are the connection to the community and employers and boards are not willing to compromise that role.

Directors expressed concern over repetition of work. Hanoski mentioned that local areas already have priorities established and do not need to re-establish or duplicate work that has already been done. Buford agreed and wants to expand what has already been done. Golembeski stated that the training coordinators are not in the budget and summary and asked for clarification on the positions. Buford stated the training coordinators will attend the orientations, work with local job center partners, and screen candidates. Golembeski suggested that the boards do recruitment, and the training coordinator do the initial screening. Welch suggested the technical colleges conduct the assessments. Directors stated that the coordinators will need to be integrated into the Workforce Development Board's Business Service Units instead of the industry coordinators telling boards the needs.

WRTP foresees priorities being identified via input from both industry (apprenticeship, labor unions) and workforce boards. Industry and workforce boards will provide input/data and the ETP advisory committee will "shake out" the needs of both parties. WRTP will inform all partners of the result (e.g., forecasted needs). Buford stated that the advisory committee will have the final decision making authority over which trainings are offered in each local area and will use data and research to base decision on.

Directors stated the language in the proposal and project summary needs to be clarified, specifically on partner roles and how the industry coordinator will work with the local boards. Buford stated they would do this and add a paragraph on the role of workforce boards.

Directors expressed concerned about sustainability. St. Clair stated that building strong partnerships become the sustainability of the project. All coordinators will inform agencies about existing programs and opportunities, and build stronger connections between organizations.

Budget

The budget includes industry coordinators and a statewide coordinator position. The statewide coordinator position includes helping to build outreach between apprenticeship, labor union, boards, etc. and help coordinate local responses to needs. Per Buford, if a local business service unit has identified businesses that need workers trained, then the funding can come from this grant. When training opportunities are identified, the statewide coordinator and local boards will work with WRTP to access funding. The statewide coordinator will work with local apprenticeship and local boards to facilitate orientation to the registered apprenticeship system.

The industry coordinator will work with partners to coordinate training. Training providers will include technical colleges and apprenticeship trainers and be based on industry needs. Three million dollars will be directed towards training.

Directors expressed concern over the discrepancy between the original project scope and the scope identified in the ETP summary. The project has moved from an equal partnership between WRTP and WDBs to an incidental relationship to the

workforce system. Originally the budget included staff time for each of the local areas. The current budget includes funding for support services, which is not the same as staff time/project time. Buford responded that it is not feasible to fit WDB staff time into the project at this time. St. Clair explained that the focus of the project is really about making a connection between apprenticeship and the workforce system. The statewide coordinator position will do the work instead and arrange for orientations and screenings, etc. St. Clair stated that staff resources will be mobilized based on need. Best noted that the ETP summary includes case management with no resources to carry out that activity.

Scope of Project

Best and Cutler expressed rural areas need help to building capacity. Rural areas may still need to establish relationships in their WDAs. Capacity building in rural areas may be viewed as a strength of the grant. Buford agreed that was a good point.

Directors stated that the project summary WRTP is presenting is not what the original ideal was. Sanchez will work with WRTP to make sure the project is evenly spaced throughout the state. Buford concurred and said WRTP would start the project based on summary presented today (step 1) and build up to original agreement (step 2).

Implementation

WAJTE Directors expressed concerns over details of implementation. Sanchez expressed the need to have a planning time after the proposal is funded to work out some of the logistics. All concurred.

Potential Future Opportunities

Kessenich would like to see WWDA build capacity to shift resource to training and staff resources where they are needed throughout the state. WWDA could respond to an upcoming grant opportunity, the State Sector Partnership Grant, and discuss how we could build off of or supplement the work done through the ETP grant.

Sanchez concurred and would like to see capacity built at the WWDA level to do statewide planning.

Borremans motioned to approve the project; Golembeski seconded.

Discussion:

Directors discussed the possibility of WWDA applying for a statewide sector grant which would include funds for staffing, and focus on building capacity in the rural areas.

Directors agreed that the ETP proposal needs to better explain the roles of Workforce Development Boards. Buford stated that WRTP will add a paragraph better explain the roles of the boards, and the partnership between the boards and WRTP.

Motion carried. 10-0

Schramm suggested that the team who worked on the ETP grant should meet to begin the statewide sector strategy team. Best will join the planning team for sector strategies.

Letters of support were signed on behalf of WWDA and local boards.

3. Chair's Report

Sanchez reminded Directors to submit payment of their dues if they had not already done so.

4. Coordinator's Report

a. Fiscal Report

Cummings distributed the August financials for WAJTE/WWDA. Directors did not have questions or comments.

b. ASSET User Group Report

Cummings distributed an updated AUG membership list. Denis stated there is a more current list. Cummings will obtain most current list and send to WAJTE Directors.

Cummings distributed Asset User Group meeting minutes from 9-1-09 and pointed to the WAJTE Recommended Actions/Highlights section.

Cummings relayed the following questions: "In PY09, are we accountable for the old performance measures or the common performance measures? If the latter, when will they be negotiated? AUG would like an explanation of what issues are causing the delay." Denis responded that in PY09 DWD will continue to collect data on old performance measurers, but will be held accountable for new performance measurers. DWD is supposed to negotiate the common measurers with the Department of Labor before mid-September and then will negotiate with local boards on their local common measurers.

Cummings relayed the second set of AUG questions: "What counts as 70% training for ARRA: Administrator Memo 9-02. An errata sheet will come out stating what work experience and support services are includable in the 70% training." Denis responded that he's not sure when the policy will be communicated.

c. State Business Services Group

WAJTE Directors would like the Statewide Business Service group to develop a statement of purpose to include identifying common industry sectors. Suggestions included defining an industry sector and common points within the industry sector; identifying high-growth and emerging industries; developing a statewide map showing high-growth and emerging industries by WDA; assessing the state's usage of the apprenticeship system; coordinating sector work on a state level; and working with the DWD State Business Services department on projects (in the future).

The statement of purpose (SOP) should include goals. Cummings will create the SOP with the input from the statewide business service group, provide directors a draft and solicit feedback, create a second draft, and inform the statewide business service group.

5. Legislative Staff Report

a. WIA Reauthorization

Sanchez provided a little background stating the Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA) in Southeast WI is developing a WIA position statement and wanted to align with WWDA's position statement. Kay-Nabozny circulated a draft WIA reauthorization position statement, which will be necessary prior to the meeting with Congressman Petri on September 28, 2009.

Suggestions for the WIA position statement included:

- The one stop system and centers need to remain under private sector leadership.
- Ensure the summer youth program as part of the funding allocation. (Make a separate bullet point under funding.)

Kay-Nabozny asked for additional edits by Tuesday, September 8th. She will put together a final draft and send to WWDA for feedback. The final version will be distributed before meeting with Congressman Petri on September 28th.

Hanoski stated the reason the workforce development system was created in the first place was because the training institutions failed. This is the key reason the workforce development system is so important. Best suggested to reinforce the brokering function, separate from the educational system, is an essential element.

Best also suggested identifying the ARRA underpinnings and lay those next to our draft position to be sure we are covering the key points of this administration.

Kay-Nabozny would like directors, business, and CLEOs represented and will balance representation from each. Congressman Petri's office requires a list of RSVPs previous to September 28th. Send RSVPs to Mari by September 20th so she can provide a list of attendees to Petri's office. Those visiting Petri's office will attend a briefing session one hour before the meeting. Welch will provide the meeting space in Fond du Lac.

Kay-Nabozny distributed e-mail statistics for the August 2009 WWDA Newsletter to Legislature. A list of due dates for future legislative newsletter articles was distributed. ARRA information is due to Mari today, September 2nd.

b. Upcoming conferences and sponsorships

Kay-Nabozny provided information on the status of conferences and sponsorships. Directors decided WAJTE/WWDA will not attend the Wisconsin Counties Association conference this year. The WEDA fall conference is in Eau Claire. Sponsorship levels are \$250 and \$500. The \$250 includes one free registration; \$500 includes free registration and exhibit space. Welch mentioned that the WHEDA conference focus is to look at the challenges of employers, and encourages attendance.

Motion made by Welch to sponsor the WHEDA conference for \$500; Cutler second. No Discussion.
Motion carried 10-0.

Best will look into staffing the WWDA booth. Welch and Borremans volunteered to staff for part of the time.

Directors decided not to sponsor the Office of Energy Independence Conference due to lack of information available.

6. Job Service & Statewide Business Services

Brian Solomon provided WAJTE Directors with an update on State Business Service activities, accomplishments, and next steps. Solomon reviewed the RES system, and reminded the group that on July 1st the state started the RES initiative with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) dollars.

Solomon provided a report on staff production, asked for feedback on report content, and answered clarifying questions. Directors requested to see data by WDA. Solomon said directors may request the report from their respective state contacts. The State is working with companies to have a batch transfer into the ASSET system (from national data base into ASSET). The State will receive regular reports on KeyTrain and WorkKeys. The reports will be broken out by WDA. Solomon will develop a plan for sharing the data/information.

Welch requested that the state share assessment results in ASSET so case managers can see results and be informed. Solomon stated that it's not practical to enter 'old' data into ASSET; however the new data will be entered into ASSET right away. Cutler concerned that we are moving away from self help and suggested a portfolio is developed for each person (similar to doctor's office files where any health care provider can see your health file). Solomon stated he is willing to work with the WIBs to develop a system. Sanchez recapped the conversation saying that we are trying to create a system that eliminates duplication for in workforce development, and for customers (e.g., eliminating duplicative efforts/forms to fill out).

Directors would like to see the state's system for referring RES participants to one of 4 triages (options). Solomon stated one of his "huge" priorities is to communicate information to others and is working on a system that works with the ASSET system. Solomon will also add data showing the number of participants referred to TAA (as one of the "paths").

Sanchez stated that the RES program is putting a lot of new work on the reception area and asked if there is funding or resources to put towards reception staff?

Welch requested that RES staff work with local Business Service staff on employer outreach. Solomon agreed, suggested Welch follow up with local RES contact, and stated he will also follow-up with RES staff to clarify their role. Welch requested WAJTE Directors to be copied on clarifying correspondence.

Kristina Toll has been hired as the RES employer services person. She will promote JCW and NCRC on a statewide and local level, and will contact local staff to see how we can promote locally. Solomon stated Toll will not be doing any direct business contacts. She will attend workforce development board meetings chamber meetings, etc. Cutler suggested Toll be part of the Statewide Business Service Group meeting (subcommittee of WAJTE).

Solomon explained the intake form is currently only for determining which triage (of four) the RES participants will take. He eventually sees an expanded use as a common intake form. Cutler suggested WDAs be in the planning process from the beginning. Solomon stated when the form becomes a common intake form they will involve stakeholders.

Timeline

The RES system is beginning phase two of the initiative, which includes KeyTrain, Work Keys, and NCRC certification. Today (9/2/09) is the first day that 5 pilot locations are up and running. A 4th triage path – assessment – will also be added to the program. Directors expressed that all local WIB staff will need to know how this works and attend training.

Solomon explained that the program will have 100 sites; 54 are chosen already. When participants receive a username and password, they can access the RES system at any of the 100 sites. RES staff is encouraging participants to use the RES system elsewhere so participants do not overwhelm the resource centers. Scheduling of testing will be done in ASSET; this is a newly created tool in asset. Scheduling is in the pilot phase and eventually all partners will be able to view it. Eventually all workshops will also be in asset (only pilot workshops appear right now) and eventually the public will be able to access the scheduling component and register themselves. The Work Keys call center, opening September 14, 2009, will handle calls to schedule Work Keys tests. The State will have 6 staff rotating coverage for calls. Staff will verify the participants have used KeyTrain, then schedule for the WorkKeys testing. The governor has agreed to sign the NCRC certificate.

Solomon provided a timeline for staff training:

September 2nd: RES staff will be trained on the 4th triage

September 9th: Call center staff will be trained

September 10th: WorkKeys staff will be trained

September 21st: WorkKeys testing will begin in the five pilot areas

The reason pilot projects are limited to five areas is that there could be a bandwidth issue. Solomon is still looking for available computer lab space in WDA# 1, 3, 6, and 9, and asked if anyone knows of help/resources. Directors provided ideas. Solomon will talk to Welch separately regarding her local WorkKeys program and state efforts.

Solomon gave a timeline for key implementation dates:

October 1st: adding the 4th triage path in RES sessions

October 14: start offering WorkKeys session

Solomon stated he is happy to plan implementation with the local WIBs and mentioned that it is difficult to create different systems for each WDA but does not want that to be a “door closer”. The local system sill needs to work with state system. Solomon stated that there is opportunity to partner with the local boards currently using WorkKeys in order to use resources more effectively. Solomon is in discussion with Secretary Gassman, Danowski, and others about sustainability of the program.

Solomon mentioned that in April the RES system will be up and running. A CWI assessment grant in the amount of \$175,000 might be integrated into the RES project. DET is developing a proposal for \$175,000 and still needs to figure out the logistics. This is not a CWI initiative; it is the Governor’s Grow III initiative. The money is a set-aside for WorkKeys. The RFP will be developed within the next month or so. Originally the Governor positioned the funding for one location, but because of ARRA, the state was able to develop WorkKeys in an expanded version potentially making the \$175,000 available for more than one area. DET still needs to figure out the details.

Cutler suggested the money be used for recruitment and retention. Welch suggested a system that captures that information electronically and markets the program. Sanchez suggested Solomon, Denis, Cutler, and Welch participate in planning. All parties concurred. Solomon will let WAJTE Directors know when he is ready for the planning process.

7. Opportunity Grants

Cutler stated there is a lack of dollars for case management. She has been working out issues with state. Denis stated the opportunity grants will remain the same.

8. DOL Technical Assistance Funds

Kay-Nabozny stated the Federal government suggested we contact the State for technical assistance funds.

9. Reports

a. Partnership Updates (GLETA, WCA, Other)

b. DWD Reports

The waiver for ARRA youth has been granted by DOL. The AUG minutes reflect early release of information, but WIBs should not act on until the official correspondence is released. The state will be developing correspondence to solidify policy.

The state requested several other waivers in state plan. Some were temporary and allowed others DOL had questions about. The waiver to remove the recapture of funds one year earlier is unlikely to happen. Allowing OJT and customized training on a sliding scale is likely to be approved. The state has already provided a lot of info to DOL regarding this request. Most of the additional requests are likely to happen but in a different way than the state expected/intended. DOL is sticking with the original intent.

Denis facilitated a round robin where Directors provided updates to job center activity, continued activity and summer program updates. A common theme emerged that retraining grants/funds are greatly needed by workforce boards.

Denis asked Sanchez for the WWDA Technical Assistance funding request. Sanchez will send to Denis.

10. Other Business

Cutler requested a motion for WWDA to provide a letter of support for the statewide health care proposal.

Motion made by Schramm for WWDA to provide a letter of support for the statewide health care proposal; Borremans seconded. No Discussion
Motion carried 10-0.

Noon Lunch & Director Updates

Respectfully submitted by Angela Cummings