

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor



Rich Baer
Chair – CWDC

Don Mares
Executive Director – CDLE

Booker T. Graves
Director – CWDC

CDLE

COLORADO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
633 17th St, 9th Floor, Denver CO 80202

Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) Strategic Planning Summary

January 23, 2009

Warwick Denver Hotel
1776 Grant St, Denver

Attendance

Booker Graves, Steve Wright, Glenn Little, James Neubecker, Gary Yakimov, Nancy LaPrade, Celina Shands-Gradijan, John Soper, Ken DeBey, Roger Smith, Michelle Wagner, Carmen Velasquez, Robert Gray, David Mitchem, Barbara Ihde, Tom Looft, James Hall, Inta Morris, Paula Gomez-Farrell, Dani Crane, David Ford, Phil Washington, Charlie Whalen, Nancy Smith, Fay Wilson Tate, Paula Sandoval, Bette Matkowski, Sue Carparelli, Robin Wise, Pam Smith, Peggy Herbertson, Elise Lowe-Vaughn, Don Mares, Amy Mitchell, Nancy McCallin, Susan Kirkpatrick, Scott Stump, Raymond Gonzalez

Welcome and Opening

Roger Smith welcomed everyone at 2:15pm. Rich Baer, the Council Chair was unable to attend the session due to a scheduling conflict. Roger discussed the new administration and the prospect of the stimulus package coming into the State. He commended the workforce centers and their outstanding efforts working with less money.

The Council is taking a sector strategies approach, looking at large sectors and industries. The Council hopes to drive dollars and efforts to work collaboratively to help the State.

Roger introduced prospective new members: Phil Washington, an Assistant General Manager at RTD; Jesse Ruiz, with the Eastern Workforce Board; Michelle Wagner, EGG; Charlie Whalen, President of Pikes Peak Workforce Center.

Peggy Herbertson introduced the new CEO/President of the Pikes Peak Workforce Center, Charlie Whalen.

Introductions were made around the room.

Sector Strategies Presentation

Gary Yakimov provided an overview of sector strategies. This approach provides a broader economic context, allowing entities to do more with less. How do you work with sets of employers? Strategy - what does the State think should happen? Initiatives - what should be done regarding these strategies? What's the framework the State has in place to do this work? Sector strategies help regions focus on an industry to help it grow and grow the workers they need. They can combine a lot of resources and strategies, promoting systemic change. This allows employers to share costs, which they don't normally do.

Benefits to Business

- Shared costs and risks
- Increased availability of skills training
- Guidance on ways to improve human resource practices
- Reduced turnover

Impact on Workers

- Increased availability of jobs offering decent wages
- Improved working conditions
- Expanded work supports
- Increased opportunities for education and training

Benefits to Communities

- Decreased skill and labor gaps
- Increased attraction and retention of higher-wage employers
- Reduction of poverty and unemployment
- Increased community cooperation and collaboration
- More efficient and effective use of public resources

Elements of a Sector Strategy

- Gubernatorial leadership
- Funding strategies
- Industry and labor market strategies
- Interagency alignment strategies
- Capacity building strategies

The gubernatorial support Colorado has already received has allowed the State to become part of the NGA Learning Academy. The NGA group is currently working on a sector strategy toolkit (www.sectorstrategies.org). The roll out plan for the sector strategy initiative and the agenda for the Academy taking place in February will be sent out.

Working the strategic plan

What are the big buckets of work that the Council wants to tackle for the next year to two years? CSW used framework to create a planning matrix. The meeting broke into three groups to revisit the list created at the previous strategic planning session and to determine how to fill in the matrix.

Career Pathways

Nancy LaPrade, with CSW, and Scott Stump, from the Community Colleges, made a presentation on career pathways. These are defined as a systemic framework for developing a series of connected instructional strategies, with integrated work experience, and support services that enables students and workers to combine school and work and advance over time to better jobs and higher levels of education and training. They are targeted to regional labor markets, focused on industry sectors, and provide a framework for workforce development by integrating the programs and resources of community colleges and other education providers, workforce agencies and social service providers. Career pathways are a framework, not a program. They are a supply-side strategy and an economic development tool. They provide a seamless system, allowing students in and out of their educational path as they need; there are multiple entry and exit points. This should span from middle school through workplace education.

There are six core elements of career pathways:

- Institutional and instructional transformation
- Supports and tools to help students succeed
- Partnerships that drive planning and implementation
- Employer (sector) involvement in all phases of the process
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Commitment to sustainability

In Colorado, the community colleges are focused on building a plan for every student that will lead to career success. This will provide a seamless plan of study, which will encourage academic and technical achievement. In Colorado's cluster model, students will be able to move among different jobs within a specific cluster; programs are applying transferable skills. The community colleges have created Plans of Study, which represent the path students will take as they study for their new career.

Awareness of this initiative is happening all the way down to the elementary school level. The community college system is partnering with the WIRED regions and College in Colorado to disseminate this information. At an early age, children should determine what they are interested in without having to pick a specific job. Some school districts have adopted career pathways as actual classes. While the current focus on awareness has focused on school administrators and guidance counselors, the next phase will be a more grassroots movement to spread the word, so more parents will be aware of these efforts. This program will also help those in dying industries, as there is a tool that provides an assessment of someone's skills to determine how they could move to a new position.

Working the strategic plan

Further group discussions took place in the three groups.

Wrap Up

CSW will digest the work of each committee. They will edit the information and distribute to everyone on the Council. Then the members will need to come together again to see what is involved with the next steps.

To save time at this meeting, Booker will structure a few questions on how to design future CWDC meetings. The proposed CWDC meetings for 2009 are June 17th and November 19th. In the interim, the sub-committees will meet to do a type of “reorganization” and re-evaluation of their mission, goals, and structure. The meeting adjourned at 5:15pm.