

## **State of Oregon 2007-2008 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Annual Report Narrative**

### **Oregon's Workforce System**

The state workforce development organizations and community partners have moved to a simplified, unified approach in delivering "market driven" services to job seekers and employers through the implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act. By bringing industry together into a partnership with service providers, state agencies and educational institutions, Oregon offers a diverse array of workforce services that can be accessed throughout the State. At the same time, a collaborative approach to the delivery of technical assistance, training and capacity building to support state workforce development partners also is occurring among state agencies

### **Oregon's Strategic Goals**

In 1989, the Oregon legislature published *Oregon Shines*, a report that put forth a new vision with a stated goal to "build an advanced economy that provides well paying jobs to the maximum amount of citizens." In 1990 the Oregon Progress Board (OPB), chaired by the Governor and made up of community leaders and 16 committees representing business, labor, education and government, developed a long list of quality-of-life indicators which are still used today. These benchmarks continue to provide the foundation for measuring and managing the state's economic, social and educational endeavors. The three goals of Oregon Shines are:

- Quality jobs for all Oregonians
- Engaged, caring and safe communities
- Healthy, sustainable surroundings

### **Governor's Vision for Education and Workforce**

The Governor's Vision for Oregon's Workforce states that "we must invest in education and workforce training so Oregon becomes a magnet for companies that want to hire skilled workers, and workers have good jobs that fully utilize their skills and talents. Oregon needs competitive companies, productive people and innovative ideas to grow and keep stable, high-paying jobs in our state."

### **WorkSource Oregon**

Oregon's workforce development system is in full operation, connecting citizens with agencies, businesses, education, training, jobs, child care and a wide range of related services. *WorkSource Oregon* is a statewide workforce development system—a network of public and private partners that stimulate job growth by connecting businesses and workers with the resources they need to succeed.

#### *WorkSource Oregon:*

- Ensures businesses have a ready supply of trained workers whose skills and talents are aligned with the expectations and needs of business and industry;
- Connects businesses with the resources they need to grow their workforce and their business;

- Provides resources to help Oregon’s unemployed and underemployed connect with the employers that are right for them, find the jobs they’re looking for and get trained for jobs they want;
- Aligns concurrent initiatives in the education, workforce and economic development arenas;
- Provides leadership in shaping the education programs and workforce services that benefit individuals, businesses and communities in Oregon;
- Ensures a continuum of comprehensive learning opportunities that enable youth and adults to effectively contribute to our global society;
- Broadens sustainable public access to skills, knowledge and career opportunities.
- Fosters innovation in instruction, service delivery and information collection and dissemination; and,
- Meets public stewardship and accountability expectations to federal, state, and local partners.

Oregon’s workforce system serves Oregon workers, helping people update their career skills, launching them toward higher wages, and referring them to jobs or educational career paths based on new technologies or innovations. Having a highly skilled workforce means Oregon businesses have a competitive edge and Oregon workers have stable jobs.

### **Current efforts**

In October of 2007 two state agencies, CCWD and the Oregon Employment Department, met to discuss ways to integrate the delivery of Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser services. To date their efforts and accomplishments include:

- Creation of a “Compass” document that outlines the goals and vision of an integrated system;
- Joint state-level policies that apply to staff, regardless of their funding sources;
- Several multi-partner workgroups to explore various aspects of integrated service delivery (performance, compliance, technical requirements, innovations, etc.);
- Development of a Common Intake process that combines electronic data capture with staff services to create a common, shared customer pool;
- Implementation of a statewide initial skills assessment, available to all customers;
- Development of a statewide Menu of Resources and Services – skill-building and other tools available at every physical site, with online options as well;
- Elimination of paper (hard) copy files for most participants;
- Progress towards a single, statewide data Management Information System (MIS);
- The redesign and redefinition of service delivery components (case management, service coding, etc.);
- A statewide customer flow process, adaptable to local areas, to ensure consistent, effective service delivery; and,
- Development of cross-functional teams and staff to focus on three primary areas of customer interaction: Welcoming and Registration, Employment Services, and Skills Services.

Phase 1 of the integrated services delivery rollout is slated for October 2008.

### **WIA Title IB Adult and Youth Programs**

The WIA Title IB programs provide skill assessment, skill training, and knowledge development necessary to be successful in the job market. Services provided to adults (18 years of age and older) include core, intensive and training services through local area WorkSource Oregon Centers and local providers. Staff provides technical assistance, capacity building, identification of resources, leadership in policy making and the coordination of discussions and continuous improvement efforts.

The youth programs provide assistance in achieving academic and employment success to eligible youth, ages 14-21 who are economically disadvantaged with barriers to employment. The goals of the program are to establish local youth councils that connect local youth programs to a comprehensive youth system and provide:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction, leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention;
- Adult mentoring;
- Summer employment opportunities linked directly to academic occupational learning;
- Occupational skill training;
- Continued support services which enhance the success of youth;
- Incentives for recognition and achievement of youth; and,
- Opportunities in activities related to leadership development, decision making, and citizenship in their local communities.

WIA Title IB Adult and Youth Programs:

- Coordinate activities at state and local levels with other workforce programs;
- Deliver services through local providers;
- Measure and evaluate performance under Title IB of the WIA (monitoring entry into employment, job retention, attainment of credentials);
- Provide objective assessments of adults and youth to identify academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant; and,
- Develop individual service strategies for each participant by preparing him/ her for postsecondary education opportunities or unsubsidized employment opportunities and providing linkages between academic and occupational learning and effective connections to the job market.

### **Performance**

CCWD has a long history of working with and supporting local efforts to meet and exceed state, federal or local performance measures. Performance measures are an integral part of CCWD's work, and are incorporated into the services provided through community colleges, the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title IB and Title II programs, and Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education programs.

Federal performance measures include the US Office of Management and Budget common measures that now impact WIA Title IB, WIA Title II, and Carl D. Perkins programs.

### **State Evaluation**

Oregon continues to evaluate the impacts of the workforce system. Initiatives include a renewed interest in further developing Oregon's long-standing system wide performance measurement system and data warehousing, continued emphasis on WIA performance analysis and improvement, increased efforts to implement the WIA common measures, and an initiative by the Oregon Workforce Investment Board to track the implementation of its new strategic plan.

The state has undertaken or plans to undertake the following efforts in the area of program evaluation:

- Data from our system wide performance measures continues to be available for the employment related indicators, basic skills attainment, and TANF caseload management. Our experience in using this information for the narrative portion of the Annual Report has been positive and continues for the current report. This system wide performance data is available at [www.prism.state.or.us](http://www.prism.state.or.us). The site includes analysis of the data. Current discussions include changing some of the definitions of the indicators to more closely reflect Federal measures.
- Oregon is increasing the emphasis on developing the “next generation” data system. Efforts include connecting with a planned data warehouse for Oregon's K-20 education system, a desire for more flexible reporting on system wide data, and warehousing data for the reporting of common measures for federal compliance.
- The Oregon Workforce Investment Board completed a strategic planning process to set direction for the entire workforce system. The inclusive process resulted in *Winning In the Global Market*, a plan to transform Oregon's workforce education and training system. The plan for the process includes a continued emphasis on metrics, accountability and program impacts and results. To track system performance against the plan, the OWIB formed a Performance and System Improvement Committee to report metrics to the full board and suggest system improvements.
- The Oregon Workforce Investment Board also contracted for an evaluation of the capacity-building portion of its Employer Workforce Training Fund, comprised of projects that are multi-regional or that build capacity in the statewide workforce system. The evaluation showed that the program has promise and suggested ways to strengthen it. To follow up on this partial evaluation, the board is considering a more complete evaluation in the near future.
- State staff review local area and statewide performance quarterly. Local areas are contacted about various aspects of their operations and their effect on performance. In-depth analysis of local performance includes the continued use of Performance Matters, a

performance management on-line service, which has greatly improved efforts to analyze WIA IB performance.

- Annual quality assurance reviews address multiple aspects of program compliance and program improvement.

- Oregon's Labor Market Information system continues to be responsive to state and local Workforce Investment Board needs, and supplies information and analysis to assist with evaluation initiatives. Recent studies have included job and industry growth analysis, industry cluster analysis, studies of the occupational needs and growth of various industries and industry groupings, and local/regional profiles, all of which assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of workforce programs in the state.