

Lightning Round Proven Policy Ideas: Workforce Development

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Why Regional Collaboration?

“There is no ‘magic bullet’ in economic transformation. True transformation comes about when people across and within all sectors (government, education, business/industry, not-for-profit, arts and culture) come together in genuine partnerships for the common good. It comes about when processes are improved. It comes about when bureaucratic impediments are swept aside. It comes about when, intertwined with basic improvements, a few bold experiments are launched”¹

In today’s world, labor market activities are not confined by geographical or jurisdictional boundaries. In North Carolina, there are multiple efforts underway to support regionalism as one of the core components of creating better outcomes for employers, workers, and the emerging workforce.

Regional Collaboration Planning Grants

- **Issued in 2007 to incent behavior** to collaborate and encourage Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to join with other local boards and economic development partners to increase awareness of and access to their region’s services to workers, businesses, and communities through formal collaboration and coordination of services that meet changing needs.
- **Possible Funding Streams:**
 - Federal WIA Governor’s Reserve Funds or Incentive Funds

¹ *Staying a Step Ahead: Higher Education Transforming North Carolina’s Economy*, Pappas Consulting Group, July 2006.

- **Expected outcomes:**
 - The development of processes and infrastructures that will formalize regional collaboration to create a “Competitive Workforce Advantage”;
 - An end-of-grant working Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that outlines a regional model of collaboration including;
 - Processes for identifying regional industry sectors and workforce and economic development issues that will be jointly addressed by the partnership;
 - A process for determining joint support of training capacity;
 - Processes for the sharing of information and capabilities concerning business trends, impacts and projections;
 - A sustainability plan that includes the process for identifying, developing, and implementing sharing of resources, such as cost allocation, fee-for service, funding opportunities and other sustainability options;
 - Branding for the collaborative;
 - Inter-board policies that facilitate joint economic development support to create the “one voice” approach for business expansion and retention efforts.

- **Selected process outcomes:**
 - Alignment of policies, including OJT reimbursements and common assessments
 - Changed the ways employers have viewed economic development deals
 - Alignment around regional sector strategies/initiatives

- **To What End?**
 - Increase economic development in the regions
 - Reduce costs of doing business/ greater efficiencies
 - Increase opportunities for job placement in newly acquired firms