

**GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE BOARD RI
ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY COMMITTEE MEETING
September 24, 2010**

MEETING MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Ray DiPasquale, Chair, Mario Bueno, Paul MacDonald, Robin Coia, George Nee

Committee Members Absent: Joseph MarcAurele, Robert Nangle

Board Members Present: Sandra Powell, Pheamo Witcher, Sharon Moylan

Others Present: Steve Maurano, RIBGHE; Kim Chouinard, Sharon Lee, Andrea Castaneda, RIDE; Judy Jones, Linda Katz, Poverty Institute; Robin Smith, Sharon Hoffman, CCRI; Jim Glover, Workforce Solutions of Providence & Cranston; Jen Buck, Workforce Partnership of Greater RI; Jill Holloway, Robin Adams, Professional Development Center; Malcolm Baxter, United Way

GWB Staff Present: Lisa D'Agostino, Nancy Olson, Dan Brown

DLT Staff Present: David Tremblay, Laura Hart

Chair's Welcome and Remarks

Chair Di Pasquale called the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Chair Di Pasquale stated that the reason for this committee meeting is to address and respond to concerns of the board and the adult education community about the reorganization of the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) and the recent reduction of funds to the adult education providers. With that stated, the Chair moved to have the staff from RIDE introduce themselves and move forward with the agenda.

RIDE Updates for Adult Education

Three representatives from RIDE introduced themselves and stated they would participate in the presentation. Andrea Castaneda, Chief of the Division of Accelerating School Performance, thanked the committee for the opportunity to present and indicated they would provide an update on adult education from RIDE's perspective. A. Castaneda acknowledged that RIDE staff has been noticeably absent for the past few months and apologized for that, and shared that the Adult Education office has had more than 100% turnover which has been difficult.

2010 Grant Award Concerns and Budget Issues

A. Castaneda opened by addressing the reduction of funds and stated the three (3) major factors behind this action:

- 1) A very comprehensive five (5) part RFP was issued that was a continuation of Johan Uvin's work when he was at RIDE. This RFP was very challenging to the providers as well as to RIDE.
- 2) RIDE lost \$1M of funding from the Job Development Fund (JDF)
- 3) RIDE over awarded by almost 9% through an administrative error. This resulted in having to notify vendors of this reduction in early September.

Nancy Olson reported that \$3.5M of JDF has been awarded to RIDE this fiscal year. N. Olson stated that the GWB did allocate \$1.5M in WIA funds for Contextualized Training and that \$1.3M has been awarded to vendors (by the local WIBS). She noted this should be of assistance with the reduction to the adult education programs.

Pheamo Witcher mentioned that the Contextualized Training program is off to a slow start with the vendors. N. Olson acknowledged this and stated that staff is currently working to address issues raised by the vendors and explained that staff training is being provided at no cost to the vendors to administer these grants. This assistance is being funded by the United Way.

Reorganization of RIDE agency – Adult Education

A. Castaneda reviewed the RIDE organizational chart. She informed committee members that the department's focus is to incorporate adult education into all of the areas of the department, noting it falls under Multiple Pathways on the organizational chart. She explained that in spite of budget cuts across the department, the Office of Adult Education was able to add another full time employee (FTE). She indicated that there will be additional staffing to include an Adult Education Specialist and an Adult Education Administrator. The staffing priorities within RIDE show the department's continued commitment to support adult education programs. She stated that her position of Director of Multiple Pathways reports directly to the Commissioner.

When asked about possible future funding streams for adult education, A. Castaneda reported that in addition to looking for additional funding, the objective is to closely monitor funds, re-capture any funds that are not obligated or spent and redistribute. Regarding performance targets, A. Castaneda explained that these targets will be re-negotiated with each vendor since it is unfair to hold agencies to targets determined prior to the 9% funding cut.

Sharon Lee, Director of the Office of Multiple Pathways, indicated the intent is to ensure there is a comprehensive system in place to provide a continuum of opportunities for all learners, including virtual learning systems. She noted the importance of all learners, including adult education learners, to obtain certification of academic progress and industry work skills which would provide them with credentials during the long process. She mentioned drop out and re-entry programs and the strategies necessary for older adolescents and young adults.

Robin Smith, Associate Vice President, Center for Workforce Training & Community Education at CCRI, asked if RIDE was incorporating their work and planning based on the Industry Partnership Program of the GWB. S. Lee explained that RIDE looks at the sectors with greatest economic development to promote the secondary and adult continuum of learning specific to industry.

Chair DiPasquale noted sources of upcoming funding and the importance of deciding how to optimally spend these funds, specifically mentioning the \$240,000 provided for the 21st Century CCRI Commission. He spoke of funding available through the Bill and Melinda Gates College Foundation which involves the objective of improving state graduation rates. He noted the importance of collaboration between agencies and other entities in seeking funding and avoiding duplication of effort.

Mario Bueno spoke of the Critical Links recommendations of the RI Governor's Adult Literacy Taskforce and the impact from the recent RIDE reorganization on the adult learner system. M. Bueno suggested that the committee review this report. Chair Di Pasquale recommended it be put on the meeting agenda for the next meeting.

Sharon Lee reviewed the graphs entitled: FY11 RI JDF Funding Levels by Region, FY JDF Adult Education Funding allocated by Provider and Adult Education FY 11 Allocations Available for Grants by Fund Source. Since committee members were interested, S. Lee indicated that the graph "JDF-Total Adult Education Funded Providers JDF and Total Adult Education Allocation Comparison" would be forwarded.

Targets and Performance Data

Kim Chouinard of the Office of Multiple Pathways discussed several of the handouts including JDF Funded Program Educational Gains and Attendance by Educational Functioning Level, CALIS Academic Gains Report Table, and CALIS Core Follow-up Outcome Achievement Report Table. She noted the improvement towards target goals. It was noted that when all of the data is received by the end of September, RIDE will continue to provide Quartile reporting as Johan Uvin did in the past. L. Katz requested that the GWB consider level funding in FY12 for adult education.

In response to questions on the use of a single data system as part of the Race to the Top funding, A. Castaneda indicated that an RFP will be developed for this system. This would include data collection efforts based on collaboration from such agencies as RIDE, DCYF, DLT and DHS. This work would assist with getting the different systems to talk to each other.

Director Powell reported on recent meetings regarding establishing a system to collect longitudinal data to link information from the workforce, customers, students and employers, indicating this is a USDOL grant.

Approval of Minutes of 3/23/10

A motion was entered to approve the Adult Education and Literacy Committee meeting minutes of March 23, 2010.

VOTE: G. Nee moved to approve, seconded by P. McDonald. All approved. The motion passed.

Chair DiPasquale thanked the RIDE staff for their preparation and clearly defined reporting update and noted the importance of working together and keeping open the lines of communication. He cited the Newport Skills Alliance as a good example of collaboration noting it brought all the decision makers together, improved the focus of the project and provided many people with jobs and opportunities. He noted that we must find a better way to deliver services and to better utilize funds. Chair DiPasquale mentioned that more funding will become available to community colleges in October and that collaboration, communication and a focus on global needs will be important in submitting an RFP.

With no further business, a motion was entered to adjourn the Adult Education and Literacy Committee meeting.

VOTE: M. Bueno moved to approve, seconded by G. Nee. All approved. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mooney