

**Governor's Workforce Board RI
Adult Education & Literacy Committee Meeting
February 23, 2016**

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members present: Chair Susan Rittscher, Mario Bueno, Paul McDonald, George Nee,

Other Board Members Present: Monica Dzialo,

RIDE Staff present: Dr. Philip Less, Stephen Osborn, Kim Chouinard
GWB Staff present: Rick Brooks, Dan Brown, Kristen McKenna,
Others Present: Hector Riviera, Malcolm Baxter, BIS; Jill Holloway, PDC; Dr. Albert Alba, RIDOC, Sophia Tan, ILSR, Nancy Olson

Location: RIDLT Conference room 73-2

Call to Order

Chair Rittscher called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Chair Rittscher asked for a review of the meeting minutes of December 15, 2015 Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) Adult Education & Literacy Committee meeting. Chair Rittscher asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

VOTE: Paul McDonald moved to approve. Mario Bueno seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

GED information and changes

Chair Rittscher asked Dr. Philip Less to provide an update. Dr. Less noted:

- The passing score for high school equivalency is moving from 150 to 145
- Test is normed by high school students, 60% passing
- GED Graduates with a score over 175 are considered College Ready and can earn college credit
- 2 college ready students earned credit, Working with Community colleges
- GED Passing score changes are retroactive to January 2015
- \$145.00 fee waiver

Paul asked if practice test score would help the student get a waiver. Paul also asked if we can find some money to cover the cost of the practice tests. Dr. Less noted it would cost \$3 to \$4 dollars to take it.

Objectives of this Working Group

Chair Rittscher noted committee members discussed the need for a working session and here we are:

- Look at and discuss what the different reports are saying.
- Develop work plan for our group for the next couple of years and make a list of the top 5 things to work on

George noted we need to understand the WIOA Program and what it really means, and if its additional funding we need it to be clear on how it can help our work.

Adult Education Trends

Chair Rittscher asked Dr. Philip Less to provide an update on the Adult Education Trends Data. Dr. Less noted:

- For NRS requirements, a student must enrolled 12 hours, less than 12 hours is not counted
- 2010 -2011 first year of RFP, moved forward, targets were set.
- Programs are focused at keeping a student longer
- Educational gain, 26% making gains in 2005 – 2006, held at 15% last couple of years. Last 5 years, ESL increase. It went from 48% to a current increase of 52%.

Monica Dzialo asked for the numbers of those with a disability obtaining a GED. Philip noted RIDE has the ability to breakdown this data. Kim noted this information will be available in the spring of 2016, she can get this information to send out to the committee

Crosswalk Presentation / Data

The group was presented with:

- Crosswalk Recommendations or common themes between United Way (UW) AE Report, CSIP, WIOA and RIDE and Strategic Plan: Areas of commonality or discord that might be topics for advocacy to Governor's office, RIDE, DLT etc.
- **Four main points illustrated in this cross reference are:**
 1. There are too many RI's without foundational skills and it is affecting employers' ability to find good workers.
 2. There are siloed systems in place that have some plans to address foundational skills, but they are not connected with combined planning (as WIOA requires), and foundational skill development is not a priority in any one plan that cuts across agencies.
 3. There is not enough capacity in terms of resources and connectivity (internet access) to support the RI's who need foundational skill development.
 4. Each report or system has its own broad terms of how to address parts of this problem

Other observations:

- WIOA and Title 1 and Title 11 (Adult Education Act) call for supporting all levels of low skilled individuals which implies those lacking foundational skills.

- The United Way Report does not focus on employer connections or engagement other than to say government agencies and the Governor's office should serve to connect ABE to employers
- RIDE recognizes the need to develop foundational skills and connect to employers
 - Adult Ed partners providers and business partners can work together to provide career ready credentials and skills transcripts
 - Fund performance, monitor results
 - Delivery should be responsive and relevant to adult educational services
 - Partnering with school districts to complete employability skills
- CSIP does provide any real mention of foundational skills support but supports employer partnerships as a demand driven strategy that should prevail as well as a better networked government.
- If Real Jobs RI is the strategy then is important to mention:
In the RJRI funded projects there is one partnership that mentions low skilled: OIC (Opportunities Industrialization Center) and four other partnerships reference adult education or populations that could be considered in need of foundational skills: Man Up, IT Tech Collective, Westerly Regional, and Healthcare Collaborative

Action Items from this meeting:

Chair Rittscher: given what we just heard, what is the group thoughts?

- What are the policy points we want to emphasis? What do we need, and have to do, to move ahead?
 - Where does the UW report go from here?
 - Develop a definition of foundational skills, what does that mean and how do we disseminate the definition so we are all talking the same language?
 - Unified Approach: How does RIDE re-shape there system to supports needs of Adult Education and unify its efforts with other agencies like DLT etc.
 - The funds are the same from JDF but with some cuts overall? How do we reverse the trend?
 - Do we focus on the JDF funds and the outcomes that lead to employment, particularly for that funding stream?
 - Can Adult Ed having a bigger voice or are we happy with the way the current system is working / workforce development.

Dr. Less noted we need to endorse the united way report. We believe these are important goals, a workforce cabinet / WIOA State plan should reflect the need to improve foundational skills. We should continue the current movement to improve Adult Education services and make a recommendation to the board to endorse the report.

- Chair Rittscher noted of the 5 reports that came out in one year
 - All reports support engagement and partnership
 - Some suggest more resources or capacity building
 - Evidence of Effectiveness is also important
 - On the UW report Practitioners are well represented contributing an important voice to this effort.

The group Thanked Alexis Stern from United Way. They very pleased with the report.

Adjournment:

With no further business, Chair Rittscher asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Mario Bueno moved to approve. Paul McDonald seconded the motion.
The motion was passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Brown