

Policy Consult Findings/Recommendations

The policy recommendations came from the three breakout groups:

- 1) Why should workforce development boards care about education? And how can they effectively engage? - Mary Gardner Clagett, Director for National Workforce Policy, Jobs for the Future

The framing question:

The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) charges local boards to work with the education system to develop career pathways and other collaborative approaches to education and skill development. How do we see this system, support it, and achieve outstanding results for our communities?

Recommendations:

- Develop policy “ask” for systemic changes that need to occur around the use of LMI data when making human capital investments. Request \$1-10 million from DOL to assist with the implementation of this policy.
- Assess new ideas/concepts (e.g., badging and industry recognized credentials) and their success rate in the workforce system. Work to identify best practices and create awareness and potential funding options for scaling. (Alter the Eligible Training Provider List criteria to reflect the reach of eLearning providers and their potential to assist in this skill development.)
- Serve as primary go to for educating the new administration on WIOA with business approach.
- Advocate for more flexibility in the creation and adoption of industry recognized credentials that are stackable and transferable.
- Provide technical assistance to help workforce development boards understand the strategic role they play both regionally and nationally.
- Advocate for flexibility in the funding of employer specific skills gap training that may or may not result in a credential.

- 2) Need for greater flexibility in workforce development policy - Todd Gustafson, CEO, Kinexus

The framing question:

Regulations at the federal and state level affect all workforce boards. What hinders our work the most? What are the alternatives? What can we do to assure funders that we are effective and efficient in our operations and that our efforts lead to meaningful outcomes?

Recommendations:

- Grant boards the ability to determine their own service model.
- Add waiver authority to WIOA.
- Integrate funding across workforce programs.
- Ensure that non-WIOA legislation authorizing other workforce programs explicitly reinforces WIOA mandates (e.g., through language added during reauthorization).
- Ensure that states grant local boards the full measure of flexibility currently allowed in the federal regulations.

The group also identified as a priority to increase accountability at the local board level for organizational performance through the creation of common performance standards, including:

- Fiscal integrity;
- Use of data and metrics; and
- Creation and use of plans to address local needs and drive local economic vitality (vs focused solely on compliance).

3) Financing the workforce development system - Stuart Andreason, Senior Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

The framing question:

Who should fund “what” skill development? Federal Appropriations are nearly at all-time lows for non-defense domestic discretionary spending. Where is the funding coming from to maintain/enhance the skills of the labor force? What role do we think the private sector has in the system?

Recommendations:

- Actively seek increased employer financing.
- Decrease risk of implementation for workforce boards. (Indirect cost rates established by DOL are disincentives to participation in pay-for-performance.)
- Increase incentives for participation.
- Provide technical assistance.