

Governor's State Workforce Investment Board

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A National Workforce Education & Training Policy

The following excerpt is taken from the Executive Summary of the National Center On Education And The Economy (NCEE) publication, Toward a National Workforce Education and Training Policy.

Executive Summary

This is a critical time in our economic history. Demographers are projecting severe shortages in skilled workers in the next ten years. While the skills gap will be a crisis in 2010, the lack of basic skills, technical skills and competencies is an issue for industry right now. To meet this challenge, we need to invest in worker education and training.

In the next two years, the federal government will be reauthorizing a number of programs that affect workforce education and training: The Workforce Investment Act, the Higher Education Act, TANF, the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act. Now is the time to take a more strategic approach to workforce education and training and create a seamless, dynamic and sufficiently funded system for advancing the skills and credentials and productivity of our entire workforce. In order to meet the current and future demand for skilled workers, a strong, national system for workforce education and training requires us to:

1. Invest in training on a scale that supports the well being of the nation's economy so that it is not just a privilege for the lucky few.
2. Expand the scope of all federal training and education programs to reach incumbent workers, particularly those with low skill and income levels, and to help them advance to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages.
3. Use federal resources to leverage state, local and private investment in education and training.
4. Create stronger linkages with higher education programs and help to improve access, retention and success for working adults pursuing skills and credentials.
5. Strengthen connections between workforce training and employers, as well as with economic and community development initiatives/strategies, and fund interventions that engage the private sector.

Given the changes in skill demands and the dramatic demographic shifts in the next decade, the need to increase the skills and credentials of the nation's workforce has never been as urgent as it is today. Although the programs, services and resources that currently exist for workforce education and training are a good start, they do not yet make a fully functioning and dynamic system. We urge lawmakers to think broadly about the various components of the workforce education and training system and about how all of these different programs, services and incentives work together – or fail to work together – in the common goal of helping the nation meet skill and labor needs of today and in the future.

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You will find a direct link to our newsletters on the official State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) website:
www.discoveringmontana.com/gov2/css/boards/workforce/

Upcoming Events:

April 27 Rural Health Works Training Workshop – Helena, MT

April 27 - 28 Governor's Health Care Summit - Missoula, Montana

April 29 - May 1 Mountain Plains Adult Education Association 2004 Conference - Bozeman, MT

May 20 - 21 SWIB Meeting, Helena

June 8 - 9 JobLINC Partners Training - Billings, MT

June 10 - 11 JobLINC Partners Training – Missoula, MT

September 1-2 SWIB Meeting, Helena

September 23-24 Arbitration & Labor Relations Conference – Bozeman, MT

Governor's Safety & Health Award Nominations

Pam Watson

The Department of Labor and Industry is seeking nominations for the 2004 Governor's Awards for Safety and Health, to be presented at the Annual Governor's Conference on Workers' Compensation and Occupational Safety at the Big Sky Resort September 8-10, 2004. The purpose of the annual award is to recognize employers who have made outstanding achievements in improving safety and health in the workplace by initiating and updating programs in their individual companies. Commissioner Keating encourages every qualified employer in Montana to submit a nomination so they will have the opportunity to receive the recognition they so rightly deserve. Nominations are due by July 12, 2004.

This year Governor Martz will recognize employers who have made a commitment to safety in the workplace evidenced by ongoing safety programs, involving employees in the development of the in-house safety plan, and efforts to enhance programs by seeking advice and assistance from qualified professionals at the state and federal level.

Awards are categorized for large and small public employers, large and small private employers, and mining/mining related employers. Employers who would like to be recognized for their efforts in safety-related issues should contact the Safety Bureau at the Department of Labor and Industry in Helena, 406-444-6401, or visit the website at: www.montanasafety.com. ■

IPI Update

The technical team of the Integrated Performance Information (IPI) Project met in Miami April 1-2 to discuss the technical challenges facing integrated performance measures. A report will be made to the Accountability committee at their meeting on April 16th, and a full report of the progress of the IPI project will be made to the Board at the upcoming SWIB meeting in May.



Public Hearing on HJ 8

Pam Watson

A Hearing was held on April 3, 2004 by the Montana State-Tribal Affairs Legislative Committee concerning the HJ 8 Study. This meeting offered an opportunity for oral testimony to be heard from the public; written testimony may be submitted through April 30, 2004.

The purpose of the HJ8 study is to gather information relating to the dropout and graduation rates, and at-risk factors among American Indian students in Montana's public schools. The study will also obtain fiscal data on impacts to schools from which students drop out.

The committee will present study results to the 2005 Legislature. They will also develop a statewide strategic plan that will include recommendations to school districts to break the cycle of at risk factors and significantly reduce the drop out rate, while increasing the graduation rate of Montana's American Indian students. ■

Fourteenth Annual Career Development Conference

Pam Watson

Jobs for Montana's Graduates (JMG), Montana Career Association will be holding the Fourteenth Annual Career Development Conference in Butte at the Ramada Copper King Inn on May 5th.

The theme for this year's conference is "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams!" Students will take part in workshops and competitive events such as employment preparation, decision-making, public speaking, and life and math skills. The winners of the competitive events will receive awards at a luncheon ceremony.

JMG helps students to stay in school and provides career awareness so students can transition successfully from school to work. JMG is now in 41 schools throughout Montana, and have programs in nine reservation high schools, eight alternative high schools, the Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch, and the National Guard Youth Challenge Program. One feature of the JMG Program is the Montana Career Association, a student organization that develops self-esteem, leadership, civic responsibility and career awareness.

For more information on the JMG Program, contact their office at 444-4100. ■

JobLINC Partners Training Opportunity

Pam Watson

At their meeting on February 13, 2004, the SWIB Executive Committee voted unanimously on behalf of the SWIB to endorse a training opportunity for JobLINC partners to improve coordination of business services. The training is sponsored by the Montana State Employers' Council.

Kathy Yankoff, Business Services Coordinator for the Job Service Programs Bureau, Department of Labor & Industry, presented an overview of the training curriculum entitled, "Serving the Business Customer Through a System-Wide Approach" which will be targeted to teams of CMT staff from across the State. The training focuses on the business customer side of Montana's workforce system by using a systems approach to business outreach.

There will be two training sessions; one in Billings on June 7-8, and the second in Missoula on June 10-11. For additional information please contact Kathy at (406) 444-7092. ■