

The Board provides an opportunity for public comment by publishing the below announcement and a copy of the DRAFT plan on the agency's website. In addition, comments are solicited through the WDB membership, which includes representatives of business and labor organizations.

**PUBLIC NOTICE ANNOUNCEMENT** PUBLIC NOTICE to submit the 2018-2019 Workforce Regional Plan for the utilization of State and Federal Employment and Training Funds in Regional Workforce Development Area 1 (RWDA1).

RWDA 1 encompasses the Local WorkForce Development Areas 1 and 2 comprised of Northwest PIC and RMCEP. Services will be provided to employers, job seekers and workers through one-stop shopping at local WorkForce Centers. The operator of the centers is a partnership consisting of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Rural Minnesota CEP (RMCEP), NWPIC, Rehabilitation Services and State Services for the Blind. The WorkForce Development Board will ensure that the workforce investment system meets the labor market needs of its customers. RMCEP and NWPIC will provide Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), State Dislocated Worker Program, Minnesota Youth Program (MYP) and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) services. WIOA is a federal funded program designed to increase the occupational skills attainment, employment, job retention and earnings of participants in order to improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the nation. The State Dislocated Worker Program assists workers who lose their jobs because of layoff or plant closing. MYP provides summer jobs and basic work skills training for youth age 14-21. SCSEP provides part-time jobs for individuals age 55 and older. DEED utilizes Wagner-Peyser funds to provide a labor exchange, connecting job seekers with potential employers. Unemployment Insurance (UI), Veterans, Work Opportunities Tax Credit and Trade Adjustment Act programs are also accessed through DEED. The local plan is incorporated with economic development, education and local entities identified by the Workforce Development Board. RMCEP and NWPIC fully endorses the promotion of equal opportunity and non-discrimination in all aspects of employment and training including recruitment, selection, appointment, promotion, compensation and any other personal or programmatic action for RMCEP staff, participants or subcontractors. Comments should be submitted by May 28, 2018, to: Dan Wenner, Director Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. 803 Roosevelt Avenue P.O. Box 1108 Detroit Lakes, MN 56502-1108.

# **Regional Planning Area 1 - Regional Action Plan Recalibration**

## **Goal #1 – Establish Regional Leadership Approach (Regulation 679.510 a.1.i/v)**

### Deletions:

- None.

### Additions:

- Added DEED Workforce Strategy Consultant, DEED – DRS to Executive Committee.
- Business Development Champions
- MOU
- Regional Planning Budget.
- Definitions of additions to RWA
- Definitions of meeting expenses for RWA Members.
- Regional Planning Budget.
- Revised dates.

### What has worked well:

- Creation of an intermediary governance group (RWA) representing both WDA's and regional partners. This provided continuity of purpose in the broad 26 county region.
- Sub- delineation of the larger 26 county region to align with the established EDR districts. This allowed sub-region buy in to the larger 26 county regional plan. This also allowed for a more focused local approach in support of the larger regional plan deliverables.

### What has not work well:

- Finding a common location for RWA members to meet. Due to the vast 26 county region, many RWA and LWDB board members found it a burden to drive to meetings over 3 hours away. Note that the region is rural in nature, but remote in isolated corners.

### Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

- The Executive Planning Team will continue to explore additional locations for future regional meetings. Both LWBD's will also continue to solicit interest and engage new members to expand the Regional Workforce Alliance. The RWA will also attempt to expand locations of the regional meetings to allow members to highlight their own communities. This may lead to a reduction in travel for some, and an increase in travel for others. Common solutions will continue to be explored.

**Goal #2 – Establish an Agreement for Negotiating local levels of Performance (Regulation 679.510 a.1.viii)**

Deletions:

- None.

Additions:

- Revised dates.

What has worked well:

- Not required at this time (DOL TEGL).

What has not work well:

- Not required at this time. (DOL TEGL).

Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

- Waiting for DOL TEGL Guidance.

**Goal #3 – Identify and Implement 3 Regional Services (Career, Training, and/or Support Alignment Goals (Regulation 679.510.a.ii/vi).**

Deletions:

- None.

Additions:

- Identify/Add New Career Training Services.
- Branding/Customer Service Training.
- ABE Service Coordination with WIOA Youth Programs.
- Develop Mobile Workforce Services (LWDB 2).
- Revised dates.

What has worked well:

- Coordination of client services with ABE allowed for increased continuity of services for job seekers needing addition foundational skill development. Career pathways are starting to be defined and developed.
- Branding of workforce centers allows a common vision to be developed for the future.
- Mobile workforce center concept allowed for additional outreach to job seekers in remote locations reducing travel for job seekers to access workforce center services.

- The identification for increase in UI staffing in LWDBA helped identify the need for additional supports for unemployed job seekers in remote regions.

What has not work well:

- Although many partnership meetings were held with multiple WIOA Partners in the first two years of the regional planning cycle, a systems level approach will be necessary to identify common areas of crossover between state level agencies. It was identified that some state agencies have contradictory performance and operational goals that do not always align in a seamless manner with the new WIOA Legislation.
- WorkForce Center agency partners did not have an opportunity to further develop integrated career and training services with business. This was primarily due to the DEED change in direction and lay off of Business Service Representatives. Business outreach and WorkForce Center staff training in the area of business integration into the WIOA regional planning activities suffered as a result of these actions.

Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

- Agency partnership meetings will continue to occur. Areas of cross-over in workforce development will be identified. Plans will be developed to build on each agencies strengths and weaknesses. Efficiencies will be developed eliminating duplication of effort in regional job seeker services.
- With the addition of the DEED Workforce Strategy Consultants, work will continue to identify additional career and training solutions that serve job seekers, business and career pathway development.

**Goal #4 Coordination with Economic Development Services and Providers (Regulation 679.510 a.1.vii)**

Deletions:

None

Additions:

- Planned, developed and Implemented (3) regional Workforce Events.
- Involve ED with the sector partnerships in workforce, economic and community development.
- Revised dates.

What has worked well:

- Coordination with regional economic development commissions allowed for common threads to be identified and generated. The MADDO Develop MN plan has a human capital component that aligns well with the WIOA Regional Plan and allows for current and future alignment of mutually beneficial goal attainment. As an example (3) Workforce Summits were developed and implemented. This allowed for a common pathway forward in serving workforce development, economic development, community development and business.
- Coordination of partners on the EDR level allowed for identification of common regional and local themes and helped to identify overall approached to regional needs.

What has not work well:

- Given the vast region there are many city, county and regional economic development and community development agencies. Often, these agencies are small in nature and narrowly focused on micro level city or county issues and do not have the continuity with the broader region. Therefore, coordination on a macro level is a challenge.

Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

- Regional partners in workforce, economic and community development will continue to work together on the themes that were identified in the regional summits. A plan will be developed for continuity of the WIOA Regional Plans and the MADDO Develop MN plans.
- Coordination with local economic and community development agencies will continue to be an area of focus. Many of these entities attended the regional workforce summits and found common identifiers. Therefore, the local and county plans have started to come together.

**Goal #5 – Identify the Populations Experiencing Inequities in Educational and Employment Outcomes (State Plan Goal #1)**

Deletions:

- Explore Kumu.IO mapping tool

Additions:

- LWDB inclusion in Tribal Workforce Development Council (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe).
- Establishment of New Americans Workforce Development Committee.
- Revised dates.

What has worked well:

- Populations experiencing disparities in employment outcomes have come to know that the WIOA providers are welcoming and have many tools and job seeker supports. The DEED Equity Grants, although largely focused on the 5 county metro region have provided foundational support for small non-profits in the rural regions to work with others and to develop culturally inclusive workforce development solutions.
- Development of disability services with the DOL and MN Disability Employment Initiative and Ticket-to-Work programs have helped serve diverse populations.
- Engagement with the New Americans population in the region has proven to be a new and valuable partnership.
- Engagement with Tribal communities has allowed for increased integration of WIOA career and training services.
- Hiring workforce center staff from minority groups helps develop a trust between the programs we represent and the populations we serve. The Moorhead workforce center has had success hiring job counselors who represent the New Americans community. In that effort, cultural competency has increased.

What has not worked well:

- Acceptance of other cultures has not always been a priority for the predominantly Caucasian population in the region.
- Many small non-profits serving New Americans do not have the resources to sustain support to the populations they serve.
- Equity funding serving the 5 county metro region has not been consistently allocated to serve out-state needs.
- Development of trust with populations experiencing disparity takes a long, dedicated effort. Relationships tend to take a long time to develop. Efforts often start over when leaders representing diverse populations leave the effort. Turnover in leadership representing disparate populations tends to be high.

Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

Regional leadership is committed to continuing to work with the populations experiencing disparity with continued outreach to groups who represent those communities. The following points reflect the continued work within the WIOA Regional Plan:

- Developing stronger relationships with culturally based agencies will continue to be a priority.

- Emphasis on inclusion of under-represented populations as a remedy to the workforce shortage will continue to be an area of focus.

**Additional inclusions listed below are provided in reference to GWBD recommendations:**

**Goal #1** – To reduce educational, skills, training and employment disparities based on race, disability, disconnected youth, or gender.

**New Activity #1** - Further develop engagement strategies to serve Native and New American populations, disability populations and disconnected youth. Activities will include community based outreach, community focus groups, and roundtables to obtain relevant information to support these groups with meaningful, culturally based services and opportunities.

**New Activity #2** - Information from regional summits held early in 2018 will be utilized to develop and implement strategies to center on diversity as part of the solution to alleviate the critical workforce shortage in the rural regions. At those summits, information was provided by the MN Chamber and the DEED LMI, presenting data that support engagement with groups experiencing disparity as a possible partial solution to alleviate workforce shortages. Groups attending those summits have identified methodologies for community engagement.

**New Activity #3** - Attention will be given to out-of-school youth, women and minorities for inclusion of an under represented non-traditional population in employment fields that are primarily male dominated.

**New Activity #4** – Organizational Change Models will be explored highlighting activities that focus on client entered design for inclusion of minorities experiencing disparity in employment outcomes.

These ideas will be further developed in the years 3 – 4 of the WIOA Regional Planning effort.

**Goal #6 – Create 1-2 Business Led Sector Partnerships (Regulation 679.510 a.1.iii/iv/vii)**

Deletions:

None.

Additions:

- Share Career Pathway regional scan with Regional Workforce Strategy. Consultant, Job Counselor staff and other interested parties.
- Validate Career Pathways with RWA and Business Champions.
- Develop/ Business Engagement Training to direct Team activities combining WSC and Job Counselor Activities.
- Determine gaps and areas of need in Business Services.
- Bring WorkForce Center Staff together and integrate activities.

- Develop youth program career advisor and youth coordinator engagement strategy for development of internships and apprenticeships.
- Revised dates.

What has worked well:

- Development of a strategy to engage Business Champions/Leaders in the WIOA Regional Plan. In the of Spring 2017, (4) Rural LWDB's came together with Maher/Maher Associates to develop a plan that would serve a large portion of the state in workforce development. This action has provided consistency in development of business interaction, career pathway development, skills training and customer centered design.
- Incumbent Worker Training has worked well in areas where offered.
- Business awareness of workforce development services has increased through WIOA Regional Planning and RC3 outreach.

What has not worked well:

- Obtaining buy-in from business has been a long and arduous task. Businesses tend to undervalue government sponsored programs, often developing solutions for themselves within a narrow focus of individual business need.
- Elimination of DEED Business Service Representatives has reduced outreach to business, resulting in fewer opportunities to interact within the business community.
- Funding for Incumbent Worker Training has a direct benefit for business but is cumbersome for LWBD's and often not feasible within traditional formula funding sources.
- Usage of MJSP Incumbent Worker Training and Low Income Worker Funding is not aligned with WIOA career and training services or WIOA performance standards. This causes a disconnect in overall alignment with the WIOA and MJSP funding and further reducing potential for development of synergies within workforce development programs.
- DEED Business Development Services are not highly aligned within DEED Employment and Training to allow for support of WIOA career and training services.

Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

Regional leadership is committed to continuing work with the Business Led Sector Strategies through the Regional Work Force Alliance (RWA). The following points reflect the continued work within the WIOA Regional Plan:



- Continued staff support for the Regional Planning - Business Champion/Leaders Committee through development of objectives, strategies and outcomes for integration of business needs into the WIOA Regional Plan.
- Increased interaction with business through staff including the DEED Workforce Strategy Consultant, WIOA Regional Planning Coordinator, Rural Career Counseling Coordinator (RC3) and RMCEP Business Outreach Specialist.
- Develop and offer additional workforce summits and roundtables designed to obtain relevant information for the development of strategies to help solve the workforce shortage.
- In coordination with business, develop and offer Incumbent Worker Training where feasible.

**Additional inclusions listed below are provided in reference to GWBD recommendations:**

**Goal #2** – Build employer-led sector partnerships that expand the talent pipeline to be inclusive of gender, race, and disability to meet industry demands for a skilled workforce.

**New Activity #1** – Use data presented at regional summits and roundtables to help inform business of the availability of non-traditional and under-represented populations as a readily available source for workers. Example – promote recruitment and retention practices that support diversity.

**New Activity #2** – Interact with business and educational leaders to re-design training and career pathways for inclusion of under-represented populations. Example – support training inclusion of women in traditionally male-dominated career fields.

**New Activity #3** – Work with WIOA defined partners to prioritize organizational change for inclusion of underrepresented populations into WIOA career and training activities. Example – develop, and implement workforce solutions that include provision of customer-centered design.

These ideas will be further developed in the years 3 – 4 of the WIOA Regional Planning effort.

**Goal #7 – Stakeholders Engagement (State Plan – Strategic Element #2)**

Deletions:

None.

Additions:

- Create Sector Communities in Education.

- Establish new schedule of RWA Stakeholder Meeting for 2018.
- Revised dates.

What has worked well:

- Development of the Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA). This had increased the level of interaction between workforce systems partners and other regional partners as defined in the WIOA Legislation.
- Development of a strategy to include additional non-workforce system members into the Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA) to increase integration and communication within the larger region.
- Coordination of Rural Career Counselor Coordinator (RC3) with WIOA Regional Planning has increased the level of interaction with stakeholders within the region.
- Addition of the DEED Workforce Strategy Consultant has increased the level of integration within the business community in the region.

What has not worked well:

- Development of strategies and outcomes that supports a multi-system level performance criteria. Example – Higher Education's defined objective and performance criteria is often contradictory to WIOA performance criteria. This represents a disincentive for stakeholder engagement.
- Coordination of Tribal WIOA programs into WIOA Regional Planning efforts. WIOA Tribal programs appear to not be under the same requirements as WIOA Regional Planning regulations. This creates a challenge for development of synergies between WIOA career and training programs.
- The development and implementation of DEED Competitive Equity Grants has created an environment of disconnection between entities that could be working together toward common solutions.

Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

- The WIOA Regional Planning effort will continue to use the Regional Workforce Alliance (RWA) as a method for inclusion and development of a common framework for regional workforce development.
- Regional leadership is committed to support stakeholder engagement through the development of additional synergies between systems level partners as defined in the WIOA legislation.

- Regional planning leadership is committed to the identification of additional non-system partners for inclusion into WIOA Regional Planning activities.

**Goal #8 – Submission of Local Plans that align with the Regional Plan (Regulation 679.510 2.ii)**

Deletions:

None.

Additions:

- Revised dates.

What has worked well:

- Not required at this time

What has not work well:

- Not required at this time. (DOL TEGL).

Summary Solutions – Year 3 and 4:

- Contained within the Local Unified Plans (LUP) for LWDB1 and LWDB 2