

Governor's Workforce Board Rhode Island

Strategic Workforce Plan 2009-14 Objectives and Strategies



Objective 1.1 - Align Systems - Enhance workforce development, education and economic development public policy to be more efficient, effective and flexible so that all youth, workers and employers can access, opportunities, and to develop their skills and knowledge needed to participate in and contribute to the development of Rhode Island economy.

Strategy Menu¹

Goal 1

The Public
System Grows,
Retains and
Attracts Talent.

1.1.1 Align and strengthen industry partnerships around targeted, high-wage sectors. Create guidelines and expectations for industry partnership outcomes that involve secondary, postsecondary, workforce development, union, economic development, and industry representatives. Outcomes will include documentable resolution of skill gaps and shortages.

1.1.2 Institutionalize the interagency relationship between the Economic Development Corporation and the workforce development system through more formal arrangements.

1.1.3 Identify common goals and desired outcomes that are reflected in both the Governor's PK-16 Council and the Dept. of Labor and Training plans.

1.1.4 Identify common goals and desired outcomes that are reflected in both the CCRI 21st century workforce commission and the Dept. of Labor and Training plans.

1.1.5 Incorporate, when applicable, the RI Science and Technology Advisory Council's (STAC)'s blueprint for educating & training state residents in all federal and state-funded workforce training.

1.1.6 Increase outreach to unions and employers in industry partnerships to increase alignment of programming and enhance gainful employment or advancement options.

1.1.7 Establish a standing interagency and possibly interstate work group (Workforce Cabinet subcommittee) that monitors emerging funding opportunities and can mobilize rapidly to develop regional comprehensive, strategic joint responses (such as WIRED).

¹ Note: all strategies throughout the plan represent a menu of possibilities from which state leadership may select, based on available resources and changing economic conditions.

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1.1.8 Create standards for “work-plus-learn” models for newly employed low-skilled individuals and monitor the workforce system against the criteria.

1.1.9 Improve rehabilitation programs/services in a manner that increases employment outcomes through greater alignment with the workforce development system and better understanding of business needs and matching consumer interests, abilities and skills.

1.1.10 Deliver a training module for staff of the workforce development system around working with individuals with disabilities.

1.1.11 Appoint an interagency taskforce to evaluate and revise incentives that encourage business to hire ex-offenders.

1.1.12 Establish a work group of the Workforce Cabinet and others as needed to review best practices regarding entrepreneurship and business management training.

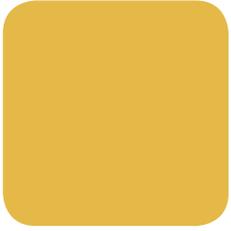
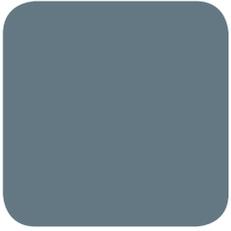
1.1.13 Ensure mutual representation, participation and communication across all workforce, education and economic development related boards, commissions and councils.

1.1.14 Assign the Adult Education Committee to identify best practices in working with newly-arrived immigrant populations in workforce development and adult education. Include community leaders from host communities on the taskforce.

Objective 1.2 - Eliminate Barriers - Establish and implement a systematic approach to the elimination of policy, administrative, and programmatic barriers in order to facilitate more efficient and effective interaction among private industry, individuals and the public workforce development system to more efficiently and effectively collaborate.

Strategy Menu

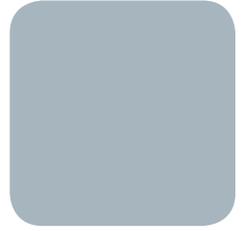
1.2.1 Create an interagency taskforce to establish an on-going process for identifying policy barriers by 2010. We want to identify policies that inhibit people from obtaining work, retaining work, moving up in the workplace, and accessing higher skills. We want to identify public policy that discourages employers from upskilling their workforce. Our success in eliminating barriers will be demonstrated by improved



customer satisfaction (both employers and job seekers) and a better return on investment.

1.2.2 Establish an interagency taskforce to review potential federal waivers for WIA, TANF, and other programs that allow waivers to better align federally-funded workforce development programs with the Rhode Island Industry Skills Development Initiative and other non-WIA programs.

1.2.3 Appoint a taskforce comprised of representatives of state and local career and technical education from the secondary and postsecondary levels and from Industry Partnerships to establish guidelines for utilizing business advisory councils.



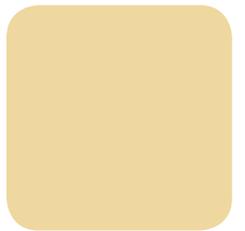
Objective 1.3 - Create a Value-Added Public System - Create a workforce intelligence system that has the capability to inform the development of relevant, agile, and timely skill training for growth industries in a rapidly-changing economy.

Strategy Menu

1.3.1 Develop and implement methods to identify and resolve workforce supply issues.

1.3.2 Engage Industry Partnerships with One-Stop Career Centers to conduct on-site activities including recruitment, assessment, interviewing of training applicants and the provision of training.

1.3.3 Connect regional Community Based Organizations (Community Based Organizations & Faith-Based Organizations) to One-Stop Career Centers to increase referrals and access to services.



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Objective 1.4 – Increase Effectiveness. Create an evaluation agenda and system to assess effectiveness, performance and customer satisfaction for the entire workforce development system to ensure improved outcomes on measures of interest and greater customer satisfaction results.

Strategy Menu

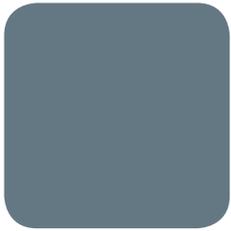
1.4.1 Establish an interagency work group (Workforce Cabinet subcommittee) charged with developing a set of measures and minimum goals where possible, across all agencies involved in workforce development and creating an implementation plan that includes the evaluation and alignment of agency information systems.

Objective 1.5 – Increase Efficiency. Redesign the workforce development system architecture in a manner that increases access and yields higher levels of cost efficiency as demonstrated by cost efficiency and return on investment studies.

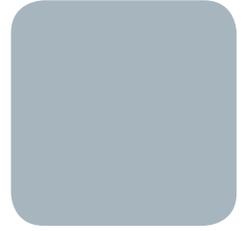
Strategy Menu

1.5.1 Use the procurement process for the next 3-year funding cycle to streamline the number of providers and networks serving Adult Education, youth and netWORKri.

1.5.2 Conduct net impact studies of the workforce development system and return of investment studies every two years.



Objective 1.6 – Increase Capacity. Create access to well-trained and adequately compensated workforce development professionals to ensure quality of services throughout the workforce development system.



Strategy Menu

1.6.1 Each state agency that provides workforce and economic development-related programs will provide access and incentives for frontline professionals throughout the entire system to complete competency-based training that leads to high-standard, widely-recognized and Governor’s Workforce Board and/or Board of Regents-approved certification.

1.6.2 The Rhode Island Department of Adult and Secondary Education, Office of Adult and Career and Technical Education, will develop for Governor’s Workforce Board and Board of Regents-endorsement or approval work-based preparation, development, credentialing, and compensation systems for adult education professionals.

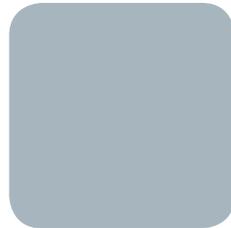
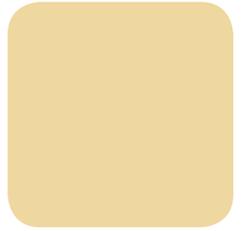
Objective 1.7 –Support a Culture of Lifelong Learning. Establish a systematic approach towards the development of a culture of lifelong learning as demonstrated by increased rates of participation in adult education programs and increased enrollment of working adults in postsecondary education and industry training.

Strategy Menu

1.7.1 Develop and implement a lifelong learning marketing campaign.

1.7.2. Distribute public information to youth, workers and employers to make them aware of all programs, including non-traditional methods of receiving training such as e-learning, and information available to them as well as to encourage their use.

1.7.3 Promote and integrate family support and asset building skills throughout the workforce system.



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Goal 2

Employers
Attract and Retain a
Highly Skilled
Workforce.

Objective 2.1 – Increase Employer Investments in Incumbent Workforce Training. Increase employer investments in incumbent workforce training.

Strategy Menu

2.1.1 Increase awareness, access and use by employers and streamline approval process of the various state and federal job training tax credits, such as the RI Investment Tax Credit, RI Job Training Tax Credit and the Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit (i.e. allowing GWB approval of the tax credits after the training is accomplished). Evaluate workforce tax credits for effectiveness and change as needed.

2.1.2 Require that any private company or industry partnership receiving public workforce development grant funds commit to providing job shadowing opportunities and/or teacher externships with local high school(s) or career and technical school(s) that expose youth and educators to industry and career opportunities and pathways.

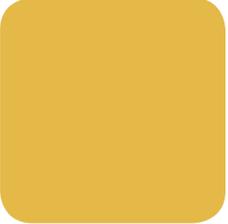
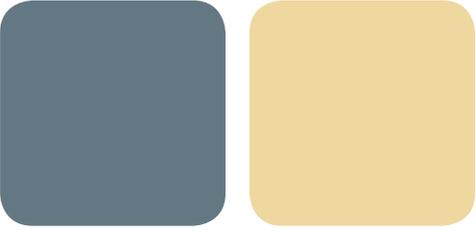
2.1.3 Require that Industry Partnerships receiving workforce development grants through the GWB and LWIBs match grant funds by a minimum of 25% with private investment.

2.1.4 Identify, expand, and grow employer-based training.

Objective 2.2 – Increase the Number of Self-Sustaining Jobs. Increase the number of employers offering opportunities for upward mobility through career pathway development.

Strategy Menu

2.2.1 Increase training resources annually that focus on high wage sectors that provide workers with good opportunities to move from lower paying entry level positions to higher-wage positions. Strategically invest limited resources in the six industry sectors that pay above the national average wage.



Objective 2.3 – Increase Employer Involvement in Apprenticeships. Increase employer involvement, including those from high-demand and high-wage industries, with the state’s Apprenticeship Council and apprenticeship program as demonstrated by an increased number of apprenticeship opportunities.

Strategy Menu

2.3.1. Complete a comprehensive evaluation of the RI Apprenticeship Program.

2.3.2. Identify the range of apprenticeable occupations. Identify employers in the state who employ individuals in those occupations. Direct the workforce system’s business and industry representatives to call upon those employers individually to discuss the value of apprenticeships and identify any barriers to using the apprenticeship model that could be removed.

Objective 2.4 – Expand Skill Partnerships. Expand the reach, influence and coordination of regional and industry skills partnerships that engage employers in addressing both worker supply and employer issues which impact our economic prosperity as demonstrated by a greater number of formal partnerships and a greater number of employers engaged in each partnership.

Strategy Menu

2.4.1 Establish industry partnerships for emerging sectors.

2.4.2 Establish a task group to develop incentives for employers to increase the number of employers offering student internships and educator externships.

2.4.3 Evaluate, promote and incentivize the provision of worker retention services by RI employers.

2.4.4. Support industry partnership through quarterly Governor’s Workforce Board-facilitated information sharing and technical assistance re: effective practices.

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Objective 2.5. – Increase Credentials. Increase the number of employer-certified, transportable training programs and credentials as documented by a statewide inventory of training programs leading to industry-recognized credentials.

Strategy Menu

2.5.1 Conduct and maintain a statewide inventory of existing training programs and credentials to determine where gaps might exist and what overlap or duplication might be corrected.

2.5.2 Convene quarterly industry sector forums, led by Industry Partners that develop industry specific training programs and credentials that are transportable; map employers' worker supply and workforce issues, resulting in actionable plans; and assist companies in the development of career ladder pathways for their prospective workforce.

Objective 2.6 – Increase Fill Rate of High Wage Jobs. Increase the rate at which vacant, high-wage jobs get filled as documented by the number and length of time high wage, high skill job postings remain unfilled in the state's job matching system.

Strategy Menu

2.6.1 Link workforce development job matching system to all post-secondary institutions to capture graduates in the system.

2.6.2 Increase the percentage of employer postings for high-skilled, high-wage job postings.

2.6.3 Increase the accuracy and relevancy of employer job postings.

2.6.4 Enhance the service delivery model of the One-Stop Career Center system by upgrading and implementing draft technologies and other organizational methods to increase accessibility (including for the incarcerated), build system capacity, and engage jobseekers and employers through a virtual One-Stop system that includes online applications through self-service portals, skill assessment tools, educational assessment tools.

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Goal 3

The Adult Workforce
is Skilled
and Agile.

Objective 3.1 – Increase Employment Rates of Special Populations. Beginning with 2010 as the baseline year, increase every year the employment rate of Rhode Islanders who face significant barriers to employment, such as those with disabilities, ex-offenders, and other special populations.

Strategy Menu

3.1.1 Incorporate the knowledge, expertise and experience of the Rhode Island State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program to the workforce investment system.

3.1.2 Work collaboratively with netWORKri and Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) to educate community organizations serving adults with developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance abuse about the employment resources available through the One Stop System in RI.

Objective 3.2 – Increase Workforce Attachment. Increase workforce attachment (staying power to a job) for minimum-skilled, low-wage individuals.

Strategy Menu

3.2.1 Establish a systematic approach to eliminate the barriers and provide supports for minimum-skilled, low-wage individuals, including those with limited abilities to maintain attachment to the workforce.

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Goal
Three

Adult
Workers

Strategy Menu

3.3.1 Adopt a career pathway model that is transferable across industry sectors upon approval of this plan.

3.3.2 Implement ramp and bridge programs that integrate basic and occupational skills. Higher education is inaccessible to individuals who lack the foundational skills to succeed. Bridge programs have long been used to help low-skilled individuals transition from adult education to postsecondary education and careers, but there are many who lack even the ability to participate in bridge programs. Ramp programs serve to help the lowest skilled adults get on the educational road to ultimate success. Because adults have themselves and often others to support, we must accelerate their travel on this road.

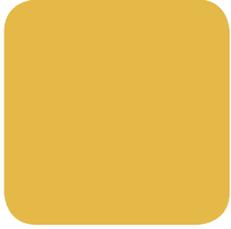
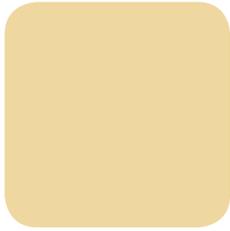
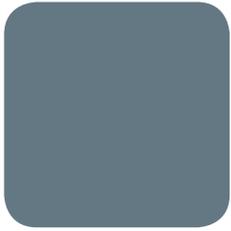
Objective 3.4 Increase Skill Attainment Rate. Increase the number of adults with significant barriers to employment (including those with disabilities, the incarcerated, welfare recipients and adults with limited English proficiency) that are able to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the changing economic demands of our state and to assure the opportunity of their participation in the workforce, for their own benefit and the prosperity of the state.

Strategy Menu

3.4.1 Utilize the Vocational Rehabilitative (VR) program and its team of professionally trained and qualified counselors to offer evaluation and assessment, vocational counseling and guidance, job development and placement, and support to assist people with disabilities to go to work.

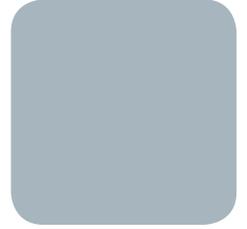
3.4.2 Develop a marketing strategy to increase the awareness of RI's employers about the benefits and financial incentives for hiring people with developmental disabilities, mental illness and other special populations.

3.4.3 Work collaboratively with netWORKri and ORS to educate community organizations serving adults with developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance abuse about the employment resources available through the One-Stop System in Rhode Island.



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3.4.3 Work collaboratively with netWORKri and ORS to educate community organizations serving adults with developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance abuse about the employment resources available through the One Stop System in RI.



Objective 3.5 – Increase Credential Rates. Increase the number of postsecondary and industry credentials.

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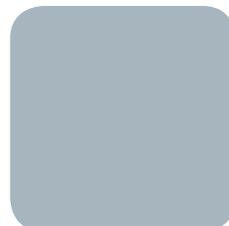
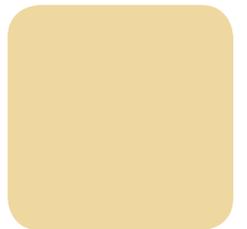
3.5.1 Conduct an inventory of existing credentials to determine where gaps might exist and what draft credentials could be created.

3.5.2 Increase the number of options, including credentialed, virtual training, available on the Eligible Training Provider List.

3.5.3 Increase the number of adult learners who establish a goal to continue their education at the postsecondary level and who entered postsecondary education or training after program exit.

3.5.4 Develop jointly with post secondary institutions an institutional model for improving access to financial and academic supports for adult learners.

3.5.5 Increase the accessibility of postsecondary education for working adults.



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Objective 3.6 – Increase Participation in Adult Education.
Increase the number of participants in adult education.

Strategy Menu

- 3.6.1 Align the workforce development system with the adult education system (cross-referral/capacity).
- 3.6.2 Expand and diversify funding for adult education services to reach a total investment of \$25 million.
- 3.6.3 Expand Welcome Back Center service capacity to other sectors and double service levels and outcomes.
- 3.6.4 Refine student leadership and engagement model to engage at least 100 students or alumni on an ongoing basis in adult education system improvement efforts.
- 3.6.5 Develop and implement a recruitment strategy and create instructional guidance for working with adults with considerable learning disabilities.
- 3.6.7 Alter system's funding mix to ensure that at least 50% of all adult education resources go toward programs that integrate adult education, training, and wraparound support services in support of career pathways in critical sectors.
- 3.6.8 Increase recruitment strategy for referring Veterans incorporating Government Issue (G.I.) benefits and other programs.

Objective 3.7 – Integrate Basic Skills Training with Occupational Skills Training. Build capacity for contextualized learning for ABE, GED and ESL integrated with occupational skills training.

Strategy Menu

- 3.7.1 Create and support innovative programs that allow for credit work experience, dual enrollment in ASE and post secondary/training.
- 3.7.2 Develop and support at minimum one pilot dual enrollment program in each adult education network.

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Goal 4

Youth Are Ready for
Work and Lifelong
Learning.

Objective 4.1 – Increase Access to Work-Preparedness Activities.
Increase the number of youth who have access to and participate in work-preparedness activities.

Strategy Menu

4.1.1 Expand the number of youth connected to the youth workforce development system by allowing organizations, such as Community Based Organizations, Faith-Based Organizations and local education agencies to link to the system through the provision of their core competencies.

4.1.2 Ensure that 50% of the youth connected to the youth workforce development system engage in work experiences, internships or part-time job opportunities and that 30% of those served will move into post-secondary opportunities such as short-term certified training, apprenticeships or post-secondary schooling.

Objective 4.2 – Decrease Postsecondary Remediation Rates.
Increase the number of youth, who upon high school graduation, can immediately enter postsecondary courses, institutions, and programs without remediation and/or can enter the workforce (already possessing the necessary work-readiness skills).

Strategy Menu

4.2.1 Increase the number of youth engaged in work-based learning.

4.2.2 Embed and regulate workforce development standards in the RIDE high school content standards and provide a framework to help schools succeed.

4.2.3 Expose all K-12 students to the world of work through career awareness programs provided at each grade level.

4.2.4 Increase the number, diversity and quality of high school-level academic, technical and career-focused programs of study in order to serve the substantial majority of students who could benefit from such options.

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4.2.5 Increase the percentage of youth who can immediately enter for-credit postsecondary courses without remediation.

4.2.6 Expand bridge programming that promotes more students going on to postsecondary education, such as dual enrollment activity and apprenticeship.

4.2.7 Allow students engaged in approved out of school work-based learning programs to count this activity toward their high proficiency-based graduation requirements.

4.2.8 Require that all CTE students must meet all high school graduation and college-ready requirements in order to be awarded their CTE skill certificate.

4.2.9 Ensure that workforce training programs provided to incarcerated youth are consistent with the statewide educational standards.

Objective 4.3 – Increase the Capacity of Youth-Serving Organizations. Increase the capacity of all youth-serving state agencies to support at-risk youth in their ability to have a productive work life.

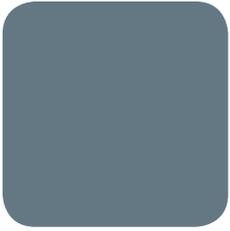
Strategy Menu

4.3.1 Increase the opportunities for special needs youth to have access to work preparedness activities prior to graduation from high school.

4.3.2 Increase the number of Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) involved youth and youthful offenders who are served by each Youth Center.

4.3.3 Establish a Youth Center at the Rhode Island Training School and at the Department of Corrections (DOC).

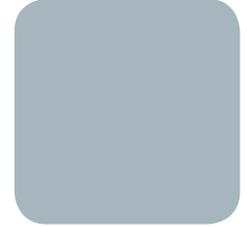
4.3.4 Establish a baseline as to the percentage of DCYF involved youth and youthful offenders who are attending school full time and/or are engaged in meaningful full time employment.



4.3.5 Improve rehabilitation services in a manner that increases employment outcomes for youth through better understanding of business needs and matching consumer interests, abilities and skills.

4.3.6 Link the youth workforce development system with proven mentoring programs that connect at-risk youth with caring adults.

4.3.7 Identify and re-engage at-risk youth in education and work-based learning.



Objective 4.4 – Increase Youth Participation in Apprenticeships. Increase the number of youth enrolled in labor-sponsored and other apprenticeship programs.

Strategy Menu

4.4.1 Embed an apprenticeship track in the high schools allowing for programs of study to begin in the 9th grade so that students graduate high school having completed all course work and labor hours allowing for the transition into full-time employment post graduation.

4.4.2 Support outreach and demonstration projects that foster the increase of youth enrollment in apprenticeship programs.

Objective 4.5 – Increase Youth with Credentials. Increase the number of youth with a high school credential or diploma.

Strategy Menu

4.5.1 Partner with the RI Department of Education to leverage funding and ensure all RI Youth Centers offer GED courses.

4.5.2 Increase the number of youth remaining in and graduating from high school by creating alternative and innovative pathways for youth to obtain traditional credits (e.g. virtual learning).

4.5.3 Increase the number of alternative learning programs that address non-traditional learners and provide for more experiential learning.



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4.5.4 Increase the number, diversity, and quality of CTE programs in order to serve the substantial majority of high school students who would benefit from such programs.

4.5.5 Institute Industry-Recognized Certificates for all Career and Technical Education Programs.

Objective 4.6 – Increase Educator Understanding of the Labor Market. Increase the number of educators in externships and expand their knowledge of resources available to support their understanding of workforce development and the contemporary labor market.

Strategy Menu

4.6.1 Increase the utilization rate of labor market and workforce development resources available for teachers and guidance counselors. (Examples: industry tours, netWORKri One-Stop Career Centers, placement agencies, youth centers, post-secondary career centers)

4.6.2 Establish incentives (such as the use of continuing education credits) that increase teacher participation in externships.