



Collaboration for Success

Partnering with Registered Apprenticeship

Workforce
florida, inc.



Progress Report June 2011

**Collaboration for Success
Partnering with Registered Apprenticeship
Status Report (June 2011)**

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Executive Summary

With the economy in the doldrums, job creation is at the forefront of everyone's strategic concerns. Over a year ago the Florida's educational governance recognized the synergies that exist between two workforce entities – The **Workforce Florida, Inc. (WFI)** with the **Workforce Boards** and **Registered Apprenticeship**. In an effort to explore joint opportunities, these two agencies banded together and created the **“Florida Collaboration for Success” Clinic**. Participants sought to first understand the roles and responsibilities of each organization; then, to create plans for the two to work together toward joint goals. These joint goals focus on communication, joint meetings, sharing of information, pilot programs and re-alignment of funding to provide Florida employers highly skilled employees.

A Harvard University report (referenced later in this report) explains the dilemma with today's educational system. The popular notion of “college-ready” has been the norm for a long time; when in reality approximately half of our students in this country will not graduate college, and without skill based training will not be able to support themselves and families.

In Florida, the numbers are worse. It is estimated that 70% of those students entering the ninth grade will not graduate from college. That is why apprenticeship and workforce training is vital for Florida's educational program. For pre-apprenticeship programs - beginning in high schools with students 16 years or older - Florida is highlighted as being a 21st century career and technical education model. You will find related information at the conclusion of this report.

The **Collaboration for Success initiative** has gotten the two sides – **Registered Apprenticeship and the local Workforce Board organizations** – talking, and although there are some philosophical and language barriers to overcome, their models are ironically not that far apart. The Registered Apprenticeship model of the “learn, earn and succeed” model, sounds quite similar to the Workforce mantra of the “to learn, apply knowledge and create wealth” model.

Following is a recap of the plans created at the **Florida Collaboration for Success Clinic**, and what has been accomplished to date. The dead economy has sidetracked many of the plans. There is hope, however, to resurrect the mission and continue on. These two agencies have too much in common and too much at stake to not proceed with joint efforts. The ultimate goal is to provide existing and future employers in Florida motivated, highly skilled workers to compete in the global economy.

Review of Collaboration for Success (CfS) Clinic

The Florida Collaboration for Success Clinic was held at the Center for Innovation and Economic Development site in downtown Gainesville, Florida on Tuesday, April 21, 2010. The attendees represented stakeholders in state and local workforce development, state (community) colleges, school districts, Department of Corrections, Juvenile Justice and both joint and non-joint construction and manufacturing apprenticeship. Both the Agency for Workforce Innovation and the Department of Education were represented.

Goals of Clinic

The goals of the Collaboration for Success Clinic are:

- Understand Workforce Florida (WFI)
- Understand Registered Apprenticeship (RA)
- Understand Interaction – WFI & RA
- How Do WFI & RA Work Together – In the Workforce Strategic Plan
- Guidance from WFI to RA for Speaking the Same Language, and Vice Versa

Results

A collaborative partnership begins with a vision of what the partnership will look like in the future. The collaborative vision between workforce and apprenticeship includes the following elements:

- Make a sea change
- “Learn, earn and succeed” training model
- Mainstream approach
- Sustainable funding model
- Adult career pathway
- Customer focused
- Collaboration/partnership
- Integrated part of the “talent supply chain”
- Elevate image & respect of apprenticeship
- Career path concept
- Employer/demand driven
- Job creation and re-employment

Following is the vision statement crafted for the partnership between workforce and apprenticeship in Florida:

“Develop and maintain a sustainable collaborative partnership between Florida’s workforce, registered apprenticeship, and education systems that recognizes the strengths of the existing earn, learn and succeed apprenticeship model to become an integral part of the talent supply chain. Emphasis will be placed on emerging industries and technologies to meet current and future customer demand.”

This vision encapsulates the future of the collaborative partnership between workforce and apprenticeship. The partnership recognizes the ***earn, learn and succeed*** model of apprenticeship as an integrated part of Workforce developing a sustainable and successful talent supply chain for Florida’s expanding economy. Although all industries will be included as beneficial recipients of this partnership, emphasis will be given to those high profile and emerging industries and technologies that Florida has targeted and successfully attracted to expand the state’s economy.

Moving Forward

The Collaboration for Success group strongly recommended continuing the dialog between Workforce and Registered Apprenticeship – Communication, Communication and Communication.

The steps outlined in the initial report and the status of June 2011 is summarized below:

1. Present these concepts and ideas at a workforce partnership meeting. Partnership meetings include 24 workforce board presidents along with AWI (Agency for Workforce Innovation) and Workforce Florida Inc. people. These meetings are held quarterly. **The result:** Unfortunately and by no fault of trying this event did not take place. Other priorities of Workforce such as dealing with historically high unemployment in their areas have delayed this information meeting.
2. Develop a plan was to continue the communication of the apprenticeship training model to local workforce organizations and One Stop staff. **The result:** The apprenticeship consultant developed collateral materials and distributed them via the regional apprenticeship training representatives (ATRs) organization to Workforce and One Stop. All ATRs were encouraged to develop and maintain effective and continuous relationships with their local workforce boards so that apprenticeship becomes part of the regular course of business for workforce and workforce becomes a regular course of business for apprenticeship.
3. Link and prominently display each partner’s icon on their respective websites. This will keep the communication mantra moving. A brief description of what each partner does may be included above the link. **The result:** This has not been accomplished.
4. Invite and encourage participation in the meetings previously suggested. **The result:** The partners **have not** invited each other to be a regular attendee at each other’s

meetings - Workforce representation to the State Apprenticeship Advisory Council Meetings and Registered Apprenticeship representation to the Workforce Partnership Meetings.

5. Develop a pilot program for the partnerships to work together to introduce the apprenticeship training model to that industry that is currently expanding its jobs. **The result:** This program is currently being worked on. Refer to the pilot program section of this report.
6. And lastly, both Workforce and RA recommended a need to go back to its funding and organizational roots and identify those misalignments that will hinder the full development and success of the partnership. For example, Workforce may need to identify the misalignment of how it receives its funding and the constraints put on those funds which work against apprenticeship funding. Also, Florida DOE may need to look at the 70% of its students that do not go to college and offer incentives to those Registered Apprenticeship providers and employer organizations that offer a career path through apprenticeship. In addition, RA will need to identify its funding mechanism through its educational partners (LEAs) to better communicate this mechanism for workforce to be incentivized. **The result:** This initiative is ongoing for both Workforce and Apprenticeship. The initial findings are described in the further findings section of this report. However, neither group has recommended a sustainable funding mechanism for the partnership to be successful.

It was clear that Workforce and RA can both benefit their constituents by collaboratively working together. There are many synergies between the groups that if nurtured and allowed to grow can provide many benefits to businesses, workers and Florida's future.

Follow-up from the Collaboration for Success Clinic

As mentioned above, there has been a minimal amount of active follow-up to the suggestions outlined from the Collaboration of Success Clinic. There are many reasons for the slow follow-up. First, the State Apprenticeship Director retired a couple of months after the clinic was held and a new director named. The new Apprenticeship Director has been active in learning apprenticeship and getting familiar with the grant and clinic results.

However, there have been a number of attempts from RA to follow the clinic outline with Work Force with minimal success. RA has not been successful to coordinate a meeting around the Work Force Partnership meetings due to scheduling conflicts. Florida has been hit hard by the recession and resulting high unemployment, topping at over 12% statewide. The Work Force Boards have been under extreme stress in addressing their regional unemployment issues and thus apprenticeship has not been a focus to them. Therefore, RA has taken a different approach in moving this project forward. We have chosen two Work Force Boards,

FloridaWorks (Gainesville) and WorkNet Pinellas (St. Petersburg) to approach and partner. Both staff executives, Angela Pate, Executive Director Florida Works and Edward Peachey, President/CEO WorkNet Pinellas have been very cooperative and are favorably inclined to the apprenticeship training model as a tool to expand and promote its resources to local businesses.

Registered Apprenticeship has conducted internal meetings with all of its ATRs across the state. Collateral materials have been developed including a PowerPoint presentation and postcard placards that are used to communicate the benefits of apprenticeship to Workforce Development, Employers and Apprentices. Examples of these collateral materials are included at the back of this report. The ATRs have been visiting local One Stop Centers, the outreach arm organizations of Workforce to supply them these materials.

Meetings with both Mrs. Pate and Mr. Peachey have revealed further insight into a few of the specific hurdles that exist between workforce and RA for a true collaboration to be successful. There are three main issues to the distance between local Workforce and RA.

First - since the split in Florida of Apprenticeship with Labor back in the late 90's, workforce has not been involved with apprenticeship as a worker training model. It is evident that workforce does not know what apprenticeship is. And on the flip side, RA does not know what workforce is. This was evident and was a take-away from the Collaboration for Success Clinic. Therefore, both workforce and RA need to be educated about each other's role and responsibility to the citizenship of Florida. This is a training and cooperation problem that needs to be addressed.

Second - the Florida workforce model is run primarily by business people who understand and run their ship by definable strategic and business planning models. If it isn't in the strategic plan and specifically outlined in a business plan, it does not receive any focus. Apprenticeship is not addressed in either the WFI's strategic plan as identified and outlined in the Collaboration for Success Clinic and thus is not further addressed in any of the 24 local workforce business plans. And on the other hand, Registered Apprenticeship does not have written and definable strategic or business plans. As expected from such a situation, there is a definite culture clash between these two organizations.

Third – the apprenticeship funding model is a big issue. There is currently no monetary incentive for workforce or their business partners to participate in apprenticeship. Money is always a thorny subject and the current funding mechanism for apprenticeship needs to change for workforce to be involved. Current funding for apprenticeship is controlled through the community or state college system or local county school authorities. Neither of these Department of Education institutions has their local workforce boards financially participating in their local apprenticeship initiatives. Therefore, without workforce participation, expansion of apprenticeship is limited.

These three issues must be addressed for future success of the apprenticeship training model in Florida. Apprenticeship training is employer based and the further apprenticeship gets from

the employer, the weaker it will become. Workforce is the employers' representative and the focal point of the worker. The model could be changed to focus on the worker through the employer (workforce) not through the formal educational system (RA). This would change the model to a demand driven apprenticeship model from the current supply driven model.

A demand driven apprenticeship model of workforce education would put control of training in workforce and the employer's responsibility. Workforce has a good barometer of job demand and where its training needs to be focused. Workforce has the relationships with their employers and communicates with them regularly. Workforce actively participates in identifying and recruiting future employers to a region and could work apprenticeship into new business incentive offerings.

In addition from the supply side, workforce has a good focus on marketing these job opportunities and apprenticeship to high schools. Some effective workforce models include running career fairs and scheduling employers into high school classes. In addition, workforce can reach and make guidance counselors quickly aware of the changing workforce trends and opportunities in apprenticeship.

Putting workforce and their employers in charge of apprenticeship is the best way to create a higher skilled and flexible workforce that satisfies their future talent supply chain needs. Apprenticeship is workforce education and workforce needs to be involved.

Pilot Programs

Pilot programs are being designed and suggested for the FloridaWorks workforce organization in Region # 9, Alachua/Bradford Counties and for WorkNet Pinellas, region 14, Pinellas County. These pilot programs will be based on an analysis from the data supplied by the Labor Market Information (LMI) section of the Agency for Workforce Innovation that prepares quarterly supply / demand reports to the Regional Workforce Boards. The latest report, April 2011, will be analyzed for their respective areas. "Attachment A" is a copy of the April LMI labor report for both workforce regions.

The first step in the process is to identify the occupations that may fit the apprentice earn, learn, succeed model. RA initially took on the responsibility of identifying these job areas to suggest the appropriate pilot program. However, after diligent research by RA, it was evident that new programs cannot be suggested without input and research by the workforce board. Apprenticeship is a work-study program, not a study-work program. Designing a joint apprentice pilot program by RA is difficult without input and cooperation from both RA and Workforce. Therefore, RA has met a second time with the Pinellas Workforce Board President, Ed Peachy, and solicited more collaboration in designing a pilot program.

WorkNet Pinellas has held a series of industry specific forums – healthcare, manufacturing / aviation, construction, information technology and financial / professional services. These

forums have brought industry leaders within specific sectors to discuss their top needs and priorities. Industry leaders and local education representatives discussed topics such as industry specific trends, employment and educational needs for their industry and individual companies. The results of these Collaborative Industry Forums are outlined in “Attachment B”. More detailed information and a synopsis of these sessions can be found at www.worknetpinellas.org. Two synopsis reports are included in “Attachment B”: the Manufacturing/Aviation Focus Group held February 16, 2011 and the Information Technology Industry Focus Group held April 27, 2011.

RA will tap into this information network and partner with WorkNet to design an industry specific pilot program. Industry business partners will be solicited to work and sponsor the program. There continues to be conference calls and specific activities to accomplish at both RA and WorkNet Pinellas to identify employers, job categories and a specific apprenticeship pilot model to design.

The FloridaWorks pilot program has been put on hold pending the outcome of the WorkNet Pinellas pilot program. However, there is every expectation that FloridaWorks will be cooperative and accommodating for the second pilot program to be developed.

Further Findings

The Harvard University report titled “Pathways to Prosperity, Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century” concludes that workforce training is undeniable, yet not popular. The popular notion of “college-ready” has been the norm for a long time. There needs to be more emphasis on “career-ready” education as it is estimated that approximately half of our students in this country will not graduate college and without skill based training will not be able to support themselves and families. This is called the, “skills gap” in which many young adults lack the skills and work ethic needed for many jobs that pay a middle-class wage, according to the report.

In Florida, the numbers are worse. It is estimated that 70% of those students entering the ninth grade will not graduate from college. Yet it is also estimated that the majority of job demand in the future will be for applicants with post-secondary licenses or certificates – credentials short of an associate’s degree. It is also a fact that those people with those licenses or certificates earn more than the average bachelor’s degree recipient according to the Harvard study.

However, for pre-apprenticeship programs, those programs beginning in high schools with students 16 years or older, Florida is highlighted in the report as being a 21st century career and technical education model:

“And in 2007, FLORIDA passed an act that mandates comprehensive reform of CTE. The law requires that new CTE programs be designed to meet a real workforce need, and that CTE students should earn high-quality industry-recognized certifications,

so they are more easily employable. To date over 20,000 young people have graduated with such industry-recognized certificate. To help raise the prestige of CTE, the law also considers CTE courses equivalent to AP and other advanced academic courses in the state's grading system for high schools. A core aim of Florida's new approach is to raise the graduate rate by offering students more high-quality, relevant programs of study." Page 27 of the Harvard study, "Pathways to Prosperity,..."

The importance of the "Pathways to Prosperity,..." report is that it identifies the need of our educational system to be flexible to the needs of the job market, and for employers to be involved in designing the educational model of the future. Both sides have for the most part let the other have their way. This can no longer be the case, either nationally or in Florida.

"Attachment C" is the Conclusion Section of the Pathways report. It is strong and to the point: that our educational system is broken and is missing the mark; also, that our employers are to blame by not becoming involved in the education system. However in Florida there is a bright spot. The Collaboration for Success initiative has gotten the two sides talking and although there are some philosophical and language barriers to overcome, their models are ironically not that far apart: the Registered Apprenticeship model of "learn, earn and succeed" model sounds quite similar to the Workforce mantra of "to learn, apply knowledge and create wealth" model.

Conclusion

There is now a crack in the door between Workforce and Registered Apprenticeship in which both are surprisingly un-informed of each other's role in the future of workforce development. As mentioned above, their learning models are aligned; their communication and future are not. This is not to blame either side; it is just what it is.

Since the late 90's when apprenticeship was spun off from the old Florida Department of Labor there has been a steady decline in communications and involvement between the organizations. The result has been less innovation and relevancy for apprenticeship beyond the traditional construction and some manufacturing trades. And with construction booming for the first half of the decade, apprenticeship expanded significantly with no need to include other job and industry classifications. However, times have changed and with the decline in traditional apprenticeship, expanding the model is more important than ever to increase the skills needed for the new workforce.

The great recession has changed the focus of the status quo and both RA and Workforce could benefit from the strengths of each other. These strengths were outlined in depth in the "Collaboration for Success, Partnering with Registered Apprenticeship" report published in 2010. In summary, the strength of Workforce as being locally focused and intimate with employers can complement the strength of apprenticeship, as being a tried and true workforce training model with employment a necessary component of the model. With both entities, the employer is in charge of the curriculum and administering the training.

The author's suggestion from this work is for the workforce groups to embrace and find a place for apprenticeship within the Florida workforce model. Apprenticeship is direct workforce education and for apprenticeship to expand and the workforce education system to better support industry's talent supply needs, they should be aligned.

There will be controversy with this suggestion and in preliminary talks with both groups; push back will surprisingly come from workforce more than education. However, controversy will only be because of a lack of understanding apprenticeship and current priority overload in the Workforce system. Preliminary discussions with education revealed a sincere focus on the student's long-term welfare and success as the number one goal of skill based workforce education.

Whatever the outcome, the main suggestion of this report will be to continue the effort! Do not let up. Continue to design and follow through with the pilot programs. Also keep the end in mind – to provide existing and future employers in Florida motivated, highly skilled workers to compete in the global economy.

Attachments

Attachment A - RWB Supply Demand for WIA Training Analysis, April 2011 Release

1. Region 9 – FloridaWorks, Alachua/Bradford Counties
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