

REB Strategic Plan, 2006 - 2009

VISION

The Regional Employment Board leads a dynamic, efficient and integrated workforce development system that promotes economic development and community growth, and is rooted in the principles of equity and increased access to workforce development services for employers and job seekers.

MISSION

The Regional Employment Board plans, coordinates and oversees the growth and effective use of public and private investment in workforce development initiatives for quality jobs. The Board provides leadership in creating strategic alliances with business, government and community organizations to provide access to education, training and employment opportunities for all workers, especially for low income adults and youth, disadvantaged minorities and newcomers, dislocated workers, incumbent workers, and their families.

STRATEGIC GOALS

The REB sets forth the following Strategic Goals in four key areas to build the overall quality of our workforce.

1. Retain, Expand and Attract Business through Workforce Development

Goal: Take a leadership role in integrating workforce development with initiatives that support business growth and success, and that enhance the skills of new/incumbent workers, leading to family economic self-sufficiency.

Objectives:

- a. Promote sectoral training initiatives in high growth industries, particularly in the priority clusters of healthcare and advanced precision manufacturing, which utilize a career ladder approach to provide upgraded skills, increased salary, and career advancement for new/incumbent workers.
- b. Increase the market penetration and use of our regions' One-Stop Career Centers by area businesses, especially by those that offer high quality jobs and career ladder advancement opportunities within high growth industries, and small businesses; and expand the capacity of our One-Stop system to supply qualified workers for business retention and expansion.
- c. To be the primary partner for workforce development with all regional economic development organizations, including the Economic Development Council, the Regional Competitiveness Council, the Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress, Chambers of Commerce and other employer organizations, to retain, support, expand and attract companies that offer high quality jobs.

Anticipated Results:

- a. Increased Workforce Training Fund awards and other public and private investments for industry-specific training in the health care and precision manufacturing sectors; as well as sustained support for the Nurse Career Coach as a model to address the nursing shortage and a new strategic alliance with the Western Massachusetts Chapter of the National Tooling and Machining Association to support precision manufacturing companies.
- b. An action plan, jointly developed by the REB and One-Stop Career Centers that will enhance job postings and result in increased career ladder placements, particularly in high growth industries.
- c. The REB will be the recognized expert for workforce development needs, working with the major economic development organizations, for business retention, expansion and attraction.

2. Increase Basic Skills for a Quality Workforce

Goal: Align adult education programs and services to integrate literacy and work readiness skills with workforce development, resulting in career directed employment opportunities leading to economic self-sufficiency.

Objectives:

- a. Lead a partnership of education and workforce development providers to ensure the integration of high quality education programs and work readiness services.
- b. Collaborate with employers and education providers to develop high quality workplace education programs that upgrade the literacy and industry-specific skills of incumbent workers, especially in high growth industries.

Anticipated Results:

- a. Establishment of an integrated delivery system that results in increased numbers of adults and families successfully transitioning from literacy programs to One-Stop Career Centers, post-secondary education and other workforce development programs, leading to economic self-sufficiency.
- b. Increased number of workplace education programs that provide sustainable skills to incumbent workers, especially in high growth industries.

3. Build Youth Employability Skills

Goal: Improve and expand workforce development programs and services for youth, especially older youth who need basic skills development, English language proficiency and employment.

Objectives:

- a. Engage community partners in collaborations that will align youth services and result in a more coordinated system of youth development.
- b. Expand and improve youth work readiness services and internships.
- c. Customize One-Stop Career Center services to meet the unique employability needs of out-of-school and unemployed youth and increase the number of job postings and placements for youth, especially in high-growth industries that offer career advancement opportunities.

Anticipated Results:

- a. The Pathways to Success by 21 (P-21) and Massachusetts Partnership for Youth Employment (MPYE) partnerships will grow and will be sustained by creating a new Youth Council workgroup that will focus on the Strategic Plans developed by the P-21 and MPYE partners.
- b. Increased numbers of youth who participate in the work readiness curriculum and obtain quality year-round and summer internships, including in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) related occupations.
- c. Increased numbers of older youth being served at the One-Stop Career Centers and obtaining jobs that offer career ladder opportunities.

4. Build Stakeholder Understanding and Support for Workforce Development

Goal: Increase stakeholders' understanding of the pivotal role of workforce development in community and economic development and their support for resources to expand public and private investment in the system.

Objectives:

- a. Develop and implement marketing strategies that inform economic development, business, education and community leaders, as well as elected officials about the REB's role as the leading advocate, planner and convener for regional workforce development.
- b. Insure that timely and understandable data about the local labor market and workforce development resources is provided to business and workforce agencies in such areas as labor supply and demand and occupational skills needs, through the REB's website and value-added labor market research.
- c. Pursue alternative public funding and private sector investment to maximize available resources in addressing key workforce issues.

Anticipated Results:

- a. Key stakeholders support, and participate in, the work of the REB as the leader in building the workforce development system.
- b. Business and workforce development agencies plan for and address workforce issues more effectively.
- c. Increased public investment through state legislation, and employer investment through matching grants and private foundation support.