



ILLINOIS
WORKFORCE
INNOVATION
BOARD

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE QUARTERLY REPORT DECEMBER 2020

Charges of the Business Engagement Committee (BEC):

The mission of the BEC will be to provide guidance and direction to help bridge the gap between Illinois' important business sectors and employers, and the Illinois workforce development system.

Priorities of the BEC:

- **Engage Illinois' business community in the development and direction of regional industry-led sector partnerships** that will convene employers, workforce development professionals, and other regional institutions and partners. These partnerships will seek to coordinate investments, align workforce and education systems, and promote economic growth across the state.
- **Develop and improve communication mechanisms between employers and the workforce development system** in order to increase employers' awareness of the services that are designed to provide them with the skilled workforce they require.
- **Assist the IWIB and Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIBs) with outreach, recruitment and engagement of business representatives to the board(s)**, that are representative of the geographic, demographic, and target industries of the state or local area, respectively.

Quarterly Update:

Committee:

The full Committee is currently planning on meeting once quarterly. The only Committee meeting during this quarter was in September. At that time the work plan for the Committee was finalized, with five goal areas. Three of these are based on the priorities shown above, the others are concerned with the creation and maintenance of the Committee and the coordination of the Committee with other IWIB groups and with other state workforce and economic development efforts. Also during that meeting, the Committee received a presentation on local and regional business services efforts under WIOA Title I (Jennifer Serino, Executive Director of LWIA 1 in Lake County) and Title II (Tory Davis, Regional Manager for Business Services for IDES). Business services, and in particular unified business services at the local and regional levels, will be an ongoing concern of the Committee as a whole, as parts of that effort are included in all three Work Group work plans and these efforts really are the key point of retail contact between the workforce development system and Illinois' business community. The next full Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9th at 10am.



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Work Groups:

The Committee established three Work Groups, each based on one of the three Committee priorities described above. Goals and activities for each were included in the Committee work plan, and have since been built out through tactics identified by each Work Group in their monthly meetings.

Industry Partnerships Work Group

CHARGE

Engage Illinois' business community in the development and direction of regional industry-led sector partnerships.

GOALS

1. Identify Illinois Target Industries & Sectors.
2. Increase awareness of and support existing sector strategies.
3. Identify and support opportunities for additional sector strategies.
4. Effectively communicate with and aid sector strategies identified under Goal 2 and 3.

ACTIVITIES

This work group meets on the morning of the first Wednesday of each month. During this quarter the work group selected a chairperson, Katie Bata of Aurora Advocate Health System. Activities this quarter were centered on Goals 1 and 2. Staff reviewed and presented a matrix of target industries identified by the State Unified Plan, the ten WIOA Regional Plans, and the DCEO Economic Development plan. Through discussion the work group identified a set of six industry sectors that are most suitable for supporting sector strategies and industry partnerships: Manufacturing, Health Care and Transportation, Distribution & Logistics (TDL) were identified in all 12 of these reviewed plans. Information Technology (IT) was identified as an important sector, with the realization that IT skills are required in many industry sectors where the firms included are not IT-specific. Business Services was identified as a fifth important sector as it is the industry grouping with the most IT-specific firms. The sixth identified sector was Hospitality & Leisure, chiefly because of the outsized impact of the pandemic on this sector.

Staff also developed an initial listing of regional sector projects in each of the regions. This listing was then later segmented into collaboratives/potential collaboratives, organizations that might convene projects, and organizations that might support collaboratives. The work group also met with the new Coordinator of Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) projects for DCEO, Kim Kuchenbrod, who will continue to meet with the work group. Kim presented on the basics of TPM, and the work group began to discuss methods to support TPM, communicate its benefits to employers, and engage employers in projects of this type.



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Communication Work Group

CHARGE

Develop and improve communication mechanisms between employers and the workforce development system.

GOALS

1. Expand employer knowledge of the workforce and education systems.
2. Engage employers in identifying and communicating training and workforce needs.
3. Support the development of an employer information database.
4. Support ongoing employer engagement
5. Explore, and if viable, promote an initiative to provide common messaging and shared branding across all system partners.

ACTIVITIES

This work group meets in the afternoon of the first Tuesday of each month. During this quarter the work group selected a chairperson, Einar Forsberg of the Rockford Chamber of Commerce. Activities this quarter were centered on Goals 1, 2 and 3. The Work Group developed a number of tactics to begin to operationalize these goals, including the development of a ongoing database of business services activities and contacts, development of a directory of business services staff across all WIOA partners and regions, development of a database of employer information – possibly building upon the Employer Business System (EBS) under development at DCEO, review and recommendations regarding the utilization of the Illinois workNet's BizHub as a focus of business communication and inquiries. The Communication Work Group will continue working on each of these tactics and others moving forward.

Board Recruitment Work Group

CHARGE

Assist the IWIB and Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIBs) with outreach, recruitment and engagement of business representatives to the board(s).

GOALS

1. Assist IWIB/LWIB recruitment, engagement, retention, and accountability.
2. Enhance IWIB/LWIB Communication



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ACTIVITIES

This work group meets in the morning of the first Tuesday of each month. During this quarter the work group selected a chairperson, Jennifer Serino of the Lake County Workforce Development Department. Activities this quarter were undertaken towards both goals of this Work Group. They began by brainstorming and discussing methods by which the IWIB might communicate better with LWIBs. Part of this process has been an activity to identify and understand existing communication mechanisms between state and local boards, and between and amongst local boards. To that end, Work Group members developed a short survey, targeted at LWIB and LWIA staff as members of the Illinois Workforce Partnership, to better understand what communication methods are already in place. This survey will be completed in November and is expected to be completed by mid-December.

As a second activity during this quarter, the IWIB board staff engaged the Work Group on the need to fast track the development of a board recruitment/retention/accountability package that has been identified as an activity under Goal 1 in the work plan above, and has asked the Board Recruitment Work Group and the Business Engagement Committee to approve an accelerated proposal and time line to have staff develop a package for approval by the work group, the BEC, the ExCom and ultimately the IWIB.

That package will consist of six items outlined in the work plan:

- Define the profile of a local or state board member.
- Establish member roles, responsibilities and expectations.
- Create policies and procedures for accountability.
- Create an effective board member orientation and onboarding as a template for all boards.
- Establish policies to encourage and develop a mentoring process for new board members utilizing established board members.
- Create and disseminate a spreadsheet program (and dashboard) that allows for more in-depth tracking of board membership by geography, industry coverage, attendance and activity accountability, and by influence (specifically, how board members can leverage their activities under other organizations and in other realms in order to help move the workforce development agenda forward).

Work Plan Progress:

IWIB BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORKPLAN NOVEMBER, 2020)		6/30/20	9/30/20	12/31/20
PRIORITY AREA 1: Establish and Operate the BEC Effectively	GOAL 1.1: Finalize BEC workplan and methods to implement it.			
	ACTIVITY 1.1.A.: Develop and approve a BEC work plan that expresses the priorities, goals and activities of the committee.			
	ACTIVITY 1.1.B.: Review, update and approve the BEC work plan as necessary or appropriate			
	ACTIVITY 1.1.C.: Establish and support the structure necessary for implementation of the workplan.			
	GOAL 1.2: Develop and Evolve Committee Membership and Member Expectations.			
	ACTIVITY 1.2.A.: Determine an initial Committee membership profile.			
	ACTIVITY 1.2.B.: Develop an set of committee membership expectations, and accountability practices.			
	ACTIVITY 1.2.C.: Develop mechanisms for identifying replacements for committee vacancies.			
	ACTIVITY 1.2.D.: Create an orientation for committee members and effectively onboard all members, include an overview of each goal and specifically of the elements of Goal 5 and how they relate to the other goals.			
PRIORITY AREA 2: ENGAGE ILLINOIS' BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN INDUSTRY-LED SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS	GOAL 2.1: Identify Illinois Target Industries & Sectors.			
	ACTIVITY 2.1.A.: Review and (as appropriate) adopt existing statewide and regionally specific target sectors identified through previous statewide and regional workforce and economic development planning.			
	ACTIVITY 2.1.B.: Explore changes in sectors across the economy, identify new target industries or adjustments needed to existing as appropriate in alignment with economic conditions.			
	GOAL 2.2: Increase awareness of and support existing sector strategies.			
	ACTIVITY 2.2.A.: Support the creation of a directory of existing talent pipeline management projects and other employer-driven sector strategies -- particularly as identified under Goal 2.1.			
	ACTIVITY 2.2.B.: Identify best practices as opportunities for replication and expansion of existing sector strategies.			
	ACTIVITY 2.2.C.: Assist existing employer-led workforce development projects in target sector businesses in all regions in Illinois.			
	GOAL 2.3: Identify and support opportunities for additional sector strategies.			
	ACTIVITY 2.3.A.: Conduct a gap analysis of 2.1 and 2.2 to identify, target industry sectors in regions across IL for new sector-based activities.			
	ACTIVITY 2.3.B.: Encourage and support the establishment and sustainability of new sector strategies statewide and within all regions.			
	ACTIVITY 2.3.C.: Assist appropriate state and regional actors (e.g., LWIBs, Business Associations, Regional Economic Development Organizations, etc.) to develop and promote new employer-led workforce development projects to sector businesses in all regions in Illinois.			
	GOAL 2.4: Effectively communicate with and aid sector strategies identified under Goal 2.2 and 2.3.			
	ACTIVITY 2.4.A.: Promote existing and new employer-led workforce development projects to sector businesses in all regions in Illinois.			
	ACTIVITY 2.4.B.: Identify tangible solutions to support businesses affected by economic conditions, such as COVID-19, especially small businesses and utilize sector strategies to promote these offerings.			
	ACTIVITY 2.4.C.: Create a network of sector-based community of practice for each target industry of both state and regional players, to support each other and for collaboration to better support partnerships and businesses in each sector.			
PRIORITY AREA 3: COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM	GOAL 3.1: Expand employer knowledge of the workforce and education systems.			
	ACTIVITY 3.1.A.: Develop mechanisms to determine and assemble information sets regarding these systems that are relevant to employer needs.			
	ACTIVITY 3.1.B.: Develop mechanisms to transmit those information sets to employers.			
	GOAL 3.2: Engage employers in identifying and communicating training and workforce needs.			
	ACTIVITY 3.2.A.: Support the utilization of sector strategies and business services to engage employers and help them identify and communicate their needs.			
	ACTIVITY 3.2.B.: Encourage the development of a simple and consistent approach for helping identify employer needs and matching those needs to available resources.			
	GOAL 3.3: Support the development of an employer information database.			
	ACTIVITY 3.3.A.: Explore and support the development a common database of employer information and contacts with/from workforce development partners at all levels of the workforce development system.			
	ACTIVITY 3.3.B.: Support creation of a mechanism for sharing up to date information about unified business services efforts, at the regional level and across the state.			
	ACTIVITY 3.3.C.: Explore the impact of remote work and increased technology use in the workplace -- some of which has been in reaction to COVID-19 -- in the types of workforce needs seen by employers.			
	GOAL 3.4: Support ongoing employer engagement			
	ACTIVITY 3.4.A.: Identify opportunities to support and promote unified business services efforts at the state level and in each region of the state.			
	ACTIVITY 3.4.B.: Develop policies to support engagement between employers and the workforce/economic development system and strengthen communication between system partners.			
	ACTIVITY 3.4.C.: Identify and implement a framework to assist business advocates of the system to promote the workforce and education system services to their industries and peers.			
	GOAL 3.5: Explore, and if viable, promote an initiative to provide common messaging and shared branding across all system partners.			
	ACTIVITY 3.5.A.: Identify best practices for shared branding and messaging.			
	ACTIVITY 3.5.B.: Explore a collaborative solution across all partners for messaging and branding employer services, that will elevate the system partners "above the noise" and provide a "stamp of approval" that helps businesses identify system resources.			

PRIORITY AREA 4: ASSIST IWIB AND LWIB OUTREACH, RECRUITMENT AND COMMUNICATION	GOAL 4.1: Assist IWIB/LWIB recruitment, engagement, retention, and accountability.		
	ACTIVITY 4.1.A.: Develop outreach mechanisms and other tools to assist in the recruitment of employers to the IWIB and the LWIBs.		
	ACTIVITY 4.1.B.: Develop a framework for effective engagement and retention of business representatives of workforce boards.		
	GOAL 4.2: Enhance IWIB/LWIB Communication		
	ACTIVITY 4.1.A.: Develop and expand mechanisms to ensure consistent and timely communication between LWIBs and the IWIB.		
PRIORITY AREA 5: COORDINATION WITH RELATED GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES	GOAL 5.1: Coordinate with Executive Order #3 Activities		
	ACTIVITY 5.1.A.: Review Executive Order #3 activities and recommend approaches by which the BEC can assist in their completion.		
	ACTIVITY 5.1.B.: Acquire an overview and 101 training to be used in the committee onboarding orientation.		
	GOAL 5.2: Coordinate with WIOA State Unified Plan Activities		
	ACTIVITY 5.2.A.: Review WIOA State Unified Plan activities and recommend approaches by which the BEC can assist in their completion.		
	ACTIVITY 5.2.B.: Create an overview and 101 training to be used in the committee onboarding orientation.		
	GOAL 5.3: Coordinate with Restore Illinois Health Plan Activities		
	ACTIVITY 5.3.A.: Review Restore Illinois Health Plan activities and recommend approaches by which the BEC can assist in their completion.		
	ACTIVITY 5.3.B.: Recommend approaches to communicate available COVID-19-related business assistance to employers.		
	ACTIVITY 5.3.C.: Create an overview and 101 training to be used in the committee onboarding orientation.		
	GOAL 5.4: Coordinate with Activities of Other IWIB Committees		
	ACTIVITY 5.4.A.: Coordinate, as appropriate, with the other IWIB Committees, Work Groups and Task Forces in order to ensure successful completion of the activities of all IWIB groups.		
	ACTIVITY 5.4.B.: Create an overview and 101 training to be used in the committee onboarding orientation.		

	Activity Completed
	Activity in progress during this quarter & on schedule
	Activity in progress during this quarter & behind schedule
	Activity due to be in progress during this quarter but not yet begun
	Activity to be in progress during this quarter
	Activity not yet begun during this quarter