



**GRUNDY LIVINGSTON KANKAKEE WORKFORCE BOARD  
STRATEGIC GOALS  
November 2007**

**MISSION**

Enhancing workforce quality to meet regional needs

**VALUES VISION**

Provide equal opportunity for all to achieve economic independence and improved quality of life by establishing a collaborative system that promotes life-long learning and proactively addresses the workforce needs of the community and employer base.

**IMPACT VISION**

To be recognized as a region having a skilled, productive and dedicated workforce.

To more effectively and efficiently utilize workforce development initiatives, programs, services and resources for employers, employees and system partners.

To create a results-oriented workforce development system that is attractive to job seekers, as well as, new and existing employers.

**ROLE VISION**

To create a system that serves as the catalyst that coordinates and meets the requests and needs of job seekers, employers and partners.

To position the system to be a leading resource linking job seekers, employers and partners in developing and maintaining a successful workforce.

To develop a process that evaluates and continuously improves the activities and results of the system and its collaborative partners.

In March 2007, the Grundy Livingston Kankakee Workforce Board convened a meeting to set a strategic agenda for the next three years. This planning session was centered on the board's Mission, Vision and Values statement. The day began with a brief overview of the history of the board since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act in 1998 and major accomplishments were noted along with outstanding items. Richard Kaye, Labor Market Economist, from the Illinois Department of Employment Security presented an overview of both the local and state labor market.

Major Accomplishments:

- Department of Labor measures have been met or exceeded every year since inception
- Fiscal responsibility and program management have been divided
- Three-county system has assisted an average of 1000 individual job-seeker customers per year receive some form of job training

## The Strategic Agenda

The strategic agenda was developed using break out groups organized by committee responsibility. Each committee was provided a description of the committee responsibilities and asked to identify its priorities. The board then reconvened and addressed each area of responsibility to determine priority strategic agenda items. Each member in attendance received 5 red dots to put on any of the bulleted items that were listed by the 4 committee groups. The following 3 strategic goals were identified.

### *Strategic Goal #1: Position the Workforce Board as a leader in business services*

The Workforce Board requires all WIA providers to perform outreach and provide services to businesses in the community as part of the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act and in an effort to integrate job seekers and employers. This requirement is largely an unfunded mandate, there are no funds allocated specifically for business services neither by the federal government funding streams nor by the provider contracts entered into by the Board. Providers must determine how to successfully integrate these services into daily operations in an efficient yet meaningful way, utilizing limited resources and staff time.

The Board determined that there are some basic business services that should remain the responsibility of the providers but that a Business Service Liaison should be incorporated into the Workforce Board's staffing plan to more effectively perform business service functions.

Additionally, the Board recognizes that one of the greatest needs of local businesses and one of the ways that training can have the greatest impact, is to regularly provide training to those workers already employed (incumbent workers), but in need of additional skills in order to progress in the workforce or remain in the workforce. The Board determined that incumbent worker training should be a priority service to business customers.

#### **1.1 Develop a Board-level Staff Position as Business Service Liaison**

Develop and implement a cost-effective way to deliver business services at the Board level, relieving providers of the bulk of the responsibility and cost. Develop a job description that effectively integrates this Board-level position into the operations of the providers to maintain a seamless business services appearance to the community and effectively transfer responsibilities. Hire Business Services Liaison.

**Assignment: Business Services Committee/Executive Committee**

**Target Date: July 2008/on-going**

#### **1.2 Specialized/Incumbent Worker Training**

Develop and implement locally relevant, employer-defined specialized training programs that meet the workforce needs of the businesses in the three-county area. Identify opportunities for incumbent worker training and maximize the use the WIA training dollars where possible to meet those needs. Identify funding opportunities to carry out training programs, including the collaboration of employers, workforce development partners, industry organizations, and educational institutions.

**Assignment: Business Services Committee**

**Target Date: June 2009**

***Strategic Goal #2: Position the Workforce Board as a key player in the economic growth and competitiveness of our three-county area and regionally by implementing a marketing plan in support of the mission***

Much of the work of the Board is carried out by its providers, particularly to the individual job-seeker customer, making marketing a crucial element in educating the public about what the Board does. The Board determined that marketing the Workforce Board in the communities it serves is a top priority. Additionally, the Board determined that general education of board members must also be an ongoing process. Better name recognition in the three-county area will promote collaborative partnerships, member recruitment, communication, and broader community support.

The Board also recognizes that its success, while measured by state and federal law, is also measured by key indicators in the local economy. The Board determined that these local success indicators should be more clearly defined and tracked in a standard form to be communicated internally and externally. These success indicators are essential to developing marketing tools that reflect the work of the Board and its impact on the communities it serves.

**1.1 Develop a Marketing Plan**

Develop and implement a marketing plan that emphasizes who the Board is, what the Board does, and how the Board contributes to communities it serves. Specific items to be included in the marketing plan include website redesign, annual report preparation, media coverage of success of the Board and its customers, and expanded opportunities for visibility in the community.

**Assignment: Marketing/Membership Committee**

**Target Date: June 2008/on-going**

**1.2 Integrate Illinois workNet into Local Marketing Efforts**

The state's new web portal presents an excellent opportunity to launch a revised public presence and fresh service access for WIA services to both job-seekers and business customers. Integration of Illinois workNet into local marketing efforts creates an opportunity to use marketing materials provided by the state in conjunction with local marketing pieces and provides an excellent motive for re-introducing the Workforce Board and its services to the public.

**Assignment: Marketing/Membership Committee**

**Target Date: September 2008/on-going**

**1.3 Develop local definitions of success**

Integrate state and federal reporting requirements and program outcome measures into a set of measures that is meaningful and relevant to the local economy. Introduce a matrix to track defining success measures and develop a procedure for collecting and distributing data on the measures.

**Assignment: Operations Committee**

**Target Date: December 2008**

### ***Strategic Goal #3: Review and define Board meeting agenda and streamline Board functions***

In order to carry out its mission and purpose, and pursue its strategic goals, the Board must continually look at the manner in which it is organized as a functioning work group. Responsibilities of all aspects of the organization should be clear and the organization must continually examine its successes and failures and look for opportunities for improvement. The Board must continue to recognize and respect that Board members are volunteers; the work of the Board should not be overly taxing on their schedules.

- 1.1 **Define functions within the organization**  
Examine committee descriptions and by-laws to ensure areas of responsibility do not overlap. Review staffing plan and job descriptions. Recommend appropriate changes to governing documents.  
**Assignment: Executive Committee**  
**Target Date: December 2008**
- 1.2 **Streamline administrative functions**  
Examine committee and Board meeting agendas and identify opportunities to streamline processes. Revise format and content of committee and Board meeting materials as appropriate.  
**Assignment: Operations Committee**  
**Target Date: June 2009**

### ***Strategic Goal #4: Define priorities in youth programming***

Employers consistently identify the lack of skills as one of the greatest hurdles when hiring entry-level workers. The adoption of a standardized soft skills curriculum, particularly as it pertains to youth, is a critical component to meeting the needs of local employers. As providers look at new ways to engage youth in WIA programs, many have turned to incentives to encourage participation and attendance.

As more and more employers require drug testing for both pre-employment screening and job retention, the Workforce Board must examine the integration of drug abuse awareness, drug testing, and substance abuse into its mission to prepare both youth and adults to be successful in the workforce.

- 1.1 **Identify and adopt an appropriate soft skills curriculum**  
Inventory available soft skills curriculum and survey providers for training already in place. Implement a standardized soft skills curriculum for all youth providers. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of implementing a soft skills curriculum for adult and dislocated worker customers.  
**Assignment: Youth Council**  
**Target Date: December 2008/on-going**
- 1.2 **Analyze impact of policy shifts such as drug testing and youth incentives**  
Conduct fiscal and programmatic analyses on the impact of requiring all youth customers to submit to random drug testing. Analyze additional policies on customer incentives and recommend changes to local policies. Develop other policy recommendations as appropriate.  
**Assignment: Youth Council**  
**Target Date: December 2008**