

Outcomes Supporting Workforce

Recommendation – Adopt the Recommendations of the Governor’s Workforce Development Task Force – The Governor’s Higher Education Task Force should adopt the recommendations of the Governor’s Workforce Development Task Force in order to establish a coordinated implementation effort between higher education, industry and state government to meet Idaho’s future workforce needs.

Principle

Work Group 4 reviewed and concurred with the recommendations of the Governor’s Workforce Development Task Force (WDTF):

1. Increase the role and responsibilities of the industry-driven Workforce Development Council.
2. Establish a sustainable funding mechanism for the Workforce Development Training Fund.
3. Increase awareness of career opportunities for Idahoans.
4. K-Career education system supports all pathways for career aspirations.
5. Increase support for Workforce Training Centers.
6. Increased college and career advising.
7. Incorporate workforce readiness through secondary curriculum.
8. Develop apprenticeship programs.
9. Expand career and technical education programs.

The recommendations of the WDTF foster an active partnership between education and industry, which is needed to produce an educated citizenry and meet Idaho’s workforce needs. This partnership will build the skills and competencies that allows individuals in the workforce to be qualified for immediate employment while being able to adapt to change in the workplace.

Short-term Actions

1. At the very least, coordinate implementation efforts stemming from the two Task Forces, and even look for opportunities to merge implementation efforts.
2. Adopt College and Career Readiness Competencies.
3. Develop Partnerships with education based on regional and statewide industry sectors.
4. Enhance career exploration and STEM-related themes in public schools and higher education, including current jobs.

Long-term Actions

1. Require student-centered career advising in higher education to transition to job placement that meets workplace expectations.
2. Develop Credit-bearing internships, apprenticeships and co-op programs to connect higher education and careers.

HIGHER EDUCATION TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT

Owner

Idaho State Board of Education
Postsecondary Educational Institutions
State Department of Education
State Workforce Development Council
Industry

Government & Industry Roles (if applicable)

The Idaho State Board of Education, the Idaho Department of Labor, the Idaho Department of Commerce, public higher education institutions and members of industry sectors would all be active partners.

Outcomes

An on-going process of industry providing input of its needs for the education system, and higher education becomes a more agile, responsive system to the workforce needs identified by industry.

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Recommendation –Competency-Based System – The public higher education system should shift to a competency-based system.

Principle

A competency-based education will allow students to earn certificates or degrees through demonstrated mastery of subject matter, rather than learning outcomes based system that requires students to earn credits based predominately on class-time. Western Governor’s University is an accredited online university using competency-based education to provide several bachelor’s degrees. Texas A&M Commerce and South Texas College are examples of brick and mortar institutions offering similar programs that are entirely online or a combination of online and in-person.

Short-term Actions

1. Meet with WGU and the Texas institutions to learn all of the facets of providing competency-based degree programs.
2. Complete degree program review to identify and document competencies that must be demonstrated in order to earn credits towards degree completion.
3. Develop a uniform assessment system for students to demonstrate mastery of competencies, using industry advisory committees to provide validation of credits, certificates or degrees. This will also allow for transfer of credit between institutions.
4. Review institution and degree accreditation requirements to ensure competency-based degree programs are compliant.

Long-term Actions

1. Modify the tuition and fee structure to accommodate competency-based education since some credits may be earned in substantially less time than a semester.
2. As degree programs are developed to meet high demand workforce needs, use competency-based model.

Owner

Idaho State Board of Education (based on its role of approving degree programs)

Government & Industry Roles (if applicable)

Industry involvement in the competency and assessment system, as well as identifying new degree programs to meet high demand workforce needs.

Outcomes

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accreditation of the competency-based system. Such a system will provide confidence in the certificate or degree that has been earned, as well as allow for transfer of credit between public higher education institutions.

Outcomes Supporting Workforce

Recommendation – Partner with Industry – The public higher education system should partner with industry to include more workplace experiences as part of certificate and degree programs.

Principle

Internships and/or apprenticeships as part of certificate and degree completion requirements inject on-the-job application of theories and principles learned in the classroom. The University of Waterloo (Canada) has a trimester cooperative program that provides opportunities for classroom teaching and internships in a variety of academic degree programs. Additionally, utility companies have a history of teaching new employees through apprenticeships. In both cases, these programs teach competencies that are critical to student success and entry to the workforce.

Short-term Actions

1. Explore requirement of internships and co-op programs demonstrating a proven success rate of job placement. Should have assessment for each student receiving credit.
2. Work with the higher education institutions to offer a trimester-based-co-op program similar to University of Waterloo. In this program, students will alternate between on-campus semesters and on-the-job semesters helping students to apply the skills learned.
3. Work with industry to incorporate apprenticeship programs into certificate and degree programs, particularly CTE programs.

Long-term Actions

1. Work with business and industry to expand internship and apprenticeship opportunities part of certificate and degree programs.

Owner

Idaho State Board of Education (based on its role of approving degree programs)

Government & Industry Roles (if applicable)

Industry involvement in providing internship and apprenticeship opportunities that can be incorporated into certificate and degree programs.

Outcomes

Idaho public institutions provide an array of academic and CTE certificate and degree programs that provide on-the-job experience.

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Recommendation – Workforce Training towards Degree or Certificate Completion – Workforce training completed by an individual should count towards degree or certificate completion.

Principle

Relevant employment experience, completed industry recognized skill certifications and military training should count as credit towards a certificate or degree, whether earned at the workplace or through the Workforce Development Training Centers associated with the six technical colleges embedded within NIC, LCSC, CWI, CSI, ISU and CEI.

Short-term Actions

1. Evaluate opportunities for competency badges for employment and resume.
2. Review workplace training programs and industry certification programs for competencies and credit worthiness.
3. Review Workforce Training Center programs for industry needs and education credit. Continuing education credential could result in academic credit.

Long-term Actions

1. Establish a streamlined process for evaluating a creditworthiness of new industry employment experience or completion of training.

Owner

Idaho State Board of Education
Division of Career Technical Education
Technical colleges at state institutions and community colleges

Government & Industry Roles (if applicable)

Higher education and the Department of Labor work together to assess workplace-training programs.

Outcomes

Time to completion is expedited for students starting or returning to a certificate or degree program because they are receiving credit for relevant workplace experience.