



Jobs are Alaska's Future

State of Alaska
Frank H. Murkowski, Governor

State Of The Alaska Workforce Investment System



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**Alaska Workforce Investment Board
Annual Report**

February, 2005

February 10, 2005

I am pleased to present the annual State of the Alaska Workforce Investment System report.

Each year the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) presents a report to the Alaska State Legislature on the performance and evaluation of training programs within its purview, as required by Alaska Statute 23.15.580(b)(9).

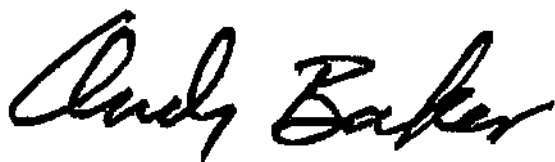
At the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development the primary mission is putting Alaskans to work. The Department is doing that through a wide range of programs designed to help Alaskan workers and employers. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board plays an important role in accomplishing that goal.

The vision for the Alaska Workforce Investment Board is "building connections that put Alaskans into good jobs." Today's customers include businesses looking for qualified workers, unemployed and displaced Alaskans looking for jobs, incumbent workers wanting to upgrade their skills in a changing work environment, and youth, students and trainees either entering or planning to re-enter the workforce.

The board provides policy oversight of state and federally funded job training and vocational education programs. Board members, a majority of whom are business and industry leaders, look at employment trends and emerging occupations to ensure training is customized and Alaskans are prepared for high demand, good wage jobs. Because of the board's oversight, public and private educators and training providers connect with employers to ensure the right people are being trained for the right jobs.

As of State Fiscal Year 2004, Alaska is a single local workforce investment regional planning area state. We are proud of the accomplishments and efficiencies this change has produced. The single state designation has also presented us with challenges such as adequate representation of both urban and rural areas, funding policy for regional representation and policy implementation for high concentration of eligible youth. We have met these challenges with new and innovative ideas to bridge the connection and development of Alaska's workforce.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board welcomes your involvement and support and looks forward to working closely with you to build a quality workforce and a secure future for all Alaskans.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andy Baker, Chair
Alaska Workforce Investment Board

Recommendations

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development are committed to ensuring all possible employment opportunities for Alaskans. The board has assessed the state of the workforce investment system and offers the following recommendations:

Governor and Legislature

- Continue and Expand the Governor’s highly applauded “Jobs Are Alaska’s Future” initiative.
- The legislature should make the highly successful State Training and Employment Program (STEP) a permanent part of the workforce development system.
- The Governor should continue to hold the system accountable; set standards for outcomes and expect a return on workforce investment.
- Fully fund the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program which prepares Alaskans for employment by providing instruction in the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, and General Educational Development (GED) preparation and testing, emphasizing practical life skills and workplace readiness skills through basic skills instruction.

Other Stakeholders

- Business and industry must make a greater investment in training in order to achieve their Alaskan hire goals.
- Recognize and encourage that healthy communities encompass education, economic development and workforce development activities to improve the quality of life.
- Raise expectations for increased quality in training and more Alaskans employed after training.
- Increase coordination and collaboration between State, Federal, private industry and service provider agencies.
- Equal access, equal opportunity and equal representation relating to all aspects of workforce development, economic development, education and training for rural Alaskans.
- Training providers and employers should foster alignment and investment in the career and technical education system for Alaska.

Training and Service Providers

- End the duplication of effort created through multiple systems; look for opportunities to match funding sources and share responsibilities between private and public resources.
- Be responsive to business needs, the changing economy, and the workforce needs of the future.
- Educators and employers should prepare Alaska’s youth for Alaskan jobs by creating employability standards.
- The Alaska Job Center Network should make it easier for employers and workers to connect.
- Implement the board approved policies that recommend industry-based skill standards in workforce development and training.

Introduction

In Fiscal Year 03, Governor Murkowski issued an administrative order dissolving two local area boards and collapsing their responsibilities into a single statewide board. This resulted in a streamlined and simplified system that business and industry could more easily access.

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) was called upon to play a leadership role in designing a new system, pulling stakeholders together, and realigning the local areas. The board also pursued important issues around vocational development and the quality of training.

Fiscal Year 2004 ushered in a new era of accountability across agencies and within geographic regions. The board diligently sought to engage business, industry, organized labor, community-based organizations, and the education system in workforce issues and the integration of academic and occupational learning that lead to good jobs and careers for Alaskans.

AWIB Vision

An Opportunity for Employment for All Alaskans

Right Skills - A prepared and motivated workforce.

Right Person - Workers and employers connect.

Right Job - Alaskans meeting their potential for employment in the areas of skills, salary and satisfaction.

Right Time - Linkages that produce a skilled Alaskan workforce when and where needed.

AWIB Mission

To provide leadership, set policy, direction and accountability standards to get Alaskans into jobs.

AWIB Objectives

Below are the strategic objectives for Program Year 2003:

- Sixty percent of training participants entering employment related to the training received.
- At least sixty percent of the training programs on the Eligible Training Provider List are either registered apprenticeships, adhere to industry-based skill standards, or result in accredited degrees.
- Increase the rate of participants entering employment by two percent per year.
- Increase market share among employer customers by two percent per year.
- Annual two percent reduction of non-resident to resident employment ratio.
- Earnings increase equal to fifty percent of a participant's training cost within six months.
- Sixty percent of participants trained in occupations identified by the board as belonging to a priority industry.
- Encourage workforce and economic development forums in all regions of the state.

Board Members

(See Page 7 for current Board Member Roster)

The Board consists of the following voting members not to exceed 26 as mandated in the legislation, which established the Board (Sec. 44.19.620):

- (1) the lieutenant governor, or designee;
- (2) the commissioners of Community & Economic Development, Education & Early Development, Health & Social Services, and Labor & Workforce Development, or a designee for each commissioner;
- (3) one representative from the University of Alaska
- (4) four additional representatives of education - one from local public education, one from secondary vocational education, one from a postsecondary vocational education institution, and one from adult basic education;
- (5) four representatives of business and industry, with at least one representative from the private industry councils appointed under 29 U.S.C. 1512 and subject to reconstitution under 29 U.S.C. 1515;
- (6) four representatives of organized labor that the Governor shall appoint from lists of nominees submitted by recognized state labor organizations;
- (7) at least one representative from an organization representing employment and training needs of Alaska Natives;
- (8) at least one representative of a community-based service organization;
- (9) at least one representative who has personal or professional experience with developmental disabilities;
- (10) at least one and up to four additional members of the private sector to ensure a private sector majority and regional and local representation on the Board.
- (11) Additional non-voting members may be appointed to the Board from government or non-government entities.

Industry Focus

A critical component of the Board's workforce development strategy is targeting priority industries for investment with workforce development resources. With help from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Administrative Services, Research and Analysis Section and input from industry consortia, the board identifies and targets industries for workforce development through training.

The board prioritized the following industries for funding training programs in preparation for anticipated growth:

- Health care
- Construction
- Information Technology
- Education
- Natural resource development (i.e., mining and petroleum)
- Transportation
- Hospitality and tourism
- Seafood harvesting and processing

These priorities represent the board's efforts to assist Alaska's workforce system to create good jobs for Alaskans.

Regional Focus:

Regional Advisory Councils

With the restructuring of the workforce investment system into a single local workforce investment regional planning area state in 2003, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) recognized the need to continue and expand regional involvement in workforce development. In an effort to assure good representation of workforce and economic development issues the concept of Regional Advisory Councils, (RACs) evolved.

The AWIB worked with the Lt. Governor's office and the Denali Commission while developing the Regional Advisory Council concept, and defined the role and goals of Regional Advisory Councils as:

- Natural coordination of local and regional initiatives through strategic planning
- Link regional economic and workforce development
- Cross-membership between Alaska Workforce Investment Board members and Regional Advisory Council, and potentially between Denali Commission's Economic Development Committee and council
- Ensuring alignment of state and federal workforce training resources with regional priorities
- Input from regions for grant proposals for workforce training
- Shared workforce development information between regional partners
- Regions will have ownership and governance of their councils
- Regions will initiate the councils
- Regional councils will align with economic development priorities, and can use that as a springboard for partnering with high schools, job fairs, employee summits and workshops

AWIB's responsibilities to Regional Advisory Councils have also been more clearly defined as the concept has been implemented.

- AWIB can offer the regions customized information about their regions that will fit their needs
- Key industries in the regions are to be defined
- Keep the regions informed of the types of training programs and services that are available
- Customer focus groups
- Technical assistance for proposal writing
- Partner with regions to market training facilities and services

Regional Advisory Council implementation is an ongoing project that is based on cooperation between the state and its regions. A strong link between the workforce investment system, economic development system and the Regional Advisory Councils will maximize the effectiveness of state training expenditures.

Regional Advisory Council Progress

Since implementation of the Regional Advisory Council concept the Alaska Workforce Investment Board has endorsed fully or conditionally seven applications. There are currently seven functioning Regional Advisory Councils from Southeast to the North Slope. There are five areas of the state that are currently working towards the formation of a Regional Council.

Current Regional Advisory Councils:

- Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council – The boundaries of the RAC are the boundaries of the NANA Regional Corporation
- Interior Regional Council – At this time, the boundaries of the Interior Regional Advisory Council, phase I encompass the Fairbanks North Star Borough.
- Mat-Su Regional Advisory Council – The boundaries of the Mat-Su Regional Council match the Mat-Su Borough boundaries and contain some of the Cook Inlet Tribal Council boundaries.
- Kenai Regional Advisory Council– The boundaries of the Kenai Regional Council match the Kenai Peninsula Borough.
- North Slope Regional Advisory Council – The boundaries of the North Slope Regional Advisory Council match the boundaries of the North Slope Borough.
- South West Alaska Municipal Conference Regional Advisory Council –The boundaries of this RAC match the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference boundaries. They encompass the city of Dillingham, and Bristol Bay, Kodiak, Lake and Peninsula Boroughs, Aleutians East Borough and the Aleutians West Borough
- Southeast Alaska Municipal Conference Regional Advisory Council – The boundaries of this Regional Advisory Council encompass a large area from Yakutat to Prince of Wales Island. The boundaries match the boundaries of the Southeast Alaska Municipal Conference.

Regional Advisory Councils in the process of forming:

- City of Anchorage
- Valdez/Cordova area
- Wade Hampton Census Area
- City of Bethel
- City of Nome

Accompanying this report is a detailed map showing current Regional Advisory Councils, Election districts, Job Center locations, and areas of economic growth.