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## **Executive Director's Report December 2003**

### **Comprehensive Plan for Vocational Education:**

The Division of Business Partnerships will be drafting a plan in December for the Governor based on the multiple work products that have been generated by DBP contractors and the Vocational Technical Education Provider group. Key findings indicate that while there are islands of excellence, the statewide vocational education 'system' is disconnected and under funded. Strategies to address these issues are being developed with an eye towards leveraging the value of the 'Blueprint' as a means to build a stronger system of vocational education in Alaska. The Division is also promoting AWIB's role in increasing the available resources for vocational education and increasing accountability for system-wide improvements.

### **Regional Councils / Linkages to Economic Development:**

Interviews and feedback to the "Who Speaks for the Region?" Discussion Paper continues. Early indications are support for the concept and appreciation for the inclusive process that seeks diverse input. Those interested in formal input may contact the Director by December 31, 2004. Communications to Local Advisory Committee members and past Local WIB members encouraging their leadership in connecting workforce issues to economic development entities will be issued following the Policy & Planning Committee meeting on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>. The inquiry will also seek nominations for ex-officio membership from business members on AWIB committees. Meetings with individuals and organizations in both the Arctic region and the Southwest region are scheduled in the next three months. Feedback to date has indicates the need for the AWIB to provide further information as to how the relationships with existing forums who can serve as Regional Councils will be 'crystallized,' and how they will work in practice.

### **Ex-Officio Standing Committee Members:**

A significant amount of work of the AWIB is conducted within committee, as the reports below show. In addition, many individuals across the state have been engaged and interested in participating in workforce development and can strengthen AWIB with their input. Resolution 4-05 has been developed to define the mechanism for nominating and approving ex-officio members to the four standing committees.

### **Support Services Policy:**

Part of the AWIB role when serving as a Local WIB is to ensure adequate policies are set related to the thresholds for WIA services. With the creation of a single statewide area, many policies require updating and standardization. Participants in the WIA program may have the need for supportive services, in addition to core, intensive and training services. Resolution 04-3 directs the Division of Business Partnerships to establish such a policy and limits for Needs Related Payments and other services on an annual basis. .

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### **New Investment Strategy:**

Grant negotiations continue with the successful applicants. The next deadline for reviewing applications is December 15<sup>th</sup>. The New Investment Strategy has been marketed to industry target groups, specifically the hospitality and tourism employers as well as construction via 6000 emails and 2500 mailers. Inquiries and 'hit count' on the website have already shown a strong response. A new application, priorities and guidelines are expected for the March 15, 2004 review cycle based on AWIB input and lessons learned from the first two rounds.

### **Alaska Native Coalition on Education and Training**

ANCET hosted a conference last month at which they convened the diverse stakeholders involved in rural and Native education and training. The meeting included a summary of results from a survey of village administrators and Native non-profits to determine how they and their clients were accessing workforce development services. The dominant message was that village administrators would routinely seek assistance from the regional non-profit native organizations. Usage rates of the Alaska Job Center Network were significantly lower. The group cited the critical need for coordinated leadership through regional forums and for the creation of a database for information resources pertaining to workforce development. The AWIB Director was able to report progress on both matters and looked forward to collaborating with native organizations in pursuit of these and other common goals.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Youth Council**

Lieutenant Governor Lehman spoke Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> at the graduation ceremony for the Youth Program participants in the Youth Resource Mapping Geographic Information System program. This is the same group involved in the Nine Star, Job Corps and University of Alaska joint program that was highlighted in the October meeting. Representatives of the group also made a great impression at the national Youth Summit in Washington DC.

Letters and packets of membership information were mailed this week, inviting candidates to participate on the council. Once they respond, Youth Council members will be officially named.

#### **Assessment & Evaluation Committee**

The Federal WIA Title I report was submitted December 1, although there it was not available for review in advance by the Assessment & Evaluation Committee. The report is included in the Executive Committee materials and Resolution 04-04 is provided to formally approve the annual report. The Committee expects to have a better opportunity to play a meaningful role in the review of the annual Training Program Performance report that is due to the legislature February 10<sup>th</sup>. A rough draft is expected to be available by the January Executive Committee meeting.

In November, the Executive Committee tabled the proposed resolution regarding the awards ceremony. Chair McAleese will coordinate with Deputy Commissioner Fisher to ensure the AWIB can link to efforts within the Governor's office.

Staff has begun constructing a basic website to complement the Clearinghouse prototype – this includes news, links, FAQs, information resources, and a message board. The intent is to

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cultivate system-wide participation that is critical to the successful development of the Clearinghouse vision. Please visit the site located at [www.clearinghouse.bravehost.com](http://www.clearinghouse.bravehost.com) (temporarily) and contribute, as you are able. Future enhancements include online grant applications for the New Investment Strategy (est. March '04) and integration with existing tools and resources. WIA Youth grantees will begin to submit their monthly performance reports via the Clearinghouse in December.

Strategic planning efforts and a review of performance data for the annual report will be the focus of the December meeting.

### **Employment & Placement Committee**

The Employment & Placement Committee did not meet in November. The next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 17th. The committee will hear from Joe Skiba, Ph.D. on the status of the CEG grant. The committee will also complete its strategic planning assignment in preparation for the January meeting of the Executive Committee. After the strategic plan is completed the committee plans to return to work on the re-certification of the one-stops in Alaska and the development of workforce development plan for professionals in the one-stop. Finally once the holiday season is over the committee will return to the regular schedule of the last Thursday of the month at noon for its committee meetings.

### **Policy & Planning**

The Committee met on October 31 and worked exclusively on its strategic planning assignment. The November 28 meeting was postponed until Dec. 5 because of the holiday. The committee is working on the development of regional councils, including outreach to former local advisory council and local workforce investment board members to solicit their participation in the process. The committee is also tackling the subject of the AWIB becoming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. The committee will decide whether the committee should have a role in the development of the annual priority list. It will finalize their contributions to the strategic plan this month. Still on the 'clipboard' is a Conflict of Interest Protocol that will guide member decisions and actions relative to issues in which they may have a personal or organizational interest.

### **Workforce Readiness**

The Workforce Development Committee focused on and will present recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding the Tech Prep documents outlining principles, definitions and a seamless system; the proposal from the VTEP; and the strategic business plan. The Committee also discussed the timeline for defining Industry Priorities and potentially Occupational Priorities.

### **Near-Term Plans:**

As the agenda indicates, the AWIB is extremely busy from December - February. Top priorities and deliverables include:

- Strategic Plan review and approval
- Annual Training Report review and recommendations to the Governor
- Comprehensive Plan for Vocational Education review and response
- Identify Industry Priorities
- Construction Industry Forum

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- Define investment strategies

Finally, please note that the next full board meeting is still set for April 7<sup>th</sup> in Juneau.