W.I.A. Community
Conversations

A discussion of the re-authorization of the
Workforce Investment Act
Overview

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Guiding Questions

Questions
- What are the successful ingredients needed?
- What are some of the greatest challenges?
- What are some innovative solutions to these challenges?
- What are your hopes?

Focus Areas
- Professional development
- Assessment
- Diversity
- English language acquisition
- Learning disabilities
- Reading and writing
- Technology/distance learning
- Transition to postsecondary
- Workforce competitiveness
Sources of Input

- NIFL discussion lists
- Listening sessions/community conversations focused on specific questions and audiences
  - Learners, Providers (Adult Education, Training, Career and Technical Education), National Organizations, Employers, Community College Presidents and staff
- Position papers by national organizations
- Blog comments
- E-mail comments WIAConversations@ed.gov
- Meetings with stakeholders
W.I.A. Conversation Statistics

- 19 W.I.A. Community Conversations
  - In 7 ED regions
  - In 8 states and the District of Columbia:
    - CA, NY, NJ, TN, IL, DC, TX, MA and RI
  - Involving over 500 participants.
- Dozens of responses to WIAConversations@ed.gov
- Over twenty (20) position papers from national, state, and local organizations.
- Outreach to more than 9,000 practitioners via NIFL Listservs; 398 practitioners became new subscribers just to participate in the discussions.
W.I.A. Community Conversation
Houston, TX (January 2010)
# NIFL Discussion Lists

*(participation by topic)*

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<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Technology and Distance Learning</td>
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<td>Transitions to Post Secondary Education</td>
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<td>Workforce Competitiveness</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9258</strong></td>
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Student Voices

- Free classes; larger classrooms; more hours; and classes at different times of the day.
- Child care and other supports.
- Teachers who think and care about students.
- More teachers (better grouping of students) and more teacher time in and outside of the classroom.

New York City, NY (November 2009)
More From Our Students

- Grammar, social studies, science, and conversational English classes; new computers and computer instruction; textbooks and learning materials.
- Information on and help with going to college.
- Help in finding a career closer to field of training and prior employment (credential evaluation and other supports for foreign-born underemployed professionals).
Overall Themes
(Themes that emerged from all of our input sources)

1. Purpose
2. Career Pathways and other key program strategies
3. Support services
4. Teacher quality and effectiveness
5. Professionalization
6. Technology
7. Innovation
8. Alignment and interagency collaboration
9. Data systems and use
10. Accountability
11. Research
12. Funding
Purpose

• Increase postsecondary and career success.
• Strengthen families.
• Increase civic/community participation.

*Include the most vulnerable populations*
Career Pathway Programs and Other Key Program Strategies

- Career pathway programs tied to sectors.
- Integrated basic skills instruction and occupational skills training.
- Transition/bridge to postsecondary education and training programs.
- Integrate more explicitly EL Civics, family literacy, health literacy, workplace literacy, and computer literacy instruction.
- Create Career Pathways State Policy Leadership Grants Program.
Support Services

- Personal and academic counseling are essential:
  - upon entry into a program,
  - as adults move from one level to the next, and
  - as they enter postsecondary education and training.
- Expand support services such as child care, transportation, college and career counseling and mentoring.
- Use of transitions advisors.
- Support case management.
Teacher Quality & Effectiveness

- Establish a system of intensive, job-embedded, and sustained professional development.
- Support quality standards for professional development.
- Create a national professional development entity.
• Launch a (free) national digital library.
• Use highly skilled instructors as program professional development coordinators.
• Content: college and career readiness standards; reading, mathematics, and science instruction; transitions to postsecondary and career; adult education in work settings; adults with learning disabilities; formative assessment; integrating 21st century technology.
Professionalization of the Field

- Increase number of full-time positions.
- Create conditions for practitioners to participate in professional development.
  - Paid non-instructional time for common planning, analysis, and professional development.
- Establish minimum teaching standards and credentialing requirements.
- Recruit young, trained practitioners and provide internships.
- Offer incentives to states that encourage:
  - Teachers and administrators to pursue certificates and high-quality professional development.
  - Partnerships with local programs and universities to recruit and train young instructors.
Technology

- Increase access to “new” computers and portable technology (handhelds, smart phones, e-tablets, etc.) to support learning and continued engagement of students.

- Incorporate technology to offer additional materials to students and to differentiate instruction.

- Use web-based learning management systems for students and teachers including options for web-based assessments.
Technology (continued)

- Support a national project to develop an online and blended learning professional development model.
- Approve an assessment to determine computer skill competency for each of the educational functioning levels.
- Create state technology centers to assist programs.
System Flexibility and Innovation

- Promote, seed, and scale up innovations
  - Accelerate learning/student achievement.
- Use of work-based learning (shadowing, mentoring, internships).
- Expand and improve use of technology.
System Flexibility and Innovation

- Increase teacher effectiveness.
- Help adults navigate career pathways.
- Integrate service delivery and data systems; develop articulation agreements; joint professional development across systems and for educators and business personnel focused on proven models.
Alignment & Interagency Collaboration

- Create a shared vision that supports career pathways and sector strategies.

- Use common definitions and assessments; align and simplify eligibility criteria; streamline intake.

- Increase access to training and other employment services; set goals for dual enrollment.
• Modify performance measures to recognize skill attainment in other titles/programs and capture progress along career pathways.

• Include adult education and community colleges on State and Local Workforce Investment Boards.
Accountability

- Establish a shared accountability framework across programs.
- Use common assessments of basic skills, technical skills, and college and career readiness across programs.
- Consider work readiness indicators and ways to measure progress along a career pathway.
- Increase local accountability by having the states set targets with local programs.
Data Systems and Use

- Use longitudinal data to determine learner outcomes over time.
- Remove (any remaining) barriers to cross-agency data sharing to link adult education, postsecondary education, and employment data systems.
- Strengthen/build upon National Reporting System.
Research

- Re-establish an independent research center.
- Establish a research agenda to get answers to fundamental questions.
- Identify whether, how, and when professional development makes a positive difference in student achievement.
- Identify and replicate effective practices.
Funding

- Increase appropriations to reach underserved populations; allocate more funding to basic education.
- Establish employer incentives to increase access to education and training.
- Create EL Civics set aside.
Funding (continued)

- Create separate performance incentive funding for adult education.
- Raise state leadership cap to 15%.
- Reauthorize 10% set aside for Corrections.
- Create fund for innovation.
Alignment with Secretary’s Four Pillars of Reform

- Prepare students for success in college and the workplace.
- Put highly effective teachers in every classroom and effective leaders in every school.
- Build data systems that track student achievement and teacher effectiveness.
- Turn around our lowest performing schools (2,000 dropout factories).
Reaching the President’s Goal

- Create and support opportunities for every American to commit to at least one year of higher education or advanced training in his/her lifetime.

“America cannot lead in the 21st century unless we have the best educated, most competitive workforce in the world”

President Barack Obama
April 24, 2009
Alignment with the President’s Vision for Workforce Development

- Truly one-stop shopping for high-quality services.
- Streamlining service delivery and establishing new waiver authority.
- Engaging with employers on a regional and/or sectoral basis.
- Improving accountability.
- Promoting innovation and identifying and replicating best practices.
Thank You

Office of Vocational and Adult Education