

**Michigan Works! The Job Force Board  
Youth Comprehensive 5-Year Plan**

**July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2012**

**Michigan Works! The Job Force Board  
Youth Comprehensive 5-Year Plan  
July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2012**

**A. Local Strategy and Goals**

*1. Describe your broad strategic, economic, and workforce development goals for youth.*

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board and its Career Connections Group (Educational Advisory Group) have been working to implement the goals of this region's Comprehensive Strategic Plan. The vision of the Job Force Board is "to create and maintain a healthy and growing economy with a local workforce that has the knowledge and skills to enable local employers to compete effectively in a global and technologically sophisticated market place."

The Job Force Board's Career Connections Group is composed of business and education representatives who support the Job Force Board's Strategic Plan of increasing the basic skills of our workforce. Through participation in the Job Force Board's Strategic Planning Sessions, employers indicated a need for our Michigan Works! System to continue to address the "soft skills" that our emerging workforce needs focusing on not only "how" to get the job, but more importantly, how to "keep" the job. The role of the Michigan Works! System to educate and prepare youth is more important than ever as school districts have minimized career preparation activities and are looking for community support to assist with activities that support career awareness and career preparation.

With the state of Michigan undergoing educational reform relevant to graduation requirements and "No Child Left Behind" requirements, Michigan Works! The Job Force Board's vision is to continue to develop its system to ensure that our businesses have the

workforce they need to be competitive in the world marketplace and to sustain our local economies. Traditionally, academic standards do not have measurability for success in employability skills. Common Measures are requiring that our out of school youth have the basic skills to be competitive and successful in the workplace. The Job Force Board, as the designated Youth Committee, and its Career Connections Group continues to implement innovative services to youth that address the basic skills, occupational skills, and employability skills required by our regional businesses. As key partners in Regional Skills Alliances of Healthcare, Manufacturing, Construction Trades and Tourism, the Job Force Board is supporting industry led initiatives that are geared to educating the pipeline of career opportunities and skill requirements for jobs in the Upper Peninsula as well as increasing opportunities for youth to enroll into apprenticeships or to participate in internships. From “Exploring Career Pathway Guides” at various hospitals to creating youth focused compact discs touting opportunities in the construction trades to on-going conversations with industry and education leaders, the Job Force Board will continue its convener role to build the skills of our emerging workforce.

Strategic planning activities have identified clearly defined roles for the Career Connections Group. Educators are charged with supporting and seeking ways to continue integrating entrepreneurial curriculum into K-16; with continuing to offer applied learning applications to teachers and students and with building upon the business education partnerships to bring current and projected labor market information to students, teachers and parents. Both business and education will continue to work together to support activities such as job shadowing, provision of internships, classroom presentations, etc. In 2007, the Industrial Manufacturing Regional Skills Alliance outreached to school districts to provide presentation to students about careers in the manufacturing industry. Members selected

employees to present at over 33 schools across the Upper Peninsula to educate the emerging workforce about career opportunities.

The Job Force Board is committed to support the activities for youth that are prescribed under the Workforce Investment Act:

1. To provide assistance to youth in achieving academic and employment success by improving education and skills competencies, and by providing effective connections to employers;
2. To ensure ongoing mentoring opportunities for eligible youth;
3. To provide training opportunities for eligible youth;
4. To provide continued supportive services for eligible youth;
5. To provide incentives for recognition and achievement for eligible youth; and
6. To provide opportunities for eligible youth in activities related to leadership, development, decision-making, citizenship, and community service.

In 2011-2012, the Job Force Board is transitioning its younger in-school youth services to the schools. As a pilot project in Delta and Marquette Counties, Youth Career Specialists will be delivering services in three regional school districts, incorporating the Jobs for American Graduates (JAG) competencies and curriculum as the backbone of service provision.

The Job Force Board is building local entrepreneurial opportunities for regional youth through the provision of entrepreneurial training that is included in the summer youth employment activity, to incorporation into the comprehensive JAG curriculum and through regional partnerships.

2. ***Describe your youth vision and how the WIA workforce investment System will help attain these goals.***

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board's vision for comprehensive youth oriented services is an integrated system at the local level that brings together the expertise, experience and leadership of existing federal, state, and local youth programs. Through the process of collaboration and the redirection of resources, this system provides learning options, work experience, skills development and leadership development, counseling and support, connections to both post secondary education and training and good jobs for eligible 16 to 21 year olds.

The Michigan Works! Service Center System continues to participate in school events such as career fairs, job shadowing, and classroom presentations. Career fairs and classroom presentations to both secondary and post –secondary schools help to present to the youth information on business needs. The Michigan Works! Service Center System is working to create more and to strengthen business and education partnerships. Participation in Regional Skills Alliances led by industry leaders in healthcare, manufacturing, construction trades and tourism is helping to bridge the skill gap areas that business are seeing with emerging workers.

Marketing of career opportunities and increased communication between business and education through the efforts of the Job Force Board is bringing an increased awareness of workforce needs to youth and educators. Area youth are provided universal access to the community's youth development opportunities through the Michigan Works! Service Centers and other community locations. Youth are able to access information on education and training opportunities; mentoring resources; linkages between academic and occupational learning; skill, aptitude, and academic assessment; work experience; comprehensive guidance and counseling; support services; etc. The Michigan Works! Service Centers continue to play a strong role in career pathways and career preparation

services to area youth. As well, the Michigan Works! Service Centers continue to provide youth entrepreneurial activities to regional youth.

The Youth Council acts as the focus for leadership and change in youth activities within local areas. The Youth Council continues to be pro-active in bringing Community Stakeholders, whose constituency is youth, to the table to talk about workforce development/career development opportunities, identifying areas that can contribute to the whole puzzle as opposed to taking a slice of the pie of youth dollars. Services are designed to be accountable, and to be evaluated by results against established benchmarks, which will be reviewed and evaluated yearly, to assure continuous improvement. The Career Connection Groups' work at the committee level has helped to increase communication between business and education. Joint efforts in writing grants and delivering career preparation services have helped to streamline services and will continue to be a catalyst in working together to eliminate duplicate and create more efficiencies in service delivery.

The Job Force Board's focus on quality improvement serves as the foundation for our Michigan Works! System to continually review its youth services in order to enhance and/or expand services that meet the needs of our business community.

Our younger in-school youth services have been traditionally offered through our local Michigan Works! Service Centers. We recognize that in order to maintain and build a quality relationship with these at-risk youth, it is important that our human resource specialists be visible on a day to day basis to build a continuity of service. The Job Force Board will work to expand in-school youth services to multiple school districts over the next five years, while maintain services for older and younger out of school youth within each of the Michigan Works! Service Centers.

**3. *Youth customers of the workforce investment system***

Michigan's Annual Planning Report for the Six County as of 2009 here are 10,989 youth ages 14-18 which is a 17.4% decline from the year 2000; and 9041 youth ages 19-21, showing a 14.7% increase during that same period. There are approximately 2,442 economically disadvantaged youth, ages 14 to 21, in the central Upper Peninsula. An estimated 2,350 are in-school youth, with the balance either a high school graduate or no longer attending school. Of the total eligible youth population, approximately 1402 are disabled. All area youth seeking labor exchange services have access to the Michigan Works! Service Center System.

**4. *Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the local level to award grants and contracts for youth activities under Title I WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts.***

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board will adhere to its procurement policy, which follows the guidelines set forth in Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth Policy Issuance 04-03.

The state has delegated responsibility to local boards to provide the definition regarding the sixth youth eligibility criterion at Section 101(13) (C) (vi).

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board has identified the following youth eligibility criterion. In-school youth who are at risk of dropping out as defined as a youth who has had two or more of the following characteristics:

- is deficient in basic literacy skills;
- is homeless;
- is a ward of the court or foster child;

- ❑ is pregnant or parenting;
- ❑ is in need of special assistance to complete education or retain employment.

Out-of-school youth who are at risk as defined as an out-of-school youth who has two of the following characteristics:

- ❑ is basic skill deficient;
- ❑ high school dropout;
- ❑ has a limited work history;
- ❑ has not completed a year of post-secondary education or training;
- ❑ exhibits dysfunctional behaviors that are barriers to education, training, and/or employment.

5% criteria may be utilized if it has been determined that a youth who is over income meets two of the above criteria and an alternate source has indicated youth will benefit from services to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.

**5. *Describe the Older and Younger Youth Services provided by the One Stop Centers***

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board has a Michigan Works! Service Center (or satellite office) in each of its six counties (Alger, Delta, Dickinson, Marquette, Menominee, and Schoolcraft).

Each Michigan Works! Service Center offers the full range of universal, core, intensive, and training services to the employers and residents, including youth, of the region, based on their need of services. Out-of-school youth have access to job openings, labor market information, job search assistance, job placement assistance, and when eligible, education and training opportunities at each of the service centers.

In-school youth have accessed the one-stop service centers as part of their work-based learning activities during the summer component of our Youth Services. All youth development

services provided by member agencies of the Youth Council will be accessible through the service centers. Michigan Works! Service Center personnel have been assigned to area school districts to help raise the awareness of the Michigan Works! Service Center System and increase access by youth to the Service Centers.

The Jobs for American Graduates curriculum is serving as the backbone of services for our WIA younger youth enrolled in three regional school districts. Our focus is to keep at-risk youth in high school through graduation; assisting youth in securing an entry level job leading to career advancement opportunities; encouraging and helping youth pursue a postsecondary education; and provide program participants with competency-based classroom experiences, recognition and leadership opportunities. This strategy aligns to the Strategic Plan and seeks ways to continue integrated entrepreneurial curriculum in K-16; to market current and projected labor market information to students, educators and parents and to promote applied learning opportunities to students and educators. Michigan Works! Service Center staff work in coordination with local school districts to provide services and information along the Career Pathways, helping to focus on the present and future needs of business.

For The Job Force Board, business is the primary customer of the Michigan Works! Service Center System. Business involvement includes working with the Job Force Board to identify job and skill requirements of the current workplace and to provide a bona fide connection between the youth of the community and the area businesses. Youth who are referred to business through our labor exchange and/or intensive services receive workshop training that focuses on “Steps to Success,” such as problem solving, communications, getting to work on time, etc. Youth enrolled in intensive services will have an individual service strategy (ISS) that identifies goals, strategies and outcomes as they progress through our Michigan Works! Service Center System.

## **B. Strategies for Improvement**

### ***1. Describe how the local board and youth council will develop and manage effective youth programs***

The Job Force is this region's Youth Council. The Youth Council's purpose is to provide the expertise in and knowledge of the workforce needs of youth to develop and recommend local youth employment and training policy. This policy incorporates youth development; establishes linkages with other organizations serving youth; and evaluates a range of issues that impact young people's success in the workforce.

In addition, the Job Force Board has assigned an adhoc committee composed of non-Job Force Board members and youth to help lead the discussion on youth employment issues. This representation is imperative to the design and implementation of services for youth. The scope and role of the Youth Council is to implement the broad range of workforce development programs for youth. The Youth Council:

- a. Makes decisions on youth funding under WIA based on certain decision-making authority delegated by The Job Force Board.
- b. Works to develop a more comprehensive and integrated system of workforce development programs and services for youth.
- c. Helps to develop a stronger merging workforce including students enrolled in the high schools in the region.
- d. Focuses on the strengths or assets of youth and seeks strategies to develop and capitalize on those assets.
- e. Deals with a broader array of workforce development programs for youth that are supported with a wider range of funds from various sources.

The Youth Council coordinates youth activities that:

- a. Provide eligible youth seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment success, effective and comprehensive activities, which shall include options for improving educational and skill competencies and provide effective connections to employers.
- b. Ensure ongoing mentoring opportunities for eligible youth with adults.
- c. Provide opportunities for training for eligible youth.
- d. Provide incentives for recognition and achievement to eligible youth.
- e. Provide opportunities for eligible youth in activities related to leadership, development, decision-making, citizenship, and community service.

***2. Describe the strategy for providing Comprehensive services to eligible youth, including any coordination with foster care, education, welfare, and other relevant resources. Include requirements and activities to assist youth who have special needs or barriers to employment, including those who are pregnant, parenting, or have disabilities.***

Part of The Job Force Board's strategy for providing comprehensive services to eligible youth will lie in the membership of the Youth Council. Criteria for membership will promote the involvement of key youth activities-related organizations including the Department of Human Services, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, local secondary and/or post secondary educational institutions, and other community based and youth focused organizations. In addition, the Michigan Works! System design includes having human resource specialists work within schools to recruit youth to the Michigan Works! system.

The Youth Council assures that programs serving youth have the following components:

- a. Comprehensive objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant.
- b. Development of individualized service strategies for participants that identify an employment goal, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant taking into account the assessment conducted.
- c. Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities, in appropriate situations.
- d. Strong linkages between academic and occupational learning.
- e. Preparation for post-secondary education, where appropriate.
- f. Effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to the job market and local and regional employers.

The members of the Youth Council and their respective constituents comprise a network for youth who are in need of specialized services to overcome barriers to education, training and eventually unsubsidized employment. This network addresses the needs of the disabled, pregnant and/or parenting teens, and other at risk youth by providing the unique interventions required by the youth to achieve their goals.

The Job Force Board provides a continuum of services and programs for youth that meet the provisions of WIA, and more importantly the needs of the region's youth through its Michigan Works! Service Center System. Based on an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each youth a service strategy is developed. This strategy identifies an employment goal (including non-traditional employment when appropriate), appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services. Elements of this strategy may include any of the following components:

- a. Preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities which may include

tutoring, study skills training, career exploration, instruction, and work experience leading to completion of secondary school, including drop out prevention.

- b. Strong linkages between academic and occupational learning that may include the use of applied academics.
- c. Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities including career exploration, job shadowing and internships.
- d. Effective linkages with intermediaries with strong employer connections through adult mentorship and role modeling.
- e. Alternative secondary school services leading to the completion of a secondary diploma or equivalent rather than leaving school.
- f. Summer employment experiences that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning.
- g. Paid and unpaid work experience in the private or public sector under close supervision of an employer or employer representative to develop and enhance specific work related skills and abilities.
- h. Occupational skill training leading to the attainment of a recognized credential or its recognized equivalent relating to unsubsidized employment.
- i. Leadership development opportunities that may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors.
- j. Comprehensive guidance and counseling which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral as appropriate.
- k. Support services that are required to remove barriers to the completion of

educational, training, or employment related goals.

1. Follow-up services for not less than twelve months as appropriate to insure the goals and outcomes originally identified are attained, or if they cannot be attained, alternative outcomes are sought.

For youth ages 14 through 18, who are registered in the system The Job Force Board anticipates that they will:

- a. Attain basic skills, as appropriate, work readiness, and/or occupational skills
- b. Attain secondary school diplomas or their equivalent
- c. Be placed and retained in post-secondary education or advanced training, or placed and retained in the military service, employment or a qualified apprenticeship.

For youth ages 19 through 21, they anticipate that they will:

- a. Enter unsubsidized employment and retain employment for at least 6 months
- b. Attain recognized certificates relating to achievement of educational skills, which may include attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or occupational skills, by participants who enter unsubsidized employment, post-secondary education, advanced training, or unsubsidized employment.

- 3. Services to Youth may be provided through (1) a summer employment program designated in Section 664.600 of the WIA Final Rules and Regulations, and (2) a year-round Youth Program designated in Section 664.405 of the WIA Final Rules and Regulations.**

The Job Force Board incorporates the summer youth employment program as part of its year around services to youth. The summer component is designed to create career exploration activities that incorporate applied learning activities with academics. Entitled “Earn While You Learn”, youth are placed at worksites that build the soft skills, addressing the work readiness goal; and career exploration and work experience to address those occupations skill requirements based on career pathway interest. Prior to placement in the summer component, youth are provided opportunities to explore careers, learn about workplace expectations and attend workshops that focus on building their employability skills. Coordination with school teachers and guidance counselors help to ensure youth who are in school remain on track for graduation. Services for the out of school youth, older and younger are focused on assisting the youth to transition back to school if lacking credentials or to employment. Career exploration activities to include participation in the Earn While You Learn are part of the menu of services.

The transition of our human resource specialists to providing the JAG curriculum in regional high schools will increase the provision of services to youth beginning with the academic school year and ending that academic year with a summer youth employment opportunity.

#### **4. Youth Eligibility Process**

The Job Force Board has issued an eligibility policy (maintained on-site) that includes a system of checks and balances for our human resource specialists to utilize when enrolling youth to assure compliance to the Workforce Investment Act guidelines. Within the policy are completed checklists that are required as part of the eligibility packet that is then reviewed for compliance prior to enrollment.

For in-school younger youth, human resource specialists will work with area school districts to help substantiate citizenship. Since core services are not provided to youth under WIA, the provision of service does require citizenship or authorization to work in the United States. Older youth could be services through core services which do not require citizenship documentation. When informed by a job seeker that they are unable to provide documentation of citizenship or authorization to work, our human resource specialists will refer the individual to the Department of Immigration for further assistance.

**C. Review, Comment, and Publication Documentation**

The MWA has published this plan in accordance with Section 118 (c) of the act.

Documentation will be maintained on file for monitoring by the Workforce Development Agency.