



**METRO NORTH REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT BOARD
QUARTERLY REB MEETING NOTES**

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Present: Reed Brockman, Charlene Bauer, James Donovan, Susan Jepson, Danny LeBlanc, Rose Lydon, Kambiz Maali, Mina Reddy, Paul Richard, Larisa Schelkin, Sandra Smith, Steven Sullivan, Mark Tardiff, Tricia Tyler, Juan Vega, Susan Walsh

Absent: Joanna Dowling, John Drinkwater, Madeline Hoffman, Karen Sampson Johnson, Robert Jones, John Kendzior, Lisa Amaya Price, Cheryl Scott, Mary Tighe, Kerry Wollner

REB Staff: Linda Bass, Peter Farkas, Priscilla Golding, Michael Hatfield, Meelynn Wong, Kimberly Napier, Holly Vogel

Guests: James Mabry and Jay Linnehan, Middlesex Community College; Linda Rohrer, Career Source; and Christopher Brennan, The Career Place

Welcome (Paul Richard)

Paul welcomed and introduced guest Dr. James Mabry, the new President of Middlesex Community College, as well as new REB staff member Robin Dion, Manufacturing Marketing Manager of the Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (NAMC).

Review of December 2014 Meeting Notes (Paul Richard)

Paul requested a motion to approve the notes of the December 2014 REB meeting. The motion was moved and seconded, and the notes of the December 2014 REB meeting were approved as presented.

Adult Basic Education Transitions to Career Committee (ABETCC) Report (Mina Reddy)

The ABETCC Committee, which was established just last year, has recently defined their six-month, as well as longer-term goals. The committee is collecting information on programs that help adults transition into community colleges and other opportunities, and is also working toward identifying meaningful internship and job shadow opportunities for ABE students. In addition, Community Learning Center, Cambridge, has received, and will soon pilot, Career Ready 101 software. Lastly, Mina mentioned that if anyone has an opportunity to advocate for ABE funding to please let her know.

Update on REB Activities: Federal/State Context (Linda Bass)

The Governor's 9C budget cuts eliminated some of the funding for some of the REB's key projects – including an IT planning grant and an advanced manufacturing training grant. We are now hoping that next year's budget will restore funding for our sectoral initiatives that were cut through this 9C process. Chris Brennan, Linda Rohrer, and I are in the process of talking to legislators about our activities and current priorities. We are providing them with copies of the legislative report, since we feel it is a good summary of the work of the REB and Metro North careers centers.

In addition, we are involved in WIOA workgroups – youth and training providers – which are focused on implementing the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). We do not yet have the regulations, and this has hampered our ability to move forward.

Metro North was one of two Workforce Investment Boards invited to the Governor's signing of the Executive Order that created the Workforce Skills Gap Cabinet (the other was North Shore WIB). The Cabinet is designed to bring the three Secretariats together. Under WIOA there is an emphasis on joint planning. At the event, comments were made about workforce investment boards around the state that do not have business membership from their own communities. This appears to be simple misinformation, since by law, WIBs are required to have majority private sector participation. Three other WIB directors and I will meet with Secretary Ron Walker next week to talk about our manufacturing efforts, and try to get this back in the budget next year.

Youth Council Report (Priscilla Golding)

Priscilla announced that the Metro North Youth RFPs were issued in early March, and will be due back in April. The three RFPs are available on the website at www.mnreb.org. The new Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act now mandates work experience as well as credential attainment.

Business Engagement Task Force Report (Paul Richard)

The newly established Business Engagement Task Force met in early March. The group discussed how to better engage industry to help identify the workforce skills that are in most need, particularly in the fields of life sciences, information technology, and possibly medical devices. The objective will be to host focus groups within specific industries or groups of industries. There was also discussion about engaging temporary service agencies as well, since many permanent employees begin their careers as temporary workers.

REB Move and Meeting Schedule (Linda Bass)

The REB offices will be moving in July to the same building as Career Source in Cambridge (above the Fresh Pond Mall). The new space will have its own conference room, so the September meeting, and most future meetings, will be held there.

Linda then led a brief discussion about potentially changing the regular REB meeting schedule to accommodate more members. Since there was no clear consensus on the survey, it was decided that the next meeting will be held as originally scheduled (Wednesday, June 17, 8 AM). The September meeting, however, will be held on Tuesday, September 15, at 8 AM). This topic will be addressed again at the September meeting to determine if Tuesdays (or an alternate Tues/Wed schedule) work best for the board as a whole.

Vote on Rechartering of Career Centers (Paul Richard)

At the December meeting there were several presentations related to the rechartering process, including an overview of the process, a summary of performance, and highlights from the career center directors and Jay Linnehan (Middlesex Community College). However, since we did not have a quorum, the relevant materials have been included in the package for today's meeting. Paul then asked for any questions or concerns about rechartering. Paul said that the REB has been very pleased with performance, and strongly recommends that MCC be rechartered as operator for the next three years, through June 2018, contingent upon WIOA regulations, which may require a competitive bidding process. Paul requested a motion to recharter Middlesex Community College as operator of the Metro North Career Centers for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018, contingent upon consistency with WIOA regulations. The motion was moved and seconded, and the rechartering of MCC as operator of the Metro North Career Centers through June 2018 was approved.

Metro North and STEM Occupations: Overview (Meelynn Wong)

In 2013, the Metro North REB was designated to lead the Metro North STEM Network. The Network is a strategic alliance between education, business, workforce development, and the community to promote a skilled and sustainable STEM Workforce in the region. It is one of nine STEM Networks across the state that have been charged with promoting STEM careers and coordinating the regional STEM activities in congruence with the MA STEM Plan 2.0, an initiative of the Governor's STEM Advisory Council. The network meets quarterly, and all REB members are invited to participate. The Metro North STEM Network has identified the five areas of focus that will best meet the needs of the communities it serves:

- Developing and disseminating information on STEM career pathways, as well as regional labor market information;
- Promoting applied and work-based learning opportunities;
- Promoting mathematics and its relevance to computer science, life sciences, engineering, and the "real world";
- Aligning curricula to the needs of both students and businesses; and
- Addressing systemic barriers for youth and educators.

The next meeting will be on April 2, and the REB has also partnered with the Cambridge Science Festival for an event on April 23, where STEM professionals will meet informally with parents and students to talk about their day-to-day work life. All REB members are welcome to attend.

In response to a question about developing STEM pathways, Linda Bass mentioned that REB Associate Directors are currently developing STEM career pathway maps, and we are hoping to have that completed by the end of this fiscal year.

Meelynn then provided a brief overview of statistics related to STEM jobs in the Metro North area (see presentation handout).

STEM Involvement of REB Membership

The following REB members (or, in their absence, Priscilla or Linda) gave a brief overview of their respective organization's involvement in STEM activities:

Larisa Schelkin, Global STEM Education Center

One of Larisa's key roles is founder and president of the Global STEM Education Center, a nonprofit corporation which brings together educators, K-20 students and corporate partners to promote STEM educational initiatives that prepare students with the skills to succeed in diverse, international, team-based contexts. Upcoming events: May 8 (tentative) – New England school committees and superintendents will meet to discuss workforce development issues; May 29 -- Harvard University School of Education, Global STEM Education Center event that will focus on the development of an innovation-driven global workforce.

Reed Brockman, AECOM

Reed is involved with the Boston Society of Engineers (BSE), which places a significant focus on STEM Education, as well as seeks to encourage students to appreciate the infrastructure that's around them. Upcoming event: On May 16, there will be birthday celebration for the 250-year-old Choate Bridge in Ipswich, designed for both children and adults (see website: www.celebrateinfrastructure.org). Future City, one of three competitions run by the BSE, is funded by the @SCILS grant. This year, twenty eight (28) schools from throughout New England were involved in the competition. The students are asked to envision their dream city of the future, and then explain how it works based on science, technology, and engineering principles. This year's theme was urban agriculture. They build a model out of recycled materials and present it to a panel of judges.

Biogen (Priscilla Golding)

Priscilla mentioned that one of Biogen's many STEM education programs is a "Lab Day." Each year, a number youth from WIA-funded Metro North programs participate in this program, where they get hands-on lab experience. This gives them a sense of what it's like to conduct scientific research, as well as to work in a high-security environment.

Mary Tighe, Boston Centerless (Linda Bass)

Board member Mary Tighe is the HR Director for Boston Centerless. This company is owned by Steve Tamasi, who is a member of the REB's Advanced Manufacturing leadership team, and is also the national spokesperson for the National Robotics League. Winchester High School has attracted many youth participants in this popular robotics competition.

Sue Walsh, City of Cambridge

The City of Cambridge plans to hire a Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) Coordinator to connect Cambridge businesses and schools on a series of STEAM-related initiatives. One of the primary goals is to integrate local business into the curriculum.

Steve Sullivan, Executive Office of Community Colleges (EEOC)

EEOC has received a second Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant from DOL in the amount of \$15M, with an additional \$5M for the purpose of creating an integrated data plan. The community colleges are advancing a comprehensive approach to addressing the training and educational needs of workers and employers statewide with a focus on articulated pathways to careers in high-growth STEM sectors. The project, entitled Guided Pathways to Success in STEM (GPSTEM), will use the national Complete College America Guided Pathways to Success model to assist eligible students in obtaining degrees and certificates in STEM fields. The model focuses on reducing the time to completion of certificates and degree programs, resulting in more students entering employment in the Commonwealth and/or transferring to baccalaureate education to add to their credentials. For more information, visit: masscc.org.

Sandra Smith, Microsoft

STEM Initiative Highlights:

- Microsoft Educator Network (available online); certification possible
- TEALS (Technical Education and Literacy in Schools), is a program that helps high schools to build a sustainable computer science (CS) program and CS teacher capacity by integrating industry software engineers into the classroom in a co-teaching model with a classroom teacher - committed partner schools are expected to eventually run the CS courses with their own classroom teachers in two years.
- Online learning tools for youth
- Computer Science courses in eight schools, including four in Metro North: Cambridge Rindge and Latin, Medford Vocational Technical, Revere High School and Watertown.
- Employees are involved in various science and technical organizations, including Science Club for Girls, Youth Cities, and Women Entrepreneurs in Science and Technology
- The NERD Center has a large conference space on the first floor, where they host many school groups and STEM-focused organizations
- Small competitive university-level internship program

Mark Tardiff, United Electric Controls

UAE's STEM Education involvement over the years has included: a robotics program with a local high school; an engineering scholarship program; a partnership with Benjamin Franklin High School for job shadow and internship opportunities, and participation in high school job fairs.

Paul Richard, Warner Babcock Institute (WBI)

WBI's non-profit organization, Beyond Benign, teaches sustainable chemistry to middle, high-school and college students, both locally and around the world. The goal is to transform thinking about careers in chemistry to better prepare students to engage with their world while connecting chemistry, human health and the environment. Beyond Benign also offers special

training programs for teachers. A newer project is called “Green Chemistry Commitment” where Beyond Benign works with colleges to incorporate green chemistry principles into the curriculum.

Discussion

In lieu of a discussion on STEM (due to time constraints), Linda read aloud some questions for possible follow-up at a future REB meeting:

- 1) How can we best address the widespread deficit in math skills essential for entry into careers in our priority industries? How can we foster interest in learning math? Can you identify any exemplary programs for youth and/or adults?
- 2) Similarly, how we can encourage interest in and development of information technology/computer science skills, e.g., coding, working with databases, etc.? Can you identify any exemplary programs for youth and/or adults?
- 3) What role can we play in creating partnerships between schools (pre-K to post-secondary) and businesses in order to increase the pipeline of students entering STEM careers? What are your ideas for three next steps?

Lastly, Linda asked for questions or comments on the Benchmarking Chart (there were none).

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next REB meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 17, 2015, 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM, at 150 CambridgePark Drive, 1st Floor Conference Room, Cambridge.