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**MEETING NOTES  
NORTH DAKOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
APRIL 5, 2004**

A meeting of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council – Planning Committee was held on Monday, April 5, 2004, at the North Dakota Department of Commerce, 1600 East Century Avenue, Suite 2, Bismarck, ND 58503.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jim Walker, Scott Holdman, and Cathi Christopherson.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lyn Dockter-Pinnick, Justin Schardin, Dr. David Gipp, Leo Cummings, and Jim Hirsch.

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Ken Smith, Bill Goetz, Cheryl Kulas, Wayne Kutzer, Dave Massey, Maren Daley, Dr. Chuck DeRemers (via phone), Deb Dillon (via phone), Sue Myxter (via phone), Dr. Paul Johnson, Ron Ness, Connie Kalanek, Dan Polk, Don Puetz, Al Austad, Korrine Lang, DeAnn Berg, Andy Rendon, Carissa Richter, and Jill Splonskowski.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Jim Walker welcomed members. Members and guests introduced themselves around the room.

## **Jobs for America's Graduates:**

Ken Smith introduced the program called Jobs for America's Graduates to members. The program has been in existence for 25 years. They operate in 26 states and they have leaders from the Senate as well as high-level business people from around the country. The program has had great success in many states including Montana. The Jobs for America's Graduates (hereinafter JAG) model focuses on the following:

- Senior Program Application – serves junior and seniors, but also can serve as early as the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level
- Multi-Year Program Application
- Out-of-School/Dropout Recovery Program Application

JAG has over 8,000 employers in their network and they serve over 65,000 in and out-of-school youth in over 800 schools. They have a 90% graduation rate. They have an 80% overall success rate 12 months after leaving school. The average cost is \$1500 per student covering 21 months of education and training. Eighty-two percent (82%) of students who do not pass state proficiency tests are passing once enrolled in the JAG program. JAG has also had great success in serving Native American Reservations. Some competency skills learned by students are:

- Career Development
- Job Attainment
- Personal Skills
- Basic Skills
- Leadership and Self-Development
- Workplace Skills

Job Specialists are the adults who work with the students. They are carefully chosen for the classroom setting. They recommend 30-35 students per 1 job specialist. Some skills necessary to be a JAG student are the following:

- 1) Mastery of 37 core employability skills
- 2) Participation in the State Career Association
- 3) Design and implement after-school activities
- 4) Community service
- 5) Social and self-esteem building activities
- 6) Job shadowing, employment field trips
- 7) Counseling and assistance in assuring remediation is provided when needed.

Targeted populations are youth or "young adults" identified as being at the greatest risk of not graduating and having other "barriers to success".

Funding for JAG comes from State Legislatures and WIA funds. Some other sources available are Wagner Peyser Discretionary Funds, Carl Perkins funds, TANF money, Juvenile Delinquency Prevention funds, and private sector contributions.

A non-profit organization would be developed and North Dakota would adopt a model developed by JAG. The organization would be run and managed in North Dakota under JAG's recommendations.

Ken Smith asked members if they have any questions in regard to JAG. Some of the questions asked were:

Q: What is funded in the JAG program out of the 10 requirements of WIA?

A: Almost all of the requirements of WIA are covered under their program.

Q: Is the program tailored to each individual and how long is the program?

A: Yes, the program is very tailored to each person and the training consists of 9 months of classroom training and 12 months of follow-up.

Q: Is there an in-school and out-of-school program?

A: Yes, many students are also married and have children. There are currently about 70 centers nationwide with such a program.

Q: What is the profile of the job specialists?

A: North Dakota will decide on educational requirements. They must have proven successful experiences working with young people in an educational setting. They must have entrepreneurial skills and must be energetic individuals. Job specialists are usually paid \$25,000 per year depending on location.

Q: Can you review the employability skills tests and requirements?

A: Students will compete against one another in a classroom setting and take a test to determine skill attainment. After taking the tests, students have been reported to have improved by up to 80% of their skill level, attitude, and work ethic.

Q: How does this program differ from Job Corps?

A: They intervene more closely with a job specialist, the cost is substantially less due to non-residential status, and they act as a prevention tool to keep students from entering centers such as Job Corps.

Q: Can and do students work during the program?

A: Yes. Students are employed; however, they try to limit them to 15-20 hours per week.

Q: What are the physical space and other requirements to administer the program?

A: Requirements are a classroom, telephone, ability to schedule, and students who understand and are willing to accept the program.

Q: What are the day-to-day activities for students?

A: Employment activities are addressed up to twice per week. Employers may come to speak to them once a week. Remediation studies are conducted. Counseling services are offered, and they participate in youth organization activities.

Q: Are participants mostly blue collar or white collar students?

A: Rural areas show blue collar students who live in agricultural areas. White collar students live in urban areas and their concentration of study can be office settings and lower health-related areas.

Q: What are the requirements to enroll into the program?

A: North Dakota would decide those based on the non-profit organization's standards.

Q: What is the nearest JAG site to North Dakota?

A: Far eastern part of Montana and the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

Q: Can we see a curriculum sample?

A: Yes. They will be sent via mail or e-mail to Jill L. Splonskowski for distribution to members.

Q: What characteristics would JAG like to see in a pilot project for the State of North Dakota?

A:

- 1) The project has to be in a setting where they feel JAG would have success
- 2) Must be a public/private engagement
- 3) Must have a potential for growth
- 4) Would like to see the program in more than one location to determine outcomes. JAG would propose 10 locations statewide to start with 35 students at each site

Q: What would JAG receive in compensation if North Dakota were to set up the program in 10 schools?

A: \$16,000

One of the first steps in implementing this program would be to see a curriculum and receive additional details. Ken Smith mentioned that he would suggest setting up a non-profit organization with members from public and private sector businesses, legislators, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Community College system. JAG staff would like to be a part of the selection process in choosing North Dakota's Director. JAG conducts progress monitoring and performance/accountability measures. Ken Smith also mentioned that 80% of the States who began with the JAG model are still using the program and are having great success.

--LUNCH--

Bill Goetz mentioned that he will visit with Jim Hirsch and we will continue to pursue the JAG model in North Dakota. Bill Goetz asks that anyone with interest should e-mail him with any comments or questions.

Next, Ken Smith mentioned that he will e-mail a summary of JAG to Jill Splonskowski for distribution to all members.

**Agenda:**

April 5, 2004, Agenda is approved as-is by members.

**Minutes:**

March 8, 2004, Meeting Notes are approved as-is by members.

**Incentive Awards:**

Korrine Lang mentions that a letter will be sent out to Job Service North Dakota by the USDOL in April 2004 regarding the application process. The deadline for Incentive Award obligations is June 30, 2004. The Planning Committee will ask for Incentive Award recommendations at the next Workforce Development Council meeting on April 8, 2004.

**DOL Recommendations:**

Korrine Lang identified a letter dated March 19, 2004, which was sent to Jim Hirsch from Maren Daley outlining comments to the recommendations of the Five Year State Strategic Plan.

**Pro's/Con's of JAG – Pilot Opportunities:**

Members discussed the opportunities available. They feel it is a worthwhile cause, a good idea, and great concept, but are concerned with the costs, selection of school districts, and duplication of services (such as Job Service North Dakota). The schools chosen would be those with the greatest area of need:

- Fargo
- Bismarck
- Dickinson
- Schools surrounded by a manufacturing community
- Reservations

We would recommend as a Committee several sites to the Workforce Development Council for future action as soon as we receive additional information on the JAG model.

Scott Holdman asks if Korrine Lang could visit with Job Service North Dakota employees to see if we could integrate some of the JAG concepts into programs that are already administered by their agency.

Members are concerned with the timeline of implementing this program by August 2004. They ask about the possibility of molding the program to the needs of the participating agencies and possibly extending out the timeline.

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

None

Scott Holdman asks that at the next Planning Committee meeting some topics to focus on are:

- 1) Identify some key points that we as a Planning Committee need to be focusing on
- 2) Take a look at how we can increase member attendance at future meetings

The next Planning Committee meeting will be held in mid-May 2004. The meeting will be held at the North Dakota Department of Commerce, Workforce Safety Board Room, 1600 East Century Avenue, Bismarck, North Dakota starting at 10:30 AM.

**The meeting was adjourned.**

**Action Steps:**

- **Submit any comments or questions on the JAG project to Bill Goetz.**
- **Jill Splonskowski to e-mail curriculum and general information from JAG to all members.**
- **Ask for Incentive Award recommendations at the Workforce Development Council meeting on April 8, 2004.**
- **Korrine Lang to visit with Job Service North Dakota employees to see if they could integrate some of the JAG concepts into programs that they are already administering.**
- **Jim Hirsch to develop an agenda and set a meeting date for mid-May 2004.**