

<b>State of Oregon</b>  Governor's Office of Education  and Workforce Policy  Salem, Oregon 97310	Classification:
	Date: October 24, 2001

## Oregon Workforce Letter No. 7-01

TO: ALL LOCAL AND REGIONAL WORKFORCE BOARDS  
ALL STATEWIDE ACTION TEAM MEMBERS  
ALL STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES  
ALL WORKFORCE GRANT RECIPIENTS/FISCAL AGENTS

FROM: Annette Talbott, Governor's Workforce Policy Coordinator

SUBJECT: Support for Area/Regional Board Staff from Unified Board Support Fund

1. *Purpose*

The local and regional boards asked the state for funds to support their staff and other work to further develop the One Stop system and have it be financed in one lump grant from the state (without individual agency designations).

The state, through support by state WIA partners has developed a unified support fund to respond to this request.

2. *Background*

The state has provided some base funding/support to regional and area boards in previous years. This past year (June 1, 2000-July 1, 2001) the state directly provided a total of \$53,000 in support as follows: \$10,000 (WIA Transition), \$33,000 (WIA Governor's Reserve), and \$10,000 (Economic Development). In addition, any unexpended Community Development Funds from the Employment Department were also available for use for staff for the board if that was the highest need in the region/area for these funds. (\$33,000 was authorized for the 99-01 biennium). The amount used to support boards from the Employment Department's Community Development Funds ranged significantly as well from zero to \$33,000.

The state did a survey of what amount of funds was spent to support workforce boards - both regional and local area boards. It found the amount spent on supporting the board staff alone ranged significantly from \$20,000 to \$180,000. In local areas, the average amount for board staff was approximately \$86,500 (excluding the one area that did not separate support staff from the board staff). In regions (the nine regions within the 23 county rural workforce area), the average was \$32,600 for board staff.

The average cost for supporting the board overall in workforce regions reporting was \$56,000 (the nine regions with the larger 23 county federal workforce area). The average for federal workforce areas reporting was \$187,000; this average however was somewhat skewed based on one area's figure. If this area is taken out of the equation, the average is \$138,000. Notably, these funds often went to support a diverse set of tasks including board support and training.

After receiving the request of local and regional chairs at their January 2001 meeting to develop a board support fund, the state agreed to develop some options to try to find a more consistent base of support from the state level. The request also asked that the funds be distributed to the regions/local areas through one state source, as opposed to multiple sources. The chairs requested this approach based on several factors. First, the chairs indicated that it would enable the boards to have a more stable source of funds to use to hire and retain staff. Second, it would also avoid the confusion and competing sets of performance expectations or contractual reporting requirements that were associated with the funds when they were distributed in small pots from multiple sources.

### *3. Description*

#### *Unified Support Fund*

The state workforce partners were asked to take a look at their budgets and review what other types of monetary support each provides to the One Stop and workforce system and compare this to the percentage of their customers served in the One Stops. These partners include the Employment Department, Department of Human Services and the Community College and Workforce Development Department. This process resulted in the development of a unified support fund.

The Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Policy (OEWP) has received commitments of \$1.4 million to the unified support fund for the 2001-03 biennium. The intention is to hold this fund harmless in the face of reductions or rescissions from the funding sources. However, it may be contingent upon the severity of any federal funding cuts and legislative approval to move partner funds to the unified support fund.

The unified support fund comes from program dollars and no matter at which level they are diverted, they could have been used to provide direct service to employers or job seekers. This is why this funding proposal asks the boards to provide performance measures and goals as described in Attachment A and show what improvements or enhancements the board expects to make with these funds.

The goal is to provide a sufficient amount of funding to staff a workforce board in regions, given the state average, keeping in mind the difference between region and area support levels. Some local areas or regions have expressed a desire to have the funds be more flexible. Thus, the board could decide to use the funds for One Stop coordination and customer service as the state finds that these initiatives are equally as important as supporting the board directly. The goal of this approach also allows the workforce boards to undertake the functions that will support the role the boards are directed to play under federal law -- which is to provide policy oversight and support the development of the One Stop system.

#### *Recognizing Contributions by State Partners*

In addition to this unified fund, state partners are providing a variety of supports for the workforce and One Stop system including but not limited to the following:

- Piloting and providing support for the electronic Information and Referral Form (IRF);
- Designing and funding PRISM, a performance reporting information system for reporting performance information on the state performance measures across workforce programs;
- Development and support of the Oregon Labor Market Information System (OLMIS) for occupation and career information and for the Skills Match project (7/02 - projected timeline);
- Providing training opportunities and scholarships through the Coordinated Training Program to One Stop staff; and
- Providing One Stop Capacity Building and Technical Assistance to areas (\$50,000 per year per area) *Notably, these funds CAN BE USED FOR BOARD STAFF as long as this is indicated in the local unified plan modification).*

#### *4. Funding Allocation and Process for 2001-03*

The \$1.4 million in the unified support fund will be distributed as follows:

AREAS (except as noted \*)  
\$50,000 per year (two annual allocations)

TOCOWA\* and 9 regions  
\$400,000 per year with a minimum of \$40,000 to each region  
(two annual allocations)

The funds will be distributed by the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development through the NFA process. TOCOWA will distribute funds to the regions without administrative fees.

The local and regional boards decide how the money should be spent. The boards are expected to provide a response as described in Attachment A and submit these performance goals and measures to the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Policy prior to December 31, 2001 and receipt of the second allocation. The goals and measures shall also be submitted to CCWD and will be considered as a modification to the local unified plan.

### *5. Other Funds*

Additional funds may be added to this unified support fund in the form of lottery fund dollars. This is dependent upon the flexibility in the CCWD department's final budget and the department's evaluation of the activities the boards undertook to strengthen ties to the economic development organizations using the funds provided this past year (past year was \$150,000 distributed to 15 regions).

The Employment Department will continue to have its Community Development fund (\$33,000 per biennium) and those dollars can be used for staff if this is the priority need for the area or region.

### *6. Setting Measurable Performance Outcomes*

The state workforce partners discussed how to craft one set of performance expectations to the unified support fund. The performance information is important for most programs to be able to dedicate program funds to this unified support fund. It is also to document, for audit purposes, how the use of the dollars contributed to this fund supports the particular program.

Attachment A specifies that the boards should examine how they could objectively measure their performance and set measurable performance standards and goals for the core functions the federal and state laws require they undertake. It also identifies other functions that relate to the programs that have committed to provide funding to the unified plan and are in keeping with other workforce strategic goals.

### *7. Implementation*

Payments will be processed and distributed in October and January.

### *8. Action Required*

The boards are expected to submit its response (see Attachment A) to the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Policy by December 31, 2001. The state will assist the boards in obtaining information needed to develop performance measures and goals.

The response will also need to be submitted to CCWD as a local unified plan modification. State recognized regional boards within a federal workforce investment area shall submit the regional board's response to the local workforce board for submission to the state.

### *9. Inquiries*

Annette Talbott, 503-378-3921, x 24 and April Lackey at 503-378-8648 x 372.

## **Attachment A: Core Functions With Objectively Measurable Performance Goals**

These performance measure and goals are short and long term in nature. The first three functions represent core functions or strategic goals of partners contributing to the fund. For the strategies, they are longer term in nature and the board need only describe how it will develop the measure (s) and set the goal(s) with partner participation. The strategies should include reasonable timeframes for developing the measurements and goals.

### **Core Function Expectation: Set the measure(s) and goal(s).**

1. Designate/redesignate One Stop operators for centers with specific performance measures.
2. Enhance service delivery and outreach by WIA programs funded through the local/region boards using quantifiable measurements to those segments of the population with significant barriers to employment such as mental health issues, substance abuse, domestic violence, disabilities and limited English proficiencies.
3. Recruit and actively engage private sector members for workforce board and set goals to assess the board's work in improving regional or local system after setting some baselines (State has several assessment tools available from workforce organizations to assist boards).

### **Strategies For Setting Measures and Goals**

1. Establish and oversee the One-Stop system that effectively provides core and intensive services without unnecessary duplication (includes continuous improvement tools to assure affiliate sites use value added referrals and use of access checklist to assess improvement). Example: The board would develop a plan and timeline to identify where there are service duplications that are not required by law or needed to effectively serve the same population and gaps in services.
2. Coordinate with local economic development entities and regional investment boards to develop joint strategies to support workforce development.
3. Support needs of workforce board by developing local policies with objective performance measures for one or more of the following:
  - Developing and improving self-sufficiency and wage progression strategies
  - Advancing incumbent worker strategies
  - Creating a business services or representative delivery system model
  - Develop drop out prevention strategies with K-12 and other partners.
4. Update board's Strategic Plan with timeline, action steps, and measurable outcomes with continued strong input from business and labor including: outreach and marketing targets for employers and business organizations, customer satisfaction measurements with One Stop services (not by program) and/or continuous improvement goals.
5. Raise additional funds from other public or private sources to support accomplishment of any/all of the functions listed above

