

2009

Strategic Plan



**Ramsey County
Workforce
Investment
Board**

Adopted by Board of Directors:

June 4, 2009

Executive Summary

The Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board (RCWIB) implemented its first strategic plan in 2003. The initial plan defined the Board's role and identified goals to support the workforce needs of Ramsey County's businesses and jobseekers.

The RCWIB continues to enjoy the benefit of dedicated members who offer their talents to create opportunities for local businesses and jobseekers that will help bolster the economy. It is through these members that the WIB has grown as an organization, embracing unique strategies to address identified needs.

Since its inception in 2000, the WIB has evolved to include a director-led board of 33 WIB members, 11 Youth Council members, 7 Education Committee members and its partner 501(c)3 organization, Friends of the Workforce Investment Board. This unique structure allows the board to provide oversight to Ramsey County's WIA programs and to have greater flexibility to engage in innovative workforce initiatives.

The 2009-2012 Strategic Plan guides the organization to continue its growth and achievement in a direction that best affects the local needs. While the economy works through its present challenges, the RCWIB will embrace the opportunity to find solutions to serve their customers.

Vision:

The Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board will be the recognized leader in identifying future workforce issues and developing appropriate responses to those issues.

Mission:

The Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board will be the catalyst for comprehensive workforce development strategies that address both employer and jobseeker needs.

Strategic Goal:

Ensure alignment of education and resources to meet future business needs and opportunities.

Tactics for 2009-2012:

- Complete an annual environmental scan with input from business, education, training, and community representatives.
- Identify and communicate current training and workforce development opportunities.
- Convene stakeholders to connect workforce needs with training opportunities in response to identified needs in the WIB's focus areas.
- Sustain and support existing WIB initiatives.

Annual strategic priorities will be identified to support the RCWIB Goal and Tactics.

Background

The Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board began the process of developing the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan with focus groups and planning sessions in 2008. The RCWIB felt that timing and interest were important with the new structure and reengaged partners and stakeholders.

On March 5, 2009, the Strategy Consulting Group facilitated the Strategic Planning session that included the RCWIB, Youth Council, Education Committee, Friends of the WIB, and City of Saint Paul representatives. The expectations of the session were two-fold:

- To reenergize the RCWIB; and
- Develop the strategic plan for 2009 – 2012.

The specific outcomes for the strategic plan process were to:

- Complete an environmental scan;
- Identify the practical vision for the RCWIB;
- Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges for the organization and evaluate the relative importance for the RCWIB;
- Develop strategy to move toward vision; and
- Build an implementation plan that would be used to track and measure the strategy actions.

Participation in developing the Mission and Vision statements included online input, discussions at the Strategic Planning session and follow-up meetings.

The RCWIB's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats present in the current environment were identified:

Significant Strengths

- Active Youth Council and Workforce Investment Board
- Demonstrated ability to generate quality educational and workforce development opportunities
- Diverse make-up of the WIB membership stimulates many differences of perspectives
- Strong presence of director-led board

Significant Weaknesses

- Lack of access to employer's voice and insight / connection into the business community
- Measuring progress and goals

Relevant Opportunities

- Build awareness and provide voice and exposure to needs of workforce during difficult economic times
- Slowed economy increases educational opportunities
- Also provides opportunity to improve and re-shape educational alignment
- Access to stimulus package from Federal government
- "Green" jobs

Relevant Threats

- Unengaged businesses
- Short-term thinking of external policy makers
- Uninformed stakeholders
- Lack of sufficient funding to drive strategies
- Misaligned educational strategies

Key Focus Areas based on the SWOT:

- Increase educational alignment between education and workforce systems and employer needs.
- Build greater awareness and engagement with businesses.
- Demonstrate maximum flexibility in changing economic environments.

Committee meetings were held to further develop the focus areas, with one group working on business engagement and one group working on the education goal. Through these discussions it became clear that the two goals had a common purpose and combining the education and business goals was logical. Additionally, members felt that the third focus, of demonstrating maximum flexibility in response to changing environments, was important to be aware of in all WIB work, though it did not warrant a separate goal.

The outcomes and recommendations for action steps for the RCWIB to use in implementation of the plan are stated in the goals and tactics.