

**Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board**  
Education Committee Meeting

November 7, 2011

**Present:**

David MacKenzie  
Jane Nicholson

**Absent:**

Deanne DeGraff  
Scott Helland EA

**Staff/Guests:**

Jacquelyn Carpenter, WIB Member  
Mary Jo Gardner, WIB Staff  
Pamela Maldonado, WIB Member  
Judy Mortrude, DEED  
Kate Raleigh, WIB Staff

---

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m.

---

**Approve September Minutes**

**Motion** made by Jane Nicholson with second by David Mackenzie to approve the September Education Committee minutes as presented.

**Motion carried.**

---

**Blue Ribbon Commission Update**

Mary Jo updated the committee on the Blue Ribbon Commission's report to reduce racial employment disparities in Ramsey County. The report, *Everybody In*, was completed and presented to the WIB, County Board of Commissioners and City Council. The final copy of the report can be found on the WIB's website. There is a meeting on November 16 with representatives from the WIB, County and City to develop next steps.

---

**FastTRAC Initiatives- State Level Perspective**

Judy Mortrude, DEED, was present to discuss the state-level FastTRAC perspective. Judy gave a brief history of the initiative, starting five years ago with a grant from the Joyce Foundation to address the skills gap, demographics, and the need for students to obtain post-secondary credentials. The program is called Shifting Gears by the Joyce Foundation and FastTRAC in MN. DEED is currently funding the third round of FastTRAC programming and has applied for additional Shifting Gears funding to work on sustainability, data, and professional development. A response is expected from the Joyce Foundation in December.

There are 27 active FastTRAC partnerships throughout the state; there are other partnerships that no longer receive FastTRAC funding that have figured out how to continue the programming. The FastTRAC programs in Minnesota count Community-Based Organizations and the United Way as key partners, which is unique in comparison with other states. The focus on a Central Point of Contact (CPOC) is also unique. The CPOC helps students navigate to and through all of the available support systems and as a result, achieves better retention in and completion of the program.

Other discussion included:

- There is a push from the Joyce Foundation to align data systems amongst the various partners involved in this type of programming.
- Financial aid involvement and the associated issues.

- Background checks and the crime rate in MN; are there types of FastTRAC programming that can be developed for people with a criminal history? The Youth Council may be able to work on this.
- It is difficult to determine a Return on Investment for this type of program.
- Business has a key role in FastTRAC.

---

**Other**

The FastTRAC discussion led members to think about the focus of their work. The Education Committee may want to identify barriers to student success in traditional education and select one or two barriers to address. This would align well with the need for 70% of Minnesotans to have post-secondary training by 2018. The Skills@Work website ([www.skillsatwork.org](http://www.skillsatwork.org)) may be helpful in this. Another suggestion for focus is the WorkKeys assessments and the redundancy in assessments that students and/or job seekers are required to complete.

---

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned upon completion of the agenda at 5:03pm.

The next Education Committee meeting will be January 9, 2012