

**10 Year Statewide Strategic Plan
Grow Local Talent Work Group – Meeting 5
July 28, 2021, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
Via Zoom Meeting**

Meeting Objectives:

- **Update GLT workgroup on internal progress and parallel work streams/funding streams**

Meeting Attendees:

- Martha Bentley
- Jason Judd
- Diana Doiron
- Jen Fullmer
- Steve Kardys
- John Herweh
- Ana Hicks
- Erica Watson
- Colleen Quint
- Rajesh Masilamani Anand

Notes:

Item 1: Introductions and Discussion of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for Strategic Plan work

In addition to the members of the work group, Steve Kardys and Rajesh Mailamani Anand joined the meeting representing FEMA's Long Term Economy Recovery team.

Overview provided by Martha Bentley:

- LD-1733 -legislation which stemmed from the Governor's Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan and included recommendations from the Strategic Plan workgroup, passed last week in the Legislature. There are lots of parts of that plan which connect with this work and are assigned to different state agencies and departments. The work over the next 90 days will be focused on putting the pieces together and getting money out the door. There will be some redesign based on changes made through the legislative process. Some pieces of the proposed workplans have some new funding money, including career exploration - funding now adds requirement to support for Jobs for Maine Graduates (JMG) and adult education as mechanisms for that work. There are various industry-specific aspects of the plan that connect to the overall work around "Grow Local Talent," including: stackable credentialing within healthcare, healthcare career specialists, a clean energy workforce pilot, an online portal connecting clean energy job seekers to jobs, community college system, a learning system run by DoE, the university system, pre-K expansion, childcare supports, an additional adult education and career advancement pilot project. There is a lot of opportunity via this funding, the challenge now is to make it more than the sum of its parts, which will be part of our work in this group, and at is also happening at the Cabinet level.

Questions and Discussion:

- Now that the funding has been approved, will DECD be the lead on the implementation, then that feeding into this group for coordination? Or the opposite? Or a little of both?
 - It's a work-in-progress as to how all the pieces fit together. The State is responsible for how the guardrails fit within the federal requirement piece. It's critical to make sure we build out a clear system that fits within what we're allowed to use the money for. As far as how all the pieces fit together, those conversations are happening with collaborators and stakeholders within the community and at the Cabinet level, but still in process, given the updates and changes through the legislative process. The other piece is figuring out what will be managed within state government and what makes sense to contract out, given stakeholder expertise.
 - it's very helpful that a lot of this design work has already been done. The work done here will be incorporated into cross-agency work. The parts that are hardest are the workforce development pieces, in trying to figure out how all those streams of funding fit together, and efforts are not being duplicated. Different departments are getting different streams of funding which will need to be mapped out. Other discreet pieces are already underway within existing logical structures – preK expansion and childcare infrastructure grants are two examples.

Takeaways:

- It's still being settled as to who will be leading implementation of the various funds—some are already being implemented but continue to work on cross-agency and stakeholder input.

Item 2: Report Outs from Work Teams

- Martha highlighted the reminders at the bottom of the agenda – including delay of bringing on a project manager to operationalize and oversee the GLT strategy due to staffing changes. The work on the NGA WIN plan is provided as a separate attachment for input and feedback.

A1

- **Updates:**
 - Building off the work done by A1 group last spring, over the course of the last couple of months the work team has been thinking about the next phase of building out the Career Exploration piece. The three core elements they're thinking about are the career experience opportunities for 11th/12th graders, micro credentials, and aspirations.
 - Career Experience: Looked at models and budgeting around how to expand geographically, identifying potential partners for expansion, bringing in young adults in addition to the high schoolers, and including special populations like adjudicated youth and young adults aging out of foster care.
 - Micro Credentials: Focused on building on what's already in place. Goals are identifying potential partners and focusing on linkages across domains.
 - Aspirations: Discussed what's already happening in different programs around the state and thinking about campaigns that work for different grades and age groups. Middle schoolers and teachers around the state have no idea the opportunities available to them, so how can we think about an aspirations campaign to spread the word?
 - Making sure they key in on geography, involving the business sector, and equity of access.
 - Also thinking about priority sectors for the A1 workgroup, such as clean energy, healthcare, and education – those are three core sector areas in workforce development
 - The Maine Children's Cabinet is extremely pleased with the work that's been done.

A2, A3, A5, and A6

- **Updates:**

- **A2:** Web portal matching students and employers
 - The priority is to build on, connect, and improve the existing web portals, rather than building an entirely new portal. Currently, the system is too confusing and inaccessible for both students and employers.
 - With the new flood of money being invested into internships and apprenticeships, those portals are going to be busy with new listings.
 - Discussion around consolidation and connection to the A4 work with NGA WIN around a “meta-portal” that connects various digital portals and tools
- **A3/A5:** Expand the professional preparation of educators at all levels in STEM and other digital economy skills
 - Maine DOE is working on a strategy document about professional preparation of educators which will be released to the public shortly
 - Strategies will help us meet our goal.
 - Next step is to look at what gaps exist beyond the DOE plan – will this plan include specific strategies to expand the STEM teaching workforce? How can we partner with Maine’s higher education institutions to encourage more students to pursue this career pathway?
- **A6:** Improve the quality of care in our early childhood system by supplementing salaries for early childhood educators, rewarding them for their experience in the field and completing postsecondary programs.
 - Made good progress with the Office of Child and Family Services in terms of increasing wages for childcare workers.
 - \$73 million of ARPA funds will give extra wages to child care workers in an effort to stabilize Maine’s child care market.
 - Bill LD 1652 around increasing wage supplements and providing scholarships has been tabled so these new wage supplements can be tracked and they might be able to come back in the next session with something even bigger.
 - Legislative leaders and the Governor’s office are making big steps.
 - This workgroup now needs to have conversations around what wage goals should be, so we can determine what data we need to collect to track our progress towards the goal.
 - Martha notes that the Steering Committee is building a group that will determine a clear and transparent way to track all these pieces and this should be included.

A4

- **Updates**

- Will revisit NGA-WIN workplan progress next time.
- Federal Reserve has built out a system for trying to help people understand their pathways from various levels of public assistance into the workforce. We’re working on an online dashboard for which there will be a beta test first used by various navigators. Thinking about getting 2 or 3 navigators to test out that system.

Item 3: Next Steps

- Chris and Kim will figure out timing of the next meeting

- Going forward, we will continue to think about Jason's question as to where the funding streams are being implemented.
- Martha will check in with Chris and Kim to see if others should continue work in existing work teams to refine or wait for additional guidance from workgroup chairs (Chris and Kim)