

May 30, 2018

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DEED

The following updates were made to the Region #6 Regional Plan Narrative to further highlight the key industry sectors and our continued dedication to addressing gender-based inequities, along with reducing inequities faced by people of color and/or with disabilities and disconnected youth.

1. Describe the selection process for the membership who will provide the leadership to oversee the development and coordination of the regional plan.

The Regional Alliance is led by leaders at influential organizations from around the region, including Excel Energy, Mayo Clinic, Mississippi Welders Supply, PlastiCert, and Seven Rivers Intermodal Terminals, LLC. Counties are represented by the County Commissioner from Freeborn County, who is also the Chair of the Joint Powers Board for WDA #8. These officers from the two local delivery area WDBs, along with the WDA #8 Director, provide the leadership to oversee the development and coordination of the regional plan.

2. Describe how the selected organizations from the region will provide oversight to development and implementation of the regional plan. Complete **Attachment A – Regional Alliance**.

The WDBs of SE MN and Winona have established joint leadership (the Regional Alliance) to align strategies for the region as a whole. The members of the Regional Alliance determine regional priorities and action plans. WDA leadership has the responsibility of implementing the action plans throughout the region. The Regional Alliance will continue to meet on a regular basis and receive updates on the progress being made.

3. Describe how the approach used will ensure that partner engagement includes diverse representation, specifically among populations experiencing barriers to employment.

The Regional Alliance has identified three regional priorities: 1) Higher education and community career pathways; 2) Career planning efforts in K-12 schools; 3) Outreach and support services to special populations, including Veterans, older

workers, offenders, persons with disabilities and minorities.

WDA leadership has the ultimate responsibility of guiding the work around these regional priorities. Current partnerships are being expanded to ensure that we are leveraging resources and minimizing duplication of services.

5. Describe any additional goals being set by the regional leadership or individual local area boards.

See above (Q.3) for the goals set by the Regional Alliance. Additional goals will be set as action plans are implemented at the local level.

In order to foster additional partnership and increased communication, a Winona County Commissioner has been invited to attend the meetings of the SE MN Joint Powers Board, which is made up of commissioners from our 10-county region. Winona County Leadership has also been invited to attend SE MN WDB meetings, including Sector and Taskforce Subcommittee meetings.

11. Describe the regional workforce development area's vision for a skilled workforce.

Our workforce vision is for every available person throughout the region to be fully employed in skilled careers that offer living wages and purpose. To that end, the WDBs of SE MN and Winona will establish a broad framework for career pathways across the region, with the following understanding: 1) any/all career pathway work will include deliberate outreach to unique populations, especially the unemployed, under-employed, and/or disadvantaged populations; 2) Data and employer input will be utilized to determine the essential workplace skills needed for individuals to be successful in a particular career pathway; 3) Roles for additional partners (including, but not limited to ABE, colleges) will be identified within each career pathway; 4) Skill building opportunities will lead to either credentials or apprenticeships whenever possible; 5) Career Navigation will be a key component in the development of any career pathway. Continuous Improvement Processes (i.e. Plan-Do-Study-Act) will be utilized in any regional work.

Career Pathway work is ongoing with regional employers continuing to lead our Sector Subcommittees. We currently have **Advanced** career pathways and sector partnerships in Healthcare. **Active** career pathways and sector partnerships in Construction/Carpentry. One recent outcome was the Carpentry Career Pathway training. This training resulted in 15 individuals (11 of whom were women and/or minorities) completing a seven-week training and becoming employed in the carpentry industry around our region. **Emerging** career pathways and sector partnerships are

being developed in Manufacturing, Public Sector, Customer Service, including retail, hospitality, and tourism and IT. At this time, work on the business financial services and agriculture career pathways have been suspended due to the current economic conditions within those industries in our region.

### Area 1 – Sector Partnerships

12. Describe how the region will use the labor market information and conduct outreach to business and industry to select the targeted sectors for developing career pathways for occupations in demand that provide family sustaining wages. If sectors and occupations have been already selected, describe them within this response. Complete **Attachment G – Local Workforce Development Area Key Industries in Regional Economy**.

The WDB's of SE MN and Winona will establish new employer partnerships focusing on Career Pathways in a broad range of industry sectors, staying focused on the needs of the communities in order to be able to respond quickly when a new sector emerges.

The WDB of WSA #8 supports the seven principles of high performing industry partnerships, including:

- Develop and maintain employer leadership
- Produce excellent outcomes for individuals and employers
- Serve low-skill, low-wage individuals
- Promote career advancement
- Promote industry-recognized credentials
- Communicate key information to stakeholders
- Operate with knowledgeable staff

The WDB of WSA #8 has been built around key regional industry sectors and employer issues. We currently have **Advanced** career pathways and sector partnerships in Healthcare. **Active** career pathways and sector partnerships in Construction/Carpentry. **Emerging** career pathways and sector partnerships are being developed in Manufacturing, Public Sector, Customer Service, including retail, hospitality, and tourism and IT. At this time, work on the business financial services and agriculture career pathways have been suspended due to the current economic conditions within those industries in our region. Advanced, Active and Emerging Career Pathways and Sector Partnerships align with our primary WDB sector subcommittees: Healthcare, Manufacturing, Services & Trades, and Emerging Technologies & Economic Development.

Taskforce subcommittees (which focus on employer issues) include: Salute Southern MN (veterans), Emerging Workforce (youth), Gender and Equity,

Previously Incarcerated, and MaxAbility. The sector subcommittees and taskforces are all employer led.

The mission of the SE MN WDB is to develop and advance the workforce of Southeast Minnesota. Our mission is at the heart of everything we do to impact positive outcomes for both job seekers and employers. We actively provide outreach to people from diverse populations and low-skilled (often hardest to serve) individuals, to ensure that they are able to utilize the myriad services available to them.

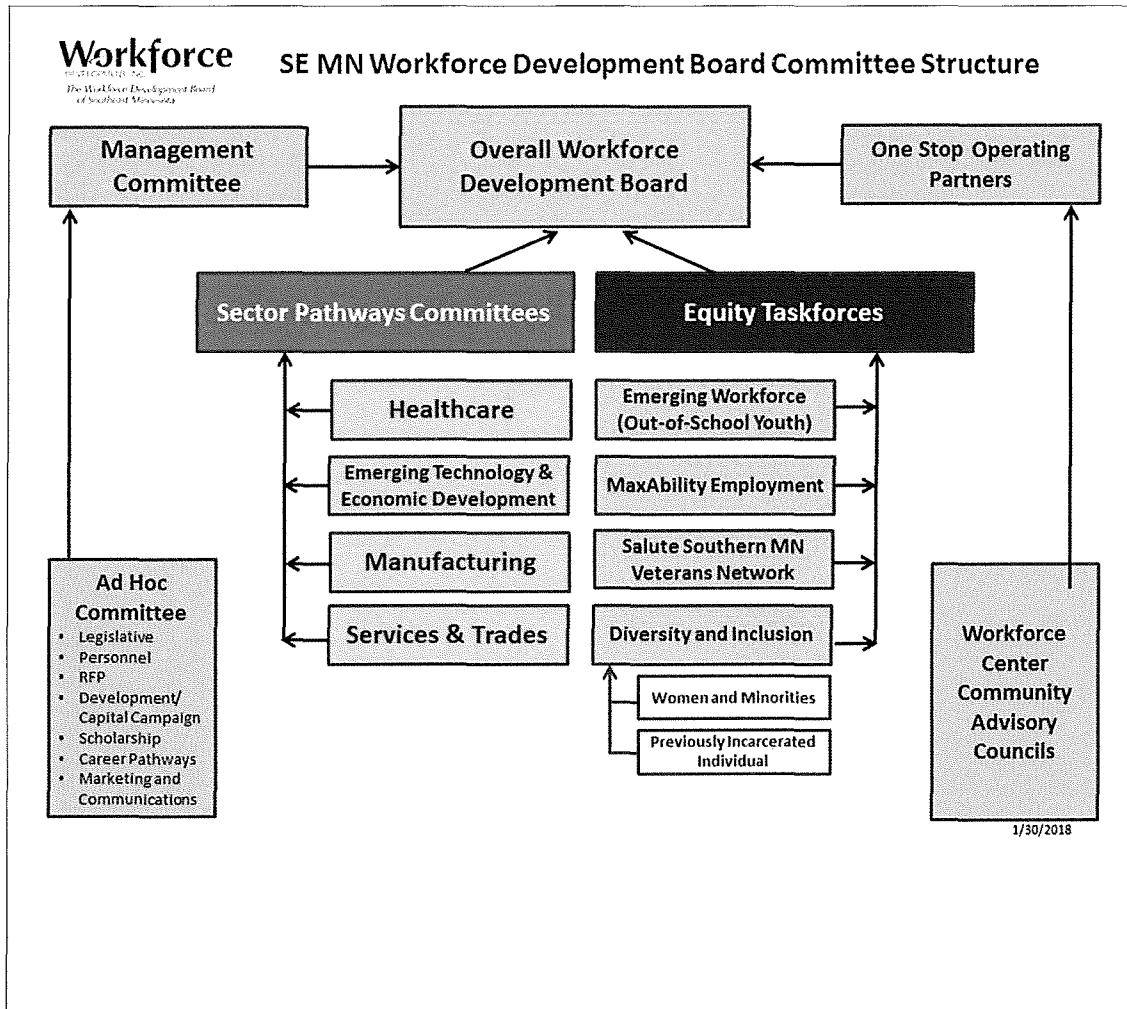
Targeted effort to reduce employment and educational disparities faced by women and diverse populations with the development of programming that specifically addresses their unique needs will continue to be a goal for the region. Specifically, cultural competency (Intercultural Development Inventory) and unconscious bias training for staff and regional employers will be provided.

All subcommittees of WSA #8 focus on convening partnerships as well as identifying and developing career pathway solutions for area in-demand occupations. Several of our staff members and area partners are now certified Career Pathways Leaders.

Regular communication with industry leaders (board members) ensures that we are assisting our customers to pursue industry-recognized credentials.

WDB staff regularly requests and analyzes current Labor Market Information (LMI) from our regional DEED LMI analyst. The WDBs gets monthly updates about the regional economy from staff "on the ground" as well as directly from board members. The local Workforce Strategy Consultant and WDI staff provide outreach to area businesses, and report information on economic activity at each WDB meeting. In addition to LMI, WDI staff uses Wanted Analytics and the State of Minnesota's Career Profile tools to access the data needed to drive decision-making. This information and data is used as a foundation for planning and decision-making at all levels, to set priorities and direct activities, to align resources with the needs of our regional employers, and to give timely, relevant information to our job seekers.

All of the Career Counselors within the SE MN WDB must have Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) training. All Career Counselors are required to have at least a Bachelor's degree; many of our Career Counselors have Master's degrees. All of our intake specialists have achieved State-sponsored training and certifications. Our extremely knowledgeable staff is dedicated to serving both our job seeking and employer customers.



16. Describe who will be included in the broad stakeholder engagement to address a targeted number of socio-economic issues faced by diverse populations.

The WDB, Sector and Taskforce members and community partners serve as the conveners to bring appropriate partners together around specific issues. Community partners such as the Diversity Council, the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs, the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage, and other agencies serving diverse populations are engaged and able to provide information and guide solutions.

Stakeholder engagement will be determined by the socio-economic issues themselves so that we can ensure the right people are around the table for each issue.

Outreach specialists provide targeted connections to several diverse populations across our region, including the Somali, Karen, and Latino populations. These staff people help identify the changing and often unique needs faced by these diverse

populations, and help educate the rest of our staff on the best ways to serve these customers.

The WDB's of SE MN and Winona are committed to listening to the voice of our customer stakeholders and will continue to use a variety of methods to collect customer information and feedback. This data will be used to help us continuously improve services and outcomes, as well as to respond in a timely manner as new customer needs or demands emerge.

19. Describe how the entities responsible for participating in this process will be selected, including their expected roles and responsibilities.

In order to better serve our customers, the WDB of WSA #8 is currently transitioning from a programmatic approach to a sector-based service strategy. Staff is developing their knowledge about local employers, labor market information, and specific industry sectors. These experts in the field, along with the WDB and community partners, help align our work based on regional workforce demands.

If you have any questions on the above changes or other sections of the narrative, work plan or timeline, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,



Randy Johnson  
Executive Director