

Charlie opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance; introductions were made.

Minutes from the March 5, 2012 meeting were approved.

**Update – Current Year Worker Retraining Program**

Kim reported that the numbers are very close to last year’s. Kevin inquired as to placement statistics for Worker Retraining completers. According to Stephanie, a report from her boss is forthcoming and will be sent to Workforce advisory committee members. The question remains – are graduates being hired in their area of training.

**Review of Proposed Worker Retraining Plan for FY2012-2013**

Worker Retraining funds are just one of several funds that are leveraged by Workforce staff in the best interest of students. Other funding sources include WorkFirst, Opportunity Grant, and Basic Food Employment Training (BFET).

**Program Mix Discussion:**

Kevin raised the question regarding the predicted $40.50 hourly median wage for Health Care Information. (Subsequent to the meeting, the state’s Demand/Decline website shows that the average annual wage for Medical Records & Health Information Technicians is $18.94/hour in Snohomish County and $20.22/hour in King County. Possibly the $40.50 figure in the table was a typo or taken from a different job title.)

SCC’s HCI program is a management track, whereas, the Medical Coding & Reimbursement Specialist is the one year entry level program. Kim will check other sources to verify this seemingly high wage.

The questions remain: how many program graduates are there, and what is the placement rate?

Jason stated the current “healthcare crisis” may result in healthcare facilities consolidating services, which could result in more staff lay-offs – particularly in registered nursing.

Paul spoke to the ‘glut’ of nurses; Charlie added there are 800 nurses currently collecting unemployment across the state, so it appears the market is saturated.
Kim – our nursing graduates are at a 100% placement rate. Approximately 10-15% of the annual enrollment in the nursing program are Worker Retraining students.

Question: Should Worker Retraining/Dislocated Worker funds be spent in support of this program?

Kim suggested consulting with specific advisory committees related to the programs on the Program Mix list in preparation for next year’s Worker Retraining Plan.

**Discussion – Funding pre-requisites**

- Kevin – Is it permissible to use tax payer dollars to fund students taking prerequisites for a program they may not complete?
- Kim – to receive Worker Retraining funding students must have a Commissioner Approved Training plan; Worker Retraining funds are currently used for (Nursing) pre-requisites; the completion rate for pre-requisites is high. Students with borderline qualifications are encouraged to apply for other health occupations programs either at SCC or other colleges.
- Dave – this is a win-win situation.
- Charlie – it may be advisable to take a second look at the 2012-2013 Worker Retraining Plan, since health care is in such turmoil.
- Gordon – This is public spending; look at the annual aggregate spending to determine the success rate; the goal is for graduates to obtain family wage jobs.
- Workforce Training & Education Board without question sees funding students as a positive investment.
- Gordon – how well is SCC doing related to performance metrics?
- Dave – the SBCTC regularly reviews success rates; performance outcomes are published on the website.
- Charlie suggested leaving the ‘door open’ on the proposed 2012-13 Worker Retraining Plan in case subsequent data gives concern to make changes.

**Labor Force Update**

Charlie presented the report from the King County Reemployment Support Center /Dislocation Activities by Sector for the first quarter 2012.

- Providence and Swedish have merged.
- Ongoing talks about nursing lay-offs; possible re-structuring; is the market saturated?
- First wave of lay-offs mainly in home health care.
- Ten companies/employers have laid off 1,627 workers in the first quarter.
- Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities experiencing high dislocation activity: Verizon, Century Link.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Minutes by Jeanne Skaare.