



SECTOR PARTNERSHIP LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING

July 19, 2017 • 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

United Way of Central Iowa, 1111 9th Street, Des Moines, IA, 50314 (Room E)

Present: Chris HUMMER, Kristin DIETZEL, Kevin ELSBERRY, Fred LISLE, Denny PRESNALL, Liang Chee WEE, Mike RALSTON, Jean CLABAUGH, Michelle KREFFT, Kim BECICKA, Georgia VAN GUNDY, Renee MILLER, Cindi McDONALD, Lynn PICKARD, Oather TAYLOR, John STINEMAN (IDOE – Barb BURROWS, Paula NISSEN, Eric ST CLAIR, Sue GIBBONS, Joe COLLINS, Pradeep KOTAMRAJU)

On phone: Beth TOWNSEND

Guests: Pat STEELE – Central Iowa Works, Emily BROWN – UnityPoint, James REDDISH – Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL), Cindy ANGEL and Chelsea MORRISON – University of Northern Iowa (UNI)

Began 9:10 a.m. with BURROWS welcoming the group.

COLLINS briefly discussed 1-on-1 SPLC member interviews, sector partnership inventory survey results, and how the information from each was used to structure this meeting, subcommittees, and future SPLC work.

Introductions/Ice breaker: Name, organization, worst job, and something good that has happened since the last meeting. (Two new members – McDONALD and LISLE)

TOWNSEND (phone) recommends further collaboration with the Future Ready Iowa (FRI) initiative. VAN GUNDY, DIETZEL, and WEE are all part of the FRI Alliance and can provide info to the group for the meeting. Unable to stay for entire meeting.

Sector Partnerships 101 with GIBBONS.

Overview:

- A sector partnership is a collaborative workforce initiative led by employers that organizes key stakeholders and targeted industry partners into a sustainable working group that focuses on the long-term workforce needs of a targeted industry cluster.

Typical Outcomes:

- Employers benefit from reduction in turnover, increased worker productivity, and increased labor force.

- Workers benefit from increased earnings, degree attainment, and job satisfaction.
- Support partners benefit from less duplication of services, greater efficiency with limited resources, and increased customer satisfaction.

Distinguishing factors:

- Data-driven
- Employers shape the design
- Serves the full-spectrum of students/workers
- Based on partnerships
- Integrates many funding streams
- Process, not program

Sector partnership member responsibilities:

- Labor forecasting
- Career mapping
- Supply/demand negotiation
- Labor exchange identification
- Best practices – education/training and employment

Career pathways – samples of Regions 2 (Mason City - [healthcare](#)) and 6 (Marshalltown – [manufacturing](#)).

COLLINS stated that the term “regional” doesn’t have to be specific or pre-defined. It can be any region defined by the group. Sector partnerships in Iowa historically follow the fifteen community college regions. The purpose of SPLC is to advise, not audit these groups.

Discussion of [50-state scan study](#) by National Skills Coalition in 2015 – map of states with sector partnerships. Study somewhat outdated, but new one being released in 2017. Wisconsin and Colorado have joined. There is a group in northern Colorado with 200 employers: they have memberships, dues, conferences with speakers. Again, the goal is to consult, not to oversee.

VAN GUNDY asked if having statistics makes the partnerships do a better job. COLLINS stated that there are documentation [studies](#) done by National Governors’ Association (NGA) to showcase the benefits and strengths.

Impact of Future Ready Iowa (FRI) – the goal is 70% of the population to have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, etc...by 2025. Strategic plan is due October 31, 2017 from the FRI Alliance. There is an interactive portal online with a sector partnership [section](#). Plans to further collaborate with initiative and have sector partnerships part of the recommendations.

VAN GUNDY recommends creating community collaborations, not just sector boards, but for the entire region. Create a playbook or toolkit for communities to use to create partnerships between businesses and communities.

DIETZEL gave idea of having a conference for sector boards. COLLINS stated that they are working on toolkits and other resources to educate people – the board doesn't have to always be focused on single sector. Examples in rural areas around Dubuque of "community boards" of employers that meet to discuss needs, regardless of sector.

BECICKA stated that community boards are different from sector boards (in their experience in Cedar Rapids area). DIETZEL asked how to engage in sector – variety of means. The FRI Alliance recommends "business-community boards", because concerned about narrow focus of "sector boards". Concerns presented included duplicating groups and stressing communities if not using current sector partnership groups. How important is name?

VAN GUNDY stated that the group didn't want to prescribe what people should do. Recommends IDOE meet with FRI Alliance to further discuss names/labels of groups.

HUMMER talked about hiring and reporting – it becomes more granular as it flows down.

VAN GUNDY asked about metrics that are pertinent to sector partnerships. NISSEN has been working on them with COLLINS. Other states have tried to show performance metrics, but can be hard to measure and define success (i.e.: unemployment impacted by many variables, including sector partnership). Best measure usually involves employer satisfaction surveys (Colorado is good [example](#)).

Inventory of Sector Partnerships in Iowa project

Cindy ANGEL and Chelsea MORRISON – University of Northern Iowa (UNI)

COLLINS introduced the UNI team by phone to talk about the sector partnership inventory [project](#). MORRISON talked about Strategic Marketing Services' work to survey groups in-person and by phone. Questions to provide an overview – what they did, etc. Institute for Decision Making worked to apply secondary market research. Included 60 sector partnerships across a wide range of industries and maturity levels.

Sector partnerships in Iowa:

- 67.8% are convened by community colleges
- 20.3% are convened by economic development organizations
- 62.1% were established in 2015 or later
- 59.2% have 11 or more active and engaged industry partners
- 61.0% have a designated or trained facilitator

Top industries of focus:

Manufacturing (40.0%), Information Technology (30.0%), and Health Sciences (28.3%)

Discussion of pp. 13-14 of the [Inventory of Sector Partnerships in Iowa – July 2017](#) report

Challenges and/or Resources Needed:

- Keeping the board engaged and participating

- Educating industry partners on the value of sector partnerships
- Receiving assistance with goal setting and strategic planning, and facilitation of meetings
- Obtaining funding for staff, externships, meals at meetings, marketing, equipment and initiatives
- Identifying and obtaining neutral, outside facilitators that are trained
- Being able to hear experiences of other partnerships across the state

Continuation with recap of survey and documents. ***Bottom line is they want help, but not more rules. There is a fear of losing flexibility and uniqueness; they have “WIOA fatigue”.*** IDOE and SPLC have opportunity to help by connecting groups to one another (networking) and providing tools/resources (ie: training, best practices, funding, etc...).

McDONALD: Was there any theme re: partnerships? How well do they work with K-12?

ANGEL: Most are involved with education system, but hard to get representatives to participate. Not necessarily intended – challenges.

MILLER asked if the idea for subcommittees was based on these findings. How we’re driving committee work. COLLINS – yes, it’s based on findings. How might we promote? What should the subcommittees focus on? We need to develop their work and COLLINS will work with subcommittees between full-SPLC meetings.

BECICKA asked if the findings should be prioritized. COLLINS agreed, as did the group.

(UNI team leaves meeting)

Recommendations/best approach to next meeting in October/November. COLLINS stated that he has some plans and ideas based on survey findings and learned from conferences, trade events, other states, etc.... He’d like to have validated by SPLC; discussion of subcommittees.

Draft Charter introduced and short break to discuss in small groups at tables.

COLLINS asked for feedback about the draft charter from tables. Recommendations:

1. Be more specific in how it ties to other groups (i.e. FRI, State Workforce Dev. Board)
2. Best practices – flexibility, changeability
3. More specific / incremental changes
4. Charter is dynamic document and will become more specific over time, based on subcommittee work
5. Membership should maintain regional diversity

COLLINS stated that each subcommittee will have a chair to speak for the group and the SPLC will have an Executive Chair and Vice Chair to represent the group at the State Workforce Development Board. Planned member term limits will allow other areas of state to be represented in the future.

BURROWS also stated that the solicitation of initial members focused on a balanced rural/urban component. WEE reiterated the importance of regional diversity, as not only is there a difference between rural and urban, but rural areas are also very different from each other.

McDONALD shared concern and stated that “efficiency” is not necessarily “effectiveness”.

DIETZEL talked about promotion and development. State policy vs. the resources to support initiatives will be an issue. Is the State able to provide? BURROWS stated that financial resources are a collaboration with people, money, & time; and mentioned there may be development grants that the IDOE could supply.

COLLINS stated that other states are surprised that Iowa has a volunteer advisory board like the SPLC. Those states don't have a seat at the table. Iowa is a “best practices” state in many regards— as noted by work with the Council of Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL) and National Governor's Association (NGA) - others hope to replicate our system.

Regarding SPLC membership, TAYLOR stated that industries need to be involved. Since they are the customers, initiatives need to be reviewed and supported by them.

COLLINS stated that the charter seems to need more work – group agreed and will revisit at next meeting once FRI Alliance releases plans in October and subcommittees have met.

(Group takes short break)

Healthcare Sector Partnership - “show and tell”

Pat STEELE (Central Iowa Works) and Emily BROWN (UnityPoint)

STEELE stated that there is a worker and skills shortage in Iowa and employers are joining partnerships for help. Main question is how to attract and retain employees. Their sector partnerships are developing training programs based on direct employer input and needs.

The sector partnership developed a breakthrough employment leadership program with Unity Point utilizing a Retention Specialist. By upskilling current proven employees, they were prepared to advance within the organization, opening up those positions for new employees. Partnerships have also helped change policy (i.e. partner support of state funding for Adult Education & Literacy).

Their group was funded through a DOL grant to work with 380 individuals within United Way and Central Iowa Works.

Goals:

- Increase workforce – 30-40% will retire in 5-10 years.
- Support education – Community College healthcare training (i.e. ESL-CNA)
- Sustain partnership

BROWN is a Retention Specialist within Human Resources at UnityPoint, but views herself as a “career coach”. This position was originally partially funded by CIW, but is now 100% funded through UnityPoint. They are on the front line, assisting current and prospective employees with the barriers – “how to” create a resume, being better prepared to advance on their career pathway.

MILLER asked what the results were. STEELE stated that Breakthrough to Leadership has 70-75 percent promotions from within.

Goals:

- 1/3 obtain career advancement
- 1/3 have advanced education
- 1/3 become stronger employees

CLABAUGH asked how to document what’s working; how to create a compilation for other sector partnerships and communities to use. They also learn what doesn’t work.

COLLINS stated that a primary benefit of sector partnerships is the open collaboration with many members at the same table that prevents workers and students from falling through the cracks. Partners can step in to help keep employees on the job and/or in-school.

Energy Sector Career Pathway Project

James REDDISH – Council for Adult & Experiential Learning

REDDISH discussed the [Opportunities in Energy - Iowa](#) report and the process of how the document was created with assistance from the statewide energy sector partnership, the Iowa Energy Workforce Consortium (IEWC). This document designed for a high school/college level student to understand what is needed for a career in the energy sector and pathway to achieve.

Six occupation families are presented with education requirements, salary range, environmental conditions, work experiences, etc...for each associated career. This info was collected through research, employer group focus groups, and surveys in Iowa.

TAYLOR (part of the IEWC) stated that people don’t know what types of jobs there are in the energy field. When he moved to Iowa, he was contacted by Alliant Energy. Didn’t know about all the types of jobs there were – not just linemen in trucks. Need to share information with families, schools, and how to get into the jobs. Industry is expanding and offers great security. Need to communicate with “future” employees now.

REDDISH stated that the IEWC has subcommittees doing studies and addressing workforce issues impacting the sector.

BECICKA asked if other sector groups involved in study. Iowa Lakes Community College has the only other energy sector partnership and they were involved, as well as renewables, biofuels, and other employers not part of the IEWC.

DIETZEL asked how it will be found on the FRI site. Discussion ensued re: how to find, what could be done to promote, etc. Plans to make more interactive, like the [Opportunities in IT - Iowa](#) document. COLLINS hoping to get guidance and ideas from SPLC members.

Industry Updates

Energy:

TAYLOR stated that there were opportunities to increase diversity in energy workforce (ie: need more minorities and women)

Health Care:

ELSBERRY stated that RN's are difficult to find. Healthcare careers include nurse practitioners. Concern is how to restructure CNA, paramedics, and use more LPN's.

COLLINS asked if there were any promising practices. ELSBERRY stated that LPNs are starting to be hired more. BECICKA asked about "scribes" (employees who do paperwork). ELSBERRY stated they have considered hiring them. COLLINS discussed the possibility of educating more health care aides and CNA's online, but concerns about safety and oversight were raised. VAN GUNDY stated that the #2 request of "wants" in [Future Ready Iowa Metrics that Matter](#) report. is RN's.

Transportation:

HUMMER talked about the perception of transportation – "guy in a truck". Also includes production, logistics...everything to get something from Point A to Point B. The lifetime earnings are impressive when comparing to typical college graduates. Have to also consider the marketability of some college degrees/debt/quality of life.

Information Technology:

ST CLAIR pointed out that IT is covered in all other sectors/areas and is not an isolated industry. IDOE had partnered with CAEL and TAI to create the [Opportunities in IT: Iowa](#) report to help break stereotypes and educate public about IT careers. ([press release](#))

Manufacturing:

LISLE stated that manufacturing is making a comeback. They can now actually make products for less money than importing from China. Training is more expensive, but needed as the workforce has aged (like healthcare). The average age of a worker is 50.

NISSEN stated that in Southwest Iowa, the manufacturers came together at Iowa Western Community College (IWCC) to develop a great sector partnership program. LISLE is a member and was pivotal in planning and building new Center of Excellence for Advanced Manufacturing in Clarinda. ([press release](#))

Construction:

PICKARD stated that construction is up across the state (i.e., windmills, solar). Des Moines has a good 3-5 year window to get into training programs. Sources of labor shortages seem to be

lack of driver's licenses and need for more women and workers with disabilities. Programs developed to attract and educate more youth from diverse backgrounds (ie: YouthBuild).

DIETZEL brought up the emotional appeal of a career. Parents are still in "college-mode." They have to think of ways to describe pathways and promotion to careers that don't require a four-year college degree.

BECICKA agreed and stated that there has been an appeal for lifelong continued education, but the public seems to focus on "college" and not "careers".

REDDISH stated that the FRI goal of 70% post-secondary education/training past high school needs to be nuanced – it shouldn't mean just four-year degrees. NISSEN stated that they have been diligent about the types of post-secondary education/training. REDDISH stated that personal stories and vignettes (that don't include 4-year degrees) would be helpful to promote the value of certificates, diplomas, and associates degrees.

COLLINS mentioned the APEX Program at Waukee CSD under McDONALD has had success in promoting careers to parents with different career paths outside of traditional college.

Financial:

CLABAUGH stated that 70% of their entry-level positions do not require a college degree. It's a very mobile workforce, however, and employees are not building a career path. If they would just take time to stay with a company, they could have a great career and even get education benefits from employers.

Agriculture:

PRESNALL stated that moving around is still an issue. WEE stated that there are also issues in the Ag-Lending and Ag-Business. Many younger people don't want to live in rural areas for those jobs, even though the opportunities can be very lucrative. VAN GUNDY stated that the agriculture industry has changed. Many of them have business degrees. The challenge is that the industry doesn't seem to want to change. Many young people don't want to farm either.

Subcommittee Formation

Subcommittees based on Four Pillars of Support areas: Equip; Empower; Promote; Champion. Some work is involved on subcommittees but primarily in advisory role to COLLINS. We want everyone be part of a team, so asked to choose which they feel they could contribute to most.

Recap and next steps

Questions and feedback from group – meeting valuable and helped provide focus.

Next meeting in October/November, to coincide with FRI Alliance recommendations. COLLINS to send Doodle poll with potential dates soon.

Subcommittees still being formed. Every member should be on a subcommittee. COLLINS to contact teams to begin discussions and work before the next meeting.

Still need nominations for Executive Chair and Vice-chair roles to represent sector partnerships to the State Workforce Development Board. Send nominations to COLLINS, please.