

National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices State Sector Strategies: Innovative Workforce Policies to Address Worker and Employer Needs

Georgia is in a unique position to significantly contribute to and benefit by participating in the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices State Sector Strategies Policy Academy.

Background

In 2003, then newly elected Governor Sonny Perdue created the Commission for a New Georgia to support his efforts to build an educated, healthy, safe and growing state. Georgians, from the private sector, were asked to lend their expertise in the areas of policy development and governmental operations to develop a model for continuous improvement that would become a part of the culture of governing and providing services for the people of Georgia. Their mission was to bring breakthrough thinking and a fresh perspective to ways state government can better manage its assets and services and map its strategic future.

Nearly 300 knowledgeable citizens have served on 17 focused, fast acting task forces tackling a wide range of issues. The task forces have recommended 68 actions to improve cost savings and customer service in government and to open new opportunities for a growing economy. To take the Commission's recommendation to the workings of government, in 2004, the Governor established the Office of Implementation. This office relies on a cross-agency, intergovernmental team effort to take the Commission's recommendations to work inside State government to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and economy.

Three of the Commission for a New Georgia original task forces, Workforce Development, Strategic Industries, and Competitiveness, reported findings and recommendations that will have significant impact on positioning Georgia to recruit and retain businesses that will drive economic growth for the long-term future.

Workforce Development – proposed a Statewide Workforce Development System, which integrates education, industry, employment and economic development in a unified enterprise with a shared vision, goals and governance to ensure Georgia's competitiveness in the global economy.

Strategic Industries – identified the industries with the most potential and best fit for Georgia's future. Six strategic industries and seven supporting clusters were targeted for development. The task force also recommended strategies to bring in and bring along enterprises in those categories as primary generators of the state's economic development growth.

A direct outcome from this task force was to establish the Traditional Manufacturing Technical Advisory Group to provide insight into the challenges faced by the broad base of Georgia manufacturers and to learn how the State of Georgia can better support, sustain, and grow this industry sector.

Competitiveness – assessed Georgia’s assets as an attractive choice for corporations to locate. Emphasis should be placed on the coordination of recruitment and retention efforts, improvement in the coordination of financial incentives and continue to strengthen the state’s knowledge economies.

To further recognize the findings and implement the recommendations of the above-mentioned task forces, Governor Perdue launched Georgia’s Centers of Innovation. These centers provide a portal to the statewide network of hubs of excellence in the area of aerospace, agriculture, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, information technology, and maritime logistics. By leveraging Georgia’s strategic industries, the state is creating new jobs, increasing investment and ensuring long-term economic opportunity. Companies seeking help in meeting the challenges generated by global competition will find assistance and leading edge training. These centers serve as the epicenter for the very latest in technologies related to the focus area of individual centers, paving the way for the industry to flourish in Georgia.

The Governor has not only embraced the essential elements of the 21st Century Workforce system identified by the National Governors’ Association but he has put into action several efforts to create a workforce development enterprise that combines the resources of many, engages the private sector and focuses on meaningful outcomes.

In February 2006, Governor Perdue, reconstituted the State Workforce Investment Board with a mission to assist the Governor in creating an integrated statewide strategic plan for Workforce Development, which links workforce policies and education programs to the economic needs of the state, its regions and its communities. This reconstituted workforce board creates a broad platform for policymakers to work closely with the business sector, communities and employment programs to fill state and regional workforce pipelines with job-ready Georgians.

Under the oversight of the recently established, Governor’s Office of Workforce Development, the workforce development system in Georgia will build stronger connections to the business community to identify the skills needed to power the regional economy; become a holistic and systematic cycle of life-long learning, beginning with pre-school, through high school and continuing throughout adult life changes; connect the resources of various programs to provide a pipeline of

job ready Georgians; and support of industry-sector and cluster based strategies working with a network of firms to train the workforce effectively.

Steps to achieve Georgia's vision for a world-class workforce system are underway with state and local partners working together to understand each others services and how they can work together to effectively address the needs of Georgia businesses and residents.

Georgia Industry Sector Strategy Efforts

Automotive Advanced Manufacturing Industry Sector

The State of Georgia is positioned to embark on a new venture that would put into play many of the efforts that have been created over the past three years. The goal of this venture is to develop a workforce pipeline that will meet the needs of the advanced manufacturing community in the western region of the State. This area of the state will be experiencing significant changes as it prepares for nearly 5,500 new advanced automotive manufacturing jobs with the opening of KIA and over 3500 jobs from the multiplier affect. The Governor's Office of Workforce Development, within a collaborative environment, is proposing to develop and implement a workforce development model that supports a vertical (career pathways) and horizontal (career lattice) initiative that meets the employment needs of the automotive advanced manufacturing industry and its supplier companies within a six county area.

Georgia has recently invested nearly \$1 million to support the advanced manufacturing innovation center and is applying for a President's High Growth Job Training grant in Automotive Advanced Manufacturing to fund this regional sector initiative. Collectively, the funding stream to support efforts in this industry sector is projected to be consistent through 2009 and includes a \$20 million investment for an on-site training center for KIA.

Healthcare Industry Sector

The Commission for a New Georgia has launched a *Healthier Georgia* initiative. One of the goals is to ensure the state's healthcare delivery system has quality services available to all Georgians wherever they live, from rural roads to center city.

The State of Georgia is interested in building on the collaborative environment that has been initiated by the workforce development system efforts to address some of the policy issues related to meeting workforce needs of the healthcare industry. Georgia and the nation are facing a critical shortage of allied healthcare workers. Although the reasons for these shortages are numerous and profound, the Governor is committed to being a significant partner in helping the healthcare industry address its need for qualified workers.

In September 2005, the University System of Georgia appointed the Task Force on Health Professions Education to analyze future needs and inform the decision making necessary to address the health professions education needs of the state. The Task Force was charged with documenting critical areas of shortage, considering demographic and economic influences, examining current and future challenges, and identifying programmatic strengths and educational gaps. The group was asked to develop a comprehensive report which detailed recommendations about the University System's role and strategic directions related to health professions education.

The report concluded that the responsibility for health workforce education and retention rests squarely, but not solely, with Georgia's public institutions of higher education. The institutions and their governing organizations must utilize their considerable talents, tools and resources to respond successfully to the state's future health professions education needs. Adoption and implementation of the recommendations generated by this report will provide a foundation for long-term success.

Complimenting the work of the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System will focus nearly 75% of their capital outlay budget for FY 2007 for the construction of new and/or reovated healthcare educational facilities. This effort, in tandem with the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force, should better position Georgia to increase our capacity to educate for the healthcare industry.

Also, there are currently three significantly funded efforts in Georgia that are located in Metropolitan Atlanta, Rural Georgia and outside the Metro Atlanta proper that amount to over \$ 4 million. Each of these efforts has been underway for no more than one year and will be funded for an additional two years.

This industry sector strategy is to coordinate the statewide efforts and organize them into comprehensive community based workforce development strategies for the healthcare industry. The result will be a model that can be replicated throughout the communities in Georgia.

Georgia Industry Sector Summary

Both of these industry sector efforts are moving forward and are well defined projects that have established partnerships, cross system regional and state level support and participation, outcomes and accountability measures that are data driven and have the potential to provide a pipeline of potential workers with viable careers that have family sustaining wages, benefits, and/or opportunities for advancement.

However, of utmost importance to the contributing partners of these efforts is not only to successfully develop and implement these workforce development models, but also to ensure that these efforts prosper and are sustainable over the course of time. Although the models differ in scope and purpose, both are designed to be replicated. The automotive advanced manufacturing model will be developed to be easily replicated for other industry sectors. The healthcare industry sector strategy will be developed solely for the industry with the intention of making the model available to all communities for implementation. Of particular interest to the Governor's Office of Workforce Development are the success indicators and performance metrics of these models to enable sustainability of initiatives through policy.

Georgia Core Team Composition

The Georgia's core team will be comprised of inter-governmental senior level staff and regional industry representatives that are in positions to influence policy within their agency. A letter of commitment from each member of the core team is attached.

- Appointed by the Governor as team leader is *Debra Lyons*, Program Manger for the Governor's Office of Workforce Development. Debra was tapped by Governor Purdue to lead the State Workforce Investment Board in creating an integrated statewide strategic plan for Workforce Development, which links workforce policies and education programs to the economic needs of the state, its regions and its communities. dlyons@gov.state.ga.us 404.463.5283
- *Andrea Harper*, Assistant Commissioner, Georgia Department of Labor brings a wealth of understanding of federal and state workforce rules and regulations. andrea.harper@dol.state.ga.us 404- 232-7320
- *Jan Kettlewell*, Associate Vice Chancellor, P-16 Initiatives, the University System of Georgia directs the Georgia P-16 Initiative which is a comprehensive and collaborative statewide effort aimed at raising expectations and ensuring student success from pre-school through post-secondary education. Jan.Kettlewell@usg.edu 404-656-2261
- *Frieda Hill*, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Technical Education, the Technical College System of Georgia oversees the administration of all publicly owned technical colleges and works with other public agencies and organizations to provide Georgia's citizens with a seamless educational system. fhill@dtae.org 404.679.1660
- *Chris Clark*, Deputy Commissioner, Global Commerce Division, Georgia Department of Economic Development is responsible for existing industry retention and expansion; business development; global trade and new business recruitment for The Governor's Entrepreneur and Small Business Office, the Innovation and Technology Office, 12 regional offices and Georgia's 13 international offices. cclark@georgia.org 404-962-4070

- *Abel Ortiz*, Health Policy Advisor to Governor Sonny Perdue.
aortiz@gov.state.ga.us 404-656-1784
- *Diethard Lindner*, Chairman of the Development Authority of LaGrange, Georgia is a community leader for regional industrial advancement.
lindner@charter.net 706-845-0981

The “home team” for this effort will be the existing partners that are working on the Advanced Manufacturing project and the existing partners that are working on the Healthcare Industry projects. There is a natural connection between the two teams because some of the members of the “core team” are either on one or more of the collaboratives or have representation on them.

Georgia is convinced that convening the members of this “core team” will act as the catalyst that will be necessary for significant policy coordination and change. Reviewing our existing policies and practices will help set the stage for the work that needs to be accomplished over the next year. Our immediate goal will be to leave each of the Policy Academy meetings more informed and better tooled to address the needs of our current industry sector strategy efforts during the implementation of our action plans. Our overarching goal will be to identify and address policy issues that will allow Georgia to create a continuum of workforce development service strategies that help foster permanent linkages needed between education, workforce development and economic development.

Georgia’s success matrix for this effort will be seeing the results; where inter-governmental agencies, education, workforce and economic development, collectively work together, empowering each other to establish a continuum of service strategies that effectively and efficiently address the workforce needs of Georgia industries. These strategies will be sustainable and supported over time through policy.

Conclusion

Georgia is an excellent candidate for the NGA Best Practices Policy Academy for State Sector Strategies: Innovative Workforce Policies to Address Worker and Employer Needs. The State has two sector initiatives that will serve as unique and necessary workforce development pipeline models for the State. One is a regional approach that supports meeting the significant workforce needs for a new industry and its suppliers. The second is developing a model that can be duplicated in every community as shortages in the healthcare sector impact every hospital and healthcare facility in Georgia. Studying policy issues as they pertain to both of these strategies at the same time will enable this core team to (1) ensure policies aligned and/or developed will support both types of strategies and (2) ensure policies are put in place that will enable permanent change in how Georgia develops the workforce pipeline for these two types of models.