

EAB Board Meeting of October 5, 1999

Members Present:

Raymond G. Boland, Peg Meyers for Jon Litscher, Rick Berg, and Leroy Conner

Others Present: Jim Falco (National Louis University), Don Madelung (Herzing College), Mary Schroeder (New Horizons Computer L.C.), Rick DeMoya, Joe Bertalan (WDVA), Pati Epstein (Inacom), Deborah A. Uecker (State Budget Office), Luci Klebar, Prostaff Training Plus, Mary Meyer, Bryant & Stratton College, Linda Heidtman, Joan Fitzgerald, Maurice Spencer, Nina Tallard, Yvonne Hagen, Pat Sweeney., Joe Davis (EAB staff).

Absent: Gene Kussart, Georgiana Giese, Delora Newton

Ray Boland, Chair of the Educational Approval Board, called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M. Mr. Boland referred the members to the Minutes. He noted that he had talked at length about the future of the EAB. Mr. Conner moved and Mr. Berg seconded a motion to approve the Minutes. The motion carried.

Presentations

Prostaff Training Plus (a computer learning center located in Wauwatosa):

Luci Klebar presented to the board. She reported that Prostaff Training Plus grew out of the perceived training needs of job seekers identified by Prostaff's related temporary employment agency. The computer learning center has expanded three times in three years and 80% of the individuals hired into temporary jobs become permanent hires. The school emphasizes flexible scheduling; an open-entry/open-exit format – with individuals clamoring for more evening hours.

Ms. Kleber reported that the IT field is literally booming with open jobs, unmet needs and very solid salaries. This is the area where the economy seems to be heading and she predicted that training would undoubtedly grow in the future. Increasingly, the trend is also toward industry recognized certification (i.e., formal acknowledgement of a set of competencies) which, from an EAB perspective, suggests more formal instructional programs.

Mr. Boland asked about the length of the training which Prostaff offers and specifically referenced the WDVA's transition grants. Ms. Klebar said that no program is longer than one year, though individuals may stretch the time out to accommodate work schedules.

Bryant & Stratton College (a junior college located in Milwaukee):

Mary Meyer presented to the board. She emphasized that the school has a clear employment focus. It offers Associate Degree programs and currently has a B.A. program in development.

Mr. Boland asked about curriculum development. He pointed out that Prostaff developed its training packages in response to identified needs in the labor market and wondered how Bryant & Stratton identified in what areas to train.

Ms. Meyer stated that the school used a variety of methods, chief among them being focus groups of employers and standing advisory committees. In developing the B.A. program, for instance, the advisory committee (a multi-state group) was put 'on-line' to facilitate

interchange.

Ms. Meyer reported that Bryant & Stratton has considerable interaction with employers and what is learned from them and the real world is injected into the classroom. She also described an innovative new approach to strengthen the connection between graduates and jobs – a formal internship program (the one operating now is with 'Extendicare' a long-term care company with IT staffing needs). The school has had great success with this model and intends to expand it to other employment areas. It was developed as the result of outreach and marketing by the school.

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs:

Rick DeMoya reported on the various initiatives and programs under way in the WDVA to help transition veterans to civilian life. He made particular mention of the shift in emphasis from an educational to an employment focus. Available programs include a Retraining Grant, Tuition and Fee Reimbursement, Part-time Study Grant and Direct Loans. Joe Bertalan then described the WDVA's efforts to promote the transition of some veterans into the teaching profession through the Troops to Teachers Program. He noted that there remains a shortage of qualified teachers and that veterans can perform a useful service. He also discussed the Department's efforts to promote the acceptance of training in the military by educational institutions: the Academic Credit for Military Experience [ACME] project. This will literally create a computerized matrix of competencies/equivalencies that can assist schools in granting credit to individuals for training received in the military.

Mr. Boland pointed out that the veterans trying to make the switch to teaching need a B.A. in order to participate.

Mr. Conner asked if the data was being kept on the individuals participating in the Troops to Teachers effort. Mr. Bertalan replied in the affirmative.

Distance Education

Mr. Davis stated that the remainder of the agenda really emanated from the chair's discussion of the EAB's future at the July meeting. He described the papers in the meeting packet: a legal and policy discussion on the Internet and Distance Education and the summary of meetings with other state oversight agencies that EAB staff attended. Although Distance Education is quickly growing in importance, states really don't know how to deal with it.

He then reported that the EAB had a meeting at which the Executive Director of the Distance Education and Training Council presented information on that rapidly changing sector. The EAB's intent was to begin an effort to have the state, as a whole, come to some understandings about how Wisconsin schools ought to deal with the subject internally and in reaction to external providers. This meeting was designed to stimulate ongoing discussion. Attendees included the Department of Workforce Development, the UW System, UW-Madison, and legislative staff.

Mr. Berg asked if the UW had developed any policy or position on distance education.

Mr. Davis said that he did not know, but that he would follow up and report to the board.

Mr. Boland thought that it was a good idea to make specific recommendations on this issue and on how the state ought to respond. He noted that Wisconsin was only one of three or so states which did not have a higher education authority and there is, he said, a real need to be able to figure out what capability and process is needed to deal with the future of

education.

Mr. Sweeney stated that EAB sets standards and creates a level playing field for the out-of-state colleges – it holds them to standards. Distance education is, at the moment, an open game with few rules. There is a need to define a level playing field for the state as a whole.

Mr. Berg thought that it was important to be able to vouch for the quality of the programming coming in to the state. He said that this was a legitimate interest for Wisconsin.

Mr. Conner stated that he liked the notion of having staff find out what is going on outside of Wisconsin.

GI Bill Pilot:

Mr. Davis quickly summarized the draft end-year report. He said that it still needed data on number of visits plugged in and some additional discussion of staff's experience in the field. He noted that informal word has revealed that the leadership in the USDVA likes what Wisconsin is doing, but it is still unclear how this will affect future efforts.

Workforce Investment Act [WIA]:

Mr. Davis reported that a workgroup called together by the Department of Workforce Development has recommended that the EAB function as the vetting arm of the WIA; i.e., certifying potential training providers. While this primarily supports what the EAB would be doing anyway with for-profit schools and trainers, it is recognition by another state agency of EAB's competence.

Mr. Boland reported that he had had some discussion with Mr. Kussart relative to coordination issues between DWD and the EAB.

EAB Conference:

Ms. Fitzgerald reminded the members of the upcoming conference.

Executive Secretary's Report:

Mr. Davis referred the members to the 'state' and GI Bill activity reports. He then referred to Ms. Heidtman who gave an update on successful work to deal with some problems at MBTI.

Mr. Berg asked if Distance Education would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Davis said that it was his intention to make it an active subject.

Mr. Berg moved and Mr. Conner seconded a call for adjournment that carried. The meeting ended at 10:42 A.M.