Improve Education and Workforce Development

Implementation Action Area #1: Improve Coordination Between Education, Workforce Development, and Economic Development

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Prepare assessment reports on cross-system coordination	Nonprofits, philanthropic	Focus initially on the freight and energy industries of the economy; later expand to other industries. Identify and convene economic development, education, and workforce leaders in each industry, and determine areas of duplication or gaps. Summarize the conclusions of this work in a report for each sector with recommendations for next steps, including setting of common goals and pursuit of pilot programs to improve coordination.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- On a regional scale, both the Manufacturing and the Freight Cluster Drill-Down reports found examples of collaboration and coordination between education, workforce development, and economic development and recommended expanding these types of collaborations.
- CMAP has integrated assessments of cross-system coordination into several Local Technical Assistance projects, as well as the Cluster Drill-Down reports. These assessments were not as robust as described in the plan, though they leveraged related projects and resulted in a better understanding of existing coordination and opportunities for greater coordination. The Blue Island Comprehensive Plan was completed through the first round of LTA projects in 2012 and included an analysis of existing workforce development services and programs completed by Chicago Jobs Council. This assessment and an examination of development opportunities led to an implementation strategy to "create workforce training opportunities" and several actions that create linkages between economic development strategies and workforce development services.
- The Berwyn Comprehensive Plan found need for increased collaboration between regional businesses and non-profit training and education service providers. The plan calls for improved connections between workforce service providers and residents in need of workforce services.
- Several other Local Technical Assistance projects integrated workforce development, including the projects with Franklin Park, Morton Grove, and Hoffman Estates. These projects identified local efforts and opportunities to strengthen collaboration.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:

- This action remains a priority for CMAP and the region.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete
Expand on successful workforce development coordination programs	State (DCEO), community colleges, Workforce Investment Boards, economic development organizations	Build on successful programs like CWIC to expand it beyond the City of Chicago. Also build on the Shifting Gears initiative of the state's community colleges and DCEO's Critical Skills Shortage Initiative to expand them to cover additional industries. Expand other initiatives that engage the private sector and economic development organizations and strengthen partnerships between education institutions and the business community.	Revise

Implementation Examples:
- In 2011, the City of Chicago and Cook County began work to combine three separate Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) – Chicago, Northern Cook, and Southern Cook – into the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership. The Partnership seeks to improve service delivery to residents looking for jobs, help to eliminate duplicative administrative costs across the LWIA system, make more funds available to be used in training and development programs.
- In 2012, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded $12.9 million to expand Harper College's Advanced Manufacturing Degree and Training program to schools across Illinois, including many of the region's community colleges.
- The Manufacturing Careers Internship Program, a partnership between education, workforce, and business, exposes young adults to careers in manufacturing. Recently, the program has expanded to offer more opportunities for young adults to take part in internships and apprenticeship programs.
- The U.S. Department of Labor awarded $19.4 million to the Illinois Green Economy Network's Career Pathways Consortium to support new certificate and degree programs focused on green careers at Illinois community colleges.
- The City Colleges of Chicago initiated the College to Careers Program to better connect the colleges' curricula with job training and employment opportunities.
- The Calumet Green Manufacturing Partnership was launched in 2010 and is expanding to include additional partners and serve more job seekers and employers. The program is a collaboration between three community colleges, local government, community-based organizations, and the business community.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- CWIC was merged with the Cook WIB and the Critical Skills Initiative is no longer active.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Strengthen role of workforce intermediaries -- including community colleges, universities, proprietary schools, universities, apprenticeship programs, vocational programs, community based organizations, Workforce Investment Boards and Workforce Investment Act affiliates	Community colleges, nonprofits, other education, workforce and economic development groups	Expand programs that have succeeded at individual education institutions and training providers to be applied broadly across the region. Improve communication between education institutions and training providers through regional forums that also involve economic development groups. Increase the profile of workforce intermediaries as a critical link in the education and workforce development system.	Revise

Implementation Examples:
- Through the LTA program, CMAP has helped the Golden Corridor Manufacturing Group develop into a more structured intermediary with specific goals and objectives. Comprised of employers, economic development practitioners, and education and training providers, the group did not have a formal structure or agenda and therefore was limited in its impact. The group is now transitioning to a more defined role and is better positioned to function as an intermediary to support the manufacturing industry.
- Composed of nine foundations, the newly formed Chicagoland Workforce Funders Alliance has focused its first grant on a type of intermediary for manufacturing. Chosen through an open request for proposals, a partnership between Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC), Manufacturing Works, and the Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council will act as an intermediary, connecting employers, educational institutions, training providers, and economic development initiatives.
- The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership has expanded its capacity to connect to industry leaders and employers through its new Business Relations division. Several staff have been hired to serve as Industry Specialists. These staff identify employers' needs to inform the Partnerships' programming and investment decisions.
- Launched in 2012, Skills for Chicagoland's Future is a collaboration between the City of Chicago and Cook County to close workforce skills gaps.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- While intermediaries continue to be effective at connecting stakeholders and momentum has built to support this role, the description of "intermediary" should be clarified.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Collect, compile, and publicize career pathways analyses	Community colleges, nonprofits, philanthropic	Identify existing analyses of career pathways, or programs of education and training that prepare students for future employment in a certain field. Compile these and make them available to education institutions, workforce service providers, and employers. Update this compilation frequently to reduce duplication, and prepare new career pathways to eliminate any gaps in coverage of new or expanding industries.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- Illinois Pathways, funded through the federal "Race to the Top" program, is a State of Illinois-led science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education initiative designed to support college and career readiness for all students. Through a partnership between the State of Illinois' education and economic development agencies, Illinois Pathways aims to provide resources for students to explore STEM-related academic and career opportunities. It is also aims to create new statewide public-private partnerships known as Learning Exchanges to improve coordination of investments, resources, and planning for STEM programs.
- Workforce development practitioners in the region also have access to national data and resources through the Career Pathways Community of Practice, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce[3]One program.
- Women Employed and the Chicago Jobs Council are leading the Pathways to Careers Network, which focuses on supporting education and career success among adult learners with low basic skills. The Network provides information on programs, connects peoples with resources, and advances a policy agenda that supports adult learners.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- Career pathways continue to be an important way to show students and job seekers the opportunities available, as well as coordinate training and education providers.

Implementation Action Area #2: Data and Information Systems

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise Complete/Delete
Launch and continually improve the Regional Indicators Project website	CMAP, the Chicago Community Trust	Develop and maintain a website that describes the tracking indicators and allows users to tabulate, graph, or map this information. The website will be continually improved to incorporate new data sets and new technologies as they become available. Education and workforce development indicators are among those featured on the website.	Revise

Implementation Examples:
- CMAP released MetroPulse, the website of the Regional Indicators Project in 2010. Since then the website has gone through several iterations. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and the Chicago Community Trust remain committed partners in the collection and distribution of public data to monitor progress on the region's most important issues—principally, through the performance of the GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan.
- Because good data becomes more accessible every year from institutions and government agencies, MetroPulse will henceforth narrow its focus to select indicators for monitoring the progress of GO TO 2040 implementation and progress on the Chicago Community Trust's community goals. This revised approach also promises to be more effective for the greatest number of users.
- CMAP has already released Community Data Snapshot reports on each municipality in the region and will be releasing similar reports on the City of Chicago's 77 community areas very soon.
- When fully implemented, MetroPulse will include narrative analyses and visuals on indicators of significance to a broader community of users and aligned with the priorities of GO TO 2040 and The Chicago Community Trust. To close the gap on user data needs, the site will provide categorized links to data from trusted sources selected by CMAP and The Chicago Community Trust.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- Revise to reflect CMAP's updated plans for the MetroPulse website.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Identify additional data sources concerning education and workforce, including existing data and newly developed or innovative data measures	State (IDES, DCEO), CMAP, higher education institutions and community colleges	Analyze existing education and workforce information and data sources, including CWICstats, Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), DCEO, Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Northern Illinois University (NIU), and Shifting Gears, among other sources. Identify barriers to making new data sources publicly available on the Regional Indicators Project website and determine incentives or mechanisms needed to overcome these barriers.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- In June 2012, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership was awarded $3 million grant from the Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation Fund. The grant will be used to create an Integrated Workforce Information System. The system is in development and the overall goal is to improve credential attainment, as well as employment and earnings results for client. It will use data-based decision-making to improve the assessment of client skills and barriers, leading to improved referral of clients to services, training opportunities, and job openings.
- In 2012 the U.S. Department of Labor awarded the Illinois Department of Commerce and Opportunity (DCEO) a $1 million grant through the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI). The funding will allow DCEO to develop a longitudinal data system that includes unemployment insurance wage records, unemployment insurance benefit claims, data on workforce training programs, and other data sources. The State is coordinating the development of this system with Illinois State Board of Education-led State Longitudinal Data System.
- The Illinois P-20 Council continues to make recommendations to the Governor, General Assembly, and state agencies to create a seamless system of education and support from birth to childhood. Data and metrics are included in the topics this group considers. The council is composed of members appointed by the Governor, from business, local government, universities, school boards, non-profit organizations, teachers, partners, and other stakeholders. The Council's third annual report from April 2013 is available online.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- This action remains a priority for CMAP and the region.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Expand the CWICstats system to cover the region	CMAP, CWICstats leaders, WIBs, education institutions, workforce providers	The CWICstats program tracks education and training participants as they move through public education, workforce development, and other social service systems. It promises to be an extremely useful data source for monitoring program effectiveness, but currently only covers the City of Chicago. There are significant barriers to expanding it, including institutional coordination, data management, and cost; these should be scoped in partnership with current CWICstats leaders and potential participants outside of Chicago.	Revise

Implementation Examples:
- CWICstats, the Chicagoland Workforce Information Collaborative at Chapin Hall, has evolved and expanded its scope since its original inception in 2010. Research efforts have evolved into specific projects to link and analyze data for particular agencies or programs rather than a comprehensive, system-wide scope, which was the original objective of the CWICstats effort.
- The Metropolitan Chicago WIA-Training Resource Guide includes information on Workforce Investment Act-certified training programs, including the location and type of programs offered, employment and wages of each program's graduates, customer feedback, and occupational labor market information.   The online portal website began with Chicago, but has expanded to the metropolitan area to include Cook, DuPage, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- This action needs to be revised to reflect the current status of CWICstats and related projects.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Expand the Student Information System beyond K-12 education	State (ISBE), early childhood educators, higher education institutions, workforce providers	Implement the Student Information System to track student performance over their educational careers, including data beyond academic achievement. Expand this to coordinate with early childhood education, higher education, and workforce development data systems.	Revise

Implementation Examples:
- The Illinois State Board of Education was awarded nearly $20 million in federal grants to develop the State Longitudinal Data System, which will integrate the Student Information System as well as numerous other data systems. The initiative will link many data sources and improve the ability of researchers to answer complex questions regarding the outcomes and impact of education and training programs. There are challenges to ensuring the system provides benefit to the greatest number of end-users, and CMAP has helped convene end-users to communicate their data and information needs.
- The Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research (ICEPR) is a network for state agencies, universities, researchers, and others that are working together to formulate a research agenda to utilize the state's education and workforce data systems. The ICEPR was launched in 2012 as part of Illinois's federal "Race to the Top" grant.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- This action may need to be revised slightly to place greater focus on the State Longitudinal Data System rather than the Student Information System.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Create measures of school readiness to improve early childhood education programs	State (ISBE), early childhood educators	Create a measure of school readiness for students entering kindergarten. Use this to evaluate the effectiveness of various early childhood education programs at preparing students for success in school. Link this assessment with the Student Information System described above.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- An Illinois State Board of Education steering committee of local and national experts crafted a tool to measure school readiness for students entering kindergarten. The Kindergarten Individual Development Survey is in pilot phase of implementation.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- This action remains a priority for CMAP and the region.

Implementation Action Area #3: Improve Delivery of Workforce Development Services

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise Complete/Delete
Increase the flexibility and federal funding for workforce development and increase flexibility of State discretionary workforce funds	Federal, State (DCEO), WIBs, workforce providers	Modify the requirements of WIA funding to allow workforce boards to exercise more flexibility in how these funds are used. Permit differences in how WIA funds are used between regions to reflect their different economic profiles and related training needs.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- The Department of Labor has dedicated a greater portion of federal Workforce Investment Act dollars to be distributed through competitive grants.   The Chicago region has responded and won several of these grants. Harper College led a consortium of community colleges in a successful application for $12.9 in funding to create the Illinois Network of Advanced Manufacturing.   The Calumet Green Manufacturing Partnership was funded by a $850,000 grant from the Department of Labor's Green Jobs Innovation Fund.
- Through its Learning Exchanges program, DCEO has issued several competitive requests for proposals to fund partnerships focused on specific industries. The Learning Exchanges create curriculum, online tools and information, expand internships, and support several other strategies to better prepare the workforce.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- Funding sources continue to be limited and demand for services continues to be high.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Investigate the use of other funding sources for workforce development	Nonprofit, philanthropic	Explore the use of more flexible funding sources such as CDBGs to be used more extensively for workforce development. Create a region-wide documentation of existing public funding streams to allow the development of specific recommendations for funding changes.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- In 2012, the Workforce Boards of Metropolitan Chicago published a region-wide report on public funding for workforce development. The report, "An Analysis of Public Workforce Development Resources," was funded by a grant awarded to the Metro WIBs by DCEO. The report documents the amount of public investment in the region's workforce system, describes the types of services and service providers, the target population, and includes recommendations.
- In 2012, the several Chicago-area foundations launched the Chicagoland Workforce Funders Alliance. By working together and pooling resources, the Alliance is able to address complex and regional workforce challenges. The funding partners include the Boeing Company, the Chicago Community Trust, the Joyce Foundation, JP Morgan Chase, Polk Bros. Foundation, The Pritzker Traubert Family Foundation, the McCormick Foundation, and United Way of Metropolitan Chicago.
- The City of Chicago contributed $25 million from the lease of city parking meters to fund the Chicago Career Tech program over three years. The program will serve dislocated middle-income workers in Chicago. The intensive program provides a 6-month, 6-day/week training program plus a training stipend for participants.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- Funding sources continue to be limited and demand for services continues to be high.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Monitor impact of more flexible funding and communicate outcomes	Federal, workforce providers	The outcomes of modified policies and funding streams should be result in better matches in workforce skills and business needs. Routine and regular monitoring of effectiveness in meeting regional goals will be an ongoing activity.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- New data systems will expand the current capacity to track outcomes and communicate the impact of grants and flexible funding. For example, Chapin Hall, along with many other stakeholders, has been engaged with the City of Chicago as part of the Thrive Chicago: Cradle to Careers effort, which will track progress toward achieving education and employment outcomes and indicators. Annual dashboards will be produced, starting in the fall of 2013.
- Chapin Hall led the Chicago Career Tech Job Training Program Evaluation. The Chicago Career Tech program was an innovative technology training program launched in 2011. The evaluation consists of three components: web surveys to assess immediate employment outcomes, quantitative analysis of individual-level pre- and post-program quarterly employment and wage data, and quasi-experimental quantitative analysis of individual-level employment and wage outcomes of Chicago Career Tech participants in relation to a comparative sample of WIA training participants
- Supported by a U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund grant, the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership is developing the new Integrated Workforce Information System (IWIS). IWIS will serve as an integrated management information system that will for the first time collect information across programs and both public and private organizations on all those being served by the workforce development system in Chicago and Cook County. IWIS will serve as a resource to service providers, funders, and program managers to improve service provision and also allow for the use of IWIS data for improved program performance management. IWIS will be developed and implemented during through 2014 and into early 2015.
- The DCEO STEM Learning Exchanges are tasked with reviewing performance of STEM programs of study through assessments and working with school partners to continuously improve performance.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- Evaluations continue to provide important information that can guide future investments.

Action	Lead Implementers	Specifics	Retain/Revise/ Complete/Delete
Strengthen community-focused provision of workforce services	State (DCEO, Governor's Office), community based organizations, business community, WIBs, other workforce funders	Continue offering workforce development services through community-based organizations, in conjunction with other services. Evaluate local community-focused programs, determine which approaches are most effective, and promote further use of these programs.	Retain

Implementation Examples:
- In 2012, Chapin Hall completed a report identifying successful workforce development programs and exploring what makes them succeed, and how the factors that contribute to success can be measured to help improve the workforce development system. The report, "Inside the Black Box: What Makes Workforce Development Programs Successful?" includes several recommendations, including improved data systems to more accurately measure program impact and outcomes.
- Numerous innovations and partnerships are expanding and strengthening community focused workforce services. For example, the Calumet Green Manufacturing Partnership (CGMP) is a collaborative effort focused on supporting and enhancing the manufacturing industry in South Suburban Cook County and the south side of Chicago. By building partnerships between employers, the public workforce system, and training providers, the CGMP develops the skills of the local workforce to meet the labor needs of local manufacturing companies, with an emphasis on green skills, industries and manufacturing practices.
- The DuPage Workforce Board approved a second "one-stop" facility in the county in 2013.
- Authorized by the Affordable Care Act, the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) program has been led by a regional collaboration between the Workforce Investment Boards, several community-based organizations, community colleges, and human service agencies. The program provides education and training to low income individuals in high-demand health care occupations.

Rationale for Retain/Revise/Complete/Delete Assessment:
- Local service providers are a key part of the system.