

Westchetser Putnam Workforce Investment Baord
Westchester Workforce Development Academy for Youth
(A promising practice)
Concept Paper

Background

On April 1, 2007, The Westchetser/Putnam Workforce Investment Board (WIB) opened its new Westchester Workforce Development Academy for Youth (WWDAY). The academy includes both the in-school and out-of- school programs that are focus on youth obtaining a high school diploma/high school equivalency and entrance into the workforce, college and or the military.

Program Model- In school

The in school youth component of the academy will operate out of six (6) local high schools in Westchester County. These are the Peekskill, Ossining, White Plains, Portchester, New Rochelle and Mount Vernon high schools. The WIB has established contracts with five youth services agencies that will provide the staff to the academy in each school. The academy's staff will be work with WIA eligible youth who are at risk or failing in high school to help them complete hifg school successfully. Working collaboratively with the schools' guidance counselors, the youth service contractors will offer a mix of youth development services which includes:

Summer employment (which is manadatory), internships and work experience, mentoring, tutoring leadership development, alterantive secondary school opportunities and other supportive services that will help the youth complete high school successfully.

Formerly, the in-school and out-of-school youth services contractors operated the program much like after school programs. There was no formal relationship with the local schools. The academy will be located in the schools and will be operated jointly with with the school staff. The contractors have very strict performance outcomes that align the proragm to the established WIA performance standards for younger youth.

Program Model- Out-of-school

The out of school component of the academy will operate in five communities and will be located in the One Stop Centers and or other designated sites. Four youth services contractors will handle component A of the program that has includes outreach and recruitment, intake, assesssment and case planning and management of all youth registered with the program. The youth services contractors will provide the youth development services that include summer employment (where necessary), internships and work experience, mentoring, tutoring leadership development, alterantive secondary school opportunities (where applicable) and other supportive services that will help the youth complete high equivalency, find employment, enter college and or enter the military.

In addition, the WIB has established contracts with Westchetser Community College to provide Basic Skills and Work Readiness Preparation. The basic skills instructions will be based on the National work Readiness credential which is being developed and led by the US Chamaber of Commerce nationally. Further, the WIB has has given the youth service contracts referral access to its eligibale training providers list. This will allow youth services providers to refer youth for occupational training in demand and high wage industries.

The Business Council of Westchetser, the largest business membership organization in the area, is also a partner in the academy and is helping to recruit business representative for the academy's business advisory council.

The Academy represents a significant and innovative change in the way the WIB delivers youth services in our area. It's the goal of the WIB to build a foundation that will help prepare youth for jobs that are currently available and those that projected in the near future. The Academy will expand to incorporate youth at a younger age and to build career ladders based on the labor market projections in future years.