



**Brockton Education & Workforce Training
Task force Report Draft**
Spring 2010

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Letter from Taskforce to Mayor Linda Balzotti
Brockton Task force on Education & Training Report
April 2010

Dear Mayor Balzotti,

On behalf of the Task force on Education and Workforce Training, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve the many individuals that we hope will benefit from our recommendations. It is our collective belief that youth, life-long learners, limited English speaking populations and adult learners in the City of Brockton all have a right to access a menu of educational services and workforce retraining programs that the City of Champions offers. Our goal is to propose a strategic framework that providers, city officials, and other stakeholders will utilize as an initial roadmap to ensuring the City's residents have access to public education, sustaining jobs, and an enriching and active civic life.

In your role as Mayor, many regard you as the "The Great Convener of the City" who can best bring people together and we hope that these recommendations will aid you in that endeavor. We determined to structure our charge through a fact-based lens. In our first few weeks we honed in on the urgent issues facing the City of Brockton. Additionally, we surveyed cities with similar demographics to Brockton to compare best practices. These cities also demonstrated favorable outcomes in the areas of innovative educational programming and workforce development. Finally, we interviewed individuals and agencies with expertise that could further illuminate the data we collected. With the assistance of these various agents we gained insight to obstacles that faced both underserved populations and service providers in Brockton.

In closing, the recommendations outlined in the Education & Training Report are based on the common themes that we found to be at the foundation of all effective systems and institutions– communication, collaboration and coordination. Thank you for the opportunity to partner with you in serving on this team. We hope that as you move forward in your administration a formulated action plan will be implemented to build new relationships and cultivate current partnerships; ones that we anticipate will enrich the quality of life for all Brockton residents.

Sincerely,

Nathania C. Onyeagoro
Chair, Brockton Education & Training Taskforce

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Executive Summary
The Charge

In the winter of 2010, the newly elected Mayor of Brockton Linda Balzotti created five task forces to study issues critical to the City, one of which was the Education and Workforce Training Task force. Education along with training opportunities has been identified by the newly elected administration as a critical issue facing the development and ongoing revitalization of Brockton. The task force collectively researched, brainstormed, and conducted an analysis of the current state of education after high school along with workforce development in Brockton. Additionally, the goal was to create a draft blueprint report that outlined optimal strategies to improve the accessibility to local programs, effective agencies, and a variety of services for all Brockton citizens.

This report focuses primarily on residents who are identified as populations that could benefit from further educational and workforce development opportunities. Specifically, we focused our attention on the following areas: grades 13 through 16 and postsecondary training; out of school youth ages 16 through 24; lifelong learning and initiatives; adult basic education (ABE); and English language competencies (ELL, ESOL). For each of these categories our team researched the current status of programs; what the best practices are, and where they are located; relevant statistical data and possible funding sources; finally, we made recommendations for each category. After convening this task force the Mayor charged us to produce a report within 60 days.

Following the completion of the report draft, it will be submitted to Mayor Balzotti for review and comments. The report draft will then be made available to the community at-large. At the public forum the community will have an opportunity to give feedback and input, as well as, present relevant questions directed to the taskforce.

The Mission

“Ensuring that all citizens of Brockton are given educational opportunities including: adult education, education for non-English speaking populations and alternatives to traditional forms of education, such as trade schools, GED courses, etc.”

Vision Statement

“That the City of Brockton embraces the challenge to reach higher by implementing a strategic action plan that provides educational and workforce development programs and offers appropriate options to career pathways that lead to a successful career, enhanced civic engagement and a living wage that will empower residents to maintain self-sufficiency.”

Strategic Goals and Objectives for Targeted Populations

A successful system for youth/adult learners calls for greater accountability, more effective outcomes, and increased collaboration between youth serving agencies. To achieve these goals, the following priorities are identified:

- **High Expectations.** We expect learners to reach their full potential educationally and are committed to helping them develop the career skills they need to access high growth/high wage jobs.
- **Systems Development** We pledge to create systems that leads to increased system capacity across a network of integrated service providers,
- **Seamless Service Delivery** We will create a continuum of services, accomplished through leveraged resources and viable partnerships,
- **Career Development** We will foster occupational training and brokered employment for all,
- **Year-round Service Strategies** We ensure no one gets lost in the system, or passed from program to program without results.
- **Measurable Results** We are accountable to outcomes that demonstrate significant achievements in the lives of the youth we serve

Table 1 – Data relevant to target population

May 2008

Brockton Region Labor Market Indicators		
16-24 Total Population		30,983
16-19		14,727
20-21		7,352
22-24		8,904
HS Students		10,974
% of Population		35%
Dropouts		2,509
% of Population		8%
16-24 Labor Force		23,200
Employment Rate (Unemployment)		80.8% (19.2%)
HS Students Employment Rate		65.7% (34.3%)
Dropout Employment Rate		60.4% (39.6%)
16-19		71.6% (28.4%)
20-21		84.3% (15.7%)
22-24		89.6% (10.4%)
Employ-Population Ratio by Family Income		
< \$20,000		39.60%
\$20,000-\$39,999		39.20%
\$40,000-\$59,999		56.50%
\$60,000-\$79,999		50.70%
\$80,000-\$99,999		62.70%
16-24 YO's Who Did Not Work w/in Last 12 Months		
All		24.90%
16-19		35.60%
20-21		14.30%
22-24		14.50%
HS Students		52.30%
HS Dropouts		30.40%

Courtesy of Brockton Area WIB

Successful implementation of the recommendations enclosed in this **report requires** three strategic themes—*Communicate, Convene, Collaborate*-- are universally shared and practiced by all stakeholders and partners.

COMMUNICATE

- Our findings were conclusive upon a review of best practices in similar cities to Brockton. It was noted that the Mayor’s Office, due to general accessibility by all citizens, should serve as a “Clearinghouse of Opportunities” for information regarding Education & Training (beyond the scope targeted by the School Department).
- **Suggestions include:** *a web based system, utilizing social networking sites, quarterly newsletter highlighting classes or seminars for a various groups, multi-lingual resources, developing ways to work with local cable stations to promote informational broadcasts*

CONVENE

- As noted in formal interviews, service providers acknowledge that their ability to share information and unite for a common cause would be facilitated and enhanced by a more active involvement by the Mayor.
- **Suggestions include:** *coordinating events open to the public where providers promote programming, hosting round-tables with grant writers and funding coordinators, taking the lead on quarterly “education and opportunity fairs” where program recruitment is emphasized, partner with local colleges and universities to better understand how to prepare learners for admission.*

COLLABORATE

- Promoting unity among stakeholders is needed. The Mayor’s office is encouraged to actively cultivate and lead collaborative efforts between and among all service providers. This involves building bridges with the support of a variety of resources. Collaboration under a new action plan would reinvent “how” information is shared among providers and citizens. Research revealed that best practices began with collaboration and organization early in the planning stages.
- **Suggestions include:** *asking local businesses to host job shadows; to lead the discussion about their needs in the area of workforce development; to focus on information sharing with the city council and statewide facilitators; establish an ongoing campaign to assist citizens in “spreading the word” about educational and training programs.*

Grades 13 to 16 and Post-secondary training

“Massachusetts Employers are struggling to find workers with the knowledge needed for high-growth jobs, including the technology-dependent fields of life sciences, renewable energy and health care.... of the Commonwealth’s current 92,021 job vacancies, 46 percent require an associate’s degree or better. National forecasts suggest that some two-thirds of all new jobs will require some education after high school.”

-Ready for 21st Century Success - The New Promise of Public Education.

-The Patrick Administration Education Action Agenda. June, 2008 (pages 6 &

Current State of Programs & Services

While the challenge to the City of Brockton’s early education through Grade 12 system is to ensure that every child succeeds by securing a high quality education that leads to the completion of high school and the attainment of a high school diploma, success in the competitive employment marketplace of our city, state and national economy also challenges us to provide opportunities for our high school graduates for accessible, quality and affordable post secondary education and training as well.

Recommendations designed to expand post-secondary and training opportunities for the citizens of Brockton are as follows:

Recommendation 1: Brockton Higher Education Collaborative

Re-energize the Brockton Higher Education Collaborative with the highest levels of participation by college leaders to discuss college readiness activities (e.g. college immersion / “Brockton Goes to College”, dual enrollment, alignment of high school graduation requirements with college admission requirements, etc.), community service learning opportunities (e.g. mentoring), and economic development/training roles. The Mayor should convene the relevant college presidents for this purpose, and Massasoit Community College President, Charles Wall has already offered to host the meeting.

Recommendation 2: Adult Education / Training Consortium

Grant writers Collaborative

The City is encouraged to host a gathering of key leaders in adult education and training to develop a citywide adult education and training strategic plan. As there is no current mechanism for relevant grant writers in the city of Brockton to collaborate, it is advisable for the Mayor to urge grant writers to pursue collaborative funding to advance the aims and goals of adult education and workforce training.

Recommendation 3: Transition/Career services mapping

No inventory (mapping) of transition or career services has been done in recent years. (See BAMS, My Turn, etc. for good examples of such mapping). The City of Brockton should take a lead role in conducting and communicating such an inventory. Massasoit Community College has offered their assistance in the mapping effort.

Recommendation 4: Public Transportation access to Massasoit Community College Evening classes end at either 9:30 p.m. or 10 p.m. but BAT busses stop running at 8:30 p.m. A designated bus, paid for by Massasoit, stops running by 9 p.m. – hence, too early for any evening classes The City of Brockton should work with Brockton Area Transportation and with Massasoit Community College to provide a regular route bus for evening classes at Massasoit.

Recommendation 5: Education/training programs at Massasoit for Nursing, Radiology & Health Technology

Long waiting lists at Massasoit Community College for nursing and related programs are due primarily to a lack of clinical placements. The City of Brockton should convene a meeting of health care providers to expand clinical placements for Massasoit. An ongoing statewide initiative led by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education to address the nursing shortage in Massachusetts can be of assistance to the city as a state initiative has already constructed a web portal clearinghouse for clinical placements throughout Massachusetts. Compiling a list of lab facilities and qualified clinical faculty would be an initial step in addressing this issue. Additionally, to address a growing employment trend in health care, Massasoit Community College should explore the establishment of a medical information technology program. Although this is a target for Massasoit, out of the purview of the Mayor – city hall should encourage development of programming by higher education institutions.

Recommendation 6: Centralize internship opportunities

Public and private internship opportunities in the City of Brockton should have a central location. Options for location sites include: Workforce Investment Board, Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, or at Massasoit. Having a centralized effort to identify, communicate, and facilitate internship opportunities for Brockton students, graduates or citizens would assist both employers who seek to fill short duration low cost or no cost student learner positions and Brockton residents in search of valuable employment skills and experience. A centralized internship clearinghouse could also include general volunteer service opportunities.

Recommendation 7: Expand GED Plus program opportunities.

Brockton is already breaking new ground nationally in piloting a new GED Plus program. As one of only eight programs funded in the nation, the City of Brockton has a unique opportunity to support, highlight, and leverage the recently announced GED Plus program to secure additional private state and national funding to expand participation in the GED Plus program. The GED Plus Program will provide a comprehensive array of services and programs including counseling, case management, GED instruction, academic tutoring and remediation needed for college entry, referrals to social services, entrepreneurship, financial literacy and computer literacy classes, and college exploration and preparation.

The National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) Postsecondary Success Initiative (PSI) Grant, supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, is a three-year pilot to build the capacity of community-based organizations to reconnect low-income youth and young adults to a path leading to postsecondary attainment and employment at a living wage. This initiative aims to identify effective practices and strategies; expand organizations' ability to use data to inform programming and interventions that lead to postsecondary attainment for low income and minority youth; strengthen formal partnerships with postsecondary institutions; influence systems change for youth service providers and postsecondary institutions to sustain programming for completion of postsecondary outcomes and, ultimately, to inform national and state policy.

In addition, MY TURN has developed three career pathways, including short-term trainings, industry recognized credentials, and work-based learning experiences for youth in the areas of human services, health, and retail/customer service, all of which are prominent industries in the Southeastern region of Massachusetts. Upon receiving their GED, youth will continue receiving services from MY TURN while simultaneously enrolling in courses at Massasoit Community College and working towards attaining an Associate degree.

(In addition to the partnership with Massasoit Community College, the MY TURN GED Plus Program also receives financial and programmatic support from many local organizations and businesses including Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board, the Amelia Peabody Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Career Works, BAMSI, MA Provider's Council and the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship.)

When I travel around the country, meeting with students, business people, and others interested in the economy, I am occasionally asked for investment choices. Usually (though not always) the question is posed in jest. No one really expects me to tell them which three stocks they should buy. However, I know the answer to that question and I will share it with you today. Education is the best investment.”

-Ben S Bernanke, Chairman Federal Reserve Sept 24, 2007

Out of School Youth (ages 16-24)

Current State of Programs & Services

The key to serving out of school youth is in developing multiple pathways that lead to educational opportunities, employment prospects and a career path that results in positive outcomes for each youth. The majority of youth in this population face low literacy, poverty, language barriers, and low skill attainment and health issues as challenges to their success. In Brockton, 6% of youth between the ages of 16-24 left high school without a diploma and 32% between the ages of 16-24 possess only a high school diploma. Additionally, of the 32,529 youth 16-24, 11% are disabled, 10% of the girls in this age group are parents, 13% are non-native born, with possible linguistic challenges and the unemployment rate for this group is 19%.^{liii}

We are facing a crisis - youth lack the opportunities they need to develop the skills necessary to succeed in today's global economy. Services need to be strengthened for youth to connect to educational providers, occupational training providers and other local youth partners. Inversely, programs should find new ways to conduct creative youth demonstration programs and develop innovative youth workforce collaborations. There is a critical need to coordinate and expand services that help youth master basic academic skills (including English language skills or English for Speakers of Other Languages), develop occupational skills, and become employed in jobs that have career potential.

Current State of Programs & Services cont'd

On the following pages are relevant data regarding the state of youth dropouts and employment trends -

Distribution of the 16-24 Year Old Population in the Brockton WIB Region of Massachusetts by Educational Attainment Level, 2006-2007 Averages

Group/Educational Attainment	Number	% Distribution
Total 16-19 Year Olds	19,783	100.0
HS Students	10,946	55.3
HS Dropouts	925	4.7
College Students	6,659	33.7
No-Enrolled HS Graduates	1,253	6.3
Total 20-24 Year Olds	19,387	100.0
HS Students	28	0.1
HS Dropouts	1,584	8.2
Non-Enrolled HS Graduates	4,912	25.3
College Students	9,029	46.6
Some College or Higher (Non-Enrolled)	1,999	10.3
Associate's or Higher Degree (Non-Enrolled)	1,835	9.5

- **Availability of jobs for youth**

Labor Market Indicators for 16-21 Years Old Not Enrolled in Any Educational Institution in Massachusetts, 2005-2006-2007 Averages

Gender	Race	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment- Population Ratio	Unemployment Rate	Population
Male	White	84.3	69.6	14.7	40,081
	Black	69.5	42.3	27.2	6,216
	Asian	70.5	45.0	25.5	1,820
	Hispanic	79.5	59.9	19.6	11,989
	Other	69.2	60.3	8.9	2,031
	Total		81.0	64.0	17.0
Female	White	78.8	67.6	11.2	27,745
	Black	67.3	53.1	14.2	4,141
	Asian	52.9	44.9	8.0	969

	Hispanic	64.5	51.2	13.3	8,102
	Other	80.2	65.0	15.3	1,983
	Total	74.5	62.5	12.0	42,939
Total	White	82.1	68.8	13.3	67,826
	Black	68.7	46.7	22.0	10,357
	Asian	64.4	45.0	19.4	2,789
	Hispanic	73.5	56.4	17.0	20,091
	Other	74.6	62.6	12.0	4,014
	Total	78.4	63.4	15.0	105,076

Source: 2005, 2006, and 2007 American Community Surveys, public use files, U.S. Census Bureau. Tabulations by Center for Labor Market Studies.

- ❑ Roughly ½ of our 16-24 cohort is between the ages of 16 and 19, the age range with the highest unemployment.
- ❑ Overall, our teen unemployment rate is over twice that of the adult rate.
- ❑ HS Students are roughly 4 times less likely to be employed than adults.
 - ½ our HS Students, and 30% of our dropouts, have not worked in the last year
- ❑ Dropouts are over 4 times less likely to be employed than adults.
- ❑ The younger you are, or the lower your family income, the less likely you are to be employed

Percent Distribution of Employed 16-24 Year Olds by Major Industry of Their Employers in the Brockton WIB Region of Massachusetts by Age Group and School Enrollment Status, 2005-2006-2007 Averages

Industry	All 16-19	16-19 HS Students	All 20-24	Non-Enrolled 20-24
Total Employed	6,994	3,033	11,741	6,808
Agri, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining	1.2	-	-	-
Construction	0.7	1.7	4.4	7.6
Manufacturing	3.2	5.5	2.8	4.4
Wholesale Trade	2.0	-	1.4	2.0
Retail Trade	26.8	19.5	16.3	15.4
Transportation, Warehousing	3.3	4.6	11.0	9.7
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing	1.0	-	3.7	4.9
Prof., Scientific, Mgmt., Adm. and Waste Mgmt.	3.0	0.9	7.6	9.4
Education, Healthcare, and Social Service	14.3	12.9	25.2	21.1
Arts, Entertainment, Accom. and Food Services	39.5	50.2	21.2	17.2
Other Service, Excl. Public Adm.	4.2	4.7	4.8	6.7
Public Administration	0.8	-	1.6	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Out of school youth (ages 16-24)
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Selected Labor Market Outcomes for 16-24 Year Old High School Dropouts in the Brockton WIB Region of Massachusetts, 2005-2006-2007 Averages

Group	16-19	20-21	22-24	Total (16-24)
Population of HS Dropouts	647	565	927	2,139
Number of Employed Dropouts	164	286	431	881
% of Employed	25.3%	50.7%	46.5%	41.2%
Number of Economically Disadvantaged Dropouts	94	215	489	799
% Who Were Economically Disadvantaged	14.6%	38.1%	52.8%	37.3%

Group	16-19	20-21	22-24	Total (16-24)
Number of Low Income Dropouts	183	203	413	799
% Who Were Low Income	28.3%	35.9%	44.5%	37.3%

Percent of 16-24 Year Old Mothers in the Brockton WIB Region of Massachusetts Who Were Economically Disadvantaged or Low Income, 2005-2006-2007 Averages

Group	16-19	20-21	22-24	Total (16-24)
Population of Mothers	270	239	1255	1764
Number of Economically Disadvantaged Mothers	76	142	740	958
% Who Were Economically Disadvantaged	28.0%	59.6%	58.9%	54.3%
Number of Low Income Mothers	176	121	671	968
% Who Were Low Income	65.3%	50.6%	53.4%	54.9%

Current state of Programs cont'd

- **Older Out-of School Youth Services**

BAPIC The Brockton Area Private Industry Council is a non-profit agency that provides workforce development services in the Brockton Workforce Investment Area by assisting at-risk youth and adults in acquiring skills that will enable them to be productive members of the labor force and attain economic self-sufficiency, and strengthening overall personal development through extensive support services that address the needs of individuals, families, and the community as a whole.

MY TURN helps needy youth acquire the education, life skills, and occupational skills needed to obtain and retain career-ladder jobs. MY TURN programs help youth acquire skills that will enable them to be productive members of the labor force and attain economic self-sufficiency, and strengthening overall personal development. In addition to the above services MY TURN offers programs transitioning to the world of work, connecting to college and works with young people on the margins of the social mainstream.

Brockton Public Schools (BPS) - BPS provides a variety of programs that address many of the key data trends including, drop out prevention, MCAS remediation, alternative education, vocational training, and career and job readiness training.

Training Resources of America (TRA) - TRA programs assist low-income, youth with disabilities, and pregnant and parenting teens to gain job readiness and career skills to prepare them to enter the workforce. In addition to providing a variety of job readiness and life skills training services, TRA also provides ESOL and ABE courses.

Old Colony Y – Through its partnerships with DCF and DYS, the Y offers programs focused on court involved and pre-court involved youth to provide advocacy, life skills and job readiness training, and mentoring.

Job Corps - Job Corps provides access to academic remediation, vocational training, and job readiness activities.

Youth Build – Youth Build offers academic remediation, vocational training, and life and job readiness training.

Recommendation 1: Raise public awareness concerning the challenges of Low Educational Attainment in our community

With an average of 47% of residents in our community only possessing a high school diploma or GED, occupations are restricted to unskilled labor, translating into 29% of our population earning an average of \$500-\$799 a week.

Recommendation 2:

To increase the educational attainment in our community must provide youth with programs that offer:

- Assessment & Training
- Career Awareness & educational options
- Streamlined educational pathways, align work experience to college credit

Recommendation 3: Continue to focus on prevention & intervention strategies for dropouts.

While our current dropout rate *has declined* in recent years, there is still a large population of youth between the ages of 16-24 that do not possess a high school diploma or GED. This inhibits not only their earning power and their ability to sustain employment; it also siphons off community resources.

Suggested strategies and interventions include:

- Pathway Center
- Intensive Case Management Services
- Occupational skills
- Early identification

Recommendation 4: Guide Agencies in focusing on setting common goals regarding youth employment & training programs

Below are suggested goals

- Enhance the skills of participants; including individuals at risk of dropping out of school
- Provide participants with skills and knowledge relevant to the world of work demands through workshops on related topics such as pre-employment skills training.
- Provide income to youth based upon satisfactory participation
- Enhance the sense of civic responsibility of participants by developing special projects that contribute to the betterment of the community within which they live
- Encourage Work Based Learning activities with Academic Enrichment and/or Occupational Skills Training

Community Service Projects benefit the community as a whole. Youth employed in Community Service Projects are involved in the development and implementation of these projects. They develop academic, vocational and leadership skills by participating in community service projects. Projects can be community-wide or neighborhood-based. Community Service Projects will be considered employment for youth and youth will be paid for participating in these projects. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Peer mentoring coupled with neighborhood recreation activities
- Community beautification projects
- Art in public places/Murals
- Partnership with schools (secondary and/or post secondary) that offer well-defined career and technical education and education pathways programs who have partnerships with industry that expose youth to high-growth, high-demand occupations
- Green Jobs
- Project based programs- i.e. beautification, programs which document blight etc
- Partnerships with local Housing Authorities
- Jobs in private sector companies which include an employer match

Recommendation 5: Recognition of characteristics of successful youth development programs and promotion approaches.

Programs and approaches:

- are youth centered, focused on the youth versus the program.
 - create opportunities for meaningful youth participation.
 - are asset-based, focusing on positive youth outcomes verses deficit-focused,
 - emphasize and value caring relationships between youth and adults as a key mechanism for building success in youth and communities.
 - promote civic engagement and involve the multiple sectors of the community
-

*ii*Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, March 2009

Life Long Learning

“Education really is the new coin of the realm. It’s the new form of capital in this country, in this planet.”

-Former Virginia Gov. Gerald Baliles

“Learning is not a product of schooling but the lifelong attempt to acquire it.”

-Physicist & Nobel Laureate, Albert Einstein

Background & Current State of Programs & Services

Lifelong Learning is an ongoing voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. It not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but competitiveness and employability.

The global economy has made lifelong learning a necessity. A rapid, ongoing change in technology means that it is imperative for individuals to take charge of their own learning if they are to be competitive in world, state, and local economies. There are a variety of tracks for individuals perusing lifelong learning outside the traditional classroom.

These tracks include:

- Adult education, the acquisition of formal qualifications or work and leisure skills later in life
- Continuing education, which offers not-for-credit courses offered by higher education institutions. Knowledge work, which includes professional development and on-the-job training
- Personal learning environments or self directed learning using a range of sources and tools including online applications.

- **Funding for Lifelong Learning**

There are funds available through organizations such as The Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board, state agencies which usually funnel monies through school or public service providers, and some local funding sources such as colleges and other post secondary institutions. Most schools do offer loans for schooling and some scholarships. Governments, however, at all levels have limited resources to provide significant investment in retraining workers. Businesses also look to government to prime the retraining pump.

One idea, which has been advanced, is the creation of PCA’s or Personal Competitiveness Accounts. For each newborn child the US Government would make contributions on their behalf through age 16 years to “prime the learning pump”. Workers would also make voluntary contributions. Businesses who chose to make contributions to PCA would receive tax incentives. The combination of contributions by government,

individuals, and businesses when totaled would provide significant dollars for individuals to upgrade skills and retrain to meet the needs of an ever-changing economy. Ironically, many foreign countries (China, India, Singapore, etc.) are investing heavily in work training and skills programs. In the United States, however, the idea of PCA's is a long way off from becoming reality.

Recommendation 1: Market Programs to Residents

Marketing and coordination of programs are essential in order for residents to take advantage of services offered in the city. Create a position for planning, development and coordination of education and job training opportunities. Traditional media outlets are tools that the City can use to inform residents about available options. A user friendly website that conveys to residents all the opportunities available to them in the Brockton community should be developed. This website design should include civic groups, church groups, for profit and nonprofit organizations that offer opportunities for alternative learning. The city is encouraged to develop an incentive program for businesses that offer tuition reimbursement for their employees and the City should publish and recognize the best 50-100 businesses.

Recommendation 2: Partner to offer free seminars/classes

Classes that are offered at various times and locations throughout the city offer a wider menu of options and are most popular or in demand. The city should partner with community and civic organizations to offer free course selections. This “a la carte” approach to training would be in the form of one or two day workshops and would motivate a variety of learners. Ideas for classes are: technology skills, writing, wellness, finance, and trade specific seminars such as resume writing and interview skills would aid in attracting individuals into alternative learning tracks and emerging fields.

Recommendation 3: Citizenship classes

Reaching out to immigrant populations through interaction with senior centers, businesses, and church groups can be a key strategy in leading a campaign to inspire residents to learn English and to sign up for citizenship classes. Working closely with various ethnic populations would demonstrate a more inclusive approach to outreach.

Recommendation 4: Promote career paths for retraining

Effectively communicate to City's residents the careers and jobs that are in demand and help them access training opportunities. Area colleges and business schools can play a key role by offering non-traditional paths to learning. Non-citizens; the unemployed and the employed in need of skills enhancement require different learning opportunities. The city should work with all public service providers to offer expanded learning opportunities at centers established throughout Brockton without negatively impacting the city's budget. Examples are as follows:

Learning Modules---Short credit or non-credit blocks of learning where independent participation takes place, as needed, at home, at work, or at community learning centers.

On-line learning---Usage of computers, the Internet and computer mediated conversations permits study in the home, at work or in neighborhood resource centers.

Audio-visual instruction---Usage of audio or videocassettes or CD-ROMs containing specific instruction or knowledge primarily for independent or individualized learning.

Voucher system for learning--- Entitlement to a certain amount of free adult learning/training in exchange for their services. Volunteering in schools, public libraries, and students after school programs, children's summer programs etc. Further research is advised to investigate cities where this model is operating.

Recommendations 5: Promoting U.S. Citizenship classes

Brockton is a gateway city and has a large population of non-English speaking adults. These adults must be given access to programs which will help them to assimilate. It is vital that we offer citizenship classes for immigrants and communicate to them the importance of becoming legal residents. Offer continuing education classes at times and locations that are convenient and economical to working and non-working Brocktonians. The location of learning centers should be close to public transportation routes and coincide with bus schedules. They should be offered at various times, weekdays, weeknights and weekends.

Adult Basic Education

“We must bring adults back into the education system and put them on track to earning certificates and degrees, and to qualifying for jobs at family- sustaining wages”.

-Jones and Kelly

Current State of Programs & Services

- *National data*

The National Commission on Adult Literacy in its June, 2008 report, Reach Higher, America, states that 88 million adults have at least one barrier- no high school diploma, no college degree , or ESL needs-to an improved economic situation. And, about 67% of American workers are beyond the reach of schools. This is troubling because our education systems were designed for a different time in our history and for different challenges. Thus, the country’s ability to address older workers skills needs will be put to the test. It is estimated that federal adult education, training and English language programs reach only 3 million adults a year or 3.5% of those who need it. One in every 100 U.S. adults 16 years old and older is in prison or jail in America which represents 2.3 million people in 2006. Of these, about 43% do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent and 56% are adjudged to have very low literacy skills. Compounding this challenge is the fact that 95% of incarcerated people return to their communities after serving their time.

A National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) study done in 2003 but released by the U.S. Department of Education in 2005 paints a bleak scenario for America. This study revealed that 30 million American adults scored “below basic” – meaning that they could perform no more than at the most rudimentary literary tasks. Another 63 million adults could perform only basic every day literary activities.

It is estimated that by 2030 one in four people in America will be of Asian or Hispanic origin. This growth will create increased demand for English language programs in our adult education and adult literacy system. Currently, one-third of foreign – born adults and forty-four percent of Hispanic Americans do not have high school diplomas. And almost 80% of immigrants who do not a diploma report not speaking English conversationally or at all.

- ***Specific data relevant to Brockton***

The Brockton Community Partnership for Adult Education (CPAE) is a multi-agency coalition of public and private service providers involving 32 agencies who have come together to support literacy (family and adult); English language programs; Citizenship; workplace training and a host of other adult education and training services. This partnership includes governmental, school, post-secondary, faith (-) based, the Chamber of commerce, medical, ethnic and private industry partners.

CPAE has written a five-year strategic plan, which was reviewed by stakeholders and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Six hundred and ninety-two students are enrolled in either federally or locally funded classes: G.E.D, English Language Learners, Adult Basic Education at the Brockton Public schools and the Adult Learning Center (ALC). It is reported that the ALC has over 1700 people on the waiting list. Students who attend reportedly come from 39 different countries and speak 14 different languages. The BPS Adult Learning Center also offers an Adult Literacy Program, Pre-K programs and a Citizenship Program. E.S.O.L. (English Speakers of Other Languages) classes are offered in Brockton by approximately 10 agencies, some classes are free and others charge a fee. Additionally, six agencies in nearby communities also offer ESL/ESOL services. The ABE budget at the Adult Learning Center is \$1,000,000 of which 80% is paid by the state and 20% by the city. Recent State budget cutbacks, however, will affect these programs.

- ***Comparative Study of best practices beyond Brockton***

States with high success rates in the area of ABE

Washington State has initiated I-Best (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training), which prepares adult learners for high wage jobs by integrating ABE education and occupational training.

The state of Indiana initiated a one-stop contact program to help employers provide training to address skill deficits of their workers called Ready Indiana. This state run program educates employers on how to take advantage of national, state, and community resources.

California, has adapted the E.O.P.S Program (Extended Opportunity Program and Services) that aims to encourage the enrollment, retention and transfer of students hindered by language, social, economic and educational disadvantages and to facilitate the successful completion of their own goals. E.O.P.S offers wraparound services, i.e., supportive counseling, academic counseling, financial and other support services

Recommendation 1: Identify Challenges

Significant challenges are facing our city. Brockton is a gateway city where approximately 1/3 of its estimated 94,000 residents speak a language other than English at home. The city's schools reflect dramatic changes in its demographics over the past quarter century. These changes continue unimpeded.

In fact, the pace of change has accelerated in recent years, i.e., the current third grade class reflects that 28% of the students are Limited English Proficient, up from just 12% three years ago. Seventy percent of the school district's children live at or below the poverty level. These statistics infer that the adults in these households are also impacted.

Recommendation 2: Link service providers through established network

The City can coordinate the creation of an established web of providers that link data gathering procedures between adult basic education and post secondary education programs. During the process of convening providers, the current administration can foster an atmosphere where participants target the alignment of ABE and postsecondary policies to build career pathways. It is strongly advised that these partners agree to review both entry and exit standards so that a more cohesive process takes place. Success could be more readily achieved if work readiness skills and post secondary qualifiers are the foundation of basic skills curriculums. Finally, once these providers are brought together, the promotion of dual enrollment strategies between basic skills and post secondary education and training programs should be high on the agenda.

Recommendation 3: Development of a universal tracking system

Longitudinally track participants through adult basic education, post secondary education and training and into employment that would lead to a more realistic view of the scope of services. Additionally, tracking outcomes aides in setting and monitoring benchmarks to success – those outcomes could be used to apply for funding to expand services.

Recommendation 4: Recognize barriers to access for adult learners

Each population has needs that are beyond the realm of the classroom. Once the City of Brockton and its partners recognize and set out to address participants' obstacles including: child care, transportation, financial limitations, etc. then collaboration to improve intensive wrap around services can be focused and intensified. Sustainable wages are a primary concern. Collaborative efforts should ensure that employment is more accessible and should be the main goal of adult basic education. Regular monitoring of effectiveness is vital – surveying and engaging this population to explore other needs is also advised.

Recommendation 4 continued

Explore offering ABE/ESOL programs during nontraditional hours in addition to traditional hours. Brainstorm creative strategies to increase knowledge of and awareness of CPAE programs and opportunities. Work with classroom instructors to formulate lessons that are content-rich and embed relevant skills within the curriculum – for instance, language needed in the workplace, application and interview skills.

Concluding Summary

Data on Status through 2020

The center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University cites Brockton as showing a 1.4% population increase between 2000-2006. Research shows that Brockton's population would have actually declined during this period if it were not for immigrants coming into the city. Foreign-born residents during the period between 2000-2006 increased by 22%. Additionally, all age groups, except for those under age 16 years increased significantly: ages 16-21 years increased by 10%; over age 45 increased by 9%; age 55+ increased by 13%. There was a decline in white, Hispanic and other non-Hispanics, native born and younger residents between 2000-2006 and an increase in male, female, black, foreign born and older residents in the city.

The implications of these demographic shifts presage an older, undereducated, limited English proficient and larger minority citizenry in the years ahead. The need for a robust pre-k through grade 14 that addresses and coordinates educational and manpower-training system is very real. The immigrant work force in Brockton increased by 3% from 2000-2006. Of these, 22% were high school dropouts compared to 8% of native workers and 34% were high school graduates. Without a significant investment in education, skills training and literacy many immigrants will not meet requirements needed by employers.

The establishment of new post-secondary and training programs in emerging industries not already situated in the City of Brockton requires close coordination with economic development planning and strategies developed by the City of Brockton is consultation with employers and workforce development community.

As training recommendations designed to attract and retain emerging industries must necessarily follow the completion of an economic planning effort occurring with other Task Forces assisting Mayor Balzotti, we do not address specific emerging industries not already located in or near Brockton nor training associated with those industries. At a later point in the planning process, however, best workforce training practices in emerging industries is easily identifiable.

Acknowledgements

Before presenting our findings and recommendations to the Mayor we want to recognize and acknowledge the good work already being done in the City of Brockton by the numerous service providers. Brockton is already on the cutting edge with effective providers committed to making strides in the area of local education reform. The challenges facing our city are not going away, and as a result, Brockton must unite with a universal mission to improve and move forward.

We encourage Mayor Balzotti to embrace the spirit of our recommendations and to forge a new era of cooperation, collaboration and leadership that is essential for Brockton to sustain current initiatives and inaugurate new innovations, which will benefit Brockton citizens.

Below is a list of the agencies that we want to recognize for the information and cooperation during the process of compiling the elements to this report.

BAWIB – Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board

Bridgewater State College

Brockton Old Colony YMCA

Brockton Public Library – Main Branch

Brockton Public Schools

Community Partners for Adult Education (CPAE)

Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

MA Board of Higher Education

Massasoit Community College

Metro South Chamber of Commerce

MY TURN, Inc.
