

Summary of Recommendations

BUILDING THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW:

A Shared Responsibility

The Premier's Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel

June 2016

1. Foundational Theme: Partnerships and Local Leadership

1.1 Create a Planning and Partnership Table (PPT) jointly chaired by representatives from employers, educators, government responsible for driving change and developing actionable solutions with respect to skills, talent development and experiential learning, with a focus on priority growth sectors.

1.2 Establish a Workforce Planning and Development Office, in the provincial government, to drive the delivery of the Panel's recommendations, and to support the government's role on the PPT.

1.3 Ensure sector-specific partnerships between post-secondary institutions and employers, using Ontario's post-secondary education Differentiation Policy and funding formula as incentives.

2. Foundational Theme: Labour Market Information

2.1 Work with the federal government, provinces and territories to develop an integrated national labour market information system. The system should modernize and harmonize data collection and consider better ways to collect data from employers.

2.2 The Workforce Planning and Development Office should lead a provincial Labour Market Information Strategy and develop an Ontario-specific digital labour market information website.

3. Experiential Learning and Mentorship

3.1 Expand Ontario's Specialist High Skills Majors Program to 25% of all students in grades 11 and 12 in the next three years to expose more high school students to opportunities in the workforce.

3.2 Expand experiential learning by ensuring that every student has at least one experiential learning opportunity by the end of high school and one opportunity by the end of post-secondary education. A process to streamline matching students to employers should also be developed.

3.3 Through consultation, develop a modernized apprenticeship system reflective of the current business climate and focused on integration of more young people into skilled trades.

3.4 Require businesses that receive funding through Ontario's Jobs and Prosperity Fund to provide experiential learning opportunities, with the number of opportunities based on the size of the organization.

3.5 Encourage post-secondary institutions to allow and recognize longer (8-12 months) co-op placements, to better respond to business needs.

3.6 Ensure adult learners have access to quality experiential learning opportunities that are adaptable and appropriate to their needs.

4. Promotion of Multiple Career Pathways

4.1 Review the Guidance and Career Education curriculum to ensure that it exposes students to a variety of learning pathways and opportunities.

4.2 Provide students from K-12 with more exposure to the science, engineering and technology fields, as a foundation for the diverse careers of this technological age.

4.3 Provide professional development opportunities to teachers with a counselling role, to expand their knowledge of current and future labour market trends, skills requirements and emerging careers.

4.4 Encourage school boards and partners with demonstrated capacity to design and implement experiential learning projects to collaboratively develop new ways of introducing students in the classroom to different career pathways.

4.5 Encourage school boards, employers and others to collaboratively develop approaches to career counselling that expose students to role models and positive, real-life examples.

4.6 Employers, community leaders, policy makers and other partners should find ways to take advantage of the highly skilled labour pool exiting from the Canadian military.

5. Strategic Investment in Human Capital

5.1 Launch a program to “franchise” successful in-house training programs developed by large employers to small and medium-sized enterprises.

5.2 Create a new training program for workers in their workplace which allows these workers to acquire the skills and literacies that are required for the changing nature of their work.

5.3 Establish a “first-look” hiring process that requires employers receiving government contracts to consider qualified workers from local employment and training programs first.

6. Skills and competencies

6.1 Develop an Ontario-specific skills and competencies framework, using the experience of other jurisdictions as a guide.

6.2 Identify a skills need in growth sectors as identified by the PPT, and develop a short-term training program for groups underrepresented in the workplace to allow them access to employment opportunities.

6.3 Identify promising ways of teaching students competencies demanded by the evolving economy such as problem solving, teamwork and entrepreneurial spirit, across curricular and extra-curricular learning opportunities, including through the arts, sports, math and science.

6.4 Universities, colleges and private career colleges should look at ways to shift focus to needed skills and competencies rather than just credentials.

7. Role of the Federal Government


7.1 Work with the federal government to secure improved labour market funding to Ontario, to better meet the employment and training needs of Ontarians.


7.2 The Province should work with the federal government to conduct a coordinated, evidence-based review of training programs and encourage the development of a National Skills Strategy.

7.3 The Province should work with the federal government to take a human capital/talent approach to new federal funding programs, for example, new investments in Indigenous communities and in the low carbon economy.

8. Measuring Success

8.1 Develop a performance evaluation framework and metrics to measure the effect of the Panel's recommendations, as implemented by the government and its partners, on the growth and development of a highly skilled workforce in Ontario. Metrics should be reviewed annually, revised as appropriate, and an annual report should be released.



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