



Addressing some of the largest challenges facing Milwaukee youth and employers by bringing together workforce, education, community, and business leaders to provide career services and support, integrated into a high school environment.

Executive Summary

The “world of work” is an important pathway into adulthood and long-term economic prosperity, yet youth employment rates keep dropping and employers assert there is a lack of job readiness skills. Young people need guidance on how to develop essential job skills and navigate their educational experience to connect them to work and postsecondary education.

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) is the largest school district in Wisconsin and one of the largest in the nation by enrollment. As of the 2013–14 school year, MPS served 78,502 students in 165 schools and had 9,282 full-time equivalent staff positions. MPS serves a highly diverse population of students that are at risk of dropping out and/or being unemployed due to high poverty and other socioeconomic factors that create barriers to employment.¹

The Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (MAWIB) is the largest workforce development board in Wisconsin and provides employment and training services for youth and adults. MAWIB’s sector strategy uses Industry Advisory Boards in high demand sectors – construction, manufacturing, finance, healthcare and hospitality - to more effectively link employers to skilled workers. MAWIB has a unique opportunity under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to realign, enhance, and improve youth services so that they are more closely coordinated, better utilized, and more effective.

The City of Milwaukee is partnering with MPS and MAWIB to engage in opportunities to meet the demands of students and employers. As the largest city in Wisconsin, Milwaukee plays a pivotal role in the region’s economic success. The City of Milwaukee as a governmental entity invests in policies and programs that create a more livable world for residents, especially young people.²

Career Plus was created to address some of the large challenges facing Milwaukee youth and employers by bringing together workforce, education, community, and business leaders to provide career services and support, integrated into a high school environment. Career Coordinators will be located on site at MPS high schools to deliver career services, as well as supportive services and enrichment activities. All students will receive some level of career services and eligible students will be enrolled for comprehensive services including the development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

Career Plus will facilitate paid and unpaid work experience for students, including integration of the MPS Communities in Need (COIN) program. MAWIB will use a career pathways approach to link work experience,

¹ United States. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. 2009.

² City of Milwaukee. “Citywide Policy Plan”. March 2010.

high school course work, career exploration, and youth apprenticeship to postsecondary education and employment. Career Plus will launch in early 2016, connect MPS students to summer employment opportunities in late spring 2016, and implement full program activities by fall 2016. MAWIB will work closely with MPS to identify schools to host Career Plus, scaling up through a phased approach.

Background

A first job is more than pocket money for a young person. It can connect them to the ability to envision a career pathway, a desire to develop skills, a boost in self-confidence, an alternative to poor choices, and even a lifelong mentor. The “world of work” is an important pathway into adulthood and long-term economic prosperity, yet youth employment rates keep dropping. Youth employment rates today are 17 percentage points below what they were in 1989³ when nearly 80 percent of youth were working. The annual average employment rate for teens in 2010 was the lowest ever recorded since the end of World War II⁴. The nation’s teen summer employment rate plummeted from 45% in 2000 to 26% in 2010, a 40% drop.⁵

Several trends have radically changed the way young people will participate in the workforce. Young people that lack direction and/or do not have the knowledge and skills necessary to enter an increasingly complex workplace may not be competitive. The disparity between skilled and unskilled workers began developing over the past decade and is projected to intensify.⁶ Most importantly, young people that will enter the workforce in the next two decades must be prepared with “essential skills” such as communication, teamwork, and decision-making, which are crucial in becoming an effective worker at every step on a career pathway.⁷

At the same time, Southeastern Wisconsin employers are facing their own challenges. A serious labor shortage is projected in the next decade due an aging population and mass retirements⁸. Without an adequate workforce to produce goods and services, businesses will be constrained in their ability to grow. Currently, the seven county Southeastern Wisconsin region as a whole is a mostly Caucasian (77%), while the inner city of Milwaukee is mostly non-Caucasian (75%). The Caucasian population is much older than the non-Caucasian population⁹. The City of Milwaukee’s population will continue to diversify and become younger, with African Americans and other people of color making up a growing share of the population that will be entering their prime working years over the next two decades¹⁰.

MAWIB has complementary goals of improving job outcomes for young people and building a strong regional talent pipeline for employers. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) invests federal funding in MAWIB to serve youth, providing a fresh framework to realign, enhance, and improve services so that they are closely coordinated, better utilized, and more effective. WIOA fuses youth development with employer-driven workforce development approaches to help young people

³ United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics. “Employment and Unemployment among Youth” News Release. 20 Aug. 2013.

⁴ McLaughlin, Joseph and Andrew Sum. “The Steep Decline in Teen Summer Employment in the U.S., 2000-2010 and the Bleak Outlook for the 2011 Summer Teen Job Market.” Center for Labor Market Studies. Northeastern University. April 2011.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Callahan, Jim and Pines, Marion. “Recipe for Success: Youth Council Guide to Creating a Youth Development System”. U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Agency. 10 Jan. 2000.

⁷ America’s Promise Alliance. “Every Promise, Every Child: Turning Failure into Action”. 2007.

⁸ Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Office of Economic Advisors. 2010.

⁹ Greater Milwaukee Foundation. “Vital Signs: Benchmarking Metro Milwaukee 2015”. July 2015.

¹⁰ City of Milwaukee. “Growing Prosperity: An Action Agenda for Economic Development”. September 2014.

develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies required for today's complex workplace. WIOA presents a unique opportunity to innovate and increase capacity by rethinking the way youth services are blended and deployed.

MAWIB's Sector Strategy

Milwaukee youth are a significant portion of the Southeastern Wisconsin region's future workforce, so they must be equipped with the skills needed by employers. MAWIB's sector-based strategy provides insight into the supply and demand sides of the labor market including the characteristics of youth and their typical routes into employment, as well as the demand for entry-level workers and the economics that inform employer decisions about hiring.

MAWIB provides direct employer engagement through Industry Advisory Boards that drive the alignment of MAWIB's strategies and investments to respond to the current workforce and labor market demands. The boards are led by high level private sector professionals who are deeply committed to providing



expertise in regional growth industries including construction, hospitality, healthcare, financial services, and manufacturing. To accelerate employment and training opportunities for students, each Career Plus school will be aligned with an Industry Advisory Board. Representing labor supply is the MAWIB Coordinating Council, a formal network of community-based organizations that provide specialized services to address barriers to employment for residents. MAWIB is at the center of this model, serving as a workforce intermediary that brings together all of the workforce and economic development partners for planning and coordination purposes.

Career Plus Program Description

Goals and Objectives

Career Plus is designed to assist low income young adults achieve their educational and employment goals. The goal of Career Plus is to improve and connect the services available to young people through enhanced ability to meet skill requirements for local employers, reduction in welfare dependency, increased self-sufficiency, quality services, and enhanced productivity and competitiveness of the Milwaukee County workforce.

Career Coordinators

Career Coordinators will be responsible for coordination between MAWIB, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), various postsecondary educational institutions, MAWIB Industry Advisory Boards (employers), and other employment-related community-based organizations. Career Coordinators will be located on site at select MPS high schools. Career Coordinators will collaborate with guidance counselors, social workers, MPS Career and Technical Education (CTE) staff, parent groups, and employers to ensure students are actively participating, highly-engaged, and successfully completing required activities. Career Coordinators will have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Education, Social Work, Counseling or related field, plus one year of successful experience working with youth. MAWIB will perform

Career Plus Service Menu

Available to All Students

- ❖ Access to local labor market information and job postings
- ❖ Job search assistance
- ❖ Job application, resume development, and interview assistance
- ❖ Assistance with work permits
- ❖ Career exploration
- ❖ Referrals to MPS Career and Technical - Education (CTE) services including work experience and youth apprenticeship
- ❖ Referrals to Inspire Wisconsin career exploration, mentoring, and job placement services

Available to Enrolled Students

- ❖ Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout and recovery strategies.
- ❖ Alternative secondary school instruction or dropout recovery services.
- ❖ Paid and unpaid work experiences.
- ❖ Occupational skills training.
- ❖ Leadership development opportunities.
- ❖ Supportive services.
- ❖ Adult mentoring.
- ❖ Follow-up services for at least twelve (12) months.
- ❖ Comprehensive guidance and counseling activities
- ❖ Occupational skills training.
- ❖ Financial literacy education.
- ❖ Entrepreneurial skills training.
- ❖ Services that provide labor market and employment information about the targeted industry sectors or occupations available within the local area.
- ❖ Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

background checks on all staff and volunteers working in the program.

Services for All Students The entire student population at each high school will have access to general Career Plus services including job postings, job search/resume assistance, and referrals to youth employment programs within MPS and the entire community. Career Coordinators will have open office hours and be responsible for updating job boards, filling general job orders, and assisting youth obtain work permits. Career Coordinators will emphasize careers in quality, high wage occupations connected to Industry Advisory Boards, as well as Information Technology (IT) and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

Career Coordinators will provide current labor market information (LMI) to students in an accessible format, allowing them to connect their education and training activities to high demand jobs and career pathways leading to family-supporting jobs. LMI will be compiled by an MAWIB Business Services Analyst using traditional, real-time, and validated by Industry Advisory Boards.

Case Study: A student arrives at the Career Plus office with a general interest in the healthcare industry, but no work experience or specific occupations in mind. After reviewing the current local job openings in healthcare on the job posting board, the Career Coordinator distributes and explains labor market information which details wage rates for various occupations, projected future growth in the industry, the minimum education and training requirements to enter specific occupations, and career pathways leading to middle- and high-skill jobs. The Career Coordinator helps the student enroll in the Health Science Youth Apprenticeship program where they receive work experience and mentoring from a Healthcare Industry Advisory Board employer and earn a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certificate. Engaged and excited about their future, after graduation the student attends postsecondary school to become a Registered Nurse.

Career Coordinators will leverage and coordinate resources with existing programs and stakeholders including Mayor Barrett's Earn & Learn Summer Youth Employment, M³ strategic partnership and initiatives, Wisconsin Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) providers, Inspire Southeast Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Bureau of Apprenticeship Services.

Comprehensive Services for Eligible Students

Eligible students will work with a Career Coordinator to create a personalized plan for a successful future. Career Coordinators will work closely with MPS counselors and social workers to recruit, identify, and provide comprehensive services for young people. Eligible young people will be low-income (70% of the lower Living Standard Income Level) and possess one or more of the following characteristics: Basic skills deficient; an English language learner; an offender; homeless, a runaway, or a foster child; pregnant or parenting; a disability; and/or need additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.

Assessment

Enrolled youth will receive an objective assessment of their academic levels, skill levels, and service needs, including a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. Assessment tools include but are not limited to the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), Prove It!, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Skills Explorer, and Career Cruising.

Individual Service Strategy (ISS)

Each Career Coordinator will be responsible for a case load of youth. The youth will meet with the Career Coordinator on a weekly basis to develop and implement an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) in conjunction with the MPS Guidance Counselor. The ISS will describe career objectives, list degree and/or certificate objectives, detail a career pathway, and document paid youth work experience activities. The ISS will be jointly reviewed and updated by the Career Coordinator and participant at least once a semester. The ISS will bridge the academic and postsecondary/employment needs of the youth by combining traditional MPS comprehensive counseling with enhanced career counseling activities and post-secondary preparation activities.

Essential Skills Training

Career Plus will include a 40 hour work readiness curriculum delivered in a group setting and followed by individual, self-paced programming to address the components of personal effectiveness, academic competencies and workplace competencies.

Work Experience

Work experience provides students meaningful opportunities to learn and apply skills with local employers in a real world setting. This may include summer employment and other



opportunities available throughout the year such as youth and pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training.

Paid and unpaid work experience opportunities will be facilitated for Career Plus participants through coordination between Career Coordinators and MAWIB Business Services staff. Business Services staff will obtain information from Industry Advisory Boards on current occupational skills training needs and youth employment opportunities, then communicate the information to Career Coordinators. MAWIB will leverage and coordinate with existing programs including MPS CTE National Academy Foundation (NAF) Academies, Mayor Barrett's Earn & Learn Summer Youth Employment, and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship.

In addition, MAWIB proposes to provide job placement services for the MPS COIN program, which was developed by Milwaukee Public Schools/Neighborhood Schools Initiative (MPS/NSI) to help individuals from the community to gain access to employment opportunities on the various MPS/NSI building projects. MAWIB would work with MPS to design a "pay for performance" model for these services.

Career Pathways

Career Plus uses a career pathway approach that supports a wide range of options for students relative to postsecondary education and/or immediate job placement upon graduation. Through the development of an ISS, students will have gained the work experience, knowledge, and tools to make informed choices about their future. Students will be equipped to move up and along career pathways, throughout their lifetime, by way of stackable credentials, industry-recognized training, apprenticeships, and other employment and training activities.



Post-Secondary Education Placement

Each participant will have a documented career pathway plan through their ISS that includes education and employment goals, as well as specific, actionable steps leading to those goals. MAWIB Career Coordinators will coordinate with regional technical colleges and universities to provide college tours and assist students in enrolling in post-secondary education programs. Career Counselors will place special emphasis on connecting to employer-sponsored scholarships and the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) Promise, which provides free college education for area high school graduates who meet program eligibility requirements.

Job Placement

Through MAWIB's sector-based strategy, Career Plus will be directly connected to Industry Advisory Boards, which will provide immediate employment opportunities after graduation for some participants, especially those that received work experience and industry-recognized training connected to a career pathway and/or participated in youth or pre-apprenticeship. MAWIB will leverage its longstanding partnership with the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP)/Building Industry Group Skilled Trades Employment Program (BIG STEP) to assist students in becoming certified for the Residential Preference Program (RPP), which was developed by the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works to help individuals from the community to gain access to employment opportunities on the various city construction projects.

Performance Outcomes

Career Plus includes a comprehensive performance accountability system in order to optimize the return on investment. Career Plus will be measured by youth placement in employment and education, youth retention in employment and education, median earnings, credential attainment, and skills gains. Follow-up services for enrolled youth will occur for at least 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate.

Youth Committee

While WIOA eliminates the requirement for local workforce development boards to establish a Youth Council, MAWIB has chosen to maintain a Youth Committee, chaired by MPS Superintendent Dr. Darienne Driver, to provide assistance with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to in school youth. MAWIB's Youth Committee will play a major role in ensuring quality programming by bringing parents, participants, and other stakeholders together to solve problems. The Youth Committee will also provide a forum for discussing leverage of community resources, development of grant proposals, and common goals and policy issues.

Preliminary Timeline

Date	Activity
February 2016	Develop agreements with MPS.
March 2016	Post Career Coordinator Job Descriptions.
February - April 2016	Finalize high school locations and establish office space, equipment, etc.
April – May 2016	Interview and hire Career Coordinators
April - May 2016	Career Coordinators begin work on site with focus on recruitment for summer youth employment program.
June – August 2016	Summer youth employment programming
September 2016	Career Coordinators begin general programming and recruitment for comprehensive services programming.
2017 and Beyond	Fund development and implementation of Career Plus to scale.

About MAWIB

MAWIB's mission is to build a strong workforce development system by planning, coordinating, collaborating, and monitoring workforce initiatives with businesses, partners, and community stakeholders at the local, regional, and state level to ensure a skilled and productive workforce for the 21st century. Established in 1985, MAWIB is the largest workforce investment board in Wisconsin and serves youth, adults, and dislocated workers. MAWIB administers an annual budget of over \$20 million. President/CEO Earl Buford's career includes 18 years of experience in workforce development, diversity initiatives, and executive leadership. In his previous position as President/CEO of W RTP/BIG-STEP, Mr. Buford developed strong partnerships with national and state-wide businesses, labor unions, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.