



Meeting Summary

Education/Workforce Development

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Using Innovation and Technology to Connect Education and Workforce

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On innovation — *The best kind of change starts with a really simple question: "If we weren't doing it this way, how would we do it?" We need to pursue questions with a sense of curiosity.*

— Jeb Bush, former Governor, Florida

Education, economic and workforce indicators tell us if we are “healthy” and have the continued potential to be productive, according to Teresa Chasteen, President and CEO of WIN.¹ They also signal whether or not we will be leading or following in the future, she notes. To remain a world leader, Chasteen asserts that we need to balance the “big” macro indicators with small units of measure such as credentialing knowledge and skills of both “our young and not-so-young.”

Examples of credentials include career readiness certificates such as ACT’s National Career Readiness Certificate, Florida’s Reading to Work credential and Syracuse’s regional certificate; industry-recognized certifications; and two-year, four-year and professional degrees.

According to Jeb Bush, Florida’s governor from 1999 to 2007 and currently chairman of the Foundation for Excellence in Education, in Florida, it’s been important to assess where students are, to match their deficiencies to support and to ensure students can get skills certified. Through various partnerships, the state has credentialed 55,000 students over the past 12 months. Overall, 84% of program participants have earned a credential. Approximately 400 employers are using these credentials to identify job candidates.

His five recommendations for other state leaders:

1. Raise standards but have fewer of them. If you raise expectations, students will rise to them.
2. Focus the system on the professionalization of teachers.
3. Harness and embrace technology to improve access and to allow lessons to be taught in the style of each student (Amazon.com or iTunes for education). We have the technology, and there are particular opportunities — such as new Federal support — for discussion across states.
4. Expand choices for students (options in schools and schooling).
5. Create a culture of lifelong learning. Too many adults quit school within 30 credits of earning a bachelor’s degree. We need to allow more opportunities for them to continue and finish what they started.

¹ WIN provides e-learning courseware and works to leverage technology in a way that builds, connects and advances strategic policies for workforce development, education and training. The company’s policy dashboard is called Strategic Compass. <http://www.w-win.com>.

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