

Philosophy & Values Statement

PHILOSOPHY: The High Country Workforce Development Board exists on behalf of the region's taxpayers and citizens for the purpose of governing the federal funds under its jurisdiction by providing leadership in the development of the region's workforce to meet employer needs.

The Board receives its authority from the US Congress, the Governor of NC, and the High Country Workforce Development Consortium, which is comprised of the Chairs of County Commissions (or their designees) from each of the region's seven counties.

The Board is accountable to the citizen taxpayers on whose behalf it exists. The Board is accountable for the achievement of the goals of its authorizing legislation, and for other goals it sets on behalf of its stakeholders, while avoiding any actions that are illegal, immoral, or unethical.

The Board exists for the purpose of policy governance on the issues under its jurisdiction and uses the question, "What good for which people at what cost?" to give focus to the ends it seeks to achieve.

The Board delegates to its staff and administrative entity all responsibilities related to the day-to-day administration of programs and services operating under its auspices. The Board holds the staff accountable for ensuring conformance to all laws, regulations, rules, and policies by operating entities. In pursuit of the Board's end goals, it authorizes staff to use any means except those which are illegal, immoral, or unethical, or which contradict the Board's statement of values to carry out its work.

The Board authorizes the Chair to make policy decisions on behalf of the Board when it is infeasible for the Board to act as a whole, and accepts all such decisions except when they are clearly contrary to the Board's philosophical underpinnings.

The Board recognizes that each committee serves as policy maker and systems builder for its specific areas and delegates to its committees full authority and flexibility to accomplish the goals and assignments for the specialized areas under their authority. The Board accepts the recommendations, decisions, and actions of its committees unless they are clearly contrary to the Board's philosophical underpinnings. To accomplish committee goals, the Board designates staff and service contractors to support each committee.

The Board holds certain values which underlie its philosophy and the actions of its members and staff. The following statements represent the Board's values:

- All citizens have the right to self-sufficiency through responsible employment.
- Citizens have the right to relevant education and training to properly prepare them for today's and tomorrow's globally competitive workforce.
- Employers have the right to expect their workers to share basic work ethics and to possess basic academic skills to enable them to learn their specific job responsibilities and to function appropriately and responsibly in the workplace.
- Taxpayers have the right to expect that workforce development services provided on their behalf are administered and operated in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations to ensure responsible expenditure of public funds and to ensure equitable service to eligible individuals.
- Elected officials have the right to expect the highest level of service and responsibility from those they appoint to carry out designated functions.
- Individuals and organizations selected to carry out the duties of publicly funded workforce development and related programs and services have the responsibility to do so in a manner that achieves their goals while not engaging in unacceptable practices, including those which are illegal, immoral, or unethical.

Philosophy & Values Statement (cont.)

- In fulfilling its mission, the High Country Workforce Development Board will, with integrity, be respectful and aspire to excellence.

STAFF LIMITATIONS

The staff shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance which is unlawful, imprudent, immoral, or unethical, or which contradicts the Board's statement of values. With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board, the staff may not permit the Board to be uninformed.

Accordingly, staff shall not:

- Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the Board in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion;
- Let the Board be unaware of relevant issues, anticipated adverse media coverage, significant external and internal changes;
- Fail to report in a timely manner any actual or anticipated non-compliance with any policy of the Board;
- Fail to advise the Board, if in the staff's opinion, the Board is not in compliance with the law or its own policies.

With respect to dealing with contractors, the staff may not:

- Fail to establish with contractors a clear explanation of:
 - › Contractor requirements; and
 - › Projected outcomes from services offered;
- Fail to provide a grievance process to contractors who believe that they have not been accorded a reasonable interpretation of their rights.

With respect to funds, the staff may not:

- Expend more funds than will be received in the fiscal year;
- Fail to aggressively seek receivables after a reasonable grace period.

The Board frees the staff to use any other creative approaches within these limits without further Board approval. Thus the staff is empowered to use their full creative powers, enabling the Board to concentrate its energies on goals.

BOARD-STAFF RELATIONSHIP

The Board speaks with one voice to its staff through written policy.

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board will:

1. Cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The Board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The Board will be an initiator of policy and will use the expertise of individual members to enhance the ability of the Board as a body. The Board will not substitute individual judgments for the Board's values.
2. Direct and inspire the initiatives it oversees through the careful establishment of broad-written policies reflecting the Board's values and perspectives. The Board's major focus will be on intended long-term impacts, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.
3. Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policy-making principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuity of governance capability. Continual Board development will include orientation of new members in the Board's governance process and periodic Board discussion of process improvement. The Board will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the Board to hinder, or be an excuse for, not fulfilling its commitments.
4. Monitor and discuss its process and performance at intervals throughout the year. Self-monitoring will include comparison of Board activity and discipline to policies in Governance Process and Board-Staff Linkage categories.