

A Good Step Forward and Yes, Anticipation

TAACCCT Round IV - Thanks to Secretary Tom Perez, Acting Assistant Secretary Eric Seleznow, and the crew in ETA for a clearer, expanded, and required role for local workforce investment boards in this round. Many local WIBs expressed a fair amount of frustration with the "partnerships" exhibited in the first three rounds of TAACCCT. Those support letters that outlined participation were met in some cases with the quizzical looks of grantees as they rolled out projects without the participation of local workforce boards. Given the lack of direct involvement of many local workforce boards in TAACCCT initiatives across the country, these clearer pronouncements in Round IV instructions are most welcome and a clear signal that DOL expects workforce boards to assert themselves in their involvement in these efforts moving forward.

I'm not going to recite the regs. I'll leave that to the countless PowerPoint presentations being prepared and used to explain the grant requirements. Suffice it to say that the Executive Summary makes it clear that WIBs are required in the process and section IV (a)(2) clearly spells out this expectation. Page 50 of the Solicitation also includes clear language that the partnership needs to be real and clearly explains that WIBs can be paid for services and expertise provided by TAACCCT funds.

If your WIB has already costed-out its screening protocols such as, skill assessments and reading/math or work readiness, then you should be in a good position to both present the in-kind amount of your work and what you need to be paid to provide. Numerous Federal regulations and legislative language prohibit duplication, so if your service quality is good, and you're a customer-responsive system, you should be a valued partner.

The burden falls largely on local WIBs to be ready to partner. Round IV of TAACCCT is crucial and WIBs should be prepared to be active, smart, and questioning partners. Outcomes are mentioned often in the Solicitation and you should insist that you see them in whatever draft you're given to support. Better yet, be proactive in your region and discuss what you need and want to see in the proposal. Seek out your own partners, be constructive, and offer what you know. Be in the game!