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## SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

### **STATE OF IOWA** **One-Stop Profile**

June 1996

Based on a Site Visit Conducted During May 1996

# STATE OF IOWA

## One-Stop Profile

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# **STATE OF IOWA**

## **One-Stop Profile**

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### **DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE CONTEXT**

The nation's farm crisis in the early and mid-1980s resulted in substantial dislocation among Iowa's farmers. Many of the affected individuals had been operating small family farms in rural areas and were unaccustomed to leaving their land to look for work. In order to conduct outreach to customers in need of support and assistance with reemployment, the employment and training community developed grassroots partnerships with ministries, health facilities, schools, and agricultural associations. In addition to widespread dislocation among farmers, nationwide economic shifts away from traditional manufacturing, the evolution of a more global labor market, and changes in the traditional workplace practices also prompted renewed interest in public workforce development services during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Because relatively large numbers of Iowa residents have been forced to seek assistance from state or federal programs during the last decade—as a result of economic shifts and natural disasters—there is a generally high level of support for public workforce development services.

The One-Stop initiative in Iowa has grown out of a broad effort, underway since the 1980s, to improve the quality and relevance of the workforce development services available to state residents. Another major objective of reform efforts has been to reduce costs by integrating administrative functions across multiple workforce development programs and coordinating the delivery of workforce development, economic development, and human services. The foundations for the development of the new workforce development system consist of an increasing consolidation of state programs and agencies and the creation of innovative partnerships among public agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector.

Following a blueprint laid out by the state legislature in welfare reform legislation in 1993, and confirmed in 1996 legislation that consolidates workforce development agencies at the state level, Iowa is pursuing a systemic transformation of workforce development services. Systemwide goals include creating a statewide network of local interagency workforce development centers, developing an integrated information system to facilitate interagency collaboration, and designing and delivering integrated services to center customers.

Although the state was in the early stages of implementation at the time of the site visit, significant progress had been made toward improving both the content of services available to customers and the means by which those services are delivered. Under the new system, all individuals—not just those eligible for particular categorical programs—will be eligible to receive services through the workforce development centers. The new centers will also be information-driven; that is, they will serve as local clearinghouses for information on all local employment, training, education, and supportive services in the areas they serve, and will provide access to quality labor market information relevant to other areas and other states. In an effort to promote local “ownership” of the workforce development centers, the state has required the individual centers to develop their own mission statements, consistent with the state vision, but tailored to local goals and conditions.

State-level respondents noted several factors that have spawned interest in reinventing workforce development services and continue to impact the evolution and development of the state design. These include (1) statewide demographic shifts, (2) shifts in employment and manufacturing trends, (3) overall reductions in state and federal revenues, and (4) efforts to implement welfare reform. Each of these are addressed briefly below.

- *Iowa’s demographic profile has become more complex in recent years, resulting in different employment and training needs among Iowa residents.* Although overall population growth has been minimal, of particular concern are the increasing proportions of both older and younger residents as percentages of the total population. Currently, 25% of the state’s population is under 18 years of age. More than 15% of the state’s residents are over age 65; and more than 7% are 75 or older. Only Florida has a higher percentage of seniors. State policy makers fear that many Iowans of working age are moving out of the state to begin post-college careers or seek better career opportunities. One staff referred to the phenomenon as Iowa’s “brain drain.”

Another changing feature of Iowa’s demographic landscape is the increasing ethnic diversity of its urban areas. Although the state-wide population of 3 million residents is still fairly homogenous, workforce development staff in urban areas are serving increasing numbers of native Spanish-language speakers, as well as recent adult immigrants from other countries. This has impacted the nature and intensity of services required in Iowa’s urban centers, and rendered overt the need for locally relevant employment and training services.

- *Shifts in the state’s traditional economy have increased the demand for employment and training services in the state.* First, the percentage of

residents employed in the agricultural sector has dropped by 30% during the last two decades. Second, although manufacturing remains fairly strong in Iowa, employment in that sector dropped dramatically between 1980 and 1985, and again in the early 1990s, despite slight growth in the state's overall population.<sup>1</sup> These structural changes have created a need to train the labor force for life-long employability, rather than just for specific jobs, and have revealed the need to promote a diversified economy.

- *Significant declines have occurred in the level of public resources available to support employment and training programs in recent years* This has provided an incentive for staff at all levels to seek opportunities to share resources and find new ways to approach their business, including consolidating staff with common functions, automating some business processes, and developing strategies for fee-for-service arrangements.
- *Welfare reform in the state of Iowa has been ongoing for several years through Promise JOBS, the state's welfare-to-work program* In part fueled by federal welfare reform efforts, there is currently strong support for state programs to assist families in moving from dependency to work. This will continue to impact the demand for employment and training services throughout the state. Of particular relevance, given this context, are services to assist customers in becoming job-ready and access to information about entry-level jobs.

Welfare reform efforts are also driving the formation of new partnerships among public and community-based organizations at the state and local levels. Because welfare customers typically face non-training-related employment barriers, such as limited child care or transportation issues, increased coordination with the organizations that provide these services will promote improved workforce development program performance and improved customer outcomes.

## **EVOLUTION AND DESIGN OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE**

### **Evolution and General Description of the State Design**

Efforts to consolidate government programs and render state government more efficient began in 1986, when state officials responded to a growing feeling that state and federal governments had created a maze of independent social programs whose bureaucracies had grown overly cumbersome. During that year, Iowa instituted major governmental reforms—state-level commissions and agencies were consolidated and the number of state departments was reduced by one-third. The government reform movement

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the decline in manufacturing employment from 1980 to 1985 was related to the decline in agriculture, since much of the manufacturing in Iowa was agriculture-related.

also began to impact employment and training programs directly with the implementation of a state welfare-to-work initiative involving the development of new partnerships between the Departments of Human Services, Employment Services, and Economic Development. As a result, the public employment and training communities and human resource agencies began working together to address common concerns.

In 1989, the governor established an advisory group—called Target Alliance—made up of representatives of labor, business, education and government to (1) assess the state of workforce development services in the state; (2) gather information about the employment and training needs of individual and employer customers in Iowa; and (3) develop recommendations for improved integration of public services. Among the trends that the Alliance identified were:

- an increased use of technology, resulting in changes in the way Iowa firms do business;
- increased evidence of non-traditional practices in the workplace, including the use of temporary or contract labor; and
- an increasing gap between the skills of the current workforce and the skills demanded by employers.

The Alliance submitted its findings to the state with an overall recommendation that state-level agencies be more attentive to horizontal connections between agencies, departments, and programs. A report entitled, “Iowa Workforce 2010” grew out of the efforts of the Target Alliance. It was widely publicized throughout the state and generated considerable grassroots interest in workforce development issues.

Based on the work of the Alliance, a committee representing six state departments<sup>2</sup> developed a list of recommendations. The five recommendations included (1) establishing a workforce development council to oversee all programs; (2) creating local interagency workforce development centers; (3) developing an integrated information system to facilitate interagency coordination; (4) working across agencies to influence federal regulations that inhibit collaboration; and (5) appointing a coordinator to oversee statewide workforce development reform efforts.

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<sup>2</sup> These included: the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Education, the Department of Elder Affairs, the Department of Employment Services, the Department of Human Rights and the Department of Human Services.

These recommendations were incorporated into the 1993 *Iowa Invests* legislation aimed at creating a comprehensive human resources investment policy throughout the state. The legislation mandated cross-agency partnerships in education and employment and training initiatives. The Council on Human Investment created by the Iowa Invests legislation in 1993 is responsible for providing policy oversight to the broad initiative to integrate human resources funds and programs and for establishing overall state objectives and benchmarks for the three goals of workforce development, economic development, and building strong families.

In 1994 the governor created a separate Workforce Development Council through executive order—with representation from business, labor, state agencies and secondary/post-secondary education institutions—to guide the transformation of workforce development services and oversee the creation of interagency workforce development centers. The availability of the federal One-Stop implementation grants provided an incentive for Workforce Development Council and state agencies to accelerate plans to implement the transformed workforce delivery systems at the state and local levels. As described in more detail under Organization and Governance, below, the first year One-Stop implementation efforts were accompanied by another major reorganization of state agencies to bring a number of relevant programs under the umbrella of a new state department, called the Iowa Department of Workforce Development.

The mission of the Iowa Workforce Development Council is to further a high performance Iowa workforce and high performance workplaces as well as a high standard of living for all Iowans. The One-Stop initiative is perceived as the “system-building” effort to prepare for the delivery of improved services to state residents. The state of Iowa perceives its One-Stop initiative as closely linked to broader reforms of state government, as well as to educational reform and welfare reform. The One-Stop initiative is one means through which Iowa hopes to meet the workforce development needs of the 21st century.

State-level staff envision a system of local workforce development centers that offer access to all education, employment, and training services in their local areas, as well as to career information and labor market information. To qualify as a workforce development center, a local site must have a *single identity, joint administration* by a management team or designated center director, offer a set of required *core services* in a *customer-friendly facility* that is accessible and uses a unified and seamless process to make services available to customers. Workforce development centers are envisioned as having multiple electronic points of customer access for information and services including libraries, schools,

community colleges, universities, and home computers via modem. Moreover, since many centers have already established quality linkages with local community based organizations and providers of social services, state staff members are confident that local sites will be able to successfully market their services to job-seekers, employer customers, and students and seekers of career information.

The state also envisions a close relationship between educational institutions in Iowa and the public workforce development agencies responsible for ES, UI, JTPA, Vocational Rehabilitation, and welfare-to-work services. This relationship will be supported in at least two ways. First, the community colleges in Iowa will serve as the community link to the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), a statewide fiber optics network that supports two-way information and data transmission throughout the state. As such, they will be able to support long-distance learning and training opportunities for Iowa residents by serving as points of access for courses and training programs offered through other colleges and delivered over the fiber-optic network. Second, in many local areas, the community colleges are expected to be actively involved in providing services—ranging from assessment to customized training—to individual and employer customers of workforce development centers.<sup>3</sup>

Because Iowa was early in the One-Stop implementation process at the time of our visit, many changes were occurring at the state level. During the first year of One-Stop implementation, the state was concentrating much of its effort on plans for establishing a new consolidated Department of Workforce Development (which started up operations on July 1, 1996). To support local workforce development center implementation, state-level staff were also undertaking system development efforts in the following areas:

- Creating a business plan to support the design and delivery of services to customers at local workforce development centers.
- Developing an integrated information system to support the reporting and accountability functions for a consolidated workforce development system.

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<sup>3</sup>In most local service areas in Iowa, JTPA administrative entities are local community colleges. This was not true in the two local sites visited for this study. In one of the local areas visited for the evaluation, workforce development agency staff perceived the local community college as a full partner in the local One-Stop initiative. However, in the other local site, workforce development staff from the ES/UI and JTPA programs were afraid that the community college might decide to compete with them for designation as the local workforce development center operator.

- Promoting coordination between the One-Stop, welfare reform, and school-to-work initiatives at the state level.

According to the state's plan, during the first year of One-Stop implementation, local sites were granted substantial discretion to begin the development of detailed designs for workforce development centers and the delivery of local services so long as they conformed to the overall state vision. Further articulation of local delivery systems, including the formation of local policy boards and the implementation of locally-driven processes to select service providers, was to be the primary focus during the second year of implementation.

### **Relevance of the State Design to the Four Federal Goals**

#### **Universal Access**

State-level staff recognize that implementing the principle of universal access is a challenge. Ultimately, Iowa seeks to attract a broader customer base for workforce development center services, including students seeking career information, job-changers seeking new opportunities, and employers seeking a wider variety of services (e.g., referral, screening, and testing of job applicants). However few of the local One-Stop sites have yet had the opportunity to test strategies for promoting their services beyond the individual job-seeker customer base traditionally served by each of their partner agencies. Some state-level respondents expressed uncertainty about whether the career centers would be able to successfully serve their traditional customer base as well as new customer groups, particularly in a resource-scarce environment.

To make workforce development services accessible throughout rural areas, some One-Stop centers have made arrangements for center staff to travel on a regular basis to satellite service sites operated by One-Stop partners or coordinating social service agencies. Customers can thus access workforce development services at sites close to their homes, rather than having to travel to the One-Stop center itself. The availability of information services via remote terminals or Internet access will also make services more accessible to customers in dispersed rural locations. However, although information technology will make some services accessible at a distance, staff acknowledged that many customers still want personal contact with agency staff.

#### **Customer Choice**

The state has emphasized customer choice in two primary areas: (1) new products for customer use; and (2) expanded access points for center products and services.

The state of Iowa has invested heavily in the development of self-service products for use in the resource rooms of workforce development centers state-wide. Although many of these products are related to core services that the public employment and training agencies have always provided, new automated products allow customers to explore career and employment options at their leisure, rather than having to make an appointment with an agency representative.<sup>4</sup>

The number of points of access for workforce development services has also increased dramatically. Customer with home computers, for example, may access the state's Data Center through a modem, or they may access the state's World Wide Web site from local libraries, universities, or from any home or institution with access to the Internet. There are also several stand-alone kiosks throughout the state that run a touch-screen version of ALEX (America's Labor Exchange) to which customers have convenient access.

### **Integrated Services**

Iowa seeks to lead by example in its efforts to integrate a wide variety of agencies, departments, and programs under an integrated state department of Workforce Development. At the local level, the state has mandated that the following programs be participants in all of the state's workforce development centers. Co-location is highly recommended, though not required for these programs:

- JTPA Titles II&III
- Employment Service
- Veterans Employment Services
- Senior Community Service Employment Programs (Title V of the Older Americans Act)
- Unemployment Insurance
- Food Stamps Employment and Training Program
- Promise JOBS
- Vocational Rehabilitation.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, Iowa CHOICES is a CD-driven program that provides customers with information on various career areas and the skills needed to pursue careers in each area.

Local sites are also encouraged to include non-mandatory programs such as Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers and the Indian and Native American Program.

The state has also strongly encouraged staff at each center to work toward the functional integration of services. Local sites are required to develop joint administrative processes and governance arrangements at local centers. The state's guidance to local areas calls for integrated delivery of basic services including reception, orientation, assessment, and access to career information. It is expected that technology will facilitate the integration of programs and services by providing all customers with new ways to access services and supporting an integrated information system with the information needed for individual program-based reporting requirements.

### **Performance-Driven/Outcome-Based**

A state-level One-Stop Performance Management Committee has the responsibility of developing performance measures that will support shared accountability for outcomes among the partners in the local workforce development centers. The Committee has solicited input from local centers and is coordinating its activities with the Iowa Council on Human Investment (which is responsible for measuring goal attainment for the state's human resources investment system as a whole). The Committee seeks to develop measures that (1) promote shared accountability among partners, (2) demand little time or effort on the part of local staff; (3) balance the needs of local sites with the needs of the state-level administrators, and (4) support system-wide continuous quality improvement strategies.

On the basis of these initiatives, the state has developed guidelines for the development of local performance measures for the workforce development centers. As part of this effort, the Committee has identified seven areas in which the development of specific measurements is required. Each of these is described below.

- *Equity and Access.* To ensure that services are provided equitably to individuals and employers, the committee has identified a wide range of customer characteristics—including race, socioeconomic status, gender, age, and education-level—that will be measured to ensure that groups of individuals are receiving services in proportion to their representation in local communities. A similar set of characteristics—including size and industry represented—have been identified to ensure equitable representation of different groups of employer customers.
- *Outcomes/Outputs.* The Performance Measurement Committee has recommended that the units of services provided be measured and compared

to the impact of programs on communities to assess program effectiveness and inform continuous improvement processes.

- *Program Management.* The Committee has recommended that program management performance measures be established at the local level so that they will be consistent with local objectives.
- *Customer Value.* The Committee has recommended that a variety of customer feedback mechanisms, including surveys and focus groups, be implemented in order to determine how customers value the services they receive and how satisfied they are with the manner in which they receive them. This information will be compared to the economic cost of the services and used to inform continuous improvement efforts.
- *Community Value.* Although the Committee has not yet developed specific recommendations, it has suggested that performance measures be established to gauge the quality and value of the workforce development centers in relation to other community initiatives, such as economic development.
- *Analysis.* The Committee has recommended that specific methods of statistical analysis be developed and implemented to identify best practices and inform continuous improvement efforts.
- *Return on Investment.* The committee has recommended that the concept of return on investment be used to measure the effectiveness of the new system over time, but it has not identified specific indicators under this standard.

Although the committee has suggested specific measures under each category, at the time of the evaluation site visit, final decisions had not yet been made about whether or how to implement the Committee's suggestions.

## **ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STATE ONE-STOP INITIATIVE**

### **State-Level Organization and Governance**

*Governance Structure.* As described above, the Council on Human Investment, created as part of the "Iowa Invests" legislation in 1993, is responsible for overseeing broad state human service policy, setting program priorities, and measuring progress against the three goals of workforce development, economic development, and stronger families. Although the Council on Human Investment is not directly involved in the oversight of the One-Stop initiative, One-Stop planners and policymakers are being careful to conform to the overall policy goals established by this Council. More detailed coordination is occurring between the workforce development system and the Council on Human Investment regarding the design of specific One-Stop features, such as performance measures, the development of a technology infrastructure, and the design of integrated information and reporting systems.

The state Workforce Development Council (WDC)—created by executive order of the governor in 1994 and formalized by the 1996 state legislation that created a consolidated Iowa Workforce Development agency at the state level—is the state-level advisory board for employment and training services in Iowa. The sixteen members of the Workforce Development Council include four representatives each from business, labor, state agencies, and secondary/post-secondary education. The WDC is responsible for coordinating workforce development services and agencies, setting priorities, and identifying strategies that will further its mission of promoting a high-performance Iowa workforce, high performance workplaces, and a high standard of living for all Iowans. The Workforce Development Council is responsible for approving major aspects of One-Stop system design, including state workforce development plans and budgets, plans for integration of workforce development services under the One-Stop initiative, and the designation of local service areas. Formal oversight of specific categorical programs is provided by subcommittees of the WDC.

The early stages of the state Workforce Development planning process in Iowa were clearly based on a model of broad interagency collaboration. Over six major state agencies with responsibilities for workforce development programs were involved in collaborative One-Stop planning efforts. The State Workforce Development Coordinator was selected for his experience and expertise in coordinating interagency relations. Interagency work teams comprised of JTPA and Department of Employment Services staff were created to implement reforms in education and employment and training services consistent with the state's new Workforce Development legislation. These teams included: the Center Guidelines and Implementation Team, the Marketing Team, the Labor Market Information Team, the Iowa Management Information Systems Team, the Capacity Building Team, and the Communications Team.

As implementation plans have matured, however, the state-level organizational model for the workforce development system has shifted from an emphasis on interagency collaboration to an emphasis on state agency consolidation, with a new Department of Workforce Development emerging as the lead agency responsible for One-Stop planning and implementation. State legislation passed during the 1995-96 legislative session called for a major governmental reorganization (effective July 1, 1996) that merged workforce development programs from the departments of Economic Development, Employment Services, and Human Rights under the new consolidated Iowa Department of Workforce Development. Programs administered by the new agency include JTPA Titles II and III,

Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Employment Services, and a state-funded Volunteer Mentor Program.

At the time of the evaluation site visit, it was not yet apparent how this organizational change would affect the level and type of participation in One-Stop planning by the state agencies and programs not initially included within the consolidated workforce development department. Additional state-level agencies involved as partners in planning for the One-Stop workforce development system both before and after the creation of the consolidated Department of Workforce Development include the following:

- *The Department of Human Services* is responsible for public assistance and welfare-to-work programs. This agency has a long history of collaboration with workforce development agencies. Since 1986, the Department of Human Resources has contracted with the workforce development system, including both ES and JTPA providers, for the delivery of employment-related services to AFDC recipients under the state's Promise JOBS program. This was not expected to change dramatically under federal welfare reform legislation.

In one workforce development center under development in Iowa, local DHR staff will be fully co-located at the workforce development center and will share reception and child care services with other center partners. In other local service areas, DHR income maintenance workers are not co-located at workforce development centers.

- *The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation* (a division within the state Department of Education) is one of three partners in Iowa's local workforce development centers—together with the Department of Workforce Development and the local community college system. Although VR can benefit from closer coordination with other workforce development partners and vice versa, VR staff are hampered in their ability to integrate services with other partners by categorical funding requirements. The state VR spokesperson explained, "We can only work with disabled individuals."
- *The Iowa Department of Education* oversees both primary and secondary education, the community college system, adult education programs, Carl Perkins vocational education programs, and business and industry services to private employers. The Department of Education is interested in how workforce development centers can coordinate with the school-to-work initiative in making use of electronic tools for career education and well as in involving employers.

A newly established Workforce Development Project Office played a key role in state-level planning and administration of the One-Stop initiative at the time of the site visit.

The project office was established in April 1996 for the purpose of coordinating the various initiatives in which the Department of Workforce Development is involved. The staff assigned to this office—recruited from a number of different state agency partners—serve as the implementation or “system-building” arm for the seven state-level transition committees. The Project Office works closely with two additional entities—the Management Team and the Project Planning Team. The responsibilities of each of these entities are described below.

- *The Workforce Development Project Office* is responsible for overall coordination of various tasks associated with the consolidation of state administrative functions and the integration of services provided at local workforce development centers. As part of an overall effort to make the new Department of Workforce Development’s operations effective and efficient, the Project Office has also been charged with eliminating overlap, preventing duplication of effort, and systematizing ongoing operations using the state’s business plan. Staff of this office serve as liaisons between the seven transition committees, the Management Team, and the Project Planning Team.

At the time of the site visit, the staff within the Workforce Development Project Office had divided into two planning teams to undertake two major tasks. The “business plan” team was responsible for refining a business process analysis of tasks associated with the design and delivery of workforce development services developed by an outside contractor. As part of the business plan, the state is developing a matrix identifying the different “lines of business” associated with workforce development services. This framework is being used to guide local areas in developing and planning for the integration of One-Stop services.

The “information systems” team was responsible for overseeing the state’s involvement in the development of a common intake system, and an integrated case management/program management system.

- *The Management Team* comprises the Director of the new Department of Workforce Development, as well as the directors of each of the five divisions in the new Department—Policy, Customer and Administrative Services, Workforce Development Center Administration, Job Insurance, and Research and Information. This team is responsible for implementing workforce development policy, setting priorities, and providing general direction to the Project Office.
- *The Project Planning Team* is a temporary work team charged with identifying specific needs and developing requests for proposals to solicit outside vendors to meet those needs. Outside vendors have been solicited to (1) assist in the development of a common intake system, (2) establish a state-wide workforce development electronic network, and (3) develop a

uniform data collection and reporting system or an interface between preexisting systems. The Project Planning Team coordinates closely with the Management Team and the Workforce Development Project Office. Once a process is in place for selecting all needed vendors, the Project Planning Team will be dissolved and the Project Office will absorb any remaining responsibilities.

### **State Framework for Local Governance**

The state framework for local governance of One-Stop workforce development centers was still in the process of development at the time of the evaluation site visit. The 1996 legislation that created a consolidated Workforce Development Department and formalized the structure of the state's Workforce Development Council also called for the creation of local workforce development boards, with representatives—from business, labor, elected officials, and educational institutions—appointed by the governor. As described in the legislation, the function of local workforce development boards will be to identify local workforce development needs, advise the state Department of Workforce Development and the state Council on the selection of local service providers and help monitor the performance of local workforce development center operators. These boards had not yet been constituted at the time of the site visit.

The state envisions a statewide workforce development system with “state leadership and local ownership.” Although individual centers are encouraged to develop programs and delivery systems that best meet the needs of their local communities, the state has taken an active role in both planning and implementing these centers. The state is involved in (1) assisting local areas in developing workforce development center plans; (2) setting the criteria centers must meet to achieve “Workforce Development Center” status; (3) addressing the capacity-building needs of the local sites; (4) identifying state performance measures; and (5) providing technical assistance during the transition process.

To meet the state requirements to become an official Workforce Development Center, a local center must include participation by each of the federally mandated DOL-funded programs (JTPA Titles II and III, Employment Services, Veterans Employment Services, Senior Community Service Employment Program, and Unemployment Insurance). In addition, the state requires local sites to involve partners responsible for the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program and the state's Promise JOBS program for AFDC

recipients.<sup>5</sup> Participation by additional partners—such as those responsible for Vocational Rehabilitation, the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program, Homeless Training, the Indian and Native American Program, the School-to-Work Opportunities program, Job Corps, Apprenticeships, adult education, Carl Perkin’s Act post-secondary programs, and student financial assistance programs—is “strongly encouraged.”

The state has not prescribed a specific structure for managing day-to-day center operations and the management structures used in local workforce development centers vary from locality to locality. However, state guidelines for the development of local workforce development centers emphasize the importance of developing a *single center identity* supported by a *joint administration* to deliver core basic services to customers through a seamless workflow. In a document providing local actors with guidelines for the development of workforce development centers, the state defined joint administration as a structure that permits all center partners to “participate in Center operations and management through a shared mission and goals, contribution of resources, and shared oversight of the center facility and its functions.” Features that were identified by the state as demonstrating a joint administration include the establishment of a center plan, the development of a center budget showing fiscal support from all partners, and the identification of a management team or designation of a single center manager approved by all partners.

## **COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

At the level of state policy makers, the Human Resources Investment Council and the Workforce Development Council play important roles in coordinating the different human services initiatives underway in the state (e.g., welfare reform, workforce development centers, and school-to-work efforts) and ensuring that the performance measures and technology tools developed to support these initiatives and promote system-wide accountability are mutually supportive and compatible.

State-level staff have identified communication and coordination as crucial to One-Stop implementation. Staff-level communication and coordination vehicles developed to

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<sup>5</sup> Although each of these programs is supposed to be included in center operations and available to center customers, the state is interested in implementing a competitive local process to select the actual entity or entities that will provide services to center customers. The paradigm described by state staff as the model for service delivery in the long-term is “decentralized and competitively determined” service delivery arrangements.

support the One-Stop implementation process include: (1) cross-agency transition and special project teams and (2) the development of improved communication and information-sharing mechanisms for use by One-Stop partners. The inter-agency Workforce Development Management Team—led by the state Workforce Development Coordinator and with representation from all state-level partner agencies—has overall responsibility for setting state workforce development policy and supporting system transformation efforts. In addition, the Workforce Development Project Office (described above under Organization and Governance) plays an important role in the day-to-day coordination of efforts to promote consolidation and integration of services under the One-Stop initiative.

During the initial formation of the Department of Workforce Development, the state established seven inter-agency teams to address different aspects of the state-level transition and design the new workforce development system. As described below, these teams addressed issues associated with the creation of the consolidated state workforce development agency as well as with the establishment of local workforce development centers.

- The *Personnel Team* was charged with developing new job descriptions and procedures to merge Merit and non-Merit staff in the consolidated Workforce Development Department. The team was also responsible for conducting skills assessments and identifying staff training needs to inform the development of a capacity-building strategy for staff of the new Department.
- The *Staff Development Team* was responsible for addressing the training needs of staff transitioning to the new Department, as well as developing services for staff who are laid-off as a result of the reorganization.
- The *Substate Boundary Team* was responsible for coordinating with the Workforce Development Council to identify criteria with which to determine service delivery boundaries.<sup>6</sup>
- The *Administrative Processes Team* was responsible for evaluating administrative processes—from accounting procedures to procurement systems—and suggesting ways to streamline them that will allow continuity in the delivery of services to customers (i.e., the local sites).

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<sup>6</sup> Where to draw the boundaries of service delivery areas is an important issue in Iowa. The geographic service areas associated with the Area Education Agency (AEA) areas, the JTPA Title II service delivery areas (SDAs), and the substate areas for JTPA Title III are not identical. Because the community college system is expected to play a greater role in providing workforce development services than in the past, as are the local school districts (through school-to-work initiatives), local workforce development centers have expressed great interest in aligning these boundaries to ease their administrative processes.

- The *Information Systems Team* was charged with identifying the range of systems in place and recommending ways to streamline the information management process, with a view toward integrating all systems. This team is expected to coordinate closely with staff involved in parallel MIS efforts.
- The *Competitive Service Delivery Team* was asked to draft the design for a competitive bidding process to be used to select local service providers. This includes gathering information on assessing effectiveness and developing evaluation criteria to be used in selecting bidders. This team is also responsible for recommending strategies for building the capacity of public sector staff to successfully compete in such processes.
- The *Regional Issues Team* was assigned to identify the new roles and responsibilities of various state and local stakeholders—such as regional board members, local elected officials, and formerly separate service providers—under an integrated system. This team was also charged with recommending the formation of new inter-agency teams to deal with additional issues as they emerged.

As the overall design for the state's workforce development system started to take shape, the state established a number of working committees to address different details of One-Stop implementation. Iowa envisions a flexible management structure for its new workforce development system, wherein project teams will be established and dissolved as needed. At the time of the site visit, the committees described below were operational. The state anticipates that the committees, as well as the content of committee tasks, will change over time.

- The *Business Plan Committee* is responsible for recommending a menu of core services that should be available to all center customers. The committee will also examine the potential for fee-for-service arrangements.
- The *Center Guidelines Committee* is responsible for the planning and implementation of services and products in all of Iowa's workforce development centers. This includes activities such as identifying services and products that will be common to all centers, establishing skills-based assessment methods, and developing strategies for soliciting employer participation in the planning of local workforce development centers. This committee is expected to coordinate with other committees on a regular basis to prevent duplication of efforts.
- The *Integrated Information Systems Technical Committee* is responsible for providing guidance on the design of the integrated information systems plan, and providing input at various points of implementation. This committee is intended to work closely with the users committee described below.
- The *Integrated Information Systems Users Committee* was developed to "check" the activities of the Technical Committee (see above). The two

committees work in concert to insure that new technologies under development meet the needs of center customers and line staff, and that any new products are user-friendly.

- The *Labor Market Information Committee* is responsible for the development and or implementation of LMI products that meet the needs of center customers and are easy to use.
- The *Capacity Building Committee* is tasked with identifying the training needs of staff at various levels of the workforce development system, recommending appropriate training programs to meet those needs, and establishing a system of credentialing whereby staff who have completed training are certified to perform specific functions.
- The *Performance Management Committee* is the designated liaison to the Iowa Council on Human Investment. It is responsible for providing guidance and input on the development of new performance measures and of establishing performance benchmarks. It is also charged with developing recommendations for a system of incentives and sanctions to govern the continuous quality improvement of the local sites.
- The *Marketing Committee* is responsible for developing a plan for helping local workforce development centers market their services to local job-seekers and employers. The committee will also facilitate the “Grand Opening” celebration in the local sites.
- The *Local Liaison Workgroup* is made up of a representative body of local workforce development stakeholders who will act as a communications link between the state- and local-level workforce development partners.
- The *Congressional/Legislative Committee* seeks to identify areas of potential legislative support for workforce development-related issues in Iowa. The committee monitors state and federal legislation, informs key state and local stakeholders of important legislative initiatives, and makes recommendations for action on the part of workforce development staff.
- The *Resource Development Committee* is concerned with developing additional or alternative sources of support for Iowa’s workforce development system. Recognizing the limited availability of public funds, this committee seeks additional resources to support workforce development initiatives in Iowa.

The second approach used to support the One-Stop system-building process is the development of improved mechanisms for communication and information-sharing. The state has identified improved management information systems as important tools to support communication among partner agencies and between the state and local sites. Building the technology infrastructure and developing integrated information systems to support One-Stop operations have received high priority activity during the first year of One-Stop

implementation. (See also the section on Labor Market Information and Related Technology Improvements). Because the state's integrated MIS system is not available immediately, the state requires each local site to include a section in its local center plan on how staff of the various programs within the center will communicate with each other and share data until the state system is completed.

To promote communication between the state and local levels on One-Stop implementation issues, the state has identified a local workforce development liaison in each service delivery area. This individual receives memoranda prepared by the state to guide local system development and is intended to serve as the coordinator for local-level communication on One Stop issues. At the outset of the One-Stop planning process, the state also requested that each service delivery area convene a local implementation team to begin conversations on the building of local One-Stop partnerships. A staff member of the state Workforce Development Project Office was designated as a liaison to local sites to support their system development efforts. Every effort has been made to encourage local sites to design and take ownership of their own workforce development system, within the guidelines established by the state.

#### **FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS, BUDGETING, AND FISCAL ISSUES**

As described above under Local Governance Structures, Iowa has encouraged local workforce development centers to develop integrated budgets showing how the resources from multiple partner agencies are being used to support consolidated center operations. At the time of the local evaluation site visits, however, neither of the local sites visited had completed formal consolidated center budgets, despite efforts to coordinate and co-locate staff from a wide variety of employment and training programs. Instead, informal cost-sharing agreements were being used to pay for shared facilities, equipment, and jointly-operated services. The continued existence of categorical programs at the federal level was perceived as a major barrier to consolidated budgeting. However, staff at all levels anticipated that the integration of state-level agencies, departments, and programs under the single Department of Workforce Development—together with changes in federal workforce development legislation—would result in the eventual integration of funding streams for all education, employment, and training programs in the state.

As the one source of funds allocated to the development of the workforce development system as a whole, One-Stop Implementation Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Labor have been an important catalyst for large-scale changes in the building of a statewide One-Stop system. The state of Iowa received \$6.5 million in federal support

for its One-Stop initiative, and an additional \$1 million to support LMI development. The state has allocated the grant funds to support improvements in four main areas, including (1) state administration, (2) local implementation, (3) management information systems, and (4) labor market information. Each of these areas is discussed below.

*State Administration.* Approximately \$600,000 of the implementation grant was allocated for activities to support state-level administration of workforce development services, including the transition to a consolidated Workforce Development agency on July 1, 1996. Budgeted activities included staff development, marketing, and networking/communications with staff from other states.

*Local Implementation.* Approximately one-third of the DOL Implementation Grant was allocated to support the development of local workforce development centers. After requesting formal One-Stop implementation plans from all 16 service delivery areas, the state selected ten sites to receive implementation grant funds each of the first and second grant years, based on each site's demonstrated readiness and willingness to implement reform. The ten sites selected for funding during the first year, received levels of support ranging from \$25,000 to \$190,000. During the second year, five of the first-round grantees received repeat awards to continue their system-building efforts, and five new sites received funds. Although funding priorities were established locally, state-level respondents indicated that most sites planned to use the majority of their grant awards to upgrade physical facilities or purchase hardware that would support the state's new MIS system. Although information system development is seen as a state-level function, many local sites required technology upgrading in preparation for implementing the planned integrated MIS system and using new LMI products under development at the state level.

*Labor Market Information Development.* The state has devoted its \$1 million LMI grant to the development of new consumer products for use in the workforce development centers. Among the products the state seeks to develop or improve are (1) the area wage survey, (2) the Data Center—an electronic bulletin board that lists job openings, labor market information, and recent employment news—and (3) a wage tracking system. The LMI grant, together with state funds, has also supported the development of a survey to determine customer needs that will inform strategic planning for local- and state-level staff capacity-building efforts.

*Development of an Integrated Management Information System.* Approximately one-third of the DOL Implementation Grant was used to support MIS development efforts. A

new statewide integrated management information system (IMIS) is seen by staff at all levels as a key component of One-Stop system transformation in Iowa. State-level staff worked with outside private sector consultants as part of an interdepartmental task force to develop recommendations for Iowa's new system. The task force recommended that Iowa adopt an integrated information system in three phases: (1) first, creating access to information by establishing links between current programs and agencies; (2) developing a common intake system and employment and training database; and (3) creating a fully integrated system of case management, tracking, and automated eligibility determination.

Iowa is also supporting its MIS development efforts through its participation in a multi-state consortium that received an ALMIS grant to develop a common access and intake system for One-Stop systems. Within Iowa, Employment Service, JOBS, and JTPA are expected to be the first customers of the new system. The Vocational Rehabilitation program, which is also involved in MIS development, is expected to join the system at a later date. State staff hope to continue to support Iowa's MIS development efforts by playing a key role in the multi-state consortium—known as “George”—formed to develop an automated One-Stop case management/case tracking system.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE SUPPORT MECHANISMS**

### **Capacity Building and Technical Assistance**

The state of Iowa has identified capacity building as a clear priority during One-Stop system implementation throughout the state. The Capacity Building Committee has identified two primary areas of focus within capacity building during the first implementation grant year: (1) technology training and (2) training in “systems change.” Staff assigned to develop a state capacity-building approach believe that training and staff development efforts have an important role to play in helping people “feel safe in the change process” as organizational systems and cultural systems are transformed.

To date, the state's role in capacity-building has included efforts to identify staff training needs, develop curricula to address those needs, identify training providers, and make training available to state staff as well as to local sites to support local capacity building plans. Where appropriate, the Capacity Building Committee attempts to make use of already existing effective training materials rather than duplicating existing resources.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> For example, capacity building staff seek to use effective products developed in other states or local areas or through the Department of Labor's *Simply Better* initiative.

The state capacity-building staff prefer to begin with technology training, rather than team-building training, because technology training is more concrete and raises fewer staff fears about culture change. The state has also found that if staff from different agencies receive technology training together, there will be positive team-building side effects from the rapport developed during training.

To address the immediate need for technology training at the state level, the state contracted with the Iowa Community College System to provide training in the Windows program to state-level staff. An assessment of additional technology-training needs among state-level staff was underway at the time of the site visit. Capacity building efforts are being carefully coordinated with other system-building initiatives, such as MIS development. For example, as the Information Systems team prepares to implement a Windows-driven management information system, the capacity building team is working with outside vendors to provide training on the new system.

In developing local center plans, each local area is required to describe staff development and training needs and indicate how these needs will be met. State-level staff involved in capacity building have identified several characteristics, or “benchmarks,” against which local training plans will be evaluated. Planned training programs will be assessed based on how they (1) meet specific staff needs, (2) promote skill-building over time, (3) identify measurable outcomes, (4) demonstrate cost-effectiveness, and (5) support enhanced customer service. The capacity-building team has shared these benchmarks with cross-agency staff who will be participating in training so that their internal evaluations of capacity-building efforts will be better informed.

To measure local technology training needs, the Capacity Building Committee developed an assessment tool. The Committee also solicited input from state MIS staff, as well as representatives from local One-Stop sites in identifying local training needs. After conducting surveys of core partner staff in each of the local sites, and conducting face-to-face discussions with staff in some sites, state-level staff responsible for capacity building were convinced that the local-level staff were “way out in front” of state-level staff in their desire for training because they deal with One-Stop customers. As a result, local-level staff require immediate training in the use of basic technology (e.g., computer literacy, word processing, and spread sheet applications) as well as familiarity with technology-based customer products in order to provide quality services to One-Stop customers. This is particularly crucial during the start-up period when the centers are introducing new products and services to their communities. Local technology training piloted at one local

site at the time of the site visit included approximately ten hours of training for all center staff in computer literacy, Windows, and beginning word processing.

Managers of the local sites also expressed great interest in instruction in team-building so that program and agency identities can be integrated within workforce development centers. State capacity-building staff recognize that addressing organizational change and training in continuous quality improvement strategies, team building, and collective decision-making will be a complex, long-term project. Consistent with this view, they plan to develop staff capacities gradually over time rather than in more concentrated doses during a short time period. Capacity-building staff seek to generate solid state- and local-level commitments of time and resources prior to such training. The team also seeks to integrate One-Stop training efforts with capacity building for school-to-work staff since both groups will be working through the new workforce development centers.

### **Labor Market Information and Technology-Based Customer Products**

The state of Iowa seeks to use technology to support improved customer service by developing new products that facilitate customer access to information, services, and instruction. Independently of the One-Stop initiative, the state has invested heavily in its state-wide fiber optics network called the Iowa Communications Network or ICN. The ICN offers the capability of conducting two-way information sharing and data transmission, including voice, video, and teleconferencing. Although originally conceived as a means to link rural Iowans to educational and professional opportunities, as well as remote access to services such as medical care, the ICN plays a critical role in supporting state-wide data transmission and access to the Internet. For job seekers and students, the ICN provides alternatives to traditional classroom instruction, and creates new possibilities for remote learning/training activities.

As part of the One-Stop initiative, the state has reviewed its LMI products to identify how they can be improved to be more useful to One-Stop staff and customers. The objective of the LMI improvement effort is to ensure that information is available in a timely and user-friendly format that will help customers make informed choices about their futures. In addition, the state would like to develop a “consumer report card system” that will help program operators and customers review the employment outcomes that are likely to follow from participation in various education and training programs.

Although the state encourages local sites to explore new LMI products and services, it has taken the lead in the development of new products designed for customer use. The

development of new consumer products for use in the workforce development centers throughout the state is largely the responsibility of the Labor Market Information Committee. This committee was established in 1995, prior to the creation of the other One-Stop committees. The committee works closely with the inter-agency Information Systems Team. Early on, the Committee identified five priority areas and has been pursuing innovations in each of them since the Spring of 1995. These areas include: (1) a regional occupational wage database, (2) products or linkages that improve the quality and accessibility of the state's Data Center,<sup>8</sup> (3) a pilot project involving the assessment of customer information needs and staff training needs in the area of labor market information, (4) a pilot project to identify LMI products that can support a "state-of-the-art" resource room in a One-Stop center, and (5) the development of state-wide and regional versions of a publication that identifies employment trends and expected growth areas.

Although the Committee anticipates being involved in ongoing continuous improvement efforts, it has already met several objectives. Among the major milestones that staff identified during the site visit were the development of the state's Web site,<sup>9</sup> the introduction of new self-contained consumer products intended for use in the centers—including CD-based programs to provide job search, help with resume development, and basic career information—and participation in several multi-state initiatives around LMI product-development.<sup>10</sup> In addition, the state has contracted with the state of North Carolina for the development of a version of that state's PC-based LMI system customized to Iowa's labor market information needs.

### **Management Information Systems**

From the outset, the development of integrated information systems has been a high priority for One-Stop system development in Iowa. The Information Systems Team formed

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<sup>8</sup> The Data Center is an electronic bulletin board that lists job openings, labor market information, and recent employment news. It can be accessed remotely via a personal computer and modem or through the workforce development center computers.

<sup>9</sup> The state Web site is linked to America's Job Bank, Iowa's Job Bank, and Iowa LMI. However, since not all local sites are linked to the Internet, these services are available through the Internet in only a limited number of service areas. All workforce development centers also offer access to job listings via local terminals connected to the ALEX system.

<sup>10</sup> The state is involved in a consortium developing statewide Talent Banks and is working with the state of Texas on the Consumer Report Card project.

to develop recommendations for improved information management adopted four design principles, including (1) *customer choice*—customers should be able to select the services that best meet their needs; (2) *proportional data collection*—information collected for service delivery will be proportional to the level of service provided; (3) *cumulative data collection*—data will be gathered cumulatively to avoid duplication of efforts; and (4) *confidentiality*—data collection efforts will reflect a high level of respect for customer privacy.<sup>11</sup> State-level respondents in Iowa repeatedly emphasized that “customers” exist both inside and outside of the workforce development system. That is, state-level agencies and staff are each other’s customers in terms of data transmission and reporting.

The task force has planned a three-stage implementation process for the new MIS system. The first stage involves connecting existing information systems—electronic linkages will be established and interfaces developed that will permit easier transmission of existing data. The second stage revolves around the development of a common information intake system for use in the centers themselves. The new system will be linked to existing information systems but will also serve as the centerpiece of the Department of Workforce Development’s new integrated employment and training database. The third stage will emphasize full-scale integration—the creation of an information system integrated by function (not program or department), and capable of collecting and managing client information as well as assisting in eligibility determinations.

At the time of the site visit, the first stage of implementation was well underway—electronic linkages, including local area networks (LANs) had been established linking the state to local sites and offering the opportunity to link local partners to each other. Iowa had also made progress in completing the second stage—developing its common intake system. As a result of its participation in the multi-state Common Intake consortium, Iowa has assisted in the development of the Common Intake Prototype. This system, driven by Lotus Notes, has been designed to support the ability of multiple users (including agency staff and workforce development center customers) to access differing levels and types of data according to their individual needs/clearance codes. At the time of the site visit, Iowa planned to customize and pilot the common intake prototype in its individual centers by the end of 1996.

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<sup>11</sup> Several external consultants have also been involved in the MIS design project.

## **Marketing**

An inter-agency Marketing Team has identified three critical areas in which One-Stop marketing efforts will be concentrated during the initial implementation of local workforce development centers. These include (1) marketing the statewide transformation of workforce development services to customers and potential customers, (2) assisting the local sites in marketing their services to their local communities, and (3) marketing the One-Stop initiative to state-level staff of the agencies and departments involved in workforce development.

*Marketing the Transformed System to Current and Potential Customers.* Planned changes in the design and delivery of workforce development services in Iowa are significant. State-level staff indicated that the planned “roll-out” of One-Stop centers provided them with opportunities both to inform current customers of coming changes in the system and to market new services to customers who were not frequent users of the old system, particularly employers. At the time of the site visit, the team faced several marketing challenges. First, because the integrated Department of Workforce Development had not yet been established, state-level staff were uncertain about the details of the planned state-level administrative structure, and were hesitant to market a change that had not yet occurred. Moreover, key decisions about how to distinguish between the new Workforce Development department and the One-Stop system as a whole in marketing efforts had not yet been made.<sup>12</sup>

Second, the state Marketing Team had to determine how to assist local marketing efforts without “stealing the thunder” from local marketing efforts, since a key feature of the new workforce development system was increased local control. Third, since the workforce development centers were scheduled to open gradually over the course of two years, the state was concerned about marketing services that were not yet be available in all local sites. Finally, at the time of the site visit, the team was becoming aware of the need to coordinate marketing with parallel state-level marketing efforts around related services, such as the use of the ICN for remote learning activities. As a result of these challenges,

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<sup>12</sup> For example, it was unclear whether a logo originally developed to represent the One-Stop initiative as a whole would be taken over as the logo of the new Department of Workforce Development. Since several key state One-Stop partners and programs are not included in the consolidated agency—most notably the Education Department, including the Vocational Rehabilitation Division, and the Department of Human Resources—it is important to find a marketing logo for One-Stop that is distinct from that of the new agency.

the state has proceeded cautiously and in consultation with local sites in developing its marketing approach. Staff anticipated that setting state marketing priorities and developing specific marketing plans would become easier after the Department of Workforce Development was officially established in July 1996.

*Assisting Local Sites in Marketing Centers.* The Marketing Team has been active in assisting local One-Stop sites with their own marketing efforts. Each of the workforce development centers has held a well-publicized open house as a part of its “grand opening” activities. The state has helped local partners to plan these events by developing an event-planning manual—with step-by-step instructions—tailored to the needs of the local sites. In addition, the state has solicited the participation of senior state-level workforce development staff and state or congressional representatives in the local opening receptions. State staff have also conducted assessments of new products and services offered locally and helped local sites to develop a strategic marketing plan for these services. Among the topics that local partners have identified as One-Stop marketing issues are (1) how to market workforce development services to students in local primary and secondary schools and (2) how to develop and market new services to meet the needs of employer customers, job-changers, and individuals seeking information on education and training opportunities. Local One-Stop sites have also requested state-level assistance in developing brochures, press releases, and other informational materials for local consumption.

*Marketing the One-Stop System to Internal Customers.* The state Marketing Team has also identified a need to market the One-Stop initiative to the staff of the state and local agencies that are partners in the One-Stop effort. Toward that end, the state is working on the following products: (1) a newsletter for the staff of state- and local-level partner agencies; (2) marketing products designed to bring in new partner agencies, departments, and programs; and (3) a systematic process for disseminating information on workforce development products and services to all One-Stop partners.

## **ASSESSMENT AND LESSONS LEARNED**

Iowa has taken a bold and comprehensive approach to workforce development reform. Although One-Stop implementation is still in a formative stage in Iowa, the state has begun transitioning to a new system of education, employment, and training service delivery. This system is characterized by (1) a phased-in approach that emphasizes state-level administrative changes during the first implementation year; (2) planned coordination between a number of different public reform efforts, including the welfare-to-work and school-to-work initiatives; (3) coordination and eventual integration of local partners in

workforce development centers supported by an integrated information management system; and (4) improved linkages between local workforce development and economic development entities.

The state included a broad range of agency, department, and program representatives in the planning and implementation of the One-Stop initiative well in-advance of the establishment of the consolidated Workforce Development Department. This joint planning, in combination with the state's early emphasis on internal marketing of the One-Stop initiative to agency staff, contributed to good will among many different agency partners who will be affected by the transition.

Inevitably, however, staff within agencies affected by reorganizations are affected by the uncertainty surrounding their individual and agency futures as well as by the need to adjust to the "culture changes" that accompany the One-Stop initiative. At the state level, uncertainty remains about whether and how the education, school-to-work, and vocational rehabilitation programs will be incorporated into integrated workforce development system over time. At the local level, the greatest unknown at the time of the site visit was whether the state would require local service providers to compete for contracts and how this would affect the relationships among the local One-Stop partners. The state Capacity Building Committee has recognized the importance of responding to culture change with training that helps staff from all participating agencies adjust to system change and strengthens team work skills.

However, it has taken time to develop internal support for the One-Stop transformation and to coordinate state-level planning and early local implementation efforts. Initially, the state wanted to spend the first year of the One-Stop implementation grant in state transformation and system-building and to move on to local implementation efforts during the second year. Ultimately, as a condition of the DOL One-Stop grant, state and local implementation efforts were undertaken simultaneously. This created some difficulties, because the state was still making important decisions at the same time that selected first-year sites were encouraged to move ahead with local One-Stop implementation. Staff in these sites were encouraged to develop their own One-Stop visions and design their own local systems without much detailed guidance from the state, which caused confusion. It also prevented the state from being as ready to meet the capacity-building needs of local staff as quickly as state and local partners would have liked.

Overall, Iowa has developed a comprehensive and sophisticated implementation plan, particularly in the development of an integrated information system and performance management system. The One-Stop initiative in Iowa has developed a unifying vision and appears to have broad-based support among key stakeholders at the state and local levels.