

Work2future Board - public comment

Joe Herrity

Thu 9/15/2022 8:38 AM

COMMENT 1, RE: II. A, under the header "PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL STATUS AS OF JUNE 30, 2022"

I would like to express concerns about the effective use of public funds

Under the sub-header "Key Highlights" it is noted that "work2future has \$4.30 million from the current Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth allocations to be carried over to FY 2022-23"

I am profoundly concerned at this level of underspending during a period in which we are exiting a pandemic that had catastrophic economic consequences for youth and young adults from historically marginalized communities. Further, given the number of young adults categorically eligible as out-of-school via enrollment in reengagement high schools in region, as well as the opportunity presented to partner with those schools under WIOA and California education code 47612.1, this strikes me as a failure to find innovation through partnership during a time in which this is of utmost importance. Further, through the participation in in-school-youth waiver, which was signed on to about this time last year, work2future was able to increase its ISY expenditures up to 40% if targeting system impact youth, which should have made for an easy increase.

Further on in this section, under sub-header "Other Discretionary Funding"

In the final bullet referencing Google's investment and the \$625,000 directed to work2future for earn & learn approaches, I am deeply concerned about work2future's ability to steward these precious resources and effectively implement an earn & learn model of substance. To date, work2future has not proven effective at doing this. The efforts of San Jose works and WIOA programs to build earn and learn models have yielded little of substance, even with explicit legislative mandates to do so from federal, state, and local government. Work2future is only superficially involved in some of the most robust efforts around this via durable funding streams like the state's Strong Workforce Program. I cannot in good conscience, as a resident of San Jose and advocate for young people, accept this allocation of resources with no clear plan.

In a time of need I see massive amounts of resources rolling over while contracted vendors are struggling with enrollments, and youth are in need of connected resources and a workforce ecosystem that works. What is the strategic plan that turns these efforts into grant funded one-offs into a strategic and interlinked set of service and pathways?