ALABAMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM

Department of Economic and Community Affairs
Workforce Development Division
401 Adams Avenue
Post Office 5690
Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5690

July 10, 2014

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIVE NO. PY2014-01

SUBJECT: Training and Employment Notice (TEN) – Informed Career Decisions

1. Purpose. This transmits the following TEN:

Number	Date	Subject
33-13	6/04/14	Joint Letter on Informing Career Decisions from the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

2. Discussion. The purpose of TEN No. 33-13 is to share the interagency support for ensuring students and parents have relevant and timely information to make informed career decisions. TEN No. 33-13 is meant to encourage continued coordination and collaboration across the public workforce, adult basic education, career and technical education, and human and social service systems to prepare students for education and career paths.

The attached joint letter builds on joint work among the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services to build and strengthen career pathways. The career pathways framework align education and training programs with the needs of employers and targeted industries within local, regional, or state economies to help individuals attain relevant certifications, connect successfully to work, and advance to higher levels of education and wages over time. An early and essential step in the career pathways framework is to help young people make informed decisions about their future education and career options. This letter provides ways that workforce investment boards and American Job Centers can partner with high schools and human service agencies to improve counseling opportunities for students.

3. Action. This Directive should be distributed accordingly to local areas and workforce development partners. Local area and partner staff should seek to strengthen existing partnerships and build new relationships with schools and agencies serving youth in order to take full advantage of all resources available to youth participating in career center services. Staff should become familiar with resources available through other agencies and also serve as a resource, particularly in the area of career planning to schools and other agencies in order to help youth in the community successfully transition into careers and higher education.

4. Contact. Any questions regarding this Directive should be referred to Lorilei Sanders, State Programs and Divisional Budget Management Section at (334) 353-1632 or lorilei.sanders@adeca.alabama.gov.

Steve Walkley, Division Chief
ADECA, Workforce Development Division

7/25/2014
Date

Attachment: TEN No. 33-13

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 33-13
	DATE June 4, 2014

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS
AMERICAN JOB CENTER MANAGERS
WIA 166 AND 477 GRANTEES

FROM: PORTIA WU
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Joint Letter on Informing Career Decisions from the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

1. **Purpose.** To share the interagency support for ensuring students and parents have relevant and timely information to make informed career decisions. This notice is meant to encourage continued coordination and collaboration across the public workforce, adult basic education, career and technical education, and human and social service systems to prepare students for education and career paths.

2. **References.** Training and Employment Notice No. 36-11, "Joint Letter on Career Pathways from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families."

3. **Background.** The attached joint letter builds on joint work among the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education and Health and Human Services to build and strengthen career pathways. The career pathways framework aligns education and training programs with the needs of employers and targeted industries within local, regional, or state economies to help individuals attain relevant certifications, connect successfully to work, and advance to higher levels of education and wages over time. An early and essential step in the career pathways framework is to help young people make informed decisions about their future education and career options. This letter provides ways that workforce investment boards and American Job Centers can partner with high schools and human service agencies to improve counseling opportunities for students.

4. **Inquiries.** Questions concerning this Training and Employment Notice should be directed to the appropriate Regional Office.

5. **Attachment.** See attached joint commitment letter.

June 3, 2014

Dear Colleagues:

This letter highlights the joint commitment of the U.S. departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor to provide education, workforce development[1], social services, and private-sector leaders with information[2] about ways that high schools and human services agencies can work with the American Job Center network.[3] The goal is to ensure that students and their parents have relevant and timely information with which to make informed career decisions. In support of the Administration's goal of leading the world in college completion by 2020, we are committed to giving students information about college and career options, and opportunities that can help them make informed choices for their futures.

While high school counseling already includes an emphasis on planning for college, career counseling remains a minor function of guidance and counseling practices at the secondary level. Given the multiple roles of high school counselors and the limited time they have available to provide guidance to students on career planning, additional school staff members are expected to participate in students' career planning efforts. According to the 2003 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) survey,[4] the majority of schools reported having a "team approach to career development." This approach was the most commonly cited among a list of program features having a positive effect on a high school's delivery of career counseling services. While all schools provide some type of career exposure through the formal curriculum and other resources[5], there remain significant challenges in helping high school students plan for the careers that have sparked their interest, including:

- Ratio of school counselors to students – Most schools have few school counselors and those few work with large numbers of students. There is insufficient time and resources for the school counselors to meet regularly with students to help them make informed educational choices that align with their career aspirations or to track student progress consistently.
- Multiple roles – School counselors' roles focus primarily on issues impacting academic achievement, leaving less time for career planning and counseling.

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[1] "Workforce development" is also referred to as "workforce investment."

[2] Additional information is provided in the appendices regarding: (1) examples of partnerships in which schools and the workforce investment system work together in collaborative relationships; (2) national career counseling tools and resources; (3) selected state career counseling tools and resources; (4) research and evaluation studies and reports; and (5) information for school counselors. The information provided in the enclosed appendices is provided for the convenience of the reader and is not an endorsement by the signatory agencies or the federal government. Moreover, the signatory agencies do not guarantee the accuracy of the content of the Web links provided in these appendices.

[3] The centers in the American Job Center network are also referred to as "One-Stop Career Centers." To learn more about these centers and to locate the center closest to you, please visit: http://jobcenter.usa.gov/about-us/.

[4] Based on most recent available NCES data on high school guidance counseling (See 2003 NCES High School Guidance Counselor Survey (2003 NCES survey), it appears that high school career counseling is a secondary focus whereas academic counseling appears to be of primary importance in high schools. In 2001–02, almost half the respondent high schools stated that helping students with academic achievement was the most important goal of their counseling program. Only 8 percent said that helping students prepare for their careers was their most emphasized guidance goal. In 1984, by comparison, just over one-third of responding high schools said that counseling on academic achievement was their most important goal.

[5] The NCES shows that guidance programs are generally equipped with tools students can use on their own, such as computerized and non-computerized career information resources and college catalogues. Additionally, testing for career planning is generally available in school districts.

- Current job market information – In some instances school counselors and other personnel may not have access to the latest information on current job trends and requirements. This could limit students' abilities to make informed decisions about educational and training opportunities to further their career aspirations. It could also limit their ability to find unpaid and paid internships, cooperative placements, and/or summer or year-round jobs that enable them to develop critical workforce readiness skills.

School district efforts to increase the capacity and number of school counselors would certainly assist in addressing these challenges. However, schools and school counselors should not have to resolve these issues alone. Partnerships between education institutions, workforce development and human services agencies, and the private sector can be forged to help address the challenges by expanding the resources that are currently available to schools and school counselors.

The public workforce investment system provides services that assist: (1) youths and adults with career guidance, work experience, and job training; and (2) employers with finding skilled workers. These services, as well as online career tools, are available through the American Job Centers. There are over 2,500 of these job centers across the United States. Operated by community colleges, community-based organizations, and government agencies, the centers are funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration through state workforce agencies. Job seekers and businesses can access employment, education, and training services at an American Job Center, including the Workforce Investment Act Youth Program, Job Corps, YouthBuild, Workforce Investment Act Adult Program, adult education, postsecondary vocational education (that is, postsecondary career and technical education), and vocational rehabilitation. Some centers also provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program services.

Across the federal government, there are efforts under way to help states and localities better connect their education and workforce services to make it easier for job seekers and employers to connect with one another. To support these efforts, the president's goal of increasing awareness and usage of American Job Centers involves creating closer linkages among the centers and high schools to provide information that can assist students in preparing for college and careers.

Partnerships between American Job Centers, high schools, human services agencies, and the private sector can help ensure the successful transition of students from high school graduation to postsecondary education and the workforce by:

- Providing career development services, such as interest inventories, career exploration activities and tools, and occupational information based on local labor market conditions;
- Offering counseling services, including providing information about resume preparation, interview skills, and the long-term benefits of postsecondary education and training (e.g., increased earning power and career mobility);
- Providing all high school students with quality individualized learning plans (ILPs) that promote opportunities for self-exploration, career exploration, career planning, and postsecondary education and training in order to advance short- and long-term career goals;
- Providing information about career options like Registered Apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship programs like Jobs Corps and YouthBuild that provide "earn and learn" opportunities that can lead to industry-recognized credentials;
- Creating awareness about summer youth employment programs that frequently offer job shadowing, mentoring, and supportive services; and

- Connecting with state and local career pathway efforts that work to develop clear sequences of education and training that span secondary and postsecondary education, and lead to industry-recognized credentials and in-demand, well-paying jobs in high-growth sectors.[6]

These partnerships between the job centers, high schools, human services agencies, and the private sector also support robust college and career counseling services that incorporate up-to-date information on: (1) existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and (2) the education and training aligned to these opportunities. These partnerships can help ensure that high school students have the information they need to be ready for college and careers, and alleviate some of the gaps in college and career counseling that is provided in high schools today.

The workforce investment, education, and human services agencies, in collaboration with the private sector, can take various steps to ensure that students have the skills to select the education and training they need based on current and relevant information, make informed career decisions, and find internships or employment. These steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing exposure and career guidance support for students;
- Enhancing and expanding current guidance and career counseling efforts by adding a focus on career readiness and success that is aligned with students' academic programs, job search needs, and plans for postsecondary education;
- Developing partnerships with business, industry, and unions in the design and delivery of career planning;
- Disseminating college and career guidance and planning resources and tools; and
- Providing school counselors with information that would result in improved job performance, reduced burden, and enhanced direct service to students.

There are different ways that high schools, human services agencies, and the private sector can structure partnerships with American Job Centers. For example, an American Job Center can:

- Host school field trips for students;
- Co-locate in high schools and/or community colleges;
- Use mobile units to make routine stops at high schools;
- Provide training to school counselors, library media specialists, and teachers on how to use the in-person and online services available through American Job Centers so they are better equipped to counsel students;
- Work directly with students who are eligible for specific programs, such as the Workforce Investment Act Title I Youth Program;
- Collaborate with local workforce investment boards to share workforce and labor market information with schools, including data on high-growth industries and occupations;
- Help school counselors host job fairs and career days, bolstering employer engagement in these events, and supporting career exploration and job search skills;

[6] For more information on career pathway approaches, please see the 2012 joint letter issued by the departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services outlining the essential components of career pathway programs and links to technical assistance resources to help develop them. The letter is available at http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/ten-attachment.pdf/.

- Partner with schools to build linkages with businesses that provide opportunities for students to develop employability skills through summer internships, work experiences, pre-apprenticeships, or job shadowing;
- Co-enroll youths in TANF into programs offered at the centers so that they can benefit from additional services, such as occupational skills training;
- Partner with agencies funded under the Community Services Block Grant, which offer additional supports for youths, such as financial education and mentorship; and/or
- Form partnerships among schools and state or local child welfare agencies to help current and former foster care youths obtain education and employment.

We urge education, workforce development, social services, and private-sector leaders to join us in our commitment to help high schools and human services agencies utilize the resources of American Job Centers to ensure that students and their parents have relevant and timely information for making informed career decisions.

Sincerely,

Brenda Dann-Messier
Assistant Secretary
Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education
U.S. Department of Education

Portia Wu
Assistant Secretary
Employment and Training Administration
U.S. Department of Labor

Mark Greenberg
Acting Assistant Secretary
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Enclosure

Appendix 1—National Career Counseling Tools and Resources

The following national websites and resources are available for students, parents, teachers, and school counselors.

My Next Move
http://www.mynextmove.org/
My Next Move is an interactive tool for job seekers and students to learn more about their career options, including growing jobs. My Next Move has tasks, skills, salary information, and more than 900 different careers listed. Users can find careers through keyword searches, by browsing industries that employ different types of workers, or through the O*NET Interest Profiler, a tool that offers personalized career suggestions based on a person's interests and level of work experience.

Occupational Outlook Handbook
http://www.bls.gov/ooh/
The *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, prepared by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, provides detailed information about employment projections and other occupation information. Easy to use buttons on the front page of this website show you the highest paying, fastest growing, and most new jobs.

O*NET Online
http://www.onetonline.org/
O*NET Online supports students in career planning by providing key data for identifying and developing workplace skills.

***Youth Jobs*+ Initiative**
http://www.whitehouse.gov/economy/jobs/youthjobs
President Obama issued a challenge to businesses, nonprofits, and government: Work together to provide pathways to employment for low-income and disconnected youths. Building off the 2012 Summer Jobs+ program, President Obama has announced Youth Jobs+, which will bring together elected officials, local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and faith institutions to create pathways to employment for young Americans.

CareerOneStop
http://www.careeronestop.org/
CareerOneStop includes tools to explore careers, investigate salary and benefit information, review state-by-state labor market conditions and employment trends, research education and training opportunities, plan a job search and browse job sites, write and improve resumes and cover letters, prepare for a job interview, and search for jobs.

What's My Next Move? Career Guide
http://www.careeronestop.org/whats-my-next-move.aspx/
This printable guide includes seven easy steps to help students plan a career path after graduation. It was developed as a resource to connect young people to online career exploration resources available from the Department of Labor. The guide encourages students to think about and make decisions about their future, and to engage with school counselors, workforce professionals, teachers, and parents and guardians.

YouthRules!
http://youthrules.dol.gov
Through YouthRules! DOL and its partners seek to promote positive and safe work experiences to help prepare young workers to enter the 21st-century workforce.

Individualized Learning Plans How-to Guide
http://www.ncwd-youth.info/ilp/how-to-guide
The individualized learning plans (ILP) how-to guide is designed for schools, educators, and other professionals who assist youths with college and career readiness and transition planning. The guide can help schools develop a bridge between college and career readiness through the use of ILPs, and help youths achieve prosperous and productive lives. The career development activities and resources in this guide are also useful for youth service professionals in the workforce development system.

Appendix 2 —Examples of Partnerships

There are several communities in which schools and the workforce investment system already partner creatively and productively, particularly in providing career information and guidance to students and parents. Some of these are:

Wisconsin's Career 101 Initiative [7]

http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwdwia/PDF/career101_grant_app.pdf

This initiative provides career information to students that promotes career awareness and supports student learning about career opportunities. Career 101 activities include career portfolio development, career assessment and research, resume and cover letter preparation, applying for jobs, job shadowing, interning, and paid work experiences.

Missouri Connections and Missouri Career Guide

http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/missouriconnections.htm

Missouri has created websites that aim to provide labor market information for a student audience to guide career and education decisions. The Missouri Connections website (http://www.missouriconnections.org/) is developed in partnership with the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center, the Missouri departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Higher Education, and the Missouri Division of Workforce Development. Missouri has also created a Missouri Career Guide for students and school counselors in hard copy and online at: http://www.missourieconomy.org/occupations/career_guide.stm

College and Career Centers at High Schools in Minneapolis

http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/promise/

According to its website, "the Minneapolis Promise is an innovative cluster of coordinated efforts designed to eliminate barriers to college for Minneapolis students. ... The Minneapolis Promise provides young people with counseling to help them plan a vision for their future, quality summer jobs to prepare them for the workforce, and financial assistance to attend college." Privately funded College and Career Centers are now located inside all seven Minneapolis public high schools and eight specialty high schools. The centers are equipped with computers, trained school counselors, and college planning resources. An online career planning tool is administered to each ninth-grader to develop a personalized "My Life Plan."

Statewide Career Education Model in Nebraska

http://www.nebraskacareerconnections.org/careerClusters.htm

The Nebraska departments of Education and Labor, along with other organizations, established the Nebraska Career Education (NCE) model that can begin in elementary school and continues through high school and college, and throughout an adult's career. The model includes career exploration resources for educators to use in the classroom, for job seekers to use online, and for businesses to use to post jobs. Nebraska aims to use the model to provide a common vision for all statewide partners, including business, industry, education, government, and private partners.

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[7] The information and descriptions related to each Web link in this report either come directly from the websites or are descriptions provided by an agency's content expert.

Creating Strong Linkages With Businesses in South Carolina
http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/174/documents/SCCDGCPM06-23-08Final.pdf
South Carolina has developed the Comprehensive Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program, which it describes as providing "developmental opportunities and experiences that address three central student-development areas: learning to live (personal/social), learning to learn (academic), and learning to work (career)." It also includes "sequential activities designed to address the needs of all students by helping them to acquire competence in the knowledge of self and others, in identifying their educational goals, and in their own career development." As a part of this comprehensive model, the Midlands Education and Business Alliance (MEBA) supports schools in South Carolina by connecting educators with the business sector. MEBA activities provide educators with up-to-date knowledge on careers and the requirements students will need to pursue those careers.

Appendix 3—Selected State Career Counseling Tools and Resources

While not an exhaustive list, the following state websites and tools have emerged as promising resources and approaches to support students, parents, teachers, and school counselors.

Career Pathways Roadmap Web Tool

http://oregon.ctepathways.org/

The Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (OCCWD), working in partnership with Oregon's 17 community colleges through the Oregon Pathways Alliance, developed the Career Pathways Roadmap Web Tool to provide visual maps using Web technology for students and citizens to learn more about education, training, occupations, careers, and the labor market. Other state agencies, educational institutions, and organizations are encouraged to download the source code to develop a comparable Web tool for the students and citizens in their state or region.

Kansas Career Pipeline

http://kansascareerpipeline.org/

The Kansas Career Pipeline (KCP) system helps individuals (grade 5 through adult) measure their career interests, skills and work values, explore occupations, establish educational strategies, and ultimately connect with employers who need their talents. This website supports parents of middle school and high school students by allowing them to get directly involved in their child's education and career planning. Students can use the KCP system to learn about themselves, build an educational plan, and explore and prepare for the various options after high school. The KCP system provides parents with a free account to check out the resources available to their child, review their child's lifelong portfolio, and learn more about how they can help with the career planning process.

Appendix 4—Evidence From Research and Evaluation Studies and Reports

Decisions Without Direction: Career Guidance and Decision-Making Among American Youth (Ferris State University Career Institute for Education and Workforce Development, May 2002)
http://www.constructmyfuture.com/Teachers/Resources/PDF/dwd.pdf
This national study surveyed Michigan's youths to determine how they chose careers and related courses of study, and the external factors that influenced those choices.

Using TANF Funds to Support Subsidized Youth Employment: The 2010 Summer Youth Employment Initiative (Mathematica Policy Research, 2011)
http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2012_02.pdf)
This research found that summer employment programs help youths build new and valuable skills.

Reinvesting in America's Youth: Lessons from the 2009 Recovery Act Summer Youth Employment Initiative (Mathematica Policy Research, 2010)
http://www.dol.gov/summerjobs/pdf/AmericasYouth.pdf
This study of summer jobs programs funded by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and TANF found that nearly 75 percent of youth participants improved their work readiness skills.

Appendix 5—Additional Information for School Counselors

American College Counseling Association
http://www.collegecounseling.org/
Strives to support and enhance the practice of college counseling to promote ethical and responsible professional practice.

American School Counselor Association
http://www.schoolcounselor.org/
Supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social, and career development.

Center for the Study of Technology in Counseling and Career Development
http://www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter/
Assists practitioners, researchers, software developers, and policymakers in improving the design and use of computer applications in counseling and career development. The center also assists practitioners, researchers, and policymakers in improving the cost-effectiveness of career services.

Education World Counseling Center
http://www.educationworld.com/counseling/index.shtml
Provides an online resource area for school counselors covering academic development, career and college development, personal and social development, assessment, and counseling techniques.

National Career Development Association
http://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sp/home_page
Provides service to the public and professionals involved with or interested in career development, including professional development activities, publications, research, public information (with links to other Internet sites and tools for planning for the future, searching for employers, finding additional training options, etc.), professional standards, advocacy, and recognition activities.

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
http://www.ncwd-youth.info/
Provides a wealth of workforce development resources for program administrators, educators, policymakers, families, and youths on transition to employment, postsecondary education, and independent living for all youths, including those with disabilities.

Perkins Collaborative Resource Network
http://cte.ed.gov/
Contains tools and resources for use by students, counselors, parents, teachers, and administrators, including the Career Decision-Making Tool, the National Career Development Guidelines, the Career Development Toolkit, and parent brochures (in Spanish and English).

Connect! College & Career Planning
http://connectedu.com/connect
Provides a comprehensive open source Web-based resource that allows students to take a variety of assessments, search for colleges, develop a personalized college and career plan, and find financial aid information. This site also allows for monitoring by school counselors and parents.

Student Interest Survey for Career Clusters™

http://www.careertech.org/career-clusters/ccresources/interest-survey.html

Contains a career guidance tool that allows students to respond to questions and identify the top three Career Clusters™ of interest based on their responses. This pencil-and-paper survey takes about 15 minutes to complete and can be used in the classroom or for presentations with audiences who have an interest in career exploration. The survey is available in English and Spanish.