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AUTHOR	Haley, Mary
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ABSTRACT

    A study assessed the characteristics and practices of employers participating in Florida school-to-work (STW) initiatives, the factors influencing their participation, and the quality and value of their partnerships with schools. Data were gathered through a statewide mail survey of a random sample of employers drawn from more than 15,000 Florida STW employers. Six industry types (government, business and services, construction trades, health care, and hospitality, travel and entertainment) accounted for three-fourths of the study population. Employers ranged in size from one to 6,000 employees. More than half had fewer than 50 employees. The study showed broad-based employer participation in these three STW areas: working with students, working with educators, and internal company practices supporting STW. Employers were less involved in a fourth area--building a system. Employers were most motivated to participate in STW by the opportunity to contribute to the local community and to the quality of public education. Work force-related incentives, such as employee recruitment, were rated higher as incentives to participate than were program-related needs. Lack of information about STW was cited as the major disincentive to employer participation. Size was the greatest determinant of employer participation, with the largest employers most likely to participate. (Survey results and open-ended comments are appended. Contains 89 references.) (KC)

Connecting Work and School

A STATEWIDE STUDY OF EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION IN FLORIDA SCHOOL-TO-WORK INITIATIVES

March 2001

Prepared for:

Department of Education
Division of Workforce Development
Office of Program Development and School-to-Work
Barbie Williamson, Director
Loretta Costin, Division Director
325 W. Gaines Street, Room 754
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Prepared by:

Mary Haley, Ed.D.
Project Director

The Institute for Workforce Competitiveness
Florida International University
Miami, Florida 33199
Frank Hammons, Ed.D.
Associate Professor and Director
(305) 348-6529 (phone, voice mail)
(305) 348-6524 (fax)
xiwc@fiu.edu (e-mail)
http://www.fiu.edu/~xiwc

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Florida International University
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(305) 348-6529 (phone, voice mail)
(305) 348-6524 (fax)
xiwc@fiu.edu (e-mail)
http://www.fiu.edu/~xiwc

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 (STWOA) provided venture capital to the states and a framework for engaging a broad range of partners in the development of an integrated school-to-work transition system. Under the STWOA, Florida was awarded a five-year, $54.6 million grant to build the state's school-to-work (STW) system. In addition, in 1996, the Florida Legislature designed School-to-Work as one of four key workforce development strategies and the strategy focusing on the initial preparation of the workforce. In school-to-work, academic and career preparation are integrated to support the career goals of all students.

Florida's school-to-work strategy depends upon active employer involvement in local partnership initiatives to provide leadership for system-building efforts, to enhance the quality of school curriculum and instruction, and to provide work-based learning opportunities for students and educators. The purpose of this study was to assess, from the perspective of the employers, the characteristics and practices of employers participating in Florida school-to-work initiatives, the factors influencing their participation, and the quality and value of their partnerships with schools. The study also sought to examine the relationships between employer characteristics and participation.

This report presents the results of a statewide survey of employers in Florida's 28 STW regions. A cross-sectional survey design was employed in which data were collected via a mail survey from a random sample of employers drawn from a population of more than 15,000 Florida STW employers. The strength of the study's findings is based on its comprehensive examination of employer STW participation, the statewide scale of the study, and the use of a probability sampling design.

Florida's School-to-Work Employers

Six industry types account for more than three-fourths of employers who responded to the survey: wholesale and retail trade (17%); local, state or federal government (15%); business and other services (13%), construction/building trades (11%), health care (11%), and hospitality, travel and entertainment (9%). Employer establishments ranged in size from one to 6,000 employees. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the sample were small establishments (1-50 employees), 18% were medium-sized establishment (51 – 150 employees), and 24% were large establishments (>150 employees). At the 95% confidence level, it was estimated that employers in the Florida STW employer population have a mean of between 25 and 51 employees.

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Employer Participation in STW Initiatives

The data from this study show broad-based employer participation in three of four STW areas: Working with Students, Working with Educators, and Internal Company Practices Supporting STW. A fourth area, Building a System, shows more limited employer involvement.

Working with Students. More than half of employers reported providing career information or classroom instruction to students (66%), giving workplace or industry tours to students (56%), providing job-shadow opportunities (55%), and providing student internships or volunteer opportunities (53%). Employers participate in an average of three activities with students, and sixty percent of employers (60%) participate in three or more activities with students.

Working with Educators. Less than one third of employers report participating in any single activity in this area, with participation ranging from 23 to 30%. Thirty percent assist teachers with student project work (30%), share information on technology (30%), or share skill standards for educator use in program planning (30%). Employers average 2.8 activities working with educators. Almost four of ten employers (39%) do not work with educators in any of the activities listed.

Internal Company Practices Supporting STW. Employer participation in this area was mixed. The mean employer score was 8.3 and the median 7.0 activities. While nearly one in five employers (19%) do not engage in any of the internal practices supporting STW included in the survey, more than half (57%) engage in two or more practices.

Fifty-six percent (56%) reported giving employees release time to attend meetings and school activities. Almost half (49%) encourage employees with skills and knowledge to serve as mentors or trainers for students; however, only about one-quarter (27%) prepare employees to supervise students in work-based learning experiences. Thirty-nine percent (39%) report actively using local education and training institutions as sources of new employees, but only 30% require applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records.

Building a System. The study showed generally lower employer participation rates for the activities in Building a System. The highest were 31% for serving on a local advisory committee or board, 14% for collaborating with other employers involved in STW and 12% for playing a leadership role in encouraging other employers to participate in STW. More than half of the employers in the sample (59%) are not involved in any of the activities listed under Building a System. The mean score is .9 activities and the median 0.0.

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Incentives and Disincentives to Employer Participation

Employers were asked to rate the importance of various incentives and disincentives to their participation.

Incentives. The incentives rated first and second by employers were the opportunity to contribute to the local community and the opportunity to contribute to the quality of public education. Third was the opportunity to contribute to the skills of the future workforce. Fourth was the opportunity to contribute to the organization's positive image in the community, and fifth was the opportunity to screen potential employees.

Workforce-related incentives, mostly in the form of individual recruitment or labor market needs, were rated higher in general by employers than were program-related incentives, comprising seven of the ten highest-rated incentives on a list of 17 incentives. These findings constitute strong evidence on the importance of workforce-related incentives for employers, confirming and extending evidence from earlier research on employer STW incentives.

Disincentives. In general, employers in this study gave stronger importance ratings to incentives than to disincentives to participation. More than half the employers in the study cited "lack of information on STW" as a moderate or major disincentive to their participation, suggesting that the quantity and quality of the information provided to employers is an issue. (This specific disincentive was not included in previous studies of employer participation.) The next three highest disincentives were rated by less than half of employers as moderate or major disincentives. They include the bureaucracy of the school system, concern about students' maturity or reliability, and concern about regulatory issues.

The cost of participation was not found to be a major barrier to employers. More than two-thirds of employers rated the cost of training and supervising students (67%) and the cost of program development (74%) as either not a disincentive or only a minor disincentive to their participation.

Employer STW Partnerships with Schools

This study showed that strong working relationships are being forged between employers and schools in Florida STW initiatives. At the 95% confidence level, it was estimated that employers in the population have been in STW partnerships with schools for a mean of between five and seven years, with individual responses ranging from one to 43 years.

Data showed that overall, employers had more positive perceptions of the value of their STW partnerships than of the quality of the partnerships. Concerning the quality of their partnerships with schools, more than half of employers agreed that

both a sense of trust (83%) and good communication (67%) exist between educators and employer partners. However, more than half (54%) disagreed that the partnership communicates with stakeholders in the community.

Concerning the value of their partnerships with schools, there was strong agreement among employers that as a result of the partnership's activities, students are better prepared for work and careers (94% agreement) and that the partnership makes a difference in education and the community (86% agreement).

Relationships between Employer Characteristics and STW Participation

A major contribution of this study is its findings on the relationships between employer characteristics and employer participation. The study found no differences in employer participation among the industry groups represented in the sample. Neither did the study show a relationship between the employer's status as a high performance workplace and participation. However, the study found positive, significant relationships between employer size and participation and between length of time in STW partnerships and participation. The relationships of both variables with overall participation and with three of the four participation scores, Working with Students, Working with Educators, and Internal Company Practices, were significant in the population. Of the eight significant correlations, six coefficients were greater than .30 and one greater than .40. The relationships of employer size and length of time in STW partnerships with Building a System were not significant.

Size was more strongly related to participation in Working with Students and overall participation. This relationship was illustrated in the analysis of employer subgroups, where large employers were shown to have higher participation rates than small or medium employers in seven of nine activities with students.

As the employer's number of years in STW partnerships increases, employer activities with students and overall STW participation increase. Employers that have been in STW partnerships longer also evidence more internal company practices that support STW. It is believed that this study provides the first empirical evidence on the relationship between the number of years an employer has been in STW partnerships with schools and the employer's level of participation.

Relationships Between Employer Perceptions of Partnership Quality and Value and Participation

Also contributing to the knowledge base are the findings of relationships between employer perceptions of partnership quality and value and employer participation. This study found positive, significant relationships between perceptions of partnership quality, as measured by a quality index; and between perceptions of partnership value, as measured by a value index, and participation in three areas: Working with Students, Working with Educators, and overall participation.

Perceptions of value were also significantly related to Internal Company Practices supporting STW. Five of seven correlations were greater than .30. The lowest correlations were with Working with Students and the highest with Working with Educators. There was no relationship between either quality or value and participation in Building a System.

Data indicated that those employers who work with educators have higher perceptions of partnership quality. Also, those employers with more internal company practices supporting STW have higher perceptions of the value of their STW partnership. It is believed that this study provides the first empirical evidence on the relationship between employer participation and employer perceptions of the quality and value of their STW partnership with schools.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions and related recommendations are drawn from the results of this study.

Importance of STW Partnership-Building. The findings of this study constitute strong evidence that efforts to strengthen long-term employer-school STW partnerships will promote higher levels of employer participation. Employer participation increases with the length of time employers are involved in STW partnerships, and also with the quality and value of the partnership perceived by employers.

In order to develop good working relationships over time, educators need to move away from the traditional view of employers as "benefactors" in order to see them as long-term partners in the preparation of students for work and careers. STW initiatives should take advantage of available resources and opportunities for nurturing the partnerships. Building and maintaining the partnerships should be considered as essential to the success of STW initiatives as the programmatic or activity components.

Size matters. Employer recruitment for partnership activities should take into account the differences among small, medium, and large employers. Large employers have higher participation rates in most activities with students and teachers. Their more complex work organizations and greater numbers of management and supervisory staff enhance their capacity (both in number of slots and mentoring support) to provide work-based learning opportunities in the workplace. Small employers, uniquely positioned to advise students on "all aspects" of a business, had higher participation rates in assisting with school-based enterprises. Medium employers showed higher participation in co-op activities, suggesting they are a good fit with that program design. STW strategies need to reflect the unique strengths of employers and the employer mix in their local economies.

Removal of Barriers to Participation. The removal of obstacles to employer participation should continue to be a priority at the state and local levels. Employers were clear that they are not being reached with information on STW programs and opportunities. (This lack of awareness is especially noteworthy given that all the employers in the study are participating in STW in some way.) Also, while Florida has removed regulatory barriers to employer participation in work-based learning programs for students, employers are not fully aware of this relief, as regulatory issues were the fourth highest-rated disincentive. A statewide marketing campaign focusing on STW could address these issues, adapted in different ways in the local partnerships to meet local needs.

Another barrier cited by many employers is the bureaucracy of the school system, the second-highest rated disincentive to participation. At the school and district levels, committed leadership is needed to streamline the employer interface with schools to make it as "employer-friendly" as possible. This would include a review of relevant policies and procedures, scheduling, lines of communication, support staffing, and allocation of time for teachers to work with employers.

Employer Involvement in System-Building and the Role of Intermediaries. Study findings indicate that the STWOA has not resulted in a substantive change in employer participation in building a STW system in Florida. A majority of employers do not participate in any of the system-building activities in the study. Thirty-one percent (31%) serve on local advisory committees or boards, but this is a traditional employer role not indicative of *new* system-building efforts. Participation rates are low even for activities with many opportunities for participation, such as collaborating with other STW employers (14%) or recruiting new employers (12%). Finally, no significant relationships were found between other study variables and participation in building a STW system.

Florida has already implemented a number of demand-side strategies in its attempt to develop and integrated workforce development system, including the establishment of regional Workforce Development Boards and the linking of vocational and technical education funding with a workforce estimating process for the identification of high-skills, high-wage and high-demand occupations. However, the role of employers appears to have remained substantially unchanged, at least in the STW component.

The establishment of intermediary organizations might be considered at the state or local levels in Florida. Many workforce development observers have argued the need for employer intermediary organizations, as a mechanism for organizing collective employer action not only around STW, but also around other collective workforce needs. However they are organized, one of their important purposes would be to develop direct networking arrangements between committed, involved STW employers and links for recruitment of new employer partners through a variety of local arrangements. The potential of employer intermediary organizations for

organizing employer STW efforts could be part of a larger analysis of demand-side strategies for workforce development in Florida.

Employer Support for Education and the STW Transition in Florida. Employers should not be expected to contribute more than is feasible to the STW initiatives in their communities. At the same time, study findings indicate they are not carrying out fully some vital roles that only employers can perform. Employers can play a larger role in several ways.

- They can provide students incentives to work hard in school by linking their hiring practices to records of school-based performance. Only 30% of employers reported requiring entry-level job applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records (grades, transcripts, etc.). The other 70% are sending a wrong signal to students – that what they learn in school is not important.

- By joining and supporting organizations that link employers with schools and with other employers. Employers are still participating in "ad hoc" ways in the STW transition and are not coordinating their efforts with other employers.

- By changing their internal company practices to support education for work and careers, including enhancing the learning content of youth jobs, recognizing and rewarding employees who support STW efforts, and training employees to mentor young people.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) of 1994 committed the Departments of Labor and Education to collaborate with the states in building a school-to-work (STW) system that would embody a significant change in educational strategies for preparing all students for education and career opportunities. STWOA provided venture capital and a framework for engaging a broad range of stakeholders in the development of an integrated STW transition system. The legislation identified the common components of STW – school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities - but gave states broad discretion to design systems that respond to their state and local needs and resources.

Under the STWOA, Florida was awarded a five-year, $54.6 million grant to implement the state's school-to-work (STW) system. Twenty-eight regional STW partnerships were developed based on existing education, job training, and labor markets. The partnerships reflect the 28 community college service areas and encompass all 67 school districts in the State. In 1996, School-to-Work was designated by the Florida Legislature as one of four key workforce development strategies and the strategy focusing on the initial preparation of the workforce. In school-to-work, academic and career preparation are integrated to support the career goals of all students.

The challenge faced by Florida STW partnerships was that of creating and integrating school-based and work-based learning opportunities so that students (a) develop an awareness of career options; (b) are able to make an effective transition from high school to work and/or post-secondary education; and (c) develop academic and workplace skills to succeed in increasingly technological and learning-intensive environments. There is no single effective partnership model; rather, STW partnerships reflect the needs and priorities of the local communities in which the partnership is formed[1]. However, there is widespread agreement that one characteristic of successful initiatives is the active involvement of employers with schools.[2]

Despite the increasing importance of employers, much of the STW and workforce development literature has continued to focus on the quality of schools and the characteristics of students: in other words, on supply-side issues rather than demand-side issues. To a great extent, employer practices, motivations, and the incentives and barriers to their participation in STW initiatives have not been adequately addressed by research. Also, information on how employers are involved in STW programs and initiatives has been largely anecdotal or has been reported by schools, not employers themselves. In Florida, where partnerships and collaborations between the public and private sectors are employed as significant

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[1] Rodriguez, 1997
[2] Brown, 1998; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996a; Lewis, 1997.

tools for the development of both a skilled workforce and a more diversified and competitive economy, the lack of data on employer participation presents a serious problem.

Florida's school-to-work strategy depends upon active employer involvement in local partnerships to provide leadership for system-building efforts, to enhance the quality of school curriculum and instruction, and to provide work-based learning opportunities for students and educators. As employers increasingly invest in their local STW initiatives, information is needed on their participation and concerns. This study was conducted to obtain information directly from employers that could lead to more effective policies and practices at the state, regional, and local levels.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess, from the perspective of the employers, the characteristics and practices of employers participating in Florida school-to-work initiatives, the factors influencing their participation, and the quality and value of their partnerships with schools. The study also sought to examine the relationships between employer characteristics and participation. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the characteristics of Florida employers who participate in STW initiatives?

2. What is the distribution of employer STW activities in Florida with regard to levels and types of participation?

3. What are the incentives and disincentives to employer participation in Florida STW initiatives?

4. How do employers perceive the quality and value of their partnerships with schools based on essential criteria for effective partnerships?

5. What are the relationships between employer characteristics and employer participation in Florida STW initiatives?

Methodology

This study used descriptive research methodology to investigate the participation of Florida employers in STW initiatives. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, in which data were collected via a mail survey from a sample of employers drawn from a pre-determined population at one point in time. The study procedures are described below.

Study Questionnaire

In the summer and fall of 1999, a questionnaire was developed to assess the participation of employers in Florida STW initiatives (Appendix A), based on a comprehensive review of the STW and employer involvement literature[3]. The questionnaire included four major sections:

- Part A asked for factual information on employer participation in STW activities in four areas: Working with Students, Working with Educators, Building a System, and Internal Company Practices Supporting STW.

- Part B asked employers to rate the importance of incentives and disincentives to their participation using a four-point response scale.

- Part C asked respondents how many years the establishment had been in STW partnerships with schools and then to indicate their agreement with statements about the quality and value of their partnership on a Likert-type scale.

- Part D asked for general employer information, including the respondent's title, the employer industry type, and number of employees. Respondents were also asked to rate the employer establishment as a high performance workplace on a scale of 1 to 10.

At the end of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to make open-ended written comments on the questionnaire or their participation in STW initiatives.

The questionnaire was assessed for validity and reliability by a panel of professional researchers and content experts in the fall of 1999. Revisions were made based on the expert review and then the questionnaire was pre-tested by a group of local employers, all members of the STW employer population, to determine the clarity and reliability of the instrument prior to conducting the survey.

Population and Sample

Construction of the sampling frame[4] for the study was completed in February 2000. The study population consisted of all Florida employers identified by one of the 28 Florida Regional STW Partnerships as participating in STW initiatives. The initial

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[3] Academy for Educational Development, 1996; American Society for Training and Development, 1995; Bailey, Hughes, and Barr, 1998; Bobosky, 1998; Committee for Economic Development, 1998; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Kazis & Goldberger, 1995; National Employer Leadership Council, 1996; Office of Technology Assessment, 1995; McNeil and Kulick, 1995; Stern, 1995.

[4] As defined by Babbie (1990), a sampling frame is the actual list of sampling units, in this case, employers, from which the sample is selected.

source of employers was the Florida STW Zone Program. The Florida STW Zone program was created to identify and recognize employers that actively participate in the education system through involvement in School-to-Work activities at either the state or the local levels. In 1997, the STW Joint Services Office in the Division of Workforce Development, Florida Department of Education established a statewide database for the STW Zone program for use by the 28 Regional STW Partnerships, who accessed the database via a secure Internet connection. The Florida STW Joint Services Office granted permission to use the database for this study.

Examination of the STW Zone database revealed that some partnerships were using it exclusively to document their employer partners; others were using it to document only their highest-participating partners; and still others were not using it at all. A number of the partnerships kept more comprehensive employer databases or lists at the district or partnership level. These were obtained and combined with the STW Zone database to construct the sampling frame for the study. The records were carefully reviewed both visually and using computer software tools to identify duplicate employer establishments and non-employer partners, which were excluded from the sampling frame[5].

The resulting sampling frame was comprised of 15,202 employers representing all 28 STW regions in Florida. A probability sample design[6] was selected based on the study's interest in understanding the population of STW employers from which the sample was selected. A simple random sample of 400 employers was drawn from the population of 15,202 employers for the survey.

Data Collection

Data were collected following the survey procedure recommended by Dillman[7] and described below:

1. An advance notice letter was mailed to the sample employers. The letter informed respondents that they would soon be receiving a questionnaire and described the study and the importance of their response.

2. One week later, the questionnaire and an accompanying explanatory letter were mailed to respondents, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the questionnaire.

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[5] Elementary, middle, secondary and post-secondary schools; and school boards and districts were excluded from the study, because, while these institutions are in fact employers, their primary and usually only role in STW initiatives is that of education partner. Civic or social organizations (garden clubs, Rotary Clubs, etc.) were also excluded based on the logic that, while they may employ a few individuals, their primary STW role is that of community partner, not employer partner.
[6] A chief advantage of probability sampling is that sample data can be used not only to calculate sample statistics, but also to estimate how close these are to the population parameters; i.e., to estimate the extent of sampling error and make inferences about the population from which the sample is drawn. Another advantage is that researcher selection bias is avoided.
[7] Dillman, 1979; Salant & Dillman, 1994.

3. Eight days after the first questionnaire mailing, a postcard reminder was mailed to all employers in the sample to thank those who had responded and request those who had not to respond.

4. Three weeks after the initial questionnaire mailing, a new personalized letter, a replacement questionnaire, and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope were mailed to all non-respondents at that time.

The above procedure was supplemented with one additional survey mailing and multiple telephone follow-ups. Data were collected over a 12-week period beginning in March 2000. Copies of the documents used in data collection are found in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the survey data included the following steps: (1) returns were analyzed and response rates calculated; (2) a check for non-response bias was performed; (3) a descriptive analysis of the data was conducted; and (4) statistical analysis techniques were used to answer research questions.

Of the original sample, 61 employers were found to be out of business, unlocatable, or a location that had been closed. Another 64 were employers not currently participating in STW activities and therefore not eligible for the study. Of the net realized sample of 275 employers, 128 useable surveys were received, for a response rate of 47%. Non-respondent bias analysis procedures demonstrated an absence of non-response bias in the sample data, allowing inferences to be made about the population from the sample.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer research questions and to estimate population parameters. Correlational analysis and analysis of variance were used to answer relationship questions. Relationships between variables were examined with tests of statistical significance at the .05 a priori level of significance ($p < .05$).

The results of the analysis are presented in the remainder of this report.

Limitations of the Study

It was not feasible to identify *all* Florida STW employers for this study. It is likely that some may be found only on lists kept at the school level, but available resources for the study did not allow for contacting every school in Florida. Also, it was not possible to determine whether the employers in the lists and databases supplied by the partnerships were proportional to the actual number and type of employers participating in STW initiatives in each region. Even so, all of the employers

identified by partnerships and/or school districts were included, and all 28 Florida STW Regions are represented in the sampling frame of 15,202 employers

Report Organization

Study findings and conclusions have been organized into the following sections based on the research questions for the study:

    I.   Florida's School-to-Work Employers

    II.   Employer Participation in STW Initiatives

    III.   Incentives and Disincentives to Employer Participation

    IV.   Employer STW Partnerships with Schools

    V.   Relationships Between Employer Characteristics and STW Participation

    VI.   Conclusions and Recommendations

Terminology and Abbreviations

The following terms and abbreviations are given for a clearer understanding of their use in this report. Unless otherwise noted, definitions are taken from Florida's Work-Based Learning and Child Labor Law Resource Guide[8].

Clinical/Practicum. Work-based experiences that offer students job-preparatory activities in a work setting under the supervision of a practicing employee/professional. Both students and clinical instructors are typically supervised by school-based coordinators or intermediary organizations that monitor placements to ensure that appropriate instruction occurs. Such experiences should extend over 40 or more hours, should be at the work site, and are normally unpaid. Successful completion of clinical or practicum experiences normally results in credit toward certification, licensure, or a professional degree.

Cooperative education. A structured method of secondary or postsecondary job-preparatory instruction consisting of 40 or more hours on the work site whereby students alternate or coordinate their studies with a paid job that is related to those studies. Instruction is based on written training and evaluation plans agreed to by the school and the employer; the students receive credit for both classroom and work.

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[8] Florida Departments of Education and Labor & Employment Security, 1997

Employer/Employer Establishment. The term employer includes private sector organizations - businesses and industry and business associations - as well as public and private non-profit organizations. For purposes of this study, an employer establishment is defined as an employer unit at a single physical location.

HR/HRD. Human resource/human resource development.

Incentive/Disincentive. An employer incentive is an employer benefit or factor that encourages or facilitates employer participation in STW initiatives. An employer disincentive is a barrier or factor that discourages employer participation in STW initiatives.

Internship. Exploratory or preparatory paid or unpaid work-site experiences where students work for an employer or agency for 40 or more hours to learn about a particular industry or occupation. Activities may include special projects, a sample of tasks from different jobs, or tasks from a single occupation. Internships may include community service (service learning) placements if they meet the above requirements and are related to the student's program of study/career major.

Job shadowing. Unpaid career-awareness or exploratory activities in which middle school, high school, or postsecondary student, teacher, or adult learner follows an experienced employee on the work site for four or more hours to learn about a particular occupation or industry.

Mentoring. Mentoring experiences are work-site paid or unpaid career-awareness, exploration, or preparation experiences of eight hours or more wherein the student is paired with an employee mentor who possesses the skills, knowledge, and workplace behavior the student seeks to acquire. The mentor instructs the student, challenges the student to perform well, and assesses the student's performance in consultation with the employer and school representative.

Preapprenticeship. An organized course of instruction in the public school system or elsewhere designed to prepare a person 16 years of age or older to become an apprentice and which course is approved and registered with the Florida Bureau of Apprenticeship and sponsored by a registered apprenticeship program.

Registered Apprenticeship. A formal program registered with the U.S. Department of Labor or with an approved state apprenticeship agency and which is typically paid work experience[9].

School Enterprise. School-enterprise experiences are activities carried out in a school or employer-sponsored enterprise in which students produce goods or services. School enterprises provide career-awareness, -exploration, or -

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[9] National School-to-Work Office, 1996

preparation experiences for 40 or more hours and normally involve students in all aspects of the business to the extent possible.

STW. School-to-Work.

STWOA. School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994.

School-to-Work Initiative. A "systematic, comprehensive, community-wide effort to help all young people (1) prepare for high skill and high wage careers, (2) receive top quality academic instruction, and (3) gain the foundation skills to pursue postsecondary education and life-long learning."[10]

Youth Apprenticeship. A career-based program of academic and technical instruction in the public school system composed of an in-school component and a coordinated paid work-experience component. The youth apprenticeship follows a career major strategy based on identified career ladders and has formal connections to, and advanced placement in, registered apprenticeships and/or related postsecondary occupational/technical programs.

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[10] Imel, 1995, p. 1

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I. FLORIDA'S SCHOOL-TO-WORK EMPLOYERS

Florida employers participating in STW initiatives reflect the diversity of the State's economy. Two chief characteristics of the employers examined by the survey were *size* and *industry*. Also of interest was the individual within the employer organization who completed the survey.

Employer Size

Size was measured by the number of employees reported by the employer establishment[11]. The number of employees reported ranged from one to 6,000 employees. The median number of employees was 25, indicating that half the employers in the sample have greater than 25 and half fewer than 25 employees.

> **School-to-Work employer partners in Florida have an average of between 25 and 51 employees***
>
> *95% confidence level

The sample mean of 277 employees was much higher than the median of 25. This raw average is misleading because it is influenced by extreme values. (The largest five employers who responded to the survey had from 2,200 to 6,000 employees, the highest being an aerospace company.) Because the data distribution was highly positively skewed, the data were transformed to log base 10 prior to estimating a confidence interval for the population mean[12]. Using this method, at the 95% confidence level, the average number of employees in the STW employer population is between 25 and 51.

Participating Employers by Size (N=128)

Large 24%
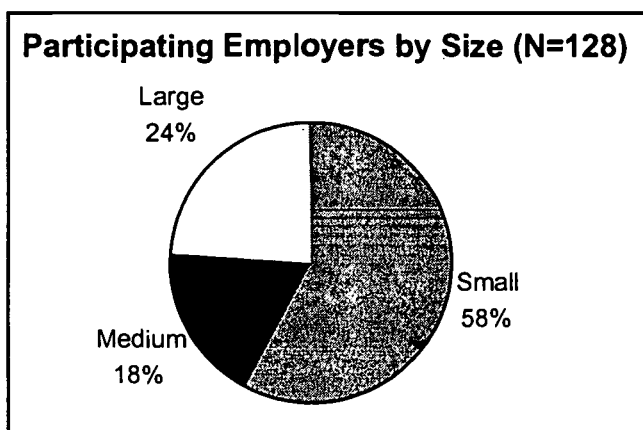
Small 58%

Medium 18%

To determine if there were important differences in survey responses based on size, employers were classified into subgroups. Employers with 1 to 50 employees were categorized as small, 51 to 150 employees as medium, and more than 150 employees as large. The proportions of small, medium and large employers in the survey responses are displayed in the accompanying pie graph.

Based on this classification, 74 employers were small (almost six of every ten), 23 were medium (fewer than two of every ten), and 31 were large (almost one quarter).

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[11] For purposes of this study, an employer establishment was defined as a unique physical location of an employer or employer association.

[12] Transformation of the raw data to a logarithm scale normalizes the data for more exact inference where procedures assume normal distributions.

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Not all STW partnership databases included employer size, and those who did used different ranges for classifying employers, making it difficult to determine how well this breakdown matches the population. However, the proportions are consistent with anecdotal accounts of STW practitioners, who report that many of Florida's STW partners are small employers.

Employer Industry Type

The survey asked employers to indicate their business or industry type. They were given 12 business types to choose from, including a 13th "other" option in which they could list an industry area not included in the choices. A summary of the responses is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Number and Percent of Employers by Industry Type

Industry	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Wholesale or Retail Trade	22	17	17
Local, State or Federal Government	19	15	32
Business & Other Services	16	13	45
Construction/Building Trades	14	11	56
Health Care	14	11	67
Hospitality, Travel, Entertainment	12	9	76
Banking, Finance, Insurance or Real Estate	10	8	84
Manufacturing	8	6	90
Information/Telecommunications	8	6	96
Agriculture, Horticulture, Environmental	5	4	100
Total	128	100	

As shown in Table 1, six industry areas accounted for more than three-fourths of employers: wholesale and retail trade (17%); local, state or federal government (15%); business and other services (13%), construction/building trades (11%), health care (11%), and hospitality, travel and entertainment (9%).

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Survey Respondents

While the unit of analysis for the study was the employer establishment, the individuals who completed the survey were also of interest. Respondents were asked to indicate their position title within the organization; the position was then classified according to whether it was a "line" position or a "staff" position. Individuals who work in the principal or core business activities of the organization hold line positions; individuals who work in support functions (such as personnel, accounting, etc.) hold staff positions. Almost three-fourths of survey respondents were in line positions (74%, n=95). Only one quarter of respondents (26%, n=33) were in staff positions.

The proportions of line and staff positions held by survey respondents were different for small, medium, and large employers. Among small employers, almost all respondents were in line positions, mostly managers (92%, n=74). A smaller majority of respondents from medium-sized employers were in line positions (60%, n=14), and from large employers, a minority of respondents were in line positions (42%, n=13). An individual in public relations or human resources represented most large employers in the survey.

Who completed the survey?

Line Positions - 74%

- Owner/Manager
- CEO or General Manager
- Location or Facility Manager
- Operations Manager
- Division Vice President
- Technical or Professional (pilot, air traffic controller, park ranger, etc.)

Staff Positions - 26%

- V.P. or Director of Human Resources
- Education/Training Manager
- Employment Manager
- Public Relations Manager
- Communications Director
- Office Manager

High Performance Workplace Rating

Survey item D4 asked respondents to rate their establishment on a scale of 1 – 10 according to the following generic definition: "Based upon the business literature, a 'high performance workplace' exhibits some or all of the following features: (a) flatter hierarchies; (b) centralized, participative management; (c) work done by teams organized around processes; (d) collaboration between labor and management, and with customers and suppliers; (e) flexible technologies. Characteristics may vary by industry" (Appendix A). The responses of small, medium, and large employers on the rating were very similar, with all three groups displaying a median rating of 8 and a mean rating of about 7.4.

II. EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION IN FLORIDA SCHOOL-TO-WORK INITIATIVES

Conceptual Framework

An important aim of this study was to understand how employers are participating in STW partnership initiatives in Florida. The study was based on a model of employer participation developed by the National Employer Leadership Council and illustrated in Figure 1, below. In this model, employer options for participating in STW initiatives encompass three broad dimensions: (a) employers building a STW transition system, (b) employers working directly with students and teachers, and (c) employers strengthening company practice.

EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION MODEL

Employers Building a System

Employers Strengthening Company Practice

Employers Working with Students and Teachers

Working with policymakers and other employers to create workforce development systems.

Providing information and experiences to prepare students for challenging careers.

Partnering with teachers to improve student skills and academic performance.

Clarifying and strengthening company commitment in the education supply chain.

Figure 1. Model of Employer Participation in STW Initiatives

Source: National Employer Leadership Council, 1996, The What, How, Where, and Who of STW for Businesses [On-Line] Available: http//:nelc.org/model.shtml

Based on the NELC model in Figure 1, a listing of employer activities was developed for each participation area based on a comprehensive review of the STW and employer involvement literature and Florida's workforce development system[13]. For

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[13] Academy for Educational Development, 1996; American Society for Training and Development, 1995; Bailey, Hughes, and Barr, 1998; Bobosky, 1998; Committee for Economic Development, 1998; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Kazis & Goldberger, 1995; National Employer

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this study, working with students and working with teachers were treated as separate participation areas.

The model illustrates that employer STW participation categories are not mutually exclusive, so that some activities could fall across more than one category. In this study, however, each activity was listed under only one category. By way of example, *sharing industry skill standards with educators for use in program planning* could logically be included under both Working with Educators and Building a System; in this study, the activity is listed only under Working with Educators.

Part A of the questionnaire asked employers for factual information regarding their participation in STW activities. Respondents were given listings of activities in four categories: Working with Students, Working with Educators, Building a System, and Internal Company Practices Supporting STW (see survey in Appendix A). They were asked to circle each activity in which their establishment participates

The survey data were analyzed in two different ways in order to understand and describe employer participation in STW initiatives:

1. <u>Distribution of Activities</u>. The number and percentage of participating employers were tallied for each STW activity in order to determine the scale of employer participation in each activity. For example, 56% of employers responding to the survey (n=71) give workplace or industry tours to students. Thirty-one percent (31%, n=39) report serving on a local program advisory committee or board.

2. <u>Level of Employer Involvement</u>. A score was calculated as the sum or count of the activities checked by the employer. For each employer, separate scores were calculated for each of the four participation areas and an overall score encompassing all STW activities. The distribution of employer scores was used to examine the levels of employer participation. For example, the average participation score for Working with Students was 3.3 activities. The average overall participation score was 8.3 activities.

Data were analyzed for the entire sample and for the small, medium, and large employer subgroups. Following are specific findings.

Leadership Council, 1996; Office of Technology Assessment, 1995; McNeil and Kulick, 1995; Stern, 1995.

Employer STW Activities

Overall, survey results showed there is broad-based employer participation in three of the four areas: Working with Students, Working Educators, and Internal Company Practices supporting STW. The fourth area, Building a System, shows limited employer involvement. This is illustrated by the data in Table 2, where the activities with a frequency of ≥ 30% of employers participating are displayed.

Table 2
STW Activities with Participation Rates ≥ 30% of Employers

Activity	n	%
Working with Students		
Visit students in schools to provide career information or classroom instruction.	84	66
Give workplace or industry tours to students.	71	56
Provide students job-shadowing opportunities at your worksite.	70	55
Provide students internship (paid or unpaid) or volunteer opportunities at your worksite.	68	53
Provide mentoring experiences for students.	43	34
Working with Educators		
Provide expertise to teachers in developing, implementing, and judging student projects.	38	30
Provide educators with information and support to increase their use of technology.	38	30
Internal Company Practices Supporting STW		
Give employees release time to attend meetings and school activities.	71	56
Encourage and allow employees who possess skills and knowledge to serve as mentors or trainers for students.	63	49
Actively use local education and training institutions as sources of new employees.	50	39

(table continues)

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Table 2, continued

Activity	n	%
In the hiring process, require entry-level job applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records such as transcripts of coursework, attendance and grades, portfolios, or certificates.	38	30
Building a System		
Serve on a local program advisory committee or board.	39	31

N = 128

Working with Students

Frequencies and percentages for all of the activities under Working with Students are displayed in Table 3. Employers are working with students both at school and at their workplaces, and there is greater employer participation in this area than in any other.

Almost two thirds of employers are providing career information or classroom instruction to students (66%, n=84). More than half of employers reported they participate in activities with students at their work sites, including giving workplace or industry tours to students (56%, n=71), providing job-shadow opportunities

More employers visit students in schools to provide career information or classroom instruction (66%) than any other employer STW activity.

(55%, n=70), and providing student internships or volunteer opportunities (53%, n=68).

More than half of employers are engaged in activities with students in their work places, including industry tours, job-shadowing, and internships.

Less than one-quarter of employers provide clinical/practicum (18%) or pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship (11%) experiences to students. These are forms of work-based learning that entail a substantial investment of employer resources and highly specified connections with school-based curricula.

Table 3
Number and Percent of Employers Participating in Activities with Students

Activity	n	%
Visit students in schools to provide career information or classroom instruction.	84	66
Give workplace or industry tours to students.	71	56
Provide students job-shadowing opportunities at your worksite.	70	55
Provide students internship (paid or unpaid) or volunteer opportunities at your worksite.	68	53
Provide mentoring experiences for students.	43	34
Provide cooperative work experiences in which students are paid for working in a job related to their field of studies.	37	29
Provide clinical/practicum work experiences in which students (a) work under the supervision of a practicing professional and (b) receive credit toward certification, licensure, or a professional degree.	23	18
Act as consultant to students operating school enterprises.	16	13
Provide pre-apprenticeship or registered apprenticeship opportunities to students at employer worksite.	14	11

N = 128

Working with Educators

Table 4 shows rates of participation in employer activities working with educators, where a somewhat different picture emerges. Less than one-third of employers reported participating in any single activity with educators, with the distribution of employer activities ranging from 23 to 30%.

> Less than one quarter of employers provide work-based learning opportunities for teachers.

More employers assist teachers with student project work (30%), share information on technology (30%) or share skill standards for educator use in program planning (30%). Less than one-quarter of employers provide work-based learning opportunities for teachers (23%) or assist in program design and development (23%).

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Table 4
Number and Percent of Employers Participating in Activities with Educators

Activity	n	%
Provide expertise to teachers in developing, implementing, and judging student projects.	38	30
Provide educators with information and support to increase their use of technology.	38	30
Share industry skill standards with educators for use in program planning.	32	25
Provide access to current workplace technology.	32	25
Assist in developing or evaluating work- or school-based curricula.	31	24
Provide teachers opportunities for job shadowing or internships to help them learn firsthand about workplace and industry expectations.	30	23
Assist in program design and development.	29	23

N = 128

Building a System

Table 5 displays the distribution of employer activities related to building a workforce development system. There is a generally lower level of employer participation in most of these activities compared to other areas of participation. This finding is not unexpected for activities that provide limited opportunities for participation, such as serving on the State STW Leadership Team (3%), an executive or sub-committee of one of the 28 Regional STW Partnerships (6%), one of the 24 Florida Regional Workforce Development Boards (6%), or the state- level Jobs & Education Partnership Workforce Development Board (0%). However, participation is low even in activities for which there are unlimited opportunities for employers to participate, such as collaborating with other employers involved in STW (14%), encouraging other employers to participate (12%), or attending school board meetings to become informed about policy issues and support STW (6%).

> **Most STW Employers Are *Not* Working with Other Employers**
> - Only 14% report collaborating with other employers in STW
> - Only 12% report encouraging other employers to participate in STW

Table 5
Number and Percent of Employers Participating in System-Building Activities

Activity	n	%
Serve on a local program advisory committee or board.	39	31
Collaborate with other employers involved in STW.	18	14
Play a leadership role in encouraging other employers to participate in STW initiatives.	15	12
Serve on one of the 24 Florida Regional Workforce Development Boards.	8	6
Attend school board meetings to become informed about policy issues and to support STW.	8	6
Influence policymakers to develop appropriate supports for employer involvement in STW.	8	6
Serve on an executive body or sub-committee of one of the 28 Regional STW Partnerships.	7	6
Serve on the statewide STW Leadership Team.	4	3
Serve on the state-level Jobs & Education Partnership Workforce Development Board.	0	0

N = 128

The most frequent system-building activity, with 31% of employers reporting they participate, is serving on a local advisory committee or board. This is a traditional role that employers have performed with schools.

Internal Company Practices Supporting STW

The survey explored the internal policies and practices of employers that are supportive of the STW transition. The data in Table 6 show that some employer practices are more prevalent than others. More than half of employers (56%) reporte7d giving employees release time to attend meetings and school activities, the activity reported most frequently. Giving recognition and/or rewards to employees who lead or participate in STW efforts was the lowest, with only 14 percent of employers reporting this activity.

Several apparent disconnects in employer practices are highlighted by the data. While almost half of employers (49%) encourage employees with skills and knowledge to mentor and train students, little more than one quarter (27%) indicated they prepare employees to supervise students in work-based learning experiences. Another inconsistency was in hiring practices. Thirty-nine percent of all employers

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Table 6
Number and Percent of Employers Engaging in Internal Company Practices
Supporting STW

Practice	$\underline{n}$	%
Give employees release time to attend meetings and school activities.	71	56
Encourage and allow employees who possess skills and knowledge to serve as mentors or trainers for students.	63	49
Actively use local education and training institutions as sources of new employees.	50	39
In the hiring process, require entry-level job applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records such as transcripts of coursework, attendance and grades, portfolios, or certificates.	38	30
Prepare employees to supervise students in work-based learning experiences.	34	27
Upgrade and enrich ordinary youth jobs into higher-quality learning experiences.	22	17
Give recognition and/or rewards to employees who lead or participate in STW efforts.	18	14

N = 128

reported actively using local education and training institutions as sources of new employees, while only 30 percent reported they require entry-level job applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records such as transcripts, attendance and grades, portfolios, or certificates. Upon closer examination, the data also showed that of those employers using local education and training suppliers as sources of new employees, fully 40% *do not* require school-based records of their applicants. This finding is in line with the NES-I survey[14], which found that employers pay little attention to

> **Disconnect in Employer Practices . . .**
>
> **Of the employers who use local education and training institutions as sources of new employees, forty percent (40%) do not require entry-level applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records such as transcripts, attendance, grades, etc. These employers are sending students the message that what they do in school doesn't count.**

[14] EQW, 1995a

measures of students' school performance, in spite of their proven relationship to job performance.

Levels of Employer Participation

Table 7 presents descriptive statistics on the levels of employer participation in each of the four STW participation areas and overall. The score for each employer consisted of a count or sum of the number of activities checked on the questionnaire.

Table 7
Levels of Employer Participation by STW Participation Area

Participation Area	Employer Participation Score[1]					
	Min	Max	Median	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Population Mean
Working with Students	0	9	3.0	3.3	.17	3.0– 3.7
Working with Educators	0	7	1.0	1.8	.17	1.5 – 2.1
Building a System	0	9	0.0	.9	.14	.6 – 1.2
Internal Company Practices	0	7	2.0	2.3	.17	2.0 – 2.6
Overall Participation Score	1	23	7.0	8.3	.49	7.4 – 9.3

[1]Score calculated as sum of activities reported

Several general observations can be made about the data in Table 7. First, employers in the sample participate in an average of $\underline{M}$ = 8.3 activities across all four areas. At the 95% confidence level, employers in the STW employer population participate in an average of between 7 and 9 STW activities. Second, not all employers participate in all four areas, and there is at least one employer who participates in only one activity.

Employers participate in an average of

- **3 activities with students**
- **2 activities with educators**
- **2 internal practices supporting STW**
- **<1 system building activity**
- **8 STW activities overall**

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The highest level of employer participation is in working with students, with an average score of M = 3.3 activities. At the 95% confidence level, employers in the STW population participate in an average of from 3 to 4 activities with students. The next highest average score is for Internal Company Practices (M = 2.3 activities), followed by Working with Educators (M = 1.8 activities). The lowest participation score is in Building a System, with a mean score of less than one activity (M =.9). Further, the median is 0.0, indicating that at least half of the sample participate in no system-building activities.

The bar graphs in Figures 2 – 5 depict the distribution of employer scores across the range of possible scores in each participation area. As shown in Figure 2, all but one of the employers in the sample work with students. Twenty-one percent of employers (21%, about one in five) participate in one activity with students. However, three in five employers (60%) participate in three or more activities with students.
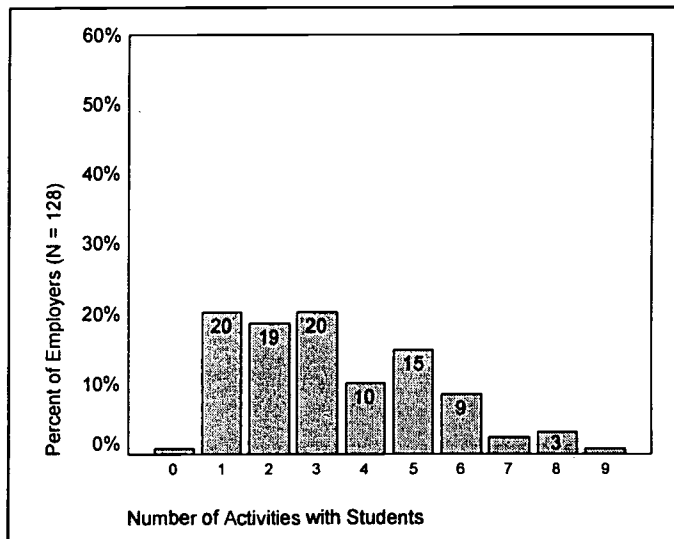
Figure 2. Distribution of employer scores for working with students

Figure 3 displays the distribution of scores for Working with Educators. Nearly two of every five employers in the sample (39%) do not work directly with teachers or counselors in the activities listed. Less than one-third of employers (30%) participate in three or more activities
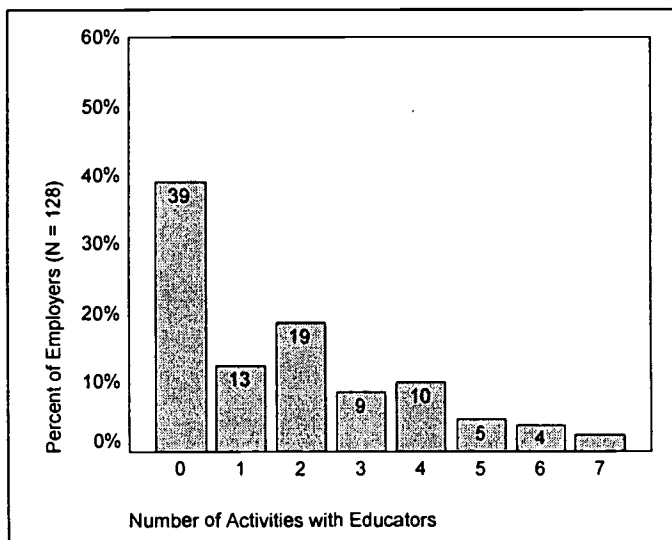
Figure 3. Distribution of employer scores for working with educators

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Figure 4 displays the distribution of scores for Internal Company Practices in support of STW. Employers are more involved in this area than any other except Working with Students. While 18.8% of employers report no participation in this area, more than half (57%) report engaging in two or more internal practices that support STW.
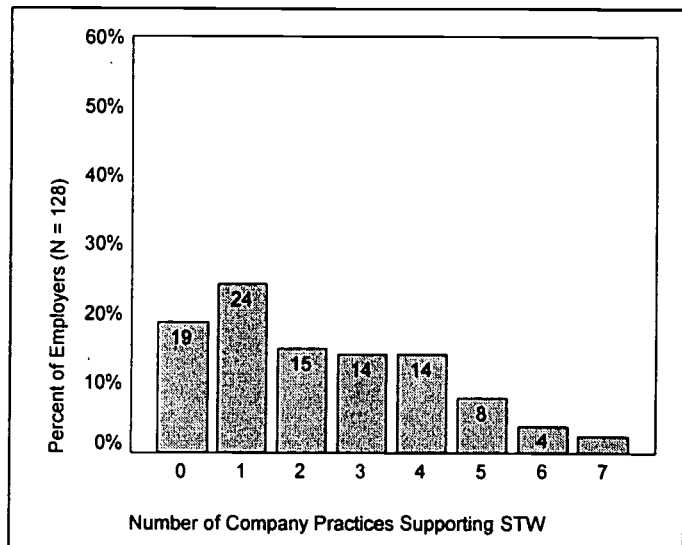
Figure 4. Distribution of employer scores for internal company practices

The distribution of employer scores for Building a System shown in Figure 5 illustrates the limited involvement of employers in this area. More than half of all employers in the sample (58%) do not participate in any of the activities in this area, and 22% are involved in only one activity. Overall, limited numbers of employers are taking a leadership role in STW system building.
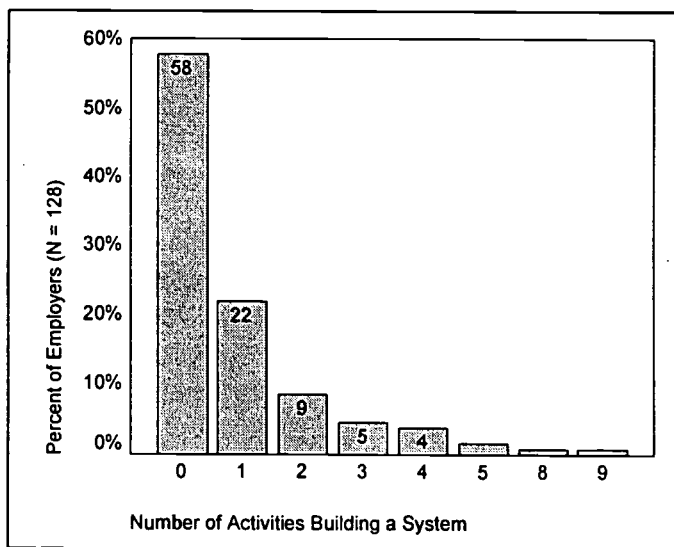
Figure 5. Distribution of employer scores for building a System

Differences in Participation of Small, Medium, and Large Employers

The tables in Appendix B give a breakdown of employer participation data by the small, medium and large employer subgroups. The data show generally higher STW participation rates for large employers (> 150 employees) than for either small employers (0 – 50 employees) or medium employers (51 – 150 employees) in three

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of four participation areas: Working with Students, Working with Educators, and Internal Company Practices.

In the area of Working with Students, large employer participation rates were higher than average for seven of nine activities with students, including the work-based learning activities of job shadowing, internships, and mentoring. The small employer participation rate was higher than average for school-based enterprise consulting only. The participation rate for medium employers was higher than average for co-op activities only.

> **Large Employer Participation rates were higher for. . .**
>
> - **7 of 9 activities with students**
> - **All activities with educators**
> - **All internal company practices supporting STW**
> - **Collaborating with other employers on STW**

Participation rates of large employers are higher for all activities working with teachers, in particular for industry skill standards (52% for large employers versus 22% for medium and 15% for small employers) and curriculum development/evaluation (32% versus 17% for medium and 22% for small employers). Large employers also lead small and medium employers in every area of internal company practices supporting STW, with higher than average participation rates for 100% of activities listed.

In the area Building a System, no particular patterns of differences by employer size were noted. A single notable difference was in collaboration with other employers on STW, where 26% of large employers reported this activity, compared to 11% and 9% of small and medium employers, respectively.

> **Small Employer Participation rates were higher for. . .**
>
> - **School-based enterprise consulting**
>
> ◊
>
> **Medium Employer Participation rates were higher for. . .**
>
> - **Co-op activities**

III. INCENTIVES AND DISINCENTIVES TO EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION

One question asked by this study was "What are the incentives and disincentives that influence employers' participation in Florida STW initiatives?" This important question has been addressed by many observers of the STW transition and by research studies of employer involvement conducted both before and after passage of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994.

Many earlier studies and writings focused on employer motivations to participate in work-based learning programs. Bailey[15] proposed a framework of three types of motivation influencing employer decisions to participate: philanthropic, individual, and collective. Corporate philanthropy, in the form of a desire to contribute to the improvement of education or the community, has long been viewed as the primary motivation for employer participation. Based on this view of employer participation with schools as a "charitable contribution," observers of early STW program models were pessimistic about the potential for widespread employer participation.

Individual employer motivations may include using STW initiatives as an inexpensive source of short-term labor[16] or to identify skilled entry-level employees[17]. Some observers rely on a classical economic perspective in which the incentive for an individual employer exists only to the extent that economic benefits equal or exceed the costs of participation[18]. Economic benefits beyond student productivity are considered to be largely intangible. Disincentives in the form of tangible employer costs include student wages, initial program design and development costs, and ongoing program coordination and supervision costs; intangible costs include the opposition of adult workers[19].

Collective motivations to participate in STW initiatives are based on observations that employers are beginning to view their participation in the education supply chain differently, given the emergence of a more learning-intensive economy. In the absence of tangible short-term benefits, employers may view STW as helping to create a more skilled work force in a region, a specific industry, or the economy overall[20]. Observers question whether employers are becoming the kind of high-performance workplaces that can support meaningful STW participation[21].

Other factors described in the literature on employer participation are firm size and the role of intermediaries. While many large employers have the internal capacity

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[15] Bailey, 1995c
[16] Urquiola et al, 1997
[17] Capelli, Shapiro & Shumanis, 1998; National Alliance of Business, 1999; Osterman, 1995
[18] Bailey, 1998; Klein, 1995
[19] Osterman, 1995
[20] Bailey, 1995d; Bailey, Hughes & Barr, 1998
[21] Ryan & Imel, 1996; Whiting, 1995b

and infrastructure to support involvement in STW initiatives, many medium or small businesses may not. A growing number of observers have seen employer intermediary organizations as an essential facilitator of employer involvement in STW[22].

Most early research studies were limited by samples that are not representative of all STW employers or of the range of options for participation, or too small for reporting results for different subcategories of employers. In spite of these limitations, the consistency of some findings across the studies suggested that employer recruitment and workforce needs, both individual and collective, are important incentives for employer participation in STW initiatives[23]. Early studies also suggest that intermediary organizations can perform valuable support functions to employers[24].

Recent case studies of specific employer STW programs established that in the near term, benefits exceeded costs for almost three-fourths of the companies studied[25]. The highest benefit-cost ratios were found in high-technology or high-skill production environments operating in tight labor markets.

Large-scale surveys of employer involvement conducted in recent years have shed light on a number of aspects of employer participation. The National Employer Survey[26] 1997 administration (NES-II) showed employer participation to be related to firm size. NES-II also demonstrated that there are specific benefits to employers that are associated with their participation in STW activities and that employers who participate in STW have more positive attitudes toward school graduates.

The results of earlier studies are not uniformly positive, but did suggest that expansion of employer participation in STW initiatives would be possible and that there were substantial benefits to employers who do participate. They also suggested that employers' partnerships with schools may be changing, as envisioned by the STWOA, to reflect increasingly collaborative and substantive connections between school and work. This study provided additional evidence confirming earlier research findings.

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[22] Academy for Educational Development, 1996; Committee for Economic Development, 1998; National Governors' Association, 1997a; Whiting, 1995; Wills, 1998
[23] Lynn & Wills, 1994; Office of Technology Assessment, 1995; Bailey, Hughes & Barr, 1998
[24] McNeil & Kulick, 1995; Pauly, Kopp & Hamilton, 1995
[25] Bassi et al, 1997
[26] National Center for Postsecondary Improvement, 1997

Incentives to Employer Participation

> **Workforce needs are important incentives for employer STW participation:**
>
> **Seven of the ten highest-rated employer incentives in this study are workforce related.**

Results of employer ratings of incentives are presented in Table 8, ranked by mean rating in descending order[27]. Four of the top five incentives to employer participation reported by employers in this study have mean ratings above $M = 3.0$, with more than three-fourths of employers indicating them to be a moderate (26% to 32%) or major (49% to 63%) incentive. These include the opportunity to contribute to the local community ($M = 3.45$), the opportunity to contribute to the quality of public education ($M = 3.25$), the opportunity to contribute to the skills of the future workforce ($M = 3.24$), and the opportunity to contribute to the organization's positive image in the community ($M = 3.16$). The fifth-highest incentive, the opportunity to screen potential employees ($M = 2.79$) was rated somewhat lower.

These top- rated incentives encompass both philanthropic and workforce-related motivations or benefits to employers. It can also be observed from Table 8 that in general, workforce-related incentives rank higher in importance to employers than most program-related incentives, comprising seven of the 10 highest-rated incentives. This data represent a clear departure from the historical view of employer participation with schools as being little more than corporate charity.

> **The highest rated incentives to participation for Florida's STW employers include the opportunity to:**
>
> - **Contribute to the local community.**
> - **Contribute to the quality of public education.**
> - **Contribute to the skills of the future workforce.**
> - **Screen potential employees.**

The five lowest-rated incentives have mean ratings of $M = 2.02$ or below, with most employers indicating the benefit is not an incentive to participation (42% to 58%) or only a minor incentive to participation (16% to 34%). They include the availability of intermediary organizations to broker STW for employers ($M = 1.76$), the availability of wage

> **PR & appreciation goes a long way with business – business uses public relations to survive – schools have not figured that out yet.**
>
> **-STW Employer**

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[27] Incentives were considered to be measured on an interval scale, with item response categories (none, minor, moderate, or major) allowing respondents to indicate the degree of influence of the factor.

Table 8
Percentages, Means and Standard Deviations of Employer Ratings of Incentives to Participation

Incentive	n	Percent of Responses				M	SD
		1	2	3	4		
Opportunity to contribute to the quality of public education.	118	9	8	32	51	3.25	0.95
Opportunity to contribute to the skills of the future workforce.	118	4	16	31	48	3.24	0.87
Opportunity to contribute to our organization's positive image in the community.	116	10	12	28	49	3.16	1.00
Opportunity to screen potential employees.	116	18	16	35	31	2.79	1.08
Opportunity to network with schools that serve as sources of new employees.	118	20	17	33	30	2.72	1.10
Opportunity to provide professional development to our current employees.	114	19	24	27	30	2.68	1.10
Opportunity to address current labor shortage in our industry or local area.	117	32	16	22	30	2.50	1.22
Opportunity to diversify our workforce by attracting young minorities and women.	116	28	21	28	23	2.46	1.14
Opportunity to attract young workers to replace our organization's aging workforce.	116	32	20	24	24	2.41	1.17
Opportunity to participate in program design and development.	113	43	20	28	9	2.04	1.06

(table continues)

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Table 8 (continued)

Incentive	n	Percent of Responses				M	SD
		1	2	3	4		
Having a range of STW program models and employer activities to choose from.	113	44	20	26	11	2.03	1.06
Availability of training and technical assistance for employees who participate.	113	43	22	27	9	2.02	1.03
Opportunity to participate in program governance and decision-making.	112	42	27	25	6	1.96	0.96
Source of low- or no-cost temporary or part-time labor.	115	50	21	16	14	1.94	1.10
Availability of wage subsidies for student workers.	115	58	16	18	8	1.76	1.01
Availability of intermediary organizations to broker STW relationships for employers and assume coordinating and administrative functions.	110	49	34	9	8	1.76	0.93

N = 128
Note: Percents may not add to 100% due to rounding; 1 = Not an Incentive,
2 = Minor Incentive, 3 = Moderate Incentive, 4 = Major Incentive.

subsidies for student workers ($\underline{M}$ = 1.76), [students as a] source of low- or no-cost temporary or part-time labor ($\underline{M}$ = 1.94), the opportunity to participate in program governance and decision-making ($\underline{M}$ = 1.96), and the availability of training and technical assistance for employees who participate.

The tables in Appendix B present data on employer ratings of incentives by employer size subgroups. The incentive ratings of small, medium, and large employers were compared to determine whether there are differences in the highest- and lowest-rated incentives of these groups. Small and medium employers rated the same five incentives highest as the sample overall, although not in the same rank order. Large employers shared only four of the highest five incentives for the

sample. The opportunity to screen potential employees was fifth for the sample of employers; for large employers, this incentive was eighth, and the fifth-highest incentive was instead the opportunity to provide professional development to their current employees. In addition, large employers ranked the opportunity to contribute to the quality of public education first, while small and medium employers ranked it second. Eighty percent (80%) of large employers rated this incentive as a major incentive, compared to only 41 percent of small and medium employers. Another difference was in the ranking of the opportunity to contribute to the local community,

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Incentives for Small, Medium and Large Employers

- LARGE employers placed more importance than small and medium employers on the opportunity to provide professional development to their employees.

- 81% of LARGE employers rated the opportunity to contribute to the quality of education as a *major* incentive, compared to only 40% of small and medium employers.

- SMALL and MEDIUM employers placed more importance than large employers on the opportunity to screen potential employees and to contribute to the local community.

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which was first for small and medium employers, but third for large employers.

Small and large employers shared the same five lowest-rated incentives, although in different order. Medium employers shared four of the five, but not the availability of wage subsidies, which was more important to them than to small or large employers (17th for the sample overall but 11th for medium employers). Medium employers ranked last the opportunity to participate in program design and development.

The cost of participation is not a major barrier to employers:

More than two-thirds of employers rated the cost of training and supervising students (67%) and the cost of program development (74%) as either *not* a disincentive or only a *minor* disincentive to their participation.

Disincentives to Employer Participation

Employer ratings of disincentives to participation are presented in Table 9, ranked by mean rating in descending order[28]. A comparison of Tables 8 and 9 shows that employers gave stronger ratings to incentives than to disincentives. The five highest-rated disincentives had mean ratings from $M = 2.16$ to $M = 2.58$; the highest rated incentives had mean ratings of $M = 3.45$ to $M = 2.79$.

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[28] Disincentives were considered to be measured on an interval scale, with item response categories (none, minor, moderate, or major) allowing respondents to indicate the degree of influence of the factor.

Table 9
Percentages, Means and Standard Deviations of Employer Ratings of Disincentives to Participation

Disincentive	n	Percent of Responses				M	SD
		1	2	3	4		
Lack of information about STW.	115	24	22	25	29	2.58	1.15
Bureaucracy of school system.	116	29	28	22	21	2.34	1.11
Concern about students' maturity or reliability.	115	30	26	23	21	2.34	1.12
Concern about regulatory issues such as child labor laws, worker's compensation insurance, or health and safety regulations.	115	35	22	23	21	2.30	1.15
Concern about students' qualifications or productivity.	115	37	26	23	15	2.16	1.08
Lack of technical assistance or trouble-shooting for program activities.	112	36	29	21	14	2.14	1.06
Cost of training and supervising students.	116	44	23	24	9	1.97	1.02
Lack of flexibility in program design (e.g., scheduling, selection of students, employer options for participation).	114	43	31	15	11	1.95	1.02
Opposition or lack of interest of regular employees.	115	43	29	22	7	1.93	.96

(*table continues*)

Table 9 (continued)

Disincentive	n	\multicolumn{4}{c}{Percent of Responses}	M	SD
		1	2	3	4		
Lack of commitment or interest at the managerial or executive levels.	115	50	20	21	9	1.88	1.03
Cost of program development.	114	56	18	18	89	1.81	1.03
Lost productivity of employees who participate in STW activities.	113	52	24	18	6	1.78	.95
Student trainee may accept a position with a competitor	114	61	20	13	6	1.65	.93
Organizational changes (e.g. change in ownership, reorganization, downsizing)	114	63	17	13	7	1.64	.96

N = 128
Note: Percents may not add to 100% due to rounding; 1 = Not a Disincentive,
2 = Minor Disincentive, 3 = Moderate Disincentive, 4 = Major Disincentive.

The top-rated disincentives reported by employers include lack of information about STW (M = 2.58), the bureaucracy of the school system (M = 2.34), concern about students' maturity or reliability (M = 2.34), concern about regulatory issues (M = 2.30), and concern about students' qualifications or productivity (M = 2.16). Lack of information about STW was rated by more than half of employers in the study as a moderate disincentive (25%) or a major disincentive (29%), suggesting that the quantity and quality of the information provided to employers is an issue needing to be addressed. The next four highest disincentives were rated by less than half of employers as a moderate or major disincentive.

The most important disincentives to participation for Florida's STW employers include:

- **Lack of information on STW**
- **Bureaucracy of school system**
- **Concern about regulatory issues**
- **Concern about students' qualifications or productivity**

The five disincentives to participation rated lowest by employers included organizational changes (M = 1.64), that the student trainee may accept a position

with a competitor ($\underline{M}$ = 1.65), the lost productivity of employees who participate in STW activities ($\underline{M}$ = 1.78), and the cost of program development ($\underline{M}$ = 1.81).

> **Florida employers – small, medium, and large - agree that the *greatest barrier* to their participation is *lack of information about School-to-Work.***

The tables in Appendix B present data on employer ratings of disincentives to participation by employer size. The disincentive ratings of small, medium, and large employers were compared to determine whether there are differences in the highest- and lowest-rated disincentives of these groups.

Small, medium and large employers agree that lack of information about STW is the strongest disincentive. Also, small and large employers agree on the rankings of the other four highest rated disincentives. Medium employers, however, depart from the sample overall in several ways. This group does not rank the bureaucracy of the school system in the highest five disincentives, instead ranking it tenth ($\underline{M}$ = 2.14). Also, medium employers rank the cost of training and supervising students as third ($\underline{M}$ = 1.08), while small and medium employers rank this disincentive seventh and tenth, respectively.

STW employers talk about the barriers to their participation:

- "We have <u>excellent</u> county STW staff. But when we are working with individual schools, there is fragmentation & disorganization with some."

- "STW is an excellent program. Unfortunately, it is not marketed to the business community to the extent that I believe it could be. Major employers are most often targeted for participation while small business owners receive minimal attention. They need to be approached and enlisted as STW program supporters."

- "We must do all we can to make sure young people understand service, reliability, and honesty. Too many young people do not know how to work or understand the 'old fashioned work ethic.'"

- "School administration/management level should be more <u>supportive</u> of efforts (i.e., in scheduling) to help facilitate projects worked on by business partners & educators. There is no point in us taking our time to help if projects are not supported by administration."

- "We need better communication in the school system. Too many contacts – often call one person only to be told they are the wrong ones to talk to."

- "Risk managers have significant concern about liability for employers when we allow students to work on site. This often guides us away from many opportunities for students wanting to gain insight into particular occupational fields."

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IV. EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS

In STW partnerships, the primary partners are schools and employers, who must develop a shared frame of reference for the partnership's work. How do Florida employers evaluate their STW partnerships with education? This study examined how employers perceive their STW partnerships on two important dimensions: quality - the effectiveness of the partnership; and value – the worth, or beneficial outcomes of the partnership. Partnership quality and value are important not only for recruiting new employers, but also for retaining employers currently participating in STW initiatives.

> "It is frustrating when there are roadblocks to progress in partnering. There should be more collaboration between employers & schools – and more commitment to an understanding of each other's needs! We have made significant strides in working with schools this year. However, we still face some challenging issues in partnering."
>
> -Florida STW Employer

The principles of successful partnership are consistent across the literature[29]. Successful partnerships address real problems that are the shared concerns of the partners, and have benefits for all the partners. They also receive sustained attention from leaders in the partnering organizations, who articulate and agree upon flexible structures and clear roles and responsibilities and provide support for participating staff. Further, in successful partnerships, the partners are able to transcend their individual organizational cultures and use problems as an opportunity to build collaboration, trust and commitment. Successful partnerships communicate with the community, take a long-range perspective, and make long-range commitments.

Section C2 of the survey gave employers the following definition[30] of STW partnership given to respondents: "A STW partnership is any joint activity, formal or informal, between schools and employers to build connections between school-based learning and work-based learning." Respondents were asked how many years the employer had been involved in STW partnerships meeting this definition.

> Florida employers have been in STW partnerships with schools for an average of between 5 and 7 years*
>
> *95% confidence level

Responses ranged from one to 43 years, with a median of 5 years. Because the data distribution for number of years in STW partnerships was positively skewed, the data were transformed to log base 10 in order to estimate a confidence interval for

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[29] See Asche, Merenda, Asche & Hammons, 1998; Bobosky, 1998; Grobe, 1993; Hubbard, Kennedy, Sutton & Trefiny, 1995; Kanter; 1994; Sidler, 1994; and Tushnet, 1993.
[30] The definition was adapted from the STW partnership definition employed in the NES-II study, National Center for Postsecondary Improvement, 1997.

the population average[31]. With this method, at the 95% confidence level, the average number of years in STW partnerships of employers in the population is between 5 and 7 years.

Those employers who considered themselves to be in a partnership with schools were asked to indicate their agreement with a series of statements of partnership quality or value. Overall, employers in this study rated the value of their STW partnerships higher than the quality of the partnerships, with average responses of $\underline{M}$ = 2.93 to $\underline{M}$ = 3.24 for value compared to $\underline{M}$ = 2.40 to $\underline{M}$ = 2.99 for quality. Survey findings in each area are presented below.

Perceptions of Partnership Quality

Employers' perceptions of the quality or effectiveness of their STW partnerships with schools are displayed in Table 10. More than three-fourths of employers (83%) agreed that a sense of trust exists between educator and employer partners ($\underline{M}$ = 2.99). More than two-thirds of employers (67%) also

> A majority of employers (54%) *disagreed* with only one quality indicator: that the partnership communicates with parents and other stakeholders in the community.

agreed that good communication exists between educators and employer partners ($\underline{M}$ = 2.73). More than half also agreed, though less strongly, that the partnership has adequate support from leaders on both sides ($\underline{M}$ = 2.64), that it works together to gain resources not available from tax dollars ($\underline{M}$ = 2. 63), and that the employer has primary responsibility for the partnership ($\underline{M}$ = 2.62).

Employers Talk About Partnership Quality

- [What works is] "meeting with the teachers or faculty to discuss goals and problems – joint problem solving."

- [What works is] "developing a relationship – schools sharing the fun stuff, not just the needs. "

- [What doesn't work is] "dependence on a business for a financial reason – support without developing or maintaining a relationship."

- "If there is not a long-term commitment by the partners, the program is doomed."

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[31] Transformation of the raw data to a logarithm scale normalizes the data for more exact inference where procedures assume normal distributions.

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Table 10
Employer Perceptions of Partnership Quality

Quality Statement	n	Percent of Responses 1				M	SD
A sense of trust exists between educators and employer partners.	106	6	11	61	22	2.99	.75
Good communication exists between educators and employer partners.	107	10	23	50	17	2.73	.86
The partnership has adequate support and attention from leaders in the partnering organizations.	103	7	30	52	10	2.64	.77
The partnership works together to gain additional resources not available from tax dollars.	104	14	23	51	13	2.63	.87
In our partnership, the employer has primary responsibility for the partnership with some input from educators.	106	11	26	51	11	2.62	.83
The partnership communicates with parents and other stakeholders in the community.	101	14	40	40	7	2.40	.81

N = 128
Note. Percents may not add to 100% due to rounding; 1 = Strongly Disagree,
2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree

More than half of employers disagreed with only one quality indicator: that the partnership communicates with parents and other stakeholders in the community (M = 2.4). Fifty-four percent of employers disagreed with this statement.

The tables in Appendix B display partnership quality ratings by employer size. Overall, small and large employers rated the quality of their partnerships higher than did medium employers. The agreement of all groups was strongest on the elements of trust and communication. These responses indicate that from the employers'

of trust and communication. These responses indicate that from the employers' perspective, good working relationships are being established between teachers and employer partners in STW initiatives throughout Florida.

Perceptions of Partnership Value

Employer responses on statements of partnership value or worth are given in Table 11. In general, employers agreed with statements of partnership value. More than three-fourths of employers agreed with the value statements, and four of five statements had mean ratings greater than M = 3.0, indicating that employers recognize the beneficial outcomes of their partnerships.

> **94% of employers agree that as a result of their STW partnerships with schools, students are better prepared for work and careers.**

Table 11
Employer Perceptions of Partnership Value

Value Statement	n	1	2	3	4	M	SD
		Percent of Responses					
As a result of the partnership's activities, students are better prepared for work and careers.	103	3	3	61	33	3.24	.65
The partnership makes a difference in education and the community.	103	4	10	59	27	3.10	.72
As a result of the partnership's activities, employers are more supportive of schools.	103	12	12	68	18	3.03	.62
As a result of the partnership's activities, employer partners have a better understanding of education issues.	104	2	18	56	24	3.02	.71
As a result of the partnership's activities, educators better understand workplace requirements.	103	6	18	54	22	2.93	.80

N = 128
Note. Percents may not add to 100% due to rounding; 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree

The strongest agreement among employers (94% agreement with 33% strongly agreeing) was that as a result of the partnership's activities, students are better prepared for work and careers, with a mean response of $\underline{M} = 3.24$. Employers agreed the least that as a result of the partnership's activities, educators better understand workplace requirements, with a mean rating of $\underline{M} = 2.92$. In the words of one employer, "because educators are or have not really been in the business world, they are not the most capable in preparing non-college bound students for life after high school in business."

The tables in Appendix B display partnership value ratings by employer size. In general, large employer ratings of value were more positive, followed by those of small employers and then medium employers.

Employers Talk About Partnership Value

- "Employers need to be in partnership with the schools to help shape, mold, and create a bright future for industry, education and lives."

- "Students' positive attitude toward work in general and the realization that a job must be learned and earned. Established workers willingly share their knowledge with those who listen."

- "We have participated with all the area high schools for many years and have, for the most part, found these students to be outstanding employees. Many have gone on to become permanent employees with our department."

V. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EMPLOYER CHARACTERISTICS AND PARTICIPATION

One objective of this study was to determine whether there are any relationships between employers' characteristics and their STW participation. Specifically, the study asked whether there is a relationship between the level of participation and the employer's:

- size, as measured by number of employees
- number of years in STW partnerships
- status as a high-performance workplace
- industry type
- perceptions of the quality and value of their STW partnerships.

As described in Section I, employer STW participation was measured by five participation scores; one overall participation score and separate scores for Working with Students, Working with Educators, Building a System, and Internal Company Practices Supporting STW. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to examine the relationships between most employer characteristics and the participation scores. The coefficient of determination, r^2, was calculated as an estimate of the strength of effect. The significance test for r was used to evaluate whether there is a linear relationship between partnership quality or value and employer participation in the population. The statistical significance of relationships in the population was tested at the .05 a priori level of significance ($p<.05$).

Number of Employees and Participation

This study sought to determine whether there is a relationship between employer size, as measured by number of employees, and participation in STW initiatives. As shown in Table 12, significant relationships were found between number of employees and four of the five participation scores: working with students, working with educators, internal company practices, and the overall participation score[32]. All of the correlations were positive, indicating that the employer's STW participation level increases with the number of employees at the employer establishment.

> **The larger the employer*, the greater the employer's participation in**
>
> - **Working with Students**
> - **Working with Educators**
> - **Internal Company Practices supporting STW**
> - **Overall STW Participation**
>
> *measured by number of employees

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[32] Correlations were significant not only at the .05 a priori level of significance, but also at the .01 level.

Table 12

Correlation Matrix of Employer Variables and Participation Scores

	Variable							
Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Working with Students n=128	1.00							
2 Working with Educators n=128	.59**	1.00						
3 Building a System n=128	.29**	.45**	1.00					
4 Internal Company Practices n=128	.49**	.48**	.15	1.00				
5 Overall STW Participation n=128	.81**	.85**	.59**	.73**	1.00			
6 Number of Empoyees[1] n=128	.34**	.28**	.03	.33**	.34**	1.00		
7 Years in STW Partnerships[1] n=97	.36**	.26**	.01	.42**	.36**	.21*	1.00	
8 High Performance Workplace Status n=108	.17	.07	.17	.05	.151	.04	.09	1.00

Note 1. Data converted to log base 10

*p< .05. **p<.01.

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The strongest relationship was between number of employees and working with students, r (126) = .342, p =.000. The coefficient of determination, r^2 = .12, indicates that 12 percent of the variation in participation can be accounted for by the variation in number of employees. A similar relationship was found between number of employees and the overall participation score, r (126) = .340, p =.000, r^2 = .12. There was no significant relationship between number of employees and participation in building a system.

Number of Years in STW Partnerships and Participation

This study also sought to examine the relationships between length of time in STW partnerships and the employer's level of participation. As shown in Table 12, a pattern of results similar to that of employer size and participation was found. Four of five participation areas showed significant positive correlations with years in STW partnerships; as with number of employees, there was no significant relationship between years in STW partnerships and participation in building a system.

The strongest relationship was between number of years in STW partnerships and internal company practices supporting STW, r (126) = .419, p =.000, r^2 = .18. That is, 18% of the variation in internal company practices can be accounted for by the variation in the number of years the employer has been involved in STW partnerships.

> Employers that have been in STW partnerships longer also evidence more internal company practices that support STW.

> As the employer's number of years in STW partnerships increases, employer activities with students and overall STW participation increase.

There are also moderately strong relationships between number of years in STW partnerships and overall STW participation, r (126) = .357, p =.000, r^2 = .13; and between number of years in STW partnerships and working with students, r (126) = .356, p =.000, r^2 = .13. As the number of years in STW partnerships increases, working with students and overall STW participation increase.

High Performance Workplace Rating and Participation

The study asked if there was a relationship between the employer's high-performance status (as rated by the respondent in item D4) and employer participation. As shown in Table 12, at the .05 level of significance, the relationships of the high-performance rating with participation scores were not significant.

Employer Industry Type and Participation

Another question of interest was whether a relationship exists between the industry type and the employer's STW participation. To answer this question, the industry groups with ten or more employers (Wholesale or Retail Trade; Local, State or Federal Government; Business & Other Services; Construction/Building Trades; Health Care; Hospitality, Travel, and Entertainment; and Banking, Finance,

> **No significant relationship was found between the employer's industry group and STW participation**
> **or**
> **between the employer high-performance rating and STW participation.**

Insurance or Real Estate) were examined in a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for each of the participation scores. Analysis of this question indicated there were no significant differences in participation among the industry groups[33].

Employer Perceptions of Partnership Quality and Value and Participation

One objective of this study was to determine whether there were any relationships between employer perceptions of partnership quality and value and employer participation in Florida STW initiatives. The Likert scaling of the items addressing STW partnership quality (survey items C2.1 – C2.6) and STW partnership value (survey items C2.7 – C2.11) allowed for the construction of straightforward indexes as a method of data reduction. These indexes were used to determine whether a relationship existed between employer perceptions of the quality or value of their STW partnership and their level of participation[34].

> **Employers that rate the quality and value of their STW partnerships higher also participate in more STW activities with students, with educators, and overall.**

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[33] ANOVA results indicated a significant difference among group means at the .05 level of significance for one of the five participation variables, Working with Students, $F_{(6,100)} = 2.33$, $p = .038$. Post-hoc pairwise multiple comparisons were made to determine which means differ. The Tukey HSD pairwise multiple comparisons revealed no significantly different group means at a familywise alpha level of 0.05. Thus, while the overall F test was significant, there were no significant differences among the group means. This result is uncommon but not impossible, since the Tukey HSD procedures are conservative in the attempt to control the familywise error rate.

[34] The response categories were assigned scores of 1 to 4 for the individual items measuring partnership quality and value. Each employer was assigned an overall score representing the summation of the scores for responses to items, a score for partnership quality and another for value. Cronbach's Alpha was computed to estimate the reliability (internal consistency) of the total score on each index (Cronbach, 1951, as cited in Gay, 1996). In this analysis, a coefficient alpha of .80 was considered adequate. The coefficient for the partnership quality index was .75. Individual item correlations with the index revealed item C2.4, "In our partnership, the employer has primary

The correlation matrix in Table 13 presents findings on the relationships between the partnership quality and value indexes and employer participation. These findings contribute to the knowledge base on employer-school partnerships.

The study found positive, significant relationships between perceptions of partnership quality, as measured by the quality index; and between perceptions of partnership value, as measured by the value index, and participation in three areas: Working with Students, Working with Educators, and overall participation. Perceptions of value were also significantly related to Internal Company Practices supporting STW. Five of seven correlations were greater than .30. The lowest correlations were with Working with Students and the highest with Working with Educators.

> **Employers who work with educators have *significantly* higher perceptions of the quality of their STW partnerships.**
>
> **In the words of one employer, "Our opinion of the program varies with the relationship with the teacher/faculty. The better the relationship, more input is given & the greater the satisfaction with the program."**

The index for partnership value is more strongly correlated with overall STW participation than the index for partnership quality. Also, it is noteworthy that there was no significant relationship between either quality or value and participation in Building a System.

> **Higher employer perceptions of partnership value (beneficial outcomes) are associated with higher internal company practices supporting STW.**

Eleven percent (11%) of the variation in employer perceptions of partnership quality is shared with employer participation with educators. That is those employers who work with educators have higher perceptions of partnership quality. Also, 10% of the variation in perceptions of partnership value is associated with the variation in Internal Company Practices. In other words, those employers with higher perceptions of the value of their STW partnership engage in more internal practices supporting STW. To the researcher's knowledge, this represents the first empirical evidence on the relationship between employer participation and employer perceptions of the quality and value of their STW partnership with schools.

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with the index. With this item eliminated, the coefficient for the quality index of .79 was considered adequate. The coefficient of .88 for the partnership value index was higher than the standard.

Table 13
Correlation Matrix of Partnership Indexes of Quality and Value and Participation Scores

Variable				Variable			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Working with Students n=128	1.00						
2 Working with Educators n=128	.59**	1.00					
3 Building a System n=128	.29**	.45**	1.00				
4 Internal Company Practices n=128	.49**	.48**	.15	1.00			
5 Overall STW Participation n=128	.81**	.85**	.59**	.73**	1.00		
6 Partnership Quality Index n=109	.27**	.33**	.09	.18	.30**	1.00	
7 Partnership Value Index n=105	.21*	.31**	.13	.31**	.36**	.55**	1.00

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions and recommendations are drawn from the results of this study.

Employer participation is optimized in initiatives that place a priority on achieving important STW outcomes for students and build long-term relationships between employers and schools.

This conclusion is based upon several related findings. First, in their ratings of STW partnership value, the strongest agreement among employers on valued outcomes of the partnership's activities was that "students are better prepared for work and careers." This finding is consistent with the importance placed by employers on workforce-related incentives to participation, where survey data indicated that employers are motivated as much by workforce needs as by a desire to improve education and the community. Basically, employers have a need for students to be better prepared for work and careers. They value this STW partnership outcome over all others, and their perceptions of STW partnership value are associated with their level of participation, accounting for 11% of overall participation. That is, employers who have higher perceptions of their partnership's value have higher participation rates.

Also associated with higher participation rates is the number of years an employer has been in STW partnerships, which accounts for 18% of internal company practices supporting STW, 13% of participation in working with students, and 13% of participation overall. As put by one employer, "If there is not a long-term commitment by the partners, the program is doomed."

STW initiatives can act on these findings by focusing on the development of good working relationships between employers and schools over time (as compared to short-term, opportunistic exchanges) in order to maximize employer participation. Educators need to move away from the traditional view of employers as "benefactors" in order to see them as long-term partners in the preparation of students for work and careers.

The study findings constitute strong evidence that efforts to strengthen long-term employer-education relationships will promote higher levels of employer participation in STW initiatives. Therefore, the building and maintaining effective STW partnerships should be considered as essential to the success of the initiatives as the development of the programmatic or activity components. To this end, local initiatives should take advantage of the many resources that exist for nurturing the partnerships, such as those of the National Association for Partners in Education. Local STW professional development and governance activities involving STW educators and employers, whatever their primary purpose, could also include a partnership-building component.

To summarize, results of this study indicate that employer participation increases with the length of time employers are involved in STW partnerships and the value of important STW outcomes for students. While data indicate that effective partnerships are being forged within the Florida STW community, keeping employers involved in those partnerships, in turn, will require attention to principles of effective partnerships identified in the literature[35] and confirmed by the employers in this study.

Size matters.

This conclusion is based on the finding of a significant relationship between the number of employees at the employer establishment and employer participation rates, accounting for 12% of the variation in working with students, 11% of internal company practices supporting STW, and 12% of participation overall. That participation increases with size is also supported by subgroup analysis (Appendix B), which showed that large employers (> 150 employees) had higher participation rates than either medium (51 – 150 employees) or small (1 - 50 employees) employers for seven of nine activities with students, all activities with educators, and all internal company practices supporting STW. In the area Working with Students, small employers had higher participation rates in school-based enterprises and medium employers, with co-op activities.

These findings suggest that employer recruitment for partnership activities should take into account the differences among small, medium, and large employers and also take advantage of the employer mix available in their local economy. For example, large employers have more complex work organizations and greater numbers of supervisory and management staff, including HRD and training staff, accounting for their higher participation rates in most activities. They likely have greater capacity (both in number of slots and mentoring support) to provide work-based learning opportunities for students at the employer work site. Medium employers showed higher participation rates in co-operative education activities, suggesting they are a good fit with that program design. Small employers were shown to have higher rates of participation in assisting with school-based enterprises. Small business owners/managers are in a unique position to advise students on "all aspects of a business." Also, in rural partnerships faced with sparse employer populations and problems transporting students to work sites, a school-based enterprise with one small business advisor can provide work-based learning opportunities to many students at the school site.

The removal of barriers to employer participation should continue to be a priority at the state and local levels.

This general conclusion is supported by specific findings from the study, both quantitative and qualitative. First, employers are not being reached with information

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[35] e.g., Asche, et al, 1998; Grobe, 1993; Hubbard, et al, 1995; Kanter, 1989, 1994; Sidler, 1994; Tushnet, 1993.

on STW programs and opportunities, as evidenced by the finding that "lack of information about STW" was the number one disincentive reported by employers, with more than half of respondents rating it as a moderate or major disincentive to participation. This finding is particularly noteworthy given that all the employers in this study are participating in STW initiatives in some way. Lack of awareness about STW was also mentioned by 12 respondents at the end of the questionnaire, with comments such as, "I don't really know what STW is" and "[STW] needs more promotion!!!"

Other employers cited as an obstacle the bureaucracy of the school system, the second-highest rated disincentive to participation, with 43% of employers indicating it to be a moderate or major disincentive to their participation. Employer comments indicated problems with bureaucracy at different levels of the system. One employer commented, "We have excellent county STW staff. But when we are working with individual schools, there is fragmentation & disorganization with some." Another employer remarked, "Schools, STW, workforce rules and regulations slow the process due to levels of bureaucracy! They sometimes are out of touch with business and education needs!" A third indicated, "We need better communication by the school system. Too many contacts – often call one person only to be told that they are the wrong ones to talk to."

Employers are also concerned about students' maturity or reliability. With 43% of employers rating this concern as a moderate or major disincentive, it was the third highest-rated disincentive to their participation. This concern was forcefully described by one respondent who wrote, "We must do all we can to make sure young people understand service, reliability and honesty. Too many young people do not know how to work or understand the 'old fashioned work ethic'". Other comments by employers suggested they feel schools could do more to prepare students in this regard. One respondent remarked, "Students need more training in job ethics & responsibilities." Another commented, "The high schools fail to develop a work ethic in the students. They have no concept of being to work on time." Yet another employer commented that [what doesn't work] is "teaching our students the three R's and forgetting all the rest."

The barriers cited above could be addressed in a number of ways. Employers' general lack of awareness of STW could be addressed by statewide, marketing efforts. Informational materials could focus on educating employers about the shared set of STW activities, drawn from different approaches and program models, that are adapted in different ways in the local partnerships to meet local needs. Local partnerships would then be able to build on the state campaign in trying to engage employers in local program activities.

Florida has removed workplace regulatory barriers to employer participation, such as making the state liable for students in work-based learning activities. However, employers do not seem to be aware of this relief, since regulatory issues were the fourth highest-rated incentive to participation. A statewide campaign could also address this lack of awareness.

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Based on evidence from this and other studies, employer participation in student preparation for work and careers should be considered a natural and necessary part of the normal business of education. At the school and district levels, committed leadership is needed to streamline the employer interface with schools. This would entail a review of school structure, policies and procedures, schedule, lines of communication, support staffing, and so on, to see how they can be made more "employer-friendly" without not sacrificing important social and civic objectives of education. For example, dedicated teachers put in a great deal of time and effort developing good working relationships with employers. School principals committed to employer participation could support teachers in developing contacts with employers by ensuring the school's structure and culture are conducive to employer involvement and by allocating time for teachers to work with employers.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act has not resulted in a substantive change in employer participation in building a STW system in Florida.

A major challenge for STW policy makers and practitioners has been engaging the participation of employers in building a system to provide career awareness and work-based learning for large numbers of students. For this reason, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 included specific references in the legislation to employer involvement in building the system.

Study findings indicate that employers are not collaborating substantially with one another in the system-building activities examined in this study. Rather, they appear to be participating individually and in ad hoc ways in their STW partnerships. Even recruitment of new employers appears to be left to schools and program staff, with little more than one in ten employers reporting they play a leadership role in encouraging other employers to participate in STW initiatives.

More than half of all employers in the sample (58%) do not participate in any of the system-building activities in the study, and 22% are report participating in only one activity[36]. Employer participation rates are low in activities for which there are many opportunities: only 14% of employers report collaborating with other employers involved in STW, and only 12% play a leadership role in encouraging other employers to participate. Thirty-one percent (31%) of employers serve on a local program advisory committee or board. However, this is one of the traditional roles employers have carried out with schools and therefore not considered a strong indicator of *new* STW system-building efforts. Above and beyond the low participation of employers in the system-building activities is the complete lack of findings regarding relationships between participation in this area and other study variables. Length of time in STW partnerships, employer size, and employer

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[36] It should be remembered that these findings are based on the activities included under the heading Building a System. There are STW activities included in other participation areas (for example, providing educators with skill requirements for curriculum development, under Working with Educators) that logically could also have been included in Building a System.

perceptions of partnership quality and value were all shown to have significant relationships with one or more areas of employer participation – except Building A System.

Traditional approaches to workforce development have been firmly entrenched on the supply side of the labor market, with employers serving nominally on governing boards and commissions. Increasingly, states are struggling with how to implement demand-side strategies for workforce development that engage employers more proactively[37]. One strategy repeated in the workforce development literature is the development of new infrastructures that provide employers opportunities to organize collectively in advancing workforce objectives – employer intermediary organizations.

A number of observers have also argued the need for employer intermediary organizations as an essential facilitator of employer participation in STW[38]. The need for intermediaries was not highlighted by this study, with respondents rating the "availability of intermediary organizations to broker STW relationships for employers and assume coordinating and administrative functions for employers" as mostly a minor incentive or not an incentive to participation. However, in view of how little employers report collaborating with one another on STW, it is reasonable to conclude they are not collaborating on other important workforce or economic development issues either. Employers participating mostly independently of other employers may not recognize a need for intermediary organizations, understand the roles intermediaries play, or understand their potential value to the employer.

Intermediary organizations could be established in Florida at the state level, the local level, or both. They could be developed and funded by the employers of an industry or region, or by public funds. Also, intermediary organizations could be established solely around STW or around both STW and other collective workforce needs, such as advancing employers' common human resource development objectives with their existing workforces or upgrading technology or high performance work practices in an industry. Regardless of how intermediary organizations are organized, one of their important purposes would be to develop direct networking arrangements between committed, involved employers and links for recruitment of new employer partners through a variety of local arrangements.

Florida has implemented a number of demand-side strategies in its attempt to develop an integrated workforce development system, including regional Workforce Development Boards; a Workforce Estimating Conference for the identification of high-skills, high-wage and high-demand occupations; and then, on the supply side, the linking of vocational and technical education funding with performance outcomes in targeted areas. However, the role of employers in the workforce development system, and in linking workforce development with economic development, appears to have remained substantially unchanged, at least in the STW component. A new

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[37] Jobs for the Future, 1998; National Governors' Association, 1997, 1998.
[38] Academy for Educational Development, 1996; Committee for Economic Development, 1998; National Governors' Association, 1997a; Whiting, 1995; Wills, 1998

conceptual framework for demand-side workforce development is needed, one which encompasses new roles for employers and new mechanisms for employer collaboration and involvement in building a system. The potential of employer intermediary organizations for organizing employer STW efforts could be part of a larger analysis of demand-side strategies for workforce development in Florida.

Employers can do more to support education and the STW transition in Florida.

This study showed that employers are working with students in many different ways both at school and in the workplace to help them prepare for work and careers. Employers should not be expected to contribute more than is feasible to the STW initiatives in their communities. At the same time, study findings indicate they are not carrying out fully some vital roles that only employers can perform. Employers can play a larger role in several ways:

- By providing students incentives to work hard in school. Only 30% of employers reported that in the hiring process, they require entry-level job applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records such as transcripts of coursework, attendance and grades, etc. Not requiring evidence of achievement sends the signal to young people that it only matters that they graduate, not whether or what they learn in school. Employers can motivate students to achieve by linking their hiring practices to school-based records.

- By joining and supporting intermediary organizations that link employers with schools and with other employers. Employers are still participating in "ad hoc" ways in the STW transition. This is especially true of small and medium employers that are the heart of Florida's STW initiatives.

- By supporting the STW transition in the organization's internal policies and practices. More employers could enhance the learning content of youth jobs, recognize and reward employees who support STW efforts, and train employees to mentor young people.

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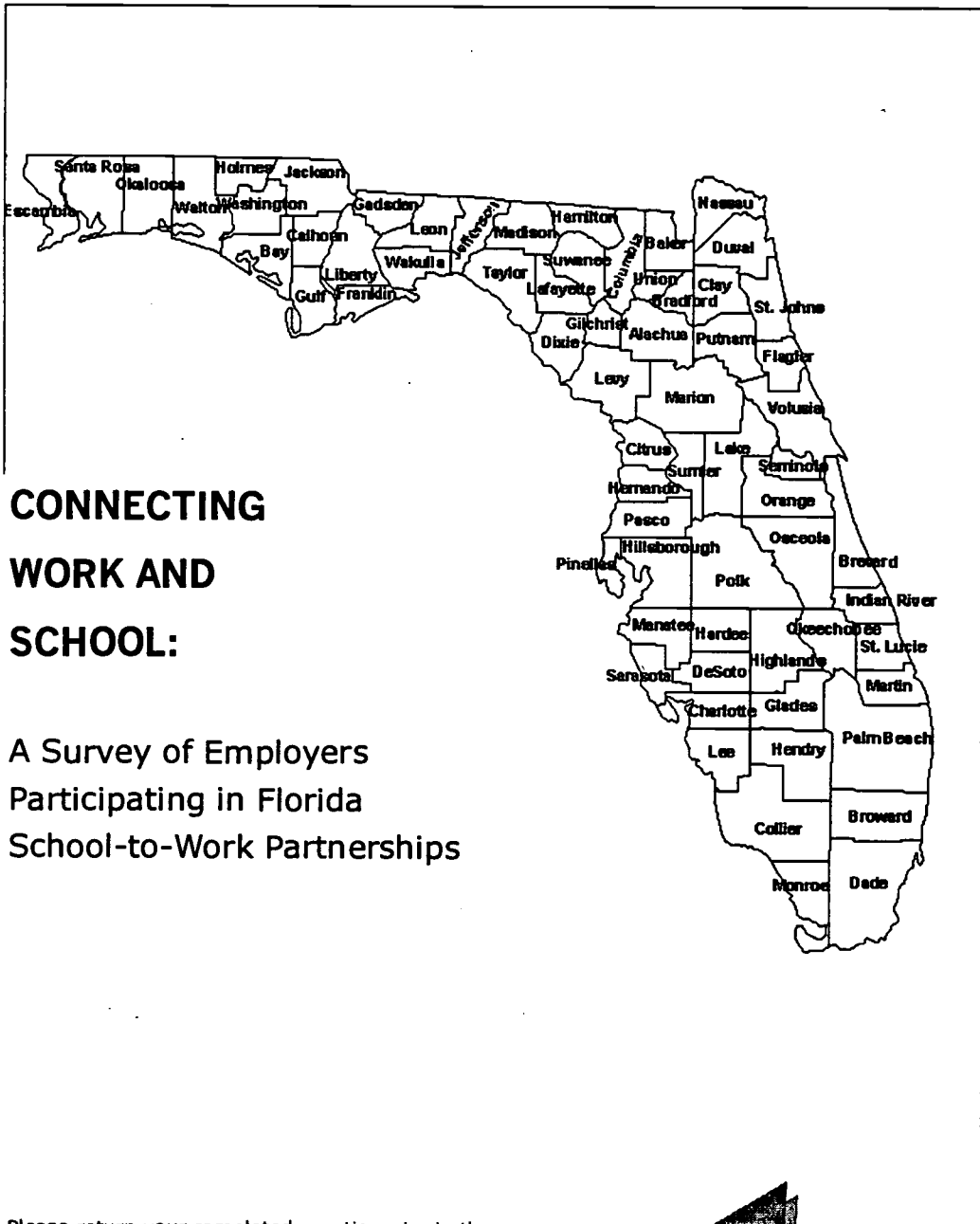
CONNECTING
WORK AND
SCHOOL:

A Survey of Employers
Participating in Florida
School-to-Work Partnerships

Please return your completed questionnaire in the
enclosed envelope to:

The Institute for Workforce Competitiveness
Florida International University
University Park, EAS 2614
Miami, Florida 33199

IWC

INSTITUTE FOR WORKFORCE
COMPETITIVENESS

Purpose of the Study

As more employers like you become involved in school-to-work (STW) partnerships, information is needed on their participation and concerns. A STW partnership is any formal or informal connection that you may have with schools to develop the future workforce. Across the state, employers are:

- providing information and experiences to students that help motivate them to work hard in school and prepare for challenging careers,

- working with teachers to develop programs and instruction that will improve student skills and academic achievement, and

- working with other community stakeholders to build effective systems for developing a quality workforce.

To succeed, STW partnerships must be viable for you, the employer, as well as for schools. By sharing your experiences and perspectives in this survey, you will be providing vital information to state and local leaders responsible for workforce programs and policy. Your responses will help to ensure the right supports for Florida employers who are working to improve education and the community.

Instructions

- The survey will take an estimated 10 - 15 minutes to complete. It has been designed to be easy for you to read and answer.

- Directions are provided for each question. Most items ask you to circle your response.

- If you need to change an answer, please completely erase or clearly cross out your old answer.

- Return your completed questionnaire in the self-addressed, stamped envelope enclosed. If more convenient, you may fax your completed questionnaire to (305) 348-6524.

- If you have any questions, please contact Mary Haley, Project Director, at (305) 348-6529 or e-mail haleym@fiu.edu.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. YOUR VIEWS ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO US AND YOUR RESPONSES WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

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Part A. Employer Participation in STW Activities (4 Questions)

This section asks about the ways that your organization participates in school-to-work (STW) activities. If you are part of a multi-establishment enterprise or agency, please answer the questions for your location only.

A1. *Working with Students.* Circle the number of <u>each activity</u> in which your establishment participates.

1	Visit students in schools to provide career information or classroom instruction.
2	Give workplace or industry tours to students.
3	Provide students job-shadowing opportunities at your worksite.
4	Provide mentoring experiences for students.
5	Provide students internship (paid or unpaid) or volunteer opportunities at your worksite.
6	Provide cooperative work experiences in which students are paid for working in a job related to their field of studies.
7	Provide clinical/practicum work experiences in which students (a) work under the supervision of a practicing professional *and* (b) receive credit toward certification, licensure, or a professional degree.
8	Provide pre-apprenticeship or registered apprenticeship opportunities to students at your worksite.
9	Act as consultant to students operating school enterprises.

A2. *Working with Educators.* Circle the number of <u>each activity</u> in which your establishment participates.

1	Provide teachers opportunities for job shadowing or internships to help them learn firsthand about workplace and industry expectations.
2	Assist in program design and development.
3	Assist in developing or evaluating work- or school-based curricula.
4	Share industry skill standards with educators for use in program planning.
5	Provide access to current workplace technology.
6	Provide educators with information and support to increase their use of technology.
7	Provide expertise to teachers in developing, implementing, and judging student projects.

A3. *Building a System.* **Circle the number of each activity in which your establishment participates.**

1	Serve on the statewide STW Leadership Team.
2	Serve on an executive body or sub-committee of one of the 28 Regional STW Partnerships.
3	Serve on a local program advisory committee or board.
4	Serve on the state-level Jobs & Education Partnership Workforce Development Board.
5	Serve on one of the 24 Florida Regional Workforce Development Boards.
6	Play a leadership role in encouraging other employers to participate in STW initiatives.
7	Collaborate with other employers involved in STW.
8	Attend school board meetings to become informed about policy issues and to support STW.
9	Influence policymakers to develop appropriate supports for employer involvement in STW.

A4. *Internal Practices Supporting STW.* **Circle the number of each activity in which your establishment participates.**

1	Encourage and allow employees who possess skills and knowledge to serve as mentors or trainers for students.
2	Give employees release time to attend meetings and school activities.
3	Prepare employees to supervise students in work-based learning experiences.
4	Give recognition and/or rewards to employees who lead or participate in STW efforts.
5	In the hiring process, require entry-level job applicants to demonstrate achievement through school-based records such as transcripts of coursework, attendance and grades, portfolios, or certificates.
6	Upgrade and enrich ordinary youth jobs into higher-quality learning experiences.
7	Actively use local education and training institutions as sources of new employees.

Part B. Factors Influencing Participation (3 Questions)

The questions in this section ask about the factors or conditions that have encouraged or discouraged your participation in STW initiatives.

B1. Below is a list of specific <u>benefits</u> or <u>incentives</u> that encourage employer participation in STW activities. Please rate the extent to which each of these factors has served as an incentive to *your firm's* participation. <u>Circle only one response for each statement</u>.

		1 Not an Incentive	2 Minor Incentive	3 Moderate Incentive	4 Major Incentive
1	Opportunity to contribute to the quality of public education.	1	2	3	4
2	Availability of wage subsidies for student workers.	1	2	3	4
3	Availability of training and technical assistance for employees who participate.	1	2	3	4
4	Having a range of STW program models and employer activities to choose from.	1	2	3	4
5	Opportunity to participate in program design and development.	1	2	3	4
6	Opportunity to participate in program governance and decision-making.	1	2	3	4
7	Opportunity to contribute to the local community.	1	2	3	4
8	Opportunity to provide professional development to our current employees.	1	2	3	4
9	Opportunity to screen potential employees.	1	2	3	4
10	Opportunity to network with schools that serve as sources of new employees.	1	2	3	4
11	Opportunity to diversify our workforce by attracting young minorities and women.	1	2	3	4
12	Source of low- or no-cost temporary or part-time labor.	1	2	3	4
13	Opportunity to contribute to our organization's positive image in the community.	1	2	3	4
14	Availability of intermediary organizations to broker STW relationships for employers and assume coordinating and administrative functions.	1	2	3	4
15	Opportunity to contribute to the skills of the future workforce.	1	2	3	4
16	Opportunity to attract young workers to replace our organization's aging workforce.	1	2	3	4
17	Opportunity to address current labor shortage in our industry or local area.	1	2	3	4

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B2. Below is a list of specific <u>concerns</u> or <u>disincentives</u> reported by employers that discourage them from participating in STW activities. On a scale of 1 – 4, please rate the extent to which each of these concerns has served as a disincentive to *your firm's* participation. <u>Circle only one response for each statement</u>.

.		1 Not a Disincentive	2 Minor Disincentive	3 Moderate Disincentive	4 Major Disincentive
1	Lack of information about STW.	1	2	3	4
2	Lack of technical assistance o trouble-shooting for progra activities.	1	2	3	4
3	Bureaucracy of school system.	1	2	3	4
4	Opposition or lack of interest o regular employees.	1	2	3	4
5	Organizational changes (e.g change in ownership reorganization, downsizing)	1	2	3	4
6	Lack of flexibility in program desig (e.g., scheduling, selection o students, employer options fo participation).	1	2	3	4
7	Concern about students qualifications or productivity.	1	2	3	4
8	Concern about students' maturity o reliability.	1	2	3	4
9	Concern about regulatory issue such as child labor laws, worker' compensation insurance, or healt and safety regulations.	1	2	3	4
10	Student trainee may accept position with a competitor.	1	2	3	4
11	Lost productivity of employees wh participate in STW activities.	1	2	3.	4
12	Lack of commitment or interest a the managerial or executive levels.	1	2	3	4
13	Cost of program development.	1	2	3	4
14	Cost of training and supervisin students.	1	2	3	4

Part C. Employer STW Partnerships (2 Questions)

The questions in this section ask about the characteristics of your STW partnership. A STW partnership is any joint activity, formal or informal, between schools and employers to build connections between school-based learning and work-based learning.

C1. Based on this definition, how many years has your organization been involved in STW partnerships? (Specify)

_____ Years

C2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree that each of the following statements describes your STW partnership. Circle only one response for each statement.

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly Agree
1	Good communication exists between educators and employer partners.	1	2	3	4
2	A sense of trust exists between educators and employer partners.	1	2	3	4
3	The partnership works together to gain additional resources not available from tax dollars.	1	2	3	4
4	In our partnership, the employer has primar responsibility for the partnership with some inpu from educators.	1	2	3	4
5	The partnership has adequate support and attention from leaders in the partnering organizations.	1	2	3	4
6	The partnership communicates with parents and other stakeholders in the community.	1	2	3	4
7	The partnership makes a difference in education and the community.	1	2	3	4
8	As a result of the partnership's activities, students are better prepared for work and careers.	1	2	3	4
9	As a result of the partnership's activities, employer partners have a better understanding of education issues.	1	2	3	4
10	As a result of the partnership's activities, educators better understand workplace requirements.	1	2	3	4
11	As a result of the partnership's activities, employers are more supportive of schools.	1	2	3	4

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Part D. Employer Information (4 Questions)

The last set of questions asks for general information on your organization. If you are part of a multi-establishment enterprise or agency, please answer the questions for your location only.

D1. What is the business type of your organization? Circle only one.

1	Agriculture	8	Health Services
2	Construction/Trades	9	Entertainment
3	Manufacturing	10	Transportation
4	Wholesale or Retail Trade	11	Government
5	Banking, Finance, Insurance or Real Estate	12	Private, Non-Profit
6	Hotel, Restaurant or Travel	13	Other (specify):
7	Business Services		

D2. Approximately how many people are employed by your organization? Please give the number for your location only.

_____ Employees at this location

D3. What is your position title? (Specify.)

_____

D4. Based upon the business literature, a "high performance workplace" exhibits some or all of the following features: (a) flatter hierarchies; (b) decentralized, participative management; (c) work done by teams organized around processes; (d) collaboration between labor and management, and with customers and suppliers; (e) flexible technologies. Characteristics may vary by industry.

Relative to your industry or field, please rate the extent to which your establishment is a high performance workplace on a scale of 1 – 10, where 1 = no high performance characteristics and 10 = most or all high performance characteristics for your industry or field. Circle only one number.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment below on your participation in STW partnerships.

What works best?

What doesn't work?

Other comments on this survey or any aspect of your participation with schools:

Thank you for your help.
Please return the questionnaire in the self-addressed stamped envelope enclosed

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PRE-CONTACT LETTER

FIU FLORIDA
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

Hope, Knowledge, and Opportunity

Date

«Title» «First» «Last»
«Name»
«Address»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear «Title» «Last» :

Within the next few days, you will receive a request to complete a brief questionnaire. We are mailing it to you in an effort to learn about how employers participate in school-to-work (STW) partnerships and what can be done to support their involvement with schools.

This survey is being conducted to better inform policymakers and program staff who must make decisions related to STW programs and strategies. As an employer, your perspectives and concerns are vital to improving the education of young people for the changing world of work.

We will greatly appreciate your taking the few minutes needed to complete and return your questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Haley
Project Director

SURVEY LETTER

FIU FLORIDA
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

Hope, Knowledge, and Opportunity

Date

«Title» «First» «Last»
«Name»
«Address»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear «Title» «Last»:

You are one of a limited number of employers selected for a statewide study of employer involvement in school-to-work (STW) initiatives, sponsored by the Institute for Workforce Competitiveness. As you know, STW partnerships are made up of various formal and informal connections between employers and schools to develop the future workforce. This study will provide vital information to state and local leaders about how employers view their connections with schools and how to encourage broader employer participation.

The employers receiving this survey were drawn randomly from a list of thousands of Florida employers who participate in STW activities. For the results of the study to truly represent the experiences and concerns of these employers, it is important that you complete the questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided. By participating in this study, you are representing hundreds of employers across Florida who are working to improve education and the community.

Your responses will be completely confidential. We use identification numbers only to check on our returns; neither you nor «Name» will ever be identified by name, and your name will never be placed on the questionnaire itself.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about this study. Please write or call me collect at the number below or e-mail me at haleym@fiu.edu. I will also gladly send you the results of the survey; please include your request with the survey.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Haley
Project Director

FOLLOW-UP POSTCARD

Institute for Workforce Competitiveness
Florida International University
University Park, EAS 2614
Miami, Florida 33199

```
THE
MAILING
ADDRESS
GOES
HERE
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CONNECTING WORK AND SCHOOL:

A Survey of Employers Participating in
Florida School-to-Work Partnerships

Last week, we mailed you a questionnaire seeking information on your participation in School-to-Work partnerships. Your establishment's name was randomly drawn in a scientific sample from a statewide listing of schools' employer partners. You were designated by a school as the contact person for your organization.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire to us, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. For the information from the study to be truly representative, it is essential that each employer return the questionnaire.

We are especially grateful for your response because we believe that it will be very useful to both state and local programs and to policy makers in strengthening STW partnerships. To succeed, partnerships must be viable for employers as well as schools.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, or if it was misplaced, please call us collect at (305)-348-6529 and we will get another one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Haley
Project Director
Institute for Workforce Competitiveness
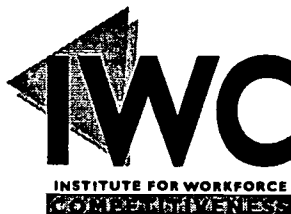
IWC
INSTITUTE FOR WORKFORCE

FIU FLORIDA
INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

Hope, Knowledge, and Opportunity

Date

«Title» «First» «Last»
«Name»
«Address»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear «Title» «Last»:

About three weeks ago, we requested your opinions about issues related to School-to-Work (STW) partnerships between employers and schools. As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire. However, we genuinely wish to hear from you.

The study is being conducted so that employers like you can affect programs and policies that help to prepare students for success in the workplace. We are writing you again because the study's usefulness depends on our receiving each respondent's questionnaire. Your name was drawn through a scientific sampling process in which every STW employer partner identified by Florida's 28 Regional STW Partnerships had an equal chance of being selected. In order for the information from the study to be truly representative, it is essential that respondents return their questionnaires.

In case your questionnaire has been misplaced, another is enclosed with this letter. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the study. Please call me collect at (305) 348-6529, write to me at the address below, or e-mail me at haleym@fiu.edu.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Haley
Project Director

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FIU FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Hope, Knowledge, and Opportunity

Date

«Title» «First» «Last»
«Name»
«Address»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear «Title» «Last»:

Over the past several months, we mailed you a questionnaire seeking your views on your participation with schools to help students prepare for work and careers. We believe that information on your experiences and concerns will be very useful to state and local leaders who make program and policy decisions. However, we haven't yet heard from you.

You were one of only **400 employers** scientifically selected from a list of more than 15,000 employers statewide who participate with schools. By completing this brief questionnaire, you are representing thousands of employers across Florida who are working to improve education and the community.

Please take ten minutes to complete and return the questionnaire. If someone else at your establishment is better able to complete the questionnaire, please feel free to have that person do so.

We are enclosing another questionnaire and self-addressed, stamped envelope to make it easier for you to help us. As I mentioned before, your responses will be completely confidential. Also, please write, call me collect at the number below, or e-mail me at haleym@fiu.edu with any questions you may have.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Haley
Project Director

APPENDIX B: SURVEY DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table B1

Statistical Indices of Study Variables Used in Inferential Procedures

Variable	Mean		5% Trimmed Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Skewness			Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Std. Error						Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio
Working with Students	3.34	0.17	3.22	3	1.97	0	9	0.63	0.21	2.96	-0.27	0.43	-0.66
Working with Educators	1.80	0.17	1.64	1	1.95	0	7	0.92	0.21	4.30	-0.07	0.43	-0.17
Building a System	0.90	0.14	0.68	0	1.53	0	9	2.66	0.21	12.44	9.04	0.43	21.27
Internal Company Practices	2.31	0.17	2.21	2	1.88	0	7	0.58	0.21	2.69	-0.55	0.43	-1.30
Overall Participation Score	8.34	0.49	8.07	7	5.52	1	23	0.63	0.21	2.95	-0.39	0.43	-0.93
Number of Employees	276.92	65.62	143.72	25	742.45	1	6000	4.84	0.21	22.63	29.68	0.43	69.84
Years in STW Partnerships	8.08	0.75	7.36	5	7.36	1	43	1.87	0.25	7.66	4.72	0.49	9.73
High Performance Status	7.43	0.20	7.51	8	2.04	1	10	-0.54	0.23	-2.30	-0.40	0.46	-0.87
Quality Index	12.77	0.33	12.93	13	3.47	3	19	-0.93	0.23	-4.00	0.80	0.46	1.73
Value Index	15.10	0.31	15.26	15	3.20	4	23	-0.66	0.24	-2.78	1.80	0.47	3.85

Note. Untransformed data including all values

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Table B2

Employer participation in STW Activities – frequency distribution by employer size

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
			Working With Students					
A1.01 Provide career information or classroom instruction.	42	57	16	70	26	84	84	66
A1.02 Give workplace or industry tours to students.	34	46	14	61	23	74	71	56
A1.03 Job Shadowing	36	49	12	52	22	71	70	55
A1.04 Mentoring	19	26	7	30	17	55	43	34
A1.05 Internships	33	45	11	48	24	77	68	53
A1.06 Co-Op	19	26	9	39	9	29	37	29
A1.07 Clinical/Practicum	10	14	3	13	10	32	23	18
A1.08 Pre-Registered Apprenticeships	9	12	1	4	4	13	14	11
A1.09 School-Based Enterprise Consulting	12	16	1	4	4	13	17	13

(table continues)

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Table B2 *(continued)*

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Working With Educators								
A2.01 Teachers opportunities for job shadowing or internships	16	22	4	17	10	32	30	23
A2.02 Program design/development	14	19	5	22	10	32	29	23
A2.03 Development/evaluate curricula	16	22	2	9	13	42	31	24
A2.04 Industry skills standards	11	15	5	22	16	52	32	25
A2.05 Access to current workplace technology	18	24	5	22	9	29	32	25
A2.06 Support for increase use of technology	19	26	6	26	13	42	38	30
A2.07 Expertise on student projects	24	32	3	13	11	36	38	30
Building a System								
A3.01 Serve on the statewide STW Leadership team.	2	3			2	7	4	3

(table continues)

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Table B2 (continued)

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
A3.02 Regional STW Partnership	6	8	1	4			7	6
A3.03 Local advisory committee or board	21	28	7	30	11	36	39	31
A3.04 State JEP Board	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A3.05 Regional WDB	4	5	2	9	2	7	8	6
A3.06 Employer leadership	9	12	2	9	4	13	15	12
A3.07 Collaborate with other employers on STW	8	11	2	9	8	26	18	14
A3.08 School board meetings	5	7	3	13			8	6
A3.09 Influence policymakers	6	8	1	4	1	3	8	6
Internal Practices Supporting STW								
A4.01 Encourage and allow employees to mentor/ train students.	31	42	10	44	22	71	63	49
A4.02 Provide employee release time	41	55	10	44	20	65	71	56

(table continues)

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Table B2 (continued)

	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
A4.03 Employee preparation for student supervision	19	26	3	13	12	39	34	27
A4.04 Employee recognition/reward	5	7	4	17	9	29	18	14
A4.05 Use school-based records in hiring	18	24	6	26	14	45	38	30
A4.06 Upgrade youth jobs	9	12	2	9	11	36	22	17
A4.07 Recruit from local education institutions	19	26	11	48	20	65	50	39

[a] Small = 1-50 employees. [b] Medium = 51-150 employees. [c] Large = >150 employees.

[d] See questionnaire in Appendix G for complete wording of items.

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Table B3

Employer participation scores – descriptive statistics and confidence intervals by employer size

	Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
Working with Students				
Median	2.00	3.00	5.00	3.00
Mean	2.89	3.22	4.48	3.34
Standard Deviation	1.99	1.81	1.61	1.97
Standard Error	.23	.38	.29	.17
95% Confidence Interval for Population Mean	2.43 – 3.35	2.44 – 4.0	3.89 – 5.07	2.99 - 3.68
Working with Educators				
Median	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Mean	1.59	1.30	2.65	1.80
Standard Deviation	1.86	1.92	1.99	1.95
Standard Error	.22	.40	.36	.17
95% Confidence Interval for Population Mean	1.16 – 2.02	.48 – 2.13	1.91 – 3.38	1.46 - 2.14
Building a System				
Median	.00	.00	.00	0.0
Mean	.93	.78	.90	.90
Standard Deviation	1.79	1.04	1.14	1.53
Standard Error	.21	.22	.20	.14
95% Confidence Interval for Population Mean	.52 – 1.35	.33 – 1.23	.49 – 1.32	.63 - 1.17
Internal Company Practices				
Median	1.00	1.00	4.00	2.00

(table continues)

Table B3 (continued)

	Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
Mean	1.92	2.00	3.48	2.31
Standard Deviation	1.79	1.71	1.79	1.88
Standard Error	.21	.36	.32	.17
95% Confidence Interval for Population Mean	1.50 – 2.33	1.26 – 2.74	2.83 – 4.14	1.98 - 2.64
Overall Participation Score				
Median	6.00	6.00	12.00	7.00
Mean	7.34	7.30	11.52	8.34
Standard Deviation	5.56	5.48	4.26	5.52
Standard Error	.65	1.14	.76	.49
95% Confidence Interval for Population Mean	6.05 – 8.63	4.93 – 9.67	9.95 – 13.08	7.38 - 9.31

[a] Small = 1-50 employees.   [b] Medium = 51-150 employees.   [c] Large = >150 employees.

Table B4

Employer ratings of incentives to participation – frequency distribution by employer size

Incentive Response [d]	Small [a]		Medium [b]		Large [c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
B1.01 Opportunity to contribute to the quality of public education.								
1 Not an Incentive	9	14	2	9			11	9
2 Minor Incentive	7	11	2	9			9	8
3 Moderate Incentive	23	35	9	41	6	20	38	32
4 Major Incentive	27	41	9	41	24	80	60	51
B1.02 Availability of wage subsidies for student workers.								
1 Not an Incentive	39	59	10	46	18	67	67	58
2 Minor Incentive	12	18	3	14	3	11	18	16
3 Moderate Incentive	13	20	4	18	4	15	21	18
4 Major Incentive	2	3	5	23	2	7	9	8
B1.03 Training and technical assistance for participating employees.								

(table continues)

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Incentive Response [d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1 Not an Incentive	32	50	6	27	10	37	48	42
2 Minor Incentive	10	16	8	36	7	26	25	22
3 Moderate Incentive	19	30	7	32	4	15	30	27
4 Major Incentive	3	5	1	5	6	22	10	9
B1.04 Range of STW program models and activities to choose from.								
1 Not an Incentive	32	50	7	32	11	41	50	44
2 Minor Incentive	11	17	8	36	3	11	22	20
3 Moderate Incentive	16	25	6	27	7	26	29	26
4 Major Incentive	5	8	1	5	6	22	12	11
B1.05 Opportunity to participate in program design and development.								
1 Not an Incentive	29	45	11	50	8	30	48	43
2 Minor Incentive	13	20	6	27	4	15	23	20

(table continues)

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Table B4 (continued)

	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
3 Moderate Incentive	16	25	3	14	13	48	32	28
4 Major Incentive	6	9	2	9	2	7	10	9
B1.06 Opportunity to participate in program governance/decision-making.								
1 Not an Incentive	29	45	10	46	8	31	47	42
2 Minor Incentive	13	20	8	36	9	35	30	27
3 Moderate Incentive	18	28	2	9	8	31	28	25
4 Major Incentive	4	6	2	9	1	4	7	6
B1.07 Opportunity to contribute to the local community.								
1 Not an Incentive	6	9			1	3	7	6
2 Minor Incentive	4	6	3	13			7	6
3 Moderate Incentive	21	31	4	17	6	20	31	26
4 Major Incentive	36	54	16	70	23	77	75	63

(table continues)

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Incentive Response [d]	Small [a]		Medium [b]		Large [c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
B1.08 Opportunity to provid professional development t employees.								
1 Not an Incentive	19	29	2	9	1	4	22	19
2 Minor Incentive	18	28	6	27	3	11	27	24
3 Moderate Incentive	13	20	9	41	9	33	31	27
4 Major Incentive	15	23	5	23	14	52	34	30
B1.09 Opportunity to screen potential employees.								
1 Not an Incentive	18	27	1	5	2	7	21	18
2 Minor Incentive	7	11	7	32	4	14	18	16
3 Moderate Incentive	25	38	8	36	8	29	41	35
4 Major Incentive	16	24	6	27	14	50	36	31
B1.10 Opportunity to network with schools as sources of new employees.								
1 Not an Incentive	21	31	2	9	1	4	24	20
2 Minor Incentive	10	15	5	22	5	18	20	17

(table continues)

Table B4 (continued)

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
3 Moderate Incentive	22	33	11	48	6	21	39	33
4 Major Incentive	14	21	5	22	16	57	35	30
B1.11 Diversify our workforce by attracting young minorities/women.								
1 Not an Incentive	29	44	2	9	2	7	33	28
2 Minor Incentive	13	20	8	36	3	11	24	21
3 Moderate Incentive	15	23	8	36	9	32	32	28
4 Major Incentive	9	14	4	18	14	50	27	22
B1.12 Source of low- or no-cost temporary or part-time labor.								
1 Not an Incentive	33	50	12	52	12	46	57	50
2 Minor Incentive	12	18	4	17	8	31	24	21
3 Moderate Incentive	11	17	4	17	3	12	18	16
4 Major Incentive	10	15	3	13	3	12	16	14

(table continues)

Incentive Response [d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
B1.13 Opportunity to contribute to our positive image in the community.								
1 Not an Incentive	11	17	1		1	3	12	10
2 Minor Incentive	11	17	2	9	1	3	14	12
3 Moderate Incentive	15	23	9	39	9	31	33	28
4 Major Incentive	27	42	12	52	18	62	57	49
B1.14 Intermediary organizations to broker STW relationships.								
1 Not an Incentive	33	52	8	38	13	50	54	49
2 Minor Incentive	21	33	8	38	8	31	37	34
3 Moderate Incentive	4	6	4	19	2	8	10	9
4 Major Incentive	5	8	1	5	3	12	9	8
B1.15 Opportunity to contribute to the skills of the future workforce.								
1 Not an Incentive	4	6	1	5			5	4

(table continues)

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Table B4 (continued)

Incentive Response [d]	Small [a]		Medium [b]		Large [c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
2 Minor Incentive	14	21	5	24			19	16
3 Moderate Incentive	23	34	7	33	7	23	37	31
4 Major Incentive	26	39	8	38	23	77	57	48
B1.16 Attract young workforce to replace our aging workforce.								
1 Not an Incentive	28	42	6	29	3	10	37	32
2 Minor Incentive	14	21	5	24	4	14	23	20
3 Moderate Incentive	15	23	4	19	9	31	28	24
4 Major Incentive	9	14	6	29	13	45	28	24
B1.17 Address current labor shortage in our industry or local area.								
1 Not an Incentive	26	39	5	23	6	21	37	32
2 Minor Incentive	14	21	3	14	2	7	19	16
3 Moderate Incentive	14	21	5	23	7	24	26	22
4 Major Incentive	12	18	9	41	14	48	35	30

[a] Small = 1-50 employees. [b] Medium = 51-150 employees. [c] Large = >150 employees.
[d] See questionnaire in Appendix A for complete wording of items.

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Employer ratings of incentives to participation – means and rank order of means by employer size

Incentive		Small[a] (n=74)	Medium[b] (n=23)	Large[c] (n=31)	All Employers (N=128)
B1.01 Opportunity to contribute to the quality of public education.	n	66	22	30	118
	Mean	3.03	3.14	3.8	3.25
	Std. Dev.	1.04	.94	.41	.95
	Ranking	3	3	1	2
B1.02 Availability of wage subsidies for student workers.	n	66	22	27	115
	Mean	1.67	2.18	1.63	1.76
	Std. Dev.	.90	1.26	1.01	1.01
	Ranking	17	11	17	17
B1.03 Availability of training and technical assistance for employees who participate.	n	64	22	27	113
	Mean	1.89	2.14	2.22	2.02
	Std. Dev.	.99	.89	1.19	1.03
	Ranking	15	12	13	13
B1.04 Having a range of STW models and employer activities to choose from.	n	64	22	27	113
	Mean	1.91	2.05	2.3	2.03
	Std. Dev.	1.03	.9	1.23	1.06
	Ranking	14	13	12	12
B1.05 Opportunity to participate in program design and development.	n	64	22	27	113
	Mean	1.98	1.82	2.33	2.04
	Std. Dev.	1.05	1.01	1.00	1.03
	Ranking	11	17	11	11

(table continues)

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Table B5 (continued)

Incentive		Small[a] (n=74)	Medium[b] (n=23)	Large[c] (n=31)	All Employers (N=128)
B1.06 Opportunity to participate in program governance and decision-making.	n	64	22	26	112
	Mean	1.95	1.82	2.08	1.96
	Std. Dev.	1.00	.96	.89	.96
	Ranking	13	16	14	14
B1.07 Opportunity to contribute to the local community.	n	67	23	30	120
	Mean	3.30	3.57	3.70	3.45
	Std. Dev.	.94	.73	.65	.85
	Ranking	1	1	3	1
B1.08 Opportunity to provide professional development to our current employees.	n	65	22	27	114
	Mean	2.37	2.77	3.33	2.68
	Std. Dev.	1.14	.92	.83	1.10
	Ranking	7	8	5	7
B1.09 Opportunity to screen potential employees.	n	66	22	28	116
	Mean	2.59	2.86	3.21	2.79
	Std. Dev.	1.14	.89	.96	1.08
	Ranking	5	5	8	5
B1.10 Opportunity to network with schools that serve as sources of new employees.	n	67	23	28	118
	Mean	2.43	2.83	3.32	2.72
	Std. Dev.	1.14	.89	.9	1.10
	Ranking	6	6	6	6
B1.11 Opportunity to diversify our workforce by attracting young minorities and women.	n	66	22	28	116
	Mean	2.06	2.64	3.25	2.46

(table continues)

Table B5 (continued)

Incentive		Small[a] (n=74)	Medium[b] (n=23)	Large[c] (n=31)	All Employers (N=128)
	Std. Dev.	1.11	.9	.93	1.14
	Ranking	10	9	7	9
B1.12 Source of low- or no-cost temporary or part-time labor.	n	66	23	26	115
	Mean	1.97	1.91	1.86	1.94
	Std. Dev.	1.14	1.12	1.03	1.10
	Ranking	12	14	15	15
B1.13 Opportunity to contribute to our organization's positive image in the community.	n	64	23	29	116
	Mean	2.91	3.43	3.52	3.16
	Std. Dev.	1.14	.66	.74	1.00
	Ranking	4	2	4	4
B1.14 Availability of intermediary organizations to broker STW relationships for employers and assume coordinating and administrative functions.	n	63	21	26	110
	Mean	1.70	1.90	1.81	1.76
	Std. Dev.	.91	.89	1.02	.93
	Ranking	16	15	16	16
B1.15 Opportunity to contribute to the skills of the future workforce.	n	67	21	30	118
	Mean	3.06	3.05	3.77	3.24
	Std. Dev.	.92	.92	.43	.87
	Ranking	2	4	2	3
B1.16 Opportunity to attract young workers to replace our organization's aging workforce.	n	66	21	29	116
	Mean	2.08	2.48	3.10	2.41
	Std. Dev.	1.10	1.21	1.01	1.17
	Ranking	9	10	9	10

(table continues)

Table B5 (continued)

Incentive		Small[a] (n=74)	Medium[b] (n=23)	Large[c] (n=31)	All Employers (N=128)
B1.17 Opportunity to address current labor shortage in our industry or local area.	n	66	22	29	117
	Mean	2.18	2.82	3.00	2.50
	Std. Dev.	1.15	1.22	1.20	1.22
	Ranking	8	7	10	8

Note 1. Response Rating Scale: 1 = Not an Incentive, 2 = Minor Incentive, 3 = Moderate Incentive, 4 = Major Incentive.

Note 2. Rank is from the ranking of mean responses in descending order.

[a]Small = 1-50 employees.   [b] Medium = 51-150 employees. [c]Large = >150 employees.

Table B6

Employer ratings of disincentives to participation – frequency distribution by employer size

Disincentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
B2.01 Lack of information on STW.								
1 Not a Disincentive	16	25	5	23	7	25	28	24
2 Minor Disincentive	14	22	4	18	7	25	25	22
3 Moderate Disincentive	14	22	8	36	7	25	29	25
4 Major Disincentive	21	32	5	23	7	25	33	29
B2.02 Lack of technical assistance or trouble-shooting.								
1 Not a Disincentive	25	39	6	29	9	33	40	36
2 Minor Disincentive	17	27	4	19	11	41	32	29
3 Moderate Disincentive	10	16	8	38	6	22	24	21
4 Major Disincentive	12	19	3	14	1	4	16	14
B2.03 Bureaucracy of school system.								
1 Not a Disincentive	20	31	6	27	8	28	34	30

(table continues)

Disincentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
2 Minor Disincentive	17	26	7	32	8	28	32	28
3 Moderate Disincentive	12	19	9	41	5	17	26	22
4 Major Disincentive	16	25			8	28	24	21
B2.04 Opposition or lack of interest of regular employees.								
1 Not a Disincentive	34	52	4	19	11	39	49	43
2 Minor Disincentive	18	27	5	24	10	36	33	29
3 Moderate Disincentive	8	12	11	52	6	21	25	22
4 Major Disincentive	6	9	1	5	1	4	8	7
B2.05 Organizational changes.								
1 Not a Disincentive	45	69	8	38	19	68	72	63
2 Minor Disincentive	11	17	3	14	5	18	19	17
3 Moderate Disincentive	5	8	7	33	3	11	15	13
4 Major Disincentive	4	6	3	14	1	4	8	7

(table continues)

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Disincentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
B2.06 Lack of flexibility in program design.								
1 Not a Disincentive	32	49	5	24	12	44	49	43
2 Minor Disincentive	17	26	10	48	8	30	35	31
3 Moderate Disincentive	9	14	4	19	4	15	17	15
4 Major Disincentive	8	12	2	10	3	11	13	11
B2.07 Concern about students' qualifications or productivity.								
1 Not a Disincentive	23	35	6	29	13	45	42	37
2 Minor Disincentive	17	26	6	29	7	24	30	26
3 Moderate Disincentive	17	26	5	24	4	14	26	23
4 Major Disincentive	8	12	4	19	5	17	17	15
B2.08 Concern about students' maturity or reliability.								
1 Not a Disincentive	21	32	4	19	10	35	35	30

(table continues)

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Table B6 (continued)

Disincentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
2 Minor Disincentive	15	23	6	29	9	31	30	26
3 Moderate Disincentive	15	23	7	33	4	14	26	23
4 Major Disincentive	14	22	4	19	6	21	24	21
B2.09 Concern about regulatory issues.								
1 Not a Disincentive	24	37	6	29	10	35	40	35
2 Minor Disincentive	12	19	5	24	8	28	25	22
3 Moderate Disincentive	15	23	5	24	6	21	26	23
4 Major Disincentive	14	22	5	24	5	17	24	21
B2.10 Student trainee may accept a position with a competitor.								
1 Not a Disincentive	37	57	10	48	22	79	69	61
2 Minor Disincentive	16	25	5	24	2	7	23	20
3 Moderate Disincentive	7	11	5	24	3	11	15	13
4 Major Disincentive	5	8	1	5	1	4	7	6

(table continues)

Disincentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
B2.11 Lost productivity of employees.								
1 Not a Disincentive	33	51	9	43	17	63	59	52
2 Minor Disincentive	16	25	5	24	6	22	27	24
3 Moderate Disincentive	12	19	5	24	3	11	20	18
4 Major Disincentive	4	6	2	10	1	4	7	6
B2.12 Lack of commitment or interest at the managerial or executive levels.								
1 Not a Disincentive	38	58	7	33	13	46	58	50
2 Minor Disincentive	10	15	7	33	6	21	23	20
3 Moderate Disincentive	11	17	6	29	7	25	24	21
4 Major Disincentive	7	11	1	5	2	7	10	9
B2.13 Cost of program development.								
1 Not a Disincentive	35	54	10	48	18	64	63	55
2 Minor Disincentive	10	15	6	29	4	14	20	18

(table continues)

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Table B6 (continued)

Disincentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
3 Moderate Disincentive	14	22	2	10	5	18	21	18
4 Major Disincentive	6	9	3	14	1	4	10	9
B2.14 Cost of training and supervising students.								
1 Not a Disincentive	30	46	5	24	16	55	51	44
2 Minor Disincentive	14	21	6	29	7	24	27	23
3 Moderate Disincentive	18	27	6	29	4	14	28	24
4 Major Disincentive	4	6	4	19	2	7	10	9

[a] Small = 1-50 employees.   [b] Medium = 51-150 employees.   [c] Large = >150 employees.   .
[d] See questionnaire in Appendix A for complete wording of items.

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Table B7

Employer ratings of disincentives to participation – means and rank order of means by employer size

Disincentive		Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
B2.01 Lack of information about STW.	n	65	22	28	115
	Mean	2.62	2.59	2.50	2.58
	Std. Dev.	1.18	1.10	1.14	1.15
	Ranking	1	1	1	1
B2.02 Lack of technical assistance or trouble-shooting for program activities.	n	64	21	27	112
	Mean	2.14	2.38	1.96	2.14
	Std. Dev.	1.14	1.07	.85	1.06
	Ranking	6	6	6	6
B2.03 Bureaucracy of school system.	n	65	22	29	116
	Mean	2.37	2.14	2.45	2.34
	Std. Dev.	1.17	.83	1.18	1.11
	Ranking	2	10	2	2
B2.04 Opposition or lack of interest of regular employees.	n	66	21	28	115
	Mean	1.79	2.43	1.93	1.93
	Std. Dev.	.98	.87	1.04	.96
	Ranking	12	4	9	9
B2.05 Organizational changes, (e.g. change in ownership, reorganization, downsizing).	n	65	21	28	114
	Mean	1.51	2.24	1.5	1.64
	Std. Dev.	.89	1.14	.84	.96
	Ranking	14	8	13	14

(table continues)

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Table B7 (*continued*)

Disincentive		Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
B2.06 Lack of flexibility in program design (e.g., scheduling, selection of students, employer options for participation).	n	66	21	27	114
	Mean	1.89	2.14	1.93	1.95
	Std. Dev.	1.05	.91	1.04	1.02
	Ranking	8	9	8	8
B2.07 Concern about students' qualifications or productivity.	n	65	21	29	115
	Mean	2.15	2.33	2.03	2.16
	Std. Dev.	1.05	1.11	1.15	1.08
	Ranking	5	7	5	5
B2.08 Concern about students' maturity or reliability.	n	65	21	29	115
	Mean	2.34	2.52	2.21	2.34
	Std. Dev.	1.15	1.03	1.15	1.12
	Ranking	3	2	3	3
B2.09 Concern about regulatory issues such as child labor laws, worker's compensation insurance, or health and safety regulations.	n	65	21	29	115
	Mean	-2.29	2.43	2.21	2.30
	Std. Dev.	1.18	1.16	1.11	1.15
	Ranking	4	5	4	4
B2.10 Student trainee may accept a position with a competitor.	n	65	21	28	114
	Mean	1.69	1.86	1.39	1.65
	Std. Dev.	.95	.96	.83	.93
	Ranking	13	14	14	13
B2.11 Lost productivity of employees who participate in STW activities.	n	65	21	27	113
	Mean	1.80	2.00	1.56	1.78

(table continues)

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Table B7 (continued)

Disincentive		Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
	Std. Dev.	.96	1.05	.85	.95
	Ranking	11	12	12	12
B2.12 Lack of commitment or interest at the managerial or executive levels.	n	66	21	28	115
	Mean	1.80	2.05	1.93	1.88
	Std. Dev.	1.07	.92	1.02	1.03
	Ranking	10	11	7	10
B2.13 Cost of program development.	n	65	21	28	114
	Mean	1.86	1.90	1.61	1.81
	Std. Dev.	1.06	1.09	.92	1.03
	Ranking	9	13	11	11
B2.14 Cost of training and supervising students.	n	66	21	29	116
	Mean	1.94	2.43	1.72	1.97
	Std. Dev.	.99	1.08	.96	1.02
	Ranking	7	3	10	7

Note 1.   Response Rating Scale: 1 = Not a Disincentive, 2 = Minor Disincentive, 3 = Moderate Disincentive, 4 = Major Disincentive.

Note 2. Ranking is from the ranking of mean responses in descending order.

[a] Small = 1-50 employees.   [b] Medium = 51-150 employees. [c] Large = >150 employees.

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Table B8

Employer Ratings of Partnership Quality and Value – frequency distribution by employer size.

Incentive Response[d]		Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
C2.01 Good communication between educators and employer partners.									
	1 Strongly Disagree	5	9	4	20	2	7	11	10
	2 Disagree	13	22	4	20	8	29	25	23
	3 Agree	30	51	10	50	3	46	53	50
	4 Strongly Agree	11	19	2	10	5	18	18	17
C2.02 A sense of trust exists between educators and employer partners.									
	1 Strongly Disagree	3	5	3	16			6	6
	2 Disagree	7	12	2	11	3	11	12	11
	3 Agree	37	63	11	58	17	61	65	61
	4 Strongly Agree	12	20	3	16	8	29	23	22

(table continues)

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Table B8 (continued)

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
C2.03 The partnership works together to gain additional resources.								
1 Strongly Disagree	6	10	4	20	4	15	14	14
2 Disagree	12	21	7	35	5	19	24	23
3 Agree	31	53	8	40	14	54	53	51
4 Strongly Agree	9	16	1	5	3	12	13	13
C2.04 Employer has primary responsibility for partnership.								
1 Strongly Disagree	6	10	3	15	3	11	12	11
2 Disagree	15	25	5	25	8	30	28	26
3 Agree	31	53	12	60	11	41	54	51
4 Strongly Agree	7	12			5	19	12	11
C2.05 The partnership has adequate support and attention from leaders in the partnering organizations.								
1 Strongly Disagree	4	7	3	15	1	4	8	8

(table continues)

Table B8 (continued)

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
2 Disagree	14	25	7	35	10	39	31	30
3 Agree	35	61	8	40	11	42	54	52
4 Strongly Agree	4	7	2	10	4	15	10	10
C2.06 The partnership communicates with parents and other stakeholders in the community.								
1 Strongly Disagree	8	14	3	17	3	11	14	14
2 Disagree	18	32	9	50	13	48	40	40
3 Agree	27	48	4	22	9	33	40	40
4 Strongly Agree	3	5	2	11	2	7	7	7
C2.07 Partnership makes a difference in education and the community.								
1 Strongly Disagree	3	5	1	5			4	4
2 Disagree	6	11	3	16	1	4	10	10
3 Agree	36	63	11	58	14	52	61	59

(table continues)

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Table B8 (continued)

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
4 Strongly Agree	12	21	4	21	12	44	28	27
C2.08 Students are better prepared for work and careers.								
1 Strongly Disagree	1	2	2	10			3	3
2 Disagree	2	4	1	5			3	3
3 Agree	34	60	12	60	17	65	63	61
4 Strongly Agree	20	35	5	25	9	35	34	33
C2.09 Employer partners have a better understanding of education issues.								
1 Strongly Disagree	1	2	1	5			2	2
2 Disagree	11	19	6	30	2	8	19	18
3 Agree	32	55	9	45	17	65	58	56
4 Strongly Agree	14	24	4	20	7	27	25	24
C2.10 Educators better understand workplace requirements.								
1 Strongly Disagree	2	4	3	15	1	4	6	6

(table continues)

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Table B8 (continued)

Incentive Response[d]	Small[a]		Medium[b]		Large[c]		All Employers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
2 Disagree	9	16	4	50	5	19	18	18
3 Agree	33	58	10	50	13	50	56	54
4 Strongly Agree	13	23	3	15	7	27	23	22
C2.11 Employers are more supportive of schools.								
1 Strongly Disagree	1	2	1	5			2	2
2 Disagree	8	14	1	5	3	12	12	12
3 Agree	38	67	16	80	16	62	70	68
4 Strongly Agree	10	18	2	10	7	27	19	18

[a] Small = 1-50 employees.   [b] Medium = 51-150 employees.   [c] Large = >150 employees.

[d] See questionnaire in Appendix A for complete wording of items.

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Employer agreement with of statements of partnership quality and value – means and rank order of means by employer size

Statement		Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
		Partnership Quality			
C2.01 Good communication exists between educators and employer partners.	n	59	20	28	107
	Mean	2.80	2.50	2.75	2.73
	Std. Dev.	.85	.95	.84	.86
	Ranking	2	2	2	2
C2.02 A sense of trust exists between educators and employer partners.	n	59	19	28	106
	Mean	2.98	2.74	3.18	2.99
	Std. Dev.	.73	.93	.61	.75
	Ranking	1	1	1	1
C2.03 The partnership works together to gain additional resources not available from tax dollars.	n	58	20	26	104
	Mean	2.74	2.3	2.62	2.62
	Std. Dev.	.85	.86	.9	.87
	Ranking	3	5	5	4
C2.04 In our partnership, the employer has primary responsibility for partnership, with some input from educators.	n	59	20	27	106
	Mean	2.66	2.45	2.67	2.62
	Std. Dev.	.82	.76	.92	.83
	Ranking	5	3	4	5
C2.05 The partnership has adequate support and attention from leaders in the partnering organizations.	n	57	20	26	103
	Mean	2.68	2.45	2.69	2.64

(table continues)

Statement		Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
	Std. Dev.	.71	.89	.79	.77
	Ranking	4	4	3	3
C2.06 The partnership communicates with parents and other stakeholders in the community.	n	56	18	27	101
	Mean	2.45	2.28	2.37	2.4
	Std. Dev.	.81	.89	.79	.81
	Ranking	6	6	6	6
Partnership Quality Index	n	61	20	28	109
C2.01, C2.02, C2.03, C2.05, C2.06	Mean	12.95	11.70	13.14	12.77
	Std. Dev.	3.59	3.77	2.89	3.47
	Partnership Value				
C2.07 Partnership makes a difference in education and the community.	n	57	19	27	103
	Mean	3.00	2.95	3.41	3.10
	Std. Dev.	.73	.78	.57	.72
	Ranking	3	3	1	2
C2.08 As a result of the partnership's activities, students are better prepared for work and careers.	n	57	20	26	103
	Mean	3.28	3.00	3.35	3.24
	Std. Dev.	.62	.86	.49	.65
	Ranking	1	2	2	1
C2.09 As a result of the partnership's activities, employer partners have a better understanding of education issues.	n	58	20	26	104
	Mean	3.02	2.65	3.19	3.02
	Std. Dev.	.71	.93	.57	.71
	Ranking	2	5	3	4

(table continues)

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Table B9 (continued)

Statement		Small[a] (N=74)	Medium[b] (N=23)	Large[c] (N=31)	All Employers (N=128)
C2.10 As a result of the partnership's activities, educators better understand workplace requirements.	n	57	20	26	103
	Mean	3.00	2.65	3.00	2.93
	Std. Dev.	.73	.93	.8	.8
	Ranking	4	5	5	5
C2.11 As a result of the partnership's activities, employers are more supportive of schools.	n	57	20	26	103
	Mean	3.00	2.95	3.15	3.03
	Std. Dev.	.63	.6	.61	.62
	Ranking	5	2	4	3
Partnership Value Index	n	58	20	27	105
C2.07 – C2.11	Mean	15.09	14.40	15.63	15.10
	Std. Dev.	2.83	3.97	3.35	3.20

Note 1. Response Rating Scale: 1 = 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree.

Note 2. Ranking is from the ranking of mean responses in descending order. Statements of quality and value are ranked separately.

[a] Small = 1-50 employees.   [b] Medium = 51-150 employees. [c]Large = >150 employees.

APPENDIX C: EMPLOYER OPEN-ENDED SURVEY COMMENTS

Open-Ended Survey Question: What works best?

- Sending (screening) qualified applicants to the job. Financial assistance by State to employer (nominal), through grants, etc.
- Mentoring students; judging science fairs; speaking at schools, co-ops; interns
- Employer-teacher communication
- Periodic reporting of student behavior/progress.
- More advertisement of the program, more awareness
- Open minds on both parts.
- Employers teaching in classroom to share real life experiences.
- This way the partnership is operating now is working good.
- High level of commitment from key individuals; good project management skills – detailed planning, communication, and follow-up. Focus on continuous improvement.
- For us: giving tours to local school classes when requested; sponsoring unpaid, college-level internship program; some employees participate in industry trade and networking organizations – and in turn – support and participate in those organizations' educational cooperative programs.
- It is a good program, but we want kids who desire to work, not just get a paycheck.
- Person needs to have an emotional commitment to the concept and program. Emotional ties come from being a parent or being greatly effected (sic) by the worker shortage.
- Must have communication with educators. Students need _more_ training in job ethics & responsibilities.
- Student motivation.
- Speaking directly to the students about job opportunities. The ability to do this increases interest in one's workplace.
- Teamwork
- Using hands-on training with students. Using visual aids to demonstrate.
- Training issues, covered in more detail by instructors
- DTC type programs and college level internships
- Teachers who want to hear.
- Vocational type classes – partner with local hospital – have set up hospital & train as CNA or HNA – or – major restaurant or hotel set up hotel rooms or teach cooking and serving , etc. Teach – general business work ethic & accepted practices.
- Our location process – communication between schools and STW partnerships
- Everyone working together for one common goal.
- We do not have a formal partnership with the school. I was asked to speak to the students on career day.
- There are no formal STW partnerships in place.
- Don't know yet.
- The partnership and spirit of cooperation that exists between the Cancer Center and the various schools.
- We have not formal STW partnership because we are so small. However, we have a good relationship with law school placement directors and paralegal school placement offices.
- Students' positive attitude toward work in general & the realization that a job must be learned and earned. Established workers willingly share their knowledge with those who listen.

- Employees you can send out on a job or repair job that have adequate knowledge! Mishaps cost our company thousands of dollars or can sometimes end in cancellation of business insurance.
- Developing a relationship – schools sharing the "fun stuff," not just the "needs."
- Open communication.
- Established programs, i.e. DCT & BCE, are functioning very well. We have participated with all the area high schools for many years and have, for the most part, found these students to be outstanding employees. Many have gone on to become permanent employees with our department.
- Clear understanding of time commitment between school, student, and STW volunteer
- Being one-on-one with the kids and enthusiasm to get them thinking about protecting and conserving our national resources. Having a beautiful black lab that is my partner is also a plus. My Oakley's Angels program really helps in getting kids interested.
- One-on-one mentoring is having a positive effect. Internet training for teachers & students was well received.
- Positive adults showing children that education is important and that they are cared about is paramount. Notice that I did not say it had to be easy.
- Get our young adults involved in the construction trades in the 8th and 9th grades
- Enthusiastic students who genuinely want to learn
- Allowing the business community to work directly with schools/programs.
- One-on-one mentoring
- For twenty years I have worked hard with the school system and find that sincerity, honesty, and a willingness to help works best; however, I sometimes feel that there is less interest on the part of the school system itself.
- I am responding to this questionnaire from an uneducated position.
- Only had one
- Close working relationship with educators. Trust & mutual respect.
- Meeting with the teachers or faculty to discuss goals and problems – joint problem-solving.
- Externships (where teacher spends a minimum of four weeks observing business operation). Many teachers are able to parlay their observations into meaningful curriculum changes.
- Mentoring, facility tours, curriculum development, participation in school boards and committees, provide speakers to schools.
- Career Day visits to schools
- Student Shadowing
- Junior Achievement Course in Schools
- Teacher/employer one to one relationships.
- Involving students in the workplace in a variety of ways. Speaking to classes, inviting students here, giving them a variety of opportunities. We feel very fortunate to be involved in our local school system!
- This survey was very hard to complete. My organization is not involved in the career shadowing at all. I am in sales and thought I would enjoy sharing my sales career with children so they can see what a sales position was really like. But they did not actually even come to my office – they came to one of my branches.
- Schools come to us and ask for specific representation at school assemblies or career sessions. We are happy to send representatives from various sectors.
- Preparing students for the workplace. You also get to look at future applicants as future employees.
- Input from employers on program development

Open-Ended Survey Question: What doesn't work?

- Sending unqualified applications to jobs. Waisting (sic) time for employer & applicant.
- Job shadowing where a large group of students comes at one time.
- Trying to attract teachers into the workplace for the summer.
- No communication
- Misunderstanding of the program, by the student.
- Schools trying to control expectations. Center standards should be achieved.
- In banking it's difficult to have students in to shadow due to the confidentiality level due our clients. (Some positions more so than others.)
- Involvement because you were directed by a superior. Involvement if you are not effected (sic) by the worker shortage.
- The high schools fail to develop a work ethic in the students. They have no concept of being to work on time.
- Lack of student motivation.
- Relying on the school to advertise or promote the workplace programs.
- Schedules
- Students my have genuine interest. They must not be forced to participate.
- Small corporate office – not a lot of turnover, therefore opportunities are more limited.
- Teachers who already know or who are just getting the extra pay.
- Not enough [Jobs and Benefits] centers. Limited support services in rural areas
- Private industry needs more $ from the STW funding process, so as to direct them to the administration of the program.
- Fragmented groups – no goals.
- We don not have formal partnership with the school.
- It is frustrating when there are roadblocks to progress in partnering. There should be more collaboration between employers & schools – and more commitment to an understanding of each other's needs!
- Haven't had much communication.
- The schools appear to have a difficult time recruiting students due in large part to the excellent economy. The health care field is having an especially difficult time recruiting qualified candidates and the schools are finding it difficult to find students interested in the healthcare field.
- Advertising for employees through the newspapers.
- Students believing that school automatically enables them to immediately produce.
- Dependence on a business for financial reason – support without developing or maintaining a relationship.
- Lack of it [communication]
- Risk managers have significant concern about liability for employers when we allow students to work (voluntary – no pay) on site. This often guides us away from many opportunities for students wanting to gain insight into particular occupational fields.
- Communication from local schools. We're never asked to do anything. We always are looking to do things.
- Mismatch of student to workplace.
- Biggest problem is coordinating schedules to find mutually acceptable times for activities.
- Teaching our students the three R's and forgetting all the rest.
- Students looking for a way to get out of class.
- Schools, STW, workforce rules and regulations slow the process due to levels of bureaucracy! They sometimes are out of touch with business and education needs!
- Too many programs to participate in. Efforts not truly focused for impact.
- I sometimes feel that the school system and educators are too busy.
- He was interested in getting out of school that day.
- No communication or preparation.

- Having teachers do entry level jobs doesn't work in our (newspaper) publishing operation. Observation is better than doing, giving the teacher a broad view of the business and the needed skills.
- Teacher in-service at our location.
- We need better communication by the school system. Too many contacts – often call one person only to be told that they are the wrong ones to talk to.
- Requiring job descriptions for intern positions. Most times they are created specifically to accommodate participation in these programs, and managers do not want to develop one for undefined roles and skill levels until student shows aptitude.
- Shadowing would prove dangerous on work-sites, as students would be untrained for hazards. Cost of training students for shadow purposes would be prohibitive.
- Students tend to be very particular about assignments.
- Timing . Trying to schedule job shadows without interfering with work pace.
- Rigid bureaucracy of institutions

Open-Ended Survey Comment: Other comments

- We are affiliated with Graceville High, Graceville, Florida. They have the most professional, well-monitored program we have participated in.
- Thanks.
- School administration/management level should be more supportive of efforts (i.e., in scheduling) to help facilitate projects worked on by business partners & educators. There is no point in us taking our time to help if projects are not supported by administration.
- The most effective partnerships result when school administrators and senior corporate management are supportive and involved in all initiatives.
- Our total staff at this location – 40 employees - is smaller than most of our peer companies. Ninety-five percent of our employees hold skilled positions, requiring a minimal amount of experience at least. While we support giving students a "taste" of the real world in our industry, we cannot provide more support than we do at this time. Please see "What works" for those things we are doing today.
- The nature of partnerships between schools & employer partners is reflective of local needs and assets, not from state or national directives. Money still makes it all work. If there is not a long-term commitment by the partners the program is doomed. Lack of school counselors (adequate #'s and training) is really hurting STC efforts.
- We must do all we can to make sure young people understand service, reliability, and honesty. Too many young people do not know how to work or understand the "old fashioned work ethic."
- The state school system needs to develop a vocational program that prepares students who aren't going to college for the workforce.
- I don't really understand what STW is. We have only participated with the schools as business partners & volunteers at the school. We would probably participate if we knew what it was and how it worked. Let us know if we can be of further assistance.
- Keep it up!
- Schools have various problems:
- Class sizes too large – 35-40 students is too many. A good teacher can teach if has smaller class – 25 or less, better – 20.
- Administrators have been promoted because they supported someone in an election – "Good ole boy" – not qualified – buckle under to both lax teachers & poor parents. No leadership.
- Needs more promotion!!!
- A formal partnership should be addressed with the employers and/ or managers of a given company.

- Have not been asked or sent information on formal STW partnerships, but would be interested in formal participation.
- We have not officially been a part of this program. However, we feel it could be extremely beneficial to both the school and employers.
- There are staff (here) interested in the Governor's Initiative – mentoring program. There is no available info regarding mentoring in Pasco County. Lack of communication!
- We have made significant strides in working with schools this year. However, we still face some challenging issues in partnering. Please do not hesitate to call me for more information.
- [name and phone number given]
- Need more communication.
- The attorneys in this firm would take an active role in partnering with schools, if the opportunity arose.
- Encourage students to work at minor positions first before they enter their careers. Recent grads that have prior, often unrelated, work experience always adapt easily to the workforce & their career.
- We are in desperate needs in the construction industry and trades (plumbing track) – the younger generation is needed, but often they are diverted in other directions. What will you pay in another 5 to 10 years for a stoppage in your house lines? Probably hundreds of dollars due to labor shortages and you will also have to wait several days for a plumber to show up.
- We have excellent county STW staff. But when we are working with individual schools, there is fragmentation & disorganization with some. PR & appreciation goes a long way with business – business uses public relations to survive – schools have not figured that out yet.*
- *Not all schools – Valleyview Elementary and George Jenkins High School are pros!
- STW is an excellent program. Unfortunately, it is not marketed to the business community to the extent that I believe it could be. Major employers are most often targeted for participation while small business owners receive minimal attention. They need to be approached and enlisted as STW program supporters.
- We have only participated in Ground Hog Job Shadow Day 2000 and are currently working with Junior Achievement.
- Most of the work done here is highly technical and requires specific training on certain operating systems. A college education, even a good one, does not give a student the skills I need to be an immediately productive employee. And most students are unwilling to train at the kind of lower salary I can pay for a trainee.
- My employer – the Fla Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission –doesn't know I do a mentoring program. This is on my own time and I do it just to help kids and get them thinking about our environment.
- My only participation has been to allow students to observe in my clinic for the purposes of completing a research project for their senior high school project.
- Many thanks for the reminder. I participate in the local high school's senior projects as well as the job shadowing program. I also attend as many of my children's field trips as possible.
- Good luck with your study.
- Local school boards should be more attentive on the high drop-out rate.
- I have not been approached to become involved in the Florida School-to-Work program I am interested in this type of partnership since it is very difficult to locate potential employees.
- These responses are based on college and vo-tech programs. We do nothing with the high schools.
- We have not been involved in STW to our knowledge.

- In my experience there have been many scenarios that prevent students from working (i.e., lack of transportation, not allowed to work late (11 pm) or once again not career oriented & just looking to get out of class. Maybe restaurant hours are not condusive (sic) to the program!
- Currently employees must flex time to support activities. Hoping to change that.
- More employers need to be involved, not only for the sake of the students but the school system together. Employers need to be in partnership with the schools to help shape, mold, and create a bright future for industry, education and lives. Thank you for this opportunity to participate.
- Basically, our relationship with schools extends to the assignment of a police officer as "School Resource Officer", on campus daily, as well as "Career Day" activities by another police officer who serves as a "Juvenile Officer". Our jurisdiction extends only to one middle school and one elementary school. We also teach a course in middle school entitled "The Consequences of Crime."
- Our opinion of the program varies with the relationship with the teacher/faculty. The better the relationship, more input is given & the greater the satisfaction with the program.
- The outdated curriculum (journalism in particular) of the schools is scary. Most high schools in Florida are 20 years behind in preparing students for careers dealing with mass communication.
- We have a school-business partnership with a local elementary school and serve on various school-based/foundation committees.
- More realistic approaches by educators to _teach_ students about real-world business situations / preparations. Because educators are or have not really been in the business world, they are not the most capable in preparing non-college bound students for life after high school in business.
- Can't say why the company participates as a whole, with a culture attitude. We have a few people that do a few things once in a while — these activities include shadowing, board & committee participation, and involvement in junior achievement.
- Answers are given "to best of my knowledge." As we are highly decentralized, I may not know of some STW activities that are in place how. Our hiring is done at each field location, not through a central point.
- When asked, I have participated in career day at our Dade Partners schools.
- Sorry for the delay

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