

8.F.1 South Central/Southwest WIRED Initiative Update

The WIRED project is moving ahead slowly with development of the required Implementation Plan. The plan has been completed and submitted to DWD for approval. Part of the Implementation Plan is an updated summary of WIRED activities. A summary of planned WIRED activities is enclosed as **Attachment 1**.

The next “big step” in the implementation process is a “Kick-Off” event planned for February 13, 2008 beginning at 9:00 a.m. at Monona Terrace in Madison. The “Kick Off” will feature someone from DOL (it was going to be Assistant Secretary Emily De Rocco but she has resigned and has left DOL) and Governor Jim Doyle. Activities in the morning will involve cluster group meetings and tours of industry and educational facilities in the afternoon. All board members will be receiving an invitation to the “Kick Off” event.

Efforts are also underway to organize the industry cluster work groups that comprise the skill development/training component of the WIRED initiative. The six industry clusters and Southwest co-chairs are:

- Health Care – Rich Gruber
- Manufacturing – James Otterstein
- Construction Trades – Rich Cullen
- Utilities – Still to be determined
- Agriculture – Duane Ford
- Life Science – Still to be determined

The health care and manufacturing groups will be the first two WIRED clusters to get active because there is already a structure for those two groups. In the South Central area a “health care excellence” group has been meeting to talk about health care issues in Dane County. That group will be expanded to include membership throughout the entire 12-county region. Also, there is an advance manufacturing group being formed in the South Central area. That group will also be expanded and activities reorganized to focus on the WIRED initiative. Both groups will have meetings in January.

The remaining four groups will be formed but actual work activities will begin later in the Spring. It is hoped that membership on the groups can be finalized so each cluster group will meet on February 13, 2008 during the “Kick-Off” event. Anyone with ideas of possible membership on any of the groups are encouraged to contact Bob Borremans.

In addition, a strategic/marketing group is being created to develop a brand and/or name for the region. Scott Stocker and Tammie Engelke have agreed to participate on this group and will represent Southwest.

Bob Borremans will review progress on the WIRED initiative and discuss plans for the “Kick-Off” event. No action is needed from the Board.