

## **2. The local public workforce system at work in Baltimore**

In this section we outline Baltimore's local public workforce system at work. We explain the role of the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB) in overseeing the workforce system, and the structure, operations, services, and activities of the key component of the system: the One-Stop Career Center Network managed by the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) and primarily funded under the 1998 federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA). While many other entities are part of the larger workforce system, this is the component on which we have the most data, and over which the Board has planning and oversight responsibilities. The Workforce System Effectiveness Committee (WSEC) intends to branch out to look at other parts of the larger system in future reports.

## 2.1 The Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB) at work

The City of Baltimore faces the test of preparing its population for a new economy that will require workers to have higher educational and skill levels. Building effectively on Baltimore's competitive and strategic advantages to address this challenge requires a systems approach to both thinking and service-delivery. Such an approach recognizes the connections between changing employer needs and worker preparedness, and understands how human needs and social issues impact and relate to workplace readiness, in an era of turbulent economic change.

Guiding this systems approach is the Baltimore's Workforce Investment Board (BWIB), an employer-majority entity whose individual members are appointed by Mayor Martin O'Malley from a variety of business groups, non-profit foundations and community-based organizations, education and training institutions, and human services agencies and providers. Local workforce investment boards (LWIBs) were created by the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as the strategic oversight and planning bodies ensuring local workforce systems pursued and achieved the objectives set by the board in accordance with local economic needs and conditions. The mission of the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board is shown in the sidebar, and its roles include the following:

### The BWIB Mission Statement

*"The Baltimore Workforce Investment Board envisions a city where every person maximizes his or her full potential and where all employers have the resources to grow and prosper."*

- To provide leadership in strategic planning, priority setting, visioning, and oversight.
- To create market-based, demand-driven systems by engaging the "voice of business" in local workforce efforts.
- To secure resources for local workforce development.
- To build bridges between workforce development, human services, education, and economic development agencies and organizations.
- To ensure the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the local service delivery system.
- To ensure that training provided is of high quality and reflective of local business needs.
- To ensure that public workforce dollars are invested wisely to yield appreciable and measurable returns.

During its first three years of existence, the BWIB has systematically identified high school completion rates, groups with multiple barriers to employment, and other challenges, as priorities, and has begun, through targeted action items, to address these issues effectively. The BWIB has also dedicated itself to working indirectly with, and through, its members and partners to build on the city's strengths to confront proactively not only today's workforce challenges, but also the opportunities of tomorrow.

Each chief local elected official can also designate an agency or organization to serve as the fiscal and administrative agent, to provide staff support to the WIB, and to provide day-to-day management of operations and services. These services are to be delivered in a comprehensive, seamlessly-integrated manner, through the One-Stop Career Center Network. In Baltimore, the Mayor has designated the Office of Employment Development (MOED) to be the city's workforce investment agency.

MOED provides the budget, staff, facilities, and services, for three of the city's four One-Stop Career Centers. It manages client intake, assessment, and referral systems, and awards and monitors performance-based contracts to non-profit and private service providers. It also provides considerable client tracking, management information reporting, and accountability systems, databases, and infrastructure, to help fulfill and document its performance and achievements for a variety of local, state, and federal stakeholders and reporting systems. Finally, it provides expert staff and information support not only to the main BWIB but also to its four working sub-committees, its Youth Council, and its three Task Forces (*see sidebar below for the roles of these various sub-groups; the work of the Workforce System Effectiveness Committee is profiled in Section 2.2 below*).

#### **The BWIB's working sub-groups and their functions for 2003/4**

**Executive Committee** – exercises the authority of the Board during intervals between quarterly Board meetings.

**Legislative Committee** – does workforce system advocacy.

**Planning Committee** – develops the board's plan, including marketing, monitors progress of, and ensures coordination among work groups; does adult policy development.

**Workforce System Effectiveness Committee** – studies workforce system effectiveness and makes recommendations for continuous improvement.

**Youth Council** – does youth strategic planning and system building, youth policy development and advocacy, program planning and development, resource mapping, youth opportunity implementation.

**Engaging Employers and Economic Development Task Force** – defines and implements system connections between economic development strategies, employers and workforce development.

**Building Linkages with Baltimore City Schools Task Force** – establishes a direct pipeline between Baltimore City Schools and the local workforce system, with the goal of impacting the continuum of learning for Baltimore's future workforce.

**Connecting Target Populations to Jobs and Career Advancement Task Force** – develops strategies connecting Baltimore's job seekers to jobs and career advancement, while identifying current issues and barriers related to employment accessibility for target populations.

*For more information, visit: <http://www.baltoworkforce.com/>*

To strengthen its effectiveness, the BWIB Board, through MOED, also works as part of a statewide system with Maryland's eleven other local workforce investment areas. The executive directors of Maryland's twelve local workforce investment agencies participate in the Maryland Workforce Development Association. This leading active professional association is a national model that meets monthly and holds an annual conference to share best practices, work on cross-jurisdictional issues, deliberate on policy, and monitor system performance.

## 2.2 BWIB's Workforce System Effectiveness Committee at work:

The Workforce System Effectiveness Committee (WSEC) is fortunate in having resources provided by The Abell Foundation, The Open Society Institute-Baltimore, and the Baltimore Mayor's Office for Employment Development, to support research and evaluation staff and projects. This has enabled the Committee to go beyond routine data compilation and analyses, and to embark on an ambitious slate of performance support projects, for the 24-month period starting in April 2003 (*see sidebar*).

Some of these projects involve culling best practice information from other LWIBs around the country, others involve comparisons

using national databases, and some involve more intense customized quantitative analyses of local data. Each study was selected after a Committee review of *why that topic is important* to the local public workforce system, and *what the "value outcomes" would be from having its findings*. All the studies are geared to producing results that will be useful and that will support recommendations for actions leading to improved effectiveness.

The progress so far on each study, as of January 2004, is documented below. Several of the studies – the client cohort outcomes and employer hiring groups study, the comparable cities benchmarking study, and the training investment study -- have been completed and form the bulk of this report. Results of others that have not yet been started, and of those finished but of narrower scope, are given in Appendix C.

### Workforce System Effectiveness Committee projects

1. Customer flow/process mapping
2. Client cohort outcomes/employer groups study
3. Training investment analysis
4. Performance support plan for intensive services contractors
5. Private sector performance practices
6. Comparable cities benchmarking
7. National survey of LWIB responses to fiscal stress
8. Role of temporary help/staffing agency intermediaries
9. Identification of employer needs
10. "Baltimore's Workforce System At Work" report.

1. The "*Customer flow/process mapping*" study is an exercise in portraying "the system" from the client's point of view as he or she moves through the basic WIA service tiers. In the map, each tier is underlain by multiple layers of related reference information about volumes, gateways, resources, services, and providers. Resources and actions are portrayed as being ready to meet the client's needs at each step, thereby emphasizing the demand-side approach of the WIA system. This differs from the more traditional "government agency org chart" presentation, which usually only shows the reporting relationships between different programs and offices, and the hierarchical flow of funding streams.

The first simple process map of the local public workforce system is in Section 2.3. In time this will be supplemented with information on activity and performance at every

step, and placed in a web environment where the user can hyperlink from any tier or layer to every other tier or underlying layer of information, and back again, to get reference information, contacts, or activity and performance data as desired, all updated on a close-to-real-time basis.

The importance of this study is that the eventual detailed process map can be used in two ways. First, as a *descriptive* tool showing individual actors and service-providers their position within, and relationship to, the whole system as that is arranged around the client. It can also function as a template for other potential partners and service providers to follow when describing their own customer flow and how that integrates with the larger system. Second, it can be used as an *analytic* tool aiding exploration of time-in-stages, bottlenecks, gaps, drop-off points, cost distributions, and so on. It can identify steps at which key decisions are made, what the criteria are, and who makes those decisions. It will also show what data are collected at which steps, and what performance measures are used.

2. The "*client cohort outcomes/employer groups*" study is in two parts. Results from the client outcomes portion of the study are reviewed in Section 2.4. These come from MOED data and reports. Results of the employer characteristics study are in Section 2.5, and are the results of analyses done at the University of Baltimore's Jacob France Institute.

With regards to the *clients*, we need to know who is being served by the one-stop system and who is not, who is "succeeding" and who is not, and how the "successful" group may be different from the rest. We also need some way of knowing if the one-stop services are making the difference. This study gives us an empirical basis for future discussions about service mix and delivery, better knowledge about who is *not* being served, and a better picture of who are the "successful" clients.

Results will also provide a starting point the second strand of this study: the "*hiring employers*" analysis. The WIA-funded local public workforce system is a "demand-driven" system, yet we have little knowledge of the characteristics of the "hiring" employer groups and how they differ from non-hiring employers, who the "serial hirers" are, and whether identifiable sub-groups of hirers manifest any particular patterns in terms of which types of clients they hire. Knowing the characteristics and patterns of hirers, in terms of their industry, location, product, size-class, etc, would allow one-stops to focus their marketing and targeting efforts on those employers most likely to offer opportunities to the client groups available.

3. The "*training investment analysis*" is a pioneering attempt to measure differences in cost-effectiveness between different types of training opportunities, as measured by earnings gain in relation to training cost, and to say something about the return on public investment (ROI) from job training. Findings from analyses of before and after situations of a sample of 216 trainees are given in section 2.7. This is a pilot demonstration of the use and application of ROI in one defined corner of the workforce system that could be expanded to other parts.

This study is important because determining the costs and benefits of public investments in workforce development in a systematic fashion would allow comparisons to be made within the same program over time and between different program investment options. Previously, we had no satisfactory way of describing, analyzing, and comparing the monetary implications of alternative service strategies in terms of their costs and benefits

measured at the client level. Future fiscal stress on public budgets will provide greater pressure to examine the financial implications of each activity. This training investment analysis thus fits the overall trend within the public sector performance agenda of moving towards greater examination of specifically financial returns. It should also help *demonstrate the value* of workforce development efforts in terms that the business and legislative communities understand.

4. The "*performance support plan for intensive services contractors*" is important because fiscal stress in the publicly-funded part of the workforce system may mean that, in the future, a greater share of service provision will fall to the non-profit and community sectors. Yet these "Tier 2" service providers have not necessarily been directly involved in public performance measurement systems in the past, and their capacity and systems for doing so are likely to be more limited. Future selections of other providers, and renewal decisions for present contract, ought to be made systematically on the basis of various objective measures of their performance, including ROI. For this to happen, non-governmental providers will need assistance with modern performance management methods, data collection requirements, and supportive evaluation practices. This project has begun with one example exploration of the challenges non-profit intensive service providers were having enrolling their clients in mid-2003, and results to date are described in Appendix C.
5. The "*private sector performance practices*" study is important because historically, the public sector has lagged behind the private sector in terms of efficiency and performance improvement. One way to redress this is to learn from private sector approaches, taking advantage of employers on the Board. This would also enable us to engage private sector BWIB member interest by utilizing their expertise and showing them another way they can directly contribute to workforce system performance improvements. WSEC will systematically visit all private employer representatives on the BWIB personally at their own workplaces, and learn more about the workplace learning strategies, human performance improvement practices, and performance management approaches they use in their own large distributed organizations. This study has not yet begun, but upon completion we will have recommendations for practices that might be transferred from the private to the public sector.
6. The "*comparable cities benchmarking*" project is important because many other cities are facing the same challenges as Baltimore, and we might learn something from their responses, as well as be able to gauge better how we are doing. The bulk of LWIBs nationwide are not like Baltimore, and so "national average" data is less meaningful than direct comparison with a smaller number of LWIBs facing similar local economic conditions. Past examinations of other cities have tended to use qualitative approaches, such as case studies and best practice examinations, which are difficult to systematize, to compare, and to validate against actual outcomes. In contrast, a "benchmarking" approach starts with the quantitative measures of performance outcomes across a peer group, and uses those results to signal where best practices are likely to be occurring and be worth following up. It also gives greater perspective to Baltimore's own statistics, by comparing them to those produced by a group of similar cases.

The WSEC has begun this process with presentation of a few key variables for a group of comparable cities, in section 2.6. We are able to explore Baltimore's achievements in the context of a peer group, and by examining differences, suggest what different service

models strategies might be at work. Eventually, distilling a few agreed mission-critical "key ratios" to benchmark periodically would give another set of management information based on real comparisons to "others in class", and would be an approach that resonates with private employer Board members.

7. The study of "*LWIB responses to fiscal stress*" is important because local workforce systems across the country are facing budget shortfalls with no state or federal surpluses to bail them out. Maryland received \$6.9 million or 12% less for its PY '03 federal allotment than it had the year before, even though unemployment was higher. We may be able to learn how to handle this "fiscal squeeze" from innovative government and provider responses to spending cuts elsewhere. Knowing the range of possible responses, and the prevalence of each across the system, should allow Baltimore to be proactive rather than reactive to the coming fiscal situation. The WSEC undertook in August 2003 a national online survey of all the nation's LWIBs to find out about their evolving budget situation and their chosen responses to fiscal stress, and results are given in Appendix C. This survey gives us examples from around the country of strategies for coping with less money, and a greater confidence that we are not overlooking potential solutions being tried elsewhere.
  
8. The study of the potential role of the "*temporary help supply and leased staffing industry*" is an important topic because "temp agencies" and "body shops" are believed to be "volume players" in the total workforce/labor exchange system, but little knowledge is available at present on how they interface with the system's public part. The "temp agencies" are known to take a substantial proportion of clients of the public workforce system, but those clients tend not, at that point, to be officially recognized as "exited" or "closed out," even though they may be "in work", because of the acknowledged temporary or short-term nature of their work situations. We need to know if this is indeed an improved situation for clients and a "step up," or merely a short-term, non-progressing, carousel situation. The temporary help industry also provides much training for temporary workers in its own right. Temporary staffing agencies could thus potentially be a significant ally to the public system, but without basic knowledge on the existing situation, it is not possible to map out the complementarities or plan the future terms of engagement. This study has not started yet, but on completion we will have a better understanding of how this key sector's activities might be leveraged in pursuit of public workforce system goals.
  
9. The "*identification of employer needs*" is important because the WIA-funded system is supposed to be demand-driven and recognize that private employers create the work opportunities. Therefore, identifying employers' present and future needs is critical to maintaining an effective system of services to be able to meet those employer needs with a suitable supply of qualified applicants. What employer needs are, and which skills and occupations will be in high future demand, are key strategic questions when deciding between alternative services and programs to prepare job-seekers with public money. The more focused that services can be on meeting actual and future employer needs, the more employers are likely to be engaged with the public workforce system, be satisfied with their experience, and be repeat customers. This study has not yet begun, but when completed, we will have identified a spectrum of ways for identifying and measuring employer needs and future demand, together with available information on their advantages and disadvantages, based on their use elsewhere. We will be able to make recommendations on which method(s) could be used regularly in Baltimore, how to

implement that system on a regular basis, and how to feed its findings back into service planning and delivery.

10. The final project brings together the findings of as many as possible of these studies in this first "*Baltimore's Workforce System at Work*" report. This report is meant to be a vehicle for educating Board members, legislators, the media, and the public, about workforce development. Previous outside studies tend to have been partial, fragmented, or overly focused on just the pathologies, rather than being focused on the whole workforce system and how it functions or how it could be improved. This report presents a complete system overview, so that individual players can see their own function within the larger scheme. It intends to empower BWIB members with an understanding of workforce system issues, strategies, operations and tools, such that they can grasp the leverage points at which they can make strategic decisions that will have positive impact. It will help them chart the local workforce system's progress, and answer the questions implied in the *BWIB Strategic Plan's* Goals 5 and 6: "*how are we doing?*" and "*how are we improving?*"

This edition of *Baltimore's Workforce System at Work* is the first in a planned regular series of such reports. As the first one, it contains much more explanatory background and historic information than will appear in future editions. It serves as an overview of what is being done, and as a baseline for gauging system progress in the future. This foundation will allow subsequent *Baltimore's Workforce System at Work* reports to be shorter and more specifically focused on the critical success factors and the opportunities identified in this first report.

### 2.3 What is Baltimore's "local public workforce system"?

Baltimore's local public workforce system is the connected activities of a large group of organizations assisting employers in finding appropriately skilled applicants for their job opportunities, and helping job seekers access a variety of services needed to find their next job. The system includes several local and state government agencies, non-profit foundations and community-based organizations, public and private educational and training institutions and providers, and unions.

Among the main government agencies involved in the workforce system are those shown in the sidebar below. Altogether, they receive almost fifty different state and federal workforce development funding streams that come into the city<sup>1</sup> (see *Appendix H*). These agencies use this funding for delivery of a variety of direct employment and training services, as well as for referrals, brokering, facilitation, and organizing. In some cases, these agencies use the funds for direct provision themselves, while in others they contract out services to private and non-profit vendors and providers.

The federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) governs distribution and use of the federal employment and training funds. These are routed chiefly through the U.S. Dept. of Labor, which allocates them by formulae to states. The Governor of each state then oversees the distribution of those federal funds to state agencies and local areas. The Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) is the city's main workforce agency staffing and operating

<sup>1</sup> *Workforce Development in Baltimore: Catalogue of Funding Stream Programs*, B. Barnow, M. Bell, S. Spaulding and J. Schultz, Johns Hopkins University, Institute for Policy Studies, March 6, 2001, [www.oedworks.com/aboutus/index.htm](http://www.oedworks.com/aboutus/index.htm).

WIA employment programs, assisted by the agencies listed in the sidebar and by other service providers. *The WIA funds and activities are thus the main, but not the only, part of what is commonly referred to as "the local workforce system".*

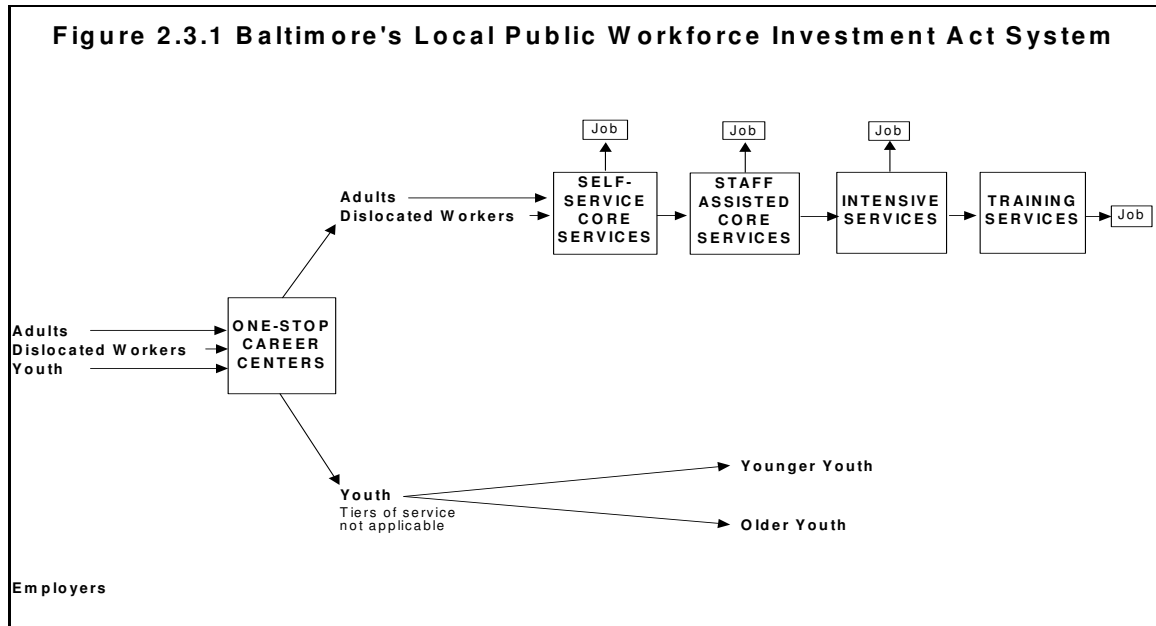
WIA funds can be used to serve two main customer groups: *employers* and *job seekers*. Within the job seeker customer group, funds are allocated to three sub-groups: "adults," "dislocated workers" (i.e. recently laid-off adults), and "youth".

The first step in a job seeker's flow through this WIA system is entry to one of four One-Stop Career Centers, located in different sections of Baltimore, that offer a wide array of employment and training services in three sequential "tiers" of service: *core, intensive* and *training*. (Core services are further divided into "self-service" core services and then "staff-assisted" core services). Customers advance from entry at core through the system to each next service tier only if they were unable to find a job at their previous tier. Their progression through the One-Stop Career Network system is shown in the graphic below.

**Public partners in the local public workforce system**

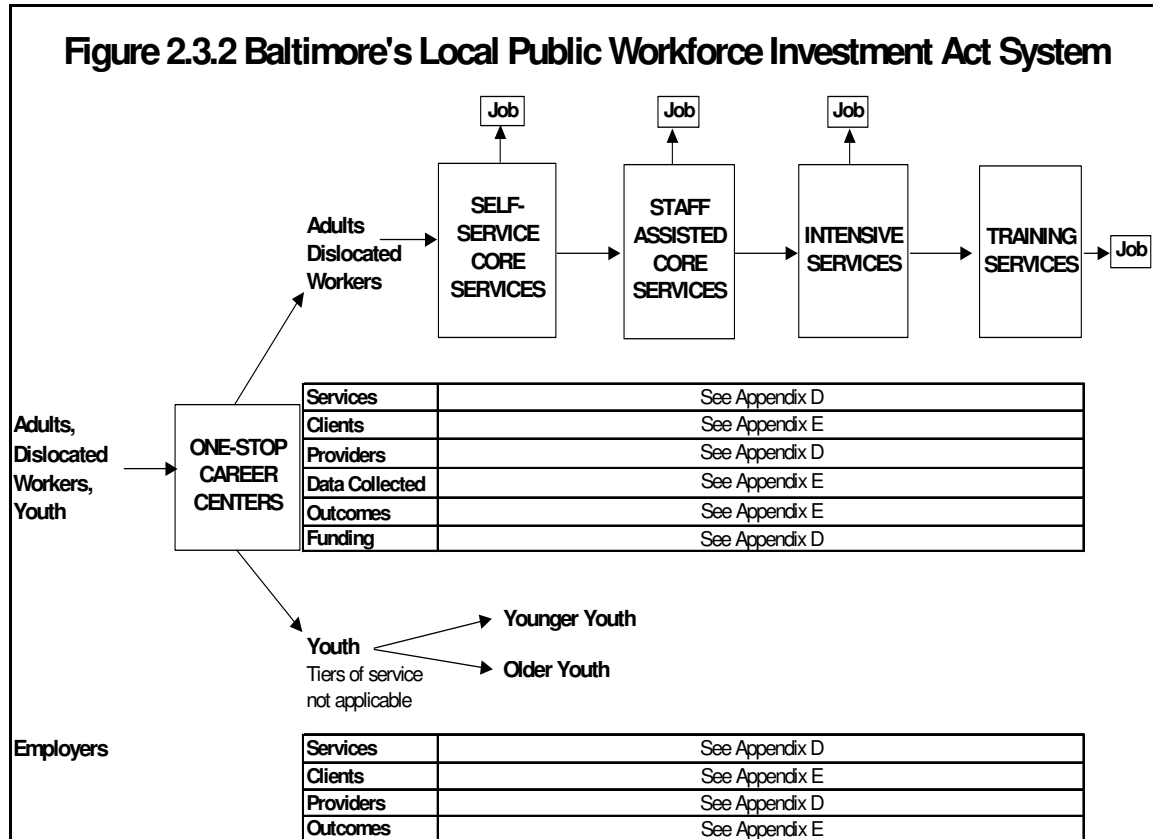
- Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development
- Maryland Department of Social Services
- Maryland Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation
  - Office of Employment Services
- Housing Authority of Baltimore City
- Division of Rehabilitation Services
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- Maryland Department of Aging
- Maryland State Department of Education
  - Correctional Education Program
- Baltimore City Community College
- Baltimore City Public School System

*(For a full list of partners, see Appendix D)*



All adults begin in "self-service core services". At this stage, staff contact is minimal, information is the prime service content, customers are free to enter and access the public services of the One-Stop Career Center Network facility. Services available at the core stage include job search, labor market information, and computer services. The prior "Job Training Partnership Act" (JTPA) system only served narrowly-defined sub-groups of the population, and this shift to universal free access to core services with no eligibility requirements is one of the main changes brought in by WIA. Given that there was no accompanying significant increase in overall federal workforce

funding when WIA began, this change in the nature of client demand has tremendous implications for the volumes of clients that can be served, the levels of services they can be offered, the costs incurred, and the flexibility with which resources can be allocated across tiers.



For most adult customers, self-service core is their highest tier of service before leaving. Since there is no federal requirement to formally register customers at this stage, limited information used to be collected on individuals. The recently introduced “swipe card” system now allows better regular tracking of customers’ entry and exit behavior, and of their use of different core services.

Customers next progress into “*staff-assisted core services*” for adults. This step involves a more substantial interaction between the customer and the system’s services and staff. Customers are required to register at this point, and more detailed information is collected on them. Services delivered include placement assistance, career counseling, and initial assessment.

The next tier is “*intensive services*”, including comprehensive assessments, individual employment plans, group and individual counseling, case management, and pre-vocational services. (For a full list of intensive services and providers, see Appendix D).

The third and final tier is “*training services*”. A small percentage of customers continue to this level. Some individuals receive an “Individual Training Account” (ITA) and are able to use it for purchasing occupational training from a provider on a state list of eligible training providers. (For a list of recent training providers, see Appendix D). Other individuals may receive

customized occupational training, developed in concert with employers to prepare customers for specific opportunities.

These tiers of service do not apply to youth, who must be aged 14-21, have a low income, and meet at least one of six specific barriers to employment. Youth customers are divided into "younger youth" (ages 14-18) and "older youth" (ages 19-21). Youth are prepared for post-secondary education or employment. The services they may receive include tutoring and other services leading to completion of secondary school, or alternative school services, mentoring, paid and unpaid work experience, occupational skills training, leadership development, and appropriate supportive services.

The foundation of Baltimore's workforce development system for youth are a network a seven comprehensive, neighborhood-based youth centers offering educational, career, recreational, health, and personal growth/mentoring activities. Five of these centers are funded by a federal Youth Opportunity grant for youth living in Baltimore's Empowerment Zone communities (economically disadvantaged neighborhoods designated by the federal government for special support) and the other two centers are funded through WIA. The two centers with WIA funding, Malcolm X Youth Center and South Baltimore Career Center, extend the model of Youth Opportunity centers into northwest and south Baltimore. The South Baltimore Career Center specializes in training and connecting youth to employer-funded internships and entry-level jobs in food services/hospitality, data entry, office management, retail skills, customer service and telemarketing.

For youth who have left school without earning high school diplomas, the WIA-funded Baltimore City Career Academy serves as an alternative learning center, offering out-of-school youth aged 16 to 21 the opportunity to earn GEDs, high school diplomas, college experiences and work skills. Diploma Plus allows youth the opportunity to earn a Maryland State High School Diploma rather than a GED, along with some college credits and internship experiences. WIA funds also support the Delta Youth Education/Employment Program assisting out-of-school youth in accessing academic and career-specific services, and the Youth Empowerment Program offering training in information technology, health care and hospitality-related careers.

In addition to job seeker services, the One-Stop Career Centers provide services to *employers*, including labor market information, job matching, outreach and recruitment, prescreening, tests and assessments, customized training, and job fairs.

Such a multi-customer, multi-service, multi-partner, distributed location, endeavor requires coordination, alignment, and oversight. Under WIA, over 630 Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) were established around the country to plan and oversee local workforce systems. The

Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB) is the LWIB entity guiding the workforce system throughout Baltimore City. However, the BWIB has direct influence over only the WIA-funded

<b>"Top Ten" workforce investment funding streams coming to Baltimore</b>	
PROGRAM	FY 2000 FUNDING (millions)
Public school system (K-12)	\$829.1
Community College grants	\$26.1
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Family Investment Program, Work Opportunities Program	\$24.1
Empowerment Zone	\$12.0
Youth Opportunity Grants	\$11.0
Correctional Education	\$9.7
Welfare-to-Work	\$9.1
Workforce Investment Act (Youth)	\$9.1
Workforce Investment Act (Adult)	\$4.3
Futures Program	\$2.9

parts of the local public workforce system. For the non-WIA-funded parts of the system, it has only an indirect -- but still an important -- influence, through its role as a forum for network building, partnership-creation, best practice sharing, and information dissemination. Its one WIA-mandated sub-group, the Youth Council, oversees the expenditure of WIA youth funding and provides guidance to MOED in targeting federal youth funds.

***What have we learned from this section and what recommendations do the findings support?***

1. Baltimore's public workforce system is made up of many organizations in a complex system of case management, referral, service-provision, and funding. The federally funded WIA programs and services are the main, but by no means the only, part of what is commonly referred to as "the local public workforce system". We can see from this section what the basic WIA model of service is, where various organizations fit into the system, how customers move through the main tiers of service, the services offered at each tier, and who manages and oversees the WIA-funded parts of the overall system.
2. To keep track of activities and outcomes, and to be able to identify and promote approaches which work best in such a complex distributed system, we need a performance measurement system that will collect relevant management information and link it with the Board's strategic objectives.

## **2.4 Customer demographics, flows and outcomes**

In this section we present the results to separate studies of client flow, customer outcomes, and placements by industry. Appendix E contains more detailed demographic and performance information about One-Stop Career Center Network customers by tier of service, WIA title, and career center, as well as an analysis of job placements.

***Why is this important?*** In order to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs, we need to understand who our customers are, how they move through the WIA workforce system, and how they are performing.

### **2.4.1 Background on WIA customer flow**

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA), implemented in July 2000, not only introduced a dual customer base -- the employer as well as the jobseeker -- but also expanded the existing low-wage/unemployed job seeker customer base by mandating universal access to core services. The goal of the WIA legislation is to provide easy access to self-directed job search tools and labor market information to any job seeker, regardless of income or skill level, and to limit intensive services and training for those who are unable to find good jobs on their own.