

**Strengthening NYC's Youth Workforce Development System**  
*A solutions-oriented symposium on how to address New York City's youth workforce system*

**FEEDBACK FROM STRATEGY SESSION**

**RESOURCES**

**Utilize the Workforce Investment Board to facilitate closer collaboration between public agencies, private philanthropy, and employers.**

*Larger Mobilization of Employers* – there needs to be a larger call for action with employers rather than by individual employer.

*Government and unions* – there needs to be more engagement with unions.

**POLICIES/PRACTICE**

**Create a network of community-based young adult opportunity centers**

**Youth Opportunity Centers:**

1. Location – Utilize transportation hubs; mobile locations
2. Operations – Coalition of neighborhood organizations
3. Nature of urban community (based on) – involve other stakeholders (church, businesses, adults stakeholders)
4. Peer-to-peer supports
5. Other services or activities that appeal
6. Engage youth as drivers – tech field
7. Engage youth in technology – incorporate into centers
8. Training staff to go beyond walls of center
9. Close gaps in occupational training; reduce youth bouncing around
10. Provide improvement around capacity/services/continuum of service
11. Assessment or referral portal/provide services?; Assess kids on-online
12. Opportunity for cohort building
13. Involve SBS, HRA, NYEDC

**Effective Youth Marketing Strategies:**

1. Speak their language
2. Social media use/privacy management
3. Start a hashtag movement
4. Keep up with what social media youth are using (Snap Chat, Twitter, Pinterest)

## **CAREER PATHWAYS/DEMAND-LED APPROACH**

### **Department of Education (DOE) – Encourage DOE to play a bigger role in youth workforce development**

Career track has been secondary to college prep.

1. *Career Exploration* – Need to have career exploration and career track focus not just in the CTEs.
  - Can't just dump this on teachers who are already overwhelmed.
  - Perhaps the new afterschool programming in middle schools is a good place to start.
  - Also use technology (like use of apps and models like iMentor).
2. *Employers Engagement* – Bring employers into the schools to talk about their real-world experiences (not the “TV” glamour of certain jobs).
3. *Mentoring* – Building on Angie's (Kamath) recommendation for “Big Hairy Goal” of \$100,000 mentor relationships. City can act as clearinghouse to connect mentors to students using tech as structure for engagement (again, iMentor model—many people don't know how to be a mentor to young people).
4. *Internships* – Embed internship component into high schools. This is used for “off track” student curriculum but need to make it more mainstream.
  - Use partnerships of CBOs to help prepare and support youth in internships.
  - Identify a private sector partner for each school (will have to attract many businesses).

### **Sector-based training and apprenticeship programs that support young adults seeking career track work while meeting employer demands.**

#### **Sector-based training**

“Expand training for the process of developing a sector strategy.”

“How can providers engage employers and shift their notion of who young people are?”

“Educating employer is important—need employers educated to make sure they understand workers' needs—employer focused workforce development.”

“Provide training for contractors and developers looking for workforce in the areas where they build.”

“There is a need for heavy focus in employer relationship building.”

“Tailor classes and cohorts to demand in the field.”

“Organizations placing people based on training goals rather than modeling trainings based on industry need.”

## **DEMAND-LED APPROACHES**

“Service providers need to engage employers specifically on the particular demands that they have.”

“Need to build nurturing relationships.”

“Can be both large scale community needs (in-demand industries) as well as very locally specific (e.g. Mt. Sinai may want local workers with customer service skills, we need to work to meet that need).”

“*Economy of Scale* – With in-demand fields there is benefit of economy of scale.

“Training - Expand training to (staff) providers to work effectively with companies/ potential employers → examine process of creating a sector strategy in your particular community → learning about the “landscape” in your community for youth-employment opportunities.”

“Corporate environment – funding – engage employers on strategies to effectively retain youth (cultural competency); agencies can offer support to companies to strengthen their corporate retention, shifting “notion” of who our youth are...BOTH.

### **Neighborhood-Based Young Adult Employment Partnerships**

“*Partners commitment* – Partners would need to have internal investment and clearly defined point person for ensuring success of placements.”

“*Building relationships* – Organizations are focused on building one- to-one relationships and competing with other nonprofits building relationships with same employers.”

“*Connect to c-level business folks* – Community organizations need to get connected to c-level folks at businesses by City as a conduit to have high level conversations about industry needs.”

“*Industry associations* – intermediaries need to build the relationships and bridge gaps between community orgs and industry partners.”

“*Sector demand* - Identify the sectors that have demand and who is already doing work—CBOs replicating work and expanding beyond their expertise is not growing and changing needs.”

“*Align training and demand* - Expanding into sectors that align with students’ interest—finding sectors that speak to their experience”

### **Challenges to building apprenticeships**

“Building programs for employers who aren’t used to working with youth.”

“Provide training for employers to be successful.”

“What trainings should employers hold in-house? What should be handled by outside organizations/agencies?”

“Finding people who are content experts who are also education experts to provide training for a population that may have struggled in traditional educational settings.”

“There is a cost to employers—hiring, training, firing, replacing, etc.—need to acknowledge and address.”