



**EDUCATION and WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CABINET
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

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Joseph U. Meyer
Secretary

February 27, 2013

Ms. Melissa Corrigan
Interim Head Workforce Development Division
Vice President – Development
ACT – Workforce Development Division
101 ACT Drive
Iowa City, IA 52243

Dear Ms. Corrigan:

Thank you for your Jan. 31 response regarding Kentucky and the other states' concerns about several aspects of the ACT Work Ready Communities (WRC) program. We value our partnership with ACT and would like to resolve the issues that we have expressed with your leadership over the last year. When Kentucky established its Work Ready Communities program we contracted with Thinking Media to assist us in developing our certification. We spent a great deal of time working with business and economic development professionals selecting, refining and adopting our criteria based on their input. We also set out to create a framework that would assist communities with making talent development and documentation a local priority. We know we were different from the other two states (Georgia and Oklahoma) certifying counties at the time. The Kentucky version of the program has been very well received.

When asked to join with ACT to develop a national program Kentucky was honored and excited about the prospects. Kentucky's experience with ACT in the development of the national program, however, has been disheartening. On Oct. 30, 2012, I sent Martin Scaglione, president of ACT's Workforce Development Division, a letter describing Kentucky's concerns with ACT's WRC program. On Nov. 7, 2012, I visited ACT headquarters to express personally to Mr. Scaglione Kentucky's concerns with the WRC process. Don Carstensen sat in on that meeting. I reiterated concerns that ACT's presentation of certain data elements was a disservice to Kentucky and cast Kentucky in an unflattering and untrue light. For example, the failure of ACT to include NCRC certificates issued before Jan. 6, 2012 (electronic) or July 1, 2012 (paper and pencil) on the website in the goals display does not recognize that Kentucky has used employability certificates for more than 12 years and makes a big difference in the numbers. It creates a conflict with the data used by Kentucky's economic development team, undermining the credibility of Kentucky's data. The use of static data to describe a community dynamic is useless for public

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consumption and counterproductive. Underlying these and other issues is the lack of ACT staff response to the input and needs of the states engaged in the academy process.

According to our memorandum of understanding, participation was to have resulted in the enhancement of our existing program. All involved on the Kentucky Leadership Team for the Academy agree that these unresolved issues are the antithesis of enhancement and could, in fact, dilute the standards and economic impact of our initiative.

As I mentioned to you on our Jan. 17, 2013, telephone conference, and to Mr. Scaglione in person, the concerns I raised were not just those of Kentucky but of other participating states, as well. I felt obliged to investigate the concerns raised by the staff of Kentucky's participating agencies to ensure that we were not alone in these concerns. Representatives of other states authorized me to communicate on their behalf.

Your January 31 e-mail was generally positive but failed to address the specifics of Kentucky's concerns. It did not offer any indication that these matters will be resolved anytime soon. This uncertainty is causing Kentucky to reconsider its participation in the ACT program. Until these matters are resolved I regret that I need to ask our longtime partners at ACT to remove Kentucky from the list of active states participating in your CWRC program. Further, I also ask that ACT amend its CWRC website to prevent access to county and state data about the NCRC accomplishments of Kentucky because we do not believe this data is an accurate reflection of the attainment of NCRCs in our counties. Given that Kentucky, along with Louisiana and Virginia, created the certification which ACT has now transformed into the NCRC, this request is especially disappointing to us. However, because of the lack of response to the documented concerns expressed by Kentucky, Missouri, South Carolina and Oregon, we must insist that you remove the Commonwealth of Kentucky and its associated data from your website and all promotional materials.

As a longtime partner with the Commonwealth, you may provide a link on the CWRC page to our site <http://workready.ky.gov>.

If, in the future, ACT chooses to address the concerns expressed in our prior correspondence as well as my meeting in Iowa City with your predecessor, please contact me and we may reconsider our decision.

Sincerely,



Joseph U. Meyer
Secretary

cc: Don Carstensen
Justin Saylor