



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF AMERICA**

## **BOARD BRIEF: Workforce Readiness Strategy**

Board Briefs are "at-a-glance" resources that help board volunteers better support their Boys & Girls Club. They are designed to occur as five-minute education opportunities at board meetings.

### **SUMMARY**

The Boys & Girls Club Movement is dedicated to the mission of helping all young people, especially those who need us most, reach their full potential, ensuring their readiness for work and life. With a strategic focus on workforce readiness, Clubs fulfill our shared vision of putting success within reach of every young person who enters our doors, with all members on track to graduate from high school with a plan for the future, demonstrating good character and citizenship, and living a healthy lifestyle. Every day, Clubs provide programs and experiences to develop skills that prepare members for success. Unfortunately, communities across America face significant challenges in ensuring that our youth are adequately prepared to enter the workforce. Youth are not feeling adequately prepared or confident about their next steps in life. At the same time, employers are finding it increasingly harder to find skilled workers to fill a record 7 million job openings. To bridge this gap, BGCA has launched a Workforce Readiness strategy to ensure every young person in America has the skills needed to graduate from high school well-prepared for work and life.

### **WORKFORCE READINESS STRATEGY OVERVIEW**

The Workforce Readiness strategy aims to build the capacity of all organizations to deliver effective workforce programming, achieving our Great Futures 2025 priorities for improving program quality and reaching more youth. By 2025, this new strategy aspires for 100% of Clubs to provide programming that builds essential soft skills and career exploration for all youth and teens members. To promote teen engagement, Clubs will help at least 55% of regularly attending teen members receive a workforce certification and/or work-based learning experience. The strategy includes development of national partnerships to support job placement and access to technical certifications for youth.

BGCA has the reach, scale, and experience to prepare today's youth for success in tomorrow's workforce. Every young person has the potential for success and helping them to fulfill that potential is our greatest responsibility. Youth have an urgent need for effective programs and services to ensure their workforce readiness. Clubs meet that need by fostering development of soft-skills that are transferable across industries, providing early exposure to careers and readying teens for their next step after high school.

As the leading nonprofit provider of out-of-school time programming, BGCA supports local Clubs in implementing research-backed strategies to build workforce readiness by:

- Providing a high-quality Club experience that includes mentoring
- Implementing BGCA's four core pillars of workforce readiness programming: soft-skills development, career exploration, employment readiness training, and work-based learning
- Partnering to increase access to workforce programming resources and services.

Through partnership with public and private investors and thought leaders, BGCA is committed to deploying our workforce development strategies to ready millions of young people for future careers.

To increase members' participation and deepen their Club Experience, it is important to provide youth – particularly young adolescents (tweens) and older teens – with opportunities to have an active voice and influence program options. In the 2017 Teen Voice report, a survey of over 1800 teens showed that older youth in Clubs continue to want more opportunities in their Club experience that prepare them for life after high school. Workforce Readiness programming meets that need and is essential to propel our Movement forward for youth and teens, providing relevant programming to help youth achieve success for their own great future. BGCA supports Clubs through four primary tactics:

1. **Awareness and Commitment Building:** Ignite commitment of executive staff and boards.
2. **Program Design & Development:** Career exploration and skill development for all ages.
3. **Capacity Building:** Increase effective implementation and quality workforce programming.
4. **Strategic Partnerships:** Provide members access to real-world learning opportunities.

## ROLE OF THE BOARD IN THE WORKFORCE STRATEGY

To achieve the Workforce Strategy goal of 100% of Clubs providing workforce programming by 2025 will take the dedication and intention of the entire Movement. The role of local Boards of Directors is vital. Boards can support the workforce strategy through the following critical actions.

- Pass a board resolution to commit to workforce programming. A sample board resolution can
- Make workforce readiness a standing item on the board meeting agenda.
- Identify funding and resources to support workforce readiness programming.
- Collaborate with Club leadership to use data to set specific program and funding metric goals and integrate them into the organization's strategic plan.
- Work with Club leadership to hire staff dedicated to workforce programming implementation.
- Allocate budget in the operating plan to support staff training at all levels of the organization.
- Work with Director of Organizational Development on creating networking or mentoring opportunities with other Boys & Girls Club organizations with strong workforce programs.
- Seek local partnerships to help build relationships with agencies and key stakeholders to support workforce programming.

## GREAT THINK WORKFORCE READINESS:

### White Paper: Recommendations + Next Steps

Boys & Girls Clubs of America has released a white paper summarizing key learnings, expert advice and action steps that emerged from Great Think: Workforce Readiness. Attended by youth, Club leaders, top business leaders, policy experts and advocates, the event was convened by BGCA to create a strategic action plan to ensure young people are well-prepared for work and life.

The white paper, *Building Economic Opportunity: Youth Workforce Readiness*, outlines BGCA's Workforce Readiness Framework, centered on four critical elements needed to help youth articulate and achieve their plans for the future: **Essential Skill Development, Career Exploration, Employability Skill Development** and **Work-Based Learning**. It also includes **recommended action steps for businesses and employers, communities and policymakers** to help prepare our youth today for success in tomorrow's workforce.

To learn more about the America's growing workforce crisis and how Boys & Girls Clubs are developing solutions to close the workforce skills gap for our youth, we invite you to read the white paper, [Building Economic Opportunity: Youth Workforce Readiness](#), and share it with your teams, partners and community leaders.





## WORKFORCE READINESS

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### Sample Board Resolution: Workforce Readiness Programming

At the *(date of meeting)* meeting of the Board of Directors of *(legal name of Organization)*, the following resolution was proposed and approved by the Board:

Resolved:

#### Whereas,

The professional staff and board members of *(legal name of organization)* recognize that in order to help our youth fulfill their true potential and leave the Club prepared with a plan for the future, our Club should create a Club Experience that provides all members with meaningful opportunities to explore career and education pathways through a robust, community-supported workforce readiness program.

#### Whereas,

The professional staff and board members embrace workforce readiness programming and resolve to:

- *Provide members diverse learning opportunities that build essential skills life and work;*
- *Provide members with career exploration and matching activities;*
- *Provide members access to job readiness and technical skill training and certification;*
- *Help members secure and successfully complete work-based learning experiences;*
- *Work with members to ensure they have a clear plan for the future;*
- *Engage the local community to build strategic partnerships and secure resources to support the Club's workforce readiness programming.*

#### Whereas,

The professional staff and board members commit to work in partnership to develop and implement a long-term plan to support a robust workforce readiness program at the Club, including seeking funding to support the program and allocating resources accordingly.

#### Whereas,

The professional staff and board members resolve to build partnerships throughout the community that lead to the Club being known to support youth workforce readiness.

#### Now, therefore, let be it resolved that:

The Board of Directors of the *(legal name of organization)* has fully adopted a Workforce Readiness plan.

Resolved this *(Day)* of *(Month)* *(Year)*

*(Signature)*

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Board President, *(legal name of organization)*