



Shifting Gears:
Minnesota **FastTRAC**
Training, Resources **And** Credentialing Initiative

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Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Minnesota
Department
of **Education**

Shifting Gears: Minnesota FastTRAC History



Convergence of demographics, state initiatives, and private funding catalyst

- **Looming demographic shifts in MN**
 - Retiring boomers
 - Declining high school enrollment and graduates
 - Today's workers will make up 65 percent of 2025 labor force in MN

- **Major state-level education, training and employment initiatives**
 - State Career and Technical Education Plan
 - ABE Postsecondary Education and Training Initiative
 - Minnesota Sector Partnerships
 - Education and Training Collaboratives
 - Framework for Integrated Regional Strategies, FIRST
 - GWDC policy advisory
 - NGA Sector Academy
 - Governor's Comprehensive Workforce Development Initiative

- **Joyce Foundation Shifting Gears Initiative**
 - MN among 5 Midwestern states
 - 2007 planning grant to MN 1/07-6/08
 - 2008 implementation grant to MN 8/08-7/09
 - Opportunity for future funding to continue efforts



FastTRAC Partners

- MN State Colleges and Universities Office of the Chancellor (OOC) and MN Department of Education -- Adult Basic Education (ABE) are the lead agencies.
- Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is on executive team and providing staff
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Office of Higher Education (OHE)
- Governor's Workforce Development Council (GWDC)
- Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI)
- Community-based organizations
- Employers
- Workforce Service Areas (WSAs), ABE providers, other frontline service providers
- Joyce Foundation

Demographics demand action

Workforce

- High school grads peak in 2009; then grad numbers fall 10% by 2015.
- New generation of P-16 grads will not be able to fill gaps.
- One of every 3 MN workers will be over 50 by 2020.

Knowledge and skill demand

- More occupations will now require more than a high school diploma.
- Skilled labor shortage in critical industries and occupations.

Increase in workforce racial and ethnic diversity

- Minnesota's workforce will be more diverse in the future.



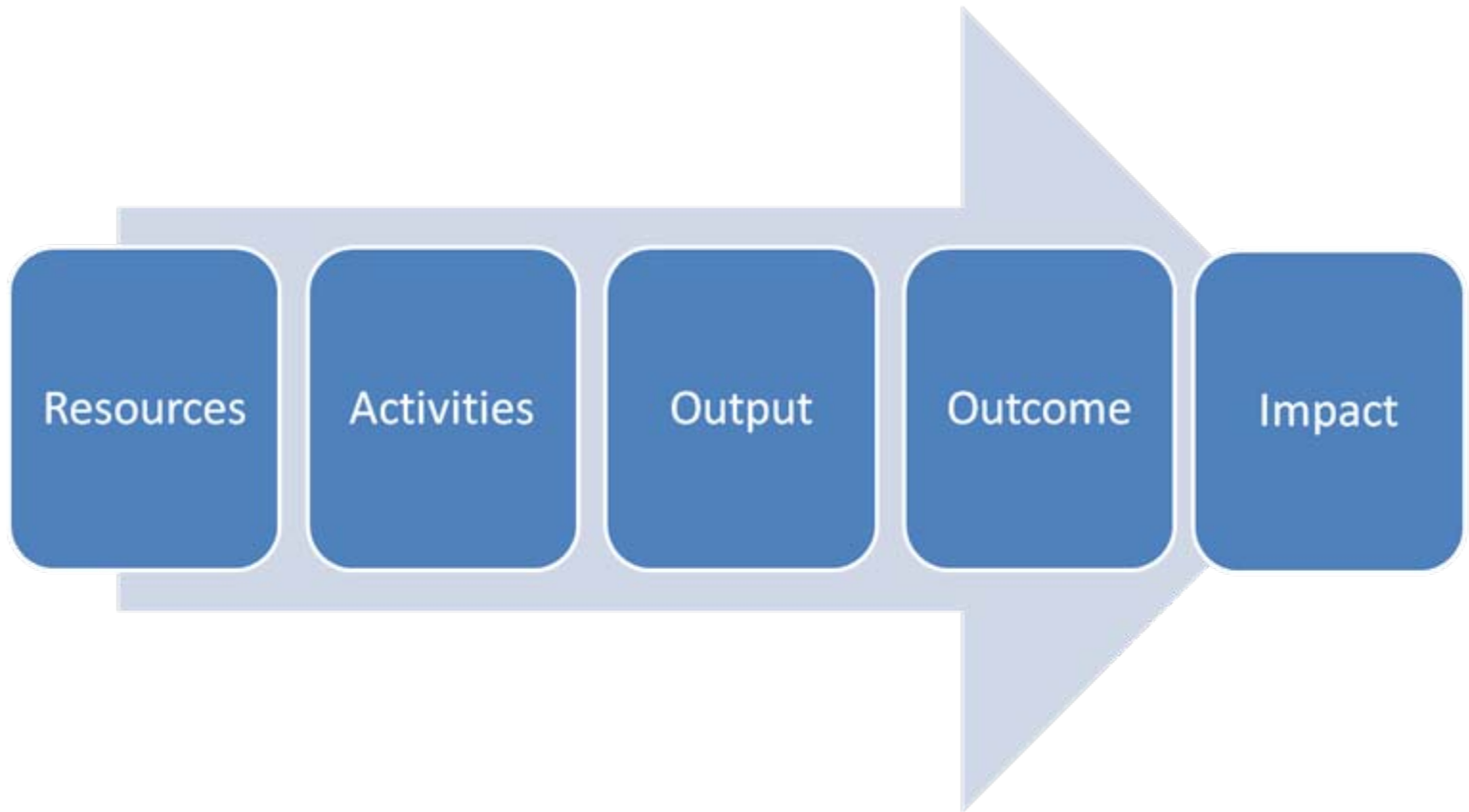
MN Shifting Gears

Planning Grant Findings:

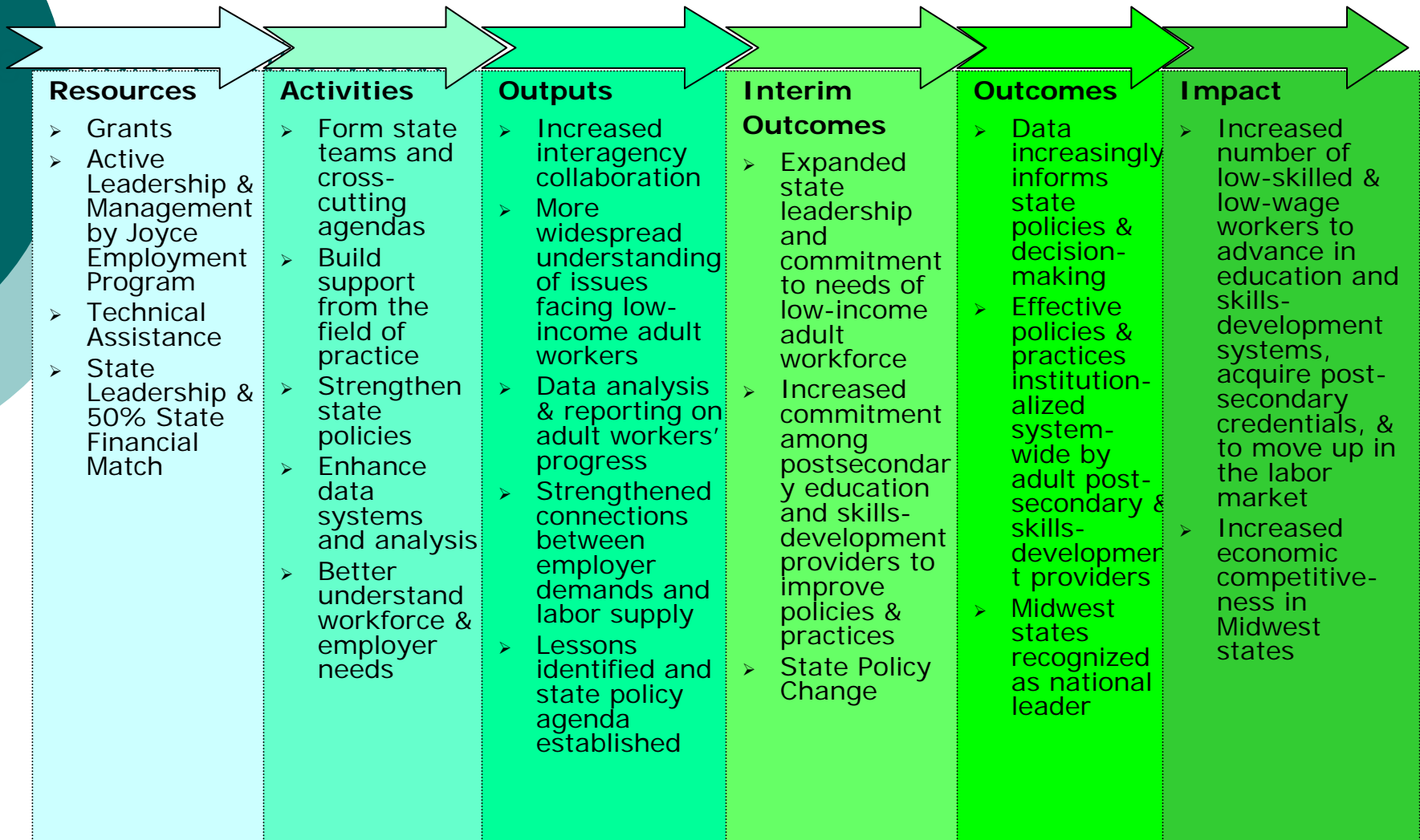
Three system barriers impede low-income adult workers from moving from unstable jobs to stable career pathways.

- Minimal and uneven coordination and resource sharing across institutions and agencies.
- Lack of flexible programmatic and support services in occupational skills training.
- Minimal uniform and unified data reporting system for systematic analysis.

Logic Model



Shifting Gears Logic Model





Resources from Shifting Gears Logic Model

- Implementation grants awarded to 5 Midwest states
- Active management and leadership by Joyce Employment Program staff
- Technical assistance resources provided to states
 - Center for Law and Social Policy
 - Workforce Strategy Center
 - Cadre of consultants and other organizations
- State leadership and 50% state financial match



Activities from Shifting Gears Logic Model

State leadership and work-plans to:

- Form state teams and cross-cutting agendas
- Build support from the field of practice (on-the-ground stakeholders)
- Strengthen state adult education and skills-development policies and systems
- Enhance data systems and analysis
- Better understand workforce and employer needs
- Implement state-specific strategies



Outputs from Shifting Gears Logic Model

- Increased interagency collaboration and coordination around state policies that affect low-income adult workers
- More widespread understanding of issues facing low-income adult workers
- Data analysis and reporting on low-income adult workers' progress through postsecondary education and skills-development systems, and employment
- Strengthened connections between employer demands and labor supply
- Lessons identified and state policy agenda established from state strategies



Interim Outcomes

from Shifting Gears Logic Model

- Expanded state leadership and increased state public policy commitment to addressing needs of low-income adult workforce
- Postsecondary education and skills-development providers exhibit better understanding of issues facing low-income adult workers, and increased commitment to improving institutional policies and practices
- State policy change to improve transitions for low-income adult workers across adult and postsecondary education, human services, workforce, and economic development systems
 - Legislative
 - Administrative/Regulatory
 - Data systems



Outcomes – Longer Term

from Shifting Gears Logic Model

- Data increasingly informs state policies and decision-making
- Effective policies and practices among postsecondary education and skills-development providers are institutionalized system-wide (sustained)
- Midwest states recognized as national leaders on issues facing low-income, low-skilled adult workers



Impacts from Shifting Gears Logic Model

Increased number of low-skilled and low-wage workers to:

1. advance in education and skills-development systems;
2. acquire postsecondary credentials; and,
3. receive higher earnings from the labor market.

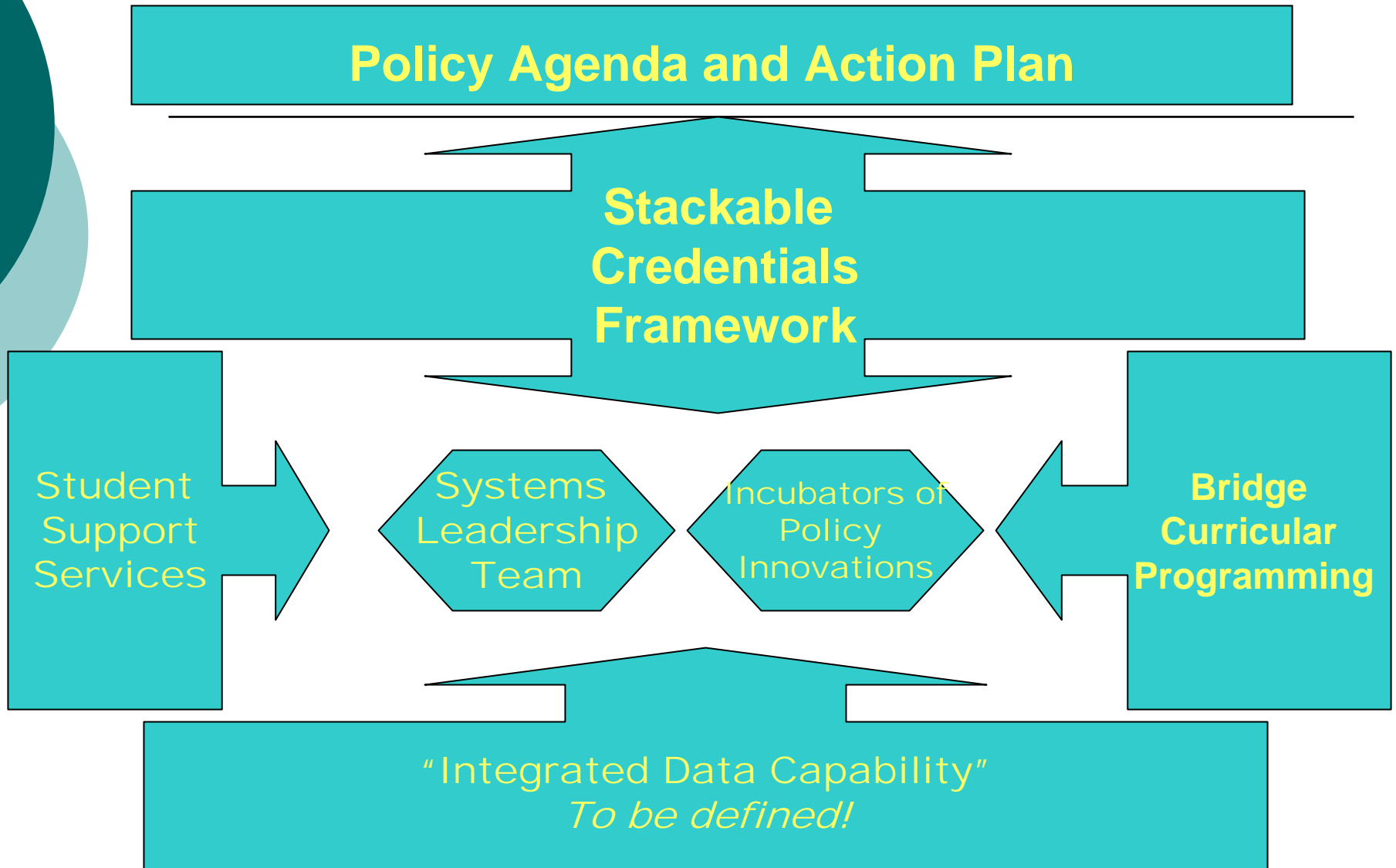
Increased economic competitiveness in Midwestern states

FastTRAC Goal



- Create a state-level “stackable credentials” education and training framework for low-wage, low-skilled adults (age 25-55) that integrates Adult Basic Education (ABE), non-credit occupational training, and for-credit postsecondary degree and certificate programs.

Minnesota's FastTRAC (Training, Resources & Credentialing)





FastTRAC focus population

Low-wage/low-skilled workers who are unable to compete for better jobs

- One-third of Minnesotans (692,000) of prime working age who have high school diploma/GED or less
- age 25-55
- unemployed or underemployed
- low-income/wages
- lacking basic and technical skills for competitive employment
- native and non-native English speakers

FastTRAC Strategies



- Provide students **support services** they need to transition between employment and education.
- Create **bridge curricula** for seamless transitions between ABE, non-credit and for-credit programs.
- Create awareness and commitment toward building **integrated data capability**.

Some Characteristics of Stackable Credential Framework



- Fast-track programming
- Career pathway development
- Multi-level, industry-recognized credentials
- Contextualized and competency-based curricula
- Flexible entry points
- Connections with regional demand-driven job needs
- Support services specific to adult students
- Comprehensive data collection

FastTRAC incubators of policy innovations



- Local/regional education and work transition programs w/ stackable credential characteristics.
- Innovative policies.
- Partnerships focused on low-wage, low-skilled.
- Each to receive supplemental grant (max \$54,000) plus technical assistance.
- Each incubator will:
 1. identify its stackable credential model;
 2. test policy alternative(s) in either bridge curricula or student supports; and
 3. inform state-level system and policy changes, i.e. policy agenda and action plan.

FastTRAC Teams – No single institution can resolve challenges alone.

FastTRAC's state teams and cross-cutting agendas

- Systems Leadership Team
- 3 Collaborative Learning Teams
 - Stackable Credentials Team
 - Student Support Services Team
 - Data and Information Team
- Executive Staff
 - DEED, ABE, Office of Chancellor, and Chair of Systems Leadership Team



Systems Leadership Team Charge



- Identify incubators and policy alternatives for testing by incubators.
- Transform what we are learning from incubators and related work into policy agenda and policy action plan (i.e. legislative, regulatory/administrative, and data).
- Advocate for and lead implementation of policy action plan.



Stackable Credentials Team

Membership:

- State systems—DEED, OOC, ABE, OHE
- Front line entities—Workforce Service Areas, ABE providers, state colleges and universities
- Employer reps (to be identified)
- Key incubator staff (to be identified)

Charge:

Assist and advise incubators in implementing stackable credential innovations and overcoming curriculum issues.

Student Support Services Team

Membership:

- State systems—DEED, OOC, ABE, DHS
- Front line entities—Workforce Service Areas, ABE providers, state colleges and universities
- Key incubator staff (to be identified)

Charge:

Identify barriers and innovations to providing student support services, particularly transportation, childcare, financial aid, and academic and career counseling; enable student involvement.



Data and Information Team

Membership:

- Technical staff of DEED, ABE, OOC, DHS, OHE

Charge:

Examine how incubators track participant progress and outcomes; aggregate the data from all incubators; advise incubators on overcoming data collection, matching and sharing barriers.

FastTRAC Staffing and Technical Resources



Lead agencies – OOC and MDE-ABE

1. Enable others to fulfill their charge
2. Fiscal responsibility
3. Administration and oversee staff
4. Represent MN with Joyce and other states

Two FastTRAC staff at DEED

1. Director—leadership support, contracts, budget, reporting, team coordination, policy development
2. Project Consultant—provide technical assistance to incubators, policy specialist

staff will conduct field monitoring of incubators

Joyce Foundation consultants

1. Share experience from other states
2. Provide technical advice
3. Lead evaluation for Joyce Foundation

Resources available online at www.cte.mnscu.org



FastTRAC Timeline – Year 1 plus

Phase One

team formation, strategy planning, incubator selection,
policy agenda and action plan introduction
August 2008 - October 2008

Phase Two

identify innovations; scan of state-level funding streams, data and
policies; policy agenda and action plan identification;
interim report to Joyce
November 2008 – May 2009

Phase Three

policy agenda and action plan recommendations
May – July 2009

Phase Four

FastTRAC model expansion and moving policy agenda
and action plan forward
July 2009 – January 2010

Incubator grant competition key dates

- Request for Proposals released Aug. 5 at www.cte.mnscu.edu
- Pre-applications from potential incubators due Aug. 26.
- Systems Team selects incubator review committee Aug. 28.
- Review of pre-apps by review committee Aug. 28-Sep. 10.
- Policy Academy Sept. 23, full application distributed.
- Full application due Oct. 17.
- Review committee makes final decisions Oct. 20.
- Grant term Nov. 1, 2008 to May 31, 2009.

See Handout in packet



Systems Leadership Team Planning



- Charge:
 1. Identify policy alternatives for testing by incubators.
 2. Transform lessons from incubators into legislative and state agency policy recommendations.
 3. Advocate for and lead implementation of policy changes.
- Membership (see handout in packet)
- Meetings 5-6 hours each Nov., Feb., May, July
common agenda items with collaborative teams
- Deliverables: let's discuss.
- Next steps:
 1. Select review committee
 2. Agree on next meeting date (Nov.)
 3. Discuss possible topics for upcoming meetings



Incubator Review Committee

- Purpose of incubator review committee:
 - select incubators from among 22 applications
 - identify policy alternatives for testing by incubators
- Revisit review timeline (see packet)
- Resources available
 - readers from collaborative teams
 - resources online
 - scorecard
- Time commitment –
 - 11 preapplications plus 10 full applications
- Conflict of interest
- Selection of review committee
- Distribution of pre-applications and scorecards



Thank you!