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April 24, 2017

Linda Crerar, Director  
Center of Excellence for Homeland Security/Emergency Management  
9401 Farwest Drive SW  
Lakewood, WA 98498

Dear Linda,

On March 29, 2017, a team from the colleges and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) participated in a review of the Center of Excellence for Homeland Security and Emergency Management (Center). Reviewers were: Nancy Dick, Director of Workforce Education, SBCTC; Mary Garguile, Vice President of Instruction, Olympic College; Mia Boster, Dean of Instruction, Peninsula College; Erik Tingelstad, Dean for Student Learning, Cascadia College; Peter Guzman, Policy Associate, SBCTC; and Katherine Mahoney, Program Administrator, SBCTC. This letter serves as the review team's final report for the Center for fiscal year 2017.

Several strengths were surfaced during our time with you, including the following commendations.

Breadth and commitment of advisory board. Throughout the visit, it was clear that the level of commitment from member of the Center's advisory board is exemplary. Center staff credits the advisory board with conscious targeting of activities on getting students employed. We also learned about the breadth of the board membership, across industries and roles, and how that helped inform the shift to engage the private sector more. This level of co-leadership with the Center's staff creates a strong foundation for the work.

Support, stability, consistency of the host campus. The leadership at the Pierce College District has consistently supported the work of the Center as it has evolved over time. The durability of this relationship is a major asset for this Center.

Brokering internships. Work-based learning is a critical issue in workforce education. We were impressed with the model the Center has developed to support colleges in finding internships for their students in HSEM-related programs. What was especially remarkable was the focus on growing capacity at the local college level by Center staff developing an opportunity with an area employer, and then handing the relationship off to the college personnel. This promises to create sustainability for the colleges by growing the number of employers they have relationships with, while maintaining important opportunities for students.

Staffing model. The Center has found ways to grow its impact and responsiveness to the needs of its college and employer customers within a tight budget. Paid staff are deployed regionally so face-to-face meetings are easily

at hand, and are well cross-trained on the different services and expertise the Center offers. You have gone even further, though, by building a volunteer workforce to evangelize around your work. This is seen in the active advisory board, but also through your Senior Fellows. You have grown many motivated partners who are contributing to projects and programs around the state.

We identified a few recommendations for your consideration as well.

Prioritizing and focusing Center activities. The Center has bitten off a big chunk in a growing and amorphous sector. We recommend that you continue to work closely with your advisory committee, State Board staffers and host campus supports to regularly prioritize and refine the focus. In the midst of so much important work to do, one strategy to narrow the deck could be to identify workforce needs that the college system is uniquely positioned to respond to and deploying your resources towards those needs.

Opportunities in corporate and continuing education. Many of the successful resources or events the Center has supported have been targeted towards incumbent workers and their continuing education. We also heard clearly that *every* industry needs HSEM-skilled employees and employers are often looking for ways to upskill their current workforce in areas like continuity planning, critical incident response, occupational health and more. We recommend you build off these successes and your skill in building colleges' capacity on the for-credit side of things by translating them to the non-credit workforce programming at colleges. You could consider exploring ways to help colleges' corporate and continuing education departments offer these chunks or modules of important, in-demand skills to serve employers.

Spread educational efficiencies. Supporting efficiency in the development and delivery of education in the college system is a core function for any Center. We were excited by your nascent work engaging criminal justice faculty in considering common curricula, and appreciated the "how to" manual provided to colleges considering becoming a collaborator with Pierce's HSEM degree program. Given your expertise in these areas, you could identify other programs or colleges with deep expertise in a specific area and help them replicate Pierce's model so students across the state could benefit.

Thank you to you and your staff, your advisory board, and your host campus for meeting with us and sharing the work of the Center. We appreciate the work you do in promoting the community and technical college system's ability to meet employer demand in the HSEM field.

Sincerely,



Nancy Dick