

**TRANSMITTAL #1**

**MEMORANDUM**

**January 6, 2016**

**TO:** Youth Committee

**FROM:** Sue Simmons, Deputy Director *Sue*

**SUBJECT:** Idaho Career Information System User Needs Assessment

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Information only

**BACKGROUND:**

Idaho's Career Information System (CIS) provides current and accurate occupational, educational and related career information to help Idaho citizens understand the link between educational preparation and work, explore education and career alternatives, and successfully seek work. The CIS system uses information from several sources to provide a comprehensive picture of all these activities. The Idaho Department of Labor, which administers CIS, seeks to incorporate State Longitudinal Data System information from the Department of Education into a new career information system to enhance the information available to users, providing a more robust offering of options and opportunities.

The first step in developing this enhanced tool hinges on completing a user needs assessment in order to accurately develop system and user requirements. Principal survey targets will be students from grades 8-12 and job seekers. Secondary targets include parents, teachers, counselors, career consultants

**Project Scope**

To ensure the enhanced tool contains features that will be used rather than features which fit technology, the over-arching methodology will be to involve students, parents, educators, job seekers and career consultants and formulate the system and user requirements from consultation.

The project will incorporate research phases including one-on-one interviews and focus groups in order to gain an understanding of underlying opinions and motivations towards education and career exploration among our different user groups. The breakdown is as follows:

- One-to-one interviews
  - One-to-one interviews will focus on the current activities of the user to determine stages and process for their activities. They will also ask about the systems that they use.
  - One-to-one interviews will be scheduled with approximately 3 students, 3 parents, 3 educators, 3 job seekers and 3 career consultants from each of Idaho's six regions.

- Focus Groups
  - Focus groups will be structured to check the validity of the ideas that emerged from the one-to-one sessions. They will also set some challenges to attendees in order to identify the 25 topics an end user might need to use on a day to day basis.
- Online Survey
  - Survey goals will include prioritization of user requirements; testing the completeness of the requirements found through the one-to-one and focus group sessions; and confirmation that these requirements were applicable to the wide community.

Along with researching user requirements, system requirements will also be reviewed. Collaboration between the state’s Professional-Technical Education division, Department of Labor and Ptech, a north Idaho charter school focused on technology, will allow for the testing and reviewing of several popular career systems on the market to better understand available technology.

**Deliverables**

- A final report from the user research conducted across the state outlining specific requirements as stated from our user groups at each of the discovery phases.
- A final listing of system requirements based on reviewing the career information systems. This will be combined with user requirements and incorporated into a request for proposal.
- Recommendations on improvements to the current CIS in the areas of functionality and branding.

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