



PWA

PORTLAND WORKFORCE ALLIANCE

PORTLANDWORKFORCEALLIANCE.ORG

P.O. BOX 14337

PORTLAND, OR 97293

March 9, 2020

Message to our partners: NW Youth Careers Expo and PWA Breakfast canceled

Dear employers, educators, volunteers and postsecondary partners,

Given the rapid escalation of the coronavirus outbreak and the emerging recommendations on social distancing within schools, the Portland Workforce Alliance has made the difficult decision to cancel the 16th annual NW Youth Careers Expo and its sister event, the PWA Expo Breakfast.

Both were scheduled for Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at the Oregon Convention Center. These events involve nearly a year of planning, and reflect the shared efforts of scores of volunteers, employers and educators.

“We are heartbroken,” said PWA Board President Anna Yates of Swift. “The Careers Expo is a unique community event and the breakfast is a celebration of so many partnerships.”

Early in the coronavirus outbreak, PWA committed to joining its school district partners in following county and state health guidelines around community gatherings. These guidelines have focused primarily on prevention measures.

On Sunday, the Oregon Health Authority issued new recommendations, advising that schools consider additional measures around social distancing, such as staggering lunch and recess to limit interactions between groups. The health authority also issued stricter precautions for people at risk, including older adults and those with underlying health conditions.

These recommendations, as well as direct advice on Sunday evening from the Multnomah County Health Department and the Oregon Health Authority, drive this conclusion: Community safety is our highest priority, and the Tuesday event can’t continue at this time, even in a scaled-down version with limited school participation, given the range of employers and postsecondary partners participating from multiple counties.

We will follow up soon with additional information and seek your input about moving forward. Until then, thank you so much for supporting high school students and our future workforce.

If you have immediate questions, please contact event coordinator Erin Jaso Longfellow at expo@portlandworkforcealliance.org or Executive Director Susan Nielsen at susan@portlandworkforcealliance.org.

Thank you,

Your team at Portland Workforce Alliance