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Boeing puts Strickland's plan to work

Students allowed to train while taking classes

By AMY PICARD
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NEWARK — Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland on Thursday found what might be a key component to the idea behind his economic stimulus package that already is in place at Boeing.

The \$1.57 billion package he signed in June, which Strickland hopes will create jobs in the

short term and expand the "intellectual and physical infrastructure in our state" in the long term, will devote \$50 million per year for five years to internship programs in order to introduce Ohioans to the work force while they still are in school.

But Michael Emmelhainz, center director for

the Guidance Repair Center at Boeing, said the company already has begun work with the Newark campus of Ohio State University and the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County to recruit talented students and set up training programs to use their talents while they still are in school.

Emmelhainz said they are beginning to hire the first group of students who have been trained by the program.

This is key, Strickland said.

"I believe in Ohio education there are too many young people who leave us and look elsewhere to find

See Strickland/8A



During a tour of Boeing Thursday, Gov. Ted Strickland takes a look at a mirror that is part of Virtual Customer Integration Laboratory, which projects 2D images to make a 3D model in the center of a room. (Morgan Wonorski, *The Advocate*)

Strickland

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jobs or build their careers," Strickland said.

By connecting them to the local economy, he hopes to keep them in Ohio.

Emmelhainz said more advantages would be made possible through the program.

"Investment in the higher-education work force obviously is a huge benefit for us," he said.

The package also invests millions into local infrastructure, including sewer, water, roads and bridges, cleaning up brownfields and toxic areas for redevelopment, historic preservation tax credits and local industry, including the bio-medical industry and logistics and distribution.

But Strickland impressed many of the local officials most when he talked about the creativity that is an integral part of the educational system in the United States.

"What we have in our country that a lot of countries want to emulate, and what I am afraid we are squeezing out, is creativity and innovation," he said.

"A fear that I have is we are so concerned about accountability, and accountability is important, ... (but) we can become so content focused we start producing people who have factual knowledge, but we have

squeezed the ability to be creative and innovative out of our system," he said.

Although the United States might have fewer engineers, they are problem-solvers, he said.

Strickland said he had spent the morning speaking with CEOs of high-powered corporations trying to convince them and was pleased that local and Boeing officials recognized that aspect of education.

Strickland also was shown an on-site virtual manufacturing center, which allows interns and employees to create 3D animation to analyze new and existing products.

In the center, Strickland was shown a commercial for prompt global strike, technology that has the potential to allow constant and immediate updates by means of satellite in times of crisis.

Information such as weapon inventory status, battlespace information, potential threats, data to be relayed to missiles and battle damage could be shared with individuals who need the information throughout the world.

"I understand it thoroughly," Strickland said afterward. "That's a joke, but I'm glad there are people who understand this technology and have

the skill to do the work."

He said expanding Ohio companies and allowing companies such as Boeing to thrive is the key to a bright economic future.

"I think that can only happen when you have the skilled work force, and (you have to) have a system of education that is adequate to the need. Up until now, we did not have a system of higher education. Each of these fine institutions were pretty much operating as separate entities."

To create a cooperation, Strickland said having a vision for education, instead of pointing out the faults, will be necessary.

"The business community recognizes their success is due to the successes in education," he said.

Emmelhainz said Boeing's rate of attrition is 5.8 percent, and the company is looking to hire 24 people into aerospace technician, industrial, mechanical, electrical and aerospace engineering and financial analyst positions.

Emmelhainz said Boeing adds more economic value in Ohio than any other state with the exception of California.

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