

One Stop center is moving to a new location

By John Dickey
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Some changes are afoot at the One Stop Career Center. Locally, the biggest change at Yuba City's One Stop Career Center is a move from 800 Plumas St. to 256 Wilbur Ave., where services will be consolidated. Feather River Academy is leaving to take over its new campus, making space for the One-Stop Center.

"This is a good location for the population we serve as Town Center moves this way," said Bob Ginther, assistant superintendent with the Career Training and Education Center.

But legislators in Washington also have their plans for the center. New legislation is being considered that would revamp workforce training including the One-Stop Center.

Moving will begin next week and should be finished by April 8.

The center's new quarters on Wilbur Avenue total 4,600 square feet – a little smaller than the 5,200-square-foot Plumas Street office but enough to do the job, said Joe D'Andrea, director of the Career Training and Education Center, a program run by the Sutter County Superintendent of Schools office that includes the One Stop Career Center.

"(It's) a little bit less but not enough to cause problems," D'Andrea said. "There'll be plenty of room."

The move may be the first of many changes at the center depending on what happens in Washington, D.C.

Congress is considering new legislation that would change the center's emphasis. Ginther said the push may be to provide fewer services to businesses with more of a focus on job seekers. It's part of a reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act.

Versions of the bills include a personal re-employment account that would allocate training money to people who are about to run out of unemployment, and a requirement to put members of faith-based organizations on local Workforce Investment Boards.

The new act was touted as a sweeping reform of the nation's job training system in a March 4 speech by Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training Emily Stover DeRocco. The centerpiece of the reform is the

consolidation of the four major Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser funding streams into a single job-training grant. Governors would get the option to include an additional five related programs into that single grant.

DeRocco said the new system would be more flexible and locally customized, would allow governors to move resources toward regional needs, and help mayors and commissioners preserve jobs.

A shift away from employers would represent a shift in emphasis for the local center. Only a year ago, the center announced that it would offer more services to businesses. Since then, the center has offered training in popular management techniques, teaching employees on how to deal with change and how to provide good customer service. Other services include employee handbook development, labor law education, and of course, providing employees top businesses.

Ginther, who is retiring April 15 to pursue a career in private sector consulting, said more and more employers are coming to the center for recruiting. A General Accounting Office study supports that, finding that 50 percent of employers use One Stop Career Centers.

"We've seen a steady increase," Ginther said. "More and more employers are coming to us to assist them," Ginther said.

The local One Stop Career Center served 24,000 "walk-in" clients during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2004.

While demand is growing, the center's budget has been cut 40 percent over the past two years, Ginther said.

The center will "max out" its ability to serve people at some point if it tries to serve more people with fewer dollars. But so far that has not been a problem, Ginther said.