



**November 19, 2025 | 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Meeting No. 279**

**Location:** 128 10<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Olympia, WA, 98501, Floor 2

*Please call (360) 709-4600 upon arrival for access — the lobby is locked.*

Remote access: Please register for a unique link [here](#).

<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Call to Order</b> Welcome and introductions	
<b>9:05 a.m.</b>	<b>Chairs Report (ACTION)</b> Consent Agenda Minutes from October 7, 2025, Board Meeting 2026 Board Retreat Dates Executive Director's Report	<b>Tab 1</b>
<b>9:20 a.m.</b>	<b>Governor's Office Update</b> Nathan Bays, Office of Governor Ferguson	<b>Tab 2</b>
<b>9:50 a.m.</b>	<b>Research Spotlight: Employer Survey</b> Coral Garey, Workforce Board Maddy Thompson, Workforce Board	<b>Tab 3</b>
<b>10:50 a.m.</b>	<b>Break</b>	
<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>TAP Chapters: Economic and Workforce Development Analysis (Potential ACTION)</b> Dave Wallace, Workforce Board Coral Garey, Workforce Board	<b>Tab 4</b>
<b>11:30 a.m.</b>	<b>TAP Implementation Workplan</b> Emily Persky, Workforce Board	<b>Tab 5</b>
<b>12:20 p.m.</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Workforce Partner Briefing (Part 4)</b> Rachel McAloon, Department of Labor and Industries Liz Smith, Department of Labor and Industries Caitlyn Jekel, Department of Labor and Industries Kristen Goodge, Department of Labor and Industries Reed Simock, Department of Labor and Industries	<b>Tab 6</b>
<b>2:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Break</b>	

PLEASE NOTE: Times above are estimates only. The Workforce Board reserves the right to alter the order and content of the agenda. For information regarding testimony, handouts, other questions, or for people needing special accommodation, please contact Bianca Laxton at [bianca.laxton@wtb.wa.gov](mailto:bianca.laxton@wtb.wa.gov).

- 2:15 p.m. TAP Workforce System Legislative Agenda (Potential ACTION) Tab 7**  
Nova Gattman, Workforce Board
- 3:00 p.m. Workforce Board Industry Leads Presentation Tab 8**  
Renee Fullerton, Workforce Board, Health Workforce Council  
Ilene Munk, Workforce Board, Clean Energy Technology Workforce Advisory Committee  
Donald Smith, Workforce Board, Long-Term Care Workforce Collaborative
- 4:00 p.m. Adjourn**

# Tab 1

## Consent Agenda

**PRESENTED BY:** Workforce Board Co-chairs Cherika Carter and Gary Chandler

**CHECK ONE:**

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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**SUMMARY:**

The consent agenda enables the Board to approve items listed below together without discussion or individual motions. If any Board member believes an item does not belong on the consent agenda, they may at any time request the item be removed and considered for an individual discussion and vote at a later time, at the discretion of the Co-chair(s).

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**BACKGROUND:**

This consent agenda includes:

- Minutes from the October 7, 2025, Board meeting.
- 2026 Board Retreat dates.

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**STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:**

Without dissent, the consent agenda items will be approved as drafted.



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**MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 278**  
**October 7, 2025**

**Board Members Present:**

Gary Chandler, Co-Chair (remote)  
Cherika Carter for Larry Brown, Co-Chair (in-person)  
Wade Larson, Representing Business (remote)  
June Altaras, Representing Business (remote)  
Jane Hopkins, Representing Labor (in-person)  
Todd Mitchell, Representing Labor (in-person)  
Emmanuel Flores for Cherika Carter, Representing Labor (in-person)  
Commissioner Cami Feek, Employment Security Department (ESD) (in-person)  
Kairie Pierce for Director Joe Nguyễn, Department of Commerce (in-person)  
Dana Phelps for Secretary Angela Ramirez, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) (in-person)  
Becky Wallace for Superintendent Chris Reykdal, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) (in-person)  
Will Durden for Nate Humphrey, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) (in-person)  
Mark Mattke, Spokane Workforce Council, Representing Local Elected Officials (in-person)

**Call to Order**

Acting co-chair Cherika Carter, Secretary Treasurer, Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. The meeting was a hybrid meeting using Zoom for remote attendees. In-person attendees convened at the Workforce Board office at 128 10<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Olympia, in the new Board room on the second floor.

Bianca Laxton, Board Secretary, conducted roll call. Quorum was established.

**MOTION-2025-278-01**

A motion was made by Todd Mitchell to approve the consent agenda with the edits to the August meeting minutes to correct Jane Hopkins' title to representing labor. Cami Feek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Carter turned the meeting over to Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director of the Workforce Board to discuss the public comment on two federal proposals: [Request for Information; Feedback on Redesigning the Institute of Education Sciences \(IES\)](#) and [Proposed Priority and Definitions- Secretary's Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Career Pathways and Workforce](#). Papadakis

discussed how the two recent federal proposals could affect Washington's workforce system and emphasized the short turnaround time for submitting comments.

The first proposal involves a redesign of the Institute of Education Sciences, a data division within the U.S. Department of Education that funds the state's Education Research and Data Center under the Office of Financial Management. Papadakis reported that this division also supports the workforce data quality initiative and related projects and noted public comments are due on Oct. 15.

The second proposal is tied to a joint workforce development report from the U.S. departments of Education, Commerce, and Labor, known as *America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age*. Papadakis explained that this report closely aligns with Washington's Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP) strategic workplan and that future grant funding will be evaluated against Golden Age priorities. She noted that the Board may submit feedback by Oct. 27. Commissioner Feek asked whether the Board had previously commented on federal proposals. Papadakis confirmed they had, but typically with more time for stakeholder engagement. She added that recent proposals have required faster responses and encouraged agencies to share information about relevant national initiatives, including contacts who could assist with analysis or feedback. Papadakis asked that such information be sent to her and Board Secretary Laxton.

### **TAP Phase 2 Implementation Work Plan**

Emily Persky, Workforce Board TAP Implementation and Advocacy Manager, led Board members in finalizing the 2026 TAP objectives. Persky shared a quick reminder of where the Board meeting ended on Sept. 18. Board members left the September meeting with the following TAP priorities moving forward, with the understanding that some would merge with the proposal presented on Oct. 7:

- 1) System Resilience
- 2) Industry and Youth (tied)
- 3) Credentialing
- 4) System Integration
- 5) Performance Accountability
- 6) Job Quality

Persky proposed implementation and administrative objectives, noting alignment with TAP priorities and the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) five pillars. The outline also included estimates of work effort and proposed next steps. She framed the work into two high-level categories — implementation work (focused on building system resilience and advancing TAP priorities) and required administrative work. She also described a crosswalk showing overlap between the Board's priorities and DOL strategic priorities. Discussion was held on narrowing the Board's focus to a smaller set of high-impact priorities, rather than advancing all items at once. It was decided to reframe and remove the advocacy objective. The Board also narrowed the scope for the objective to create feedback loops between service integration and

performance, clarifying that partners would conduct and share operational root cause analyses as well as best practices. Maintaining visibility and performance tracking was noted as essential when revising key objectives. Members requested more details about roles, and staff committed to adding a section that defines roles for the board, agencies, and partners to clarify their respective contributions and responsibilities.

Persky led a continued discussion about revisions to the phase two work plan. She began by reviewing changes, including removing "advocacy" and clarifying scope for the service integration and performance review mechanisms, as well as timelines and scope for data system integration. Discussion centered around shared accountability, resource allocation, and agency capacity. Ultimately, the Board voted to approve four implementation objectives with edits noted on the screen. Members directed Persky to produce a more detailed, articulated work plan that clarified responsibilities, deliverables, and timelines at the November 19 Board meeting. There was broad agreement that the plan should explicitly state shared ownership and accountability across agencies, with flexibility to adapt as priorities and resources evolve.

Persky concluded her presentation with a consensus to proceed with developing the detailed work plan using the four agreed-upon focus objectives:

1. Implement Workforce Pell,
2. Implement No Wrong Door and prepare for implementation of HR1 work requirements,
3. Connect service integration with performance (strategic feedback loops)
4. Deliver cross-industry, demand-driven recommendations)

Persky affirmed that the plan would remain agile, allowing adjustments as circumstances change, recognizing this as an iterative framework rather than a final, static document.

#### **MOTION-2025-278-02**

Commissioner Feek made a motion, stating we adopt the four objectives that we agreed to today, that Workforce Board staff build out a work plan in detail around those four objectives and we consistently review the workplan at regularly scheduled board meetings. Emmanuel Flores seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Workforce Agency Budget Requests Consistent with TAP**

Nova Gattman, Workforce Board Deputy Executive Director, provided an update on the Board's statutory responsibility to review state agency budget requests for alignment with the TAP plan. She explained the task team developed a rubric to help agencies conduct self-assessments of their budget requests, ensuring they align with TAP goals and strategies. Despite a shorter list this year, all agencies responded to requests for the review process. The task team confirmed which proposals were consistent with TAP, and Gattman proposed transmitting the 13 aligned requests to the Governor's Office and Legislature.

Gattman emphasized this review represents the first step toward creating a narrower list of legislative priorities, which the Board will finalize at the Nov. 19 meeting. Over the coming

weeks, she plans to meet with the business and labor caucuses to identify additional legislative priorities, as well as another outreach to the agencies, ensuring alignment and consensus across all partners. Gattman recommended reengaging the task team to evaluate agency, business, and labor proposals and to develop recommendations for inclusion of the most impactful items on the Board's legislative agenda. This approach, modeled on the Board's endorsement committee process, would require consensus among business, labor, and government representatives before proposals advance to the full Board.

Board members discussed ensuring alignment between the legislative agenda and TAP priorities, acknowledging that while non-endorsed proposals might still proceed independently, shared understanding across partners remains critical.

### **MOTION-2025-278-03**

Dana Phelps made a motion to solicit the legislative priorities from business and labor partners, convene the task team to review for consistency between the caucuses, and make recommendations to the Board on the ones that are most impactful to TAP for inclusion on the legislative agenda. Jane Hopkins seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **Workforce Partner Briefing (Part 3)**

Kairie Pierce, Workforce Innovation Sector Lead, Julia Rowland, WorkFirst Program Manager, and John Demboski, Managing Director for the Multifamily Housing Unit at the Department of Commerce (Commerce), provided a presentation on direct Commerce activities and their strategic alignment with the TAP Plan. Pierce discussed key Commerce programs related to workforce development, community services, and housing.

Rowland continued the presentation with an overview of the WorkFirst program, Washington's implementation of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), which supports adults and families in gaining employment through work training, subsidized employment, and intensive case management. Commerce partners with DSHS, ESD, and SBCTC to help participants overcome employment barriers, providing tailored assistance such as car repair, clothing, tools, and hygiene items. Rowland noted the program places participants with employers to build skills, gain experience, and increase economic mobility — benefiting both individuals and local businesses. Between July 2024 and June 2025, over 2,000 people received services, with more than 1,400 gaining work experience.

Rowland provided details on Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which fund small, rural jurisdictions for local economic development, microenterprise assistance, and affordable housing infrastructure, and Community Services Block Grants (CSBG), which supported over 600,000 Washingtonians in 2024 through job training, income growth, eviction prevention, education, and leadership skill development.

Demboski discussed Commerce's affordable housing initiatives, explaining how stable housing underpins workforce participation. The legislature appropriated over \$600 million for affordable

housing during the 2025–27 biennium, with \$212 million currently open for multifamily housing projects. Demboski emphasized the challenge of income eligibility — urban areas often have units too costly for low-wage workers, while rural areas may exclude workers slightly above the 80% area median income threshold. Demboski shared Commerce is also expanding technical assistance for BIPOC, rural, and tribal organizations and launching initiatives for recovery residences to support individuals reentering the workforce.

Pierce closed by highlighting Commerce’s broad portfolio, including broadband expansion, energy programs, and economic development. She noted that federal funds comprise about 19% (\$1.8 billion) of Commerce’s \$9.2 billion budget for 2021–25, meaning federal shifts could significantly impact services.

Below are links from Demboski’s presentation:

- [Multifamily Rental Housing – Washington State Department of Commerce](#)
- [Funding Opportunities for Multifamily Rental Housing – Washington State Department of Commerce](#)
- [Capacity Building, Outreach and Support Program \(CBOS\) – Washington State Department of Commerce](#)

### **TAP Spotlight: System Integration Landscape Analysis**

Liz Gallagher, Workforce Board staff, presented a landscape analysis with insights from frontline staff interviews. Gallagher shared the findings from her six-month qualitative study on system integration across Washington’s workforce programs. Gallagher conducted 135 interviews between April and October with frontline staff and supervisors across Washington. She noted the study built on a 2018 analysis by Community Attributes Inc. but expanded it to include staff capacity, cross-agency coordination, and updated questions reflecting post-Covid workforce realities and funding changes. The goal was to establish a new baseline of how integration functions from the ground up and to identify gaps and creative innovations that could inform future data-driven decision-making.

Interviewees represented a diverse cross-section of agencies. About 40% came from local workforce boards or Title IB service providers, 22% from Employment Security Department, and 20% from the Department of Social and Health Services. Participants described a workforce system hampered by fragmented data, intake, and referral systems, often requiring job seekers to repeatedly provide the same information to multiple case managers. Staff relied heavily on informal, relationship-based communication, including emails, calls, or personal referrals, because no universal referral or data sharing system existed. Gallagher emphasized that implementing a shared database or integrated referral platform could dramatically improve efficiency and service coordination.

High caseloads and turnover emerged as another major theme. Many staff reported burnout driven by complex compliance rules, inconsistent funding, and stagnant pay. Turnover disrupted coordination and strained remaining workers, who often inherited additional cases. Some

regions, particularly west of the Cascades, faced more acute churn due to competitive labor markets. The resulting loss of institutional knowledge weakened informal referral pathways and further fragmented service delivery. Gallagher discussed possible innovations such as shared or team-based case management models to distribute workload and maintain service continuity.

Despite these systemic challenges, Gallagher noted strong examples of innovation and resilience. Frontline staff frequently developed creative solutions to enhance integration, such as warm handoffs—personally introducing job seekers to other program staff—which improved trust and successful enrollment. Several regions implemented digital referral tools, including Spokane’s JotForm, Northwest and Olympic’s Cognito, and South Central’s Link Project. Pierce County’s 211 Common Referral System stood out for its broad adoption across agencies and use of memoranda of understanding to ensure follow-through, although none of the tools yet measure whether referrals lead to actual enrollments.

Gallagher shared South Central demonstrated effective cross-training and onboarding practices. New employees complete short, recorded trainings and use one-page “desk aids” summarizing program eligibility and services, ensuring that referrals are informed and accurate. Regular meetings and refresher training sustain collaboration and awareness among partner programs. Gallagher highlighted that where strong workplace culture and relationships existed supported by intentional communication, leadership buy-in, and shared goals—system integration appeared to be markedly more successful.

Gallagher focused on next steps for improving coordination and feedback within Washington’s workforce system, starting with the WIOA Title programs. She outlined plans to create or work with current advisory groups that maintain strong connections between the state and local levels, ensuring regular feedback from frontline staff. The need to broaden participation to include all WIOA partners and community representatives was also acknowledged.

Gallagher shared that she is finalizing a detailed report analyzing referral tools, caseload data, and workforce program performance, which will be reviewed by partners later in the month. The conversation also highlighted the importance of controlling for population differences when comparing performance outcomes, avoiding duplication of work, and capturing more of the system’s real activity.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.



**Proposed Board Retreat Dates for 2026**  
**November 19, 2025**

**2026:**

- **Board Retreat:** Monday, May 11 – Tuesday, May 12 – location to be determined.



**Executive Director Report  
Board Meeting No. 279  
November 19, 2025**

**Workforce News: Research Spotlight**

Many Washington employers face significant workforce challenges, a new Workforce Board survey shows, including not enough qualified applicants for open jobs, high turnover and lack of soft skills. The report also includes ideas to address these challenges.

The Workforce Board's [Employer Needs and Practices Survey](#) shows employers have difficulty hiring for openings at all levels of their organization. Notably, some employers have turned down business opportunities, outsourced work or turned to automation in response.

"Employers continue to face widespread challenges in meeting their workforce needs, especially in recruiting skilled workers," the survey's executive summary reads. [Learn more.](#)

**New Site Shares Resources During Federal Shutdown**

The Workforce Board has launched a new web page with the latest updates and resources related to the ongoing federal government shutdown. Crafted for workforce professionals, the page includes online maps for food banks; information for furloughed or laid off workers; consumer information and the latest updates on food benefits from the Washington Department of Social and Health Services. Read more: <https://wtb.wa.gov/federal-shutdown-resources>.

**Long-Term Care (LTC) workforce**

The Workforce Board continues its engagement with the National Center on Aging and the Direct Care Workforce Strategy Center to provide subject matter expertise on the expansion of Washington's existing workforce development collaboration. The workplan submitted by the state's collaborative continues to develop, aided by contributions from local, state and national partners.

The newly organized Leadership Council and research collaborative have been convened to support the effort. The Leadership Council has adopted a charter while the research collaborative develops plans to support the LTC Collaborative through novel research projects and evaluation of existing programs. Two independent reports detailing the creation of the Nursing Assistant Certified to Licensed Practical Nurse Apprenticeship have been drafted and

are under review prior to submission to policymakers. Two more reports written in partnership with the Center for Health Workforce Studies at the University of Washington culminate nearly two years of a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the state's long-term care workforce. During the current fall and spring 2026 quarter, a University of Washington Doctor of Nursing Practice student will conduct a research project with Workforce Board guidance. The project will examine the effectiveness of Washington's nurse training programs specific to long-term care.

Finally, the Workforce Board's LTC policy work continues to be represented at the Apprenticeship and Higher Education Coordinating Committee, Dementia Action Collaborative, as well as the Direct Care Workforce Collaborative and Workforce Development and Recruitment Group (Department of Social and Health Services). Agency staff are also working with the Transformation in LTC Workgroup, a meeting of local, national and international professionals focused on innovations that support LTC workforce development.

### **Career Bridge Modernization Project**

Since the new and improved [CareerBridge.wa.gov](https://CareerBridge.wa.gov) successfully launched in August, the updated, mobile friendly site now provides a much more engaging user experience for students, job seekers, and others seeking career and education information. A new dashboard feature allows users to easily save their career and education searches, along with career quiz results, boosting site usability and engagement—especially among younger users. As a free, public-facing tool, we expect site usage to continue to tick upwards in the coming months as more visitors explore Career Bridge's over 6,500 Washington postsecondary programs. Already, site traffic has reached 120,000 monthly page views!

Following this initial launch, Phase 2 and Phase 3 rollouts in the coming months will provide additional enhancements through June 2026. Among these anticipated updates is a collaborative digital portfolio feature that will enable high school counselors and career counselors at WorkSource to work more closely with students and job seekers on education and career planning. The 2025 Legislature provided \$475,000 for this and other "finish line" work, including tech improvements that will lead to a streamlined flow of real-time data between Career Bridge and other platforms, including the agency's private career school licensing platform, EDvera.

Workforce Board Director of Workforce System Advancement Marina Parr is scheduled to provide a presentation on the "new and improved" Career Bridge to the Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee on Dec. 4. The committee meets from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Catch it on TVW!

### **Health Workforce Council**

On Nov. 4 the SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Multi-Employer Training Fund and Allied Health Center of Excellence hosted the Behavioral Health Career Pathways Convening. The event featured updates from government partners, inspiring content about the substance use disorder

professional apprenticeship, workforce innovations from across the state, information about new professions, and work to smooth career ladders in behavioral health.

Board staff presented as part of a panel with state Health Care Authority, Washington Student Achievement Council, and Department of Health colleagues about regulatory and policy changes at the state and federal level. While the federal changes from HR 1 will have a tremendous impact on Washington, there is a great deal of improvement and change possible at the state level. Washington recently released the [Washington Thriving Strategic Plan](#), developed with support from Board staff. The state can simplify entry and advancement in the workforce as part of creating a behavioral health system that centers those needing services and supports workers. Board staff will continue to co-lead the Workforce and Rates subgroup of the Health Care Authority's Children and Youth Behavioral Health Work Group.

### **Clean Energy Technology Workforce Advisory Committee (CETWAC)**

The biennial CETWAC report has been assembled using research from advisory committee partners including the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), state building trades, Employment Security Department, the departments of Commerce and Ecology, Career Connect Washington and the Workforce Board. This report is required by the Climate Ready Communities legislation, SHB 1176.

The report includes a feasibility study of a transition to retirement program to preserve income, medical and retirement benefits for workers close to retirement who face job loss or transition because of changes in the energy technology sector.

The report also includes other research including an evaluation of labor market trends, current and projected workforce demand in both traditional and clean energy professions, and an analysis of wages and benefits for clean energy sector jobs. It also includes an analysis of additional workforce development needs.

The report is rich with data and includes three main recommendations:

1. Strengthen registered apprenticeships and career and technical education for clean energy sector jobs. This includes support for childcare and other wraparound services.
2. Expand employment opportunities through supporting clean energy project acceleration.
3. Advance equity in clean energy workforce development for underrepresented groups.

The committee met on Nov. 6 to review the recommendations from the group and discuss next steps. The final report will be released by the end of the year.

## **Perkins V Program**

### **2026-27 Perkins State Plan and State Determined Performance Levels**

The Perkins interagency group, which consists of Workforce Board, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and SBCTC staff, have determined that no substantive changes will be made to the Perkins state plan this cycle. As statutorily mandated, Washington will be setting its annually updated state determined performance levels (SDPLs) that will be submitted along with the combined state plan update on the U.S. Department of Labor portal in March. The Board will have an opportunity to review and approve the SDPLs at the February board meeting, after they have gone through a 30-day public comment period as federally required.

### **Recent Federal Developments Impacting Perkins V**

Workforce Board staff are actively monitoring multiple recent federal changes impacting Perkins V and will continue to provide updates to the Board and interagency partners as new developments arise and/or when formal guidance is received. As of early November 2025, the government shutdown has not affected drawdowns for the Perkins V formula grants.

### **Perkins V Oversight Transfer to Department of Labor – November 2025**

In July 2025, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) began transferring administration of the Perkins V program to the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration. ED retains policy authority, while DOL now handles grant management and compliance to better align career and technical education with the workforce system.

By fall, ED and DOL launched a joint state-plan portal and shifted grantees to DOL's Payment Management System, but the transition has been uneven—payment delays and unclear guidance have caused confusion. As of November 2025, states are still adapting to new systems and communication channels. Further federal guidance is expected to clarify agency roles and stabilize funding.

### **New Federal Guidance on Public Benefit Access – November 2025**

In July 2025, the U.S. Department of Education reinterpreted the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) to classify Perkins V, WIOA Title II, and related CTE programs as "federal public benefits," requiring verification of participants' immigration status. A federal court injunction in September paused enforcement in several states, including Washington, but no nationwide ruling has been issued. Since then, no new federal guidance or rule changes have clarified how states should proceed, leaving implementation uncertain. Board staff are working with the Attorney General's office to monitor upcoming court decisions that would impact implementation and enforcement in Washington.

## **Conference updates**

### **WACTA Conference Presentation: Connecting High School CTE and WorkSource**

Workforce Policy Associate Liz Gallagher presented jointly with Workforce Southwest Washington at the Washington Association for Career and Technical Administrators (WACTA) conference, held at the Ilani Resort and Casino in Ridgefield. The session, *Leveraging WorkSource to Support CTE Pathways*, showcased how the state's workforce development system can partner with career and technical education (CTE) programs to strengthen youth transitions from high school to employment or postsecondary training.

The presentation highlighted the role of local workforce development boards in operating WorkSource centers, aligning services with local labor market needs, and supporting youth, adults, and dislocated workers in overcoming employment barriers. It also provided practical examples of how CTE directors can collaborate with local boards and WorkSource centers, such as co-hosting career fairs, integrating classroom orientations, and creating referral pipelines for students.

This joint effort supports ongoing Workforce Board priorities around youth engagement, cross-system integration, and awareness of WorkSource services among education partners statewide.

### **Association of Washington Business Energy Summit**

Ilene Munk, Clean Energy Technology Workforce Policy Manager, attended the Association of Washington Business Energy Summit on Oct. 30 in Seattle. The summit was an opportunity to understand the gravity of the energy generation, transmission and distribution needs in the Pacific Northwest.

The association also shared survey results from Washingtonians that support workforce development and job creation, including:

- 93% of respondents thought exposing teens to more career paths, including through work experience before high school graduation, was important.
- 90% believe creating enough jobs that allow people to afford to buy homes in their communities was important.
- 89% valued enhancing, growing and increasing access to education or training programs that prepare workers for high-skill, high-demand jobs.
- 88% felt it was important to increase the number of students who graduate from college, trade school, apprenticeships or other professional credential programs.
- 88% of the respondents think prioritizing education funding for high-skill, high demand jobs such as nursing, cybersecurity and trades is important.

# Tab 2

## Federal Policy Update

**PRESENTED BY:** Nathan Bays, Office of Governor Bob Ferguson

**CHECK ONE:**

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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**SUMMARY:**

Nathan Bays, Deputy Policy Director, Federal Policy, Office of Governor Bob Ferguson, will discuss the most recent changes to the federal landscape and impacts from the federal government shutdown.

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**BACKGROUND:**

Recent changes at the federal level will continue to impact our communities, partners, and agencies. As the Board continues its review and modification of the state's strategic workforce plan, Talent and Prosperity for All, this discussion will provide the latest information on the decision-making process and include opportunities for questions from Board members.

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**STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:**

Discussion only.

# Tab 3

## Research Spotlight: Employer Survey

**PRESENTED BY:** Coral Garey, Maddy Thompson, Workforce Board

**CHECK ONE:**

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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**SUMMARY:**

Coral Garey and Maddy Thompson, Workforce Board, will present an interactive overview of results that were compiled from the [Employer Needs and Practices Survey](#).

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**BACKGROUND:**

The Workforce Board surveys employers to assess their workforce needs and practices. The survey gathers information about hiring practices, workforce challenges, the difficulty employers have in hiring and finding qualified applicants, and employer awareness and engagement with the state workforce system.

The results are used to evaluate the difficulty employers have in finding qualified applicants, identify successful strategies used to find qualified applicants, develop a broader understanding of employer's workforce challenges and concerns and assess employer engagement with Washington's workforce system. Identifying employer workforce needs is a critical step in employer engagement.

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**STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:**

Information and discussion only. Staff will offer time for the Board to ask questions.

# EMPLOYER NEEDS & PRACTICES SURVEY



Thank you for participating in the [Employer Needs and Practices Survey](#) for the Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. Your responses will help shape employee training programs and education policies in your local area and statewide.

This survey should be completed by a [manager or supervisor involved in hiring](#) decisions at this location and should take just 10 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses are confidential. Results will be summarized so that no one employer can ever be identified.

For each question, please choose your response based on your hiring experiences. Even if you have not hired for any positions in the past 12 months, it is important to the Washington Workforce Board that you please follow the instructions and return the survey by mail in the enclosed postage paid envelope today.

**Q1. How many employees do you estimate your organization has at this location including both full-time and part-time?**

Number of Employees: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q2. How would you describe your experience filling positions within your organization at your location?**

- ① More difficult than last year
- ② About the same as last year
- ③ Easier than last year
- ④ N/A - No workers hired in the past 12 months

**Q3. For 2024, how do you expect total employment for your organization at this location to change?**

- ① Decrease
- ② Remain about the same
- ③ Increase

**Q4. Which of the following benefits do you provide to any of your employees?**

*Please mark your response for each row.*

	Yes	No
Sick leave	①	②
Paid leave other than sick leave	①	②
Health insurance	①	②
Contribution to pension/retirement	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Q5. How does your organization advance the skills of your employees?**

*Please mark your response for each row.*

	Yes	No
Informal on-the-job training	①	②
Training exclusive to your organization	①	②
Training through a college or vendor	①	②
Seminars or conferences	①	②
Self-study	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Q6. Who do you use to conduct professional development or training?**

*Please mark your response for each row.*

	Yes	No
In-house corporate staff	①	②
Private sector vendors	①	②
WorkSource offices	①	②
Apprenticeship programs	①	②
Community and Technical College programs	①	②
4-year universities and colleges	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Next we would like to ask about your staffing/hiring across three different experience levels:**

Entry-Level Employees: Those with one year of experience, or less.

Mid-Level Employees: Those with more than one year of experience, but less than five years.

Senior-Level Employees: Those with more than five years of experience.

**Recruiting Entry-Level Employees: *Those with one year of experience, or less***

**Q7. Did your organization have any entry-level job-openings in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes → Continue with Q8
- ② No → Skip to Q12 on the next page

**Q8. Did your organization hire any entry-level employees in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes
- ② No

**Q9. Did your organization have any difficulty filling entry-level positions in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes → Continue with Q10
- ② No → Skip to Q11 on the next page

**Q10. What do you think were some of the reasons that made it difficult to fill entry-level positions in the past 12 months? Please mark your response for each row.**

	Yes	No
A low number or no applicants	①	②
Background check issues (criminal records, failure to pass drug screening, etc.), please specify: _____	①	②
Lack of needed education level, certification, or training	①	②
Lack of relevant work experience	①	②
Applicants' desire for remote work, hybrid schedule, unwillingness to come into office	①	②
Geographic issues (commuting distance, lack of transportation, etc.), please specify: _____	①	②
Applicants' unwillingness to accept the offered pay or compensation	①	②
Lack of soft skills (such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, etc.), please specify: _____	①	②
Lack of employability (including work ethic, professionalism, reliability, motivation), please specify: _____	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Please continue on to the next page.**

**Q11. What resources has your organization used in recruiting entry-level employees in the past 12 months?**

Please mark your response for each row.

	Yes	No
Word of mouth	①	②
Internet job boards, such as CareerBuilder, Craigslist, Indeed, or Monster.com	①	②
Company job boards	①	②
Social networking websites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter	①	②
Local newspaper advertisements	①	②
WorkSourceWa.com	①	②
Screened candidate referrals from WorkSource offices	①	②
Working with private career or vocational schools	①	②
Working with high school career and technical education programs	①	②
Working with Community or Technical Colleges	①	②
Working with 4-year colleges and universities	①	②
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	①	②
Department of Services for the Blind	①	②
WorkFirst placement services	①	②
Contacting recruiting agency	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Recruiting Mid-Level Employees: Those with more than one year of experience, but less than five**

**Q12. Did your organization have any mid-level job-openings in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes → Continue with Q13
- ② No → Skip to Q17 on page 5

**Q13. Did your organization hire any mid-level employees in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes
- ② No

**Q14. Did your organization have any difficulty filling mid-level positions in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes → Continue with Q15 on the next page
- ② No → Skip to Q16 on page 5

**Q15. What do you think were some of the reasons that made it difficult to fill mid-level positions in the past 12 months?** Please mark your response for each row.

	Yes	No
A low number or no applicants	①	②
Background check issues (criminal records, failure to pass drug screening, etc.), please specify: _____	①	②
Lack of needed education level, certification, or training	①	②
Lack of relevant work experience	①	②
Applicants' desire for remote work, hybrid schedule, unwillingness to come into office	①	②
Geographic issues (commuting distance, lack of transportation, etc.), please specify: _____	①	②
Applicants' unwillingness to accept the offered pay or compensation	①	②
Lack of soft skills (such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, etc.), please specify: _____	①	②
Lack of employability (including work ethic, professionalism, reliability, motivation), please specify: _____	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Q16. What resources has your organization used in recruiting mid-level employees in the past 12 months?**

Please mark your response for each row.

	Yes	No
Word of mouth	①	②
Internet job boards, such as CareerBuilder, Craigslist, Indeed, or Monster.com	①	②
Company job boards	①	②
Social networking websites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter	①	②
Local newspaper advertisements	①	②
WorkSourceWa.com	①	②
Screened candidate referrals from WorkSource offices	①	②
Working with private career or vocational schools	①	②
Working with high school career and technical education programs	①	②
Working with Community or Technical Colleges	①	②
Working with 4-year colleges and universities	①	②
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	①	②
Department of Services for the Blind	①	②
WorkFirst placement services	①	②
Contacting recruiting agency	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

## Recruiting Senior-Level Employees: Those with more than five years of experience

**Q17. Did your organization have any senior-level job-openings in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes → Continue with Q18 on the next page
- ② No → Skip to Q22 on page 7

**Q18. Did your organization hire any senior-level employees in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes
- ② No

**Q19. Did your organization have any difficulty filling senior-level positions in the past 12 months?**

- ① Yes → *Continue with Q20*
- ② No → *Skip to Q21 below*

**Q20. What do you think were some of the reasons that made it difficult to fill senior-level positions in the past 12 months? Please mark your response for each row.**

	Yes	No
A low number or no applicants	①	②
Background check issues (criminal records, failure to pass drug screening, etc.), <i>please specify:</i> _____	①	②
Lack of needed education level, certification, or training	①	②
Lack of relevant work experience	①	②
Applicants' desire for remote work, hybrid schedule, unwillingness to come into office	①	②
Geographic issues (commuting distance, lack of transportation, etc.), <i>please specify:</i> _____	①	②
Applicants' unwillingness to accept the offered pay or compensation	①	②
Lack of soft skills (such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, etc.), <i>please specify:</i> _____	①	②
Lack of employability (including work ethic, professionalism, reliability, motivation), <i>please specify:</i> _____	①	②
Other, <i>please specify:</i> _____	①	②

**Q21. What resources has your organization used in recruiting senior-level employees in the past 12 months?**

*Please mark your response for each row.*

	Yes	No
Word of mouth	①	②
Internet job boards, such as CareerBuilder, Craigslist, Indeed, or Monster.com	①	②
Company job boards	①	②
Social networking websites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter	①	②
Local newspaper advertisements	①	②
WorkSourceWa.com	①	②
Screened candidate referrals from WorkSource offices	①	②
Working with private career or vocational schools	①	②
Working with high school career and technical education programs	①	②
Working with Community or Technical Colleges	①	②
Working with 4-year colleges and universities	①	②
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	①	②
Department of Services for the Blind	①	②
WorkFirst placement services	①	②
Contacting recruiting agency	①	②
Other, <i>please specify:</i> _____	①	②

### General Workforce Challenges – State Workforce System Services

In this next section of the survey, we ask about the workforce challenges you may have encountered and more about using the State Workforce System. The “State Workforce System” means employment and training programs that are provided through WorkSource offices, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Services for the Blind, and Community and Technical Colleges across the state - as well as informational and other resources provided by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, the Employment Security Department, and others.

**Q22. What is the biggest workforce challenge for your organization concerning employees in the last 12 months?**

- ① No challenges → Skip to Q24
- ② Finding job candidates
- ③ Turnover and/or attrition
- ④ Replacing retirees
- ⑤ Professional development and training employees
- ⑥ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q23. In response to workforce challenges, has your organization done any of the following?**

Please mark your response for each row.

	Yes	No
Increased training	①	②
Revised pay scale or benefits	①	②
Automated functions	①	②
Used State Workforce System resources	①	②
Used temporary employment services	①	②
Outsourced work/used contract services	①	②
Turned down or did not pursue business opportunities	①	②
Lowered requirements for job	①	②
Increased recruiting efforts	①	②
Increased overtime for existing employees	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Q24. How much did the action(s) taken in response to your biggest workforce challenge help?**

- ① Not at all
- ② Only slightly
- ③ Moderately
- ④ A lot
- ⑤ Unsure
- ⑥ N/A - My organization had no challenges/took no action

**Q25. What State Workforce System resources have you used in the past year?**

Please mark your response for each row.

	Yes	No
Finding and hiring employees	①	②
Accessing training for employees	①	②
Supporting employees with non-skills related barriers, such as transportation, childcare needs, requiring assistive technology, or other accommodations	①	②
Accessing current occupational wage information, and occupational/industry employment forecasts	①	②
Developing workforce practices and policies, such as talent pipeline development and succession planning	①	②
Collaborating with the State Workforce System on Career Connected Learning	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Q26. What were/or would be your reasons for not using State Workforce System resources?**

Please mark your response for each row.

	Yes	No
Resources do not fit the needs of my business or industry	①	②
Job candidates available are not the right fit for my business	①	②
Not worth the time or effort	①	②
The quality of services is not sufficient	①	②
Not aware of these resources	①	②
Other, please specify: _____	①	②

**Q27. Are there any other resources that you think the State Workforce System should offer?**

- ① Yes - please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- ② No

**Q28. Please describe any workforce challenges you had at your location during the COVID-19 pandemic that continue to be challenging for you. If none, please write "none."**

Those are all the questions we have for this survey. Next we'd like to know your organization's satisfaction with certain State Workforce System resources, if applicable. Are you be willing to participate in a follow-up survey?

- ① Yes → Please provide your contact information below
- ② No → Skip to final comments below

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position within your organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Updated mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for completing the survey. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?**

**Please return your completed survey by mail in the enclosed postage paid envelope.**

Please return the survey to:  
Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University  
PO Box 641801  
Pullman, WA 99164-1801



# Tab 4

## **TAP Chapters: Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis**

**PRESENTED BY:** Dave Wallace, Workforce Board

**CHECK ONE:**

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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**SUMMARY:**

Dave Wallace, Director of Research, Workforce Board, will discuss the economic and workforce data updates for the first two chapters of the state's workforce plan, Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP). The outline of the first chapter, some high-level data points and economic impacts, will be covered.

---

**BACKGROUND:**

An updated snapshot of the economic and landscape data is required by statute in the update of the state workforce plan. Board staff will summarize the economic landscape and environmental changes since the TAP plan was last written.

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**STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:**

Possible action by the Board to approve any new content requested for the draft outline and direction for the TAP chapters.

# Tab 5

## TAP Implementation: Phase 2 Workplan

**PRESENTED BY:** Emily Persky, Workforce Board

### CHECK ONE:

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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### SUMMARY:

The Board will approve a description of phase two of TAP implementation, which will include a project management framework and an executive sponsorship model. The Board will select their optimal executive sponsorship model during the discussion. Members may volunteer for sponsor roles at this meeting or in January. The Board's decisions will lay the foundation for a staff work session in December with partner agencies. That session will focus on:

- Developing detailed subplans for each of the Workforce Board's four objectives.
- Gathering aligned partner initiatives for inclusion in the state's required federal update to the WIOA Combined State Plan (due March 2026).

---

### BACKGROUND:

[Talent and Prosperity for All](#) (TAP) is the state's comprehensive strategic workforce development plan and informs the state's WIOA Combined Plan. The Board approved four implementation objectives in October, along with milestones and quarterly activities.

In response to the Board's request for more clarity on roles and partner commitments, staff have developed a project management framework that reflects partner input. It includes proposed:

- Models to assign roles and executive sponsorship options.
- Governance and oversight structures.
- Tools for tracking, communication, and risk/change management.
- A sample partner initiative and a template for subplan content.

---

### STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Provide direction on needed changes and approve a project management framework and executive sponsorship model. These decisions will inform development of the full plan and WIOA plan update. At minimum, the WIOA plan update will be released for public comment in January 2026 and presented to the Board for final approval in February 2026. Latitude is allowed for finalization of the comprehensive state plan by May 31, 2026.

# Tab 6

## Workforce Partner Briefing – Department of Labor & Industries

**PRESENTED BY:** Elizabeth Smith, Deputy Director, Labor and Industries (LNI); Rachel McAloon, Apprenticeship Program Manager (LNI); Caitlyn Jekel, Chief of Return to Work (LNI); Kristen Goodge, Child Labor Lead Agent (LNI); and Reed Simock, Regulatory Analyst (LNI).

**CHECK ONE:**

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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**SUMMARY:**

The discussion will include an overview of workforce-related activities at the Department of Labor and Industries, budget and policy changes at the federal and state level, and their impact to programs administered by LNI.

---

**BACKGROUND:**

Recent federal and state policy changes and state budget restrictions have affected Washingtonians and state agencies at every level. As the Workforce Board and its partners update the state’s workforce development plan, Talent and Prosperity for All, it is essential to understand potential impacts in Washington that will affect LNI’s ability to respond to workers, businesses, and providers.

LNI’s presentation focuses on providing information and updates in the following program areas that intersect with workforce training and education partners:

**Registered Apprenticeship:** The Registered Apprenticeship section is the administrative arm of the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council. LNI oversees 205 active programs and over 17,000 active apprentices. The department will present on Registered Apprenticeship 101, youth in registered apprenticeship programs, and opportunities to engage and expand the system.

**Return to Work:** The Insurance Services Division administers the state’s workers compensation system, including oversight of vocational rehabilitation services and training providers who serve injured workers. The division is implementing 2024 state legislation ([HB 2127](#)) to establish a Skill Enhancement Training (SET) benefit, which facilitates skill development opportunities earlier during vocational recovery to support increased return to work outcomes. The department will share its approach to implementation of this legislation and current work to ensure quality services are available to workers in need of vocational training.

Youth Employment: The Employment Standards Child Labor unit is responsible for administering Washington's minor worker protections. These ensure that minor employees work in a safe and healthy environment. The department will give an overview of current protections and ongoing rulemaking efforts.

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**STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:**

Discussion only.

# Tab 7

## Workforce Board Legislative Agenda

**PRESENTED BY:** Nova Gattman, Workforce Board

**CHECK ONE:**

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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**SUMMARY:**

Board staff will present a draft of the Workforce Board 2026 Legislative Agenda for the Board's formal consideration and potential adoption. This draft agenda represents the recommendations of the Board's task team as the highest priority areas for policymaker engagement in a time of state and federal policy and budget challenges.

---

**BACKGROUND:**

The Workforce Board has directed staff to continue convening a task team made up of representatives from business, labor, and government to develop draft recommendations for the Board's legislative agenda. The task team has been active in October and early November in soliciting legislative priorities from the various caucuses of the Board and identifying where there could be both support and priorities among all three caucuses.

The task team took a more theme-based approach this year, recognizing that the policy landscape will continue to evolve, while still recommending a select number of priority items. The full text of each recommendation follows this coversheet.

The recommended legislative agenda priorities are as follows:

- Support initiatives that respond to changes in federal programs to support Washington residents in meeting expanded work requirements and remain enrolled in critical basic supports to receive food (SNAP) and healthcare (Medicaid).
- Restore funding for discrete programs that meet specific industry needs such as Core Plus and wraparound supports for state registered apprentices.
- Preserve investments in postsecondary programs and associated student supports.
- Support initiatives that help to inform secondary students about their options for multiple pathways to education and career opportunities.

Board staff requested early review by Board members prior to this packet submission and welcomes any continued suggestions or changes ahead of the meeting. Staff will present the draft agenda, highlight distinct priority areas, and outline next steps for distribution of the agenda following Board approval.

Once complete, this represents a true collective agenda that all partners may use in their information and advocacy efforts, with an understanding that this does not limit partners in their own individual efforts. A common document and message from the workforce system shows that the system has united around a small list of important needs that will equitably benefit a broad cross-section of workforce system customers, including job seekers, students, employers, and communities.

---

**STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:**

Potential action: Following discussion, staff requests a motion from the Board to support the Board's 2026 Legislative Agenda.

Board members will have the opportunity to discuss the items on this agenda and any adjustments before a motion to approve it. Once the agenda is endorsed by the full Board, staff will finalize the design and distribute it to Board members and stakeholders to allow for this document to be a part of their legislative advocacy efforts.

If the Board would like more time to review any of the proposals or request a significant update to the text, a final decision may be made at a December special meeting.

# Workforce Board 2026 Legislative Agenda

The Workforce Board’s 2026 legislative agenda prioritizes protections for critical workforce programs and infrastructure to ensure our workers and businesses remain resilient amid changes in federal and state policies and budget. The Board requests continued support and preservation of policies and investments that connect individuals to skills, jobseekers to work, and provide access and support to complete education and training that lead to [quality jobs](#),<sup>1</sup> meet employer needs for workers, and increase economic stability for all communities.

The Workforce Board requests that the Governor and state policymakers:

- Support initiatives that respond to changes in federal programs to support Washington residents in meeting expanded work requirements and remain enrolled in critical basic supports to receive food (SNAP) and healthcare (Medicaid).
- Restore funding for discrete programs that meet specific industry needs such as Core Plus and wraparound supports for state registered apprentices.
- Preserve investments in postsecondary programs and associated student supports.
- Support initiatives that help to inform secondary students about their options for multiple pathways to education and career opportunities.

## Rationale

- 1. Support initiatives that respond to changes in federal programs to support Washington residents in meeting expanded work requirements and remain enrolled in critical basic supports to receive food (SNAP) and healthcare (Medicaid).**

More than 125,000 Washington residents could be disenrolled from the SNAP program and 620,000 from Medicaid if they are not able to demonstrate they have met an eligible work requirement. It is imperative to accelerate current efforts to improve service efficiencies to meet the numbers of Washington residents who will need assistance to meet these requirements.

The state’s workforce system needs to be ready to provide comprehensive services and resources to meet requirements. This includes system investments to meet the requirements in H.R. 1, such as compliance and reporting for state human services agencies, the **WorkSource Integrated Technology (WIT) system, and the No Wrong Door integrated service delivery project** to support the necessary infrastructure to meet increased customer demand and accurately report state and federal performance.

- 2. Restore funding for discrete programs that meet specific industry needs such as Core Plus and wraparound supports for state registered apprentices.**

Core Plus is a program built by both industry experts and educators that serves high school students so that they receive relevant education and work-integrated learning opportunities while in high school and are ready to either enter a related postsecondary program or go straight to work with prospects for advancement.

State registered apprenticeship opportunities provide both an education and a job, however, not all are able to access or complete programs due to financial barriers. Apprentice wraparound supports (basic needs supports

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<sup>1</sup> [Washington Job Quality Survey Summary Report](#) (2025): The top three job quality factors from survey respondents were quality pay, job security and working conditions, and organizational culture.

11/12/25 WORKING **DRAFT** – Subject to Board approval at the 11/19 Workforce Board meeting

such as childcare and transportation) have proven to increase state registered apprenticeship retention and completion and add access to people who might not otherwise be able to participate.<sup>2</sup>

### **3. Preserve investments in postsecondary programs and associated student supports.**

Washington state is experiencing fast-paced demographic, economic, and technological changes. Due to baby boomer retirements and lower population growth among young people entering the workforce, the state is facing a decline in labor force participation. However, in the short term, current economic factors could cause slowing job growth. Our state is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Rapid innovations are changing job functions and industries throughout our economy. Technological advancements are shifting the way people live, work, and learn. We need to double down on efforts and pull from all available labor pools to ensure we are educating and preparing youth and adults for occupations that are in demand. Washington employers continue to report workforce challenges, while some skilled workers are struggling to find jobs. We urge policymakers to preserve postsecondary program capacity and student supports that provide access and are proven to increase program completion.

While the new Workforce Pell offers an opportunity to support students along an educational pathway utilizing high-demand short-term postsecondary programs, it requires strategic planning to ensure quality implementation and consumer protections are in place. The Economic Security for All program (EcSA) and Community Reinvestment Project (CRP) has also shown potential in its early implementation to provide a pathway out of poverty for participants.

### **4. Support initiatives that help to inform secondary students about their options for multiple pathways to education and career opportunities.**

Only 55% of Washington's high school graduates continue to postsecondary programs in the first year after high school graduation<sup>3</sup>, and this trend was exacerbated during COVID. The state has started to spring back but not enough to offset the additional needs we have for workers with postsecondary qualifications, including registered apprenticeship. Supporting further expansion of the updated High School and Beyond Plan platform to all school districts will help to ensure youth are aware of the multiple education and training pathways available.

Programs such as Passport to Careers, which provides support to former foster and unaccompanied homeless youth, are also vital to ensure these students can maintain hope for a bright future in which they can support themselves. The Washington Student Achievement Council is seeking a revenue neutral statutory change that would grant automatic eligibility for the Washington College Grant for Passport to Careers students. This would provide certainty that access to financial aid will not be a barrier to successful enrollment and completion of postsecondary education and allow much earlier conversation and planning.

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<sup>2</sup> Construct a Career Initiative. Program outcomes, 2024-25.

<sup>3</sup> [High School Graduate Outcomes | Washington State Education Research and Data Center](#)

# Tab 8

## Workforce Board Industry Sector Leads Presentation

**PRESENTED BY:** Workforce Board Industry Leads: Ilene Munk, Donald Smith, Renee Fullerton, with intro from Maddy Thompson, Board Staff.

**CHECK ONE:**

Action Item

Possible Action

Discussion Only

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**SUMMARY:**

Workforce Board staff will provide updates on industry sector work to address workforce challenges in clean energy, long-term care, and healthcare.

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**BACKGROUND:**

The state legislature has charged the Workforce Board to conduct research and convene industry sector partners for the purpose of addressing workforce challenges in specific industry sectors. These industry sector initiatives are:

- The Clean Energy Technology Workforce Advisory Committee;
- The Long-Term Care Workforce Collaborative; and
- The Healthcare Workforce Council.

These groups are comprised of industry, agency, and other state and local and community-based partners who provide their collective expertise, identify issues and recommend policy changes, and investments designed to address workforce challenges. Each of these groups conducts research on workforce gaps, reviews the landscape of policies and practices, identifies issues in recruitment and retention, and recommends possible solutions. State law also requires these groups to periodically report progress and recommendations to the Governor and state policymakers.

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**STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:**

Discussion only.