Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

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BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, August 26, 2026 **MEETING NO. 284**

9:00 a.m.	**Call to Order** Welcome and Roll Call	
9:05 a.m.	**Chairs Report (ACTION)** Consent Agenda Minutes from June 26, 2026, Board Meeting State and WIOA Policy Updates Issued Since June 26, 2026	**Tab 1**
9:10 a.m.	**Executive Director Report**	**Tab 2**
9:25 a.m.	**Workforce Pell Pilot Application (ACTION)**	**Tab 3**
10:25 a.m.	**Governor's Economic Development Council Update**	**Tab 4**
10:50 a.m.	**Workforce and Higher Education Study**	**Tab 5**
11:00 a.m.	**Break**	
11:10 a.m.	**Legislative Agenda (ACTION)**	**Tab 6**
12:10 p.m.	**Lunch**	
12:40 p.m.	**Public Comment** Please sign up via email at workforce@wtb.wa.gov by 9 a.m. on August 25, 2026.	
12:55 p.m.	**Healthcare Training Fund**	**Tab 7**
1:25 p.m.	**Successful Local Model in Industry Engagement: North Central**	**Tab 8**
1:55 p.m.	**Industry Engagement for the Workforce Board's Strategic Priorities (ACTION)**	**Tab 9**
2:25 p.m.	**Adjourn**	

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 Michelle Pierce at michelle.pierce@wtb.wa.gov.

Tab 1

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
TAB NUMBER: 1

Consent Agenda

PRESENTED BY: Workforce Board Co-Chairs, April Sims and Morgan Irwin
CHECK ONE: ☐ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The consent agenda enables the Board to approve items listed without discussion or individual motions. If any Board member believes an item does not belong on the consent agenda, they may 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).

BACKGROUND

This consent agenda includes:

- Minutes from June 26, 2026 Board meeting
- State and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) policy updates issued since June 26, 2026

The State and WIOA Policy Updates are routine workforce policy updates from the Employment Security Department (ESD). The changes cover several program areas: protecting people's private information, data security, reemployment services, veterans' priority of service, equipment rules, and the Economic Security for All and Community Reinvestment programs. These updates bring state rules in line with new federal and state requirements, make clarifications, and adjust definitions and dollar amounts. The Board's vote is needed to make the updates official.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

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

MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 283
June 26, 2026

Board Members Present:
Morgan Irwin, Co-Chair
April Sims, Co-Chair
Wade Larson, Representing Business
Todd Mitchell, Representing Labor
Cherika Carter, Representing Labor
Jane Hopkins, Representing Labor (virtual)
Commissioner Cami Feek, Employment Security Department
Nate Humphrey, Executive Director, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
Becky Wallace for Superintendent Chris Reykdal, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Amy Martinez, Chief Executive Officer, Workforce Southwest Washington, Representing Local Elected Officials
Pablo Villarreal for Secretary Angela Ramirez, Department of Social and Health Services
Kairie Pierce for Interim Director Sarah Clifthorne, Department of Commerce

Call to Order
Co-Chair April Sims called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. The meeting was a hybrid meeting using Zoom for remote attendees. In-person attendees convened at the Department of Labor & Industries, located at 7273 Linderson Way SW, Auditorium Room in Tumwater. Quorum was established.

Joel Sacks, Director of the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, welcomed the Workforce Board and thanked members for their leadership in strengthening Washington's workforce system. He emphasized that addressing workforce challenges requires strong partnerships and cross-system collaboration. Sacks highlighted the state's nationally recognized apprenticeship system, noting its role in providing earn-and-learn opportunities through partnerships with community colleges, WorkSource, and employers. He also discussed the importance of retraining workers who cannot return to their previous jobs after workplace injuries, sharing an example of successful collaboration with workforce partners to connect an injured worker to on-the-job training. He emphasized the Workforce Board's critical role in coordinating the state's workforce system and fostering long-term strategic collaboration.

Co-Chairs Report
Co-Chair Sims moved to the consent agenda, including the April meeting minutes, and federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) policy updates.

Todd Mitchell requested an amendment to the April meeting minutes. He requested it be noted during the State Board of Education's presentation, Mitchell had made a comment that he was in support of CTE remaining a core high school graduation requirement.

MOTION-2025-283-01
A motion was made by Wade Larson to approve the consent agenda with Mitchell's amendment. Cami Feek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report
Maddy Thompson, Workforce Board Acting Executive Director, highlighted several key updates during her report. She celebrated graduates across Washington, including the third cohort of the nation's first registered teacher apprenticeship program, emphasizing its transformative earn-and-learn model for paraeducators becoming special education teachers. Thompson noted the Governor's newly established Economic Development Council, with Workforce Board Co-Chair April Sims serving as a member, and reaffirmed the Board's commitment to supporting its work. She reported that WIOA performance target negotiations with the U.S. Department of Labor had concluded. She discussed potential changes to statewide graduation requirements affecting Career and Technical Education credits. Thompson also highlighted the Board's ongoing relationship-building efforts, successful Career Bridge modernization, renewed momentum within the Health Workforce Council, and continued monitoring of federal policy changes. She concluded by sharing upcoming workforce conferences, announcing the recruitment of a new Chief Financial Officer, and highlighting Washington's leadership in hosting the National Association of State Workforce Agencies conference.

Workforce Programs Outcomes: Spotlight on Career and Technical Education (CTE)
Paulette Beadling and Terje Gjertsen, Workforce Board, presented an overview of Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Washington, highlighting the Workforce Board's evaluation findings for secondary and postsecondary CTE programs and recent CTE outcomes research. They also reviewed the Board's role in overseeing the Carl D. Perkins Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. They emphasized that CTE combines academic instruction, technical training, employability skills, and hands-on learning to prepare students for college, careers, and lifelong learning. While state funding provides the primary support for CTE, federal Perkins funds play an important role in improving program quality and expanding student opportunities.

The data demonstrated strong student outcomes. High school CTE concentrators—students completing at least two credits in a single career cluster—graduate at a 96.1% rate, significantly higher than the statewide average of 82.6%. Nearly four in five graduates are employed, enrolled in postsecondary education, or participating in apprenticeships within six months of graduation. They also highlighted positive outcomes for postsecondary professional-technical programs, including rising employment, increased earnings, and growing placement in healthcare occupations.

Research presented showed that CTE generates positive returns for participants, employers, and taxpayers while helping address workforce shortages by developing in-demand technical and employability skills.

Strengthening CTE Dual Credit Pathways
William Belden, Workforce Education Policy Associate and Kimberly Ingram, Program Administrator from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) presented an update on the CTE dual credit system, focusing on efforts to improve student outcomes through greater statewide consistency. They explained that CTE dual credit serves more than 65,000 students annually and is the state's most widely accessed dual credit program, but inconsistent policies across the 34 community and technical colleges create barriers for students. Variations in articulation agreements, registration, transcription, grading, fees, and advising make it difficult for students to understand and use the credits they earn.

The presenters outlined a statewide redesign centered on improving equity, standardizing processes, modernizing data systems, and aligning CTE pathways with high-demand, high-wage careers. Pilot projects are testing common enrollment, transcription, and articulation processes, while regional partnerships are strengthening collaboration among K-12 schools, colleges, employers, and workforce development organizations. The long-term goal is to shift the system from emphasizing participation to producing meaningful educational and workforce outcomes.

During discussion, Board members explored credit transferability, apprenticeship alignment, and the Workforce Board's role in advancing future policy recommendations. Staff emphasized that standardized statewide policies, stronger advising, and closer alignment with labor market needs will improve student confidence, reduce barriers, and strengthen Washington's talent pipeline.

Economic Security for All: Results and Local Examples
Shannon Brundle, Workforce Initiative Manager, and Brian Feld, Research Investigator for Employment Security Department (ESD), provided an overview of the Economic Security for All (EcSA) program and its evaluation. EcSA helps individuals experiencing poverty access resources, training, and career pathways leading to self-sufficient wages, with a focus on BIPOC and underserved communities. Since launching as a pilot in 2019, the program expanded statewide and has received more than $61 million in investment. Current performance exceeded goals, with thousands of participants enrolled, hundreds completing training, and many achieving self-sufficiency. The Community Reinvestment Program, a partnership with the state’s Department of Commerce, further supports participants through incentives, savings accounts, and business grants. Feld shared evaluation findings showing EcSA participants experienced significantly higher employment rates, earnings, work hours, and wages compared with similar WIOA participants. Over eight quarters, EcSA participants earned approximately $12,000 more on average, demonstrating the program’s effectiveness in helping individuals overcome barriers and achieve economic stability.

Amy Martinez, CEO of South Central Local Workforce Development Board, Miranda Smith, Program Director, and representatives from People for People, Tawnya Armstead, Director of Employment and Training, Martin Garibay, Operations Manager, and Sean Brogan, Adult and EcSA Program Manager provided an overview of the EcSA program in the South Central Workforce Development region. EcSA integrates workforce services with stabilization supports to help individuals overcome barriers and achieve long-term self-sufficiency. People for People highlighted their regional model serving Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat, and Skamania counties, which combines career coaching, education and training, financial capability, supportive services, incentives, and savings opportunities. The program served 290 participants in 2025, many of whom faced multiple barriers to employment, including low income, housing insecurity, limited education, and involvement with the justice system. Participants achieved strong outcomes, including progress toward self-sufficiency, completion of training, and increased financial stability. Presenters emphasized that addressing basic needs alongside employment services is critical to creating lasting economic mobility, sharing a participant success story to demonstrate the program's impact.

Kevin Williams, CEO of Spokane's Workforce Development Council, and Jessica Clayton, Division Executive Development & Program Equal Opportunity Officer, from the Spokane Workforce Council presented on their EcSA program model, emphasizing its role as an integrated component of Washington's workforce system. Spokane's approach focuses on coordinated partnerships, seamless co-enrollment across programs, and wraparound services that address barriers before employment. The program combines EcSA with WIOA, BFET, youth services, and other resources to provide training, supportive services, financial assistance, and career pathways. Data showed strong outcomes, with participants receiving multiple services achieving higher employment and self-sufficiency rates. Presenters shared participant success stories demonstrating how coordinated support helped individuals overcome barriers, earn credentials, and secure family-sustaining employment. They emphasized that EcSA is not a stand-alone program, but a critical strategy for advancing economic mobility through comprehensive, individualized workforce services.

Public Comment

Co-Chair Irwin opened the floor for public comment as required by the state's Open Public Meetings Act, noting that individuals must sign up at least 24 hours in advance. Dr. Tonya Drake from Western Governors University (WGU) requested to provide comment. Dr. Drake noted WGU wanted to be a partner in helping Washington respond to the urgent challenge of ensuring that Basic Food recipients have practical, accessible pathways to meet SNAP work requirements and maintain critical food assistance. Dr. Drake noted opportunities WGU can offer and is asking for a partnership to identify the best pathways to support Washingtonians.

FAFSA Campaign and Results

Amy Keltner, Senior Director and Sarah Weiss, Director of College Access Initiatives from the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), provided an update on the state's financial aid completion campaign, which aims to increase Free Application for Federal Student Aid

(FAFSA) and Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) completion, helping more students access federal and state financial aid, reduce the cost of postsecondary education and expand opportunities for postsecondary access and economic mobility. The campaign, championed by Gov. Ferguson, focuses on increasing applications, improving completion rates among grant-eligible students, reducing gaps in completion, and addressing disparities among underserved populations. They reported strong progress, with the Class of 2026 completing more financial aid applications than any prior graduating high school class and reaching approximately 90% of the state's application goal. Key strategies include regional partnerships, targeted outreach, improved data-sharing tools, FAFSA dashboards, school and community engagement, and expanded support from state agencies, education organizations, and community partners. Weiss emphasized that trusted messengers, early family engagement, and clear communication about the purpose and benefits of financial aid are critical to continued success. The presenters encouraged workforce partners to help connect students with financial aid resources as a pathway to education, training, and career opportunities.

Industry Engagement in Workforce Development

Chelsea Mason-Placek from the Washington State Labor Council and Ingrid Stegemoeller from Washington Roundtable presented joint recommendations for implementing Workforce Pell in Washington. Workforce Pell expands federal Pell Grant eligibility to support short-term, high-quality workforce training programs that meet specified federal requirements. Developed in partnership with the Governor's Office, the recommendations reflect input from employers, labor leaders, unions, and training providers. They emphasized the opportunity to expand access to high-quality short-term workforce training while aligning programs with employer demand. Key recommendations include using federal eligibility standards without adding unnecessary state barriers, developing a durable employer- and sector-driven validation process for identifying in-demand jobs and skills, incorporating regional labor market needs, and ensuring programs provide strong outcomes, wraparound supports, and equitable access. Presenters highlighted the importance of employer engagement, apprenticeship alignment, rural access, and foundational professional skills. They expressed commitment to continued partnership with agencies and workforce stakeholders to build a sustainable Workforce Pell system.

Ingrid Stegemoeller, Industry Engagement Director, Washington Roundtable and Partnership for Learning and Ashley Carter, Chief Operating Officer, Pathfinder Strategies, presented findings from a landscape analysis of employer engagement in Washington's education and workforce systems. The project examined how employers interact with workforce development, K-12 education, community and technical colleges, state agencies, and other workforce partners. Researchers mapped employer touchpoints across multiple systems, documenting the various roles employers play, including providing labor market information, advising on curriculum and training programs, participating in governance, supporting work-based learning, delivering apprenticeship training, and hiring program graduates.

The presenters emphasized that Washington has numerous employer engagement structures that have developed over time in response to policy, funding, and program requirements. While

these structures provide valuable opportunities for collaboration, the analysis identified opportunities to improve coordination and strengthen employer voice across the system. Three key themes emerged: improving the representation of employer workforce needs through sector-based approaches, creating ongoing channels for employers to communicate hiring and skill demands, and increasing responsiveness by aligning education and workforce investments with labor market outcomes. The presenters noted significant alignment between the findings of the landscape analysis and recommendations developed by the Workforce Board's Industry Advisory Committee, suggesting opportunities for future collaboration to better connect employer needs, workforce development efforts, and student pathways to employment.

Emily Persky, Workforce Board, presented input from the Board's 2025 Industry Advisory Committee. Persky reviewed the findings and preliminary recommendations from the Industry Advisory Committee focused on strengthening workforce and industry engagement. She noted committee members emphasized the value of in-person collaboration across business, labor, professional associations, and sectors, noting that many workforce challenges are shared but require better coordination and awareness of existing resources.

Persky introduced two members of the Industry Advisory Committee, Darlene Edouard, PhD, Director of Education, BRIC Foundation, and Chanel Hall, Workforce Ecosystem Program Manager, Technology Alliance. Edouard highlighted the importance of recognizing the creative economy as a significant workforce sector, accounting for nearly 10% of Washington's GDP, while noting challenges in tracking and supporting portfolio workers and connecting them to training opportunities. Hall described the need for improved employer outreach and a more coordinated system to help employers navigate workforce programs.

Persky offered preliminary proposals, based on the committee's recommendations: streamlined industry engagement opportunities, frameworks to strengthen state and regional coordination, improved coordination of employer outreach and communication, and developing industry tools and resources, particularly for small businesses.

Emerging Legislative Priorities for 2027

Maddy Thompson reviewed the supplemental budget instructions from Katherine Chapman-See, Director of the Office of Financial Management, including the deadline for budget requests to be submitted by September 14. She noted we face a challenging state budget environment. Thompson shared that the top priority is to protect the most vulnerable and sustain core services that Washingtonians rely on, and that the state will need to find creative and sensible solutions when developing this budget. Thompson shared that the information gathered today will inform the Workforce Board's 2027 Legislative Agenda. She also stated that the Workforce Board agency budget will not be asking for additional funds.

Nova Gattman, Workforce Board, served as the facilitator for the legislative presentations. Board members and partner agencies were invited to discuss concepts, programs or areas to protect for the upcoming legislative session. The presenters' priority areas are as follows:

Morgan Irwin, Association of Washington Business:

1) Protecting funding dedicated for basic education and higher education. These accounts were created as part of a partnership with businesses to help build their workforce and the funds should stay there.
2) Increasing public awareness of the financial assistance, educational opportunities, and other resources available to Washingtonians.

Cherika Carter, Washington State Labor Council:

1) Washington needs good union jobs. And as the economy changes through artificial intelligence, clean energy, and major infrastructure investments, the Council's goal is to make sure Washington is creating more family-based jobs while ensuring workers have a voice and shaping the future of work.
2) Protecting workers' rights to bargain over AI implementation, establishing guardrails on electronic workplace surveillance, protecting worker data privacy and ensuring that algorithm use and hiring, promotion, scheduling, discipline, or termination are not used without human oversight.

Todd Mitchell, Washington State Building & Constructions Trades Council
Mitchell shared the five Pillars in the council's jobs package:

1) Public works and capital investment.
2) Skills for the workforce and apprenticeship pathways.
3) Energy production and infrastructure development.
4) Labor standards, enforcement and accountability.
5) Citing, permitting and regulatory alignment.

In support of the jobs package, the Washington State Building & Construction Trades Council is endorsing legislation on the following topic areas:

1) Redefining public works to include all construction supported by public dollars, including loans, grants, tax incentives or mixed funding, while requiring paid prevailing wage and apprenticeship utilization. With the apprenticeship utilization requirement there is no cost to the state to help workforce development.
2) Expanding apprenticeship utilization requirements to all public entities undertaking construction projects.
3) Establishing an apprentice support grant program with statutory language, mirroring the college students in emergency assistance grant program, to ensure underrepresented apprentices have access to basic needs and emergency support.
4) Creating funding opportunities for local municipalities to address building and infrastructure needs in exchange for commitments to apprenticeship utilization requirements.

Stephanie Scott for Kairie Pierce, Department of Commerce

1) Maintaining programs that are reducing disparities, such as energy assistance programs, victim support, Work-First transition support, housing and services for low income and for unhoused community members, and weatherization programs.
2) Continued momentum through diverse grant programs. Examples: solar and energy storage programs, clean energy fund and business recruitment and retention, infrastructure programs around early childhood facilities, and public works projects.
3) Staying competitive. Examples: Keeping momentum going with the electrical vehicle charging build out, and manufacturing support with multiple sectors across Washington.
4) Securing federal funds.
5) Complying with state requirements. Examples: technical assistance and support to local governments, the library capital program, and behavioral health facility investments.

Pablo Villarreal, Department of Social Health and Services

1) Funding to increase access to direct care settings training at institutions and community settings that will result in expanded access and safety for DSHS.
2) Implementation of rule changes from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid services due to HR1.
3) Investments in technology enterprise-wide for support of AI and other technology upgrades.

Megan Matthews, Office of Equity

1) To ensure we can, within budget realities, make sure Washingtonians have the ability to access services, access information in their native language, and the resources they need to thrive.
2) Ensure decision packages for the next couple of years are completed based on community engagement and feedback to make sure Washingtonians can better shape the work of the state and be compensated for it.
3) Office of Equity has been asked in legislation passed this year to chair a work group for the Community Reinvestment Program in joint administration with Department of Commerce to celebrate the good things that have been done and improve upon the program.

Mikhail Cherniske, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

1) Safeguarding education funding and identifying potential future budget cuts while maintaining the state's constitutional obligation to fully fund basic education.
2) Review funding for basic education.
3) Providing relief for rapidly increasing insurance and utility costs in school districts.
4) Ongoing work is focused on improving the state's K–12 funding equity model by:
    - Evaluating enhancements to the Learning Assistance Program.
    - Considering concentration-based funding for schools serving higher proportions of students with greater needs.

- Examining additional support for schools serving large numbers of multilingual learners, recognizing the added staffing and instructional demands.

5) Potential legislation to create a new senior-year course designed to better prepare students for life after high school. Proposed topics include:
    - Financial literacy.
    - Voter registration and civic participation.
    - High School and Beyond Plan completion.
    - Guided application to at least one postsecondary opportunity, with help from a teacher or counselor.

Arlen Harris, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

1) Fully funding faculty and staff compensation adjustments rather than requiring colleges to absorb a portion of the costs.
2) Providing operational funding ("keep the lights on") to offset inflationary expenses affecting college operations.
3) Expanding the Washington College Grant to cover short-term workforce certificate programs by reintroducing legislation considered during the previous session.
4) Protecting the Job Skills Program, which continues to be an effective workforce and incumbent worker training program.

Joel Anderson, Washington Student Achievement Council

1) Leverage the success of the 2026 FAFSA campaign by increasing financial aid completion and improving postsecondary enrollment and attainment statewide.
2) Reimagine Career Connect Washington and enhancements to the State Work Study program.
3) Be responsive to federal financial aid changes in the higher education space, specifically with student loans. Looking to potentially propose legislation passed in other states to improve protections for private student loan borrowers.
4) Pursue administrative improvements to existing programs, including Passport to Careers, to better serve foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth.
5) Increase transparency and accessible data for the Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board.

Amy Martinez, South Central Workforce Development Board on behalf of Washington Workforce Association and the 12 Local Workforce Development Boards:

1) Protect the Economic Security for All program.
2) Protect Community Reinvestment Program.

Procurement Update and Local Board Certifications (ACTION)

Liz Gallagher, Workforce Board, provided an overview of proposed updates to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) procurement policy. The revisions clarify requirements for selecting one-stop operators and service providers, while creating a more formal pathway for local boards to receive direct service provider status. Key changes include performance-based

renewals aligned with local plan cycles, reduced administrative burden through streamlined processes, continued oversight through existing monitoring structures, and expanded eligibility for additional federal grant services. The policy also clarifies training service definitions, business service applicability, and separate applications for adult and dislocated worker programs. Gallagher noted the goal is to balance accountability with administrative feasibility and will return with a final draft for Board action at the August meeting.

Liz Gallagher presented the Workforce Board's required two-year local board certification review, which evaluates whether local workforce boards meet WIOA requirements. The review examined all 12 local boards across areas including employer engagement, education and career pathways, stakeholder coordination, partnerships, labor market analysis, technology systems, performance outcomes, board composition, fiscal oversight, and equal opportunity compliance.

Key findings included:

- **Overall performance:** All 12 boards demonstrated strong employer engagement, partnerships, labor market analysis, fiscal integrity, and compliance with service provider selection and equal opportunity requirements.
- **Strengths:** Boards effectively used employer partnerships, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, career pathway programs, community partnerships, and additional funding sources. Several boards were highlighted for innovative approaches and strong regional collaboration.
- **Opportunities for improvement:** Gallagher recommended that future local plans include stronger outcome measures, clearer connections between labor market data and program investments, more reporting on partner contributions, improved documentation of public comments, and additional strategies addressing rural access challenges.
- **Performance outcomes:** While the state met federal performance measures overall, some local boards struggled with youth measurable skills gains, potentially due to data issues stemming from the current case management systems inability to accurately translate federal performance reporting to US DOL systems.
- **Certification recommendations:** Staff recommended full certification for six boards, certification with recommendations for four boards needing clarification or technical assistance around board composition requirements, and provisional certification for two boards with long-term membership vacancies. Gallagher noted that staff will continue providing technical assistance and monitoring progress before the next certification cycle.

MOTION-2025-283-02
A motion was made by Todd Mitchell that the Workforce Board approve certification action for all 12 Local Workforce Development Boards as presented, as follows:

- Full certification for Pierce County Workforce Development Council, Workforce Southwest Washington, SkillSource, South Central Workforce Development Council, Northwest Workforce Council, and Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council;
- Certification with nomination documentation recommendations for Olympic Workforce Development Council, Future Workforce Alliance, Spokane Workforce Council, and Pacific Mountain;
- Provisional certification for the Seattle/King County Local Workforce Development Board and Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council, contingent on resolution of long-term Local Board composition (vacancy) no later than June 30, 2027.

Wade Larson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

WorkSource System and WIOA Title I-B Policy activity since June 26, 2026

For Workforce Board Acknowledgement (action) at the August Meeting

Policy	Description	Issued
1012 (Rev 4)	Customer Concern and Complaint Resolution	6/29/26
5625 (Rev 2)	State Guidance and Instructions for the Federal Economic Security for All Program	7/2/26
5407 (Rev 1)	Property Management and Inventory	7/2/26
7010 (Rev 7)	Community Reinvestment Plan Matched Investment Savings Accounts	7/13/26
7005 (Rev 3)	Community Reinvestment Fund	7/13/26
1020 (Rev 3)	Data Integrity and Performance Policy and Handbook - Public Comment Period ended **August 13, 2026**	Pending

WIN	Description	Issued
0077 (Rev 17)	WorkSource Services Catalog	6/29/26
0147 (Rev 2)	Update on the WorkSource Integrated Technology Replacement Project	6/30/26
0165	Register for Work Requirement for Unemployment Insurance Claimants	7/1/26
0073 (Rev 83)	WIOA operating guidance issued to date by DOL through TEGLs, UIPLs, and TENs	7/8/26
0073 (Rev 84)	WIOA operating guidance issued to date by DOL through TEGLs, UIPLs, and TENs	7/29/26
0166	Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) May and July 2026 Investments	7/31/26

Tab 2

Washington Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
TAB NUMBER: 2

Executive Director Coversheet

PRESENTED BY: Maddy Thompson, Executive Director
CHECK ONE: ☐ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The Executive Director's report provides an update of workforce system developments, agency and partner activities, events and initiatives.

BACKGROUND

The Executive Director's report may include:

- Federal developments impacting the workforce system in Washington
- Research and performance updates
- Conferences and events
- Strategic initiatives

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Board could request additional information and follow up where needed.

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

CONFERENCES AND CONVENINGS

Washington State Labor Council Convention in Wenatchee

The Washington State Labor Council held its annual convention in Wenatchee July 20-22. Conference themes included wrap-around supports for apprentices, centering workers in the adoption of AI tools, and opportunities for labor participation on industry advisory panels for career and technical education programs. Workforce Board Acting Executive Director Maddy Thompson participated in a panel highlighting the value of Washington's new occupation data. The panel was led by Workforce Development Director for the WSLC AFL-CIO, Chelsea Mason Placek—and included Washington's Chief Labor Economist, Dr. Anneliese Vance-Sherman and Brandon Anderson of SPEEA. The new occupation data will help answer key labor-market questions, including wage trends and the relationships between credentials, training pathways, and employment outcomes. Emily Persky, Director of Policy, Strategy and Research, at the Workforce Board also attended.

NGA Summer Workforce Institute

Workforce Board Co-Chairs April Sims and Morgan Irwin, along with acting Executive Director Maddy Thompson and Ismaila Maidadi, Director of the Workforce Services Division at ESD comprised the Washington State team at the summer Workforce Institute of the National Governor's Association in Nashville (August 17-19). Key themes included (1) Implementing Workforce Pell, (2) Coordinating partners to ensure people meet new work requirements under HR1 and keep their food and healthcare benefits or connect with jobs; (3) Strengthening work-based learning and career and technical education; (4) Renewed methods for engaging industry in a way that best meets their needs and (5) Impacts of AI on the workforce. All these align with the Workforce Board's strategic priorities and the draft legislative agenda.

Washington Opportunity Alliance Conference in Minneapolis

Acting Executive Director, Maddy Thompson, participated in the August convening of the Opportunity Alliance in Minneapolis with seven other states (Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, New York, and Rhode Island). The initiative is funded by the Lumina Foundation and Washington representatives include the Governor's Office, the Washington Student Achievement Council, the Employment Security Department, the Department of Commerce, the Washington Workforce Association and the Washington Economic Development Association to strengthen connections between education, workforce, and economic development.

Western Association of Veterans Education Specialists (WAVES)

Workforce Board VA staff Darlene Bartlett, Lane Anderson, and Anthony Whitesides attended the 30th Anniversary Western Association of Veterans Education Specialists (WAVES) Conference in Hollywood, California, July 20–23. The conference provided valuable training on federal policy updates, compliance, risk-based surveys, and best practices in veteran education.

During the awards banquet, the inaugural John Murray Education Award was presented to Marine Corps veteran Kip Beebe of Lower Columbia College (Longview)**.** As President of the Lower Columbia College Veterans' Alliance, Kip was recognized for his exceptional leadership, mentorship of fellow student veterans, academic excellence, and continued service to his community through Search and Rescue and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteer work. Established in honor of the Workforce Board's late Washington State Approving Agency Analyst John Murray, the national award recognizes individuals who demonstrate outstanding leadership, service, and a commitment to advancing veteran education. Although Kip was unable to attend, the award was accepted on his behalf by his School Certifying Official, Serena Murray**.** The creation of this award serves as a lasting tribute to John Murray's enduring legacy and impact on the veteran education community.

WA-ACTE Summer Conference

The Workforce Board had planned to participate in the Washington Association for Career and Technical Education (WA-ACTE) Summer Conference (Aug. 2–6) in Spokane, with a booth and two presentations: *The New Career Bridge: 7,000 Pathways, One Tool for Your Classroom* and *Clearing the Path: Policy, Practice, and Youth Access to Healthcare Work*. As devastating wildfires forced widespread evacuations and created hazardous conditions in the Spokane area the day before we were set to leave, Workforce Board staff made the decision not to attend. The conference continued as scheduled, and we appreciate the efforts of the conference organizers under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. Follow-up conversations with conference organizers and attendees confirmed that there was substantial turnout, despite the fires. All told, around 750 people attended, including speakers and exhibitors. We look forward to participating in this key conference next year!

Exploring Workforce System Connections to Apprenticeships

Safal Partners, funded by Ascendium, have invited the Workforce Board to convene state partners to explore how workforce programs can connect students and jobseekers to apprenticeship opportunities. Rachel McAloon, Director for Washington's Apprenticeship and Training Council, local workforce board leaders Lisa Romine and Amy Martinez as well as the Washington Workforce Association CEO John Traugott, Ismaila Maidadi of ESD and Marie Bruin of SBCTC have agreed to be part of this cohort to explore opportunities. Washington is one of five states invited to participate along with Idaho, Kentucky, North Carolina and West Virginia.

WA HS-to-PS Roadmap Convening in Renton

Workforce Board staff participated in Washington's High School-to-Postsecondary Roadmap on Aug. 13 in Renton. Led by Education First and funded by the Gates Foundation, the effort brings together students, practitioners, K–12, including Highline and Spokane school districts, and postsecondary leaders, including the Council of Presidents and the Independent Colleges of Washington, state agencies, including the Washington Student Achievement Council, OSPI, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, along with the Governor's Office and the Gates Foundation and other partners, including Eastern Washington University and Seattle University, to develop a more connected and supported transition from high school to postsecondary education and training. Workforce Board Director of System Advancement

Marina Parr and Career Bridge Manager Julie Mix-Stark represented the Workforce Board, bringing perspectives on the state's career and training information infrastructure and the role Career Bridge can play in helping students explore pathways and make informed decisions about their next steps.

Participants prepared for the convening by reviewing fictional, composite student vignettes designed to illustrate a future where information, trusted adults and systems work together more seamlessly to support students. The stories highlighted many of the challenges students face today, as well as opportunities to better connect career exploration, education and training options, financial aid, work-based learning and student supports. The convening built on these student perspectives to identify key friction points, Washington's existing assets and infrastructure, and priorities for a statewide roadmap.

Washington Economic Development Association Conference in Tri-Cities
The Washington Economic Development Association's Summer Conference was held in Spokane August 4-6. The event brought together economic development, business, labor, training, education and workforce partners from across the state. Conference sessions emphasized the importance of strong regional partnerships, employer engagement, and aligning workforce and economic development strategies. A main-stage panel on "Growing Jobs for the Future" underscored the value of early career and technical education exposure and course-taking. Additional sessions explored innovative tools to meet workforce needs, including childcare access, regulatory barriers, and streamlined employer engagement. Interim Director of Policy, Strategy, and Research Emily Persky attended. The final day focused on financing tools for economic development projects. Presentations highlighted mechanisms such as New Markets Tax Credits and private activity bonds, with potential applications for addressing workforce-related challenges like housing, childcare, transportation, and energy capacity.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES THIS SUMMER AND FALL

Association of Washington Business – 2026 Policy Summit | September 15 – 17
Acting Executive Director Maddy Thompson and Interim Director of Policy, Strategy, and Research Emily Persky will attend on behalf of the Workforce Board.

Washington Workforce Association – Fall Conference 2026 | November 3 – 5
The Workforce Board is a proud sponsor of this year's conference, and staff are contributing to or coordinating four of the workshop sessions.

Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education
Acting Executive Director Maddy Thompson has been invited to share perspectives on implementing Workforce Pell and other workforce system priorities at the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education on September 14.

Meeting with Commission on African American Affairs
The Commission on African American Affairs has invited Acting Executive Director Maddy Thompson and Director for Policy, Strategy and Research, Emily Persky to present on workforce

priorities on September 4. The purpose is to start a dialogue with commission members and eventually invite input from the commission on the next state strategic plan for workforce development.

Future of Work Summit
Thurston County Chamber of Commerce has joined with other local chambers to plan a conference about the Future of Work on October 14. Conference organizers have invited Maddy Thompson to participate as a panelist in a plenary session about the impacts of AI on the workforce and implications for workforce development strategies.

STATE AND AGENCY UPDATES

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined Plan: Conditionally Approved
Washington received conditional approval from the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education for its modification to the WIOA Combined State Plan for program years 2026 and 2027. The determination covers all six WIOA core programs and several partner programs, including Jobs for Veterans State Grants, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and Perkins V. Approval for TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), CSBG (Community Service Block Grants) employment and training, and SNAP Employment & Training will come separately from the federal Department of Housing and Human Services and Department of Agriculture within their 120-day window. The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services and Department of Services for the Blind are working on corrections, which are due September 30, 2026.

HR 1 Work Requirements Update
As shared at our June Board meeting, the new federal SNAP "work requirements" took effect over a year ago, in July 2025, with Washington implementing changes beginning in October of last year. Board staff, in collaboration with DSHS, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and local workforce development boards, have finished the first iteration of a job aid for system staff. It shows a crosswalk of the new work requirements and eligible activities throughout the workforce system, and was published for system staff last week. The crosswalk will help WorkSource case managers navigate the requirements and better support customers. Staff are now working with partners on next steps, including delivering technical assistance and presenting on these work requirement efforts at the Washington Workforce Association (WWA) conference in November.

Looking ahead, new federal Medicaid "work requirements" are also moving toward implementation. Board staff are working with the Health Care Authority (HCA) and DSHS to make these requirements easier for people to understand.

Health Workforce Council
The Health Workforce Council held its strategic planning meeting on June 24, marking a leadership transition as Dr. Suzy Ames and Dr. Leo Morales stepped in as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. Grounded in the latest data from the Health Workforce Sentinel Network, which highlighted persistent staffing, retention, and system pressures, the Council engaged in

intensive strategic exercises to define its unique role, high-value activities, and future focus areas.

Members agreed that the Council's distinct value lies in synthesizing statewide data to convene cross-sector stakeholders and equip policymakers with actionable evidence. The Council identified its high-impact policy topics for future focus: (1) training capacity and educational pathways, (2) gaps between educational preparation and clinical practice, and (3) training affordability under recent budget and financial rule constraints.

Long-Term Care Collaborative (LTCC)
The LTCC continues to address Washington's long-term care workforce shortages through collaboration and strategic workforce development. At the August joint meeting, partners reviewed New Jersey's extended direct care workforce strategy and San Diego State University's exploration of workforce solutions involving foreign-trained professionals, generating interest in similar approaches for Washington. Leadership Council discussions focused on recruitment, retention, training, and certification barriers, including modernizing home care aide testing and licensing, expanding testing within training programs, reducing administrative burdens, supporting family caregivers and peer networks, and strengthening high school-to-career pathways. Members also emphasized employer engagement, mentorship, younger worker recruitment, sustainable funding, and practical low-cost solutions. Washington's initial engagement with the NCOA Workforce Strategy Center ended in July, and the state submitted an application to continue the work; applications are under review, with selections expected in August.

Student Data Reporting for Career Bridge and Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)
Each year, the Workforce Board collects student-level records through the agency's secure, encrypted portal to evaluate employment, earnings, and other outcomes for all private career school programs, non-credit, credential programs offered at public two- and four-year institutions, and additional educational programs as needed. The reporting period requires significant coordination, with staff responding to questions by phone and email to support compliance and high-quality reporting. These data are essential for program performance reporting and for determining eligibility for Washington's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Staff continue to support training providers through this year's student data reporting cycle. The Student Data Portal opened July 16 and is currently scheduled to close Aug. 27.

SAO Conducts Regular Four-Year Accountability Audit of the Workforce Board
The Workforce Board is currently undergoing an audit from the State Auditor's Office. This is an audit that is conducted on a regular basis every four years. Board member, Wade Larson, has agreed to be the board's point of contact. Staff will keep the board updated on the results.

FEDERAL UPDATES

NGA Announces United Service Fund
The NGA also announced a new initiative of the new NGA Chair, Maryland Governor Wes Moore, the "Service United Fund." The purpose is provide each state with the opportunity to apply for a

grant to generate a culture of service among young people and improve social cohesion. Through the fund "governors will have access to resources to plan, build or advance service programs that improve outcomes for both young people and communities through grants of up to $1.5 million. The first round of grantmaking opportunities for states is now open."

Job Corps Center Update
On August 11, 2026, the Trump administration agreed to drop its plan to close 99 Job Corps centers across the country. The agreement came in a settlement filed in federal court in a case called *Cabrera v. Department of Labor*. Seven Job Corps students, backed by Public Citizen Litigation Group and the Southern Poverty Law Center, brought the case. As part of the deal, the Department of Labor agreed to fully cancel the closure notices it sent to center operators in May 2025 and to end its pause on privately run centers. Earlier, the court had already blocked the closures, saying they likely broke the rules set by the WIOA.

Congress created Job Corps in 1964 to give young people education, job training, and support as they start their careers. Many students also rely on the program for housing, health care, and other basic needs. Attorneys in the case said the closures would have put thousands of vulnerable young people at risk and that the government did not follow the steps the law requires before shutting a center down. This settlement keeps all 99 centers open.

New Labor Secretary nominee advances
The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee voted 12–11 on July 30 to advance Keith Sonderling to a full Senate vote to be the next U.S. Secretary of Labor. No final Senate vote has been scheduled yet. Board staff will continue to monitor the confirmation and any related changes at the U.S. Department of Labor.

Elimination of Methods of Administration (MOA)
On July 22, the U.S. Department of Education rescinded regulations requiring states to maintain Methods of Administration (MOA) procedures for monitoring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The change removes the federal MOA regulatory requirement but does not affect states' existing civil rights obligations or Perkins V requirements for collecting, reporting, and using disaggregated student data, including through the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA).

New Requirements to Access Perkins Formula Funding
The U.S. Department of Education issued new requirements for states drawing Perkins V and adult education formula funds. States must now provide a written justification for each payment request, including expense categories, amounts, and date ranges, within a 255-character limit. The change is tied to the transition to new federal payment systems.

Release of final accountability rule
On June 29, the U.S. Department of Education finalized new regulations creating a new accountability system based on program completers' earnings. Beginning next year, undergraduate degree and certificate programs may lose access to federal student loans if their

graduates' median earnings fall below those of comparable high school graduates in the state for two of three years. The final rule also limits the potential loss of Pell Grant eligibility and delays the earnings test for programs leading to occupations where tips make up a substantial share of income.

Launch of "Careers in Your Community" Challenge
On August 4, the US Dept of Education launched the "Careers in Your Community" Challenge. This is the fourth competition in the CTE Momentum series. The challenge invites teams of high school students to develop and submit proposals that improve career exploration at their schools. Proposals are due November 19. Read more details about the challenge on ACTE's blog.

Approval of first Workforce Pell program
On August 4, The US Dept of Education approved the country's first Workforce Pell Grant program at Iowa Central Community College. This approval allows students in the emergency medical technician program to receive a short-term Workforce Pell grant if they are income eligible.

Artificial Intelligence and the Workforce
The *Employment & Training Reporter* recently covered a U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Subcommittee hearing examining how artificial intelligence is reshaping the workforce and the role workforce development systems may play in helping workers adapt. Witnesses emphasized that while many questions remain, early evidence suggests AI is changing the nature of work more often than eliminating jobs.

- Senate hearing witnesses said AI is transforming more jobs than replacing them, though impacts vary by industry.
- Experts raised concerns that AI could disrupt entry-level "gateway" jobs that help young workers gain experience and advance in their careers.
- Witnesses noted that youth employment challenges began before widespread AI adoption, suggesting broader labor market changes are also at work.
- The discussion underscored the need for better labor market data and AI literacy to help workforce systems respond to changing skill needs.

Tab 3

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
TAB NUMBER: 3

Workforce Pell Pilot Application

PRESENTED BY: Ahnna Smith, Education Strategy Group
CHECK ONE: ☒ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☐ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The Board will hear a presentation of the initial Workforce Pell application process developed by the Governor's Cross Agency Steering Committee and have the opportunity to vote on the process. The federal law directs that each state's Governor develops the application process and consult with the state Workforce Board for this purpose.

BACKGROUND

Congress created Workforce Pell in H.R. 1 (2025), expanding Pell Grants under Title IV of the Higher Education Act to short-term education and training programs that prepare students for in-demand jobs and demonstrate high completion and employment rates, among other outcomes and program requirements. Workforce Pell took effect July 1, 2026.

The Board has tracked the development of Washington's application over the course of 2026, hearing presentations and updates at its January, April, and June meetings. At the June Board meeting, representatives of the Washington Roundtable and the Washington State Labor Council each presented their priorities for Workforce Pell implementation.

At the August meeting, Ahnna Smith of the Education Strategy Group, facilitator of the Cross-Agency Steering Committee, will present the application process for the initial phase of implementation in Washington. Board members will have the opportunity to consider the direction of the process for recommendation to the Governor.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Action. The Board will consider the application process for Workforce Pell in its first phase and vote to recommend support for this process to the Governor.

Guiding questions for Board discussion:

1. Does the proposal include appropriate roles for each of the agencies involved?
2. Does the proposed application process balance compliance with low provider burden?

WASHINGTON STATE

Workforce Pell Application Guidance

Pilot Year Application Process for Workforce Pell Program Eligibility

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT

Introduction

Beginning in July 2026, the federal government is set to implement an historic expansion of the Pell Grant Program: Workforce Pell. This long-awaited funding will expand Pell Grant eligibility to cover the cost of high-quality, short-term training programs.

Authority and Purpose

The 119th U.S. Congress H.R. 1 (2025) established the Workforce Pell Grant Program under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA), which covers federal student financial aid. Workforce Pell expands the federal Pell Grant to short-term workforce training programs. Workforce Pell has an effective start date of July 1, 2026, and was developed with the purpose of:

- Expanding postsecondary education funding to short-term, workforce training programs;
- Identifying and promoting credentials and training programs aligned with high-skill, high-wage, in-demand occupations; and
- Ensuring the outcomes-based evaluation of programs, including completion rates, job placement rates, and value-added earnings.

This application process has been developed pursuant to the final Workforce Pell regulations and establishes the procedures to implement and administer Workforce Pell in Washington. This document includes guidance for defining key terms, determining provider and program eligibility, defining application processes, establishing program approval and performance standards, determining ongoing compliance needs, and determining effective appeals processes. This guidance governs Washington's initial pilot application cycle. The state will evaluate pilot experience and refine the process, forms, and language in subsequent cycles.

How the Washington Application Process Works

Washington uses one Workforce Pell application, administered through the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), as the state's front door, with verification steps performed by the state agency that already works with each type of training provider. Final state approval rests with the Workforce Pell Cross-Agency Steering Committee and the Governor. The path has four steps:

1. **Agency verification.** The training provider completes the verification step with the agency that serves its institution type (see pathways below). The agency verifies eligibility items using its existing systems and authorities wherever possible and issues a verification letter for each eligible program.
2. **WSAC final application.** The provider submits the Workforce Pell final application through the WSAC portal, attaching its agency verification letter. The final application collects only the institution and program information the Governor's certification requires.

3. **Steering Committee review and Governor certification.** WSAC compiles verified applications for the Cross-Agency Steering Committee, which reviews all proposed programs — regardless of institution type — and advances approved programs to the Governor for certification. The state returns the Governor's certification to the institution.
4. **Federal submission.** The institution submits the Governor's certification with its application to the U.S. Department of Education (E-App), including any Program Participation Agreement (PPA) updates or requirements as identified by the institution's accreditor. Training providers must notify WSAC when the Department approves their programs.

On the back end, WSAC shares application data with the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) so that approved program information is populated in Career Bridge, the state's public-facing training program directory and system of record for program data.

Verification Pathways by Training Provider Type

Your program type	Verification agency	Verification form
Community and technical college (CTC) programs, including CTC-sponsored Registered Apprenticeship related supplemental instruction (RSI)	State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)	SBCTC Workforce Pell Verification Form
Private career schools; Registered Apprenticeship programs not administered through a CTC	Workforce Board / Career Bridge	Workforce Board / Career Bridge Workforce Pell Verification Form
Public and private four-year institutions, including Registered Apprenticeships affiliated with a four-year institution	Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)	WSAC Four-Year Institution Workforce Pell Verification Form

Providers begin at the **WSAC Workforce Pell webpage**, which routes each institution type to the correct verification pathway. There is no wrong door: each agency's page links to the others and to the WSAC final application.

Equal Treatment Across Institution Types

Workforce Pell eligibility is a single bar. Every applicant — a community or technical college, a private career school, an apprenticeship sponsor, or a four-year institution — is evaluated against the same eligibility requirements, using the same definitions and evidence standards. What differs is only who performs the verification and how each agency uses its existing systems, authorities, and data to do so. This division of labor builds on infrastructure the state already operates and reduces burden on providers. Two safeguards protect equal treatment: every requirement, attestation, and form of acceptable evidence is stated in this one published document and applies uniformly; and the Cross-Agency Steering Committee reviews all verified applications together, across institution types, before any program advances to the Governor.

Training Provider Eligibility

To offer an eligible workforce program, the training provider must be eligible to access federal financial aid under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA) in Washington. The institution must maintain an active Program Participation Agreement (PPA) with the U.S. Department of Education.

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The training provider or participating institution must be in good standing and must not have been subject to any suspension, emergency action, or termination of programs by the U.S. Secretary of Education during the five years immediately preceding the date of eligibility determination. It is the responsibility of each training provider to ensure that it is in good standing with accreditors and the Department of Education.

In addition, during this pilot year, the training provider must:

- Be legally authorized or licensed to operate in Washington State (for private career schools, this includes current licensure through the Workforce Board's Private Vocational Schools program; for degree-granting institutions, applicable WSAC authorization);
- Be accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education, with the Workforce Pell program within the scope of that accreditation; and
- Have a physical address in the state of Washington.

Program Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for approval from the Workforce Pell Cross-Agency Steering Committee and the Governor, programs must satisfy all federal Workforce Pell eligibility requirements. Specifically, a program must:

- Be an undergraduate program that provides at least 8 but less than 15 weeks of instruction (weeks need not be sequential);
- Be 150-599 clock hours, at least 4 but less than 16 semester or trimester hours, or at least 6 but less than 24 quarter hours, consistent with 34 CFR 690.92(b);
- Not be a correspondence, study abroad, or direct assessment course, and not count remedial coursework toward Pell-eligible hours;
- Have operated for at least one year prior to the date of the Governor's approval of the program, during which time program eligibility requirements were met;
- Meet a program completion rate of at least 70% within 150% of the stated time to completion and a job placement rate of at least 70% within the second quarter after exiting;
- Ensure that no more than 25 percent of instruction is provided by an ineligible institution or organization, or less than 50 percent if the instruction is a related instruction component for a Registered Apprenticeship;
- Satisfy the federal value-added earnings requirement that the institution's published tuition and fees must not exceed the value-added earnings the U.S. Secretary of Education calculates and publishes for the award year, and a program with zero or negative value-added earnings is ineligible (34 CFR 690.95);
- Not be provided by a training provider that is subject to any suspension, emergency, or termination action by the U.S. Secretary of Education during the five years preceding the date of determination;
- Provide an education aligned with the requirements of high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;
- Lead to a recognized postsecondary credential that is stackable and portable (or prepares students for employment for which there is only one recognized postsecondary credential); and
- Ensure that a student receives academic credit for the program for at least one certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institutions.

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How this applies to Registered Apprenticeships. A Title IV-eligible institution—a college or school that can award federal student aid—must teach more than half of a program. A sponsor or other organization that cannot award federal aid may teach part of it: up to one-quarter of the program in general, or up to (but less than) half when the coursework is the related supplemental instruction (RSI) of a Registered Apprenticeship. So an apprenticeship qualifies for Workforce Pell only if a Title IV-eligible institution delivers most of its RSI. An apprenticeship whose RSI is run entirely by the sponsor, with no eligible institution involved, cannot qualify, even though sponsors may apply through the Workforce Board pathway. The apprenticeship deeming provision (34 CFR 690.93(g)) waives only the in-demand and employer-hiring requirements; it does not change this majority-of-instruction rule.

State-Defined Eligibility Criteria

For training providers seeking Workforce Pell eligibility for a program, the program must satisfy all federally defined eligibility criteria and adhere to the state's defined eligibility criteria, as detailed in this section. These state-defined criteria ensure that Workforce Pell funds are invested in programs aligned with high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations and that provide clear pathways for continued education. This section establishes guidance for: Priority Occupation Methodology, Employer Validation, Stackability and Portability, and Program-to-Credit Articulation.

Priority Occupation Methodology

This section establishes a data-driven process to ensure that Workforce Pell-funded programs prepare participants for employment in occupations that are high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand.

- **High-Skill:** occupations that require a credential or degree above a high school diploma;
- **High-Wage:** occupations that pay an hourly wage at or above self-sufficiency, which is calculated statewide based on the self-sufficiency standard produced by the University of Washington (currently $20.46/hour for 2025);
- **In-Demand:** an occupation included in the statewide approved Workforce Pell Eligible Occupations list produced by the Employment Security Department (ESD) for Workforce Pell purposes.

All training programs eligible to receive Workforce Pell dollars must prepare participants for work in a priority occupation. To be considered “priority,” occupations must meet all of the definitions above for a high-skill, high-wage, in-demand occupation, as determined by the ESD and reflected on the approved Workforce Pell Eligible Occupations List. This applies only to training providers and participants seeking to access Workforce Pell funding. It does not establish occupation requirements for other state or federal workforce or education programs unless explicitly stated.

For the pilot, Washington uses a single approved method to demonstrate that a program prepares participants for a priority occupation: the SOC code(s) the program prepares students for must appear on the approved Workforce Pell Eligible Occupations List (123 occupations), which reflects occupations that are in demand and pay at or above the self-sufficiency wage. No labor market surveys, employer letters, or alternative methods are used to demonstrate demand during the pilot. A program that provides the related supplemental instruction (RSI) of a Registered Apprenticeship meets this requirement automatically. Providers enter their program's SOC code(s); the verifying agency confirms eligibility status using the approved list and the Workforce Board’s CIP-SOC crosswalk.

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The approved occupations and their related CIP codes are included in the table below:

[INSERT FINAL WORKFORCE PELL ELIGIBLE OCCUPATIONS LIST (123 OCCUPATIONS) WITH CIP-SOC CROSSWALK, OR LINK TO PUBLISHED LIST]

Employer Validation

To qualify for Workforce Pell, every program must provide clear evidence of employer or industry validation. Eligible training providers seeking an eligibility determination for their program must submit evidence to demonstrate that:

- The program prepares participants for employment in a designated priority occupation as specified in this guidance;
- Employers are currently hiring or anticipate hiring for the associated occupation in the next year;
- The skills, competencies, and credentials taught in the program seeking eligibility determination align with specific employer expectations and hiring standards.

Training providers seeking a Workforce Pell eligibility determination for their program must meet this requirement, for the pilot, through one or more of the following:

- **Employer engagement attestation.** Providers attest to the form(s) of employer engagement that have occurred within the last twelve months connected to the program, selecting any that apply: employers helped develop the curriculum; employers helped review the program; employers helped identify skills or competencies; employers serve on an advisory board; employers provide work-based learning; employers provide hiring preference or interviews; or labor-management or sector-partnership involvement.
- **Existing agency mechanisms.** Employer validation is further embedded in the existing processes each verifying agency administers: for community and technical colleges, the SBCTC program approval process, which incorporates employer advisory engagement; and for private career schools, Workforce Board Private Vocational Schools licensing requirements.

Registered Apprenticeship RSI programs meet the employer hiring requirement automatically and are not required to complete the attestation. The state will consider additional employer-validation options in later iterations of this guidance.

Stackability and Portability

A stackable credential is defined as a recognized postsecondary credential that, through attaining two or more credentials within the same or complementary occupational area(s), increases a learner's likelihood of employment and increased wages, and provides seamless progression, meaning a learner does not lose time or credit when transitioning into additional education and training.

An eligible program must lead to a recognized postsecondary credential that is stackable and portable, or must prepare students for employment for which there is only one recognized postsecondary credential (a single terminal credential). For the pilot, providers attest that the credential is stackable and portable—or briefly describe the single terminal credential and its field—and attach at least one form of the evidence listed below. For single-terminal credentials, the provider also confirms that the program prepares students to continue toward a certificate or degree, with academic credit accepted toward that credential (34 CFR 690.93(a)).

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A credential may be determined to be stackable if one or more of the following are documented:

- A written agreement establishing that academic credit is awarded upon successful completion of the workforce program and that it can be applied toward a certificate or degree program;
- An articulation or transfer-of-credit agreement specifying the number and type of credits awarded for the eligible workforce program;
- A pre-evaluated credit designation has been awarded for the program through credit for prior learning policies;
- Published pathway maps showing progression from the eligible program to at least one credit-bearing certificate or degree with increasing labor market value;
- Evidence that the pathway has been established and in use for at least one year;
- Documentation demonstrating no administrative or institutional barriers to advancement between credentials.

A credential may be determined to be portable if one or more of the following are documented:

- Recognition by multiple employers within an eligible occupation; may be established through related Workforce Pell employer validation requirements;
- Status as an industry-recognized credential, as established by the American Council on Education National Guide or other evidence;
- Evidence from labor market information indicating broad occupational relevance.

Program-to-Credit Articulation

This process establishes the criteria to define and validate program-to-credit articulation for the purposes of Workforce Pell eligibility. It ensures that short-term, industry-aligned training programs provide opportunities for immediate labor market entry or upskilling/reskilling, and for seamless progression into longer-term education and training, including credit-bearing certificate and degree programs.

A Workforce Pell-eligible program may be determined to meet program-to-credit articulation requirements if one or more of the following conditions are documented:

- A written agreement establishing that academic credit is awarded upon successful completion of the workforce program and that it can be applied toward a certificate or degree program;
- An articulation or transfer-of-credit agreement specifying the number and type of credits awarded for the eligible workforce program;
- A pre-evaluated credit designation has been awarded for the program through credit for prior learning policies;
- A consortium, partnership, or system-level agreement confirming credit acceptance or transferability across participating institutions or training providers; and
- Other formal documentation demonstrating guaranteed or standardized credit recognition upon enrollment in a certificate or degree program.

The verification and application review process shall verify that the credential stacks or provides articulated credit into a credit-bearing academic pathway, maintains industry support, and is aligned with the state's high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations list. There must be a firm commitment to articulation with at

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least one program, internal or external to the institution; details essential to that commitment must be in place, while lesser details may still be in development, provided there is clear documentation of articulation.

To the extent possible, institutions or training providers should report credential progression rates, defined as the number of learners who earn an initial Workforce Pell-eligible credential and then pursue additional education and training that result in an additional recognized postsecondary credential.

The Application Process

Training providers seeking a determination of state eligibility for any short-term workforce training program must submit a separate, completed application for each program.

- Application Intake Portal: All applications, supporting artifacts, and institutional data submissions must be processed electronically through the WSAC Workforce Pell portal after completion of agency verification, as described below.
- Application Completeness: Applications must contain all required data fields, including the program name, the agency verification letter, and formal institutional attestations. Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes are entered only if known and are confirmed by the verifying agency from the CIP–SOC crosswalk. Incomplete submissions shall be returned to the institution without formal review. For a complete list of requirements, reference the "data requirements" section.

Step 1 — Agency Verification

The training provider completes the verification form for its institution type (see the pathways table above) and submits a separate form for each program. The verifying agency reviews the submission, confirms items it can verify from its own systems and records, for example, SBCTC through ctcLink and SBCTC records; the Workforce Board through Career Bridge, the ETPL, and federal records (DAPIP); and WSAC through the institutional lists it maintains, and, for each eligible program, issues a verification letter on agency letterhead. Wherever an agency can verify an item from its own data, the provider is not asked to submit separate documentation. Providers submit aggregate or de-identified information only; no personally identifiable information (PII) is included unless the state subsequently requests it.

Step 2 — WSAC Final Application

After receiving its verification letter, the provider submits the Workforce Pell final application through the WSAC portal. The final application collects only the information required for the Governor's State Workforce Pell Program Certification (OMB 1845-0189): confirmation of the verification pathway with the letter attached; institution information (name, OPE ID, address, authorized representative, contact information); program information (program name, 6-digit CIP code, SOC code) for each verified program; and certification and signature, including authorization for WSAC and partner agencies (SBCTC, WTB, ESD, ERDC, and others as needed) to verify information through state and federal data systems. The state completes the remaining certification items: the date each program met eligibility requirements, its completion rate, and its job placement rate from state administrative data. Providers do not calculate or report these items.

Data Requirements

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The training provider will be required to submit the student-record data the state needs to verify outcomes, including a list of program entrants and completers with unique identifiers for the relevant period, through the channel specified by its verifying agency, in accordance with applicable data-sharing agreements. The state matches these records with wage records to calculate placement.

Training providers will be required to submit participant data and a state certification, accompanied by any verification and supporting documentation required by the U.S. Department of Education, sufficient to demonstrate that the program has:

- A program completion rate of at least 70% within 150% of the stated time to completion; and
- A job placement rate of at least 70% within the second quarter after exiting the program, verified through ESD wage record matching and state administrative data. Providers do not calculate outcomes or collect earnings information from students.

Review Process

Washington will use a multi-tier review process administered by the Workforce Pell Cross-Agency Steering Committee in partnership with WSAC, SBCTC, and Workforce Board. The review reflects the four-step path described above:

- Agency Verification: The verifying agency (SBCTC, the Workforce Board, or WSAC, by institution type) confirms institutional eligibility, program format requirements, operating history, priority occupation alignment, employer validation, stackability and portability, and program-to-credit articulation, and issues a verification letter for each eligible program.
- Intake and Completeness Check: Upon submission of the final application, WSAC verifies that all required fields are complete and the verification letter is attached; incomplete submissions are returned without formal review.
- Outcome Verification: The state verifies through administrative data (ctcLink, ERDC, and ESD wage records) that the program meets federal performance baselines of at least a 70% completion rate within 150% of the normal time to completion and a 70% job placement rate within the second quarter after exit.
- Steering Committee Review: WSAC compiles all verified, complete applications into a recommendation package. The Cross-Agency Steering Committee reviews all proposed programs together, across institution types, at the program level; it does not review student-level records or PII.
- Final Approval: Programs advanced by the Steering Committee are submitted to the Governor for final state certification. Denied applicants receive a written notice documenting the reason for denial and describing the appeal process.

Federal Approval

Training providers with programs that are approved by the Steering Committee and certified by the Governor will receive a certification from the state, which is required to submit their programs for approval to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) through the Department's E-App process, including any required updates to the institution's Program Participation Agreement. Training Providers must notify WSAC when their programs are approved by ED. Approved programs will be reflected in Career Bridge and on the state's published list of Workforce Pell-approved programs.

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Appeals

Applicants whose programs have been denied may appeal the decision. Washington uses a single appeal process, administered at the application level; applicants do not appeal individual verification steps. There is one bar for eligibility and one process for contesting a determination that the bar was not met. Appeals should be submitted as follows:

- Within 30 calendar days from the date of the denial notice, the applicant may file an appeal with WSAC, as the administrative front door on behalf of the Workforce Pell Cross-Agency Steering Committee, by submitting a written statement appealing the denial and information as to why the training program should be eligible;
- Applicants should also submit any documentation pertaining to the program that could support the appeal; for example, data or records demonstrating that the program met a threshold the state's determination found unmet; and
- The written appeal should be submitted to WSAC at [Workforce Pell appeals email address].

The Cross-Agency Steering Committee will review the appeal using the provided information and issue a written decision within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the appeal. The Committee's decision is the final state administrative decision.

Scope of appeals: an appeal contests whether the program met the published eligibility requirements, most commonly the outcome thresholds, where an applicant believes it has data demonstrating that the 70% completion or job placement bar was met. An appeal is not a vehicle to propose alternative eligibility criteria, occupations, or methods. Where an appeal turns on a data discrepancy, the relevant agency reviews the applicant's submitted data against state administrative data using its existing data-review processes.

Program Determination Timeline

To provide predictable planning cycles for participating training providers, the State adheres to a strict annual review calendar and processing timeline. Pilot-cycle dates below are proposed and will be confirmed and published on the **WSAC Workforce Pell webpage**.

Milestone	Action	2026-2027 AY (Cycle 1)	2026-2027 AY (Cycle 2)
Portal Opening (twice per year)	The application process opens on the WSAC Workforce Pell webpage, which includes this guidance, the approved Workforce Pell Eligible Occupations List, and the verification pathways for the upcoming academic year.	September 2026 — proposed	January 2027 — proposed
Provider Webinar	WSAC-hosted webinar walking providers through the verification and application process; questions inform published FAQs.	September 2026 — proposed	January 2027 — proposed
Agency Verification	Verifying agencies complete verification and issue verification letters on a rolling basis; WSAC conducts completeness checks and	September–October 2026 — proposed	January–February 2027 — proposed

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Milestone	Action	2026-2027 AY (Cycle 1)	2026-2027 AY (Cycle 2)
	outcome verification upon final application submission		
Application Deadline	The application window closes. Submissions received after this date may be deferred to later evaluation cycles.	October 2026 — proposed	February 2027 — proposed
Steering Committee Review & Decision	The Cross-Agency Steering Committee convenes to review the compiled recommendation package and advance approved programs to the Governor for certification.	October 2026 — proposed	February 2027 — proposed
Determination Notice	The State issues formal Certification Letters of approval or Notices of Application Denial to the applying training providers.	Following Committee review	Following Committee review
Appellate Filing Window	Denied training providers must submit their formal written appeal and all supporting evidence within 30 calendar days of the denial notice.	Per denial notice date	Per denial notice date
Final Appeal Decision	The Cross-Agency Steering Committee reviews the record and a final, non-appealable administrative decision is issued within 30 calendar days of receipt.	Per appeal receipt date	Per appeal receipt date

Considerations for Bilateral Agreements

A distance education program may enroll students from a state outside that training provider's home state if the Governors of the two states enter into a publicly published bilateral agreement. Agreements must meet the following conditions:

- The Governor of the state where the eligible participant resides, in consultation with that state's workforce development board, must include the relevant occupations on the state's list of approved occupations;
- The Governor of the state where the institution offering the program is located must determine, in consultation with that state's workforce development board (in Washington, the Workforce Board), that the program meets the Workforce Pell eligibility requirements; and
- The bilateral agreement must include provisions for data sharing between the states to support the calculation of program completion and job placement rates.

Washington is not entering bilateral agreements during the pilot cycle. The state will publish full bilateral agreement procedures, including required letter contents and data-sharing provisions, in a later iteration of this guidance, informed by federal guidance and pilot experience.

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Ongoing Compliance and Maintenance

This process and outcomes associated with Workforce Pell-eligible programs will be reviewed to assess the effectiveness of the priority occupations criteria or as implementation experience warrants.

Each year after the Workforce Pell-eligible program is approved, training providers must:

- Submit a list of all students who entered the program (including unique identifiers) who completed the program during the award year and the information necessary for the state (via ESD wage records and established data channels) to verify job placement; and
- Report the published tuition and fees for the eligible program through a process determined by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Moreover, training providers with eligible programs approved by the State of Washington must notify their verifying agency (which will notify the Cross-Agency Steering Committee) when:

- Material changes are made to an approved program's structure, curriculum, delivery method, employer alignment, or credential outcomes; and
- The training provider voluntarily ceases to offer a program. If an institution voluntarily discontinues a failing eligible program, the institution may not reestablish that program, or a substantially similar program (34 CFR 690.97)until two years after the date of losing eligibility.

Note that modifying an existing program — including adjustments made to meet Workforce Pell eligibility criteria — restarts the one-year operational requirement: the program must operate in its modified format for at least one year before it can be certified. The state will monitor program compliance while programs are Workforce Pell-eligible, consistent with federal requirements, including during training providers' PPA renewals with Federal Student Aid.

Methodology and Process Update Cycle

Additionally, the priority occupations list and accompanying determination policies (employer validation, stackability and portability, program-to-credit articulation) will be reviewed at least every two years by the Cross-Agency Steering Committee (or its successor administrative home), in alignment with the WIOA State Plan modification process. The priority occupations list may be reviewed more frequently if significant labor market shifts occur or federal guidance changes.

Definitions

Accreditor: Private educational associations recognized by the Department of Education that develop evaluation criteria and conduct peer evaluations to assess whether or not those criteria are met. Training providers and/or programs that request an accreditor's evaluation and that meet an accreditor’s criteria are then “accredited.”

Agency Verification: The first step of Washington's Workforce Pell application, in which the state agency serving a provider's institution type (SBCTC, the Workforce Board, or WSAC) verifies eligibility items and issues a verification letter. Agency verification is a verification step within the single state application; it is not a separate program approval;

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Career Bridge: Washington's public-facing directory of education and training programs, administered by the Workforce Board, and the system of record for Workforce Pell program data;

CIP Code: A taxonomy of instructional program classifications and descriptions developed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Specific programs offered by training providers are classified using a six-digit CIP code;

CIP-SOC Crosswalk: CIP-SOC Crosswalk matches 6-digit CIP codes with 6-digit SOC codes based on their occupational and programmatic descriptions. Matching CIP and SOC codes means the academic program provides the skills and knowledge required to perform a given occupation;

Cross-Agency Steering Committee: The Workforce Pell Cross-Agency Steering Committee established by the Governor — comprising SBCTC, WSAC, the Workforce Board, ESD, L&I, and the Governor's Policy Office — which reviews all verified applications across institution types and advances approved programs to the Governor for certification;

Eligible Training Provider (ETP): ETPs are the only entities that receive federal funding for training services, as defined in § 680.200, through an individual training account, must be included on the State's Eligible Training Provider List, and must be one of the following types of entities: (1) Institutions of higher education that provide a program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential; (2) Entities that carry out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act (29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.); or (3) Other public or private providers of training services, which may include: (i) Community-based organizations; (ii) Joint labor-management organizations; and (iii) Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II of WIOA if such activities are provided in combination with training services described in § 680.350;

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL): Washington's list of approved training services providers that are eligible to receive federal workforce funding via Title I-B of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), administered by the Workforce Board;

Eligible Workforce Program: An undergraduate program that meets strict statutory and regulatory criteria regarding its length, delivery, outcomes, and alignment with workforce needs for Workforce Pell eligibility;

High-Skill: Occupations that require a credential or degree above a high school diploma;

High-Wage: Occupations that pay an hourly wage at or above self-sufficiency, which is calculated statewide based on the self-sufficiency standard produced by the University of Washington (currently $20.46/hour for 2025);

In-Demand: An occupation included in the approved Workforce Pell Eligible Occupations list produced by the Employment Security Department (ESD);

Non-Title IV-Eligible Provider: Unaccredited entities or organizations that do not meet Title IV eligibility requirements to independently receive and disburse federal financial aid; an ineligible institution or organization may provide no more than 25 percent of the instruction for an eligible workforce program (less than 50 percent for Registered Apprenticeship-related instruction);

Participating Institution: An eligible training provider that meets the standards for participation in Title IV, HEA programs in subpart B and has a current program participation agreement with the U.S. Secretary of Education;

Portable credential: A credential is considered portable when it is recognized and accepted as verifying the qualifications of an individual in other settings— such as other geographic areas across the country, other educational institutions, training providers, or other industries or businesses;

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Postsecondary Institution: An institution that qualifies as: An institution of higher education, as defined in 34 CFR § 600.4; A proprietary institution of higher education, as defined in 34 CFR § 600.5; or A postsecondary vocational institution, as defined in 34 CFR § 600.6;

Program Participation Agreement (PPA): A formal agreement that an institution of higher education must enter into with the U.S. Department of Education to be eligible to participate in and disburse Title IV federal financial aid;

Program-to-Credit Articulation: Formal articulation agreements, pre-evaluated credit for prior learning, or other policies written by institutions and training providers that apply industry-recognized certificates or certifications, occupational licenses, or registered apprenticeships towards academic credit for specific courses within a certificate or degree program;

Recognized Postsecondary Credential: Includes an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of a Registered Apprenticeship (defined under 29 CFR part 29,) a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree;

Registered Apprenticeship Program: An industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience with a mentor, receive progressive wage increases, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally-recognized credential. Registered Apprenticeships are industry-vetted, approved, and validated by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency (in Washington, L&I). Related supplemental instruction (RSI) refers to the classroom instruction component of a Registered Apprenticeship;

Self-Sufficiency Standard: The statewide wage standard produced by the University of Washington used to define high-wage occupations for Workforce Pell purposes;

Short-Term Program: A program of study that is at least 150 clock hours but less than 600 instructional clock hours (or the credit hours equivalent) offered by an eligible training provider at least 8 but less than 15 weeks, which need not be sequential;

SOC Code: Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Code is used by federal agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data;

Stackable Credential: A recognized postsecondary credential that, through attaining two or more credentials within the same or complementary occupational area(s), increases a learner's likelihood of employment and increased wages, and provides seamless progression; a learner does not lose time or credit when transitioning into additional education and training; and

State Workforce Development Board: A State workforce development board established under section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and 20 CFR 679 Subpart A. In Washington, this is the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board). The State Workforce Development Board advises the Governor for Workforce Pell program determination and approval;

Verification Letter: The letter a verifying agency issues for each eligible program at the conclusion of agency verification, documenting that the program meets the verified requirements; attached by the provider to the WSAC final application. Standard subject line: "Washington Workforce Pell Verification — [Institution] — [Program]."

WSAC Final Application: The application submitted through the WSAC portal after agency verification, collecting the institution and program information required for the Governor's State Workforce Pell Program Certification (OMB 1845-0189).

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Tab 4

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
TAB NUMBER: 4

Governor's Economic Development Council Update

PRESENTED BY: Workforce Board Co-Chairs, April Sims and Morgan Irwin
CHECK ONE: ☐ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

On June 25, Governor Ferguson signed an Executive Order that established a new Economic Development Council. The council includes Washington State Labor Council President and Workforce Board Co-Chair April Sims, and the Association of Washington Business CEO Kristopher Johnson among other industry leaders from across Washington. The purpose is to identify practical actions that strengthen Washington's economy and expand opportunity. Board Co-Chairs Morgan Irwin and April Sims will provide an update on meetings to date.

BACKGROUND

Executive Order 26-02 directs that the Economic Development Council "shall advise the Governor on a statewide economic development strategy." Stated goals are to (a) strengthen competitiveness; (b) foster innovation; (c) increase manufacturing and trade; (d) grow businesses and family-wage jobs; and (e) ensure broad-based economic prosperity across all regions of the state.

The Council is directed to "identify market opportunities and barriers to economic growth; explore strategies to increase family-wage jobs; evaluate Washington's economic competitiveness relative to peer states and global competitors; advise the Governor on options and recommendations for a comprehensive statewide economic development strategy, including sector-specific strategies; and assess the alignment of federal, state, and local policies and investments that impact economic development.

The Council must meet quarterly and provide advisory reports to the Governor with its findings and recommendations.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Discussion: This agenda item is for discussion purposes and Board members have the chance to ask Board Co-Chairs who are represented on the new Council about its work, purpose and progress. Questions could include consideration of how workforce issues, education and training will be considered as part of the new Economic Development Council's work.

Governor Ferguson creates Economic Development Council

June 25, 2026

Council will guide economic policy to ensure Washington remains a great place to do business



SEATTLE — Today Governor Bob Ferguson established a new Governor's Economic Development Council, a partnership of small businesses, labor, Tribes, educators and large employers in tech and aerospace to guide Washington's economic strategy.

Washington state's economy is the 9th largest in the nation. Washington's economy is ranked as the 2nd best state economy by WalletHub and first in the nation in economic productivity by the latest State of the States report. Washington is a global aerospace leader and the Puget Sound region ranks as the nation's second-best tech talent market.

To maintain that strength and further grow our economy, Governor Ferguson signed **Executive Order 26-02**, creating the Governor's Economic Development Council. The Council will include 26 leading Washingtonians across industries to identify practical actions that strengthen Washington's economy, expand opportunity and help more Washingtonians succeed.

This is the first such body in two decades — since Governor Christine Gregoire's Global Competitiveness Council in 2006.

"Washington is a great place to do business and raise a family," Governor Ferguson said. "We cannot take our strength for granted. I'm launching a historic convening of top leaders from around Washington state to help guide the next chapter of economic prosperity for our state."

The Council is the latest step by Governor Ferguson to take action on economic development.

- Governor Ferguson has used the Strategic Reserve Fund to create thousands of jobs across diverse sectors such as quantum computing, food processing, advanced manufacturing, forest products, clean energy, and more.
- Governor Ferguson has proposed and signed into law record investments to increase the housing supply in Washington, including through the Housing Trust Fund and reforms to building requirements.
- Governor Ferguson signed an Executive Order on his first day in office to cut down on permitting times at state agencies. Here are some examples of the results so far of that Executive Order:
    - The Department of Licensing cut processing time by almost 50 percent across its 340 licenses and permits – 46 to 25 days. All license types are being processed in 30 days or less and the agency has no backlogs.
    - The Department of Labor and Industries achieved a 75 percent reduction in processing time for new contractor registrations, going from 12 weeks to 3 weeks.
    - The Department of Financial Institutions cut processing time by over 50 percent for franchise applications, going from 17 to 8 days.

The Council is the next step in Governor Ferguson's efforts to build up Washington's economy. The Council will develop its own ideas, but to begin, it will:

- Advise the Governor and the Department of Commerce on the statewide economic development and competitiveness strategic plan funded in Governor Ferguson's first budget, due June 2027.
- Identify forward-looking market opportunities and strategies to increase family-wage jobs.
- Evaluate Washington's economic competitiveness relative to other states and global competitors.
- Make concrete recommendations on marketing Washington state to businesses from outside the state.
- Review our regulatory environment to address barriers to economic growth and alignment with federal, state, and local policies.
- Bring ideas that state agencies can take action on immediately.

The Council will meet quarterly and submit advisory reports to the Governor with its findings and recommendations.

Members of the Council

Members of the Council employ over a quarter of a million workers, represent over half a million union members, educate over a hundred thousand students, oversee tens of billions in port shipments, and span many parts of Washington state on both sides of the mountains.

"T-Mobile was built in Washington, continues to grow here and thousands of our employees call the state home," said Mike Katz, Chief Business & Product Officer of T-Mobile. "Thank you, Governor Ferguson, for betting that business and government can work together to build a Washington where our employees, all members of our communities and businesses continue to thrive."

"Adaptation and flexibility are vital to running a successful business — and to a thriving economic environment where all types of businesses can succeed," said Denise Moriguchi, CEO of Uwajimaya. "I'm excited to collaborate with all the leaders here to contribute to statewide economic development strategies that will help businesses like Uwajimaya innovate, expand and create jobs for Washingtonians."

"When business, labor, higher ed — everyone represented on this Council — sits at the same table, we can come up with real, workable ideas that shape our economic future," said Heather Kurtenbach, Executive Secretary of the Washington State Building & Construction Trades Council.

“Washington’s long-term economic strength will depend on the innovations and talent we cultivate today,” said Washington State University President Dr. Betsy Cantwell. “WSU looks forward to working with Governor Ferguson and the Council to ensure Washington continues to lead in the sectors that define the future, including AI, advanced energy, agriculture, and beyond.”

Find a link to the visual directory of Council members here.

Full list of members:

- Michael Cade – Incoming Board Chair, Washington Economic Development Association; Executive Director, Thurston County Economic Development Council
- Dr. Betsy Cantwell – President, Washington State University
- Leonard Forsman – Chairman, Suquamish Tribe
- Denny Heck – Washington State Lieutenant Governor
- Kris Johnson – President, Association of Washington Business
- Trevor Johnson – CEO, Blackwood Homes
- Dr. Robert Jones – President, University of Washington
- Mike Katz – Chief Business & Product Officer, T-Mobile
- Mary Kipp – President & CEO, Puget Sound Energy
- Heather Kurtenbach – Executive Secretary, Washington State Building & Construction Trades Council
- Dr. Thomas J. Lynch, Jr. – President & Director, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
- Julianna Marler – CEO, Port of Vancouver
- West Mathison – President & CEO, Stemilt Growers
- Stephen Metruck – Executive Director, Port of Seattle
- Denise Moriguchi – President & CEO, Uwajimaya
- Stephanie Pope – President & CEO, Boeing Commercial Airplanes
- Heather Rosentrater – President & CEO, Avista
- Michael Senske – Chairman & CEO, Pearson Packaging Systems
- April Sims – President, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
- Brad Smith – Vice Chair and President, Microsoft
- Rachel Smith – President, Washington Roundtable

- Bill Sterud – Chairman, Puyallup Tribe
- Shane Tackett – President and Chief Financial Officer, Alaska Airlines
- Dr. Rebekah Woods – President, Columbia Basin College
- Monique Valenzuela – Executive Director, Ventures
- David Zapolsky – Chief Global Affairs & Legal Officer, Amazon

The Department of Commerce will provide staffing and other logistical support to the Council.

Find video of today's event from TVW **here**. Find photos **here** (additional photos to be added later in the day).

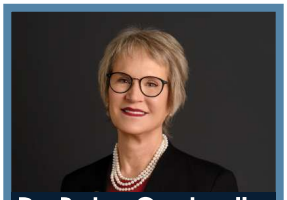
GOVERNOR'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



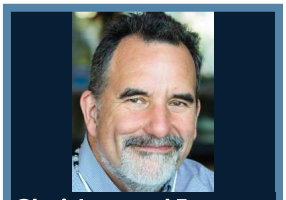
Governor Bob Ferguson



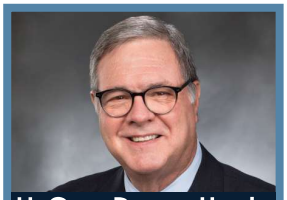
Michael Cade
WEDA, Thurston County Economic Development Council



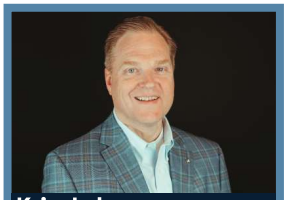
Dr. Betsy Cantwell
Washington State University



Chair Leonard Forsman
Suquamish Tribe



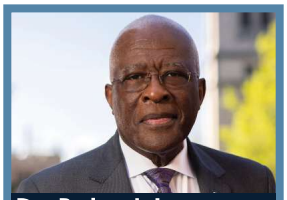
Lt. Gov. Denny Heck
Lieutenant Governor



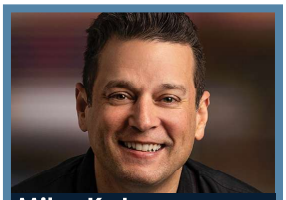
Kris Johnson
Association of Washington Business



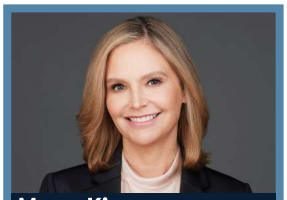
Trevor Johnson
Blackwood Homes



Dr. Robert Jones
University of Washington



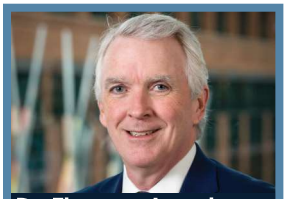
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T-Mobile



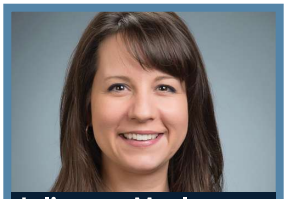
Mary Kipp
Puget Sound Energy



Heather Kurtenbach
Washington State Building Trades & Construction Council



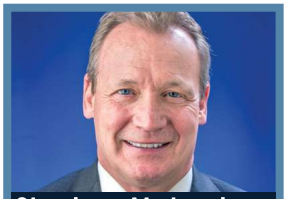
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Fred Hutch



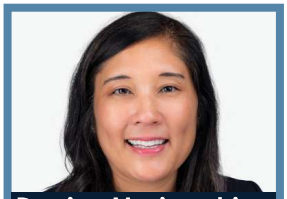
Julianna Marler
Port of Vancouver



West Mathison
Stemilt Growers



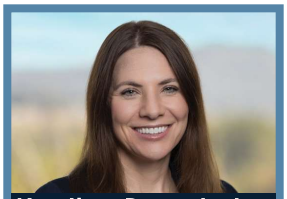
Stephen Metruck
Port of Seattle



Denise Moriguchi
Uwajimaya



Stephanie Pope
Boeing



Heather Rosentrater
Avista



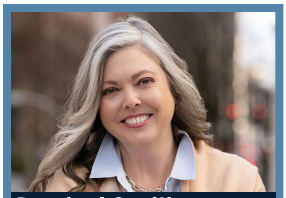
Michael Senske
Pearson Packaging



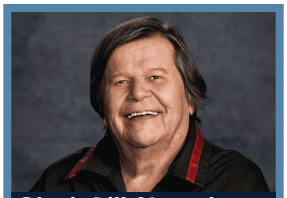
April Sims
Washington State Labor Council



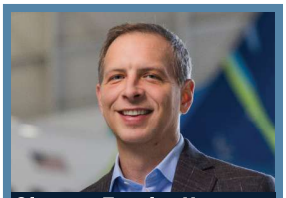
Brad Smith
Microsoft



Rachel Smith
Washington Roundtable



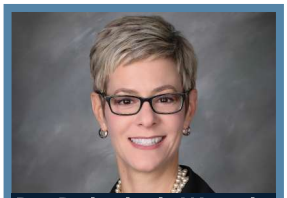
Chair Bill Sterud
Puyallup Tribe



Shane Tackett
Alaska Airlines



Monique Valenzuela
Ventures
(small business nonprofit)



Dr. Rebekah Woods
Columbia Basin College



David Zapolsky
Amazon

"Members of the Council represent hundreds of thousands of Washingtonians and billions in economic activity, spanning many parts of our state on both sides of the mountains. The last comparable body was Governor Gregoire's Global Competitiveness Council in 2006 — two decades ago. We need a new body to reflect our new era, and guide our long-term strategy."

- Governor Bob Ferguson

Tab 5

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
TAB NUMBER: 5

Higher Education & Workforce Development Landscape Analysis

PRESENTED BY: Heather Hudson, Governor's Office Deputy Policy Director
CHECK ONE: ☐ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

Heather Hudson, Deputy Policy Director for Governor Ferguson, will provide an overview of the contract and deliverables expected from a higher education and workforce development landscape analysis directed in the 2026 Supplemental Operating Budget.

BACKGROUND

The Employment Security Department, at the direction of the Governor's Office, and allocated in the 2026 supplemental budget, is contracting with a third-party vendor to analyze Washington's higher education and workforce development landscape.

> $200,000 of the general fund—federal appropriation is provided solely for a third-party vendor to conduct a higher education and workforce development landscape analysis and a related engagement process with relevant parties to analyze the current talent development system and to produce recommendations that would improve access to high-quality employment, education, and training. The federal funding provided in this subsection is one-time and comes from the workforce innovation and opportunity act's governor's reserve account. The department may only implement the work in this subsection upon guidance and approval from the governor's office. (2026 Supplemental Operating Budget, Section 213 (26), p. 354)

This agenda item will provide a chance for Board members to hear about the plans for the study and the expected outcomes and deliverables.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Discussion: Board members may ask questions about the expected purpose and outcomes of the study.

- What problems is this study intended to address?
- Why is this study needed at this time?

Tab 6

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
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Legislative Agenda Coversheet

PRESENTED BY: Legislative Oversight Committee members, Nova Gattman, Workforce Board

CHECK ONE: ☒ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☐ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The appointed Legislative Oversight Committee will join Workforce Board staff in presenting the proposed 2027 Workforce Board Legislative Agenda. Board members will have an opportunity to discuss any requested changes prior to taking a formal vote.

BACKGROUND

The Workforce Board's legislative agenda is developed as a system-wide agenda, reflecting priorities across the entire workforce development system. The proposed 2027 agenda was informed by multiple sources: input from workforce system partners at the June 26 Board meeting, a task team of system partners, and the Legislative Oversight Committee, which includes Board members representing the various components of the workforce system.

The Board's draft agenda was created with attention to the state's budget deficit while continuing to advocate for maintaining workforce programs with a track record of improving economic mobility and meeting the demands of Washington's economy.

Legislative Oversight Committee Members

- Cherika Carter (Washington State Labor Council), representing labor
- Morgan Irwin (Association of Washington Business), representing business
- Amy Martinez (Washington Workforce Association), representing local government
- Martin McMurry (Employment Security Department), representing state government

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Action item: The Board will be asked to vote to approve the 2027 Legislative Agenda.

Board members will go into breakout rooms organized by constituency groups to discuss their feedback. Board staff will then facilitate a discussion of any resulting changes to the agenda.

The Board may choose to approve the agenda with any guidance to staff on small changes, or delegate approval authority to the Legislative Oversight Committee with instructions on areas to address in the final document.

DRAFT Workforce Board Legislative Agenda 2027

The Workforce Board supports legislative policies and proposals that:

- Increase the ability of Washington residents to obtain and retain high-skill, high-wage jobs that support economic mobility and long-term self-sufficiency, and
- Increase the educational attainment of Washington's population to fuel a thriving economy.

1. **Prepare youth for success in college and careers:**
    a. Support initiatives to increase financial aid completion rates and maintain funding sources for state financial aid such as the WA Grant.
        - The Workforce Board endorses Governor Ferguson's proposal to make completion of the FAFSA or WASFA – with a clear and accessible opt-out process – a graduation requirement.
    b. Retain one credit of CTE as a core High School Graduation requirement.

2. **Support proposals that create pathways to self-sufficiency for Washington's workforce by reducing the economic mobility gap for Washington's most vulnerable populations and disadvantaged communities.**
    a. Retain investments in programs that prevent students from dropping out of high school, emphasize work-based learning, and increase credential attainment for youth and adults.
    b. Support integrated service delivery in workforce and social services to assist individuals receiving basic food and health benefits in meeting federal work requirements and more easily accessing education and training services to obtain good-paying jobs.
    c. Continue the investment in programs that support pathways to work such as Economic Security for All (EcSA) and the Community Reinvestment Program (CRP) that have shown to increase the economic mobility and self-sufficiency of individuals served. Leverage federal funding, where possible, to expand capacity.

3. **Promote policies that give Washington workers the skills and training needed to drive a thriving state economy.**
    a. Maintain or expand capacity in workforce programs to meet student, worker, and employer needs. These programs include: CTE in middle schools, high schools, and skills centers, community and technical college professional technical programs, associate and bachelor's degree programs, traditional and non-traditional registered apprenticeships, and incumbent worker training, such as the Job Skills Program.
    b. Identify models and industry sector partnerships where labor and business can more directly inform workforce, education, and training partners, reducing redundancies and encouraging stronger alignment of education and training programs with employer needs.
    c. The Workforce Board will continue advising and supporting development of implementation of Workforce Pell in Washington to enable federal financial assistance for short-term training and credentialing opportunities, allowing easy access for workers to upskill or reskill in high-demand industries and occupations.

4. **Analyze policy proposals on workforce impacts of AI for Washington students, workers, and businesses — specific to training for responsible use, evolving job competencies, and education and training system readiness.**

Tab 7

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
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Healthcare Training Fund Presentation

PRESENTED BY: Laura Hopkins, Executive Director, Healthcare Training Fund
Kelli Kennedy, Regional Chief Nursing Executive, Kaiser Permanente

CHECK ONE: ☐ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

Laura Hopkins and Kelli Kennedy will provide an overview of the Healthcare Training Fund and its career-advancement initiatives, highlighting current successes and future growth plans within the healthcare sector.

BACKGROUND

Established in 2008 as a labor-management partnership between Washington healthcare employers and SEIU Healthcare 1199NW, the Healthcare Training Fund operates as a joint trust for 11 major healthcare systems statewide. Focused on allied and behavioral health, the fund tackles workforce shortages by eliminating education costs, helping students overcome personal and financial barriers, and supporting workers through training, career advancement, and retention.

The Healthcare Training Fund sponsors the Health Care Apprenticeship Consortium and serves over 50 unions and community employers. The organization was recently renamed to recognize how its programs have expanded to serve many employers who are not part of the labor-management partnership.

The Training Fund delivers debt-free, employer-aligned education through core programs such as:

- Introduction to Healthcare Employment and Apprenticeship Program (IHAP)
- Nursing Assistant-Certified Training
- Allied Health Registered Apprenticeships (medical assistant, pharmacy technician, central sterile processing technician), and
- Behavioral Health Registered Apprenticeships (behavioral health technician, peer support specialist, substance use disorder professional).

Registered apprenticeships contribute a small but growing proportion of the overall supply of healthcare workers in Washington, particularly medical assistants and substance use disorder professionals. By bridging healthcare systems, post-secondary institutions, employers, and workers, as a non-profit, the Training Fund serves as a model for how braided public-private funding can successfully grow work-based learning across regional industries.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Guiding questions for discussion:

- What are the key benefits for students and the state of this kind of public-private partnership that supports training?
- How can the Board apply this braided public-private funding framework to other high-demand sectors facing labor shortages?
- What policy barriers currently prevent other regional industries from adopting similar debt-free, earn-while-you-learn apprenticeship models?

Tab 8

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
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Successful Local Model in Industry Engagement – North Central

PRESENTED BY: Lisa Romine, Executive Director, SkillSource
CHECK ONE: ☐ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

SkillSource, the North Central local workforce development board, will showcase how it organizes employer engagement to achieve strong outcomes for workers and employers.

BACKGROUND

SkillSource (the local workforce board serving the north central region of Washington) has consistently ranked among the state's strongest investors in On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training, and the results show the impact of that investment. From July 2024 through June 2025, North Central reported the state's highest adult second-quarter employment rate at 87 percent, compared with a 68 percent statewide average. Dislocated worker outcomes were similarly strong, with an 87% second-quarter employment rate. SkillSource will share the structures behind these results, including how it organizes employer relationships, who manages them internally, and how it coordinates with partners.

SkillSource approaches workforce development not simply as the delivery of individual programs and services, but as the work of building a responsive regional workforce system. This presentation will highlight how SkillSource uses work-based training—including On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), and paid internships—as both an employer engagement strategy and a tool for strengthening regional workforce capacity. Through employer examples and success stories, the presentation will explore the factors that have contributed to this work, including strong and sustained employer relationships, flexible and responsive service delivery, knowledgeable business services staff, and, importantly, partnerships that bring employers, education, workforce, and community stakeholders together around shared workforce needs and solutions.

The presentation will also provide a brief overview of SkillSource's youth career development partnerships, highlighting how collaboration among OSPI Open Doors, WIOA Title I Youth, and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) creates more seamless pathways connecting education, career exploration, and work-based learning. Together, these examples illustrate how local workforce boards can strengthen both employer engagement and long-term workforce capacity through coordinated partnerships and intentional investments.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Guiding questions:

1. How could the state leverage the information and insights from local boards' industry engagement efforts?
2. What are the best ways to work with industry partners to avoid duplication while also ensuring that training, education (k-12 and postsecondary), workforce development services and economic development efforts meet industry's skill needs?
3. Are there best practices that other local boards could adapt and apply in their areas? What would they need to be successful?

Tab 9

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board

MEETING NUMBER: 284
MEETING DATE: 8/26/26
TAB NUMBER: 9

Industry Engagement Strategies

PRESENTED BY: Emily Persky, Interim Director of Policy, Strategy and Research
CHECK ONE: ☒ Action Item ☐ Possible Action ☐ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The Board will direct industry engagement strategies for staff to pursue through December 2027.

BACKGROUND

At the Board's last meeting on June 26, staff presented recommendations from the 2025 Industry Advisory Committee. Staff have since met with partners to gather input and develop proposals.

1. **Workforce Board staff participation** uses existing industry forums and channels and builds on ongoing work.
2. **Collaborate with stakeholders and partners to streamline system-level engagement** and inform long-term planning.
3. **Convene a virtual industry forum in 2027** (an evolution of the 2025 Industry Advisory Committee).

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Action: Staff recommend that the Board prioritize staff participation and streamlining system engagement.

Possible action: The Board could also direct staff to convene a virtual industry forum in 2027.

Guiding questions:

1. Are these recommended priorities—agency improvements now and streamlined engagement for the long term—the right balance to address concerns about duplication?
2. Is there anything missing from these options that the Board believes should be considered before we move forward?

Industry engagement strategies

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3. Convene a virtual industry forum 4

Executive summary

At the June Board meeting, members reviewed the Washington Roundtable's employer landscape analysis and the Workforce Board's Industry Advisory Committee recommendations. Both emphasized the need for more streamlined, coordinated approaches to industry engagement.

This proposal outlines three approaches for strengthening industry engagement, ranging from immediate staff practices to long-term system improvements. This would also set the system up to co-create strategies over the next year, which can inform the next federal workforce development strategic plan (due March/April 2028, dependent on any federal changes to WIOA).

Here are the three approaches:

1. **Workforce Board staff participation**, building on existing work and practices.
2. **Work towards streamlining system engagement.** This would require collaboration with partners, stakeholders. It also sets us up for long-term planning.
3. **Convening a virtual industry forum** (an evolution of the 2025 Industry Advisory Committee).

This proposal does not include new industry-facing tools or resources. Staff recommend deferring these until we have a better understanding of existing resources and have learned more from our industry partners.

Staff recommendations

Staff recommend that the Board: Prioritize staff participation and streamlining system engagement as immediate and long-term strategies.

> **Workforce Board staff participation** builds on and strengthens ongoing work to get more input and share information with industry through existing forums and channels.
>
> **Streamlining engagement** involves collaborating with partners and stakeholders. It sets the stage for systemwide recommendations and improvements that we can incorporate into the 2028 WIOA and state plans.

Both approaches align with input from the Industry Advisory Committee and implications of the Washington Roundtable's employer landscape analysis.

If the Board wishes to maintain a stand-alone industry engagement channel: Convene a virtual industry forum in 2027. The scope would need to be well-defined, manageable and include evaluation measures to inform future iterations. This approach could satisfy stakeholder interests while also allowing us to test appetite for a dedicated convening.

1. Workforce Board staff participation

Description: Board staff would increase participation in existing industry forums at the regional and state levels, including Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and individual Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs), the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and K-12 Career and Technical Education (CTE) councils, the Department of Commerce, and economic development councils and associations.

Scope

- Strengthen the quality and efficiency of staff participation while showing up in more spaces as a partner and resource.
- Engage in existing industry forums where workforce development needs are discussed or raised.
    - Gather input on industry needs, priorities and proposals to inform statewide strategic planning and policy development
    - Share information and resources with industry representatives about the public workforce development system's resources and programs.

Pros

- Low cost, immediately actionable.
- Builds credibility by meeting industry representatives where they already are.
- Aligns with Washington Roundtable's call for streamlined engagement.

Cons

- Harder to measure impact.
- No dedicated, direct channel or forum between the Workforce Board and industry representatives.

2. Streamlining system engagement

Description: Board staff would work with industry stakeholders and partners—including the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Department of Commerce, Employment Security Department (ESD), Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs)—to coordinate industry engagement strategies. The goal is to reduce duplicative requests and make participation more manageable for employers and labor representatives.

Background: Industry partners have raised concerns about siloed engagement and duplicative requests from multiple agencies and organizations within the public workforce, training and education system. To address this, the Workforce Board could pursue system-level improvements that go beyond agency practices or single convenings.

This option focuses on working with partners to streamline industry engagement and support system improvements. The goal is to work toward engagement that is more coherent, efficient, and stays balanced between business and labor.

Importantly, this work would also position the Board and its partners to co-create strategies over the next year that can inform the next federal/state workforce development strategic plan, due March/April 2028 (dependent on any federal changes to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA).

Scope

- As Washington Roundtable builds out recommendations based on their study, collaborate with them to incorporate employer perspectives and constraints.
- Collaborate with labor partners to ensure industry engagement incorporates labor perspectives and constraints.
- Convene partners to identify overlapping engagement requests and opportunities for alignment.

Pros

- Directly addresses employer fatigue with fragmented engagement.
- Positions the Workforce Board within its scope as a convener and bridge between agencies, business and labor.
- Responsive to Washington Roundtable's findings and Industry Advisory Committee input.

Cons

- Complex, multi-agency coordination may be slow to show results.
- Requires sustained commitment from multiple partners, which may be difficult to maintain.
- Success depends on participation from many entities.

3. Convene a virtual industry forum

Description: Board staff would convene a virtual industry forum in 2027, focused on workforce development. This would not be a conference, but a structured session designed to:

- Share legislative updates related to workforce development.
- Connect industry representatives (including previous Industry Advisory Committee participants) with state and regional partners.
- Educate industry representatives on available resources and how to access them.
- Offer breakout sessions for industry and/or regional collaboration on workforce development issues.

Scope

- Consider continuation and/or in-person expansion only after evaluating the 2027 forum.
- Expand industry contact lists with support from Washington Roundtable, Association of Washington Business (AWB), Washington State Labor Council (WSLC), and Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).

Pros

- Creates a visible venue for workforce and industry dialogue.
- Provides an opportunity to synthesize legislative updates and system resources.
- Breakouts could strengthen collaboration within as well as across regions and industries.
- Offers a way to gather insights and emergent needs that staff can share with partners and the Board to inform operations and policy.

Cons

- Risk of duplication with existing activities and events.
- Requires significant staff effort for the Workforce Board as well as time and effort from partners to participate.
- Heavily reliant on expanding and refining the list of industry contacts to ensure representation from critical industries, balanced between labor and business.