

Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development Strategic Direction and Committee Work

Growing a knowledge-based economy takes a knowledge-based workforce. Every worker who seeks a living wage will need some type of postsecondary degree or credential; a high school diploma is no longer enough. Governor Mary Fallin calls this the “new minimum” for success.

The Governor's Council is playing a key role as the vehicle to establish the state vision for workforce and economic development integration. Integration of workforce and economic development objectives will result in a competitive advantage for Oklahoma by achieving wealth-creation for business, individuals, and communities throughout Oklahoma. Five ecosystems (economic systems) in major areas of employment throughout the state have been identified as driving wealth in Oklahoma:

1. Aerospace and Defense
2. Agriculture and Biosciences
3. Energy
4. Information and Financial Services
5. Transportation and Distribution

Complementary ecosystems, which help to expand wealth in the economy include:

1. Construction
2. Healthcare
3. Education
4. Creative Industries

The Governor's Council's focus is understanding the workforce needs of Oklahoma employers and ensuring education providers can meet those needs, and increasing the skills of Oklahoma workers in order to close the skills gap. Various solutions to these challenges are in sector strategies, attainment of credentials/degrees, reducing the high school dropout rate, and career pathways.

To assist the Council in its work, Committees have been established to focus on specific issues and to make recommendations to the Council.

Committees, Purpose and Goals

Workforce System Oversight Committee

Purpose (According to the Governor's Council Bylaws)

Makes decisions on program governance, policy and capacity building for the Local Workforce Development Boards and partnerships. The Committee serves as an oversight board and will ensure compliance with WIOA.

Goals/Objectives

- Certify Workforce Development Boards in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

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- Continue designing, aligning and integrating Oklahoma’s workforce/talent development and delivery system.
- Set system-wide metrics and performance expectations.
- Identify and conduct service delivery efficiency pilot projects.
- Research and identify operational and organizational strategies that will help make workforce boards stronger and service delivery better.
- Develop guidance to make the workforce system more effective and efficient.
- Development of the State Plan, Council Strategic Plan, and the Annual Report.
- Work with regional planning areas to develop planning documents.

Action Items

- Coordinate and ensure support at the local and state level to the Oklahoma Works vision.
- Through a partner supported subcommittee, provide guidance in the form of policy and technical assistance to ensure compliance to WIOA local areas and designated local planning regions, to ensure statewide metrics and required performance are met.
- Convene statewide workforce development partners and local workforce development boards and provide venues and opportunities for continued system building.
- Support and facilitation for pilot projects to provide models for the statewide system
- Plan and develop statewide summits for the Local Elected Officials and board members to continue regional planning.

Youth Program Committee

Purpose (According to the Governor’s Council Bylaws)

Provide recommendations on policy and performance for the development and implementation of WIOA youth funded programs statewide. Create an Oklahoma workforce strategy for youth that aligns with youth initiatives and provides common solutions that coordinate with the state’s economic goals building wealth creation for all Oklahomans.

Goals/Objectives

- Oklahomans are aware and supportive of the state’s emerging workforce and the effect of current trends and issues.
- A youth system is developed through a collaborative effort of networking that is inclusive of all state and local youth organizations.
- The progress and impact of the youth system is benchmarked, measured, and rewarded and best practices reported.

Action Items

- Work with the education system to support the prevention and recovery of affected youth.
- Develop prevention and recovery strategies for both in-school and out-of-school youth.
- Develop a statewide plan in support of youth which would include a communication infrastructure that will inform and engage all stakeholders.
- Provide guidance plus compliance and access to the WIOA youth programs.

Healthcare Workforce Committee

Purpose (According to the Governor’s Council Bylaws and Oklahoma Statute)

Inform, coordinate and facilitate statewide efforts to ensure that a well-trained, adequately distributed, and flexible healthcare workforce is available to meet the needs of an efficient and effective healthcare system in Oklahoma.

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Goals/Objectives

- By October 2016, statewide health workforce efforts are being coordinated through a single, centralized entity.
- By January 2016, labor demand and program supply for 20 critical healthcare occupations are identified and quantified through the development of a longitudinal, multi-sourced data set that is available for public use.
- By October 2019, strategies are in place to reduce identified supply gaps for 20 critical health occupations.
- By November 2019, at least five recommended policies and programs that support and retain an optimized health workforce have been implemented.

Action Items

- Conduct data analysis and prepare reports on health workforce supply and demand;
- Research and analysis of state health professional education and training capacity;
- Recommend recruitment and retention strategies for areas determined by the Oklahoma Primary Care Office or the Oklahoma Office of Rural Health to be areas of high need; and
- Assessment of health workforce policy, evaluation of impact on Oklahoma's health system and health outcomes, and developing health workforce policy recommendations.

Career Pathways Committee

Purpose (According to the Governor's Council Bylaws)

Make recommendations, inform, coordinate and facilitate statewide efforts to improve Oklahomans' exposure to high-demand career and entrepreneurship opportunities, along with the education and training required for entry into and advancement within a chosen career. Develop industry sector strategies in state and regional ecosystems to ensure that the education and training system is delivering the skills needed by employers.

Goals/Objectives

- Create a plan for Career Pathways efforts to be based on industry sectors within Oklahoma's state and regional ecosystems.
- Establish strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities) with workforce development activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment.
- Create and use Career Pathways approaches to increase the proportion of low-skill learners who ultimately earn a degree or certificate.
- Increase high school graduation rates - decrease high school dropout rates.
- Increase the percentage of Oklahoma workers with a recognized postsecondary credential. (A credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State or Federal government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.
- Reinforce the alignment with Registered Apprenticeship for earn-and-learn opportunities.
- Use performance data to demonstrate progress and impact, thereby supporting partner buy-in and reinforcing continued engagement over time.
- Make Career Pathways part of the Board certification process.
- Introduce employers and educators to the value of partnering by describing best practices and success stories.

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- Develop or research pilots and models.

Action Items

- Based on regional ecosystem industries and workforce and economic development data, identify skill gaps in specific occupations.
- Work with education and training partners to adopt or align curriculum in programs to meet needs of employers.
- Create awareness with business and industry, educators, local and regional leaders, KENs, community, students and parents to develop understanding and importance of career plans and career pathways.
- Explore and promote work-based learning opportunities (e.g., workplace simulations, school-based enterprises, cooperative work and study programs, internships (paid or unpaid), on-the-job training (OJT), job shadowing, apprenticeships, fellowships, short-term employment, and other paid or unpaid work experiences).
- Explore promising strategies that have been working for others and might be easily replicable.
- Hold regional summits or meetings on Career Pathways and Sector Strategies.
- Develop a Career Pathway pilot in each region of the state.

Committee Meetings

Committees should meet once a month or as often as necessary to carry out their work. Meetings can be in person, by conference call, video conferencing, etc.

Committee Reports

Committee Chairs may be asked to report out on their work at State Council meetings. Chairs shall submit written information to be included in State Council packets to staff at least ten days prior to the State Council meeting. Staff will work with Committee and Committee Chairs to ensure their reports are accurate and complete.