



OKLAHOMA WORKS

A Blueprint for Success

Oklahoma's Challenge

Oklahoma's economy is more diversified than ever and has enjoyed employment growth for many years. However, experts predict that Oklahomans must earn significantly more postsecondary degrees and credentials to have the skills employers demand to continue to grow and prosper.

The Solution

Gov. Mary Fallin created Oklahoma Works to address the workforce crisis. Oklahoma Works is designed to increase the wealth of all Oklahomans by aligning education and training to create a workforce for Oklahoma's businesses. Oklahoma Works is composed of a coalition of businesses, educational institutions, state agencies and other partners. This initiative is aligned with the federal Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) and a 14-state National Governors Association (NGA) Policy Academy cohort.

In late 2015, a strategic plan was created for Oklahoma Works to help guide the initiative. This planning effort was an unprecedented coming together of multiple agencies, and public- and private-sector representatives from all regions of the state. Working together, the group defined what needed to be done to create Oklahoma's future workforce.

Oklahoma Works catalyzes the creation of a talent pipeline to ensure all Oklahomans have the skills and education necessary to enter and advance in rewarding careers. Using Oklahoma Works' four objectives and associated strategies, we can help all Oklahomans achieve the American Dream.

Objective 1: ALIGN AND CONNECT

Connect the education and training pipeline with the needs of regional economies by coordinating across the education and workforce system.



Objective 2: DATA

Integrate and use workforce and economic development data to inform policy, track progress and measure success.



Objective 3: PARTNERSHIPS

Build partnerships between industry and education at the regional level.



Objective 4: RESOURCES

Optimize the use of resources and incentives to achieve the Oklahoma Works goal.



ALIGN AND CONNECT

Career Options Exposure: Ensure more people are aware of paths to career entry and building, are exposed to careers at an earlier age, are empowered with the information needed to use valuable resources and get workforce-ready faster.

Postsecondary Opportunities in High School: Increase postsecondary opportunities in high school to ensure more students graduate with specialized knowledge or credentials to enter in-demand occupations, start businesses or continue education with less time to completion.

Workforce Readiness: Align workforce readiness services across state programs and agencies so Oklahomans have the skills to obtain good jobs.

Transportation Services: Provide transportation to Oklahomans to address the challenge of connecting education, training and work opportunities with citizens who need them most.



DATA

Using Data to Decrease Labor Supply and Demand Gap: Utilize statewide data to decrease the skills gap by defining benchmarks at all levels of education and training that lead to employability in identified ecosystems. Evaluate and use competencies and assessments. Identify and minimize existing data gaps.

OKJobMatch: Launch OKJobMatch as the official job and labor exchange system for the state. OKJobMatch will connect jobseekers with employers, while improving the accuracy of data available to decision makers.

Common Intake Portal: Create a common intake portal so service providers can identify the eligibility of citizens and refer them to appropriate providers, ensuring more Oklahomans can enter and remain in the workforce.

PARTNERSHIPS

Regional Partnerships: Cultivate and maintain productive relationships between employers, educators and other partners to ensure an appropriately skilled workforce.

RESOURCES

Optimize Cross-Agency Resources: Identify and recommend creative, cross-agency and cross-sector funding models that support similar workforce programs. Include agency programs that potentially benefit from public-private partnerships.

Broadband and Digital Learning Capacity of K-12 Schools: Engage with school districts through the Oklahoma Connect and Learn initiative to acquire adequate broadband and Wi-Fi to meet the 2018 Federal Standards to enable the delivery of meaningful digital curriculum and supplementary programs for students.



Performance Funding Practices: Identify national best practices for performance funding programs and encourage agencies to implement meaningful initiatives to improve outcomes based on performance funding models.

By 2025, Oklahoma MUST:

- Increase employment in critical occupations
- Increase per capita personal income as a percentage of the national average
- Increase percentage of high school graduates meeting college readiness benchmarks on ACT and SAT
- Increase total labor force participation rate
- Increase number of degrees and certificates obtained
- Increase percentage of fourth grade students statewide who score proficient or above in reading
- Decrease state youth unemployment rate
- Decrease state poverty rate