

# OKLAHOMA WORKS



July 2019 – June 2022

Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic  
Development Strategic Plan

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### The Challenge

Oklahoma's economy is growing and diversifying; however, the state is on target to experience a worker shortage of nearly 20,000 people by 2028. Factors contributing to this talent gap include an aging population, low workforce participation rates, and low unemployment. This means attention must be paid to keeping our skilled workers home, increasing our workforce participation rate, and recruiting talent from other states to fill the gap.

Oklahoma is also facing sizable skill gaps in demand occupations [at both state and local levels](#). One in five workers are eligible to retire in the next decade, and in some occupations, that number is as high as 45 percent. Meanwhile, fewer Oklahomans are completing vocational training and higher education for high-demand occupations. Overall, education attainment levels among Oklahoma's workforce are less than required to meet current and future demands. Oklahoma falls behind the rest of the nation in the percent of the workforce with an Associate's Degree or higher (31.9% vs. 38.5%).

In order for Oklahoma to meet labor demands, for businesses to grow and prosper, and for Oklahomans to start businesses or succeed in wealth-generating occupations, we must understand [that](#) the new minimum for success moving forward will increasingly include education and training beyond high school, including degrees, certificates and credentials.

### The Solution

Oklahoma Works is designed to increase the wealth of all Oklahomans by facilitating quality employment for workers and the development of the skilled workforce required by Oklahoma business and industry. Oklahoma Works' strategic priorities are coordinated by the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED). The GCWED believes that coordinating strategic priorities and plans [at state and local levels](#) across education, training, economic development, and business and industry will increase the wealth of all Oklahomans by providing employment opportunities for workers and ready availability of highly skilled talent for business and industry.

The goal of Oklahoma Works is to implement wealth-generating policies across the state through the alignment of private and public strategic priorities, helping all Oklahomans to achieve the American Dream. These objectives and supporting strategies were developed to provide statewide support for implementation at State and local levels while eliminating education and workforce barriers impacting the citizens of Oklahoma.

### Impact Goals

Governor Kevin Stitt's administration and the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development have established impact goals to propel Oklahoma into a Top 10 State for workforce development, including:

1. Increase Oklahoma's labor force participation rate from 60% to 65%.
2. Create 50,000 new private sector jobs [paying with](#) an average [salary](#) of \$55,000 per year.
3. Achieve Top Ten status in U.S. unemployment rate.
4. Increase effectiveness in serving businesses by 20%.

## Objectives

Investments in the following strategic areas will contribute to achieving the impact goals:

### 1. EXPAND OKLAHOMA'S WORKFORCE TO SATISFY INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

An expanded workforce will provide a larger pool of potential workers, increase the financial and economic opportunities of workers, and encourage greater business investment, economic development, and job creation.

### 2. UPSKILL OKLAHOMA'S WORKFORCE:

A well-trained workforce will reduce the incidence and effects of unemployment, increase the financial and economic opportunities of workers, and encourage greater business investment and job creation.

### 3. OFFER WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS TO OKLAHOMA'S BUSINESSES at state and local levels:

Businesses that have access to a responsive, effective and solutions-focused public workforce systems will be better positioned to expand the availability of quality jobs and capital investments.

### 4. BUILD OKLAHOMA'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM CAPACITY:

A public workforce system able to respond to changing business needs and deliver innovative solutions will support the expansion of business investments and job creation.

## Strategies

Each objective area consists of strategies – programs, projects, initiatives, activities – that produce expected outputs (e.g. internship slots, data gathering) which produce desired outcomes (e.g. improved skills, increased capacity). These outcomes contribute to achieving larger impact goals such as increasing labor force participation, and decreasing unemployment, while facilitating state economic expansion. The causal connection becomes less direct, and more difficult to directly measure, with each move from project to output to outcome to impact. A set of connected strategies with relevant outputs and outcomes, however, can be assumed to collectively contribute to achieving broader impact goals.

## Oklahoma Works Leaders

The Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED), the State's workforce board, is the entity tasked with coordinating among education, economic and workforce development, using workforce data to inform policy and programs, tracking progress, and measuring success. The GCWED works with state workforce partners (departments and agencies impacting career readiness) to develop metrics and targets to ensure progress toward goals [at the state and local level](#).

## Critical Support

Oklahoma Works is funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which requires the governor of each state to submit a state plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor outlining a four-year workforce development strategy. WIOA creates a national network of federal, state, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services to help all jobseekers secure quality positions while also providing businesses at the regional level with the skilled

workers they need to compete in the global economy. Oklahoma’s WIOA Unified State Plan, which includes detailed analyses of statewide workforce development activities and the needs of local employers, is fully aligned to this Oklahoma Works plan.

### Structure of the Plan

The list of strategies included in this plan are selective and not exhaustive. Some strategies are listed more than once in the visual framework because they can contribute to achieving multiple impact goals. The last section of this strategic plan groups all of the strategies identified by the objective areas.

Ideally, this framework will provide an additional way of viewing the state’s impact goals and the range of actions that can help achieve them.

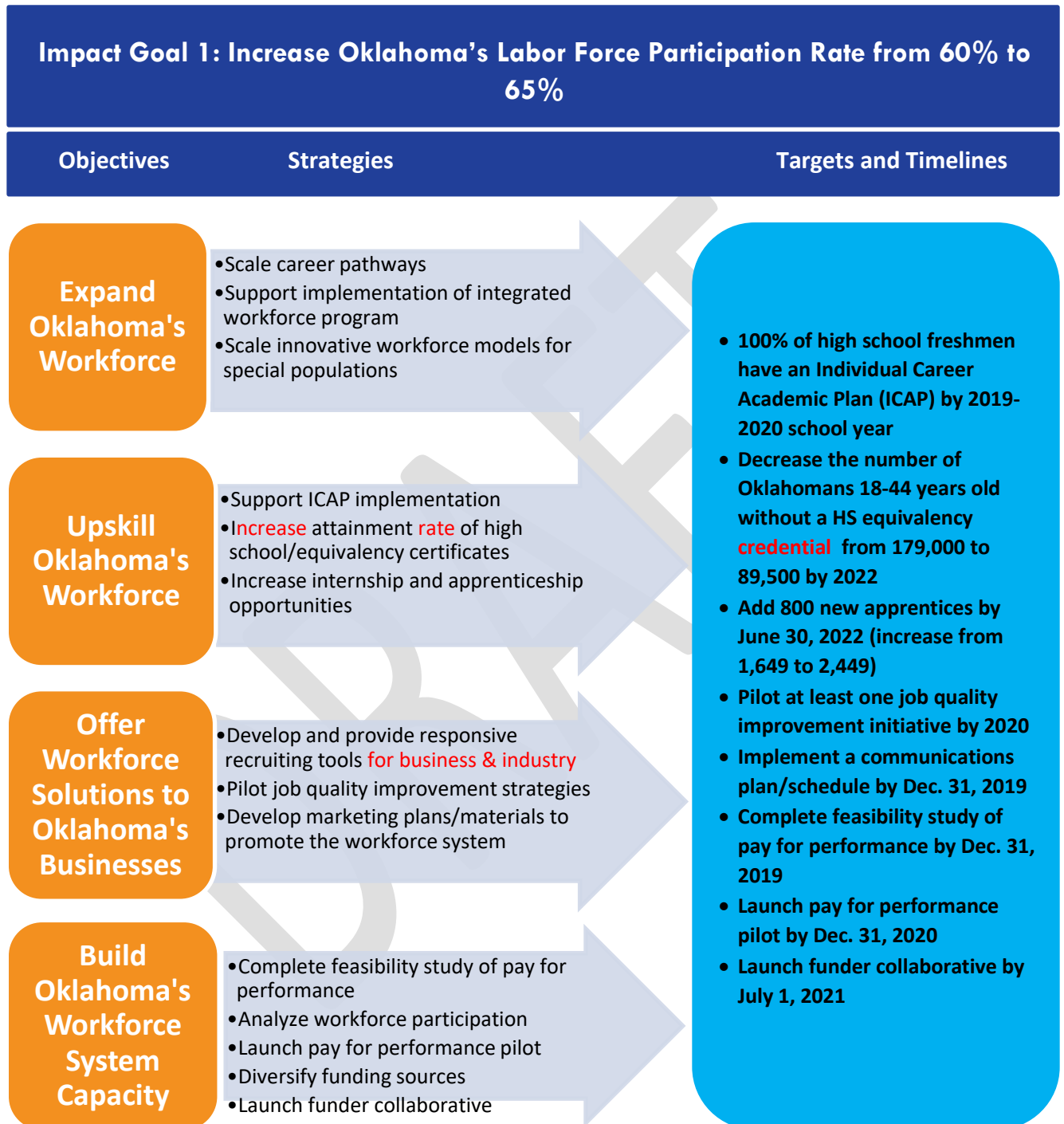
### The Governor’s Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) Council Members

- Katie Altshuler, Marathon Oil
- Cheryl Carlan, Michelin North America, Inc.
- Sara Cook, Mercy Hospital Home Health
- Jimmy Curry, AFL-CIO
- Kenneth Doke, Muskogee County Commissioner
- Shelly Dunham, Okeene Municipal Hospital
- Melinda Freundt, Department of Rehabilitation Services
- David Gerken, Red Plains Ranch
- Chuck Gray, Frontier Electronic Systems Corp.
- Nathaniel Harding, Antioch Energy
- Dee Hays, Excellence Engineering, LLC
- Sean Kouplen, Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development
- Phil Lakin, Tulsa City Councilor, Dist. 8
- Marcie Mack, Department of Career and Technology Education
- Richard McPherson, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
- Tommy O’Donnell, Plumbers and Pipefitters Training Center
- Steven Shepelwich, Federal Reserve Bank of KC-OKC Branch
- Michael Stump, Ditch Witch, A Charles Machine Works Co.
- Jason Thomas, The Boeing Company
- Valerie Thompson, Urban League of Greater Oklahoma
- Pat Viklund, Center for Employment Opportunities
- Dale DeWayne Wilcox, IBEW Local 1141
- Marty Williams, Williams Farms

### Ex-Officio Members

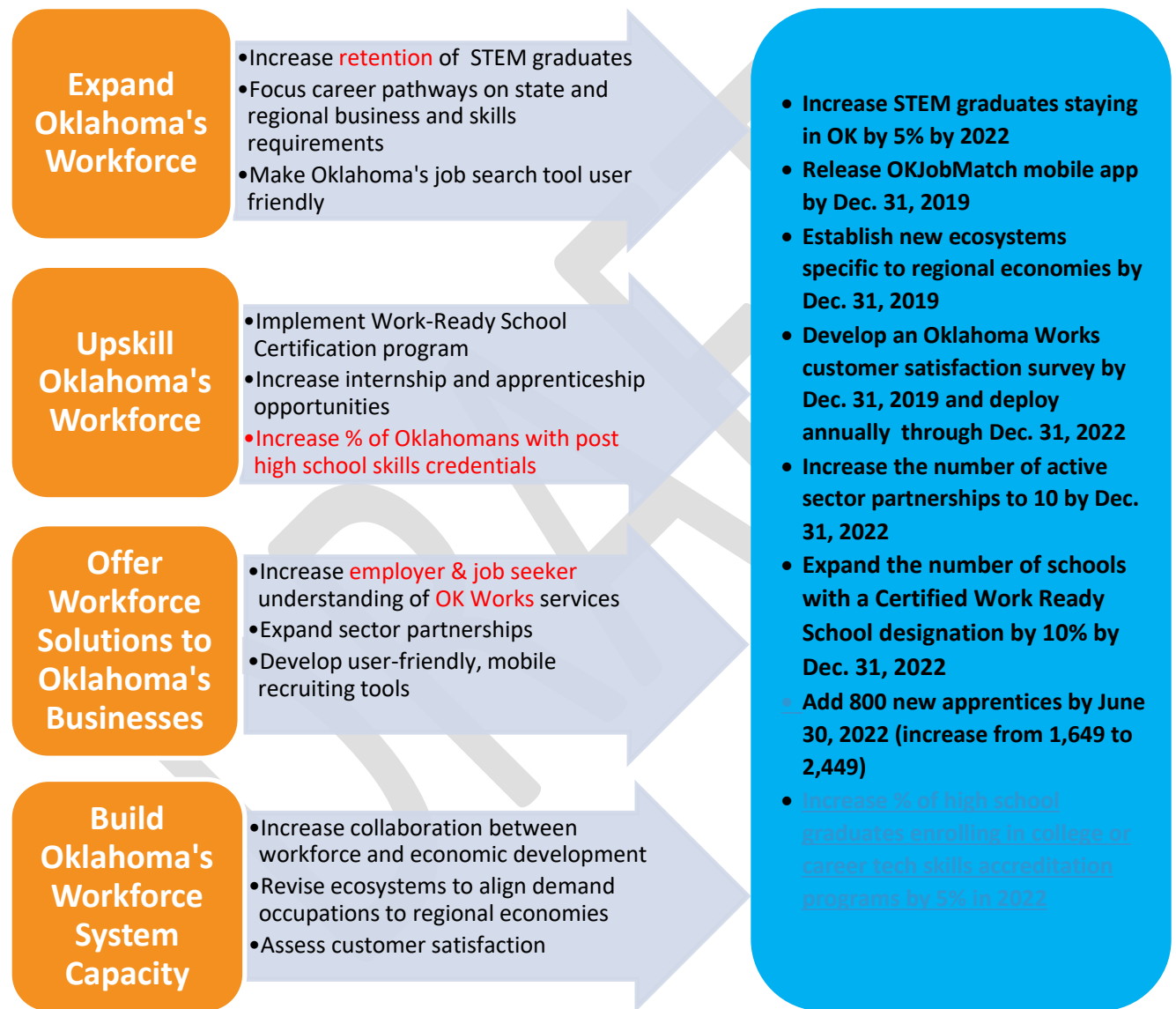
- Scott Crow, Department of Corrections
- Tom Bates, Interim Commissioner, State Department of Health
- Joy Hofmeister, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Glen Johnson, Chancellor, State Regents for Higher Education
- Becky Pasternik-Ikard, Health Care Authority
- Brent Kisling, Executive Director of Dept. of Commerce
- Terri White, Commissioner of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

## IMPACT GOAL FRAMEWORK



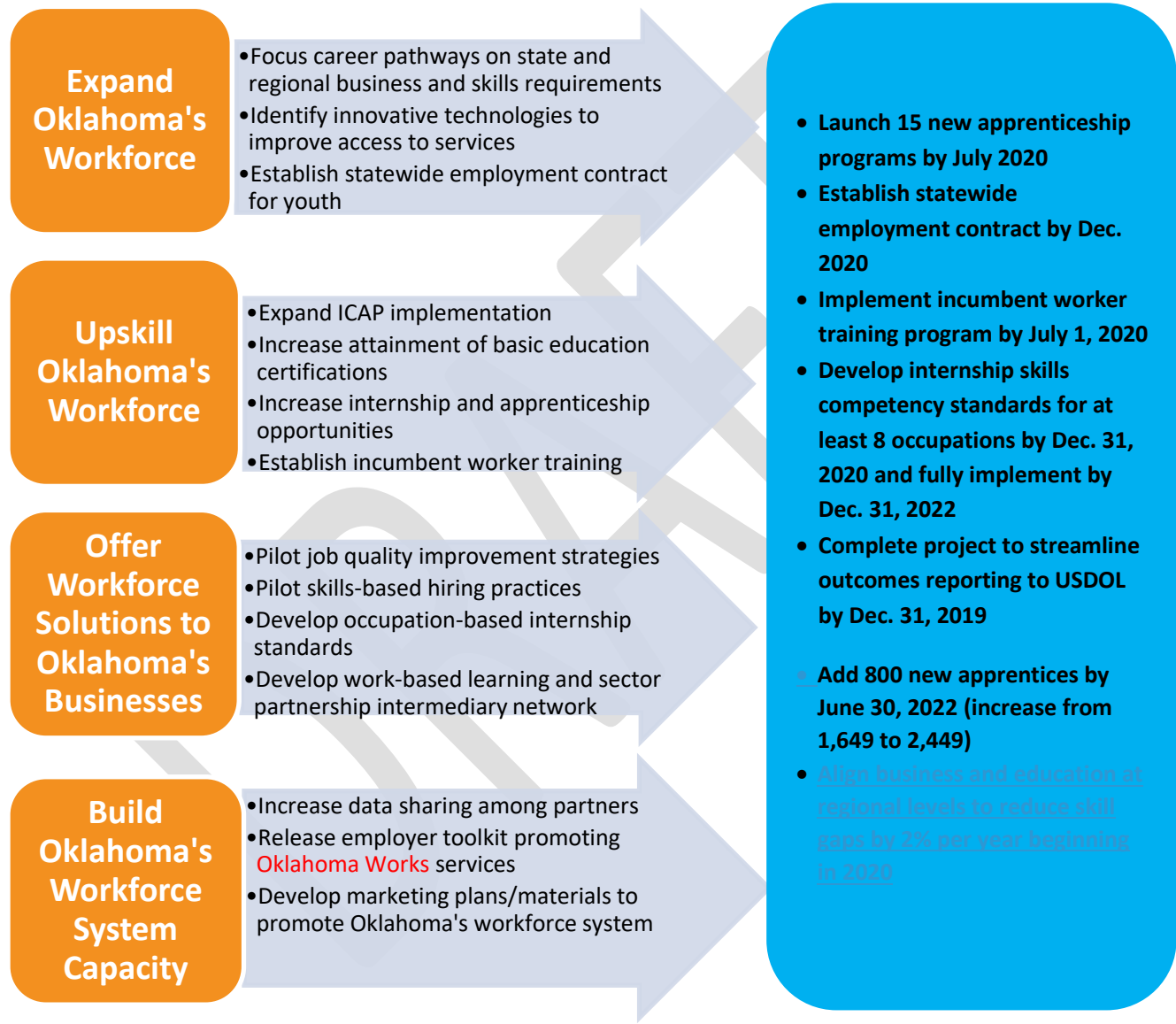
**Impact Goal 2: Create 50,000 new private sector jobs with an average salary of \$55,000 per year**

| Objectives | Strategies | Targets and Timelines |
|------------|------------|-----------------------|
|------------|------------|-----------------------|



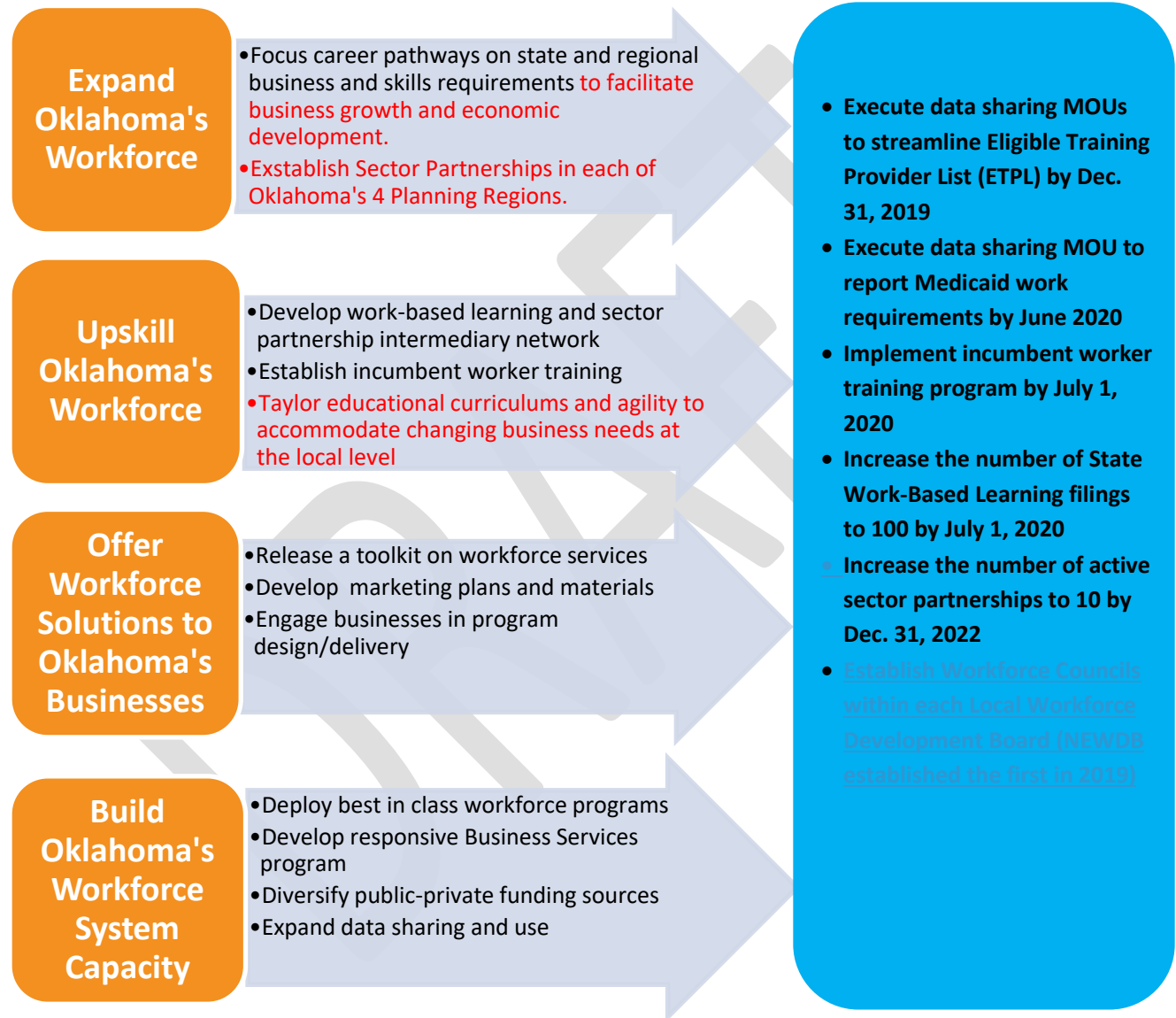
## Impact Goal 3: Achieve Top Ten status in U.S. unemployment rate

| Objectives | Strategies | Targets and Timelines |
|------------|------------|-----------------------|
|------------|------------|-----------------------|



## Impact Goal 4: Increase effectiveness in serving employers

| Objectives | Strategies | Targets and Timelines |
|------------|------------|-----------------------|
|------------|------------|-----------------------|





## OBJECTIVE AREA AND STRATEGIES DETAIL

### Expand Oklahoma’s Workforce to Satisfy Industry and Economic Development Goals

*An expanded workforce will provide a larger pool of potential workers, increase the financial and economic opportunities of workers, and encourage greater business investment, economic development, and job creation.*

| Objective: Expand Oklahoma’s Workforce to Satisfy Industry and Economic Development Goals |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Strategies</b>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engage <a href="#">and upskill</a> Oklahoma’s <a href="#">current and</a> potential workers</li> <li>2. <a href="#">Retain</a> Oklahoma’s workers</li> <li>2-3. <a href="#">Increase the % of Oklahoman’s in the workforce from 60% to 65%</a></li> </ol>  |  |
| <b>Desired Success</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of high school freshmen have a plan (ICAP) by 2019-2020 school year</li> <li>• Decrease the number of Oklahomans 18-44 years old without a HS equivalency to 89,500 by 2022. Increase the number of apprentices by 800 by 2022 (increase from 1,649 to 2,449)</li> <li>• Pilot at least one job quality improvement initiative by 2020</li> <li>• Implement an <a href="#">OKWorks</a> -communications plan/schedule by Dec. 31, 2019</li> <li>• Complete feasibility study of pay for performance by Dec. 31, 2019</li> <li>• Launch pay for performance pilot by Dec. 31, 2020</li> <li>• Launch funder collaborative by July 1, 2021</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Lead</b>   | <p>Steve Shepelwich, Chair, Youth Council (ICAP, HS graduation rate)</p> <p>Chuck Gray, Chair, Career Pathways Committee (special populations <a href="#">workforce integration</a>, ABE/HSE <a href="#">expansion</a>, career pathways <a href="#">roadmaps</a>)</p> <p><a href="#">Shelly Dunham, Chair Health Care Subcommittee ( Initiatives to meet health care skills requirements at state &amp; local levels)</a></p> <p>Nathaniel Harding, Chair, Executive Committee (Gov. integrated workforce program, communications, workforce best practices, pay for performance, barriers to employment)</p>  |  |
| <b>Milestones</b>   | <b>2019</b>  | <b>2020</b>  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the implementation of Governor Stitt’s integrated workforce program</li> <li>• Every student starting high school has an ICAP (2019-2020)</li> <li>• Increase targeted programs for diverse and special populations (offenders, veterans, youth, disabled)</li> <li>• Identify workforce programs that work</li> <li>• Develop marketing/communications plans and materials</li> <li>• <a href="#">Complete a feasibility study on a pay for performance project with the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO)</a></li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an analysis of who is not participating in the workforce and why, including an analysis of the benefits cliff in Oklahoma, to identify barriers to employment and recruit more Oklahomans to participate in the workforce</li> <li>• Develop strategies to address barriers to employment (as identified by analysis)</li> <li>• Launch pay for performance pilot in partnership with the CEO</li> <li>• Identify strategies for expanding reach of HSE services by launching partnerships with organizations</li> </ul> |

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|  |   | <p>providing similar HSE services (e.g. libraries, community organizations, United Way, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale career pathways for in-demand jobs and industries that lead to higher paying jobs in each regional ecosystem (e.g. child care, home health care, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>Develop a tailored ICAP for students completing their High School Equivalency and other targeted populations</p>  |
|  | <p><b>2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement targeted strategies to increase workforce participation of veterans, people with disabilities, and other diverse populations</li> <li>• Scale workforce programs that work across Oklahoma</li> </ul> | <p><b>2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease the number of Oklahomans 18-44 years old without a HS equivalency from 179,000 to 85,500</li> <li>• Increase the high school graduation rate from 87% to 95% (2% improvement per year)</li> <li>• All Oklahoma high school students graduate with a completed ICAP by the 2022-2023 school year</li> <li>• Deploy a tailored ICAP for students completing their High School Equivalency and other targeted populations</li> <li>•</li> </ul> |

## Upskill Oklahoma's Workforce

A well-trained workforce will reduce the incidence and effects of unemployment, increase the financial and economic opportunities of workers, and encourage greater business investment and job creation.

| Objective: Upskill Oklahoma's Workforce |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Strategies</b>                       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen public education's focus on career readiness outcomes</li> <li>2. Expand work-based learning opportunities (e.g. apprenticeships, internships, incumbent worker training)</li> <li>3. <a href="#">Decrease the % of Oklahoman's without an HSE credential</a></li> <li>2-4. <a href="#">Increase the % of Oklahoman's with a post-secondary credential or degree</a></li> </ol>  |   |
| <b>Desired Success</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase STEM graduates staying in OK by 5% by 2022</li> <li>• Release OKJobMatch mobile app by Dec. 31, 2019</li> <li>• Establish new ecosystems specific to regional economies by Dec. 31, 2019</li> <li>• Complete annual customer satisfaction assessments through 2022</li> <li>• Increase the number of active sector partnerships to 10 by Dec. 31, 2022</li> <li>• Establish a successful Certified Work-Ready Schools program by Dec. 31, 2022</li> <li>• Increase the number of apprentices by 800 by June 30, 2022</li> </ul>                                       |   |
| <b>Lead</b>                             | <p>Steve Shepelwich, Chair, Youth Council (Work-Ready Schools, youth employment contract)</p> <p>Chuck Gray, Chair, Career Pathways Committee (career pathways <a href="#">skills roadmaps</a>, work-based learning, sector partnerships)</p> <p><a href="#">Shelly Dunham, Chair Health Care Subcommittee ( Initiatives to meet health care skills requirements at state &amp; local levels)</a></p> <p>Nathaniel Harding, Chair, Executive Committee (regional goals)</p> <p>Richard McPherson, Chair, Workforce System Oversight Committee (improvement strategies related to customer satisfaction, OKJobMatch)</p> |   |
| <b>Milestones</b>                       | <b>2019</b>   | <b>2020</b>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All available jobs aggregated on one user-friendly site</li> <li>• Create mobile access for okjobmatch.com</li> <li>• Make okjobmatch.com more user friendly</li> <li>• Establish regional goals for job creation specific to local economies</li> <li>• Revise ecosystems to be better aligned with demand occupations in regional economies</li> <li>• Assess satisfaction of the current workforce system by employers, job seekers, partners, and other stakeholders (e.g. focus groups, surveys)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with workforce partners to scale career pathways for in-demand jobs and industries that lead to higher paying jobs in regional ecosystems (e.g. child care, home health care, etc.)</li> <li>• Implement improvement strategies based on customer satisfaction results</li> <li>• Launch OKJobMatch app that allows jobseekers to be notified when employers are hiring for their job title/skill set</li> <li>• Establish a statewide contract with an employment agency, or foundation sponsor, to serve as an intermediary</li> </ul> |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch 10 new ecosystem focused apprenticeship programs</li> <li>• <a href="#">Establish Work-Ready School Certification program</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Draft an OK strategic upskill plan to increase the number of Oklahoman’s in the workforce with a post- secondary credential or degree from 31.9% to 36% by 2022</a></li> <li>• </li> </ul> | <p>employer to cover liability related to youth internship/apprenticeship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop competency standards for internships that will serve as a basis for inclusion in the state’s work-based learning program (for example: serve as single point of contact for employers, standardizing minimal competency level for internships across state)</li> <li>• Develop a work-based learning and sector partnership intermediary network to increase the number and type of apprenticeships and internships available</li> <li>• Educate business about the value of the Oklahoma Secretary of State’s internship registry to increase registrations/participation</li> <li>• <a href="#">Pilot the Certified Work-Ready School program</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Finalize &amp; Implement the strategic upskill plan</a></li> </ul> |
|  | <p><b>2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale up a statewide network of regional, industry-driven, Sector Partnerships</li> <li>• Expand the number of schools with a Certified Work-Ready School designation by 10%</li> </ul>   | <p><b>2022</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of STEM graduates remaining in Oklahoma by 5% per year through sector partnership developed incentives</li> <li>• <a href="#">Decrease the number of Oklahomans 18-44 years old without a HS equivalency from 179,000 to 85,500</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Measure results from upskill plan implementation and tailor for growth to 38.5%</a></li> </ul>  |

## Offer Workforce Solutions to Oklahoma’s Businesses

*Businesses that have access to a responsive, effective and solutions-focused public workforce systems will be better positioned to expand the availability of quality jobs and capital investments.*

| Objective: Offer Workforce Solutions to Oklahoma’s Businesses |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Strategies</b>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase understanding of workforce services among businesses through focused educational and marketing strategies</li> <li>2. Engage businesses in program design and service delivery</li> <li>3. Develop and provide responsive recruiting tools</li> <li>3-4. <a href="#">Establish a local business focused Workforce Council within each Workforce Development Board</a></li> </ol>   |  |
| <b>Desired Success</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch 15 new apprenticeship programs by July 2020</li> <li>• Establish statewide youth employment contract by Dec. 2020</li> <li>• Implement incumbent worker training program by July 1, 2020</li> <li>• Develop internship competency standards for at least 8 occupations/ industries</li> <li>• Complete project to streamline outcomes reporting to USDOL by Dec. 31, 2019</li> <li>• Increase the number of apprentices by 800 by June 30, 2022</li> <li>• Deploy business educational/marketing tools for workforce services</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Lead</b>   | <p>Nathaniel Harding, Chair, Executive Committee (innovative technologies, regional goals)<br/>                     Richard McPherson, Chair, Workforce System Oversight Committee (incumbent worker training policy)<br/> <a href="#">Chuck Gray, Chair, Career Pathways (Sector Partnerships)</a></p>   |  |
| <b>Milestones</b>   | <b>2019</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create marketing and communications materials and placement schedules to promote workforce development and okjobmatch.com, including op-eds, videos, success stories</li> <li>• Release an employer toolkit so businesses know what value-added services and opportunities Workforce Development provides</li> <li>• Develop an incumbent worker training program to support worker and business retention</li> <li>• Collect business feedback on system likes and dislikes and modify as appropriate</li> <li>• Develop a strategic plan for Business Services to be responsive to employers’ needs and integrated with state economic development priorities</li> </ul> | <b>2020</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish regional goals for job creation specific to local economies</li> <li>• Roll out a pilot for skills-based hiring practices in partnership with the Oklahoma State Chapter of SHRM (OKHR) and other stakeholders</li> <li>• Implement policies/raise funds to increase access to incumbent worker training</li> <li>• Pilot job quality improvement strategies that provide improved outcomes for businesses and workers (reduced turnover, greater participation, relevant benefits, etc.)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Identify innovative technologies to increase and improve access to workforce system services, particularly for those in rural communities with limited access to transportation</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Increase Sector Partnership Grants from 2 to 4</a></li> </ul> |

|  | 2021  | 2022  |
|--|---|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scale skills-based hiring practices initiative statewide</li><li>• <u>Implement a partnership recruitment strategy that allows employers to access skilled talent quickly</u></li><li>• <u>Increase Sector Partnership Grants from 4 to 7</u></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Assess results of skills-based hiring practices pilot, refine program and systematically deploy to all Oklahoma regions</u></li><li>• <u>Increase Sector Partnership Grants from 7 to 10</u></li></ul> |

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## Build Oklahoma’s Workforce System Capacity

A public workforce system able to respond to changing business needs and deliver innovative solutions will support the expansion of business investments and job creation.

| Objective: Build Oklahoma’s Workforce System Capacity |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Strategies</b>                                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drive innovation</li> <li>2. Diversify funding</li> <li>3. Expand data assets and use</li> <li>4. Establish a unified State information baseline for data integrity</li> </ol>  |  |
| <b>Desired Success</b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Execute data sharing MOUs to streamline Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) by Dec. 31, 2019</li> <li>• Execute data sharing MOU to report Medicaid work requirements by June 2020</li> <li>• Implement incumbent worker training program by July 1, 2020</li> <li>• Increase the number of State Work-Based Learning filings to 100 by July 1, 2020</li> <li>• Increase the number of active sector partnerships to 10 by Dec. 31, 2022</li> </ul>   |  |
| <b>Lead</b>   | <p>Chuck Gray, Chair, Career Pathways Committee (ABE/HSE, WBL, sector partnerships)<br/>                     Nathaniel Harding, Chair, Executive Committee (MOUs, baseline/tracking metrics, advocate for data systems/sharing, economic incentives)<br/>                     Richard McPherson, Chair, Workforce System Oversight Committee (incumbent worker training)</p>  |  |
| <b>Milestones</b>                                     | <b>2019</b>   | <b>2020</b>  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strategic plan for Business Services to be responsive to employers’ needs and integrated with state economic development priorities</li> <li>• Develop an incumbent worker training program</li> <li>• Execute MOUs with Career Tech and Higher Ed for data sharing necessary to include postsecondary institutions on the Eligible Training Provider List</li> <li>• Execute data sharing agreement with the OK Health Care Authority to track work requirements</li> <li>• Develop incentives package for employers to register work-based learning opportunities with the state</li> <li>• Collaborate with Dept. of Commerce to define common databases and responsibilities for measuring plan milestones</li> <li>• Establish a standard baseline for assessing plan progress, milestone accomplishment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess effective practices in attracting and using non-Federal, public and private, funding sources to support workforce development</li> <li>• Implement policies/raise funds to increase access to incumbent worker training</li> <li>• Increase collaboration between state and local workforce and economic development efforts</li> <li>• Market workforce services to businesses, including ESL and HSE classes onsite for employees</li> <li>• Launch layoff aversion services for struggling businesses</li> <li>• Increase the number of employers registering work-based learning opportunities with the state</li> <li>• Adopt data system(s) approved by Executive Director, Dept. of Commerce to track milestones/outcomes</li> <li>• Deploy best in class workforce programs</li> </ul> |

|  | 2021   | 2022  |
|--|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop IT infrastructure and APIs necessary to share data among workforce partners</li> <li>• Advocate for economic incentives for employers, industries and workforce participants to upskill (e.g. tax credits, tuition resources)</li> <li>• Advocate for better state data systems and single person identifier to allow for more strategic investments and increased efficiencies</li> <li>• Implement a master MOU to be signed by the 17 state agency workforce partners</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase data sharing among workforce partner agencies for increased accountability and improved planning, including a move to one shared case management system for WIOA core partners</li> <li>• Implement innovative service delivery models that incorporate digital solutions to increasing accessibility and convenience of workforce development programs and training</li> <li>• Scale up a statewide network of regional, industry-focused Sector Partnerships to identify and implement employer-driven workforce development strategies</li> <li>• Develop community-based, public-private collaborative partnerships to increase targeted resources and funding for the state’s workforce system (e.g. CDFI, CDC, etc.)</li> </ul> |

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