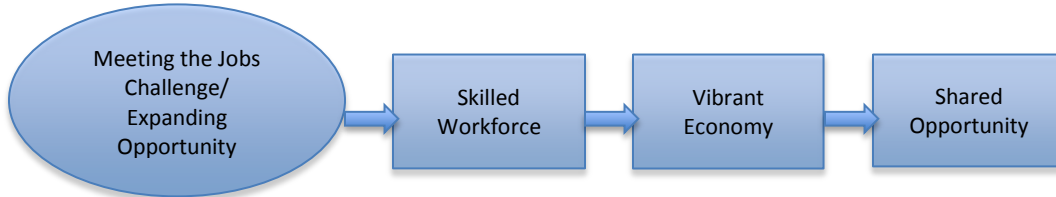


III. Governor's Vision

Shared Strategy for Shared Prosperity



The Challenge

California workers face multiple serious challenges over the next decade, including an increasingly globalizing and rapidly changing economy accompanied by unprecedented volatility and labor market churn. Workers who lose their jobs lose ground, often permanently.

At the same time, the pressure on workers to gain higher levels of skill continues to grow. To quote the White House's Education Blueprint:

Earning a post-secondary degree or credential is no longer just a pathway to opportunity for a talented few; rather, it is a prerequisite for the growing jobs of the new economy. Over this decade, employment in jobs requiring education beyond a high school diploma will grow more rapidly than employment in jobs that do not; of the 30 fastest growing occupations, more than half require postsecondary education.¹

In California, as in the rest of the nation, many of these are "middle skill" jobs. They require less than a bachelor's degree but some postsecondary training through a community college, adult school, career technical education program, state-approved apprenticeship, or other training provider. Nonetheless, without a change in direction, California faces a looming skills gap fueled by dramatic demographic shifts. By 2020, approximately 60 percent of the state's prime age workforce will be from populations with historically low levels of educational attainment.

¹ President Barack Obama's January 24, 2012 *Education Blueprint: An Economy Built to Last*, Page 3
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/cantwait/final_-_education_blueprint_-_an_economy_built_to_last.pdf

Therefore, California workers will need more education and training. But skills attainment also must be an ongoing process over the course of a lifetime that permits individuals to re-tool their skills in response to changing workforce needs. Therefore, the overarching goal of California's Strategic Workforce Development Plan is the reorientation and realignment of California's workforce programs and institutions to support a dynamic and globally successful state economy that offers all residents – including the most vulnerable – an opportunity for a higher quality of life.

Our vision calls for a state strategy based on ongoing skills attainment focused on regional growth industry sectors and clusters. By braiding² education, training, and employment services together to support these sectors, we can both effectively address employers' needs for a high quality, appropriately skilled workforce and support workers' needs for well-paid, steady work. This strategy draws on lessons from the traditional apprenticeship model -- providing workers maximum employment outcomes through mobility among multiple employers within an industry sector or cluster.

Pieces of this approach are being implemented by communities and regions throughout California, but real barriers stand in their way. These include:

- *California's workforce system is not aligned to key regional industry sectors and employers committed to providing jobs.* As a result, limited resources are not well targeted.
- *California's workforce institutions and programs are siloed.* Poor articulation, fiscal restrictions, and conflicting policies make it difficult to scale effective practices across workforce programs. Data collection is also particularly fractured in California, making it almost impossible to measure the results from workforce investments meaningfully.
- *Too few job-seekers – including displaced workers and veterans – are provided access to high quality career technical education (CTE) programs.* Competing demands for scarce resources threaten to exacerbate this problem.
- *Career Technical Education (CTE) programs are not linked into coherent career pathways, and too few have implemented evidence-based practices.* Research suggests that California's CTE programs do not place enough priority on sequencing lower-to-higher credentials within a field, impeding student progress to high levels of education.

² Braiding is defined as the leveraging of multiple funding streams for the support of both a single individual's and group of individuals employment goals.

Too few integrate practices that improve student success such as contextualized remediation, cohort-based instruction, and accelerated learning.

- *Basic skills deficiencies are a critical barrier to most individuals accessing high quality CTE, yet California's system of basic skills education is failing most students.* One of every four working age adults in California possesses very low basic skills, and few overcome that gap, blocking them from most good paying jobs. The adult education and non-credit programs of the California Community Colleges (CCCs) transition very few students into postsecondary education and training; just one in five basic skills students in the CCCs achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer, and it takes on average one-to-two years longer to obtain credentials as compared to their peers.
- *Workforce and education programs, community-based organizations, and others fail to coordinate effectively to provide individuals in training the range of supportive services they need to succeed.*

California's Strategic Workforce Development Plan

California's Strategic Workforce Development Plan builds on emerging efforts by Local Boards, community colleges, adult education providers, community-based and economic development organizations, unions, and employers to address these and other critical challenges. The Plan begins with the articulation of broadly shared goals.

Goals

State and regional stakeholders identified goals in four key areas to guide the activities of the workforce system over the next five years:

- **Business and Industry:** Meet the workforce needs of high demand sectors of the state and regional economies.
- **Adults:** Increase the number of Californians who obtain a marketable and industry-recognized credential or degree, with a special emphasis on unemployed (both short and long-term), underemployed, low-skilled, low-income, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and other at-risk populations.
- **Youth:** Increase the number of high school students, with emphasis on at-risk youth and those from low-income communities, who graduate prepared for postsecondary vocational training, further education, and/or a career.
- **System Alignment and Accountability:** Support system alignment, service integration, and continuous improvement using data to support evidence-based policymaking.

Strategy

To support these goals, the State Working Group and regional stakeholders agreed on an overarching strategy designed to address regional economic needs and promote skill development. The State Working Group also committed to a set of specific short-term (begin addressing within 18 months or less) and longer-term actions (See Chapter IV).

Regional Sector Strategy

California's regional sector strategy builds on regional workforce and economic development networks and industry-specific sector partnerships, often with career pathway programs at their center, that have begun to develop over the past decade in regions throughout the state. The Los Angeles Workforce Systems Collaborative (LAWSC) is a good example of a regional network. LAWSC is a coalition of business associations, labor, community organizations, economic development, community colleges, Local Boards, and philanthropy focused on directing resources toward the region's growth industries. Examples of industry sector partnerships include some formed around manufacturing and goods movement in the East Bay and Los Angeles regions; healthcare and biotechnology in San Diego and the Bay Area; high technology in Silicon Valley; food production in the Central Valley; and entertainment and hospitality in Los Angeles.

Regional workforce and economic development networks

Existing regional networks were formed for different purposes with a variety of organizations in leadership. California's Strategic Workforce Development Plan envisions continued diversity but encourages regions to bring together all major stakeholders, guided and sustained by a "backbone" organization that has the trust of all partners. One key purpose of the regional networks is to develop and support industry-specific partnerships and career pathways. Roles of the regional network include:

- Identifying key competitive and emerging industries in the region;
- Aligning, coordinating, and integrating a region's resources to support the development of industry-specific partnerships in those targeted industries;
- Removing local policy and administrative barriers to the alignment of multiple public programs and funding streams; and
- Identifying and accessing additional federal, state, private and philanthropic resources to sustain the network, invest in specific programs, and to seed sector partnerships.

Industry sector partnerships

In industry sector partnerships, workforce practitioners work closely with employers and labor organizations to develop education and training curriculum and programs to meet business demands for skilled labor. Partnerships include the range of stakeholders needed to address employers' pipeline needs and build robust career pathways. The geographic reach of a sector partnership is typically regional, with the specifics driven by how labor markets operate within a given industry. Lead organizations may be a Local Board, industry association, formal labor-

management partnership, regional non-profit, or community college. In the Sacramento Valley, for example, Valley Vision – a regional non-profit – leads the Green Capital Alliance (GCA). GCA is a broad partnership of business, academic, workforce, economic development, sustainability, and clean-tech organizations working to support the region's clean-tech economy. In Los Angeles, the Hospitality Training Academy grew out of a labor-management partnership of UNITE-HERE Local 11 and several hotel properties. The Academy is now the flagship hospitality sector project of the Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board and the Los Angeles Community College District.

The roles played by effective industry sector partnerships include:

- Identifying and articulating current and anticipated skill needs within the industry;
- Mapping out and establishing career pathways in the targeted industry sector;
- Integrating programs and braiding funding streams along career pathways, and providing supportive services for underprepared students and workers;
- Developing training curriculum and/or adjusting existing curriculum;
- Developing common systems to track participant success;
- Providing students and workers with industry valued skills certifications, credentials, and degrees at multiple points along career pathways; and
- Developing other strategies to support industry workforce needs and worker career advancement.

State role

California's Strategic Workforce Development Plan provides new support for these efforts at the state level. The State Board and its committees – including the State Working Group of department directors that developed the blueprint for the state plan – are committed to scaling up existing regional network and industry sector partnerships and spreading the model to new regions. State institutions and programs will direct resources to this work and support it by:

- Aligning their policy goals;
- Establishing common success metrics;
- Maximizing, leveraging, and aligning resources; and
- Identifying, removing or erasing administrative or policy barriers.

Specific Strategic Opportunities

More specifically, the State Working Group identified short and longer-term actions to achieve identified goals. Specific goals, strategic opportunities and actions are detailed in Chapter IV.