

Executive Summary Including Statement Pertaining to Vision and Goals (Corresponding to Strategic Planning Elements Required Under WIOA Sec. 102(b)(1)(D))

Policy Objectives

Consistent with WIOA, the State Board has developed its State Plan with three policy objectives in mind. These objectives affect both state-level policy and administrative practices across programs as well as local policy and service delivery:

- Fostering “demand-driven skills attainment”. Workforce and education programs need to align program content with the state’s industry sector needs so as to provide California’s employers and businesses with the skilled workforce necessary to compete in the global economy.
- Enabling upward mobility for all Californians, including populations with barriers to employment. Workforce and education programs need to be accessible for all Californians and ensure that everyone has access to a marketable set of skills, and is able to access the level of education necessary to get a good job that ensures both long-term economic self-sufficiency and economic security.
- Aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services to economize limited resources to achieve scale and impact, while also providing the right services to clients, based on each client’s particular and potentially unique needs, including any needs for skills-development.

Industry Engagement

This State Plan adopts a dual-customer focus and is intended to provide policy direction for a system that serves both employers and job seekers. The State Plan attempts to do this by laying out a policy framework for aligning education, training, and employment services with regional labor market needs through a process of regional industry sector engagement. By organizing currently fragmented employment and training programs to meet the skill demands of employers in industry sectors that are driving regional employment, the system helps create opportunities to move workers up a career ladder using targeted incumbent worker training while also moving new hires into jobs using strong employer engagement practices, relevant training investments, supportive services, and basic skills remediation where necessary.

Serving Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Both federal and state law mandate that services be provided to individuals with barriers to employment.¹ As noted above, the State Board believes the best way to serve both employers and job seekers, including those with barriers to employment, is to align training, education, and employment services with industry needs, including the skills and training needs of California's employers. This will mean, in many instances, providing access to training and education programs that align with regional labor market trends. For some individuals, this will also require the provision of remedial education services, including services designed to improve literacy and numeracy, English language literacy, as well as programming that facilitates high school dropout recovery, to better position these individuals to participate in training and education programs that are calibrated to employers' needs.

Job Placement in Quality Jobs

The ultimate goal of the workforce system is to help people get a good job, and for those who don't have the requisite skills to immediately get a good job, the goal is to ensure access to the employment services, supportive services, training, and education programming that will help these individuals eventually get a good job.

State law directs the State Board to develop strategies that help people enter and retain employment and emphasizes the development of policies that lead to "placement in a job providing economic security or job placement in an entry-level job that has a well-articulated career pathway or career ladder to a job providing economic security."² State law defines these jobs as those that provide, "a wage sufficient to support a family adequately, and, over time, to save for emergency expenses and adequate retirement income, based on factors such as household size, the cost of living in the worker's community, and other factors that may vary by region."³

The State Board recognizes that not all jobs are good jobs and that education and training alone will not solve the problem of poverty. There is a hidden cost to low wage work that is ultimately

¹ WIOA section 134 requires that priority of service be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals that are basic skills deficient for any expenditure of WIOA Adult program funds spent on individualized career services and training. Similarly, California Unemployment Insurance Code section 14000 (b) (6) requires that programs and services be accessible to "individuals with employment barriers, such as persons with economic, physical, or other barriers to employment." California Unemployment Insurance Code section 14013(d)(2) further directs the State Board to develop "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, and including individuals with disabilities, with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment."

² UIC 14013.

³ UIC 14005

borne by communities, particularly communities of color and immigrant populations. The State Board is committed to developing a workforce system that enables economic growth and shared prosperity on the basis of innovation, quality, and skills attainment rather than low wages, contingent employment, and low or no benefits. As such, state plan partners and providers covered by the plan should make it a priority to work with employers who offer jobs with good wages and benefits, support for ongoing skill training and employee advancement, good working conditions (including paid sick days, paid family leave, and paid medical or short-term disability leave), and adequate hours with predictable schedules that enable employees to meet their family caregiving commitments.

Customer-Centered Services

The State Board recognizes that services provided will vary on the basis of customer need. For some, these services will necessarily involve enrollment in remedial basic skills programming prior to, or concurrently with, enrollment in career technical education or job training. For other individuals, participation in job readiness training may be necessary prior to labor market entry. It is important to recognize that individuals with significant barriers to employment may need multiple interventions and access to a menu of services provided over an extended period of time before they will be able to find and enter a good job. However, for other individuals served by the workforce system, especially dislocated workers with an in-demand skillset, finding a good job may require only access to information about which employers are hiring in their local area or region.

State Plan Goals

Between 2017 and 2027, the state will produce a million “middle-skill” industry-valued and recognized postsecondary credentials broadly defined here as sub-baccalaureate credentials with demonstrable labor market value, including industry-recognized certificates, or certifications, or certificates of completion of apprenticeship, or professional licenses, recognized by California or the federal government, as well as industry-valued associate degrees that facilitate movement into either the labor market or longer term educational programs aligned with the state’s workforce needs. During this time the state will also double the number of people enrolled in apprenticeship programs.

These goals are aspirational in nature and are based on the need for workforce and education programs to calibrate the production of credentials to labor market trends. The actual number and type of credentials awarded will be determined regionally on the basis of systematic industry engagement. This requires that employers and other industry sector leaders be engaged to help lead the assessment and, where necessary, work with training and education providers to redesign relevant training and education programs. In this regard, regional

partnerships between industry and labor, training and education providers, and Local Boards will be vitally important to the success of the State Plan.

Additionally, any and all efforts to align training and education programs with regional labor market trends should be validated by the labor market. This will be done by examining the employment and wage rates of those who participate in and complete relevant programs. The real test of whether programs are serving the needs of both employers and workers is whether those who are receiving services are getting good jobs that put them on a path to upward mobility.

Framework for Program Assessment

The state will measure performance of the core programs using WIOA performance metrics and will *further* assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce system and those educational programs that support and work with it on the basis of these programs' collective ability to produce industry-valued, recognized postsecondary credentials and the apprenticeship enrollments discussed above. As such, State Plan credential and apprenticeship goals should be understood to be supplemental performance measures, and are not intended to supplant the measurement of WIOA performance outcomes for the core programs. The State Board will also work with non-core programs to align performance measurement for state-funded workforce and education programs for which the California Legislature has mandated performance reporting.

Specifically, the state will emphasize "demand-driven skills-attainment" in the policies it sets pertaining to local and regional workforce planning goals and program performance goals will be consistent with this policy direction. For example, in setting performance standards for Local Boards, the state will give great weight to WIOA performance measures related to skills attainment, program completion, and credential attainment (including, when relevant, high school diplomas), and will validate the labor market value of relevant programs by examining the employment and wage outcomes of the individuals served using relevant WIOA performance metrics.

The purpose of this overall approach to program assessment is to facilitate the attainment of marketable skills that ultimately will improve the labor market outcomes (employment rates and wages) of the individuals being served. The focus on labor market relevant skills attainment (as measured by the production and receipt of industry-valued credentials) is intended to work in tandem with and reinforce the performance assessment system required by WIOA, so as to increase the performance outcomes of local service providers by requiring investments that actually develop the workforce skills of the individuals they serve. If local providers make training-related investments calibrated to the needs of their local and regional labor markets, their performance numbers should benefit.

The State Board will also work with regionally organized Local Boards and other State Plan partners to determine the extent to which persons receiving training and education services aligned with regional industry needs are actually obtaining employment in occupations and sectors directly related to their programs of study. Developing this capacity will require creativity and the development of an operational plan for collecting relevant information. The State Board will work with EDD, Local Boards, and state plan partners to build this capacity and will consider alternative approaches to measuring how well local providers are calibrating training and education offerings to regional labor market trends. Given the current limits of occupation and industry sector information contained in relevant wage records, developing this capacity could prove challenging, though ultimately, worth the effort.

Finally, the State Board will work with state plan partners and relevant stakeholders to conduct program evaluation and research that examines program impacts on wages and employment, using rigorous statistical methodology to compare the labor market outcomes of individuals who participate and complete relevant programs with similar individuals who do not participate and complete these programs.

General Policy Framework for Program Alignment

State Plan Policies

The state will employ and will require state plan partners to adopt or participate in (to the extent appropriate for each program), seven policy strategies that frame, align, and guide program coordination at the state, local, and regional levels. These policies (discussed in further detail in chapter 3) will include the following:

- Sector strategies: aligning workforce and education programs with leading and emergent industry sectors' skills needs. The success of these efforts will depend on the depth of industry engagement.
- Career pathways: enabling of progressive skills development through education and training programs, using multiple entry and exit points, so that each level of skills development corresponds with labor market gains for those being trained or educated. These pathways should be flexibly designed and include, where necessary, remedial programming, and English as a Second Language training, so as to allow those with basic skills deficiencies the ability to participate.
- Regional partnerships: building partnerships between industry leaders, including organized labor, workforce professionals, education and training providers, and economic development leaders to develop workforce and education policies that support regional economic growth. The success of these efforts will depend on the depth of industry engagement.

- “Earn and learn”—using training and education best practices that combine applied learning opportunities with material compensation while facilitating skills development in the context of actual labor market participation. The success of earn and learn programs depends on sustained employer engagement, and where appropriate, the involvement of organized labor, especially as this pertains to the development of partnerships with labor-management apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and non-traditional apprenticeship programs.
- Supportive services: providing ancillary services like childcare, transportation, and counseling to facilitate program completion by those enrolled in training and education courses.
- Creating cross-system data capacity: using diagnostic labor market data to assess where to invest, and also, the use performance data to assess the value of those investments.
- Integrated service delivery: braiding resources and coordinating services at the local level to meet client needs.

This State Plan provides the policy framework and direction for day-to-day operations of WIOA-funded programs, while also laying out a vision for collaboration with non-WIOA programs that provide relevant programs and services. Across California, regional partnerships have developed to address the state’s workforce challenges. The role of state agency and state department plan partners under this plan is to help develop regional leadership and local and regional program alignment and scale by means of coordinated policy direction, program oversight, program support, and technical assistance for and to local and regional service providers covered by the plan. State Plan, state agency and departmental partners include the following:

- Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA)
- California Workforce Development Board (CWDB)
- California Community Colleges’ Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO)
- California Department of Education (CDE)
- California Board of Education
- Employment Development Department (EDD)
- Employment Training Panel (ETP)
- Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- Health and Human Services Agency (HHS)
- Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

While the foregoing state plan partners have the responsibility for providing relevant policy direction to the operators of relevant programs, a primary focus of this policy is to facilitate coordinated and seamless service delivery at the local and regional level to improve

employment outcomes for students, workers, and job seekers. As such, state plan partners will work to identify and remove policies, administrative practices and implementation practices that result in the fragmentation of services delivered locally or regionally. The success of the State Plan depends on the administrative and operational efforts of Local Boards and other local providers of training, education, and employment services, including local educational agencies (such as county offices of education, K-12 schools, and adult schools), local community colleges, county welfare departments, and any relevant community-based organizations, non-profits, or labor unions who participate in the local and regional partnerships developed under this plan. The state recognizes the critical importance of partnership with and between these entities and values their efforts to bring local and regional perspectives to any and all WIOA implementation efforts.

Regional Plans and “Regional Sector Pathways”

California’s State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements pertaining to coordination between the K-12, community college, and WIOA systems, as well as state mandated efforts to implement sector strategies as the operational framework for the state’s workforce system are met under this State Plan by making federally required WIOA regional plans the primary mechanism for achieving the state’s mandated alignment of educational and training programs with regional industry sector needs

Alignment at the regional level will be accomplished through the regional implementation of three of the seven policy strategies discussed in the preceding section: sector strategies, career pathways, and organized regional partnerships. All three of these policies will be required under the regional planning guidance issued by the State Board to Local Boards organized into the regional planning units required under WIOA Section 106.

A primary objective and requirement of regional plans will be to work with community colleges and other training and education providers, including the state’s Adult Education Block Grant regional consortia and other providers on the state’s eligible training provider list to build “regional sector pathway” programs, by which we mean, career pathway programs that result in the attainment of industry-valued and recognized postsecondary credentials aligned to regional industry workforce needs. “Regional Sector Pathway” programs should be flexibly designed and include, as appropriate, remedial programming, so as to allow those with limited basic skills, including limited language skills, an ability to work their way along these pathways.

The State Board, working alongside other state agencies such as CCCCO, CDE, EDD, and Go-Biz will provide technical assistance to regional partnerships, comprised of industry leaders, workforce professionals, and regional training and education providers to help align programs and services delivered with industry sector workforce needs.

Under the State Plan, the key regional partners involved with the development and implementation of regional plans will include the following:

- Industry sector leaders, associations, business organizations, and organized labor (required under this State Plan)
- Regionally organized local workforce development boards (required under WIOA)
- Local economic development agencies (required under WIOA)
- Regional consortia of community colleges (required under this State Plan and pending state legislation)
- Regional consortia of adult basic education providers, including both WIOA Title II and other state-funded basic education programs (required under this State Plan)
- Representatives of K-12 CTE programs funded by either federal Perkins funds or various state-specific CTE funding streams, when relevant county offices of education and other local educational agencies determine that participation will benefit the students participating in their CTE programs (required under this State Plan)

Additional regional partners may also include ETP (California's state-funded incumbent worker training program); DOR; and County Welfare Agencies. These entities may wish to participate in regional plans and the regional planning process to leverage the employer engagement efforts required and made central to regional planning efforts.

The State Board will encourage and recommend broad partnerships that include community-based organizations (CBOs) and non-profits, but the State Board will grant considerable flexibility for Local Boards and their partners to determine the nature, scope, and depth of these partnerships based on local and regional needs and priorities as long as regional plans and partnerships are consistent with the policy direction and goals of this State Plan.

Regional efforts under WIOA are expected to build upon the State Board's regional SlingShot initiative discussed later in the State Plan.

Local Plans and America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM

Under the State Plan, the purpose of local workforce plans and partnerships is to facilitate access to workforce services at the local level.

Local workforce development plans will ensure a baseline level of WIOA core program alignment compliant with federal regulations at the local level, in and through the **America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM**, the state's One-Stop system, so that program services are coordinated, and when appropriate, integrated to make accessible a menu of customizable services available to clients on the basis of client needs.

Under this State Plan and all relevant policies issued by the state concerning One-Stop design, operations, and partnerships, Local Boards will be directed to operate One-Stops as an access point for programs that provide for “demand-driven skills attainment.” From this perspective, One-Stops will be operated as an “on ramp” or “gateway” to the “Regional Sector Pathways” programs either built-out or identified through the regional planning process described above.

One-Stops will continue to provide the full menu of One-Stop services, now known under WIOA as “career services”, they have historically provided and One-Stops will continue to function as labor exchanges, especially for those dislocated workers who do not need further training to reenter the labor market; however, there will be much greater emphasis on treating AJCCs as an access point for education and training services for those who want and need it.

Further detail on One-Stop design and the operation of the AJCC is provided in the body of the State Plan.