

## CALIFORNIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD FULL BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

**April 8, 2026**

The full meeting is available to view on the CWDB YouTube channel.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMDd9FBD\\_y8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMDd9FBD_y8)

Full meeting documents, public comments, agenda, and future meeting dates may be found on the [CWDB Our Board Page](#).

### Members Present in Sacramento:

- Chairperson Joanna Rees
- Alysia Bell
- Chancellor Sonya Christian, represented by designee Vice Chancellor Anthony Cordova
- Dir. Nancy Farias
- Dr. Angelo Farooq
- Leonard Gonzales
- Secretary Stewart Knox, represented by designee Kevin Matulich
- Hala Hijazi
- Magda Menendez
- Stephen Monteros
- Janus Norman
- Mayor Rex Richardson
- Dir. Kimberly Rutledge, represented by designee Victor Duron
- Angel Sanchez
- Fabrizio Sasso
- Anette Smith
- Superintendent Tony Thurmond, represented by designee Mindi Parsons

### Members Present in San Francisco:

- Gloria Young

## Members Present in Southern California:

- Kamyar Amiri-Davani
- Laurence Frank
- Jason Haider
- Hilary Lentini
- Avin Sharma

## CWDB Staff:

- Kaina Pereira, Executive Director
- Michael Wiafe, Assistant Deputy Director, Workforce Policy and External Affairs
- Kerry Chang, Regional Specialist
- Emily Sunahara, Deputy Director of Operations
- Myranda Love, Executive Analyst
- Ross Villegas, Communications Analyst
- Ashley Anglesey, Legislation, State Plan, and Policy Manager
- Brooke Barnum-Roberts, Chief Counsel
- Ben McDonald, Deputy Counsel & Board Meeting Clerk

## Regional and State Partner Presenters:

- Evan Schmidt, CEO, Valley Vision
- Caitlin Blockus, Senior Project Manager, Valley Vision
- Dr. Marc Facciotti, Faculty Director/Professor, Biomedical Engineering and Genome Center, UC Davis NexGenBio
- Dr. Amy Schulz, Executive Dean, Workforce and Strategic Initiatives, Sierra College
- Theresa Milan, Associate Vice President, Workforce and Online Engagement, Los Rios Community College District

## Agenda:

- A. Welcome & Opening Remarks
  - a. Roll Call
  - b. Call to Order
  
- B. Action Items
  - a. Approve October 8, 2025, Meeting Summary
  - b. Approve CWDB Bylaws Amendments
  - c. Approve WIOA Regional Plans
  - d. Approve WIOA Local Plans
  - e. Approve Local Area Subsequent Designation and Local Board Recertification
  
- C. Briefing & Discussion
  - a. FreeWorld Presentation
  - b. Ad Hoc Committee Meetings Update
  - c. Capital Region Update

- i. Overview of Tourt from CWDB Executive Director
- ii. CWDB Staff Report
- iii. Regional Leader Report
- iv. Board Discussion
- d. Apprenticeships Update

D. Updates & Discussion (Time Permitting)

- a. Labor & Workforce Development Agency Report
- b. Budget Report
- c. Eligible Training Provider List Update
- d. State Rehabilitation Council Report
- e. California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Update
- f. California Department of Education

E. General Public Comments

F. Adjournment

## 1. Welcome & Opening Remarks:

A. Roll Call & Call to Order

- a. Board Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 am.
- b. CWDB Deputy Counsel conducted a roll call and found 21 members present and advised the Chair that a quorum was present (two members joined after roll call).
- c. Board Chair welcomed and introduced newly appointed Board Members, Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson and long-time workforce leader, Magda Menedez.

B. No public comment.

## 2. Action Items:

A. Approve October 8, 2025, Meeting Summary

- a. The Chair motioned to approve October 8, 2025, Meeting Summary prepared by CWDB staff, and it was seconded.
- b. Vote Taken: Approve October 8, 2025, Meeting Summary
  - i. Yes: Alysia Bell, Chancellor Sonya Christian represented by designee Vice Chancellor Anthony Cordova, Dr. Angelo Farooq, Laurence Frank, Leonard Gonzales, Jason Haider, Hala Hijazi, Secretary Stewart Knox

represented by designee Kevin Matulich, Hilary Lentini, Magda Menendez, Stephen Monteros, Janus Norman, Chairperson Joanna Rees, Mayor Rex Richardson, Fabrizio Sasso, Avin Sharma, Anette Smith, and Gloria Young.

ii. No: None

iii. Abstentions: Kamyar Amiri-Davani, Dir. Nancy Farias, Dir. Kimberly Rutledge represented by designee Victor Duron, Angel Sanchez, and Superintendent Tony Thurmond represented by designee Mindi Parsons.

c. Motion to approve October 8, 2025, Meeting Summary passed.

d. No public comment.

#### B. Approve CWDB Bylaws Amendments

a. Staff presented on amendments to the CWDB bylaws. The Chair motioned to approve the Local Workforce Board Regional Plans, and it was seconded.

b. Vote Taken: Approve CWDB Bylaws Amendments

i. Yes: Alysia Bell, Chancellor Sonya Christian represented by designee Vice Chancellor Anthony Cordova, Kamyar Amiri-Davani, Dir. Nancy Farias, Dr. Angelo Farooq, Laurence Frank, Leonard Gonzales, Jason Haider, Hala Hijazi, Secretary Stewart Knox represented by designee Kevin Matulich, Hilary Lentini, Magda Menendez, Stephen Monteros, Janus Norman, Chairperson Joanna Rees, Mayor Rex Richardson, Angel Sanchez, Fabrizio Sasson, Avin Sharma, Anette Smith, Superintendent Tony Thurmond represented by designee Mindi Parsons, and Gloria Young.

ii. No: None

iii. Abstentions: Dir. Kimberly Rutledge represented by designee Victor Duron.

c. Motion to approve CWDB Bylaws Amendments passed.

d. No public comment.

#### C. Approve WIOA Regional and Local Plans

a. Staff presented on WIOA Regional and Local Plans. The Chair motioned to approve the plans, and it was seconded.

b. Vote Taken: Approve WIOA Regional and Local Plans

- i. Yes: Alysia Bell, Chancellor Sonya Christian represented by designee Vice Chancellor Anthony Cordova, Kamyar Amiri-Davani, Dir. Nancy Farias, Dr. Angelo Farooq, Laurence Frank, Leonard Gonzales, Jason Haider, Hala Hijazi, Secretary Stewart Knox represented by designee Kevin Matulich, Hilary Lentini, Magda Menendez, Stephen Monteros, Janus Norman, Chairperson Joanna Rees, Mayor Rex Richardson, Dir. Kimberly Rutledge represented by designee Victor Duron, Angel Sanchez, Fabrizio Sasso, Avin Sharma, Anette Smith, Superintendent Tony Thurmond represented by designee Mindi Parsons, and Gloria Young.
- ii. No: None
- iii. Abstentions: None

c. Motion to approve WIOA Regional and Local Plans passed.

d. No public comment.

D. Approve Local Area Subsequent Designation and Local Board Recertification

a. Staff presented briefly on local area designation and local board recertification. The Chair motioned to approve the Local Area Subsequent Designation and Local Board Recertification, and it was seconded.

b. Vote Taken: Approve Local Area Subsequent Designation and Local Board Recertification

- i. Yes: Alysia Bell, Chancellor Sonya Christian represented by designee Vice Chancellor Anthony Cordova, Kamyar Amiri-Davani, Dir. Nancy Farias, Dr. Angelo Farooq, Laurence Frank, Leonard Gonzales, Jason Haider, Hala Hijazi, Secretary Stewart Knox represented by designee Kevin Matulich, Hilary Lentini, Magda Menendez, Stephen Monteros, Janus Norman, Chairperson Joanna Rees, Mayor Rex Richardson, Dir. Kimberly Rutledge represented by designee Victor Duron, Angel Sanchez, Fabrizio Sasso, Avin Sharma, Anette Smith, Superintendent Tony Thurmond represented by designee Mindi Parsons, and Gloria Young.
- ii. No: None
- iii. Abstentions: None

- c. Motion to approve Local Area Subsequent Designation and Local Board Recertification passed.
- d. No public comment.

### 3. Briefing & Discussion:

#### A. FreeWorld [Presentation](#)

- a. FreeWorld's Founder and CEO, Jason Wang, described FreeWorld as a tech-enabled nonprofit that trains and places people with criminal records into living-wage careers, currently focused primarily on trucking, supported by wraparound services and a mobile-first platform. He emphasized that the organization provides end-to-end support—from intake and case management through training, job placement, and retention—and that it tracks outcomes over multiple years. Board discussion highlighted practical considerations such as background-check barriers in some work settings, the dynamics of entry and retention in trucking (especially the difficult first year or two), port credentialing requirements for some roles, and questions about worker classification and industry practices.
- b. No Public Comment Received.

#### B. Ad Hoc Committee Meetings Update

- a. CWDB staff provided an update on the board's ad hoc committee meetings. Staff described them as shorter, topic-focused sessions held between full board meetings, generally organized around "one region and one topic," and solicited member input for future sessions. Board member Angel Sanchez suggested a future discussion focused on effective practices for supporting individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities, particularly approaches that help employers move past perceived risk barriers to inclusive hiring.
- b. No Public Comment Received.

#### C. Capital Region Update

- a. [CWDB staff provided a snapshot of the Capital Region](#) as an eight-county area spanning urban and rural communities and facing shared challenges such as rising housing costs, limited childcare access, environmental risk, and job-access barriers driven by the mismatch between where jobs are concentrated and where workers live.

- b. Evan Schmidt, CEO of Valley Vision and the regional convener for California Jobs First in the Capital Region, and Caitlin Blockus, Senior Project Manager at Valley Vision, described a co-investment strategy with local workforce boards that supports regional industry advisories bringing together employers, community college faculty, and training partners to identify skill gaps and align education and training with labor-market demand.

The [presentation](#) highlighted biosciences, healthcare, and precision manufacturing as priority industries, with the following partner examples:

- Dr. Marc Facciotti, Faculty Director and Professor in Biomedical Engineering and the Genome Center at UC Davis NextGenBio, described a catalyst-funded effort to build student awareness of bioscience careers through programming connected to Aggie Square, and noted the need to strengthen pathways and wraparound supports beyond the introductory experience.
- Dr. Amy Schulz, Executive Dean of Workforce and Strategic Initiatives at Sierra College, described investments in precision manufacturing, including CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machining, welding, and mechatronics scaled through dual enrollment pathways to meet technician demand tied to Bosch in Roseville.
- Theresa Milan, Associate Vice President of Workforce and Online Engagement at Los Rios Community College District, described an industry-led approach to critical healthcare occupational needs, including surgical, cardiovascular, and radiologic technology, supported by new labs and industry-aligned curriculum.

The discussion also addressed how America's Job Centers of California connect to this work, including colocation and staff presence at community colleges across parts of the region and ongoing efforts to deepen integration.

- c. No Public Comment Received.

#### D. Apprenticeships Update

- a. [Adele Burns, Chief of the Division of Apprenticeship Standards, provided an apprenticeship update](#) focused on funding strategies and scaling apprenticeships beyond the building and fire trades. She highlighted Apprenticeship Innovation Funding as a formula-style model intended to expand apprenticeships in sectors such as healthcare and advanced manufacturing, described how funding is structured to support active apprentices and completions, and discussed the practical realities of integrating apprenticeship pathways with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act system, including the generally low co-enrollment rates seen nationally. The update emphasized

practical steps to strengthen connections, such as ensuring frontline staff know how to find apprenticeship opportunities using available search tools, and reinforced the value of leveraging existing apprenticeship standards and infrastructure rather than recreating them.

b. No Public Comment Received.

#### **4. Updates and Discussion (Time Permitting):**

A. Labor & Workforce Development Agency Report

a. This update was skipped for time considerations.

B. Budget Report

a. This update was skipped for time considerations.

C. Eligible Training Provider List Update

a. This update was skipped for time considerations.

D. [State Rehabilitation Council Report \(YouTube\)](#)

a. Board Member Hiliary Lentini, speaking on behalf of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), reported that during the SRC's March 11–12 meetings the Council discussed fair hearings and mediations, delays in paying vendors, the effects of government shutdowns, the Department of Rehabilitation's language access policy, and "Independence 101," a course for SSI and SSDI beneficiaries that provides essential information about Social Security benefits and work incentives. She also explained that the SRC continued strategizing about how to shorten meetings and use meeting time more productively, how to increase engagement on committees, and how to revitalize inactive committees. In addition, she stated that the SRC passed a recommendation asking the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) to keep Category 1 and Category 2 open when DOR implements an Order of Selection. Ms. Lentini concluded by asking whether SRC updates and reports must be entered into the minutes in full and suggested that, similar to public comment documents, the minutes could instead include a link to the SRC materials, requesting that this approach be implemented starting with the minutes for the current meeting.

b. No public comment.

#### **5. General Public Comments:**

A. No General Public Comments Received.

## **6. Adjournment:**

- A. All CWDB business having concluded, the Executive Director adjourned the meeting at 12:33 p.m.