

Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) Staff Quarterly Report

1st Quarter, January 2026 – March 2026

Powering Climate and Infrastructure Careers (PCIC) Grant

GWDB staff supported the Minnesota Indigenous Energy and Workforce Initiative's March stakeholder meeting, which convened partners to conduct a SWOT analysis and identify priority areas as the initiative continues to take shape. The initiative is led by Great River Energy in partnership with DEED's Workforce Strategy Consultant (WSC) team. GWDB, WSC, and Labor Market Information (LMI) staff also continue to advance PCIC efforts related to job quality and sector partnerships, in coordination with the GWDB Sector Partnerships Committee.

Chair Updates

In March, GWDB Chair Surya Iyer and Vice Chair DeLinda Washington attended the National Governors Association Workforce Summit in Washington, D.C., representing the board alongside state workforce leaders from across the country. Surya spoke on the panel *Strategies to Build the Advanced Manufacturing Workforce*, highlighting Minnesota's approach — including the board's sector strategy work and its emphasis on aligning postsecondary, apprenticeship, and employer-driven pathways.

GWDB Committee Activities

Innovative Service Delivery Committee

Chair: Misun Bormann; Co-Chair: Scott Cummings

The Innovative Service Delivery Committee met in February and March to begin advancing concrete policy recommendations and priority focus areas for the current cycle. The committee is focusing on three priority pathways: expanding equitable access and removing structural barriers, establishing a stronger shared workforce data foundation, and strengthening employer engagement across the workforce system. Next quarter, the committee will begin developing concrete recommendations related to Labor Market Information modernization and data infrastructure.

State and Local Coordination Committee

Chair: Rob Stark; Co-Chair: Cate Duin

The State and Local Coordination Committee convened in February to establish its priorities for the current cycle, identifying five core focus areas: program and policy alignment, performance data and accountability, statewide workforce planning and governance, and funding and resource alignment. In the months ahead, the committee will advance deliberations on CareerForce performance standards, employer engagement metrics, work-based learning policy, statewide governance, and funding alignment — all in service of the board's 2027 legislative report. The committee will also continue to review and advance WIOA waivers as they arise.

Sector Partnerships Committee

Chair: Matt Lewis

The Sector Partnerships Committee met in February to begin reviewing 2026 priorities and complete an overview of Workforce Pell, including the board's role in developing program determination policy. The committee will review a draft of this policy at its April meeting before it is recommended to the executive committee to be released for public comment. Throughout the remainder of the year, the committee will continue deliberations on job quality, sector partnerships, and work-based learning initiatives and related resources.

Statewide Workforce Development Strategy

Task Force on Workforce Development System Reform

During the first quarter of the year, the Task Force on Workforce Development System Reform met twice. The February 6 meeting discussed state and federal workforce development funding, the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Program, the Workforce Development Fund, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs. The February 23 meeting discussed current workforce development performance metrics, including a presentation from the Office of Legislative Auditor on how the legislature should work to establish performance goals to better evaluate programs. The Task Force will meet again in the summer once the legislative session has concluded.

Interagency Workforce Alignment Task Force & GWDB Joint Committees

Caring Professions Subcommittee

Since January, the Healthcare Caring Professions Subcommittee has formally approved the SLEDs data-integration recommendation to move forward to the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB). In addition, the subcommittee passed a recommendation urging the State of Minnesota to establish an annual Celebrate Caring Careers Month through a Governor's Proclamation, similar to Manufacturing Month. As testament to committee commitment to partnership & transparency, members gathered insights from additional stakeholders, including provider groups such as the Direct Care Workforce Shortage Partners. Their feedback helped shape final revisions to ensure recommendations reflect the needs and impacts across the

long-term care sector. Finally, the subcommittee prioritized its remaining recommendations to ensure it can meet deadlines.

Education

The Education Committee continued advancing its work to align educator workforce efforts across Minnesota and support the development of future recommendations. Key activities during the quarter included refining subcommittee priorities and workplans and continuing recommendation-development discussions using the now-near-far framework developed in the fourth quarter 2025. The committee further advanced a statewide document scan of educator workforce recommendations, research, and promising practices already developed across the state. Through this foundational work the committee clarified how recommendations will move forward, including defining what are IWA-focused interagency recommendations versus GWDB-facing policy recommendations, and how to implement a standardized process for collecting and reviewing proposals. Subcommittees continued making progress in developing and refining their ideas, with work increasingly moving from broad concepts toward more specific recommendation development.