MINNESOTA
GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) Quarterly Report

3rd Quarter, July 2026 – September 2026

Legislative and Policy Update

GWDB staff continued developing the biennial legislative report, incorporating feedback from committees, workgroups, and workforce-system partners. The report will be presented at the Joint GWDB-MAWB Q4 Meeting on November 18, 2026, for final review, discussion, and a vote on adoption. Following the vote, the report will be submitted to the Legislature ahead of the January 15, 2027, deadline.

WIOA Local and Regional Plan Review

In addition to a State Plan from each state receiving WIOA funding, the law requires local and regional plans to be submitted and periodically updated. These plans outline how local workforce development areas will advance statewide goals and strategies while coordinating services with local partners. In July 2026, the GWDB issued guidance for local and regional plan updates. Following the submission of these plans, the GWDB is convening a special committee to review them and develop recommendations, with the process expected to conclude in February 2027. This review aims to strengthen alignment among state, regional, and local workforce development priorities and programs.

Powering Climate and Infrastructure Careers (PCIC) Grant

The GWDB continued supporting the Minnesota Indigenous Energy and Workforce Initiative, which held an August partner meeting at Minnesota Power in Duluth to refine its priorities and advance collaborative workforce strategies. The PCIC grant also supported development of the GWDB's Job Quality Metrics Framework. This framework will inform a planned subgrant program to help local workforce partners work with employers to implement and strengthen job quality practices. The subgrant program is anticipated to launch in spring 2027.

Workforce Pell

During the third quarter, the Sector Partnerships Committee and GWDB staff coordinated with state and federal partners to prepare for implementation of the new Workforce Pell program. Efforts focused on understanding federal requirements, strengthening cross-agency coordination, and identifying processes to align eligible short-term training programs with workforce-demand priorities.Staff also monitored federal implementation developments and explored how workforce, education, and labor market information systems could support future program administration and evaluation.

Executive Committee Updates

Chair: Surya Iyer; Vice Chair: DeLinda Washington

The Executive Committee continued providing strategic oversight of GWDB priorities and committee activities. Working with staff, committee leadership shaped meeting agendas, guided committee work, and supported coordination across standing committees and workgroups. Key priorities included labor force growth, workforce-system performance, workforce data, sector partnerships, and preparation of legislative recommendations. The Executive Committee also supported alignment between GWDB activities and broader workforce-system initiatives led by state agencies and partner organizations.

NGA Update

During the quarter, Chair Surya Iyer, Vice Chair DeLinda Washington, and the GWDB Executive Director represented Minnesota at the National Governors Association's Summer Workforce Development Policy Institute in Nashville. The Executive Director contributed Minnesota's perspective on Drive for 5 during a session highlighting findings from *Putting State Dollars to Work: How Governors' Signature Investments Drive Workforce Transformation*, a National Governors Association and Harvard Project on Workforce study of signature workforce investments in five states. Katie also represented Minnesota in NGA's AI Roundtable, engaging with peer states and national partners on artificial intelligence's implications for workers, employers, and state workforce systems.

Staff Updates

Executive Director Katie McClelland represented the Board at several national workforce-policy events during the quarter. At the JFF Horizons Summit, she participated as a panelist in separate discussions highlighting the GWDB's work on job quality and Minnesota's efforts to prepare its workforce for transitions associated with artificial intelligence. In September, Katie also attended a multi-state convening hosted by the Harvard Government Performance Lab in coordination with the National Governors Association and the Harvard Project on Workforce. The convening focused on how states are responding to artificial intelligence's impact on the workforce.

Nicole Hochsprung joined the GWDB staff in July as Policy and Strategy Advisor, supporting statewide workforce-system policy development, WIOA planning coordination, interagency alignment, and other GWDB priorities.

GWDB Committee Activities

Innovative Service Delivery Committee

Interim Chair: Scott Cummings

The Innovative Service Delivery Committee advanced efforts to strengthen Minnesota's workforce data infrastructure. At the August GWDB meeting, committee leadership reported on the committee's June meeting, which featured an overview of the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) from the Office of Higher Education and its growing importance as Workforce Pell ties program eligibility to graduate outcomes.

Members also provided input on the Overlooked Workers Workgroup and helped shape metrics for the Workforce Center Performance Framework. The committee subsequently launched the Overlooked Workers Workgroup, co-led by GWDB members Mary Niedermeyer and Linda Sloan. The workgroup held its first meeting on September 15, beginning efforts to establish statewide and regional baseline data on unemployment and labor force participation among overlooked worker populations. DEED's Labor Market Information team also began assembling related recommendations on Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) reporting, the Job Vacancy Survey (JVS), and Enhanced Wage Records (EWR). The committee will review these recommendations ahead of a GWDB vote in November.

State and Local Coordination Committee

Chair: Rob Stark; Co-Chair: Cate Duin

The State and Local Coordination Committee continued developing a statewide Workforce Center Performance Framework to guide future performance measurement and continuous improvement across Minnesota's workforce system. The committee reviewed progress on the framework's purpose, system priorities, performance definitions, and potential CareerForce measures. Members provided feedback on measuring effectiveness while accounting for regional differences and varying service-delivery needs, emphasizing stakeholder engagement and practical implementation.

The framework workgroup held its kickoff meeting on July 16, met again in September, gathered partner input through a stakeholder survey, and provided an update to the MAWB Operations Committee on September 10. The workgroup will continue meeting in the fourth quarter to refine the framework and bring recommendations to the committee ahead of the GWDB's November vote on the legislative report. The committee also discussed plans to launch the Statewide Work-Based Learning Framework Workgroup in the fourth quarter.

Sector Partnerships Committee

Chair: Matt Lewis; Vice Chair: Gail Cruikshank

The committee finalized development of the Job Quality Metrics Framework, which was then approved by the full GWDB at its August meeting. The committee also continued advancing development of Minnesota's in-demand sectors and occupations methodology, incorporating feedback on the labor market data, employer demand signals, economic factors, and workforce trends that should inform future recommendations. To support this effort, the committee established a subject matter expert working group to provide additional technical expertise and input as the methodology is refined. Upcoming work will focus on finalizing the methodology with the working group's input.

Interagency Workforce Alignment Task Force & GWDB Joint Committees

Labor Force Growth

The Interagency Workforce Alignment Task Force continued developing a statewide Labor Force Growth Plan with a goal of adding 10,000 workers to Minnesota's labor force each year. The plan focuses on five areas: domestic migration, postsecondary student retention, international migration, experienced workers, and barriers to work such as child care, housing, and transportation. The Task Force reviewed the plan at its July 23

meeting, and the GWDB discussed it at its August 12 meeting through a labor market overview and panel discussion. This work will inform statewide workforce goals and where the GWDB can add the most value.

Caring Professions Subcommittee

The Caring Professions Subcommittee continued addressing workforce challenges in healthcare, long-term care, disability services, behavioral health, and related occupations. During the quarter, members refined previously approved recommendations for inclusion in the legislative report, including establishing an annual "Celebrate Caring Careers Month" via gubernatorial proclamation to increase awareness of career pathways and expanding CaringCareersStartHere.com as a centralized resource for job seekers, students, educators, employers, and workforce partners. The subcommittee also explored opportunities to expand work-based learning and registered apprenticeships in caring professions, particularly through multi-employer models that would help smaller employers participate.

Education

The Education Committee continued developing recommendations to strengthen Minnesota's educator workforce pipeline. Committee members elevated two recommendations to guiding principles for the remaining work: increasing workforce diversity and ensuring rigorous evaluation of workforce programs and outcomes. Additional recommendations advanced during the quarter focused on recruiting new educators, reducing financial barriers through paid student teaching and apprenticeship pathways, strengthening mentorship and retention, and creating career advancement opportunities that allow educators to remain in the profession. Other areas of focus included educator compensation, a sustainable early childhood workforce, and strategies to re-engage licensed educators who have left the field. A high-level overview of the committee's guiding principles and recommendations will be included in the GWDB's legislative report as the full report continues to be refined with education, workforce, and state-agency partners.