

Governor's Workforce Development Board Quarterly Report

2nd Quarter, April – June 2025

GWDB Staff Activities

Staffing Update

We're excited to welcome Colleen Harris as the new program assistant supporting the Governor's Workforce Development Board and related initiatives. Colleen brings strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and a collaborative spirit that will help ensure smooth coordination across our board activities, meetings, and communications. In this role, Colleen will assist with scheduling, meeting logistics, document preparation, and cross-team coordination. This will play a key part in keeping our work running efficiently behind the scenes.

Powering Climate and Infrastructure Careers (PCIC)

The GWDB held a climate and infrastructure convening in June to gather feedback on workforce resources and tools currently in development at DEED, joined by members of the GWDB and stakeholders from across the state. These tools are intended to support workforce development efforts related to infrastructure and climate investments. Amid continued uncertainty around federal climate funding and guidance, the GWDB will continue engaging stakeholders in the months ahead to better understand workforce needs and ensure Minnesota is positioned to respond effectively.

Job Corps

The GWDB staff supported a coordinated response to the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) announcing the closure of Job Corps centers across the country, including the Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps (HHJC) Center in St. Paul which at the time had approximately 161 students living on campus. This response included working with the Ramsey County Workforce Board and state agencies in finding housing or shelters for Job Corps students. This coordination work paused when, on Wednesday, June 25 a federal judge ordered the US DOL to stop shutting down Job Corps, including to stop removing Job Corps students from housing, terminating jobs or otherwise suspending the program without congressional approval until the lawsuit against the US DOL is resolved. The Humphrey Job Corps Center has begun the process of having students return to campus and will begin enrolling students again once US DOL resumes processing applicant background checks.

GWDB Committee Activities

Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee has focused this quarter on setting the strategic direction for the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) through a coordinated approach to governance, system reform, and long-term planning. Across all efforts, the Executive Committee is working to ensure the board remains focused on high-impact priorities. The Executive Committee has taken the lead in shaping the agenda and goals for the upcoming board retreat, which will focus on broadening the board's understanding of the workforce system and its role within it. The committee also continues to provide oversight and input to the legislatively mandated Task Force on Workforce Development System Reform, helping shape its deliverables to ensure alignment with the Governor's charge and incorporation of full board feedback. In addition, the committee has provided strategic direction to the Bylaws Task Force to prioritize clarity, functionality, and compliance with state and federal statutes.

Bylaws Task Force

Over the past quarter, the Bylaws Task Force has undertaken a comprehensive review of the Governor's Workforce Development Board's governing documents, last updated in 2019. The task force identified key areas in need of modernization to reflect current board operations, statutory requirements, and the evolving workforce development landscape. The task force will continue gathering feedback and is preparing a full draft of proposed revisions for broader board review in the coming quarter. Key focus areas include:

Clarifying Board Roles & Authority

Proposed edits address ambiguities around decision-making, appointment processes, and the delineation between voting and non-voting members.

Improving Structure & Flexibility

Updates to meeting cadence, funding oversight, and committee functions are designed to streamline operations while maintaining statutory compliance.

Aligning with Statutory Duties

The task force cross-referenced proposed changes with state and federal requirements to ensure alignment with WIOA and Minnesota statute.

Encouraging Geographic and Sectoral Balance

Recommendations emphasize the importance of equitable representation across urban, suburban, and rural regions, without tying board composition too tightly to temporary economic initiatives.

IWA/GWDB/MNP20 Committee on Educator Workforce

The IWA/GWDB/MNP20 Committee on Educator Workforce has spent this quarter developing the sub-committee structure which will best enable it to align internal and external educator workforce initiatives throughout the state. All three sub-committees have begun meeting and will ensure they look at educators from all levels including early childhood, K-12 and the important role of higher education. They are also charged with including diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in their work. Each sub-committee has begun recruiting additional members where appropriate to ensure they are getting input from all stakeholders and learning about the innovative work happening in educator workforce initiatives.

The three sub-committees were built following the model of the Educator Journey's with distinct purposes including:

Explore

Focused on how we recruit to the teaching profession and all that entails (not just young people but all ages).

Become

Looking at the variety of ways to prepare teachers, the best practices and the leakages from the programs, the Big P and little p policy issues around licensure.

Grow & Thrive

Concerned with keeping teachers during those first few years and beyond. It will investigate what is done for those who stay in the profession to address burnout, professional development, leadership growth etc.

IWA/GWDB Caring Professions Committee

The IWA/GWDB Caring Professions Committee just held a full-day intensive event where all three sub-committees were able to take the input gathered from various stakeholders and use it to build their workplans for the next year. This committee, focused on public and private programming which enhances retention, decreases turnover and increases recruitment from underutilized areas, has three sub-committees tackling extremely complex issues. The sub-committees have scheduled meetings over the coming months as they begin work on their highest priority issues. Each one will be seeking out additional expertise as required and reporting back to the larger group with the hope of providing the GWDB with some additional recommendations before the end of the year.

The sub-committees include:

Programming

Review private and public workforce development programming, identify and elevate best practices (metrics etc.), address duplication etc.

Systems

Determine the policy and systemic issues within LTC workforce, create recommendations for changes, prioritize short term and long-term, impact-effort

Communication

Recommend opportunities to elevate the industry, inform students, parents, communities, elected officials and relevant organizations about workforce initiatives and career pathways.

Sector Partnerships

The GWDB's sector partnerships efforts have gained momentum through strategic planning, collaboration, and capacity building. DEED staff completed a cohort with America Achieves, in partnership with GreaterMSP and Minnesota State, to develop a sector partnership strategy focused on the microelectronics industry. This strategy could serve as a model for broader statewide application. A new Sector Partnerships Standing Committee was launched to help guide and align the development of a statewide strategy, as well as support related efforts such as the creation of a job quality framework and the establishment of Workforce Pell program requirements. The standing committee will also provide strategic oversight for the manufacturing, trades, technology, education, and caring professions subcommittees. The standing committee is currently seeking new members to support this work.