

Minutes: Minnesota Governor's Workforce Development Board 3rd Quarterly Meeting

Agenda Time: 08/13/2025 from 11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Prepared by: Colleen Harris, GWDB staff

Location: Northern Lights Conference Center, Inn on Lake Superior, Duluth, MN

Meeting Type: Regular

Meeting Facilitators: Surya Iyer, GWDB Chair and DeLinda Washington, GWDB Vice Chair

Call to Order

Time: 11:20 A.M.

Called by: Surya Iyer

Quorum Present: Yes

Business Meeting

Approval of Previous Minutes

Corrections: None

Motion: To approve previous minutes

Moved by: Hannah Alstead

Seconded by: Deb Broberg

Outcome: Approved

Approval of Quarterly Report

Corrections: None

Motion: To approve quarterly report

Moved by: Deb Broberg

Seconded by: Steve Kalina

Outcome: Approved

Meeting Goals

- Legislative updates at the state and federal level that impact Minnesota's workforce system.
- Strengthening and aligning Minnesota's workforce development system, including the role of the Minnesota Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB).
- Identifying workforce goals and priorities for the future of Minnesota's workforce system.
- Identifying GWDB priorities to communicate to the Task Force on Workforce Development System Reform.
- Strengthening cross-functional relationships between the board, local partners and the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB).

Updates

- Before the official call to order, DEED Commissioner Matt Varilek led a memorial moment in honor of House Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman and read a tribute written by DEED Deputy Commissioner Evan Rowe.
- The Sector Partnership Committee officially launched and will have its first meeting on September 16th. The committee is formed to support collaboration among employers, education providers and local partners. The committee will develop a statewide definition of sector partnerships for review. The board will vote for adoption at the next meeting.
- A bylaws subcommittee is currently completing a comprehensive review of the GWDB bylaws. Proposed bylaw changes, along with potential legislative recommendations, will be presented at the next quarterly meeting on November 12th.
- DEED Commissioner Matt Varilek provided an update on The Interagency Workforce Alignment (IWA) that highlighted the challenge of defining success metrics for workforce recovery and emphasized the importance of equity by focusing on activating overlooked workers with higher unemployment or lower labor force participation. The IWA committees continue their work on alignment in both the healthcare and education sectors, seeking recommendations which will impact the overall goal of achieving a 4.4% vacancy rate in the Drive for Five sectors.
- A 2025 legislative session established the Task Force on Workforce Development System Reform, which will research the current landscape of Minnesota's workforce development system to provide short-term policy ideas and longer-term legislative recommendations. The task force launched today with the election of co-chairs Representative Dave Baker, District 16B and Misun Bormann, Ed.D., who is also chair of the GWDB Innovation Service Delivery Committee. A preliminary report is due February 2026 with a final report due February 2027. The task force work will be structured to align with the WIOA state plan modification timeline.
- No formal decisions were made at this meeting.

Legislative Updates

Pending and Paused Programs

- Job Corps program is currently on hold pending federal decisions.
- FY25 Appropriations Act is delayed and funding decisions for workforce programs remain uncertain.
- The State of Minnesota Interagency Agreement (IAA) between the Department of Labor (DOL) and Department of Education (MDE) regarding oversight of Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) and adult education programs is delayed.

Major Legislative Proposals

- A Stronger Workforce for America Act (ASWAA) will reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and modify various programs. It requires 50% of funds to be spent on training, allocates 8% for supportive services and emphasizes long-term skill development and wraparound supports.
- Make America Skilled Again (MASA) proposes a 25% cut to existing workforce programs. The act shifts decision-making authority from Congress to federal agencies and prioritizes short-term training over comprehensive workforce development investments.
- Workforce Pell Grants are designed to expand Pell Grant eligibility to short-term workforce programs and has an implementation date of July 1, 2026. Indirect impacts, such as changes to SNAP and Medicaid work requirements, are anticipated.

Meeting Action Items

- Sector Partnership Committee to draft a statewide definition of sector partnerships for review and vote adoption at the next meeting.
- Proposed bylaw changes and legislative recommendations will be prepared for the next quarterly meeting for vote and adoption.
- Feedback collected during the August 13th GWDB meeting and during the August 14th MAWB conference sessions will be summarized and shared with the GWDB and Task Force on Workforce Development System Reform.
- The Task Force on Workforce Development System Reform will begin outlining its meeting schedule and key priorities.
- Committees and workgroups are encouraged to align their efforts with future-focused policies, workforce coordination and system enhancement.

Next Meeting

Date: 11/12/2025

Time: 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Location: Edinburgh USA, Brooklyn Park, MN

Appendix: Attendance

Board Members

Total board members: 54

Total board members in attendance: 27

Total voting board members in attendance: 22

Total voting board members: 41

1. Rep. Bernie Perryman
2. Brian Bruess
3. Brian Zirbes
4. Carol Anderson
5. Deb Broberg
6. Deb Gleason
7. DeLinda Washington
8. Erica Lester (Non-Voting)
9. Hannah Alstead
10. Jeff Rainey
11. Josh Berg
12. Mary Niedermeyer (Non-Voting)
13. Matt Varilek
14. Misun Bormann
15. Nicole Mattson
16. Roy Smith (Non-Voting)
17. Rob Stark
18. Sandy Pulles (Non-Voting)
19. Scott Cummings
20. Shannon Bryant (designee for Scott Olson)
21. Steve Kalina
22. Surya Iyer
23. Troy Haugen
24. Jennifer Theisen
25. Rep. Pete Johnson
26. Shannon Geshick
27. Cate Duin

State of Minnesota Staff

28. Adesewa Adesiji
29. Andrea Chirhart
30. Arthur Larsen

31. Colleen Harris
32. David Campana
33. Della Ludwig
34. Emily Lefholz
35. James Whirlwind Soldier
36. Jason Wadell
37. Jeremiah Carter
38. Joy A Beise
39. Katie McClelland
40. Kevion Ellis
41. Liz McLoone
42. Mike Lang
43. Nathan Ratner
44. Nolan Thomas
45. Patti Balacek
46. Sarah Arentson
47. Shayla Drake
48. Sonji Davis
49. Rebecca Zoubek

Guests

50. Attendees of the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards Summer Conference