

SKILLSOURCE REGIONAL WORKFORCE BOARD

(serving North Central Washington)

Board Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, December 3, 2024 - 5:30 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://skillsource.zoom.us/j/85804523410>

Meeting ID: 85804523410

Passcode: 182075

1. Call to Order – Zach Williams, Chair
2. September 26, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes ACTION

Committee Reports

3. **Audit Committee**
Presentation by Cordell, Neher & Company
-- Motion to Approve 23-24 Audit Report Recommended ACTION
-- Motion to Approve IRS Form 990 Recommended ACTION

New Business

4. Director's Report INFO
5. Washington Workforce Association Legislative Priorities INFO
6. Board Retreat (March 13-14) – Topics of Focus DISCUSSION
7. Board Reappointments & Forum Transition INFO

Enclosures

Sub-Area Performance Reports – Q1
Fiscal Reports 1st Quarter
Meeting Schedule
Membership Roster
WIOA Reauthorization Summary Overview
Draft 2023 Audit Report
Draft Form 990

Mission Statement

SkillSource builds workforce skills with business and one-stop partners to increase economic prosperity throughout North Central Washington and the Columbia Basin.

SkillSource Regional Workforce Board

Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2024

Via Zoom

Zach Williams, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Lisa led introductions and oriented the board and attendees to the meeting agenda.

June 25, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Tom Legel made a motion, and Sarah Thompson Tweedy seconded to approve the minutes for the June 25, 2024 Board Meeting. Motion passed.

Director's Report

Lisa summarized the director's report. In her report, Lisa reported that the Senate has proposed to maintain funding for WIOA in its FY25 funding bill, which contrasts with the proposed House bill that would enact deep cuts to workforce investment programs. She also informed the board that SkillSource's direct delivery request was extended through 2025 and explained that the State Workforce Board's new policy associate, Liz Gallagher, met with Lisa about the contested elements of the draft procurement policy 1015. She also noted that county commissioners Chris Branch, Danny Stone, and Tiffany Gering will not be seeking re-election.

Lisa gave a brief update on the audit completed last week and the schedule for the state monitoring visit the first week of November. The Director's Report also gave updates on strategic goals #1 (Industry) and #2 (Youth), and upcoming important events.

Lisa recapped business engagement through various funding sources and initiatives, including the Community Reinvestment Fund and Pre-Employment Transition Services. She highlighted the successful Business After Hours hosted at SkillSource Wenatchee last month and recapped the staff training bootcamps that took place over the summer months.

Committee Reports

Susan summarized the local committee meetings and thanked the hosts of those meetings: Wenatchee Valley College's Omak Campus; AeroTEC Flight Test Center in Moses Lake; and the North Central Educational Services District in Wenatchee. In each meeting the committee received year-end performance data, a presentation on Pre-Employment Transition Services and youth programs, and discussed industry needs and challenges for upskilling employees.

Board of Directors Presentation

Lisa explained to the board that SkillSource's board members "wear two hats" – they are the local workforce development board (LWDB) as outlined in WIOA, as well as the corporate board for SkillSource, the nonprofit organization. She briefly summarized the 14 functions of the LWDB, which are mostly executed by the board staff but advised and directed by the board, including performance measures and gauging effectiveness of workforce programs. As corporate board directors, they have other functions to include fiscal, property, and management responsibility.

Credit Limit Authorization

Laura explained that currently SkillSource has a \$25,000 credit limit at Banner Bank to split between Executive Staff and Service Delivery Managers. These credit cards are used for business related travel, online purchases of operating supplies, staff training, and participant expenses. With increased need to make operating and educational/training purchases and increased managerial staff, the staff recommends increasing the credit limit to \$50,000, adding two more card holders, increasing each card limit to \$5,000 and maintaining \$10,000 unassigned credit for future cardholders or individual credit limit adjustments. Banner Bank requires board approval to make these changes.

Roni asked if the increase was within procurement limits and if the increased number of cards was prudent. Laura explained that individual card limits are under the dollar amount where procurement was required, and that increased item costs and online ordering necessitate more cards being issued. The organization has a good track record of stewardship. Michelle asked if the cards are paid off monthly; Laura replied that they are, so no interest is accrued. She also asked if the cards have cash back or other incentives; Laura responded that Banner Bank uses a purchase points system that SkillSource has not cashed in. Zach asked the total number of cardholders if approved; Laura responded that it would be eight managers and/or executive staff, each with a \$5000 monthly limit, and \$10,000 in reserve. Tom asked about the purchase process and how internal controls for credit cards work at SkillSource. Lisa said that all purchases must be documented by requisition and receipt and each cardholder signs an agreement that assumes personal liability for expenses not documented or authorized. Roni asked if SkillSource also tracks purchased items via inventory; Laura said that SkillSource tags and catalogs such items and performs annual inventories. Laura also specified that only authorized individuals in the corporation have access to cards. Tom asked who reviews Lisa's purchases; Laura reviews and approves Lisa's purchases and Lisa and Laura also review all credit card expenditures. Roni asked how the ESD project manager in Okanogan's purchases will be assessed; Laura responded that those purchases will be directly charged to their budget. This card will give them necessary flexibility outside of ESD's narrow guidelines.

Sarah Thompson Tweedy made a motion, and Irasema Ortiz-Elizalde seconded to approve the credit limit and cardholder increases as recommended. Motion passed.

Property Review & Othello Career Center Building

Lisa summarized the real property holdings that SkillSource maintains in Wenatchee and Moses Lake, with a total acquisition cost of \$6.25 million. Cumulatively we have claimed \$2.98 million in depreciation and there remains about \$2.3 million on the Central Basin building loan. Laura noted that SkillSource is saving a large amount of money by owning rather than leasing, which allows the organization to serve more individuals.

SkillSource has leased the Othello building from Adams County since 2006 at the request of the County Commissioners. Prior to this, SkillSource was already in Othello occupying a SkillSource owned modular building located on County land. We are currently in our third (of five) 5-year renewal term that expires in 2026. This summer Adams County Commissioner, Jay Weise, shared the Board of Commissioners wants SkillSource to consider buying the building. Lisa indicated to Jay that she'd be interested in exploring the option further and explained the benefits and challenges of assuming ownership of the building. The main con to buying is the new budget cost unless SkillSource can pay cash. Lisa gave options, including negotiating a purchase price

reflecting the value prior to improvements; negotiating a purchase option now; and negotiating seller financing which usually provides the lowest borrowing costs.

Annette asked if there are spaces within the building that can be rented; Lisa said that currently Big Bend and OIC are tenants, and additional space could be rented out. Roni asked about projected commercial insurance rate increases; Laura has noted modest increases but nothing that would prevent SkillSource from continuing existing insurance coverage, and the plan is to continue with the current underwriter. Roni also asked about tax status; Laura said that property tax must be paid unless exempted by the state, which is the case for two buildings at the Wenatchee campus. Tom and Zach encouraged Lisa to continue discussion with Adams County towards purchasing; Tom noted that SkillSource stands to save more money over the long run.

Workforce Investment 2023-24 Year End Performance Presentation

Lisa and Aaron led a presentation on the annual service delivery performance. This report covered federal performance common measures for the program year ending on June 30th. Overall SkillSource achieved 116% of its target performance, with 111% achievement in WIOA Adult, 121% in WIOA Dislocated Worker, and 116% in WIOA Youth. Aaron also briefly shared available performance for Title II and Title III, local input measures (enrollments and services delivered), and reviewed statewide work-based learning service delivery. Susan summarized highlights of the past year and gave a preview of important work on the horizon. Kelli then shared the annual impact report which will be shared with the board members.

Lisa called the board members' attention to the board meeting schedule and other enclosures in the board packet.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 pm.

In Attendance:

Ryan Beebout
Julie Helligso
Annette Herup
Roni Holder-Diefenbach
Tom Legel
Brant Mayo
Irasema Ortiz-Elizalde
Michelle Price
Sara Thompson Tweedy
Zach Williams
Todd Wurl

Not in Attendance:

Randy Curry
Crystal Gage
Augustine Gallegos
Faimous Harrison
Tad Hildebrand
Ken Johnson
Nate Mack
Kyle Niehenke
Anthony Popelier
Pablo Villarreal

Staff in Attendance:

Lisa Romine
Susan Adams
Laura Leavitt
Aaron Parrott
Kelli Martinelli
Emily Anderson
Alicia Wallace
Heidi Lamers
Toby Haberlock
Christy Mataya
Mayra Eaton-Garcia

**Audit Committee Report
(Zoom and in person)
10:00 am, November 19, 2024**

Members: Zach Williams, Michelle Price

Cordell, Neher & Company PLLC: Sean Patton CPA, Cindy Ulrich CPA

Staff: Lisa Romine, Laura Leavitt

2024 Audit Results:

Cordell, Neher & Co. is expected to issue an unmodified opinion on the Financial Statements and an unmodified opinion on Internal Control over financial reporting and compliance with major federal programs. Both are the highest opinions a firm can issue.

Financial Statement:

Total assets are up \$495,000 or about 9%. This is primarily due to an increase in trade receivables at the end of the fiscal year.

Revenue totaled \$6.88 million, with large increases in the State Economic Security for All and Basic Education. Expenses increased by about \$226k over the last fiscal year. Program resources increased slightly, with EcSA increases offsetting decreases in formula programs. Last year net property and equipment decreased slightly but net activities increased.

SkillSource adopted new credit loss guidance in ASU 2016-13 as of July 1, 2023. SkillSource receivables are generated by grant and contract activity and are considered 100% collectable within a 12-month period. This new guidance has no effect on the financial statements.

There were no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies identified over financial reporting or internal control over major programs. There was no noncompliance material to financial statements noted.

IRS Form 990:

The Return has not changed in form over the past few years. This document is available to the public on Guidestar.org. Page 6 Sec B relates to the policies of the organization, which should be reviewed as no changes were made from last year. Page 7 is the listing of officers and directors; this list captures board members up until June 30, 2024. Due to the public nature of the document, there is no personally identifying information such as addresses, phone numbers etc.

There were no changes to Schedules A or B, denoting public charitable organization and donor information. Schedule D Part 11 reconciles revenue by summarizing donations.

Cordell, Neher & Co. will present the Audit Report and the IRS Form 990 for action at the November 3rd Board Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 PM.

1. Current Significant Issues

a) WIOA Re Authorization

Leaders of the **House Education and the Workforce Committee** and the **Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee** announced last week that they have reached a bipartisan and bicameral agreement on legislation to reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the next five years. (This was a surprise!)

Details, including legislative text, have not yet been made public. However, I attended a briefing by committee leaders providing a high-level overview highlighting some of the major components of this proposal. The new bill largely appears to build on the House bill, A Stronger Workforce for America Act (HR 6655), about which NAWB [expressed significant concerns](#) when it was passed by the House earlier this year.

Similar to H.R. 6655, the bipartisan agreement would maintain a narrowly defined 50% training mandate for Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. The emerging agreement would, however, allow for up to 8% of this required training services expenditure to be used for supportive services—a small departure from this provision in the House's earlier WIOA proposal.

Details regarding state-level set-asides remain unclear, but committee leaders have indicated that these funds would support statewide initiatives similar to the House and Senate's proposals regarding critical industry skills funds and sector partnership efforts. It also remains unclear how local workforce area redesignation efforts, another area of significant concern for NAWB and other local partners, would be structured in this agreement.

b) Forum of County Commissioners

Three of the five County Commissioners serving on the Forum for the SkillSource Regional Board will be moving on and their respective Boards of Commissioners will appoint their successors. I will be meeting with the group in December to discuss transition and to re-appoint five board members with expiring terms who have all agreed to continue for another term. Thank you all!

c) Washington Workforce Association (WWA) Legislative Day & Hill Climb: February 4-6 - Olympia

In February, I will be participating in the WWA Legislative Day with my Director colleagues to help bring awareness of critical workforce issues to our State Legislators. Top Priorities of the WWA Legislative Agenda: 1) Economic Security for All 2) Community Reinvestment Project, 3) Benefit Cliff 4) Digital Equity 5) Economic Development. The **enclosed flyer** provides additional detail. A short presentation will be provided at the board meeting.

2. Compliance Update

a) Auditors and State Monitoring

- Cordell, Neher & Co. completed the annual audit this month. Results will be presented at the board meeting.
- State Monitors from Employment Security Department completed their annual review this week. The review went smoothly and there were no issues identified beyond some minor data corrections. A final report is forthcoming in the next month or so.
- On the horizon is an update to the One Stop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). Both are required to be updated and re-signed by June 30, 2024.

3. Progress on Goals/Strategic Plan Implementation

Three key industries prioritized in our strategic plan include careers in Technology, Healthcare & Manufacturing. Below are a few examples of stories amplifying these efforts and successes.

[Samaritan Hospital](#), Register Nurse - MedSurg @ Legislative Tour in October

[SkillSource Wenatchee](#) - Computer Tech Apprenticeship

[Genie](#) – Production Technician Apprenticeship



4. Organizational Performance

See enclosed sub-area performance reports through the first quarter of this program year with success story spotlights. In addition, a balance sheet and financial reports are included at the end of the board packet highlighting SkillSource's financial position as well as expenditures and obligations through first quarter of the fiscal year. Reports indicate a strong start to the year.

5. Items of Information

- **Washington Workforce Association Conference:**

Several staff and two board members attended the Washington Workforce Association Conference: Our Future Workforce, Together We Thrive in Tacoma November 12-14. Pablo Villareal presented on DVRs Pre-Employment Program and several SkillSource staff members and partners including BBCC and NCW Tech Alliance made presentations. [Read more here](#). Thank you all for your engagement!



- **Save the Date: SkillSource Board Retreat** is slated for **March 13-14, 2024**. The retreat will be held in at Campbell's Resort in Chelan, WA. The retreat will begin Thursday evening with dinner and an opening session/reception. You will soon receive an official invitation and RSVP request to reserve rooms.
- **National Conference (NAWB)** will be held in WA DC **March 29- April 1**. Several members have indicated interest. Please call or email me if you want to secure a spot. All expenses are covered by SkillSource. See more info [here](#).
- **WWA Board Officer:** I have accepted a nomination for the 2025 WWA Vice Chair role. Typically, the VC moves into the Chair role the following year. I am appreciative of the nomination and thrilled with the leadership and direction of WWA.



Business Outreach & Engagement Report

| Sept - Nov 2023 | Susan Adams & Mayra Garcia

SkillSource and the Othello Chamber of Commerce hosted an Open House at the Thieme Career Development Center, which houses SkillSource and multiple partners. The community was invited to drop in and connect, learn more, and enjoy a free barbecue dinner. Nearly 50 guests toured the Career Center and heard presentations from staff about Career Seeker Services, Business Services, and the Open Doors program, which works with youth who have been disengaged from school. Guests also had the chance to fill out passports for visiting tables from community partners, including Big Bend Community College, The Othello Food Bank, Lighthouse, OIC of Washington, New Hope, HopeSource, and the Othello Chamber.



Employers and career seekers convened at two separate **Fall Hiring Events in Moses Lake, one on October 4 and one in Wenatchee on October 10**. The fall hiring events were a collaboration between SkillSource and our WorkSource partners, each serving individuals and the community in a variety of ways. Partners included: Employment Security Department, OIC of Washington, Chelan-Douglas Community Action Council, DSHS, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Services for the Blind, Job Corps, North Central ESD, Wenatchee Valley College, and Big Bend Community College.

Thousands of students in our five-county area attended the annual **College and Career Expos at BBCC, Okanogan Agri Plex, and WVC in October and November sponsored by NCESD, Apple Stem Network, Career Connect WA, SkillSource, WVC, BBCC and WorkSource**. At the events, educators and local industry professionals came together to introduce students to regionally in demand careers. In addition to connecting with colleges and industry professionals, students who attend the expos engaged in hands-on work-based activities, explored workplace tools and equipment, and learned from real job descriptions.





SkillSource staff members throughout our service area in North Central Washington attended the Washington Workforce Association “Our Future Workforce, Together We Thrive” conference in Tacoma from November 12-14. Staff attended workshops and presentations to bring back fresh ideas, perspectives, and solutions to support our communities. As one team member noted, it was a true refresher on the importance of the work we do, and an opportunity to strengthen connections so that we can serve people even better. Several employees and board members also led presentations, sharing their own expertise with other workforce professionals.

Community Reinvestment

The past quarter, SkillSource continued to focus on the **Community Reinvestment Project (CRP) and State Economic Security for All Grant (EcSA) grants** that prioritize serving Black, Indigenous, and Latino businesses and career seekers. In addition, throughout our service area, staff were engaged in outreach to the businesses and career seekers through Open Houses, Hiring Events, and College and Career Expos.

Mayra Eaton-Garcia, Business Engagement & Relations Specialist, has continued her efforts to **coordinate outreach across the five-county area**, focusing on providing Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), on-the-job training, internships, and work experiences for priority populations. In collaboration with Jacklyn Willhelm, Chamber Manager for the Othello Chamber of Commerce, Mayra has developed a plan to offer **networking opportunities and dedicated forums** for businesses to discuss their challenges. The Othello Chamber of Commerce will host the English-language session, *Business is Brewing*, while SkillSource will lead the Spanish-language session, *Café y Conexión*.

The goal of these initiatives is to cultivate a thriving business community in Othello by **creating platforms for networking, resource sharing, and skill development**. Through monthly gatherings and targeted workshops tailored to the specific needs of local businesses, the program aims to build trust, strengthen partnerships, and empower businesses to thrive. Attendance rates, participant satisfaction, and engagement in SkillSource services will be tracked to measure the impact of these efforts. These sessions will officially launch in January and are planned to expand gradually to other counties.

A similar initiative, *Conexión*, has been launched in Wenatchee, WA by D’Andre Vasquez, Hispanic Business Community Relations Coordinator with the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce, under a “By and For” contract with SkillSource. This month, approximately 25 participants attended the event, engaging in discussions about their challenges and needs. As a follow-up, a workshop on marketing will be offered to provide further support and resources for participants.

Additionally, Mayra has prioritized outreach to Tribal communities in Okanogan County. On November 26th, the executive staff will meet with the Colville Tribes to discuss the CRF grant SkillSource received and explore a collaborative approach to supporting tribal businesses and job seekers.

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Washington Workforce Association 2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Economic Security for All (EcSA)

WWA's top priority is to enhance Economic Security for All resources to increase service levels and simplify the program's administration. EcSA provides a state funding stream that aligns existing workforce and support programs across the state to amplify their collective impact. These funds are a critical resource that addresses the need to connect businesses with workers and sustain the infrastructure for individuals to receive training and credentialing to be self-sufficient and achieve economic independence. EcSA funds primarily assist traditionally underserved communities, including BIPOC, justice-impacted, and rural populations, in creating generational economic success by providing individuals with the necessary resources and support to thrive in the workforce.

EcSA previously received \$68.65 million biennially through \$20.4 million in direct funds to the Employment Security Department (ESD) and a \$48.25 million interagency agreement with ESD and the Department of Commerce (Commerce). Funding has been provided through multiple provisos, a mix of GF-S, CPP, and community reinvestment funds, with some funds being maintenance and some being one-time provisos.

POSITION:

- Maintain funding for EcSA, with ongoing appropriations to ESD of \$24.4 million for core services adjusted for caseloads and inflation.
- Simplify ESD funding streams under a maintenance budget line item to support local boards' business services to help people move out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.
- Continue the interagency agreement with ESD and Commerce to direct \$50 million of Community Reinvestment funds to enhance EcSA's pro-equity poverty reduction services.

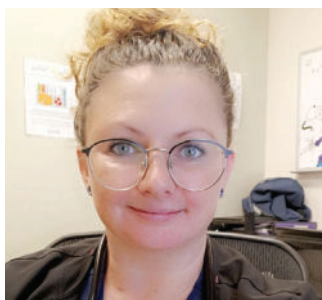
Community Reinvestment Project

WWA supports continuing the Community Reinvestment Project (CRP), a vital initiative that addresses community empowerment, workforce needs, and justice-impacted individuals while promoting economic growth. Administered by the State Department of Commerce and in partnership with local workforce boards, it uses a community-driven approach to guide the development and delivery of impactful programs to address racial, economic, and social disparities and help individuals develop or enhance their skills to move to self-sufficient employment and long-term economic stability for themselves and their families.

POSITION:

Support the continuation of the Department of Commerce Community Reinvestment Project initiatives and partnership with local workforce boards, with ongoing funding to promote economic stability for families and thriving communities through the continuation of the following initiatives:

- Provide customers with resources to help meet basic needs as they actively pursue training toward their career goals.
- Support small businesses with grants, customized training programs, hiring needs, and other assistance to promote economic development.
- Offer financial coaching and Matched Savings Accounts to help customers purchase a home, invest in education or their business, or purchase other assets that support economic mobility and stability.



Benefit Cliff

WWA recognizes the need to carefully manage benefit cliffs' interaction with workforce development career pathways. Benefit cliffs refer to the sudden loss of public assistance, childcare, or housing when an individual's income exceeds a certain threshold. While some benefit phaseouts are gradual, others are sudden and can significantly reduce income and resources for individuals and families, just as they are on the cusp of economic self-sufficiency. This is not only an issue for families but also for employers' ability to attract and retain key talent for their workplace. When people cannot afford childcare or housing, they leave their jobs, turn down new career opportunities, and forgo pursuing additional education. Wrap-around services coordinated through local workforce boards allow income gains through higher-paying careers while balancing the loss of public assistance in the near term, mitigating the impact of benefit cliffs on low-income households.

POSITION:

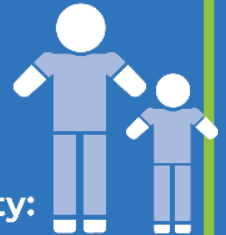
- Support policies that prevent benefit cliffs for individuals transitioning to self-sufficiency.
- Protect and enhance incentives for wrap-around services, allowing individuals to meet career goals and increase earning capacity while reducing government dependence.
- Support policies to address the housing shortage, emphasizing those who earn too much to qualify for low-income housing but struggle to afford housing near their workplaces.
- Promote legislative investments and solutions that grow access to affordable childcare options, meet the needs of parents with infants and school-age children, and invest in the people doing the vital work at childcare centers across our state.
- Encourage state agencies to analyze regulations and policies to ease the impact of benefit cliffs as individuals move from government benefits to self-sufficiency.



A SINGLE PARENT WITH ONE CHILD:

\$18 AN HOUR
\$37,440 a year

At or under 200% Federal Poverty Level



Service Eligibility:

- ☒ SNAP/Food assistance
- ☒ Working Connections Child Care
- ☒ Apple Health/Qualified Health Plans
- ☒ Housing assistance
- ☒ Utility assistance
- ☒ Telephone assistance
- ☒ Educational Assistance (Pell, Opportunity Grants, SNG, BFET, etc.)

\$19 AN HOUR
\$39,520 a year

Over 200% Federal Poverty Level of \$39,440



Service Eligibility:

- ☐ SNAP/Food assistance
- ☐ Working Connections Child Care
- ☐ Apple Health/Qualified Health Plans
- ☐ Housing assistance
- ☐ Utility assistance
- ☐ Telephone assistance
- ☐ Educational Assistance (Pell, Opportunity Grants, SNG, BFET, etc.)

Digital Equity

WWA is acutely aware of the pressing need to close the digital divide, particularly in rural and traditionally underserved communities. This is done by developing the trained workforce necessary to build broadband infrastructure, increasing broadband access, expanding digital literacy, and improving training for justice-impacted individuals and those preparing for release. Several initiatives are underway to achieve these goals. The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program aims to close the digital divide by providing high-speed internet access to every person and business in the state by 2028. The Department of Commerce has developed a Digital Equity Plan to establish eligibility for federal funding to expand broadband access. The Washington Workforce Board previously received one-time, one-year funding for Digital Literacy and IT Career Equity to promote digital literacy and provide marginalized communities pathways to high-demand, high-wage, information technology-based careers. Continued efforts are needed to ensure every resident has internet for education, training, job searches, running a business, or accessing necessities like healthcare and groceries.

POSITION:

- Support the Department of Commerce Digital Equity Plan to expand broadband access.
- Support the Washington State Broadband Office's Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) initiative and develop a comprehensive workforce development strategy that invests in skills and training for broadband deployment.
- Support the Workforce Board's efforts to continue the digital literacy and equity in IT careers initiative through their 2025 funding request to increase digital literacy and access to technology-based careers and provide Skills Gap Program funds to fill critical skills gaps locally through partnerships between employers, the 12 Local Workforce Development Councils, and education organizations. Programs should be linked to existing resources whenever possible.



Economic Development

WWA believes that Local Workforce Development Boards are crucial to economic development and enhancement for today's workforce and the future. They drive economic growth, job quality, and prosperity by fostering collaboration, strategic planning, and effective workforce programs. Local boards partner with employers, economic development councils, associate development organizations, and others to form a frontline system to develop workforce plans and bridge gaps between employers, job seekers, and community organizations.

POSITION:

- Support strategies to increase outreach, capital, tools, and technical assistance to stimulate business, particularly in underserved and rural communities.
- Ensure job creation policies include locally led workforce development initiatives.
- Increase funding for regional capacity to coordinate and deliver economic development services through ongoing investments in Associate Development Organizations (ADOs).
- Ensure a solid foundation is in place to train, retrain, and upskill workers to meet the needs of the Clean Economy employers and projects.



ENCLOSURES



Board Meeting
Via Zoom
Tuesday, December 3rd
@ 5:30 pm

Chelan/Douglas Quarterly Performance Report

July 1, 2024 - September 30, 2024

At Work In A Learner's Playground

Registered apprenticeships are where earning and learning go hand in hand. "I love working here. It's a learner's playground," says Ayden Oseguera, a young adult who found his career path through a Computer Tech 1 Apprenticeship at SkillSource. He particularly enjoys the hands-on work of cabling, setting up computers, and solving technical problems through troubleshooting.

Ayden earned his high school equivalency through the SkillSource Open Doors program. He has always liked computers, but didn't consider a career in computer technology until his SkillSource instructors made the recommendation. His Open Doors instructor, Dana Osterlund, introduced him to technical apprenticeship possibilities, and he began a paid Work Experience at SkillSource in the technology department to gain workplace maturity and soft skills, while also developing and demonstrating computer skills. Ayden officially entered into the Computer Tech 1 Registered Apprenticeship program in October, continuing to work and learn alongside SkillSource's network administrator, Kristine Ringsrud.

Regulated by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC) and sponsored by the Wenatchee School District, this program is the only computer technology apprenticeship in the state specifically designed for high school, Open Doors, and Federal Title I students. Once hired, apprentices start at 75% of the standard journey rate, with pay increases as they complete training milestones. Over approximately two years, Ayden will complete 2,000 hours of hands-on training. The program covers data management, customer service and communications, software, hardware, and network support. He'll also complete 170 hours of related instruction, including classroom learning, lab work, and online study, plus Google Workspace Education certifications.

The program has a solid track record of success. Previous graduates have found positions as computer technicians with the Wenatchee School District. Graduates can also pursue opportunities at data centers, warehouses, and computer support businesses.

His mentor, Kristine Ringsrud, has watched Ayden grow beyond just technical skills. "Ayden is a delight to work with," she shares. "He's dependable, stays on task, and is eager to help others. He was very shy when he first started working for me – it's satisfying to watch him gaining confidence as he demonstrates new skills." In Ayden's "learner's playground," he's gaining real-world experience while earning a wage, demonstrating how technical education creates practical pathways to meaningful careers.

Congratulations, Ayden!





Registration & Exit

Current Actual

Annual Goal

Total Served

236

625

Adults

Registered	30	81
Placement Rate (% employed at exit)	100%	80%
Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)	75%	82%

Dislocated Workers

Registered	17	44
Placement Rate (% employed at exit)	100%	81%
Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)	100%	81%

Youth

Registered	43	68
Placement Rate (% of youth employed or in post sec ed)	67%	65%
Credential Rate (% youth who achieved a HSD or GED)	33%	51%

Discretionary Grant Enrollments: Federal EcSA: 15/16; State EcSA 50/44



Participants in Occupational Education	24-25 Students (YTD)				23-24 Students (Year Total)			
	Big Bend	WVC	WVC Omak	Other	Big Bend	WVC	WVC Omak	Other
Health Care	22	21	17	11	17	17	13	15
Office/Misc	7	8	0	4	6	5	0	9
Industrial & Technical	7	10	0	28	12	6	0	63



Workforce Investment Fiscal	Budget	Expenditures	Expenditure Rate	Obligation Rate
Career Services	1,246,553	275,161	22%	90%
Employer Based Training				
On-The-Job / Incumbent Worker Training	122,695	2,850	2%	21%
Work Experiences / Project Learning	144,201	41,263	29%	52%
Occupational Education	216,625	35,298	16%	62%
Healthcare		10,260		
Office/Other		9,786		
Industrial/Technical		15,252		
Basic Education				
Secondary Education	493,749	97,986	20%	79%
Computer Basics	81,505	13,541	17%	66%
Support and Incentives	595,113	70,927	12%	85%
Total	2,900,441	537,026	19%	79%



Board Meeting
Via Zoom
Tuesday, December 3rd
@ 5:30 pm

Grant/Adams Quarterly Performance Report

July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024

Forward Momentum

When a person is laid off from their job, it can be a challenge to find a similar position that requires the same skills, particularly in smaller communities like Ephrata. In order to find a new job that pays a competitive wage, a dislocated worker might need to learn something new, and even pursue higher education or a certification. But then there's the additional challenge: How does someone learn new skills to get a better job when the cost for training is an obstacle, and the regular expenses of life just keep coming?

Anthony Vela was a dislocated worker who had been laid off from his job as a Chip Spreader Operator. When he lost his job and the means to support his three children as a single parent, he was determined to find forward momentum with something new. He turned to SkillSource for guidance and support, and set out to become a CDL Class A truck driver.

Anthony enrolled in CDL Class A training at Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake. He worked with his SkillSource career trainer to confirm eligibility for Economic Security for All (EcSA), which helps with financial incentives for participants who are actively working toward a certification. Despite tough financial circumstances, the EcSA incentives helped Anthony pay for rent while he focused on completing his training. And when he successfully earned his CDL Class A license, he was awarded an additional \$1,000 for his achievement.

The financial incentives provided through EcSA changes lives. Shortly after receiving his certification, Anthony was hired in a full-time position as a Route Truck Driver with Consolidated Disposal Services, Inc. (CDSI) in Ephrata, WA. The setback and the struggle were real, but thanks to Anthony's perseverance and the support of SkillSource and EcSA, he regained his footing, and has now found forward momentum toward a brighter future for himself and his family.

Congratulations to Anthony and to CDSI!





Registration & Exit		Current Actual	Annual Goal
Total Served		308	523
Adults			
Registered		61	108
Placement Rate (% employed at exit)		69%	80%
Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)		80%	82%
Dislocated Workers			
Registered		7	59
Placement Rate (% employed at exit)		—	81%
Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)		—	81%
Youth			
Registered		54	110
Placement Rate (% of youth employed or in post sec ed)		80%	65%
Credential Rate (% youth who achieved a HSD or GED)		60%	51%



Discretionary Grant Enrollments: Federal EcSA: 11/12; State EcSA 65/44

Participants in Occupational Education	24-25 Students (YTD)				23-24 Students (Year Total)			
	Big Bend	WVC	WVC Omak	Other	Big Bend	WVC	WVC Omak	Other
Health Care	22	21	17	11	17	17	13	15
Office/Misc	7	8	0	4	6	5	0	9
Industrial & Technical	7	10	0	28	12	6	0	63



Workforce Investment Fiscal	Budget	Expenditures	Expenditure Rate	Obligation Rate
Career Services*	1,401,862	318,313	23%	92%
Work Based Training				
On-The-Job / Incumbent Worker Training	181,320	12,616	7%	25%
Work Experiences / Project Learning	186,370	51,367	28%	37%
Occupational Education	324,858	56,663	17%	67%
Healthcare		3,000		
Office/Other		0		
Industrial/Technical		53,663		
Basic Education				
Secondary Education	202,103	53,073	26%	87%
Computer Basics	115,336	12,552	11%	44%
Support and Incentives	671,353	67,391	10%	79%
Total	3,083,112	571,975	19%	77%



Board Meeting
Via Zoom
Tuesday, December 3rd
@5:30 pm

Okanogan Quarterly Performance Report

July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024

Open Doors, Open for Business!

Washington State's 1418 Open Doors program is a reengagement system that provides education and services to older youth, ages 16-21, who have dropped out of school or are not expected to graduate from high school by the age of 21. SkillSource has operated Open Doors programs for young adults in Wenatchee, Moses Lake, and Othello, resulting in hundreds of graduates over the years. This fall, it was finally Omak's turn as WorkSource Okanogan began offering Open Doors in the Omak Learning Center, in partnership with the Okanogan School District. As of this writing, nineteen students are already enrolled!

This program receives referrals from throughout Okanogan, Douglas and Ferry Counties, including students from Okanogan, Omak, Tonasket, Oroville, Brewster, Bridgeport, Pateros, Lake Roosevelt, Mansfield, Methow Valley and Republic school districts. Additionally, youth are referred to WLC through Okanogan County Juvenile Center and other community partners, including Omak's local WorkSource office, the Department of Social and Health Services, and Omak's Foundation for Youth Recovery and Engagement. Orientations are held every other Monday starting at noon.

The learning center utilizes a self-paced learning format where students use Odysseyware, an interactive educational computer system, in coordination with subject specific tutoring sessions, field trips, and one-on-one assistance from instructors to improve academic skills and prepare students to obtain a high school equivalency certificate or high school diploma, and then receive assistance to obtain employment or enter post-secondary education in cooperation with the WIOA Title I programs.

Open Doors program instructor Chad Peterson is heading up this new learning experience, with WorkSource Okanogan career counselor Ana Soto providing case management and an AmeriCorps volunteer assisting in the classroom. It's not all drudgery and boring lessons for the Open Doors students; Chad makes sure they have plenty of fun as they learn.



Chad (far left) and the Open Doors students celebrate Halloween.



The Open Doors program provides flexible learning opportunities and meets students where they are at. We look forward to many graduates and successes in the future. Thank you to the many people who worked hard to make this happen.



Registration & Exit

YTD Actual

Annual Goal

Total Served

125

345

Adults

Registered

36

59

Placement Rate (% employed at exit)

100%

80%

Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)

83%

82%

Dislocated Workers

Registered

11

24

Placement Rate (% employed at exit)

83%

81%

Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)

—

81%

Youth

Registered

9

36

Placement Rate (% of youth employed or in post sec ed)

100%

65%

Credential Rate (% youth who achieved a HSD or GED)

100%

51%

Discretionary Grant Enrollments: Federal EcSA: 6/6; State EcSA 29/17



Participants in Occupational Education	24-25 Students (YTD)				23-24 Students (Year Total)			
	Big Bend	WVC	WVC Omak	Other	Big Bend	WVC	WVC Omak	Other
Health Care	22	21	17	11	17	17	13	15
Office/Misc	7	8	0	4	6	5	0	9
Industrial & Technical	7	10	0	28	12	6	0	63



Workforce Investment Fiscal	Budget	Expenditures	Expenditure Rate	Obligation Rate
Career Services *	799,060	174,548	22%	90%
Work Based Training				
On-The-Job/Incumbent Worker Training	69,660	8,690	12%	31%
Work Experiences/Project Learning	94,028	28,233	30%	30%
Occupational Education	104,500	14,100	13%	91%
Healthcare		2,100		
Office/Other		0		
Industrial/Technical		12,000		
Basic Education				
Secondary Education	120,649	29,812	25%	99%
Computer Basics	49,485	13,059	26%	106%
Support and Incentives	330,475	23,644	7%	75%
Total	1,567,857	292,086	19%	82%

SkillSource
Statement of Financial Position
As of 9/30/2024

	Current Year	Beginning Year Balance
<hr/>		
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,349,746.69	1,329,273.03
Trade Receivables	308,607.81	740,127.37
Due from Government	323,091.00	132,359.20
Other Receivables	7,828.53	2,931.53
Prepaid Expenses	<u>55,084.51</u>	<u>55,598.09</u>
Total Current Assets	2,044,358.54	2,260,289.22
Property and Equipment		
Land	813,350.61	813,350.61
Land Improvements	724,495.59	724,495.59
Building and Equipment	4,954,246.61	4,954,246.61
Construction in Process	20,335.77	20,335.77
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(3,147,374.37)</u>	<u>(3,106,360.17)</u>
Total Property and Equipment	3,365,054.21	3,406,068.41
Other Assets		
USDA Reserve	<u>164,123.47</u>	<u>163,033.88</u>
Total USDA Reserve	<u>164,123.47</u>	<u>163,033.88</u>
Total Other Assets	<u>164,123.47</u>	<u>163,033.88</u>
Total Assets	5,573,536.22	5,829,391.51
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	56,880.31	191,123.61
Accrued Wages and Benefits	58,359.29	12,977.75
Accrued Vacation	178,665.04	169,168.79
Accrued Interest	<u>2,602.94</u>	<u>2,602.94</u>
Total Current Liabilities	296,507.58	436,618.23
Long-Term Debt		
Long-term debt	<u>2,256,706.30</u>	<u>2,271,658.89</u>
Total Liabilities	2,553,213.88	2,647,531.98
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	<u>3,020,322.34</u>	<u>3,181,859.53</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>3,020,322.34</u>	<u>3,181,859.53</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	5,573,536.22	5,829,391.51

10 - Executive

7-1-24 thru 9-30-24

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Budget</u>	
Expenditures			
Salaries & Benefits	247,419	1,072,795	23%
Travel	2,830	29,950	9%
Miscellaneous	55,670	258,560	22%
Supplies	4,591	21,760	21%
Equipment	0	7,000	0%
Facilities	3,310	29,746	11%
Communication	1,940	7,558	26%
Training	16,397	110,000	15%
By & For Subcontracts	2,000	100,000	2%
Small Business Grants	<u>96,476</u>	<u>150,000</u>	64%
Total Executive Expenditures	<u>430,632</u>	<u>1,787,369</u>	24%

20 - Chelan/Douglas

7-1-24 thru 09-30-24	Total	Budget	Expenditure Rate	Obligation thru 6/30/2025	Obligation Rate
Expenditures					
Training related expenditures					
Salaries & Benefits	233,329	1,024,815	23%		
OneStop Operator	1,142	14,000	8%		
Travel	1,485	5,400	27%		
Miscellaneous	18,401	44,686	41%		
Supplies	7,193	50,667	14%		
Equipment	636	10,000	6%		
Facilities	16,307	81,750	20%		
Communication	1,207	10,235	12%		
Training	2,317	5,000	46%		
Total Training Related	275,161	1,246,553	22%	1,117,530	90%
Direct Training					
Incumbent Worker	-	47,035	0%	13,461	29%
On the Job Training	2,850	75,660	4%	12,429	16%
Participant Wages	41,263	144,201	29%	75,232	52%
Institutional Training	35,299	216,625	16%	133,326	62%
Basic Skills Training	97,986	493,749	20%	391,946	79%
Computer Basics	13,541	81,505	17%	54,164	66%
Support services					
GED Fees	940				
Incentives	67,275				
Transportation	829				
Supportive Services Other	1,884				
Total Support services	70,927	595,113	12%	507,605	85%
Total Direct Training	261,867	1,653,888	16%	1,188,161	72%
Total Expenditures	537,028	2,900,441	19%	2,305,691	79%

30 - Grant/Adams

7-1-24 thru 9-30-24	Total	Budget	Expenditure Rate	Obligation thru 6/30/2025	Obligation Rate
Expenditures					
Training related expenditures					
Salaries					
Salaries & Benefits	250,971	1,150,044	22%		
OneStop Operator	2,262	28,000	8%		
Travel	3,502	16,800	21%		
Miscellaneous	12,299	58,107	21%		
Supplies	4,006	49,472	8%		
Equipment	3,145	10,000	31%		
Facilities	38,340	77,196	50%		
Communication	1,670	7,243	23%		
Training	2,117	5,000	42%		
Total Training Related	318,313	1,401,862	23%	1,289,622	92%
Direct Training					
Incumbent Worker Training	8,000	63,660	13%	13,059	21%
On the Job Training	4,616	117,660	4%	31,850	27%
Participant Wages	51,367	186,370	28%	69,829	37%
Institutional Training	56,663	324,858	17%	216,855	67%
Basic Skills Training	53,073	202,013	26%	175,437	87%
Computer Basics	12,552	115,336	11%	50,207	44%
Support services					
Incentives	56,625				
Housing	2,570				
Transportation	5,925				
Supportive Services	<u>2,271</u>				
Total Support services	<u>67,391</u>	<u>671,353</u>	10%	<u>527,706</u>	79%
Total Direct Training	<u>253,662</u>	<u>1,681,250</u>	15%	<u>1,084,943</u>	65%
Total Expenditures	<u>571,975</u>	<u>3,083,112</u>	19%	<u>2,374,564</u>	77%

50 - Okanogan

7-1-24 thru 9-30-24	Total	Budget	Expenditure Rate	Obligation thru 6/30/2025	Obligation Rate
Expenditures					
OneStop Operator	2,262	28,000	8%		
Subrecipient Program	143,095	635,194	23%		
Subrecipient Indirect	<u>29,191</u>	<u>135,866</u>	21%		
Total Training related	174,548	799,060	22%	717,146	90%
Direct Training					
Incumbent Worker	8,260	40,830	20%	15,315	38%
On the Job Training	430	28,830	1%	6,205	22%
Participant Wages	28,233	94,028	30%	28,233	30%
Institutional Training	14,100	104,500	13%	95,545	91%
Basic Skills Training	29,812	120,649	25%	119,247	99%
Computer Basics	13,059	49,485	26%	52,235	106%
Support services					
Incentives	20,725				
Transportation	2,227				
Supportive Services Other	<u>692</u>				
Total Support services	<u>23,644</u>	<u>330,475</u>	7%	<u>248,919</u>	75%
Total Direct Training	<u>117,537</u>	<u>768,797</u>	15%	<u>565,699</u>	74%
Total Expenditures	<u><u>292,086</u></u>	<u><u>1,567,857</u></u>	19%	<u><u>1,282,844</u></u>	82%

SkillSource Regional Workforce Board

2024-25 Meeting Calendar

September 2024	9	Okanogan Committee
	10	Grant/Adams Committee
	11	Chelan/Douglas Committee
	24	Board Meeting 5:30 pm – via Zoom
November 2024	18	Okanogan Committee
	19	Grant/Adams Committee
	20	Chelan/Douglas Committee
December	03	Board Meeting 5:30 pm – via Zoom
March 2025	3	Okanogan Committee
	4	Grant/Adams Committee – TBD
	5	Chelan/Douglas Committee - TBD
	13-14	Board Retreat – Chelan, WA @ Campbell’s Resort (begins Thurs evening w/ Dinner, ending Fri @4pm)
June 2025	9	Okanogan Committee – TBD
	10	Grant/Adams Committee - TBD
	11	Chelan/Douglas Committee - TBD
	24	Board Meeting 5:30 pm – via Zoom

Committee Meetings: Noon – 1:30PM and include lunch

Board Meetings: 5:30 – 7:00PM

SkillSource Regional Board Membership Composition

This roster conforms to WIOA section 107(b)(2) Local Workforce Development Board Membership Composition. The information informs the Governor for certification under WIOA Section 107(c)(2).

Required categories	Name/Title/Organization	Nominated by	Year Appt	Term Expires
Business (51% minimum)				Dec 31
1. Business	Crystal Gage/ Practice Manager/ Omak Clinic	OK Economic Alliance	2019	2026
2. Business	Anthony Popelier / HR Dir/ Reman Reload	OK Economic Alliance	2023	2027
3. Business	Roni Holder-Diefenbach/ Exec Dir/ Ok Econ All	Career Path Services	2005	2024
4. Business	Annette Herup / HR Manager / Genie-Terex	Grant Co EDC	2019	2026
5. Business	Tad Hildebrand /Consultant/ Nash Consulting	Adams Co Dev Council	2017	2027
6. Business	Ken Johnson/ Owner/ Johnson's Glass & More	Adams Co Dev Council	2014	2027
7. Business	Brant Mayo/Executive Dir/Grant Co EDC	Grant Co EDC	2018	2024
8. Business	Ryan Beebout/ VP/ Sabey Data Centers	Wenatchee Chamber	2023	2027
9. Business	Tom Legel / CFO/ Confluence Health	Wenatchee Chamber	2023	2026
10. Business	Julie Helligso /Exec Director/ Cascade Vet	Wenatchee Chamber	2023	2026
11. Business	Zach Williams /HR Manager/ Stemilt Growers	Wenatchee Chamber	2021	2024
Workforce/Labor (20% minimum)				
1. Labor	Nathan Mack/ Field Representative/LiUNA 348	Central Labor Council	2023	2027
2. Other workforce	Michelle Price/ Superintendent /NC ESD	North Central ESD	2009	2024
3. Other workforce	Irasema Ortiz-Elizalde/ Administrator/ DSHS	DSHS	2013	2027
4. Labor	Augustine Gallegos / Bus Agent / Teamsters	Central Labor Council	2021	2024
5. Labor/Apprentice	Randy Curry / President /IBEW #191	Central Labor Council	2021	2024
Education				
1. Title II Adult Ed	Sara Thompson-Tweedy/ President / BBCC	Big Bend Comm College	2021	2024
2. Workforce Ed	Famous Harrison / President / WVC	Wenatchee Valley College	2023	2026
Public				
1. Wagner-Peyser	Todd Wurl/ Regional Director/ ESD	Employment Sec Dept	2023	2027
2. Vocational Rehab	Pablo Villarreal/ Acting Regional Director/ DVR	Div Vocational Rehab	2019	2026
3. Econ Dev	Kyle Niehenke/ Ex. Dir/ Adams County ED	Adams Co Dev. Council	2023	2026

Rev: 06/2024

Okanogan	Chelan/Douglas	Grant/Adams
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A Stronger Workforce for America Act

Bipartisan, Bicameral Bill Summary

November 2024

A strong workforce development system is vital to strengthening our economy and providing economic opportunity for more Americans. When the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was enacted in 2014, it made critical improvements to streamline the maze of federal workforce development programs and enhance accountability through a single set of performance metrics. However, a decade later, significant challenges persist that hamper the workforce system's ability to fund high-quality services to youth, workers, and employers to help fill job openings in growing and in-demand industries.

A Stronger Workforce for America Act makes critical updates to WIOA that will improve the skills development of workers provided under the law, strengthen connections between employers and the workforce system, and put more Americans on the pathway to a successful career.

Upgrades the skills of more Americans

- Dedicates 50 percent of the adult and dislocated worker funding toward upskilling workers through “individual training accounts” (ITAs), on-the-job learning, and other employer-led and industry relevant initiatives. Allows local areas to count a portion of spending on supportive services for adults and dislocated workers participating in skills development toward this requirement.
- Provides eligible displaced workers with ITAs with a minimum value of \$5,000 to enroll in high-quality reskilling programs and reconnect with the workforce by repurposing existing resources at the Department of Labor.
- Allows states to set-aside funds from their state allocation to establish an “industry or sector partnership and career pathways development fund.” Through the fund, states will establish a competitive grant to support new or existing industry or sector partnerships to fund a range of education, skills development, and employment-related activities, with a non-federal cost sharing requirement based on the size of the participating employers.
- Allows states to set-aside additional funds from their state allocation to establish a “critical industry skills fund.” Through the fund, states will provide reimbursements to employers, sector partnerships, and other intermediaries for upskilling workers in the priority industries selected by the state. Reimbursements will occur only when the workers complete their program and are employed and retained in that industry.
- Raises the cap on “incumbent worker training” so local workforce boards, particularly in areas with low unemployment or high labor force participation, can help the currently employed workforce gain new skills to increase their wages, avoid displacement, and advance their careers.
- Enhances the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act* (WIOA Title II) by including digital literacy skills as a core component of adult education and emphasizing the use of “integrated education and training” so adult learners can develop basic skills while simultaneously preparing for an in-demand occupation or industry.
- Improves service delivery and skills development opportunities through apprenticeships and industry or sector partnerships, as well as, encourages programs to implement the

principles of universal design for learning.

Delivers greater accountability and program quality

- Streamlines the “eligible training provider list” to ensure programs promote positive outcomes for workers and are aligned with the skill and hiring demands of employers by focusing the eligibility process on employment outcomes and improving consumer choice by elevating high-performing providers through a new “Workforce Innovation Leader” designation.
- Updates the performance indicators to better evaluate program success. The bill makes the percentage employed during the fourth quarter after exiting a program a labor market retention measure to hold programs accountable for ensuring participants have the skills to stay in the workforce. The bill also reforms the “effectiveness in serving employers” indicator to measure the percentage of participants in employer-connected learning such as “on-the-job training” or an apprenticeship.
- Strengthens and fully implements the performance accountability system in the law to hold states and local workforce boards accountable for achieving positive labor market outcomes for program participants and drive continuous improvement across the system, while providing incentive payments to states and local workforce boards that demonstrate significant improvements in outcomes for program participants. Modernizes the delivery of services to jobseekers by directing states to periodically reassess whether their WIOA “local areas” match the labor markets and economic development initiatives of the state, while encouraging the use of virtual services and existing community hubs to reach more jobseekers at a lower cost.
- Promotes program quality improvement and raises the standards for performance and student safety in the Job Corps program by conditioning the award and extension of campus operator contracts on successful performance. Creates a comprehensive program improvement period to enhance Job Corps program quality and set clear steps for the improvement actions that must be taken if a Job Corps campus is not achieving successful student outcomes or keeping students safe. Affords campuses more local control over budgeting and programming and behavioral management and removes overly broad offenses from the list of zero-tolerance offenses while also creating an appeals process for zero-tolerance offenses.

Strengthens pathways to economic opportunity for youth and adults

- Creates a new definition of “opportunity youth”, to replace “out-of-school youth”, by including youth experiencing homelessness and youth in foster care in the definition regardless of school enrollment status, and provides greater flexibility to respond to local needs by requiring 70 percent of youth funds statewide be dedicated towards serving opportunity youth while allowing states to work with their local boards to determine the appropriate percentage for each local area.
- Establishes the Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grant (YARG) program to increase youth participation in new or existing apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs and support high-quality career pathways for in-school and opportunity youth. Provides \$65 million annually to support these partnerships by repurposing existing resources at the Department of Labor.
- Places a greater emphasis on work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships for youth and enhances the quality of summer and year-round employment opportunities

available, while authorizing the use of ITAs for in-school youth to participate in skills development programs outside of the courses offered by their school district.

- Codifies and strengthens a program to help justice-involved individuals released from the nation's prisons transition back to meaningful employment and access skills and career pathways, while identifying and disseminating effective strategies to improve outcomes and reduce recidivism.
- Codifies and strengthens workforce education programs at community colleges that align with in-demand jobs by emphasizing programs with industry partnerships and those that use competency-based assessments to award academic credit for prior learning.
- Codifies the authority to issue dislocated worker grants to entities serving areas with employment and upskilling needs related to widespread substance use disorders, including to support preparation of individuals who have been impacted by substance use disorder in health professions involved in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders.

Fuels innovation for a skills-based economy

- Authorizes a demonstration authority to allow several states and local workforce boards to receive their Title I funds as a consolidated grant for five years, with flexibility to restructure their state or local workforce system to meet the needs of their workers and employers, while retaining basic workforce protections and programmatic accountability.
- Provides transparency on the credentials that are awarded by eligible providers to include credential-specific information on the awarding entity, industry recognition, the skills and competencies the credential signifies, and the employment and earnings outcomes of participants who receive the credential.
- Facilitates skills-based hiring by authorizing state and local boards to provide on their own, or in partnership with industry associations, technical assistance to employers on implementing skills-based hiring practices, while embedding competency-based assessments in the participant intake process.
- Codifies and enhances Workforce Data Quality Initiative grants to improve state workforce data capabilities by fostering cross-state collaboration, promoting integration between education and workforce longitudinal data systems, improving the timeliness and relevance of labor market data, supporting the adoption of credential navigation tools, and advancing the use of evidence and data to drive decision-making.
- Raises the cap on pay-for-performance contracting and simplifies the process for local workforce boards to contract with programs committed to delivering good outcomes, including for individuals with barriers to employment, while removing the prohibition on states using their governor's reserve on incentives for local boards using pay-for-performance contracting.
- Authorizes studies of pressing issues such as the employment conditions of WIOA program participants, improving workforce services for individuals with disabilities, the effectiveness and use of emerging technology in the workforce development system, alignment between education and workforce development systems, and the effectiveness of Job Corps.