

2023 Legislative Report and Recommendations



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About this Report

This report is a collaborative publication from the Governor’s Workforce Development Board (GWDB), its Executive Committee, and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) as mandated by Minnesota Statutes, section 116L.665, subdivision 4. A Legislative Report Working Group, made up of GWDB members from various sectors as selected by the Chair, also assisted in the development of this report. Total cost of salaries, printing, and supplies in developing/preparing this report is \$7,728 (reported as required by Minn. Stat. 3.197).

Governor's Workforce Development Board Members

As of October 1, 2022, the membership of the GWDB included:

Laura Beeth, GWDB Chair

M Health Fairview

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Ali Rodway Caribou Coffee	Laura Sayles Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA)	Tory Schalkle U.S. Bank	Paul Schnell Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC)
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Jennifer Theisen DiaSorin	Rosa Tock Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs	Dee Torgerson Vocational Rehabilitation Services Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)	Michelle Ufford Essentia Health
Hanna Valento City of Forest Lake	Kyle Van Acker Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota		

Letter from the Chair

Dear Governor Walz, state agency leaders, and members of the Minnesota Legislature:

Minnesota's labor market today presents a number of challenges. Our state's labor market is currently the tightest market in the nation – with almost three times as many job postings as there are available job seekers. The COVID-19 pandemic, including the relevant economic and social impacts affecting workers and employers alike, has exacerbated inequities and disparities that existed prior to the pandemic. However, with an unprecedented surplus comes unique opportunities.

In the coming months, the Executive and Legislative branches of State Government will have the opportunity to make financial investments, policy changes, and other important decisions that will impact students, career seekers, employers, and Minnesota's economy as a whole. To meet the moment, for Minnesota's career seekers and employers, it is vital that we not only make significant investments in workforce development programs and supportive services during the 2023 session, but also that we pair these investments with a firm commitment from state leaders to address the systemic policy and operational issues that also create barriers for students and career seekers. Increased alignment and coordination across state agencies, not only in program implementation but also in strategic planning and policy development, will create efficiencies and eliminate silos for those seeking services. A true Career Pathways "system", one that integrates short-term training programs, registered apprenticeship, and 2-year or 4-year degrees from across the state agencies and public education systems, is needed to eliminate existing programmatic silos.

As described in this report, the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) is committed to supporting and/or developing strategies to promote increased alignment and coordination across state agencies and programs, and advancing strategies rooted in equity to eliminate disparities related to education, training, and economic opportunity. The GWDB's vision is *for Minnesota to have a healthy economy, where every Minnesotan has meaningful employment and a family-sustaining wage, and employers are able to fill jobs in demand*. The GWDB supports this work by overseeing the development of Minnesota's WIOA State Plan, producing this legislative report with recommendations for the state, and other work through our committees.

Minnesota has a long, robust history of being a leader in the realm of workforce development. However, these are unprecedented times, with new challenges that require us to take new approaches. Significant investments will be critical in meeting the moment, while policy changes and other actionable steps could also be taken by the Legislature and state agencies to improve services. Some of these other actionable recommendations are included in the "Recommendations" section at the end of this report. We hope that you will consider these recommendations as you consider investments, policy changes, or other improvements to the workforce system in the coming weeks and months, and we look forward to engaging with members of the Legislature as these options are explored.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Laura Beeth

Chair, Governor's Workforce Development Board

Past Chair, National Governors Association of State Workforce Board Chairs

About the Governor’s Workforce Development Board

The Governor’s Workforce Development Board (GWDB) is Minnesota’s federally required state workforce development board created under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the federal law that establishes and funds the public workforce development system in states. The GWDB supports or leads efforts here in Minnesota to better align, innovate, and deliver programming and services through Minnesota’s public workforce development system. Under WIOA, as well as Minnesota Statutes 116L.665 (which establishes the GWDB at the state level), the GWDB is responsible for overseeing the development and submission of Minnesota’s four-year WIOA State Plan, which serves as the state’s strategic plan for workforce development with federal agencies, as well as the required modifications that occur every two years into each four-year State Plan. In addition to oversight over WIOA State Planning, the GWDB is also required under state statutes to produce a Legislative Report every two years with recommendations for programmatic, funding, and administrative changes to improve the workforce system. This report, which was developed under the direction of GWDB leadership and members of a Legislative Report Working Group established by the GWDB chair, is intended to fulfill the statutory requirements of the GWDB for the Board’s 2023 Legislative Report.

Strategic Plan, Goals, and Priorities

State-level workforce development advisory boards have existed across the nation to advise governors and legislatures since the passage of the federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) in 1982. JTPA was later replaced by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 1998, but the most significant changes and modernization of workforce development policies were enacted by the United States Congress with bipartisan support in 2014 under the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). With the implementation of WIOA came a mandate for State Workforce Development Boards to be business-led by having business leaders from in-demand industries serve as the majority of members on the state board, while it also explicitly ensured that other vital workforce partners are represented on the state board, including representatives of labor, education, community-based organizations, and government at both the state and local levels.

The Governor’s Workforce Development Board’s Strategic Plan for 2020-2023, as required under WIOA, is [The One Minnesota State Combined Plan¹](#), which was approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education. This plan is built on strategies developed by GWDB members that require partnerships at the state, regional and local levels. The vision of the plan is for Minnesota to have *a healthy economy, where every Minnesotan has meaningful employment and a family-sustaining wage, and employers are able to fill jobs in demand.*

Goals

1. Reduce educational, skills training, and employment disparities based on race, disability, gender, or disconnected youth.
2. Build employer-led industry sector partnerships that expand the talent pipeline to be inclusive of race, disability, gender, and age to meet industry demands for a skilled workforce.

Priority Strategies

The most effective method to achieve these goals is to strategically build on the state’s robust Career Pathways System and to align with the purposes of WIOA and the needs of Minnesota’s businesses and workforce. Our six priority strategies are:

1. Business engagement
2. Community engagement
3. Customer-centered design
4. Funding and resources
5. Policy and system alignment
6. System management

Although progress has been made since initial implementation of WIOA began in 2014, each of these priority strategies currently require attention in order to maximize funding and existing infrastructure to provide better services for career seekers and employers. Recommendations from the GWDB on ways to improve implementation of these strategies are incorporated into the recommendations at the end of this report.

Governance

Governor’s Workforce Development Board (GWDB) members are appointed by the Governor and are key leaders from across the state representing business, education, labor, community-based organizations, and government. Some members of the Board are federally required under WIOA, while other member positions were created by the Minnesota State Legislature in [State Statutes 116L.665](#). Under WIOA, the GWDB has a responsibility to advise the Governor on Minnesota’s workforce system, and to promote policies and strategies to be utilized by the state system in order to better align and coordinate programs across agencies and partners. Members collaborate to build a shared vision, mission, and goals around workforce strategies and opportunities for the state, which can be found in the WIOA State Plan developed under the guidance of the GWDB. More information is available on the GWDB web site: <https://mn.gov/deed/gwdb/>.

When WIOA was passed in 2014, a committee of Board officers and other leaders was formed to focus on the requirements of the new law and its implementation. This committee evolved into the Operations Committee, which performed many oversight duties and work on behalf of the full body. To increase efficiency of operations and decision-making, and to better leverage the expertise of the Board’s state partners, moving forward the GWDB Executive Committee, still chaired by the GWDB Chair, will serve as a more central decision-making committee of the Board – including matters previously addressed through the Operations Committee.

The Executive Committee, with increased cross-agency and cross-sector collaboration, will help identify opportunities and establish strategies for increasing alignment. The chair and members of committees, volunteers appointed by the GWDB Chair, will help the Board in setting priorities, providing input, and establishing topics and/or deliverables for subcommittees, work-groups, or task forces to address. GWDB staff and leaders, along with key workforce partners, are currently developing plans for restructuring the existing standing committees of the Board to better identify current needs, issues, and trends. These new committees, all chaired by industry partners, will begin meeting in 2023.

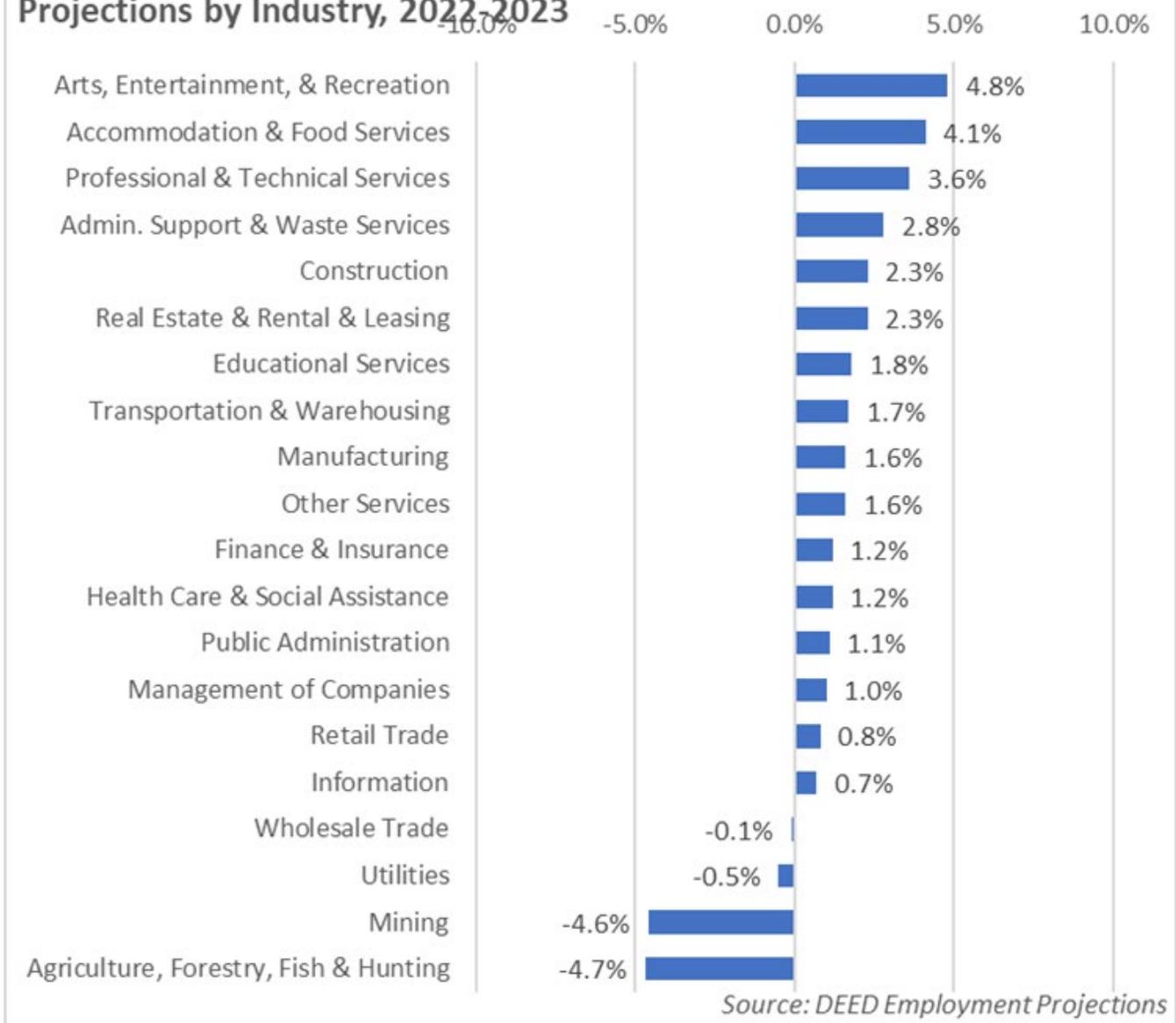
Introduction

Since the last GWDB Legislative Report was published in January 2021, the world was midway through the COVID-19 global pandemic and vaccines were starting to become available to those most at-risk of contracting the virus. Many workforce issues that existed in early 2021 remain, while new data and reports have emerged since the last GWDB Legislative Report that require mentioning within this section. As another biennium budget session gets underway at the Minnesota Legislature, it's important to look back at how the pandemic impacted the state's workforce development system, the workforce overall, and the state's most vital priority industry sectors that are essential to our state's economy.

According to DEED's Labor Market Information (LMI) Office, Minnesota's economy is projected to continue to grow over the next year, with our short-term jobs forecast surpassing pre-pandemic February 2020 employment levels by the second quarter of 2023. According to newly released 1-year employment projections, Minnesota is expected to have about 2,980,000 jobs by second quarter 2023 – a recovery of just over 345,000 jobs since the start of the pandemic.² For context, just before the pandemic broke out at the end of first quarter 2020, Minnesota had an average of about 2,940,000 jobs, including nearly 2,950,000 jobs in February 2020. Shortly thereafter, at the start of the pandemic, employers then cut nearly 308,000 workers through the second quarter of 2020. Since then, Minnesota has worked its way back to economic health despite labor force constraints, supply chain issues, rising inflation, an on-going global pandemic, and other challenges. However, this economic turnaround also brings with it a considerable challenge: with the lowest unemployment rate in the nation, Minnesota has the tightest labor market in the nation – with almost three job postings for every one available worker looking for a position.

The two industries hit hardest during the pandemic – Arts, Entertainment & Recreation and Accommodation & Food Services – are projected to see the strongest job growth over the coming year, with both expanding more than 4%. The *Health Care and Social Assistance* and *Professional and Technical Services* sectors are both expected to add just under 6,000 additional jobs over the next year. While that would push Health Care and Social Assistance just above its pre-pandemic employment average after a year of measured growth, it would be a continuation of the strong expansion experienced in Professional and Technical Services since the pandemic recession. *Manufacturing* is also projected to add just over 5,000 jobs in the next year, a steady 1.6% increase. This follows two years of rapid growth, including a gain of 17,000 jobs from second quarter 2021 to second quarter 2022 as employers surpassed pre-pandemic employment levels. If growth occurs as forecasted, Manufacturing employment would be at its highest level in the state since 2008, right before the Great Recession. Another priority sector, the *Construction* industry, is now back to pre-pandemic levels. Natural Resources job categories are expected to decline by 4% heading into 2023.

Figure 2. Minnesota Over-The-Year Job Growth Projections by Industry, 2022-2023

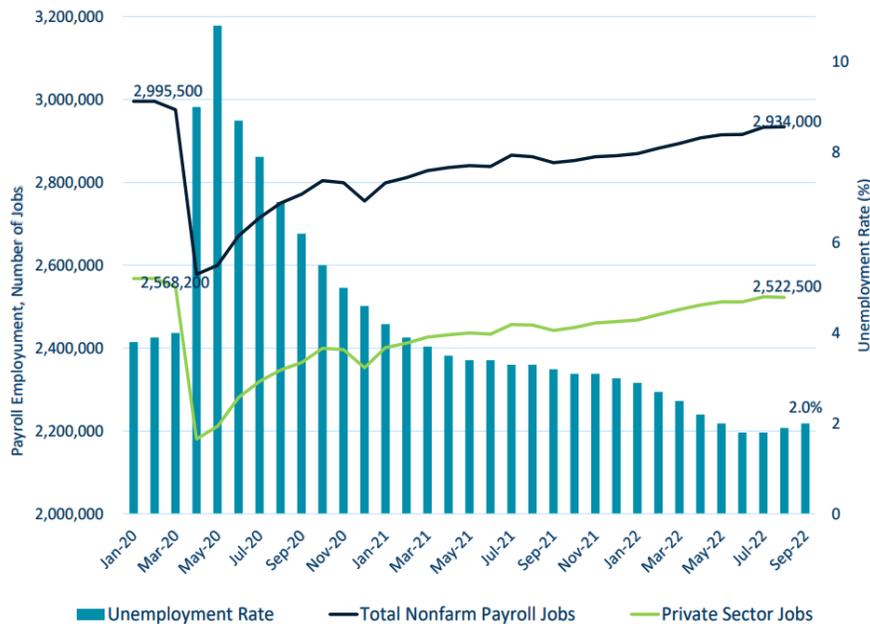


The unemployment rate increased slightly to 2.1% in Minnesota in October 2022, on a seasonally adjusted basis. It was the third consecutive monthly increase, after over two years of steady decline.³

The number of unemployed in Minnesota grew to 65,873 workers, and the number of employed decreased to 3,007,238. Minnesota's labor force shrunk to 3,073,111 workers, and the labor force participation rate dipped to 68.0%.

The U.S. unemployment rate ticked up to 3.7% in October, on a seasonally adjusted basis. The labor force participation rate dropped to 62.2%.

Unemployment Rate and Jobs Minnesota, Seasonally Adjusted



On December 6, 2022, Minnesota Management and Budget projected a record-breaking budget surplus for the next biennium. Via social media, Governor Walz said, “Thanks to the work of our students, small businesses, and working families, our state is in a strong position to send money back to Minnesotans to help with rising costs while investing in our workforce, seniors, schools, and kids. Let’s get to work!”

Innovation at the State and Federal Level

Existing workforce development and related programming that is administered through DEED at the state level can be found here: <https://mn.gov/deed/about/what-we-do/agency-results/program-summaries/>

In addition to existing federal or state workforce related programs, federal agencies have announced funding for many new workforce-related programs that have either been rolled out or will be in the near future. Some of these federal programs include:

- **The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (2020) and the Coronavirus Response and Consolidated Appropriations Act (2021)** provided fast and direct economic assistance for American workers, families, small businesses at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Consolidated Appropriations Act continued many of these programs by adding new phases, new allocations, and new guidance to address issues related to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴
- **The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund or HEERF, under the CARES Act**, allocated funds to the federal Office of Postsecondary Education.⁵
- **The Paycheck Protection Program** was established by the CARES Act and provided small businesses with funds to pay up to 8 weeks of payroll costs including benefits. Funds can also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities.⁶

- **The American Rescue Plan (ARP)** continues many of the programs started by the CARES Act (2020) and Consolidated Appropriations Act (2021) by adding new phases, new allocations, and new guidance to address issues related to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic. The American Rescue Plan also created a variety of new programs to address continuing pandemic-related crises, and fund recovery efforts as the United States begins to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷ Many counties and cities utilized ARP funding to enhance or expand services through county or city departments, local workforce development boards, economic development agencies, or their local community and technical colleges to support workforce development and economic recovery.
- **The Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors and Science Act of 2022 (CHIPS Act)**, signed into law on August 9, 2022, is designed to boost U.S. competitiveness, innovation, and national security. The law aims to catalyze investments in domestic semiconductor manufacturing capacity.⁸
- **The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)** will rebuild America’s roads, bridges, and rails, expand access to clean drinking water, increase access to high-speed internet, tackle the climate crisis, advance environmental justice, and invest in communities.⁹
- **The White House Talent Pipeline Challenge** seeks to fill high quality jobs that will help rebuild U.S. infrastructure and supply chains and continue our transition from a historic economic recovery to steady and stable growth in the years ahead. This is a nationwide call to action for employers, education and training providers, states, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and philanthropic organizations to make tangible commitments that support equitable workforce development in three critical infrastructure sectors: Broadband, Construction, and “Electrification” (EV Charging Infrastructure and Battery Manufacturing).¹⁰

Other entities, organizations, and workforce partners have produced recommendations, reports, or have ongoing oversight over relevant policies or programs that should be considered by state leaders when developing and implementing strategies to support the workforce. Some relevant efforts or organizations to consider include:

- The Governor’s Council on Economic Expansion, established to create a roadmap for equitable economic recovery from the pandemic, included many workforce development-focused recommendations. Although independent from this report and the GWDB’s own recommendations, the GWDB encourages state leaders to explore the recommendations of the Council’s report published in June 2022: https://mn.gov/deed/assets/governors-council-economic-expansion-roadmap-acc_tcm1045-535818.pdf
- Establishment of the [Governor's Council for an Age-Friendly Minnesota](#) demonstrates the Walz Administration’s commitment to addressing the needs of older workers. This statewide collaboration produced recommendations that can be found in the Age-Friendly Council Report: <https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/comm/docs/rsN2C-AZDUWJQ46xv79L7Q.pdf>
- The [Minnesota Council on Disability \(MCD\)](#) was established in 1973 to advise the Governor, state agencies, the state legislature, and the public on disability issues. Its vision is a barrier-free Minnesota where every person with a disability has access to all areas of life. This vision is guided by the principles of accessibility, equity, and independence. MCD is represented by a non-voting member on the GWDB and actively participates in the work of the Board. MCD’s Public Policy Agenda outlines three pillars for

improving access and opportunity for Minnesotans with disabilities:

<https://www.disability.state.mn.us/about-our-public-policy/public-policy-agenda/>

- The National Governors Association (NGA) is a nonpartisan association serving the 55 governors of U.S. states, territories. NGA convenes in-state and national conferences and offers technical assistance to state workforce development board staff members, chairs, liaisons from state agencies, governors' offices, and other workforce partners. GWDB leaders and staff actively participate in the workforce development programming and assistance offered by the NGA Center for Best Practices, and encourage state agency leaders and policymakers to review some of the reports and examples of innovative solutions that are being developed in other states that are published here in order to replicate some of the promising practices that have been deployed in other states with success:

<https://www.nga.org/bestpractices/workforce-development-economic-policy/>

CareerForce

In a collaborative effort led by the GWDB, DEED, and the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB, which represents the 16 local workforce development boards across the state), a unified public workforce system was created under the CareerForce name and brand as a way to improve Minnesota's delivery system of services. Many services delivered through the CareerForce system are often provided through one of the state's 50 physical CareerForce locations (formerly WorkForce Centers) across the state, while many other programs are delivered virtually or remotely, through training provider or partner locations (such as libraries), or directly on the jobsite through some training programs. The CareerForce system supports Minnesota's federally-required state labor exchange, MinnesotaWorks.net, as well as the CareerForceMN.com platform that provides virtual services to career seekers, employers, and workforce partners.

The Employment & Training Programs (ETP) team at DEED oversees grants administration and management for the state on behalf of most training programs, including WIOA Title I, while other programs – such as WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) and WIOA Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation Services) – are often delivered through a combination of “in-house” services as well as external partners receiving grant funding to do the work. While many state-funded workforce programs are delivered through this same WIOA-created “system”, most often when a local workforce development board is awarded grant funding that other community-based organizations also apply for, the federally established WIOA system is not always utilized as the delivery mechanism for providing state-funded workforce programming.

Currently, DEED is in the process of replacing MinnesotaWorks.net with a new system. A request for proposal process was conducted to select a new vendor. The replacement is anticipated to launch in 2023.

More can be learned about the CareerForce system and services at www.CareerForceMN.com.



Minnesota's Career Resource

Workforce Development System Performance

Core to our state's workforce development system are the eligibility-based programs for individuals with barriers to employment and the formula-allocated funds from the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). As part of the system innovation under WIOA, Minnesota provides performance data and information in web-based interactive tools, as well as an annual summary report detailing the performance of federal and state programs. The GWDB and its Operations Committee helped to develop and support these tools and reports during early WIOA implementation. Some of the tools used for tracking performance of workforce programs are outlined below.

Performance Outcomes - Workforce Development System

- **Uniform Report Card** – The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) measures the performance of all the programs it funds or provides at the state level. The shows activities and employment outcomes for select workforce development programs by education level, race, ethnicity, gender and geography. Because this web-based tool is regularly updated, accessing the link provides current data not available on a static point-in-time chart.
- **WIOA Annual Report** – System management is a coordinated effort of the GWDB, state agencies and programs that are part of the WIOA State Plan Plan, regional workforce development entities and local workforce development boards. The most recent program data can be found in the [WIOA Annual Report](#).
- **Performance and Technical Management (PTM)** – DEED administrators inform strategic direction by providing data-driven analysis and context to those who use, deliver and fund the Minnesota economic and workforce development systems. The Performance and Technical Management Office's three core functions are information analysis, management analysis and outreach. Most recently, PTM worked with CareerForce to identify methods for targeting those needing services the most and applied the Social Vulnerability Index to Title I and III programs to better understand if we are serving the most vulnerable Minnesotans in the state.
- **The State Longitudinal Educational Data System (SLEDS)** is a data sharing project governed by the Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership and jointly managed by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, Minnesota Department of Education and DEED. The project brings together data from education and workforce tracking systems to identify viable pathways for individuals to achieve successful outcomes in education and work; inform decisions to support and improve education and workforce policy and practice; and assist in creating a more seamless education and workforce system for all Minnesotans.
See [Minnesota SLEDS](#).
- **Workforce One (WF1)**, found at www.mnworkforceone.com, is a web-based client management application used by nearly 2,000 state, city, county, and non-profit employment and training providers to track employment and training services to more than 100,000 customers across Minnesota's One Stop network. WF1 was created through a partnership between the Department of Human Services

(DHS) and the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and is maintained by MNIT-DEED.

- **WF1 Connect** is a mobile app that customers can download to communicate with their Employment Services Counselor and/or Financial or Child Care Worker. The app was developed by MNIT-DEED in partnership with DEED, DHS, and subject-matter experts from DEED's Performance and Technical Management (PTM) team.

Minnesota's WIOA Policy and Guidance

Service providers rely on DEED policies to ensure that their services comply with federal and state laws and rules and with DEED policy requirements. DEED's policies and guidance are also an important means for implementing department and program priorities and providing assistance on how service providers can meet program requirements. DEED's Policy and Guidance for WIOA, CareerForce, Complaints, Equal Opportunity and Public Comments are posted on at [Policy and Guidance](#).

In order to provide for better alignment across state agencies, in partnership with education systems, the GWDB recommends that state agencies (including public postsecondary systems) commit to increased alignment, coordination, and implementation in order to remove barriers currently facing students, career seekers, and employers. "Silos" across agencies must be broken down to ensure that Minnesota's workforce systems, programs, and other infrastructure are better positioned to meet the moment. More details on this are included in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.

Minnesota's Workforce System Under WIOA: State, Regional, and Local Workforce Boards

Under WIOA, state workforce boards like the GWDB provide guidance and advise to partners across the workforce development system, and also are responsible for establishing the mission, vision, goals, and priority strategies of the state's public workforce development system. WIOA also creates a layered level of system governance for the purposes of promoting partnerships, fiscal administration/oversight, and coordination of service-delivery at the local or regional level.

Minnesota's 16 local workforce development boards (LWDBs) oversee programming at the local level in Minnesota's 16 local workforce development areas (LWDAs), including the responsibility of coordinating services "in-house" or through grantees. These existing local boards and areas existed prior to WIOA, having been the entities responsible for delivering programs through previous federal workforce legislation, and were redesignated as the areas and entities by Governor Dayton during initial WIOA implementation in 2014-15.

Each of the WDAs is governed by a local workforce development board, with a business-majority membership based on the composition of the State Board, which also includes members from labor unions, education providers, community-based organizations, program leads, and a chief local elected official that helps provide for fiscal accountability. The administrative and/or lead fiscal entities for each board, along with the geographic areas they serve, vary by local area and include boards staffed and supported by single local government entities (such as a county or city department), multiple local governments utilizing a joint-powers structure, and nonprofit entities. The local workforce development boards are represented by the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB), and the administrative entities, lead staff, chairs, and service area maps are available here: <https://mawb-mn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/WDA-Providers-Combined-June-2022.pdf>. In order to promote alignment and coordination between the state and local levels, MAWB is represented by a

non-voting member on the GWDB and actively participates in committee work. Additionally, the GWDB and MAWB hold an Annual Winter Meeting, every December, in order to promote alignment, partnership, and continuous improvement of the workforce system.

WIOA also tasked states with doing more strategic planning and supporting industry-led partnerships at the regional level to strike a balance between very localized efforts and the focus of the State boards. Members and staff of local workforce development boards have developed various partnerships for regional planning purposes, including WIOA Regional Plans that are developed by multiple LWDBs within a given region to expand or improve innovative partnerships, sector strategies, and service-delivery.

More information on the LWDBs can be found here on the CareerForce website (<https://www.careerforcemn.com/local-workforce-development-boards>) or on the MAWB website at <https://mawb-mn.org/>.

Core Programs in Minnesota’s Strategic Plan for the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) brings together:

- Employment and training services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth programs, as well as Wagner-Peyser employment services administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) through formula grants to Minnesota; and
- Adult education and literacy programs and Vocational Rehabilitation state grant programs that assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment administered by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Other education, training, and support services for individuals facing barriers to steady employment that are funded through WIOA.

Minnesota’s Modified WIOA State Plan was developed and submitted to the US Department of Labor (US DOL) under the oversight of the GWDB in early February 2022 and was approved by US DOL in May 2022. The full plan is available here on the GWDB website: <https://mn.gov/deed/gwdb/priorities/wioa/>. The programs included in the WIOA State Plan are listed below, along with the corresponding agency that administers the program at the state level.

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) (<https://mn.gov/DEED>)

- Titles IB – Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker (Housed in Employment & Training Programs Division)
- Title III – Job Service (Housed in Employment & Training Programs Division)
- Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Services & State Services for the Blind (Housed in DEED’s Vocational Rehabilitation Services Division and State Services for the Blind)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance For Workers (TAA) (Housed in Employment & Training Programs Division)
- Jobs For Veterans Grant (Housed in Employment & Training Programs Division)
- Senior Community Service Employment (Housed in Employment & Training Programs Division)

Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) (www.education.state.mn.us)

- Title II – Adult Education & Family Literacy Act (ABE)

Minnesota Department of Human Services (<https://mn.gov/dhs/>)

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Employment & Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Work Programs under the Food and Nutrition Act

Minnesota State (<http://www.minnstate.edu/>)

- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act – Post Secondary (Perkins V). Reauthorized on July 31, 2018.

The GWDB supports efforts by the state to better align and deliver services across agencies – through more systemic, operationalized means – and proposes increased utilization of the GWDB and WIOA State Planning processes to support these efforts. Further details are included in the Recommendations section below.

Recommendations

Respectfully, the GWDB submits these recommendations for consideration by state leaders and policymakers whose actions will impact the public workforce development system and the overall infrastructure that our state deploys to educate, train, and prepare Minnesota’s workforce.

- 1) **Improve alignment and coordination of policies, programs, and service-delivery across state agencies and systems – including increased alignment between workforce development and higher education.** The GWDB is eager to support this work, and to leverage its authority under WIOA to support efforts by the administration to improve interagency alignment.
- 2) **Fund marketing and awareness of the CareerForce system so that career seekers and employers from more populations are aware of the programs and services available to meet their needs.**
- 3) **Encourage business leaders to take the lead in addressing current challenges** among employers and job seekers, and increase supports for small employers who wish to address these challenges but are in need of assistance. The GWDB supports establishing more formalized, system-supported employer networks for employers across key industries to strengthen sector strategies and talent pipeline management statewide.
- 4) **Recruit, retain, and accelerate** the hiring and retention of teachers, counselors, and other educational instructors from BIPOC communities to provide for inclusive learning environments and supports for members of these communities. More broadly, the state of Minnesota needs more technical training providers and CTE instructors.
- 5) **Support efforts that will increase economic opportunities for Minnesotans living with disabilities** through investments from the Minnesota State Legislature to support individuals with disabilities. This includes increasing investments in mental health services to provide supports to more individuals – including those who may not currently be eligible for state-funded supports through existing programs. Increased access to free or inexpensive mental health supports will help more Minnesotans find and maintain employment.
- 6) **Strengthen and better integrate “wrap-around support services” into workforce training programs** for career seekers participating in workforce programs for individuals facing significant barriers to employment. This means that workforce program participants should be able to get supports for things

like child care assistance, transportation or a driver's license, internet access, or other services that will help an individual find or maintain employment.

- 7) **Promote and support career pathways strategies.** These efforts may include registered apprenticeships, short-term training programs to up-skill or re-skill workers, or college degree programs. The agencies that oversee these programs at the state are largely doing so independently from other state agencies – creating barriers for many students and workers, not pathways. By focusing on industry-recognized credentials - which can be embedded into the curriculum of short-term training programs, apprenticeship, and degrees - true pathways can be achieved across agencies and programs. Additionally, significant investments in the “credit for prior learning” process would help create more tangible, coherent pathways for students and career seekers whose journey might include short-term training programs as well as college.
- 8) **Prioritize workforce development investments to support Minnesota's key industry sectors** that have the most available jobs, highest rates of projected growth over time, and result in a family-sustaining wage. Other industries or careers may warrant investment, but the priorities and focus must remain on these key industries to maximize the impact of investments.
- 9) **Increase investments in career and technical education (CTE) and improve coordination between CTE and other workforce programs** to accelerate our state's ability to provide Minnesota's students with more opportunities for career exploration and hands-on learning in a workplace environment.
- 10) **Create a state Office of New Americans (ONA) to ensure for more centralized coordination of strategies and service delivery for programs serving New Americans.** The ONA could be established by increasing funding and expanding the scope of the existing DHS Resettlement Programs Office, which often plays a “triage” role in serving New Americans.
- 11) **Support efforts to bring new workers to Minnesota** by making significant investments in marketing efforts to draw new residents to the state.

Endnotes

¹ **The 2020-2023 WIOA State Plan for Minnesota and its 2022 Modification are available online at [GWDB Priorities and Initiatives/WIOA](#)**

² **Minnesota Economic Projections <https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/publications/trends/september-2022/projections.jsp>**

³ **Unemployment Rate in Minnesota <https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/laus/>**

⁴ **CARES Act <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/about-the-cares-act>**

⁵ **Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html>**

⁶ **The Paycheck Protection Plan <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus>**

⁷ **American Rescue Plan <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/about-the-american-rescue-plan>**

⁸ **The CHIPS Act <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/09/fact-sheet-chips-and-science-act-will-lower-costs-create-jobs-strengthen-supply-chains-and-counter-china/>**

⁹ **The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act <https://www.whitehouse.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>**

¹⁰ **The White House Talent Pipeline Challenge <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/06/17/fact-sheet-the-biden-harris-administration-launches-the-talent-pipeline-challenge-supporting-employer-investments-in-equitable-workforce-development-for-infrastructure-jobs/>**