



Quarterly Board Meeting

Draft Minutes

April 16, 2026; 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm ET

IN-PERSON – Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) 300 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, KY 40601
with virtual zoom option

1:30 pm ET Call to order

Lori Ulrich, Fleming-Mason Energy, KWIB Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees both in the room and online. She shared that captioning services are available through zoom and reminded online board members and proxies to unmute and enable their cameras for roll call, voting, and comments throughout the meeting.

For those participating in person, Chair Ulrich walked through using microphones and raising nameplates to indicate a desire to speak. She mentioned that the board strives to follow Robert’s Rules of Order during meetings. The consent agenda and additional materials for the day were provided in the KWIB Quarterly [Briefing Book](#). She stated that meeting minutes and presentations would be available on the KWIB website (kwib.ky.gov) under the date of the meeting. Any further questions could be directed to Debbie Dennison, (debbie.dennison@ky.gov).

Roll call was held, and quorum was confirmed.

KWIB (Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board) MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lori Ulrich, Chair	Business	X	Dr. Aaron Thompson	Partner	
Gov. Andy Beshear (proxy: Rocky Adkins)	WIOA CORE	X	Dr. Ryan Quarles	Partner	
Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman	WIOA CORE		George Nichols	Labor Representative	X
Sen. Jimmy Higdon	Legislative		Heidi Margulis	Business	
Sec. Jamie Link (proxy Commissioner Mike Yoder)	Partner	X	Kevin Middleton	Workforce	X
Sec. John Hicks	Partner		Kevin Nolan	Business	
Sec. Jeff Noel (proxy: Kristina Slattery)	Partner	X	Kevin Smith (proxy: Rena Sharpe)	Business	X
Rep. Bobby McCool	Legislative		Lyndon Pryor	Workforce	
Commissioner Robbie Fletcher	Partner	X	Robert Shelton	Labor Representative	
Commissioner Mike Yoder	Partner	X	Ryan Holmes	Business	
Judge Owen McNeil	Local Elected Official		Selma Owens	Business	
Mayor James (J.H.) Atkins	Local Elected Official	X	Suhas Kulkarni	Business	
Beth Davisson (proxy: Callie Miracle)	Business	X	Todd Dunn	Labor Representative	
Johnny W. Collett	Business	X	Tom Lilienthal	Business	X
Dr. J.C. Gregory	WIOA CORE	X	Jim Flynn	Education	X
Alice Houston	Business		Susan Hershberg	Business	

Annissa Franklin	Workforce Representative	X	David Hall	Business	
Cora McNabb	WIOA CORE	X	Adam Caswell	Business	
Dianne Owen	Workforce Representative	X	Sharon Price	Workforce Representative	
Kim Menke	Business	X	William Downey	Business	X

In-person guests attending: Rocky Adkins, David Potter, Kim Brannock, Myra Wilson, Taban Herrington, Beth Hargis, Eleri Gesler, Amanda Houle, Natalie Burikhanov

Online guest attendance: Jessica Fortner, Sara Tracey, Cathy Hoehn, Connor Campbell, Michelle Whitis, Michael Overby, Susan Cornelius, Tonia Godfrey, Todd Blanton, Thomas Thompson, Jacqueline Korengel, Michelle Drake, Amanda Curry, Tara Estes, Bridget Back, Jon Sowards, Chris Wooldridge, Jackie Masterson, Tiffanie Reeves, Beckie Wells, Joe Copeland, Elizabeth Daniels, Leslie Sandusky, Cassie Bertram, Sheila Clark, Justin Suttles

KWIB Staff: Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, LaChrista Ellis, and Elishah Taylor

Lori Ulrich, Chair welcomed everyone and recognized the gentleman from the Governor’s Office.

Team Kentucky Opening Remarks

Rocky Adkins, Senior Advisor to Governor Andy Beshear, provided an overview of Team Kentucky’s economic and workforce development progress, highlighting \$48.2 billion in investments, and more than 69,000 jobs created under the Beshear administration. He emphasized high-quality job growth, strong fiscal performance, and national recognition for economic development successes. He also discussed key initiatives such as New Kentucky Home, Pre-K for All, Second Chance Hiring, Everybody Counts, and Work Ready Communities, all focused on connecting Kentuckians to good jobs and strengthening workforce participation through education, training, and partnerships.

Consent Agenda (Voting Required)

Lori Ulrich, Chair noted that this was an action item requiring a formal vote, and that all related materials were included in the Briefing Book provided. Items included:

- November 20, 2025, Minutes
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Certification Approvals
- Perkins State Leadership Fund Request Awards 2026-27
- Certification of two Kentucky Career Center locations

Lori Ulrich called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. *Kim Menke made the motion, which was seconded by Annissa Franklin.* A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously, with no opposition. After the vote, Lori Ulrich welcomed attendees to Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and thanked KDE leadership for hosting.

Host Welcome: Kentucky Department of Education

Robbie Fletcher, Ed.D., Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education, welcomed the board and highlighted a few Kentucky Department of Education updates including House Bill 727 (uniform application for teachers) and House Bill 257 (accountability). He provided an overview of KDE offices driving diverse educational functions. More information about KDE can be found by visiting: <https://www.education.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>.

WIOA State Plan Modification

Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director, Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) shared updates to the WIOA state plan modification due at the end of April, noting that it is required of all workforce boards. He shared that a full plan overhaul will begin next year for the required 2028 submission. He provided public comments received noting no substantive changes provided.

Lori Ulrich called for a motion to approve the WIOA Plan Modification as presented. *George Nichols made the motion, which was **seconded** by Kim Menke.* A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously, with no opposition.

Workforce Pell

David Potter, Ph.D., Senior Coordinator, Education Transition Strategist, Kentucky Adult Education, provided an update on the Workforce Pell Workgroup, focusing on the development of eligibility criteria and a governance framework. Dr. Potter outlined three primary areas of focus: occupational criteria, education program criteria, and student outcome criteria, with plans to present further details at the next board meeting. Workforce Pell extends Pell Grants to short-term credentials (8-15 weeks) targeting high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations. Initial framework and launch is July 1, 2026.

Work Ready Communities Metrics

Jessica Fortner, Senior Consultant, TPMA shared that Work Ready Communities metrics have been finalized and they are working on finishing the updated website and deliverables with updated metrics and areas of focus. She shared goals including aligning regional skill supply and demand, widening talent pools, and expanding work-based learning opportunities. Updates also include adjustments to data, language, and focus areas such as childcare and transportation. The group is finalizing the framework and preparing for the May launch of Work Ready Communities - Next Generation.

Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Conference

Bridget Back, Deputy Director, Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP), provided an updated-on behalf of Becky Carnes-Miller regarding the 2026 SETA Fall Conference, which will be held in Louisville from August 30 through September 2. The conference will bring together workforce professionals from across eight southeastern states to share best practices, policy updates, and professional development opportunities.

Joint Discussion: Kentucky Education & Workforce Collaborative and Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

Lori Ulrich, KWIB Chair and Mike Yoder, Commissioner, Department of Workforce Development, and Education and Workforce Collaborative, led a discussion focusing on priorities for advancing workforce development in Kentucky. Topics included cross-sector collaborations and challenges, preparing students for jobs, strengthening community-based and regional approaches, addressing workforce gaps, and expanding public-private partnerships. The need to monitor and measure AI impacts and opportunities is paramount. Effective talent attraction strategies were shared.

Participants discussed building on current momentum around reentry, veteran employment, apprenticeships, and removing barriers to workforce participation connecting Kentuckians to quality job opportunities. Advocacy, including for expungement options, among others, and increase employer education and engagement aims to tap into underemployed labor pools.

It was noted that Kentucky's diverse economies require adaptable programs rather than one-size-fits-all models. While state guidance should be provided, flexibility in implementation is key.

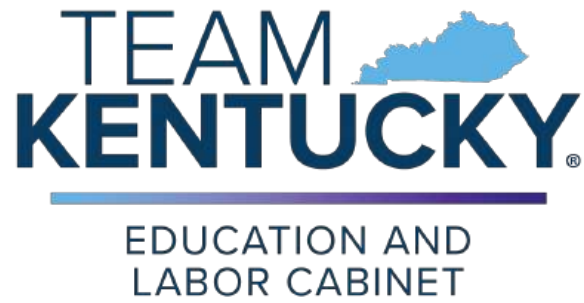
Educators shared the need for increased funding for career coaches and community liaisons in schools and shared best practices where they are seeing positive results. They also stressed the need for precise data on job types, outlooks and longevity to prepare students effectively. Increasing alignment between industry need and school career pathways is critical.

Closing Comments & New Business

Lori Ulrich opened the floor for new business and closing remarks including a reminder of the next KWIB meeting on May 21st at Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) in Versailles, along with references to materials in the briefing book such as the 2026 calendar, travel reimbursement and information, and upcoming initiatives.

With no further business to address, Lori Ulrich called for a motion to adjourn. *Cora McNabb* **made the motion**, and *Tom Lilienthal* **seconded it**. The motion was approved unanimously.

3:22 pm ET Adjournment



Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board
&
Education and Workforce Collaborative Board
Meeting Briefing Book

April 16, 2026

1:30 – 3:30 pm ET

1:00 pm ET Networking

Location: Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

300 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, KY 40601



Board Meeting Briefing Book
April 16, 2026, 1:30-3:30 pm ET

Table of Contents

	Page
<u>Agenda</u>	5
 <u>Consent Agenda (Voting Required)</u>	
November 20, 2025, Minutes.....	8
Career & Technical Education (CTE) Certification.....	13
Perkins State Leadership Fund Request Awards 2026-27.....	17
Kentucky Career Centers (West Kentucky One-Stop Centers).....	19
 <u>WIOA State Plan Modification</u>	 21
 <u>Workforce Pell</u>	 26
 <u>Work Ready Communities – Next Generation</u>	 28
 <u>Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Conference</u>	 40
 <u>Education & Workforce Collaborative Board – January 22, 2026 Minutes</u>	 42

Appendix

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board One Pager..... 47

2026 KWIB Quarterly Board Meeting List48

Board and Committee Membership Reimbursement Information..... 49

Futuriti: Your Pathway to Education and Career Opportunities..... 50

KWIB Partner Spotlight..... 51

Team KY Virtual Job Fair..... 52

WIOA Title I: Adult, Dislocated Workers and youth Kentucky Governance..... 53

Local Workforce Development Areas Map..... 54

KWIB Governance Chart..... 55

KWIB Strategic Committees Recruitment Flyer..... 56



Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) & Kentucky Education and Workforce Collaborative

Quarterly Meeting Agenda
Thursday, April 16th, 2026
Meeting 1:30 – 3:30pm ET (1pm Networking)

In Person: Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)
300 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, KY 40601
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84679147827?pwd=Prf3E0pjHSG76nZhut6VR1GcdiMcV1.1>

Meeting ID: 846 7914 7827/ Passcode: 024611 / dial via phone: 13126266799

1:30 CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Welcome: Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board Quarterly Meeting.....Lori Ulrich, Chair
Fleming-Mason Energy

1:35 Team Kentucky Opening Remarks.....Rocky Adkins
Senior Advisor, Office of the Governor

1:50 Roll Call.....Elishah Taylor
Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB)

1:55 Consent Agenda (Voting Required)..... Lori Ulrich, Chair

Provided in briefing book:

- November 20, 2025, Minutes
- Career & Technical Education (CTE) Certification
- Perkins State Leadership Fund Request Awards 2026-27
- Kentucky Career Centers (West Kentucky One-Stop Centers)

2:00 Host Welcome: Kentucky Department of Education.....Robbie Fletcher, Ed.D.
Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

2:15 WIOA State Plan Modification Review.....Alisher Burikhanov
Executive Director, Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB)

2:30 WIOA Plan Modification (Voting Required, KWIB Members)Lori Ulrich, Chair

2:35 Workforce Pell UpdateAlisher Burikhanov

David Potter, Ph.D.
Senior Coordinator, Education Transition Strategist
Kentucky Adult Education

2:55 **Update: Work Ready Communities Metrics**..... Sara Tracey
Vice President, National Workforce & Education
TPMA Inc.

Jessica Fortner
Senior Consultant
TPMA Inc.

3:05 **Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Conference**.....Becky Carnes-Miller
Executive Director, EKCEP
SETA Kentucky Representative

3:10 **Joint Discussion: Kentucky Education & Workforce Collaborative and Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board**.....Lori Ulrich, Chair
Mike Yoder, Ph.D.
Commissioner, Department of Workforce Development
Education and Labor Cabinet

3:20 **Closing Comments & New Business**.....Lori Ulrich, Chair

3:25 **ADJOURNMENT**

Next KWIB Meeting: Thursday, 5/21/2026, 1:30pm -3:30pm

Location: Kentucky Community and Technical College System, 300 North Main Street, Versailles, KY 40383

UPON KWIB ADJOURNMENT

Call the Kentucky Education and Workforce Collaborative to Order.....Mike Yoder, Ph.D.
Commissioner, Department of Workforce Development
Education and Labor Cabinet

Roll Call.....LaChrista Ellis
Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB)

ADJOURNMENT

Next Collaborative Meeting: Thursday, 7/16/2026, 1:30pm -3:30pm

Location: Mayo-Underwood Bldg., 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601



Consent Agenda

IN-PERSON – The Hub for Innovation Learning and Leadership (The HILL) 100 Midland Avenue, Lexington, KY 40508
with virtual zoom option

1:31 pm ET Call to order

Lori Ulrich, Fleming-Mason Energy, KWIB Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees both in the room and online. She shared that captioning services are available, and reminded online board members and proxies to unmute and enable their cameras for roll call, voting, or to speak throughout the meeting.

For those participating in person, Chair Ulrich provided instruction on using microphones and raising nameplates to indicate a desire to speak. She mentioned that the board strives to follow Robert’s Rules of Order during meetings. The consent agenda and additional materials for the day were provided in the KWIB Quarterly [Briefing Book](#). She stated that meeting minutes and presentations would be available on the KWIB website (kwib.ky.gov) under the date of the meeting. Any further questions could be directed to Debbie Dennison, (debbie.dennison@ky.gov).

Roll call was held, and quorum was attained.

KWIB (Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board) MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lori Ulrich, Chair	Business	X	Dr. Aaron Thompson (proxy: Dr. Leslie Sizemore)	Partner	X
Gov. Andy Beshear (proxy: Sec. Hicks)	WIOA CORE		Dr. Ryan Quarles (proxy: Jessie Schook)	Partner	X
Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman	WIOA CORE		George Nichols	Labor Representative	X
Sen. Jimmy Higdon	Legislative		Heidi Margulis	Business	X
Sec. Jamie Link (proxy: Deputy Commissioner Michelle DeJohn)	Partner	X	Kevin Middleton	Workforce	X
Sec. John Hicks	Partner		Kevin Nolan (proxy: Rocki Rockingham)	Business	X
Sec. Jeff Noel (proxy: Brandon Combs)	Partner	X	Kevin Smith (proxy: Rena Sharpe)	Business	X
Rep. Bobby McCool	Legislative		Lyndon Pryor (proxy: Jamie Goodpaster)	Workforce	X
Commissioner Robbie Fletcher	Partner	X	Robert Shelton	Labor Representative	X
Commissioner Mike Yoder	WIOA CORE	X	Ryan Holmes	Business	X
Judge Owen McNeil	Local Elected Official		Selma Owens	Business	X
Mayor James (J.H.) Atkins	Local Elected Official	X	Suhas Kulkarni	Business	
Beth Davisson	Business	X	Todd Dunn	Labor Representative	
Johnny W. Collett	Business	X	Tom Lilienthal	Business	X

Dr. J.C. Gregory	WIOA CORE	X	Dr. Jim Flynn	Education	X
Alice Houston	Business	X	Susan Hershberg	Business	X
Annissa Franklin	Workforce Representative	X	David Hall	Business	X
Cora McNabb	WIOA CORE	X	Adam Caswell	Business	
Dianne Owen	Workforce Representative		Sharon Price (proxy: John Catron)	Workforce Representative	X
Kim Menke	Business	X	William Downey	Business	X

In-person guests attending: Rocky Adkins, Sam Flynn, Michelle Wilson, Sara Tracy, Gabriel Alvares, Rahgad-Omar, Wyatt Robinson, Aveana Jackson, Kim Brannock, Myra Wilson, Justin Suttles, Benjamin Weathers, David Potter

Online guest attendance: Carie Kizziar, Correy Eimer, Elizabeth Daniels, Jacqueline Korengel, Jessica Fortner, Keilah Hieb, Lauren Graves, Lori Looney, Sara Tracey, Sheila Clark, Tiffanie Reeves, Tom Sholar

KWIB Staff: Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, LaChrista Ellis, Sara Jagers, and Elishah Taylor

Opening Remarks

Rocky Adkins, Senior Advisor to Governor Andy Beshear, opened the meeting by expressing appreciation for the board’s work and reflecting on his nearly four decades in public service. He highlighted Kentucky’s strong economic momentum, noting \$44 billion in private-sector investment and over 63,000 new jobs, along with record-high wages during Governor Beshear’s administration. He pointed to major growth in advanced manufacturing and automotive innovation as key drivers of that momentum.

Mr. Adkins emphasized the significance of the state’s major infrastructure projects—such as [the I-69 bridge](#), the [Brent Spence Bridge](#) corridor, and the final phase of the [Mountain Parkway](#)—and credited bipartisan cooperation and sound financial management for Kentucky’s improved credit ratings and business climate.

He stressed that workforce development remains central to sustaining economic growth, praising the Career and Technical Education programs at the meeting site and underscoring the importance of continued collaboration among state leaders, employers, and the board.

Mr. Adkins also previewed a discussion on PreK for All, noting that more than 24,000 four-year-olds currently lack access to early childhood education or childcare. Specifically noting that pre-K as a practical, nonpartisan investment that boosts kindergarten readiness and enables thousands of parents to reenter the workforce.

He closed by sharing his belief in public service as a commitment to helping people and improving communities. He offered a personal story about his daughter’s success through career and technical education and thanked the board again.

Membership Update

Lori Ulrich, Chair shared the executive order that included several new appointments and reappointments, and expressed appreciation for outgoing and incoming members. Chair Ulrich recognized retired Barren County Superintendent Thomas “Bo” Matthews for his service and welcomed his successor **Jim Flynn**, who was in attendance. She also thanked Justin Browning for consistently serving as Superintendent Matthews’ proxy.

Additional welcomes were offered to Kentucky Community & Technical College System President **Ryan Quarles** and Education and Labor Cabinet Commissioner **Mike Yoder**, both newly joining the board. Chair Ulrich noted reappointments as well, including **Ryan Holmes** of Louisville, whose term now extends through October 7, 2027, along with the previously

mentioned member, **Dr. J.C. Gregory**. She closed by thanking all new and returning members for their commitment and continued service.

Consent Agenda (Voting Required)

Lori Ulrich, Chair noted a formal vote was required for previous meeting minutes, and that additional materials relating to this meeting were also included in the Briefing Book provided.

Chair Ulrich called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. *Kim Menke made the **motion**, which was **seconded** by John Catron.* A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously, with no opposition voiced. After the vote, Chair Ulrich welcomed attendees to [The HILL](#), thanked the facility for hosting, and noted that a tour would be available after the board meeting.

The HILL Welcome

Michelle Wilson, Principal and Lead Learner at the Hub for Innovative Learning and Leadership (The HILL), welcomed the board and highlighted the school's first 100 days of operation, serving over 850 students across Fayette, Woodford, and Scott counties, with many pursuing multiple career pathways. She described the building's transparent design and focus on skilled trades.

Ms. Wilson outlined 19 career pathways aligned with 26 industry-recognized certifications and strong dual-credit partnerships with Bluegrass Community & Technical College and Eastern Kentucky University. She emphasized alignment with KWIB priority sectors, hands-on learning, workplace experiences, and engagement with over 70 industry partners, including Lextran, UK Healthcare, Lexington Public Works and Valvoline Global. She shared a [promotional video](#) from Valvoline Global website promoting the Automotive and Diesel Technology program and featuring The HILL.

Three students shared their experiences:

- Gabriel: Automotive, diesel, and heavy equipment programs, supporting his family's construction business goals.
- Rahgad-Omar: Healthcare pathway, emphasizing skills-based training and plans to become a nurse and future CRNA.
- Wyatt: Digital design, game development, and electronics, highlighting project-based learning and industry connections.

Ms. Wilson addressed board and participant questions on topics including EV training, dual-credit opportunities, and students' post-graduation plans. She also added a [partner video](#) of the HILL in the chat for attendees to view.

Chair Ulrich thanked Michelle Wilson and the students for sharing.

Pre-K for All Program

Sam Flynn, Executive Director, Kentucky Pre-K For All Program provided a detailed update on the Governor's "[Pre-K for All](#)" initiative, highlighting its focus on expanding early childhood education and strengthening Kentucky's workforce. He noted that of roughly 54,000 four-year-olds in Kentucky annually, only about 14,500 (25%) are currently eligible for publicly funded preschool, leaving many working families without affordable options. Limited access affects kindergarten readiness, family stability, and workforce participation, with an estimated 40,000–70,000 Kentuckians potentially able to return to work if reliable preschool were available.

Sam shared research showing that quality preschool yields long-term benefits, including improved academic performance, higher graduation and college enrollment rates, reduced absenteeism and behavioral challenges, and community savings. [Findings](#) from statewide town halls underscored widespread concerns about cost, access, staffing, and lack of childcare in many communities, with the business community emphasizing preschool as critical for workforce recruitment and retention.

The Governor’s plan proposes a phased, flexible rollout, leveraging public-private partnerships and existing providers such as Head Start, YMCA programs, and local childcare centers. The program is voluntary for families, with districts given time to address facilities, staffing, and transportation. Legislative support is growing, with eligibility expansions under discussion to serve thousands more children.

Board members discussed funding, legislative strategy, and implementation challenges, sharing personal experiences highlighting preschool’s impact on speech, literacy, and overall student well-being. Sam directed members to prek4all.ky.gov for resources and emphasized the importance of supporting early childhood educators.

Education and Labor Cabinet Update

Commissioner Mike Yoder, Department of Workforce Development, within the Education and Labor Cabinet provided an update on SWATT (Statewide Workforce and Talent Team), emphasizing its unprecedented level of collaboration across state agencies and partners. The initiative aims to strengthen communication, trust, and responsiveness across the workforce system. Teams have been traveling statewide to gather input from partners, highlight best practices, and identify ways to streamline services. The Commissioner noted that SWATT is not a new program, but a unified approach to enhance existing efforts with statewide standards, improved data-sharing, and a focus on employer needs.

Beth Davisson, Senior Vice President, Kentucky Chamber Foundation added that the collaborative model simplifies the workforce system for employers and helps ensure follow-through at the local level. She emphasized the importance of consistent engagement by state leaders and encouraged board members to continue providing input. Commissioner stressed that employers should be listened to first, with solutions tailored to their specific workforce challenges, particularly during times of turnover.

Commissioner Robbie Fletcher, Kentucky Department of Education briefly highlighted a proposed accountability model for school districts that would require partnerships with local employers, ensuring students understand career opportunities aligned with community workforce needs.

Aveana Jackson, Director, Division of Technical Assistance Department of Workforce Development, Education and Labor Cabinet presented performance data for WIOA Title I programs, covering five federal measures: employment outcomes, earnings, credential attainment, skill gains, and effectiveness in serving employers. Kentucky’s employer-retention rate of 70% exceeds early federal expectations. Only two measures fell below negotiated targets this year, with improvements expected as final data are confirmed.

Work Ready Communities – Next Generation

Sara Tracey, Vice President of National Workforce and Education, TPMA, and Jessica Fortner, Senior Consultant, TPMA provided an update on the Next Generation Work Ready Communities initiative. TPMA, a national workforce and education consulting firm, highlighted Kentucky’s collaborative approach as a model for other states.

Jessica explained that the framework revision involved extensive statewide collaboration, including emails, calls, focus groups, interviews, and ongoing stakeholder engagement. The updated metrics include seven major objectives with quantitative and qualitative measures, and a scoring structure classifies progress as “in progress” or “work ready.” Data sources were aligned to ensure equity for communities of all sizes, including those with limited staff capacity.

The project timeline included stakeholder engagement and metric refinement from July through October, with website and dashboard updates nearly complete. December will focus on finalizing data integration, with the full launch expected in spring 2026, including updated templates, resources, a marketing campaign, and a new incentive program.

Chair Ulrich noted that the updated model aligns with Team Kentucky’s “[New Kentucky Home](#)” initiative, allowing certification for regions as well as individual counties, benefiting smaller counties in particular. The model emphasizes a community’s total talent pool, including work-based learning capacity, housing availability, labor concentration, childcare

access, and employer-talent connections. She praised the website prototype and expressed excitement as the program nears completion.

KWIB Artificial Intelligence Workforce Readiness Taskforce

Kim Menke, Co-Chair of the AI Taskforce provided an update on the AI Workforce Readiness Taskforce, which he co-chairs with Dr. Jeff Sun, University of Louisville. Launched in August, the taskforce builds on Kentucky's focus on foundational skills and the SWATT model, with formal recommendations planned for the next quarterly board meeting.

The taskforce is developing a framework centered on education, shared terminology, and consistent foundations, emphasizing the need for a common language around AI concepts. The next meeting is scheduled for December 3 to refine draft recommendations.

Emerging recommendations focus on six key areas:

1. Establish Kentucky's baseline AI readiness.
2. Equip all Kentuckians with essential AI-related skills.
3. Re-train and upskill the current workforce.
4. Develop scalable lifelong-learning credentials.
5. Identify governance and ethical safeguards in workforce development.
6. Strengthen public-private partnerships to support AI workforce initiatives.

Kim noted ongoing discussions with major AI developers and stressed that the approach will build on existing K-12, postsecondary, and business-sector initiatives rather than a one-size-fits-all model. A draft of recommendations is expected next month.

New Business & Closing Comments

Chair Ulrich opened the final portion of the meeting by noting that the KWIB strategic plan is expected to be finalized and presented for adoption at the February 2026 board meeting. She invited **Alisher Burikhanov, Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board** to share updates and preview items the board will vote on next year.

Alisher highlighted the meeting's collaborative spirit and previewed two major upcoming responsibilities:

1. Modification of the WIOA State Plan: Originally adopted in 2024, the plan is being updated to reflect evolving procedures. Board members will receive the draft with final guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor expected later. The goal is to meet the anticipated March 2026 deadline.
2. Expansion of the "Workforce Pell": Beginning July 1, 2026, Pell Grants will be usable for short-term credentials. The governor, in consultation with the board, will set the framework for qualifying programs. Planning is underway to identify credentials with the greatest workforce impact using KYSTATS data.

Chair Ulrich recognized Alice Houston, founder of HJI Supply Chain Solutions, who was recently inducted into the [2025 Entrepreneurial Hall of Fame](#). She also reminded the membership of additional items located within the briefing book.

With no further business to address, Chair Ulrich called for a motion to adjourn. *John Catron **made the motion**, and Kim Menke **seconded** it.* The motion was approved unanimously.

3:29 pm ET Adjournment

Consent Agenda

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Certification

Recommendations:

The Business and Education Alignment Taskforce (BEAT) reviewed and recommended the certifications, which were approved by the CTE Certification Review Workgroup on December 11th, 2025, and the KWIB Education Attainment Committee on February 10, 2026, and are now presented to the KWIB for final approval, as outlined in the following certifications:

Industry Certification Name	Industry Certification Program Area	Recommended Industry Certification List?
UK Produce Best Practices Training (PBPT)	Agriculture	Recommend as a standalone assessment; strong pathway alignment and immediate post-graduation value
FAA Remote Pilot	Agriculture	Do not recommend; insufficient alignment with agriculture standards and implementation concerns.
Certiport - Generative AI Foundations Certification	Computer Science	Recommend as a core stacked credential validating ethical and foundational AI knowledge.
Certiport -Pearson IT Specialist AI Certification	Computer Science	Recommend stacked with Generative AI Foundations; confirms responsible and professional AI knowledge.
CompTIA IT Fundamentals	Computer Science	Recommend updating to vendor-renamed title <i>CompTIA Tech Plus</i> .
OSHA 10	Law & Public Safety	Recommend removal; phase-out June 2027 due to hiring, instructor eligibility, and feasibility concerns.
HAAS Basic Mill Operator	Manufacturing	Recommend; industry values credential and supports workforce entry.

HAAS Basic Lathe Operator	Manufacturing	Recommend; highly valued credential with immediate employment relevance.
FAA Remote Pilot	Media Arts	Recommend; drone technology is emerging and should be added as part of stacked credentials.
TRACK Youth Apprenticeship Certification	Multi	Recommend as standalone Postsecondary Readiness Indicator; each certificate listed individually on Valid Industry Certification List.
Lean Six Sigma	Multi	Pending BEAT recommendation.

Recommended

- UK Produce Best Practices Training (PBPT) – Industry Certification Program Area: Agriculture - standalone assessment, strong pathway alignment, immediate post-graduation value.
- Certiport - Generative AI Foundations Certification – Industry Certification Program Area: Computer Science - core stacked credential, ethical and foundational AI knowledge.
- Certiport - Pearson IT Specialist AI Certification – Industry Certification Program Area: Computer Science - stacked with Generative AI Foundations, confirms responsible and professional AI knowledge.
- CompTIA – Industry Certification Program Area: Computer Science - updating to vendor-renamed title *CompTIA Tech Plus*.
- HAAS Basic Mill Operator – Industry Certification Program Area: Manufacturing - industry values credential, supports workforce entry.
- HAAS Basic Lathe Operator – Industry Certification Program Area: Manufacturing - highly valued, immediate employment relevance.
- FAA Remote Pilot – Industry Certification Program Area: Media Arts - emerging drone technology, add as part of stacked credentials.
- TRACK Youth Apprenticeship Certification – Industry Certification Program Area: Multi - standalone Postsecondary Readiness Indicator, each certificate listed individually on Valid Industry Certification List.

Pending / Under Review

- Lean Six Sigma – Industry Certification Program Area: Multi - pending BEAT recommendation.

Phase-Out

- OSHA 10 – Industry Certification Program Area: Law & Public Safety - scheduled to phase out by June 2027 due to hiring, instructor eligibility, and feasibility concerns.

Removal / Not Recommended

- FAA Remote Pilot – Industry Certification Program Area: Agriculture - insufficient alignment with agriculture standards, implementation concerns.

Career and Technical Education Certification Programs

Industry Certification Program Area

Certiport – Generative AI Foundations Certification

- **Website:** <https://certiport.pearsonvue.com/Blog/2024/September/Introducing-the-Generative-AI-Foundations-Cert.aspx>
- **Recognized by:** a consortium of companies requesting including Eyeconic, Inc. and the South Central Kentucky Regional Technology Council
- **Workforce Areas:** South Central
- **Previous Program Status:** N/A

Certiport – Pearson IT Specialist AI Certification

- **Description:** Artificial Intelligence Professional Exam
- **Website:** <https://certiport.filecamp.com/s/i/n4mlgs8hJG6DV8kl/s/m40yiexUc78Zl5qG>
- **Recognized by:** A consortium of companies requesting including Eyeconic, Inc. and the South Central Kentucky Regional Technology Council.
- **Workforce Areas:** South Central
- **Previous Program Status:** N/A

HAAS Basic Mill Operator and HAAS Lathe Operator

- **Description:** These courses are designed to provide the basic knowledge necessary to get started as a CNC machine operator or CNC machinist. They offer basic machine operation, proper safety, and fundamental machining processes including programming, metrology, blueprint reading, basic math, and materials. After the online course is completed, a hands-on test is given at an authorized facility. There is no cost for this certificate.
- **Website:** <https://learn.haascnc.com>
- **Recognized by:** C&R Machine & Fabrication LLC
- **Workforce Areas:** Bluegrass
- **Previous Program Status:** No

HAAS Basic Mill Operator and HAAS Lathe Operator

- **Description:** No Cost
- **Website:** <https://learn.haascnc.com>
- **Recognized by:** Machine Time Inc.
- **Workforce Areas:** Bluegrass
- **Previous Program Status:** No

Produce Best Practices Training (PBPT)

- **Description:** Produce safety / \$500-\$1,000
- **Website** with additional information about certification - <https://fsic.ca.uky.edu/training/food-safety-regulation>
- **Recognized by:** and requesting the certification - Hallow Springs Farm
- **Workforce Area:** Cumberland
- **Previous Program Status:** No

Unmanned Aircraft General - Small (UAG)

- **Description:** \$150 test fee
- **Website:** https://www.faa.gov/uas/commercial_operators/become_a_drone_pilot
- **Recognized by:** Casey County Cooperative Extension Service/Casey County Schools
- **Workforce Area:** Cumberland
- **Previously Program Status:** No

Based on the information we received from the CTE Director, the FAA Remote Pilot Certificate is already on the Valid Industry Certification List. It's aligned with several pathways and is even designated as High Demand. The certification process involves students obtaining an FAA Tracking Number, taking and passing the Unmanned Aircraft General – Small (UAG) knowledge test, and then completing FAA Form 8710-13 to receive their Remote Pilot Certificate.

Consent Agenda

Perkins State Leadership Fund Request Awards 2026-27

Recommendations:

Perkins Workgroup reviewed and recommended the Perkins State Leadership Fund Request on January 26, 2026, and by the KWIB Education Attainment Committee on February 10, 2026, and is now presented to the KWIB for final approval, as outlined below:

Grantee	26-27 Requested Amount	Project Overview
Office of Career and Technical Ed (OCTE)		
Professional Development	\$190,000.	Continuous professional learning and technical upgrades are essential for state staff and CTE educators to ensure their knowledge and skills remain current and precisely aligned with evolving industry demands.
Technical Assistance	\$35,000.	The Secondary Technical Assistance Project (STAP) ensures the effective implementation of secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by offering continuous, tailored support to districts, schools, and CTE teachers statewide.
Career Programs & Pathways	\$449,795.	The Career Programs and Pathways Project provide instructional resources for educators, fosters business and industry partnerships, and supports the alignment of secondary and postsecondary pathways. This includes dual and articulated credit, apprenticeships, and industry certification resources and training.
OSHA	\$40,375.	This project funds the training of CTE instructors to receive train the trainer status to offer students the opportunity to receive the OSHA 10 credential before graduation.
Area Tech Centers CTSO Advisor Stipend	\$50,000.	CTSO advising adds significant responsibilities including chapter management, event planning, student supervision, and compliance tasks that extend well beyond a teacher’s contractual duties. Stipends recognize this extra workload, making it more feasible for educators to accept and sustain these roles. This helps retain experienced teachers and reduces turnover, which is critical given Kentucky’s documented CTE teacher shortage in rural and high-demand sectors.
Other applicants		

Kentucky Community & Technical College System	\$469,022.80	Project A: Comeback to Complete (C2C) Project B: Curriculum Coordinator Project C: Technical Programs Curriculum Project D: Applied Practice for Teaching (APT) Project E: CTE Professional Development, Operations, and Support To support KCTCS CTE faculty and staff in accessing professional development and industry training to enhance teaching skills and align with evolving business and industry needs. Project F: AI at Work - support project implementation, and provide professional development for faculty and staff involved in AI.
Office of Adult Education	\$62,995.	OAE services emphasize expanding postsecondary and workforce development opportunities that lead to sustainable careers and improved quality of life.
Murray State University	\$48,500.	The focus of this project is to provide tools to empower CTE teachers to design inclusive instruction and create equitable opportunities for CTE students across Kentucky.
University of Louisville	\$101,950.	CTE Teachers/Instructors from differing career clusters as co-developers, 30 teachers/instructors @\$1,500 per teacher
West Kentucky University	\$26,497.	This project will strengthen clinical instruction by expanding access to realistic, standardized clinical experiences that support safe RN-level decision-making, while meeting workforce expectations for technology-enabled training.
Preapproved eligible applicant requests (no interview required or conducted)		Eligibility explanation below
Non-Traditional Camps	\$60,000.	The State must provide funds for: (A) Preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions, programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations; (amounts between \$60,000 and \$150,000) (B) Individuals in State institutions, such as State correctional institutions, including juvenile justice facilities, and educational institutions that serve individuals with disabilities; (no more than 2% of total award) (C) recruiting, preparing, or retaining career and technical education teachers, faculty, specialized instructional support personnel, or paraprofessionals, such as preservice, professional development, or leadership development programs; and (D) Technical assistance for eligible recipients
Non-Traditional Instruction	\$492,200.	
Department of Corrections	\$72,000.	
Dept of Juvenile Justice	\$20,075.	
Kentucky School for the Blind	\$4,200.	
Kentucky School for the Deaf	\$35,561.30	
Total	\$2,158,171.10	<i>Funding conditional on federal government awards</i>



Kentucky Career Center (KCC):
Comprehensive Center

KCC One-Stop Certification and Recertifications

Recommendation

The following Kentucky Career Centers have been reviewed and recertified by their respective Local Workforce Development Board.

Department of Workforce Development (DWD) staff have received and reviewed all necessary documentation required for certification, and the following are recommended for approval of KCC One-Stop certifications.

Local Workforce Development Area	Center Location	Center Type	Previous Type
West Kentucky	Hopkinsville, Kentucky Career Center, 110 Riverfront Drive, Hopkinsville, KY 42240	Comprehensive Center	Comprehensive Center
West Kentucky	Paducah Career Center, 416 S. 6th Street, Paducah, KY 42003	Comprehensive Center	Comprehensive Center

Comprehensive Kentucky Career Centers offer customized career exploration, training, support, and employment services to career seekers and businesses. These comprehensive services give career seekers the tools they need to succeed in today's job market and connect employers to a pool of competent personnel they need to compete in the economy, and reassure them in their hiring process.

To learn more about the item listed in the consent agenda above, please click the link to access the relevant information on Google Drive: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1x3vlofje7AL8KMOpLH9xiGcdQ4FISDO9>

WIOA Plan Modification (Voting Required)

Kentucky's 2024-2027 WIOA State Plan Briefer

Every four years, each state is required to submit a Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan that outlines the strategic and operational direction for workforce development. This plan must be created in coordination with the governor's state workforce board, in the commonwealth, the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) serves in this capacity.

Kentucky is submitting a Combined State Plan, which include the core WIOA programs encompassing:

- Title I: Workforce Development Activities targeting Dislocated Workers, Adult, & Youth;
- Title II: Adult Education & Literacy;
- Title III: Wagner-Peyser, general employment services; and
- Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation.

Additional workforce programs are also included in the plan:

- Unemployment Insurance (UI);
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG); and
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).

The plan opens to a discussion about Kentucky's economic and workforce analysis followed by the strategic and operational components are addressed. The underlying theme of this plan has the Kentucky Strategic Plan as the north star and the four goals of employer engagement, education attainment, workforce participation, and resource alignment as the driving forces. The spirit of collaboration, partnership, alignment, and collective impact is seen in the activities discussed throughout the WIOA State Plan.

Executive Summary

The Commonwealth of Kentucky is in the best period of economic growth in the state's history. The Combined Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan supports and capitalizes on this historic time of opportunity and results by coordinating with the Kentucky's workforce development system, including Kentucky Adult Education, Career Development Office, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Unemployment Insurance, and the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board. These strategies and collaborative efforts within the Combined WIOA State Plan for 2024-2027 address the needs of learners, workers, and employers in the commonwealth.

Since the beginning of his administration, Governor Beshear has announced more than 1,300 private-sector new-location and expansion projects totaling over \$45 billion in announced investments, creating more than 68,000 jobs. This is the highest investment figure secured during the tenure of any governor in the commonwealth's history and \$24 billion more than the next highest total.

Importantly, these are high-quality, good-paying jobs that sustain families and communities. Governor Beshear has also announced some of the largest economic development projects in state history, which have solidified Kentucky as the electric vehicle battery production capital of the United States. These include AESC's \$2 billion 2,000-job gigafactory project in Warren County; Ford Motor Co.'s \$2 billion 2,200-job commitment in Louisville, as well as its \$2 billion 2,100-job project at the Kentucky 1 plant in Hardin County; Shelbyville Battery Manufacturing's \$712 million investment, creating 1,572 jobs in Shelby County; and Toyota's \$1.3 billion investment in Scott County, among others. A wide set of additional economic investments supported and allowed for this growth, and private businesses continue to trust and believe in Kentucky's ability to provide a skilled and ready workforce to fill these jobs of the future.

To ensure the commonwealth continues to be successful in meeting the new demands of businesses and workforce, as well as supporting the needs of existing businesses, the KWIB, in collaboration with the Department of Workforce Development (administrators of WIOA), develops and provides strategic directions to Kentucky's workforce development system. The opportunity to build pathways to good quality jobs in a wide array of industries is better now than at any time in Kentucky's history. The established partnerships across the workforce development system are well-positioned to serve all Kentuckians, including expanded access to talent that WIOA was designed to serve, such as disconnected youth, formerly incarcerated individuals, veterans and their families, individuals with disabilities, adults with foundational skill gaps, and many others.

To accomplish these tasks, Governor Beshear's charge for all of Team Kentucky is to embrace a "Forward, Together" model, working collaboratively to provide the highest level of support to Kentucky job-seekers, workers, and businesses through a coordinated approach. This call to action directly aligns with KWIB's vision to "create a workforce development system that is value driven for employers, aligns education with industry demands, prepares Kentuckians for the future of work, and drives economic development." This vision is supported by the four goals of Kentucky's Workforce Strategic Plan: employer engagement, education attainment, workforce participation, and resource alignment.

In this 2024-2027 WIOA State Plan, Kentucky's strategic and operational activities are outlined with the overarching theme of continuous improvement to align services and resources, collaborate across systems, and strengthen and develop partnerships to better serve the needs of individual customers, businesses, and workforce system staff in a rapidly evolving economy. From highlighting successful local programs executed by the 10 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) to showing how the Department of Workforce Development is innovating to meet business and individual customer needs, the Kentucky Career Centers (KCC) provides a system-wide branding to support this work.

The WIOA State Plan was developed with input from various stakeholders essential to the commonwealth's strategic and operational direction through localized and statewide listening sessions, as well as input from individuals representing businesses, elected officials, community-

based organizations, government, and individual consumers. All of these stakeholders provide unique and informative perspectives on a reimagined workforce development system. This state plan is meant to be a living document that encourages the workforce development system to continue to work collaboratively to best meet the needs shared by the stakeholders.

Additionally, this plan takes into consideration the changing dynamics of technology, more opportunities to align workforce partners to serve employers and business, and the importance of early childhood education as a workforce development strategy. Specifically, the Pre-K for All program are noted in the modification of the plan as strategies to address alignment in business services and opportunities for addressing early childhood education.

Furthermore, strategies within this plan align to the U.S. Department of Labor's *America's Talent Strategy*. Kentucky's workforce development system is intentionally industry-driven with employers signaling demand, skills, and credentials of value. Additionally, on the workforce talent side, the responsiveness of the workforce system focuses on worker mobility to secure good jobs that are high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand. Together the workforce system operates an integrated model to ensure all resources are delivered to both individuals and employers with accountability, flexibility, and innovation at its core.

To create a workforce development system that meets the needs of employers and workers, educational opportunities and training must be aligned with industry demands to prepare Kentuckians for the future of work while also driving economic development. The 2024-2027 WIOA State Plan embraces the collaborative spirit of Team Kentucky to move the commonwealth Forward, Together.

Highlights

- The Kentucky Strategic Plan is the north star of the plan with the four goals serving as pillars: employer engagement, education attainment, workforce participation, and resource alignment.
- Contribution from local listening sessions is included throughout the plan; contributors included: local businesses, local elected officials, community-based organizations, system partners, and individual customers.
- Strengths focus on the collaborative spirit of the workforce development ecosystem and connect various activities under the four goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.
- Weaknesses are focused on the barriers to employment consisting of access to childcare, transportation, and affordable housing. The solution to these barrier hinges on partnership across state and local entities.
- The flow of action is shared: KWIB providing strategy, Education and Workforce Collaborative providing direction, and the Department of Workforce Development providing execution.
- Partnership opportunities with employers and educational institutions discussed; Work-Based Learning (WBL) serving as an effective tool for both learners and businesses.
- Coordination with economic development is discussed, Work Ready Communities – Next Generation, and overall collaboration to serve current Kentucky employers and new and expanding businesses.
- Operationally, information is provided from Kentucky Office of Adult Education (highlighting Title II), Career Development Office (highlighting Title III and JVSG, TAA programs), Unemployment Insurance, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (highlighting Title IV).



Workforce Pell

Workforce Pell – Proposed Governance Structure – DRAFT

Background:

Workforce Pell was included in the federal tax and spending legislation passed by Congress and requires every state to implement Workforce Pell by 7/1/26, a very rapid timeline as the US Education Department is yet to provide final ruling. In Kentucky, SB249 has passed both House and Senate and has been enrolled.

Workforce Pell allows Pell eligible students to pursue short term credentials, 8-15 week programs. Eligible programs are:

- High-skill, high-wage, and in-demand (*definitions for all three identified by each state*)
- Stackable and portable credentials (*stackable = credit bearing or credit for prior learning; portable = accepted by more than one employer*)
- Have 70% completion rate, and 70% employment rate with wages premiums higher than the cost of tuition and fees

The Governor, with the consultation of their state workforce board (KWIB), will review and approve programs that meet those thresholds to submit to the Secretary of the US Education Department.

Proposed Governance Structure:

1. Institutions submit potential programs to the “Workforce Pell Program Review Workgroup”
2. Workgroup reviews quarterly and submits to the KWIB Education Attainment Committee for review (this structure mirrors the approach currently done with CTE certifications, Perkins Leadership Funds, and In-Demand Certification)
3. Education Attainment submits to KWIB for business approval sought in Workforce Pell
4. Approved recommendations are sent to DWD Commissioner
5. The Governor receives recommended programs via DWD Commissioner or ELC Secretary

The timeline and cadence can be accelerated if needed.

Workforce Pell Program Review Workgroup Members:

Voting Stakeholders:

- Kentucky Department of Education
- Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (business member)
- Local Workforce Development Board (business member)
- Council on Postsecondary Education
- Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges & Universities
- Department of Workforce Development - Office of Industry and Apprenticeship Services
- Department of Workforce Development - Office of Adult Education

Non-Voting Observers:

- Kentucky Community and Technical College System
- Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority
- Cabinet for Economic Development
- Kentucky Center for Statistics

Work Ready Communities - Next Generation

Work Ready Communities (WRC) – Next Generation

History: Work Ready Communities (WRC) Kentucky was launched by Governor Steve Beshear in 2012. WRC was focused on education attainment as the primary indicator of workforce readiness.

WRC-Next Generation: Because of feedback from Kentucky communities, KWIB conducted an analysis on what needs to be improved or if the program needs to be eliminated. Overwhelmingly, communities wanted to maintain WRC with a request to update goals and metrics. Through listening sessions with economic developers, businesses, local elected officials, and community stakeholders, updated goals were identified and approved by the KWIB.

Strategic Goals

1. **Supply and Demand of Regional Skills** – understanding regional skill demanded by employer. Understanding the supply through labor market information, training, and education in the regional community.
2. **Widening Talent Pools** – providing employment services to all talent pools, including formerly incarcerated, veterans, people with disabilities, youth, etc.
3. **Work-Based Learning** – expanding jobs with embedded training opportunities. Examples include registered apprenticeships, paid internships, mentorships, job-shadowing, on-the-job training, etc.

Talent-Ready Goals

1. **Childcare Access** – ensuring affordable and accessible options.
2. **Affordable Housing** – promoting affordable housing options in the community.
3. **Transportation** – assessing public transportation infrastructure for commuting to work.
4. **Digital Access** – ensuring internet availability, digital skills training, and comfort with technology in employment.
5. **Talent Attraction** – retaining and attracting new residents to the region.

Opportunity: to match the economic development momentum, communities can ensure the workforce development in their region is understood and marketed to site selectors and businesses in a format that complements the traditional technical labor market analysis conducted in site selection. These goals provide a full picture of workforce readiness in Kentucky communities.

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

The Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics use a scoring system to assess regional workforce readiness. Each category is worth up to three points: **1 = Not Work Ready, 2 = In Progress, 3 = Work Ready.**

General Considerations

- Regions must score 8-15 to be rated In Progress and 16-24 to be rated Work Ready.
- Regions scoring 21 and below will be eligible to receive technical assistance and coaching.
- In Progress: Requires at least one letter of partnership, MOU, or other agreement showing collaboration.
- Work Ready: Requires multiple agreements across sectors (employer, education, nonprofit).
- To maintain certification, regions must show progress on at least one quantitative metric such as participation, completions, or housing units added.

Goals	Description	Quantitative Metrics	Qualitative /Narrative Questions	Scoring Recommendations + Notes
Strategic Goal 1 Supply and Demand of Regional Skills	How are communities addressing local talent supply and employment demands? What strategic efforts are being made to meet the needs/goals of the industry through an aligned education vision? What are the strategies to meet the local in-demand industries as defined by Local Workforce Development Boards?	<p>Core Demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 3 industries (by number of jobs) • Top 5 occupations (by number of jobs) in your workforce area <p>Supply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of residents earning CTE Pathways or Credentials in key industries • Number of training/ education programs + Number of graduates annually related to top industries and occupations. 	<p>Core</p> <p>How does your Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) work with employers, job seekers, and partners to meet the needs of local in-demand industries? Is there a formalized public-private partnership to address industry-specific workforce needs? How does your region ensure educators are responsive to industry needs? Explain strategies in place to address mismatches where supply does not meet demand. Identify the top 5 skills employers are looking for.</p>	<p>Not Work Ready: No evidence of strategic alignment between workforce, education, and industry. Residents are not earning relevant credentials or enrolling in relevant pathways.</p> <p>In Progress: Workforce Board and education providers have engaged industry, and relevant training programs are in place or under development. Credentialed talent is growing yet supply lags employer demand.</p> <p>Work Ready: One or more sector partnerships (or similar public-private collaboratives) exist in top industries. Region has strategies addressing industry alignment and demand for skilled talent. Metrics indicate residents are upskilling/reskilling as industry demands.</p>
<p>Evidence: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Advisory Council Minutes, Strategic Plan, Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, Local & Regional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) plan</p> <p>Potential Data Source: Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)</p>				

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

<p>Strategic Goal 2 Growing Talent Pools</p>	<p>Does the community have awareness and engagement of all the non-profit organizations targeting untapped talent pools (individuals with disabilities, veterans, immigrants/refugees, ex-offenders and those in recovery seeking second chances, foster youth, those who are hungry, etc.)? What are the strategic coordination efforts being made to create pipelines into employment? Kentucky's Workforce Pipeline can be used as a guide to potential talent.</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall labor force participation rate <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of non-profit organizations serving [untapped population] and providing training/employment related services (e.g., KY Valor) 	<p>Describe your region's collaborative efforts to grow the talent pool by engaging untapped populations and the organizations that serve them. What measurable outcomes is your region tracking and what are the results? Describe how local employers are being engaged/educated to expand willingness to hire untapped populations. Describe which untapped populations are being prioritized and qualitatively assess progress in employment outcomes, barriers addressed, and partnerships developed.</p>	<p>Not Work Ready: Region does not have a strategy to create pipelines into employment. Non-profit organizations serving untapped talent populations are not active in the region.</p> <p>In Progress: Region is able to describe collaborative efforts or strategies in place to increase labor force participation in at least one key population, but results are not available or measured to date.</p> <p>Work Ready: Overall labor force participation is at or above 60%. Region has clear, collaborative strategy for increasing labor force participation in at least two key populations and measurable results of pipeline development are available.</p>
<p>Evidence: MOU, hiring policy updates, public investments, grant reporting documents</p> <p>Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, training program enrollment and completion data, LWDB, Kentucky Community Technical College System (KCTCS)</p>				

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

Strategic Goal 3: Work-Based Learning	What strategies are used to grow skills and fill employment needs through the various work-based learning opportunities, such as career exploration, internships, co-ops, registered apprenticeships, on-the-job training, etc.?	Core <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Work Based Learning (WBL) programs with enrollees • Number of employers participating in WBL programs • Number of registered apprentices plus number of registered apprenticeships completed annually Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average number of WBL hours HS graduates or CTE students complete annually • Number of WBL enrollees 	What is your region's approach to work-based learning at the high school, post-secondary, and adult/workforce development levels? What partners are involved in promoting, coordinating, and/or delivering WBL? What support is available to employers that are interested in creating or expanding WBL programs? Does the region have a system to track WBL opportunities, participation, and outcomes?	Not Work Ready: Region does not have a WBL strategy in place; WBL that is available is not coordinated or measured reliably. In Progress: Region has at least one coordinated WBL initiative (e.g., expanding registered apprenticeship, required high school internships, etc.) Work Ready: Region has WBL options available for adults and students at all levels; significant coordination between workforce system and employers is evident. 80% or more WBL participants earn an industry-recognized credential or certificate.
Evidence: MOU, Employer participation list Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, KCTCS				

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

Talent Ready Goal 1: Childcare	<p>What is the existing landscape of access and affordability, and what strategies are being taken to address the needs of the community? Data and strategy can include utilizing KYSTATs (kystats.ky.gov/Reports/Reports) capacity data and services offered by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Education.</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of licensed childcare settings in the county • Number of Early Childhood workers in the region • Average cost of childcare (as compared to average income in the region) <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of early childhood registered apprentices 	<p>How does your region ensure the availability and affordability of childcare for working parents? Are there strategies in place (such as apprenticeships and credential pathways) to grow and retain the early childhood workforce? What strategies are in place or in development to address the barriers to affordable childcare? How do local employers contribute to the solution? Describe the transportation services available for childcare, including morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up (e.g., buses, vans, car riders).</p>	<p>Not Work Ready: Metrics indicate insufficient childcare providers (business and/or individual workers) and unclear plans to address the shortage.</p> <p>In Progress: Metrics indicate gaps in childcare availability or affordability, but one or more collaborative strategies are in place/in development to address the gap.</p> <p>Work Ready: Metrics indicate adequate availability of providers/workers, or the region has a coordinated strategy to recruit and retain providers. At least 60% of childcare workers remain in the field year-over-year. Region shows evidence of employer support (e.g., on-site childcare, financial support).</p>
<p>Evidence: ECCAP agreements, Retention and recruitment strategy, Collaborative Agreements, Apprenticeship enrollment and completion data</p> <p>Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, Childcare Aware Market Report</p>				

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

<p>Talent Ready Goal 2: Affordable Housing</p>	<p>What kind of housing trends are seen in the community (for example, the number of units being added annually) and what strategies are utilized to meet the demand? How are communities addressing affordable housing? Data gathering could incorporate the local energy companies to gauge growth by understanding new meters added.</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent change in housing stock year-over-year [Percent change = $\frac{\text{Previous Year Units} - \text{Current Year Units}}{\text{Previous Year Units}} \times 100$] • Median housing costs for renters/owners • Percent of residents who are cost burdened (>30% of gross income; significant cost burden defined as >50% of gross income) • Housing vacancy rates 	<p>Describe your region's efforts to ensure affordable housing is available for all residents. What strategies are in place or in development to encourage home ownership (e.g., home repair or preservation funds, home maintenance courses)? Does the community offer rental assistance or other transitional/ supportive services for low-income residents, through a housing authority or other partners? If housing availability is a concern, are there incentives available for developers? Are zoning laws/planning rules friendly to new unit development (e.g., reduced parking requirements, flexible lot sizes)? How is the community addressing the quality of available housing stock (rehabilitation programs, inspections, code enforcement)? (Optional) Provide an evaluation of housing quality (e.g., age of stock, code compliance, rehabilitation needs)</p>	<p>Not Work Ready: Metrics indicate insufficient housing availability, or a majority of residents experience significant cost burdens ($\geq 50\%$ of gross income). Housing quality concerns are widespread or unaddressed.</p> <p>In Progress: Metrics indicate gaps in housing availability, affordability (30–50% cost burden), or quality, but programs are in development to address those gaps.</p> <p>Work Ready: Metrics indicate housing is widely available, affordable (significant portion of residents spend <30% of gross income on housing), and of acceptable quality. The region has a strategic plan to maintain adequate stock for population and employer growth.</p>
<p>Evidence: Developer agreements, nonprofit or community development reports</p> <p>Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, American Community Survey (ACS)</p>				

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

Talent Ready Goal 3: Transportation	What are the strategies used to grow transportation access and infrastructure to meet community and business needs? Can communities quantify the demand for transportation?	Core <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average cost of commuting relative to household income • Average commuting distance/time • Number of residents commuting in/out of region for work Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals using public transportation daily/weekly • Percentage of households with a vehicle available • Number of bus stops/transit stops • Number of micro-transit or community-based transportation programs available 	Describe how your region is addressing/planning to address transportation demand and barriers? How do key employers in your region support workers' transportation needs? If public transportation is available, how does coverage compare to workers' needs (e.g., do buses run for 3 rd shift workers? How far do individuals have to travel to reach a bus stop)? Are there non-profit or private companies offering micro-transit options? What transportation supports are available for workers with disabilities?	Not Work Ready: Metrics indicate that residents are spending significant time and/or money on their daily commute (as compared to household income), and no plans are in place to address the disparity. In Progress: Metrics indicate gaps in transportation availability or affordability, but the region has plans in place or in development to improve infrastructure, availability, or assistance. Work Ready: Metrics indicate transportation is adequate and affordable in the region and/or strategies and initiatives are in place to improve infrastructure, availability, or assistance. Public-private partnerships and employer assistance are evident. Average cost of commuting is less than 20% of household income.
Evidence: Employer and Transportation MOU, Survey data Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC) Datamart, ACS				

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

Talent Ready Goal 4: Digital Access & Broadband Infrastructure	What is the internet availability across their rural and urban centers? Does a community have a digital access plan or strategy to ensure access for all?	Core <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of residents with access to broadband at home • Percent of region covered by broadband access • Speed of broadband access (percent of residents who can access top speed) • Number digital literacy programs offered annually Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of public facilities with free Wi-Fi available to residents 	Describe your region's digital access plan or strategy to ensure broadband access for all. Describe opportunities available to learn digital literacy skills (in person, virtual, hybrid, instructor led, or student led)	Not Work Ready: Significant portion of region does not have broadband access or public Wi-Fi available. No digital equity plan in place. No structured digital literacy programs are in place. In Progress: Coverage is available in most areas, but gaps remain in speed, affordability, or rural access. Public Wi-Fi is accessible for residents without reliable home service. A digital access plan is in development or has only recently been adopted. Digital literacy programs are available but not yet widely accessible. Work Ready: Broadband access and high-speed coverage are widely available across the region (90% of households or more have broadband access, 50% or more at top speeds), with affordability and rural access barriers being actively addressed. A comprehensive digital access plan is in place and being implemented. Residents of all working ages have access to coordinated in-person digital literacy programs.
Evidence: Digital Access Plan, Provider service map, Broadband coverage maps, MOU or partnership agreements, Digital Literacy program completion				
Data Source: KYSTATS, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Map				

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

Talent Ready Goal 5: Talent Attraction	What strategies are being used to actively attract talent locally or regionally? Are these strategies aligning with business demand?	Core <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent population growth (working age) • Cost of living (as compared to nearest MSA) • Labor force participation by age Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web and social media traffic related to talent attraction campaigns • Number of inquiries, relocations, or event participation linked to campaigns. 	Describe your region's efforts to attract new residents. Is there an individual or organization dedicated to talent attraction and community development? Does the region have a marketing or social media strategy, and if so, how is it measured? Do strategies align with business needs? How do local business needs inform strategies?	Not Work Ready: Region does not have a strategy for attracting new talent. Population growth is stagnant or decreasing. In Progress: Region is developing a strategy for attracting new talent or has recently launched a strategy, but results are not evident to date. Population growth is stagnant or decreasing. Work Ready: Region has coordinated talent attraction strategy with demonstrated results such as increase in working-age labor force participation and tax revenue.
Evidence: Cost of living index, website analytics (heat map), marketing and branding materials, surveys Data Source: KYSTATS, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Cost of Living Calculations				

Input was provided from the following stakeholders: KWIB Taskforce, Workforce Boards, Economic Developers, Industry – Employers, KY Chamber of Commerce, KDE/CTE, KY Association of School Superintendents, KY Community and Technical Colleges, KY Council of Economic Developers, KY League of Cities, KY Transportation Cabinet, KY Housing Corporation, former Executive Director of the KY Housing Corporation, KY Office of Early Childhood, and KY Office of Broadband Development



Updated WRC Metric

Metric Wording

- Strategic and Talent-Ready *Objectives* are now Strategic and Talent-Ready *Goals*

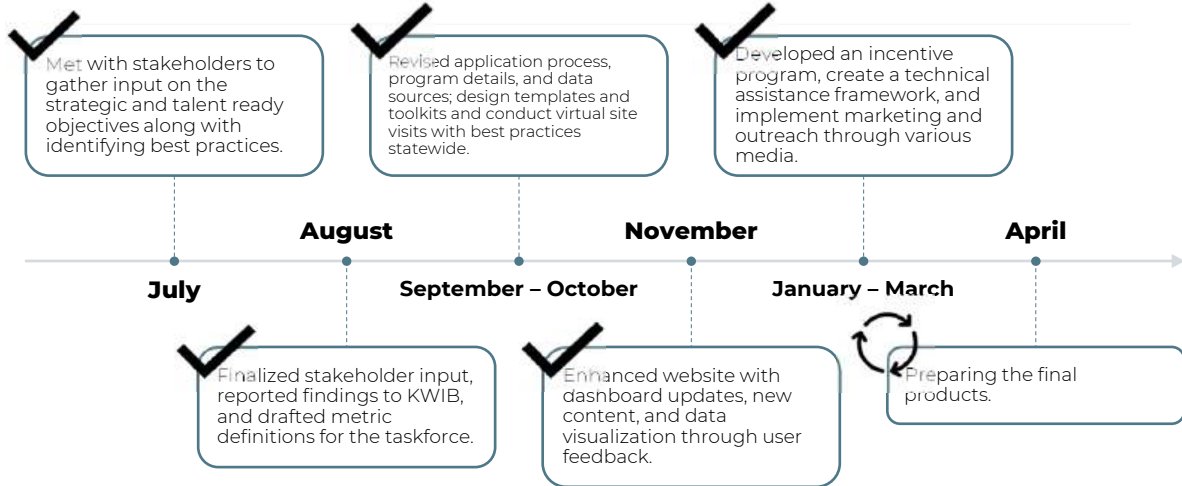
Strategic Goals

- Goal 1: Supply & Demand of Regional Skills
 - Top **5** industries to Top **3** industries
- Goal 3: Work-Based Learning
 - Number of work-based learning **opportunities/programs available** to Number of work-based learning **programs with enrollees**
 - Removed: Percent of participants earning an industry-recognized credential or certificate

Talent-Ready Goals

- Goal 1: Childcare
 - Number of licensed/certified childcare settings **within a 10-20 minute** drive to Number of licensed/certified childcare settings **in the county**
 - Removed:
 - Percent of workers remaining in the childcare field year over year
 - Number of individuals in work-based learning childcare apprenticeships
- Goal 3: Transportation
 - **Number of registered vehicles per year** to **Percent of vehicles available per household**

Timeline



Ready for Launch

May 6th – Final product shared with the WRC Taskforce
May 21st – TPMA presents final product to the KWIB





Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Conference

SETA

SOUTHEASTERN
EMPLOYMENT &
TRAINING ASSOCIATION

For more than 50 years, the Southeastern Employment & Training Association (SETA) has been the leading professional network for workforce development professionals across the Southeast, serving eight states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Led by an elected 20-member Board of Directors, SETA connects workforce leaders, policymakers, and practitioners to drive collaboration, innovation, and excellence throughout the regional workforce system.

Our Members

SETA's diverse membership reflects the full workforce ecosystem, including:

- State and regional policymakers
- The US Dept of Labor and other federal agencies
- State/Local workforce agencies and boards
- Public and private sector service providers
- Community colleges and training institutions
- Human and social service professionals

What We Do

With a network of nearly 1000 members, SETA strengthens workforce systems by:

- Hosting two regional conferences each year (Spring and Fall) that deliver actionable learning and peer exchange
- Elevating best practices and innovative workforce strategies
- Providing timely insights on legislative, regulatory, and policy developments
- Offering high-quality professional development and leadership training
- Creating space for meaningful networking and cross-state collaboration

Who Should Join?

Workforce development professionals, Workforce Board Members, educators, career counselors, economic development leaders, and anyone passionate about employment and training.

SETA 2026 Fall Conference

Winner's Circle | Louisville, KY

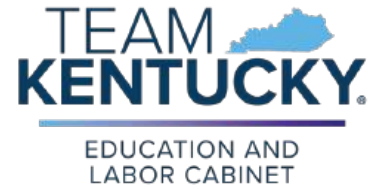
August 30–September 2, 2026

Step into the Winner's Circle at SETA's 2026 Fall Conference and experience the Southeast's premier workforce development event. Connect with industry leaders, explore proven and innovative strategies, and gain actionable insights that strengthen workforce systems and advance careers.

[SETA.ORG](https://www.seta.org)



Education Workforce
Collaborative Board
Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2026



Kentucky Education and Workforce Collaborative Meeting

AGENDA

Thursday, January 22nd, 2026

Meeting 1:30pm-3:30pm EST (1pm Networking)

IN-PERSON - 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY: 4th floor Conference Room
Via Zoom Meeting

ATTENDEES:

GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR (PROXY: SECRETARY JOHN HICKS)	GOVERNOR OF KENTUCKY	
SECRETARY JEFF NOEL (PROXY: KRISTINA SLATTERY)	CABINET FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	X
SECRETARY JAMIE LINK	EDUCATION AND LABOR CABINET	
SECRETARY STEVEN STACK, MD (PROXY: TABAN HERRINGTON)	CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES	X
SECRETARY KEITH JACKSON (PROXY: MONA WOMACK)	JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY CABINET	X
JUDGE ORBREY GRITTON	ANDERSON COUNTY JUDGE/EXECUTIVE	
MYRA WILSON	LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	X
DR. MYKAL LESLIE (JOHNNY W. COLLETT)	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE	X
DR. RYAN QUARLES (PROXY: JESSIE SCHOOK)	KENTUCKY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM (KCTCS)	X
LORI ULRICH, CHAIR	KENTUCKY WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD	X
AMANDA CURRY (PROXY: NICK NAW)	JOB CORPS	X
CHRIS WOOLDRIDGE	CPE CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS, MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY	X
COMMISSIONER ROBBIE FLETCHER	KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	X
BRIGADIER GENERAL STEVEN BULLARD	KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON MILITARY AFFAIRS	
ASHLI WATTS (PROXY: LAKISHA MILLER)	KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	X
WINSTON MILLER (PROXY: ELERI GESLER)	KENTUCKY HOUSING CORPORATION	X
DR. AARON THOMPSON (PROXY: LESLIE SIZEMORE)	COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	X
TOM UNDERWOOD	KENTUCKY NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS	

GUESTS: Ben Reno-Weber, Joe Bringardner, Stephanie Carpenter, Teresa Harris, Beth Hargis, Erika Brown, Tom Thompson, Ashley Mike, Becky Miller, Sheila Clark, Alexis Matthew, Shannon Ramsey, Kim Menke, Becki Wells, Jeniesh, Bridget Back, Tom Sholar

STAFF: Alisher Burikhanov, Elishah Taylor, Sara Jagers, LaChrista Ellis

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Education and Workforce Collaborative meeting was called to order. Roll call was conducted, and quorum was confirmed. **Mike Yoder, Ph.D., Commissioner, Department of Workforce Development, Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet (ELC)**, thanked members, guests, and workforce partners for their participation and emphasized the collaborative’s purpose.

Welcome and Overview

Mike Yoder, Commissioner, Department of Workforce Development, welcomed attendees and reiterated the importance of cross-agency and partner collaboration to advance workforce development goals across the commonwealth.

State of the Workforce Funding Report

Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director, Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board, presented the State of the Workforce Funding Report, noting it is required by executive order and serves as a comprehensive inventory of state and federal workforce development funding across participating agencies and local workforce boards.

The report captures detailed information on program activities and services provided, the individuals served, job placement outcomes and associated wages, and includes newly added return-on-investment (ROI) metrics incorporated at the request of business members of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board. Key highlights noted that approximately \$2.8 billion in workforce funding was reported over the past three program years, with participants earning an average wage of \$21.31. Members were also informed that a full, detailed [electronic version of the report](#) is available for reference.

Following the discussion, a *motion to accept the State of the Workforce Funding Report as presented was made by Kristina Slattery, Commissioner, Cabinet for Economic Development of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and seconded by Johnny W. Collett, Deputy Executive Director, University of Kentucky Human Development Institute. The motion carried.* Next steps include submission of the report to the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board for resource alignment and further analysis, with updates expected after the close of the program year in mid-August.

Introduction to Serve Kentucky and Service-to-Career Opportunities

Taban Herrington, Chief of Staff, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, introduced the Serve Kentucky/AmeriCorps discussion, highlighting its relevance to workforce development and thanking partners for bringing forward the topic as a potential strategy to strengthen service-to-career pathways across the state.

Serve Kentucky

Joe Bringardner, Executive Director, Serve Kentucky, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, introduced Serve Kentucky and AmeriCorps as a workforce-aligned service model that provides paid, hands-on experience while addressing community needs. He illustrated how AmeriCorps participation can break cycles of poverty, provide critical work experience, and serve as a pathway into leadership and public service.

Ben Reno-Weber, CEO, Essential Innovations, shared:

- AmeriCorps programs operate in nearly every Kentucky county
- Approximately 1,000 Kentuckians serve annually
- More than 17,000 Kentuckians have served over the past 30 years
- Members range in age from 16 to 86, including individuals entering the workforce, transitioning careers, or reentering employment

Programs span education, economic opportunity, public health, disaster response, youth development, and emerging initiatives such as a Youth Mental Health Corps. Serve Kentucky operates through public-private partnerships requiring local investment and matching resources, ensuring sustainability and long-term impact.

Members receive paid service opportunities, wraparound supports (e.g., childcare and transportation), skill development, and education awards that can be applied toward training, credentials, or student loan repayment. Joe Bringardner and Ben Reno-Weber emphasized AmeriCorps as a gold-standard experiential workforce development model.

Kentucky was highlighted as one of four states selected by the Service Year Alliance to further integrate service into workforce systems, alongside California, New York, and Colorado. Priority workforce sectors for alignment include healthcare, logistics, and manufacturing.

Kentucky Environmental Education Council

Ashley Mike, Program Director, Environmental Education Leadership Corps, presented the Environmental Education Leadership Corps (ELCor) as a concrete example of AmeriCorps serving as a workforce pipeline. Key points included:

- Members are recruited for passion and trained through nationally accredited curricula
- Standardized training includes Project WET, Project WILD, Project Learning Tree, and Professional Environmental Educator Certification for full-time members
- Since 2018, ELCor members have reached over 90,000 Kentuckians

ELCor intentionally treats a year of service as a year of professional preparation, supporting two primary pathways:

- Direct entry into environmental careers, with alumni moving into educator, outreach, nonprofit, and agency roles
- Transferable workforce pathways, where skills such as public speaking, curriculum development, leadership, data collection, and community engagement are applied across sectors

Ashley Mike emphasized that service lowers barriers to entry through paid opportunities and high-quality training, creating service-minded, environmentally literate professionals across multiple fields.

Service as a Pathway to Economic Opportunity: National Governors Association Briefer

Alisher Burikhanov led a discussion focused on service-to-career strategies aligned with National Governors Association (NGA) priorities. Examples from other states, particularly Utah and Maryland, demonstrated how structured service pathways can re-engage individuals who have stepped out of education, strengthen workforce readiness, and improve long-term economic outcomes.

Alisher emphasized the importance of translating service experiences into employer-recognized credentials, resumes, apprenticeships, and career pathways, including opportunities within state government.

Collaborative Discussion and Workforce Development Opportunities

Commissioner Mike Yoder, PhD., led a discussion centered on strengthening AmeriCorps and Serve Kentucky as a workforce pipeline.

Key themes included shared by Serve Kentucky:

- Engaging the 17,000+ Serve Kentucky alumni as workforce ambassadors and recruiters
- Data showing 80% of alumni report career benefits, and 70% report educational benefits
- Increasing employer awareness of AmeriCorps participants as job-ready, work-hardened talent
- Improving access to incentives such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Planned initiatives by Serve Kentucky include:

- A service-friendly employer job board
- A centralized resource infrastructure (expandable to veteran-friendly and supportive employment)
- Regional mini-summits in each workforce district
- A formal launch at the Kentucky Workforce Summit in February

Members emphasized recruiting from under-engaged talent pools, including individuals in recovery, people with disabilities, second-chance populations, single parents, and rural or economically distressed communities. It was expressed that there is a strong interest in partnership and commitment to continued collaboration, data sharing, and storytelling to support employer engagement and economic development.

CLOSING COMMENTS – Upcoming Dates

Commissioner Yoder summarized key takeaways and emphasized the importance of intentional coordination across workforce, education, higher education, and economic development systems. The need to move from anecdotal success stories to systematic data collection and storytelling was reinforced.

Next Meeting: April 16th, 2026

Team Kentucky Virtual Job Fair: February

ADJOURNMENT 3:30 PM

The meeting concluded with thanks to members for their participation and collaboration. Key reminders included the upcoming self-sufficiency report on living wages and the Team Kentucky Virtual Job Fair focused on healthcare.

Appendix

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

Workforce Ready. Future Driven.

Creating a workforce development system that is value driven for employers, aligns education with industry demands, prepares Kentuckians for the future of work, and drives economic development.



Shaping a Stronger Workforce

The 40-member Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) serves as an advisory board to the Governor on workforce training and development issues. The foundation for its focus can be found in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) with emphasis on strategic alignment of core workforce development programs to coordinate the needs of both job seekers and employers. The KWIB promotes collaboration and business driven

performance through the strategic plan that highlights four strategic pillars of employer engagement, education attainment, workforce participation, and organization and resource alignment. This approach fosters regional collaboration within the commonwealth's local workforce areas and improves the Kentucky Career Center system.

KWIB Pillars:

- Employer Engagement
- Education Attainment
- Workforce Participation
- Organization and Resource Alignment



To learn more, visit
kwib.ky.gov

2026 Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board Quarterly Board Meetings

April 16 - Kentucky Department of Education
300 Sower Blvd., Frankfort, KY 40601; Conference Room A & B on the 1st Floor

May 21 - Kentucky Community and Technical College System
300 North Main Street, Versailles, KY, 40383

August 27 – Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc. (EKCEP)
145 Citizens Lane Suite 101, Hazard, KY 41701

November 19 - The CentreWorks Building at Centre College
236 W. Main Street, Danville, KY 40422

All meetings are scheduled for 1:30-3:30 pm ET / 12:30 - 2:30 pm CT and will be conducted in-person with a virtual option.

Board Membership Travel Reimbursement Information

Per the [By-Laws](#) of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board, Article III, Section 2, Members of the Board and non-members serving on committees or workgroups, shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in connection with their duties in accordance with state travel expenses and reimbursement administrative regulation.

Regulation and Travel Expense and Reimbursement: The reimbursement rate is determined using the American Automobile Association (AAA) Daily Fuel Gauge Report for Kentucky for regular unleaded gasoline. The gasoline cost used for the calculation is located on the AAA website at <http://gasprices.aaa.com/?state=KY>.

The rate shall be adjusted on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 each calendar year based on the average retail price of regular grade gasoline for the week beginning on the second Sunday of the prior month as follows:

	AAA Average Weekly Fuel Cost	Reimbursement Per Mile
a.	\$.01 to \$1.499	36 cents per mile
b.	\$1.50 to \$1.699	37 cents per mile
c.	\$1.70 to \$1.899	38 cents per mile
d.	\$1.90 to \$2.099	39 cents per mile
e.	\$2.10 to \$2.299	40 cents per mile
f.	Greater than \$2.299	41 cents plus 1 cent for every 20 cent increase

Mileage for in-state travel shall be based on the “Kentucky Official Highway Map”, MapQuest website, Google Maps website, or similar web mapping service. Out-of-state mileage shall be based on the most recent edition of the “Rand McNally Road Atlas”, MapQuest website, Google Maps website, or similar web mapping service.

Current rate through June 30, 2026, is \$0.47/ mile.

Education and Labor's financial office requires board members to create a vendor account on: <https://vss.ky.gov> This allows for direct deposit, after the event has occurred, and “voucher” paperwork has been submitted and approved.

If you will follow the prompts in the link and then let KWIB staff know what your “vendor number” is, KWIB staff can set up the “voucher” that will calculate your reimbursable expense and prompt the process for payment. Email kwib.projects@ky.gov for more information or questions.



Futuriti helps Kentuckians understand the state's 5 high-demand workforce sectors.



Kentucky's in-demand career sectors offer many opportunities to build rewarding careers while supporting the state's growing economy. These sectors, approved by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board, provide stability and growth and allow you to make meaningful contributions to your community.



Healthcare

Healthcare practitioners and healthcare support workers play vital roles in maintaining and improving people's health. Practitioners, such as doctors and nurses, diagnose, treat, and manage illnesses, while support workers assist with daily care, administrative tasks, and patient comfort.



Manufacturing and Logistics

Workers in manufacturing build and assemble goods, from cars and electronics to clothing and food products, often using advanced machinery and technology. Logistics professionals prioritize and manage the supply chain, ensuring that materials are transported efficiently.



Construction

Construction careers contribute to all aspects of Kentucky life, from building homes and schools to developing roads and bridges. With opportunities ranging from entry-level positions to skilled trades and leadership roles, the industry offers a clear pathway for growth and specialization.



Education

Education careers require patience, creativity, and strong communication skills to engage learners and guide them toward success. Beyond the classroom, education offers opportunities in curriculum development, educational technology, and administration, providing numerous paths.



Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

Professionals in these fields may specialize in designing cutting-edge technology, conducting scientific research, managing finances, or offering legal and business advice. These roles require knowledge, analytical thinking, and a commitment to staying ahead of industry trends. ⁵⁴



Partner Spotlight

Partner Spotlight highlights initiatives by sharing best practices and innovative approaches in Kentucky's workforce development system.

May 6, 2026 • 12:00 p.m. (ET)

Discussion Topic: How Adult Education Providers Support Community & Employer Needs

Presenter:

Jamie Taylor, Ph.D., Deputy Executive Director
Kentucky Adult Education

Local Adult Education Experts:

Steven Schreck, Director
Newport Adult Education

Donnie Osborn, Adult Education Program Director
Kentucky Educational Development Corporation (KEDC)

Tammy Castle, Director of Adult Education
Big Sandy Community & Technical College (BSCTC)

Tina Cook, Executive Director
Laurel County Literacy Council

Dorinda Maynard, Program Director
Madison County Public Libraries

Ashley Janicki, Manager
Jefferson County Public Schools





REGISTER NOW

Team Kentucky Virtual Job Fair

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

10 A.M. – 1 P.M. ET

All employers are welcome to participate.

Schedule:

- 10 A.M. – 11 A.M.
Veterans & Military Families
- 11 A.M. – 1 P.M.
Open to All Job Candidates



**EMPLOYERS
SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
REGISTER.**

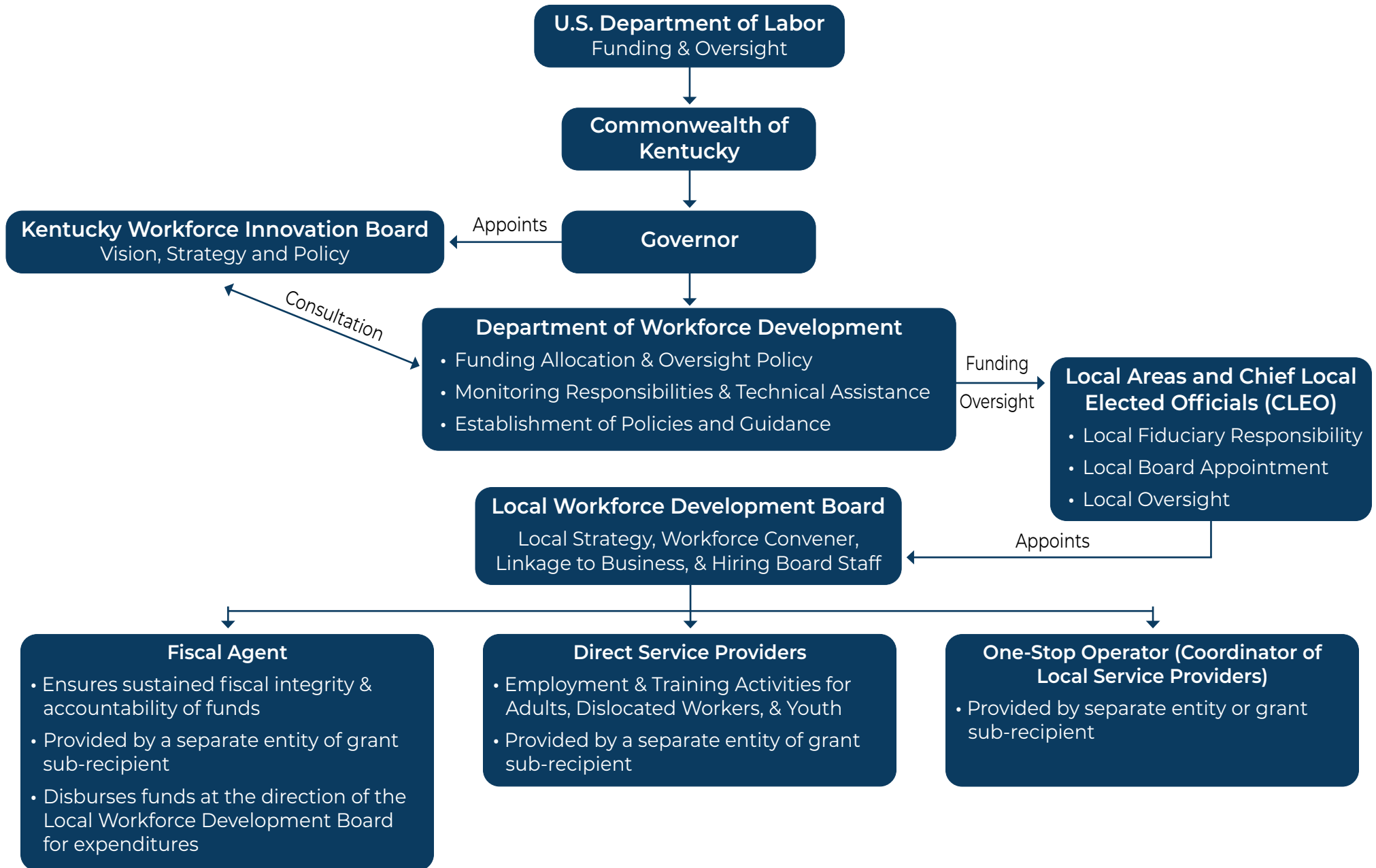


**JOB-SEEKERS
SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
REGISTER.**

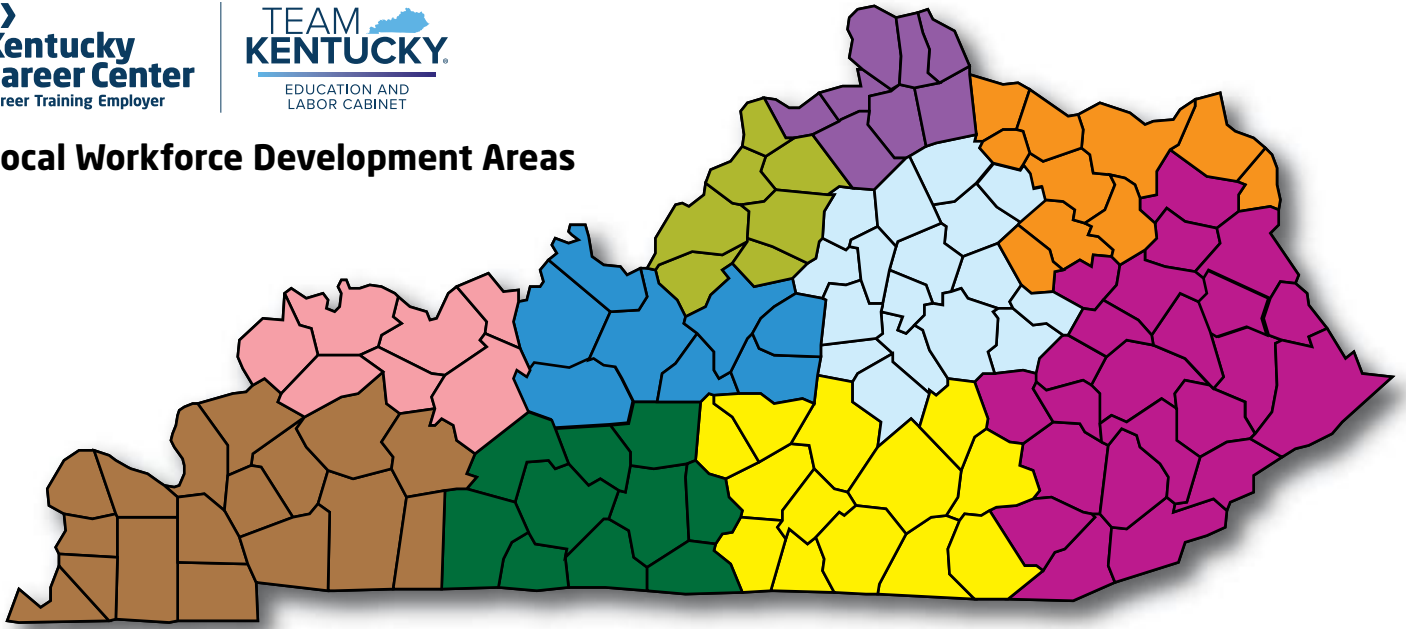


**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Questions? Contact James Hensley at 502-782-5740 or by email at jamesh@ky.gov



Local Workforce Development Areas



Bluegrass

Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, Woodford
Tiffanie Reeves, Director
699 Perimeter Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40517
859-810-2536
ckycareers.com
trees@bgadd.org

Cumberlandands

Adair, Casey, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, Laurel, McCreary, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Russell, Taylor, Wayne, Whitley
Myra Wilson, Director
PO Box 1570
Russell Springs, Kentucky 42642
270-866-4200
cumberlandsworkforce.com
myra@lcadd.org

EKCEP

Bell, Breathitt, Carter, Clay, Elliott, Floyd, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Wolfe
Becky Carnes-Miller, Director
145 Citizens Ln, Ste 101
Hazard 41701
606-436-5751
jobsight.org
bmiller@ekcep.org

Green River

Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, Webster
Michelle Drake, Director
3108 Fairview Drive
Owensboro, Kentucky 42303
270-852-1312
gradd.com
michelle.drake@ky.gov

KentuckianaWorks

Bullitt, Henry, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, Trimble
Michael Gritton, Director
410 West Chestnut Street, Suite 200
Louisville, Kentucky 40202
502-574-2500
kentuckianaworks.org
michael.gritton@kentuckianaworks.org

Lincoln Trail

Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, LaRue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, Washington
Jackie Masterson, Interim Director
PO Box 604
Elizabethtown, Kentucky 42702
270-769-2393
ltcareercenter.org
jackie@ltadd.org

Northern Kentucky

Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen, Pendleton
Correy Eimer, Director
22 Spiral Drive
Florence, Kentucky 41042
859-488-1854
nkcareercenter.org
correy.eimer@nkadd.org

South Central

Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson, Warren
Jon Sowards, President/CEO
2355 Nashville Road, Suite C101
Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101
270-846-6707
southcentralworkforce.com
jon@southcentralworkforce.com

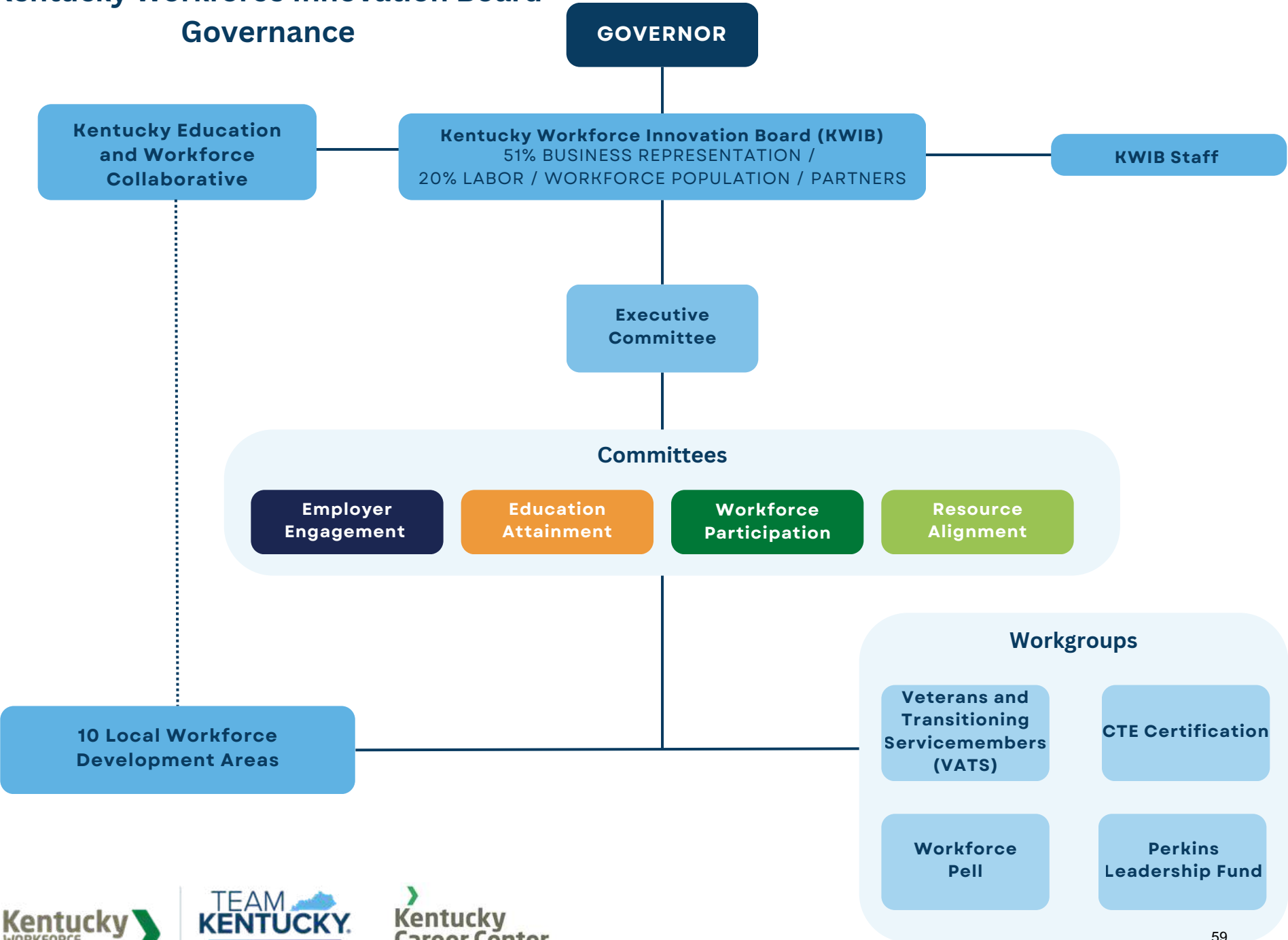
TENCO

Bath, Boyd, Bracken, Fleming, Greenup, Lewis, Mason, Montgomery, Robertson, Rowan
Justin Suttles, Director
201 Government Street, Suite 300
Maysville, Kentucky 41056
606-956-2634
tencocareercenter.com
justin.suttles@ky.gov

West Kentucky

Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, Muhlenberg, Todd, Trigg
Sheila Clark, Director
300 Hammond Drive
Hopkinsville, Kentucky 42240
270-886-9484
wkworkforce.work
sheila.clark@ky.gov

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board Governance



HELP DRIVE

KENTUCKY'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Join the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board
Strategic Committees



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Shape a business-led workforce system



WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

Create opportunities for untapped talent and remove barriers to work



EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Align and build a lifelong education system to meet the future of work



RESOURCE ALIGNMENT

Consistently improve the system and increase return on workforce investment

Business and community leaders, educators, and government professionals interested in serving, email us at kwib.projects@ky.gov.