TEAM KENTUCKY

EDUCATION AND LABOR CABINET

KWIB Executive Committee

Meeting Briefing Book
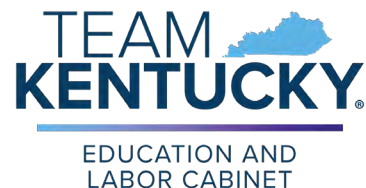
February 2, 2026

9:30am – 11:00am EST

Zoom Meeting

Andy Beshear
Governor

Lori Ulrich
Chair

KWIB Executive Committee Meeting
February 2, 2026, 9:30am – 11:00am EST

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AGENDA
KWIB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
February 2, 2026
9:30am – 11:00am EST
Virtual

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89587849165?pwd=evjeOPHZ0DuoZ4bvS6WweFEdbbj5Kt.1
Meeting ID 895 8784 9165 / Passcode 799093

9:30am Call Meeting to Order………………………………………………………………………………….……….……*Lori Ulrich, KWIB Chair*
Fleming-Mason Energy

9:35am KWIB Executive Committee Approval (Voting)……………………………………………………………………….……*Lori Ulrich, Chair*
- Approval of 10/22/25 minutes
- Approval of Board Liability Policy

9:40am KWIB Business……………………………………………………………………………………………………...…...*Lori Ulrich, Chair*
- Work Ready Communities – Next Generation Project
- Perkins Leadership Funds
- AI Workforce Readiness
- CTE Certification Applications
- Change in KWIB Meeting Date (3/26)

10:00am Education and Labor Cabinet Updates ……………………………………………………………………….*Mike Yoder, PhD., Commissioner*
- Statewide Workforce and Talent Team (SWATT)   *Department of Workforce Development*
- Education and Workforce Collaborative - State of the Workforce Funding
- Upcoming: Education and Workforce Collaborative – Self Sufficiency Report

- Workforce Pell   *Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director*
- WIOA State Plan Modification   *Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board*
- Governor's Council of Second Chance Employers

10:30pm Preparation for 3/26 KWIB Board Meeting ……………………………………………………….……… *Lori Ulrich & Alisher Burikhanov*
- Host: Council on Postsecondary Education Building, 100 Airport Road, Frankfort, KY
- Agenda Items:
  - o Central theme: KWIB Strategic Plan Launch
  - o Work-Ready Communities – Next Generation Update
  - o KWIB AI Workforce Readiness Taskforce
  - o State Plan Member Review Process
  - o Workforce Pell Update
  - o Local Workforce Development Board Highlight: EKCEP's ROI Study

11:00pm Adjournment ……….*Lori Ulrich, Chair*

Committee Member Attendance: Lori Ulrich, Chair, KWIB; LaKisha Miller, Proxy, Co-Committee Chair Employer Engagement; JC Gregory, Committee Chair, Workforce Participation; and Kim Menke, Past-Chair

Staff: Alisher Burikhanov; Debbie Dennison

9:32am   CALL TO ORDER / WELCOME
Lori Ulrich, Chair, Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) and Fleming-Mason Energy (business) welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. She referred to the agenda and asked for discussion or vote around last meetings minutes. She requested a pronoun change in the 6/30 meetings minutes and paused for any additional changes or a vote. **Kim Menke** *motioned* to approve the minutes and **LaKisha Miller** *seconded*. None opposed and the motion passed unanimously.

KWIB BUSINESS
Chair Ulrich continued with the agenda and recognized the membership Executive Order included in the meeting packet. She highlighted Alice K. Houston for being inducted into the Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame.

She shared information on the *Work Ready Communities – Next Generation* metrics provided in the packet and asked for feedback allowing members a week for review. Discussion was had about connecting these efforts to the Governor's New Kentucky Home initiatives and socializing the metrics in the local workforce development areas in 2026. Discussion also included the efforts by the consultants to identify the goals and metrics defined that included detailed interviews with economic and workforce development stakeholders throughout the state over the course of several weeks. Chair Ulrich thanked the members for the discussion and looks forward to feedback by October 29th in preparation for the full KWIB meeting.

Kim Menke, past-Chair, KWIB, shared the work of the **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Workforce Readiness Taskforce**. The taskforce has identified the importance of educating and building awareness among businesses, including terminology definitions. A SWOT discussion at a recent meeting provided insights into what framework components might be useful. The Taskforce is collaborating with Amazon, IBM, and others on identifying important applications. Discussion was had around the importance of this effort as AI skills may become an identified future essential skill.

Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director, KWIB and Chair Ulrich thanked Kim for his and Dr. Sun's leadership in this effort. Alisher continued with recent collaboration activities with education partners. Alisher and Johnny W. Collett, Vice-Chair, KWIB and Committee Chair, Education Attainment, recently presented updated sector information to Jim Flynn, KWIB member and Executive Director, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents and organization members. The importance of this interaction is to align education and workforce discussions and to help promote initiatives of both. Alisher shared the system components of the [Technical Details Framework](#) provided by the Kentucky United We Learn Council, associated with the Kentucky Department of Education, highlighting the promotion of vibrant learning that includes service projects and/or work-based learning.

EDUCATION AND LABOR CABINET (ELC) UPDATES

Alisher transitioned to recent updates within the cabinet. He noted highlights from the October 16, 2025 Education and Workforce Collaborative Board meeting. The meeting highlighted updates to identifying and removing barriers for WIOA focused-populations, specifically individuals with disabilities. More information on that meeting can be found on the [KWIB website](#).

He asked **LaKisha Miller, Sr. Director of Advancement & Partnerships, Kentucky Chamber Foundation,** to share the latest on the Statewide Workforce and Talent Team (SWATT) efforts. She shared that SWATT continues to gain input from employers through socializing the initiative across the state. Efforts include continuing to define engagement that is meaningful across partners, identifying successful practices, and refining approaches to collaboration. Additional information on SWATT and other statewide strategic objectives can be found [here](#).

Alisher shared that increased dollars to [Pell Grants](#) are available to the workforce for short job-training programs and for portable, stackable, in-demand credentials not tied to other postsecondary degrees. While we are awaiting additional framework requirements, the KWIB will be providing recommendations on the implementation of Workforce Pell. He noted the framework draft on identifying Credentials of Value (COV) and anticipated pulling the sectors strategies workgroup together.

He shared that updates to the State Plan Modification is being compiled and while guidance has not yet been received, staff has been working with department stakeholders on gathering information. The plan submitted in 2024 can be found online [here](#). The modification is anticipated to be due in March as in other years and there will be an opportunity for board review, as well as public comment, prior to submitting to the Department of Labor (DOL).

KWIB QUARTERLY MEETING PREPARATION

Alisher shared the plans for discussing the KWIB strategies at the upcoming quarterly board meeting which will be held on November 20th, at the Hub for Innovative Learning & Leadership (HILL) in Lexington. The meeting start time is 1:30pm EST, with networking beginning at 1:00pm.

A briefing packet is forthcoming that includes consent agenda items and other materials useful for the discussions of the day.

Alisher concluded by sharing the upcoming VETS Symposium to be held on November 12th at the KCTCS campus in Versailles, Kentucky.

Chair Ulrich thanked everyone for their participation and asked for any new business or other discussion. As there was none, the meeting was adjourned.

10:46AM   ADJOURNMENT

Board Liability Policy

AON

Aon Risk Services South, Inc.

Invoice # 9301	Page 1 of 1
Account Number	Date
KENTWOR-01	1/5/2026
Balance Due:	
Upon Receipt	
Amount Paid	Amount Due
	$8,521.84

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

500 Mero St

4th floor

Frankfort, KY 40601

<mark>Include the Policy Number in the payment reference field for Check/Wire</mark>

Account Name: Aon Risk Services Central, Inc.
Account Number: 182384208753
ABA Routing Number: 075000022
SWIFT Code: USBKUS44IMT
Bank Name: US Bank

PAYMENT MAILING ADDRESS

Aon Risk Services Central
PO Box 950511
St. Louis, MO 63195-0511

OVERNIGHT MAILING ADDRESS

Aon Risk Services Central
950511
3180 Rider Trail S.
Earth City, MO 63045

Commercial Package	Policy Number:	<mark>NPP717518</mark>	Effective:	1/13/2026	to	1/13/2027

Item #	Description	Amount
45614	New Commercial Package AD006 C/O Aon Risk Services Central	$7,880.00
45615	Company Fee for Commercial Package	$641.84
	Total Invoice Balance:	$8,521.84

Regarding Compensation and Taxes

Affiliates of Aon Group, Inc. providing retail, wholesale and reinsurance brokerage, risk management, underwriting and/or claim management, captive management, premium financing, or consulting may receive compensation in the form of (i) commissions and/or fees paid by an insurer and/or other third party and/or fees paid by a client; and (ii) investment and/or interest income on premiums, claim payments and return premiums temporarily held as fiduciary funds subject to the principal's consent as may be required or permitted by law. To the extent a portion of Aon's compensation by operation of law, agreement or otherwise becomes adjusted or credited to you, it is your responsibility to disclose the net cost of the brokerage and insurance costs you have incurred to third parties having an interest in such amounts.

The Data and Analytics services provide tools enabling Aon clients to access reports and analytics, including those related to insurers' capabilities, benchmarking and program design. Payment for this service is not part of your premium cost, and is neither a requirement nor a condition to receiving brokerage services or to the purchase of insurance policies. The charge for this service, plus tax where applicable, is in addition to any other compensation earned by Aon. You may choose to decline these services by contacting your Account Executive.

If you have any questions regarding the nature or amount of the compensation paid to an Aon company on your account, you should contact the head of the Aon office servicing your account. We have made every effort to identify any surplus lines or other premium taxes and/or fees due in advance, if applicable, but in all instances the payment of these taxes and/or fees will remain the responsibility of the Client and, to the extent tax rates change due to amendments to surplus lines and similar regulations, we will invoice you for the payment of such taxes and fees.

CONFIRMATION OF INSURANCE

Aon Risk Services Northeast, Inc. - New York
165 Broadway, 33rd Floor
New York, NY 10006

FROM: Ethan Dolezal

I am pleased to confirm that your insurance has been bound pursuant to your request. The attached Confirmation of Insurance will serve as evidence of coverage until the insurance carrier issues the policy. This insurance document summarizes the policy referenced below and is not intended to reflect all the terms and conditions or exclusions, of the referenced policy. In the event of a claim, coverage will be determined by the referenced policy, subject to all the terms, exclusions, and conditions of the policy. Moreover, the information contained in this document reflects bound coverage as of the effective date of the referenced policy and does not include subsequent changes by the insurer or changes in the applicable rates for taxes or governmental fees.

NAMED INSURED: Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board
500 Mero Street 4th Floor
Frankfort, KY 40601

INSURER: RSUI Indemnity Company - Admitted

POLICY TERM: 1/13/2026 - 1/13/2027

INSURER: RSUI Indemnity Company - Admitted

POLICY NUMBER: NPP717518

POLICY PREMIUM: $7,880.00
BROKER FEE: $500.00
STATE SURCHARGE: $141.84
TOTAL: **$8,521.84**

AGENT COMMISSION: 12%

RE: Directors and Officers Liability Binder

Policy Number:	**NPP717518**
Renewal of:	**NPP712931**
Company:	RSUI Indemnity Company - Admitted
	(A.M. Best rating: A++ XV and S&P rating: AA+)
Insured:	**Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board** **Frankfort, KY**
Policy Dates:	January 13, 2026 - January 13, 2027

COVERAGE SECTIONS:

	Purchased	Shared Limit	Separate Limit
Directors and Officers Liability Insurance	☒ Yes ☐ No	☒	☐
Employment Practices Liability Insurance	☒ Yes ☐ No	☒	☐
1) Third Party Liability Coverage	☐ Yes ☒ No		
Fiduciary Liability Insurance	☐ Yes ☒ No	☐	☐

AGGREGATE LIMIT OF LIABILITY

Aggregate Limit of Liability for All **Coverage Sections**	$ 1,000,000

PREMIUM:

Total Premium for All **Coverage Sections**	$ 7,880.00

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS LIABILITY COVERAGE:

Directors and Officers Limit of Liability	$ 1,000,000
1) Additional Side-A Limit of Liability	$ 500,000
Retentions	
1) Insuring Agreement A	$ 0
2) Insuring Agreement B	$ 15,000
3) Insuring Agreement C	$ 15,000
Prior and/or Pending Litigation Date	01/13/2005

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES LIABILITY COVERAGE:

Employment Practices Limit of Liability	$ 1,000,000
1) Workplace Violence Sublimit	$ Not Applicable
Retentions	
1) Employment Practices Liability	$ 15,000
2) Third Party Liability Coverage	$ Not Applicable
Prior and/or Pending Litigation Date	01/13/2005

FIDUCIARY LIABILITY COVERAGE: NOT PURCHASED

Policy Attachments

COVERAGE FORMS

- RSG 211003 0622 Common Policy Terms and Conditions Coverage Section-Non-Profit

- RSG 211009 0121 Directors and Officers Liability Coverage Section-Non-Profit

- RSG 211010 0118 Employment Practices Liability Coverage Section-Non-Profit

OTHER FORMS

- RSG 209011 0123 Advisory Notice Regarding Trade or Economic Sanctions

- RSG 204198 0118 Cap on Losses From Certified Acts of Terrorism

- RSG 214038 0118 Coverage Extension-Public Officials

- RSG 204123 0121 Disclosure Pursuant to Terrorism Risk Insurance Act

- RSG 206118 0119 Exclusion-Amended Bodily Injury and Property Damage

- RSG 204154 0716 HR Loss Prevention Services Notice

- RSG 202145 0118 Kentucky Changes

- RSG 203016 0118 Kentucky Changes-Cancellation and Nonrenewal

- RSG 204153 0118 Sublimit-Defense Expenses-Wage and Hour Claims - $100K/EPL SIR

- RSG 204113 0118 Sublimit-Defense of Non-Monetary Damages - $10K/$50K/$15K

Comments:
This binder contemplates no change in circumstances that materially alters this risk prior to the effective date and time of the policy.

Please read all terms and conditions shown above carefully as they may not conform to specifications shown on your submission.

Coverage bound herewith shall be subject to all terms and conditions of the policy to be issued which, when delivered, replaces this binder.

This Binder is valid for 90 days from the effective date.

For RT Specialty to file the surplus lines taxes on your behalf, please complete the surplus lines tax document (per the applicable state requirements) and return with your request to bind. Due to state regulations, RT Specialty requires tax documents to be completed within 24 to 48 hours of binding. Please be diligent in returning tax forms.

_____

Authorized Representative

HOME STATE FOR NON-ADMITTED RISKS

Taxes and governmental fees are estimates and subject to change based upon current rates of the Home State and risk information available at the date of binding.   The Home State of the Insured for a non-admitted risk shall be determined in accordance with the Nonadmitted and Reinsurance Act of 2010, 15. U.S.C §8201, etc. ("NRRA"). Some states require the producing broker to submit a written verification of the insured's Home State for our records. The applicable law (if any) of the Home State governing cancellation or non-renewal of non-admitted insurance, including whether any such laws apply to non-admitted risks, shall apply to this Policy.

 Any amendments to coverage must be specifically requested in writing or by submitting a policy change request form and then approved by the Insurer. Coverage cannot be affected, amended, extended, or altered through the issuance of certificates of insurance. Underlying Insurers must be rated A- VII or better by A.M. Best.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS / OTHER COVERAGES:

NO FLAT CANCELLATIONS
ALL FEES ARE FULLY EARNED AT INCEPTION

PREMIUM FINANCE (If not included in the quote document)
If the insured and the insurer agree to bind coverage and the premium will be financed, upon binding, please instruct the premium finance company to send documents to our attention. Premium Finance funds should always be paid to RT Specialty.

PRODUCER COMPENSATION:
RT Specialty is typically compensated through commission from the insurer for the placement of policies in most transactions. The amount of the commission varies by insurance line and by carrier. RT Specialty might also receive additional compensation. In order to place the insurance requested we may charge a reasonable fee for additional services such as performing a risk analysis, comparing policies, processing submissions, communication expenses, inspections, working with underwriters on the coverage proposal, issuing policies, or servicing the policy after issuance. Any fees charged are fully earned at inception of the policy. Third-party inspection or other fees may be separately itemized upon request. Our fees are applied to new policies, renewal policies, and endorsements. Fees applicable to each renewal and endorsement will be set forth in the quotes. It is the insurance carrier's decision whether to offer the insurance quoted, and your client's decision whether to accept the quote. Our fee is not imposed by state law or the Insurer.

Depending upon the Insurer involved with your placement, we might also have an agreement with the Insurer that we are proposing for this placement that might pay us future additional compensation This compensation could be based on formulas that consider the volume of business placed with the Insurer, the profitability of that business, how much of the business is retained for the Insurer's account each year, and potentially other factors. The agreements frequently consider total eligible premium from all clients placed during a calendar year and any incentive or contingent compensation is often received at a future date. Because of variables in these agreements, we often do not have an accurate means at the time of placement to determine the amount of any additional compensation that might be attributable to any single placement.

You, as the retail broker with the direct relationship with the Insured, must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to disclosure of and consent and agreement to, compensation, and informing the Insured that it may request more information about producer or broker compensation that might be paid in connection with the Insured's placement.   If we request a copy of any legally required insured consent or agreement, you will provide us with a copy. If you need additional information about the compensation arrangements for services provided by RT Specialty affiliates, please contact your RT Specialty representative.

RT Specialty is a division of RSG Specialty, LLC. RSG Specialty, LLC is a Delaware limited liability company and a subsidiary of Ryan Specialty, LLC. In California: RSG Specialty Insurance Services, LLC (License # 0G97516).

Work-Ready Communities – Next Generation

Timeline
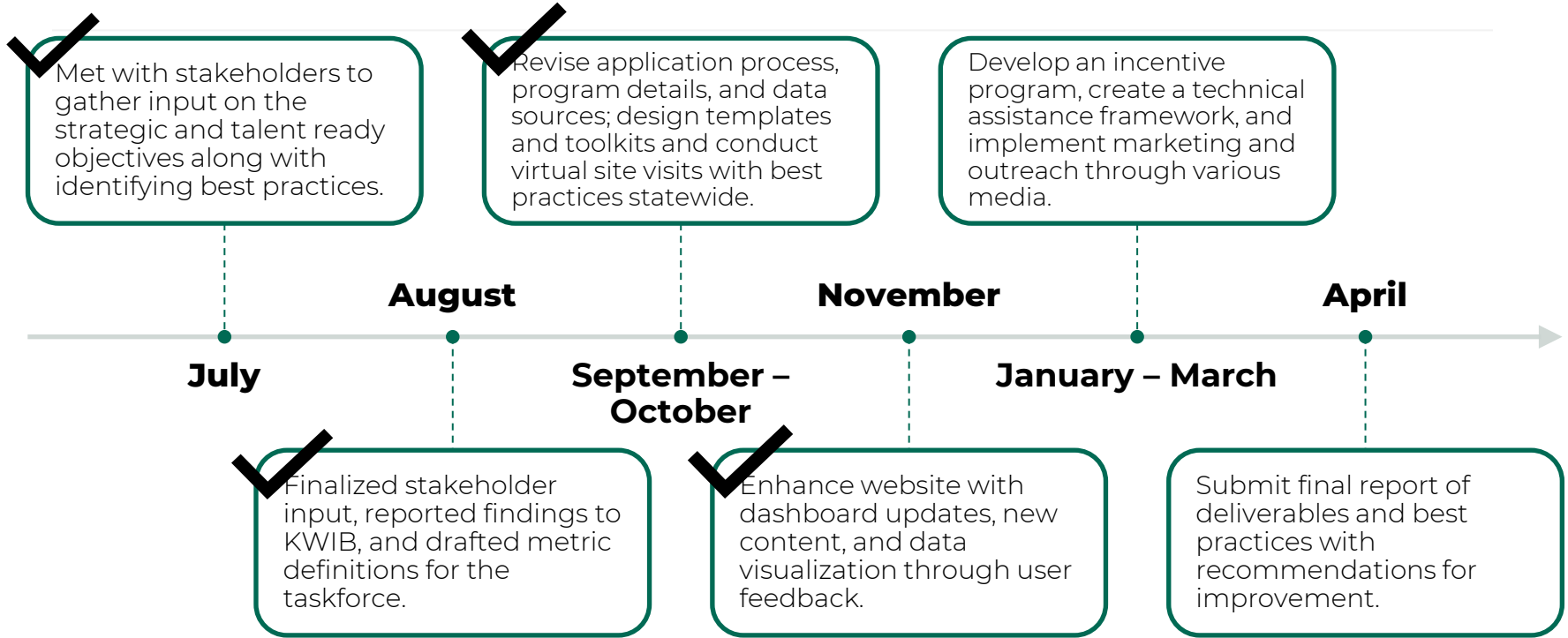
Met with stakeholders to gather input on the strategic and talent ready objectives along with identifying best practices.

Revise application process, program details, and data sources; design templates and toolkits and conduct virtual site visits with best practices statewide.

Develop an incentive program, create a technical assistance framework, and implement marketing and outreach through various media.

August

November

April

July

September – October

January – March

Finalized stakeholder input, reported findings to KWIB, and drafted metric definitions for the taskforce.

Enhance website with dashboard updates, new content, and data visualization through user feedback.

Submit final report of deliverables and best practices with recommendations for improvement.

TPMA

Survey Themes

TPMA
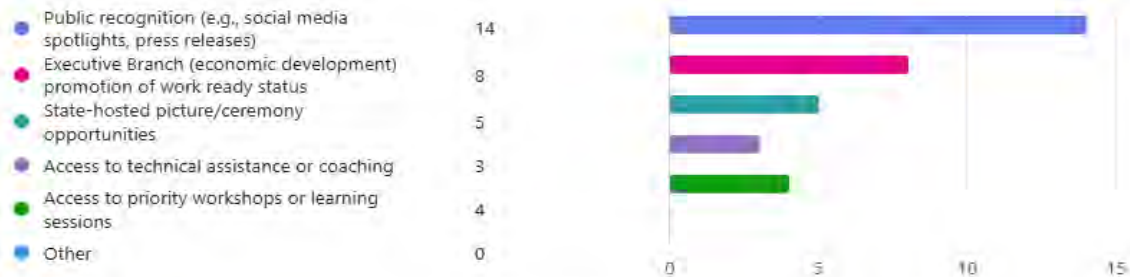
Considerations for the Incentive Program

Build Community & Employer Engagement	Flexible and Equitable	Aligned and Action-orientation
• Promotion, marketing materials and visibility allow communities to use their status to attract employers and industry. • Community driven	• Customization by community make up • Support in progress and work ready statuses • Include options for barrier reduction	• Align with other state initiatives • Real-time technical assistance • Help communities move from planning to action

TPMA

Key Incentive Principles

- Collaboration

- Recognition

- Coordination

- Leverage Existing Resources

TPMA

Incentive Framework Draft

Baseline Incentives (For All Communities)	
• Public recognition (website spotlight, signage) • Executive branch acknowledgment • Promotion & marketing toolkit	

Customizable Options (Based on Status)	
Work Ready	**In Progress**
Implementation Support	Convening / Planning Support
TA Booster Package – Barrier Buster	TA Booster Package – Barrier Buster

TPMA

Perkins Leadership Fund Recommendations

TEAM KENTUCKY.
EDUCATION AND
LABOR CABINET

Perkins State Leadership Fund Request Awards 2026-27

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		
KY Career and Technology 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.
Morehead 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**	*Funding conditional on federal government awards*

AI Workforce Readiness

Vision for AI Workforce Readiness:
The commonwealth will be the nation's leader in emerging & innovative technologies workforce readiness by modeling innovation, collaboration, and execution in prioritizing Kentucky businesses, all workers, and education. The work must be people-centered with intent of AI-human interaction.

1. **SHORT TERM: Foundational AI principles for Kentuckians**
   a. Kentucky certificate/credential for skilling Kentucky workers & learners
   b. Opportunities for Kentucky employers (small, medium, & large enterprises)
   c. Taskforce members as "client zero" as pilot

2. **MID TERM: AI Innovation Hubs – Regional Skills Development**
   a. Leverage regional SWATT partners, including local workforce development boards, regional universities/colleges, school districts, economic development, local chambers of commerce

3. **LONG TERM: Industry Innovation Competitions**
   a. Facilitate key industries collaboration

CTE Certifications / Applications

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Certification

Recommendations:

The BEAT team has reviewed the following certification applications and made recommendations for the approval of the CTE Certification Review workgroup.

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 *CompTIA Tech Plus.*
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/n4mlgs8hJG6DV8kI/s/m40yiexUc78ZJ5qG
- **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:** Cumberlands
- **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:** Cumberlands
- **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.

Statewide Workforce And Talent Team (SWATT)

State of the Workforce Funding

State of the Workforce Funding Report 2025

Background

In July 2020, Governor Andy Beshear issued Executive Order 2020-551 that established the Kentucky Education and Workforce Collaborative. The collaborative includes 19 members from across the commonwealth's executive branch agencies, as well as stakeholder partners who work together on critical workforce priorities. This group takes an intragovernmental approach to the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board's (KWIB) workforce development strategy by supporting individuals, businesses and partner customers while moving Kentucky forward as a leader in workforce innovation.

One of the key efforts of the collaborative is the annual compilation of the State of the Workforce Funding Report. This report seeks to identify all federal and state-funded workforce-related education, training, career services and support service activities in the past three programmatic years provided by the collaborative's respective agencies or entities.

Additionally, this funding report highlights return on investment (ROI) as identified by the KWIB through three foundational metrics: (1) number of individuals served through partner programs, (2) number of individuals who are placed in jobs, and (3) participants' average wages. It is important to note that many of the workforce programs are designed to serve different populations and segments in the workforce system, so these foundational metrics should be viewed as a point of reference versus a definitive ROI per program. Moreover, the service populations have varying level of needs (e.g. individual requesting resume assistance versus someone with disabilities needs vocational training) and unique outcomes metrics.

In line with the executive order, this completed compiled funding report is presented to the KWIB for review and understanding of the larger workforce system. This report is meant to provide the collected information for reference and a high-level review, it is not meant to serve as a comprehensive analysis of the workforce system.

Report Contents

This report encompasses workforce development funding information from state agencies and partner organizations represented on the collaborative as well as other entities for:

- Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)
- Program Year 2023 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)
- Program Year 2024 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

Key information includes:

- Whether the source of funding is federal or state dollars
- If funds are used for education, training, support services, career services, or a combination of these services
- Outcomes to demonstrate ROI per number of individuals served, number of job placements, and participants' average wages

Categories of services are defined as:

- **Education:** Investment used for long-term career preparation. Examples include higher education degrees, certificates, certifications, credentials, digital badging, and integrated education programs,

- **Training:** Investment in programs that are occupation specific. Examples include on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, internships, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships and career pathways exposure.

- **Supportive Services:** Investment in services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing and needs-related payments, linkage to community services, assistance with educational training, reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities, referral to medical services, and assistance with appropriate work attire and work-related tools.

- **Career Services:** Provision of services related to employment and career assistance, such as career coaching, career awareness, career exploration, labor market information sharing, resume building, interview skills, and job placement services.

The below snapshot shows contributing agencies and the three-year totals for each of the required elements (full agency names are provided on the last page to accompany acronyms used)

Collaborative Member Workforce Stakeholders	PY22 - PY24 Funding Dollars	Total # of Individuals Served	Total # of Individuals Placed	Average Wages of Individuals in a Job	PY22-PY24 Programs (Funding Streams)	Sum of Businesses Served
CED	$20,400,000.00	153,624	-	$30.81	6	318
CHFS – DBHDID	$17,369,140.03	44,085	7,858	-	124	-
CHFS – DCBS	$1,264,384,946.65	1,934,998	63,024	-	49	-
CPE	$8,359,893.82	-	-	-	11	174
DWD - CDO	$40,965,673.40	90,496	31,053	$21.67	18	6,353
DWD - KYAE	$103,317,772.00	65,665	-	$9.68	6	-
DWD – Everybody Counts	$15,416,000.00	5,865	5,482	-	8	23
DWD - OIAS	$3,947,066.42	536,920	7,852	$30.70	8	6,996
DWD - OVR	$276,612,557.00	602,399	38,789	$28.72	36	-
Job Corps	$269,177,062.00	4,879	1,571	$20.00	21	-
JPSC	$58,663,517.19	283,141	2,547	-	15	-
KCTCS	$21,881,142.00	129,178	-	-	12	928
KY Chamber Foundation	$3,105,000.00	417	3,548	-	12	1,596
KCMA	$1,373,085.00	-	218	-	6	80
KDE	$445,445,646.00	437,796	-	-	6	-
KDLA	$1,044,552.00	-	-	-	7	-
KDVA	$15,712.56	600	-	$20.00	1	80
LWDB Bluegrass	$10,854,989.35	1,602	894	$22.89	11	5,515
LWDB Cumberlands	$7,025,485.41	981	707	$21.20	10	-
LWDB EKCEP	$80,808,939.36	25,908	12,370	$20.53	22	14,805

LWDB Green River	$7,547,956.20	691	514	$27.88	13	-
LWDB KentuckianaWorks	$20,497,153.44	4,099	1,031	$26.51	19	-
LWDB Lincoln Trail	$5,870,531.38	443	210	$25.49	10	1,397
LWDB Northern Kentucky	$9,054,276.06	7,924	1,998	$24.40	23	3,334
LWDB South Central	$7,807,349.61	5,746	2,612	$28.07	31	2,963
LWDB TENCO	$11,000,148.05	1,720	625	$31.95	10	4,251
LWDB West Kentucky	$6,367,351.24	727	517	$21.57	13	107
UK / HDI	$27,079,865.14	23,188	2,917	$12.18	24	-
Non-Collaborative Members w/ Workforce Programming	**PY22 - PY24 Funding Dollars**	**Total # of Individuals Served**	**Total # of Individuals Placed**	**Max Average Wages of Individuals in a Job**	**PY22-PY24 Programs (Funding Streams)**	**Sum of Businesses Served**
KHEAA	$84,829,446.00	45,902	-	-	27	-
KYTC	$2,440,150.00	216	45	$24.29	7	-
Grand Total	**$2,832,662,407**	**4,409,210**	**186,382**	**$21.31**	**566**	**48,920**

It is important to note that workforce development funding has become much more distributive across federal and state agencies as well as public and private partners. Therefore, the information in this report may not encompass every program or service offered in the commonwealth.

The report may include duplicative information as both state and local-level programs are represented. Often, both state and federal funding flows through state government agencies and is distributed to other partners represented in this report. Additionally, most federal funding awards allow for state agencies and local programs to expend the funds over multiple years. Therefore, the report highlights dollars appropriated versus dollars spent each year.

Based on the submissions, it is notable that there are over 565 funding streams that support one or more of the categories of workforce development services across the last three program years. Each of the funding streams are provided in the Appendix. Collectively, the total funding stream funds are more than $2.8 billion across the three program years.

With the understanding that some duplication may be occurring, it is estimated that over the three programmatic years a total of 186,382 people were placed in jobs with an average wage of $21.31/hr. It is again of great importance to note the breadth of agencies captured in the report and the variety of workforce services provided. Each agency has their own requirements that may not completely align to the KWIB foundational ROI metrics; these metrics are intended to give a point of reference for the programs that are intended to capture these specific data points.

To view the full comprehensive compilation of data for each agency per funding stream, please refer to Appendix A. To view the combined data per program year for each agency, please refer to Appendix B.

Collaborative Member & Workforce Stakeholders
CED - Cabinet for Economic Development
CHFS/DBHDID - Cabinet for Health and Family Services – Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
CHFS/DCBS - Cabinet for Health and Family Services – Department of Community Based Services
CPE - Council on Postsecondary Education
DWD/CDO - Department of Workforce Development – Career Development Office
DWD/Adult Education - Department of Workforce Development – Adult Education
DWD – Everybody Counts
DWD/OIAS - Department of Workforce Development – Office of Industry and Apprenticeship Services
DWD/OVR - Department of Workforce Development – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Job Corps
JPSC - Justice and Public Safety Cabinet
KCTCS - Kentucky Community and Technical College System
KY Chamber Foundation
KCMA - Kentucky Council on Military Affairs
KDE - Kentucky Department of Education
KDLA - Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives
KDVA - Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs
LWDB Bluegrass - Local Workforce Development Board - Bluegrass
LWDB Cumberlands - Local Workforce Development Board - Cumberlands
LWDB EKCEP - Local Workforce Development Board - EKCEP
LWDB Green River - Local Workforce Development Board - Green River
LWDB KentuckianaWorks - Local Workforce Development Board - KentuckianaWorks
LWDB Lincoln Trail - Local Workforce Development Board - Lincoln Trail
LWDB Northern Kentucky - Local Workforce Development Board - Northern Kentucky
LWDB South Central - Local Workforce Development Board - South Central
LWDB TENCO - Local Workforce Development Board - TENCO
LWDB WKY - Local Workforce Development Board - West Kentucky
UK/HDI - University of Kentucky/Human Development Institute
Non-Collaborative Members w/ Workforce Programming
KHEAA - Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority
KYTC - Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Appendix

Key Sectors

EKCEP ROI Study

2026 Quarterly Board Meetings

TEAM
KENTUCKY.
EDUCATION AND
LABOR CABINET

Partner Spotlight

September 3, 2025 • 12:00 p.m. (ET)

Kentucky's Key Sectors Series: Construction

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

Presenters:
Sam Keathley, Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)
Chad Mills, Kentucky State Building and Construction Trades Council
Richard Vincent, Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Kentucky

Passcode: 431173

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KWIB Partner Spotlight

October 1, 2025 • 12:00 p.m. (ET)

Kentucky Key Sectors Series: Manufacturing and Logistics

Featuring: GAME Change & KAM

GC GAME CHANGE · KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS

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

Presenters:
Sam Keathley, Senior Workforce Analyst, Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS) https://kystats.ky.gov/
Ian McClure, Co-Founder, GAME Change https://gamechangeengine.org/
Zach Morgan, Workforce Development Director, Kentucky Association of Manufactures https://kam.us.com/

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Passcode: 431173

KWIB Partner Spotlight

November 5, 2025 • 12:00 p.m. (EST)

Kentucky Key Sectors Series:
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

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

Panelists:
Sam Keathley, KYSTATS

Heather L. Baldwin, PE, PLS, Kentucky State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors

Amanda Fuller, Kentucky Academy of Science

Cathleen Webb, Ph.D., Kentucky Statewide EPSCoR Committee

Adam Ward, PE, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

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KWIB Partner Spotlight

December 3, 2025 • Noon (ET)

Kentucky Key Sectors Series:
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services Part 2

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

Presenters:
Darlene Zibart, CPA, President & CEO, Kentucky Society of CPAs

Sarah Kerrick, CPA, Senior Tax Manager, DMLO CPAs

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KWIB Partner Spotlight

January 7, 2026 • Noon (EST)

Kentucky Key Sectors Series: Education
Partner Spotlight best practices and innovative approaches in Kentucky's workforce development system.

Dr. Angie Tombari, Director of Research Partnerships and Chief Methodologist, KYSTATS

Presenters:
Dr. Meredith Brewer, Associate Commissioner, Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness

Dr. Jim Flynn, Executive Director, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents

Dr. Kathy House, Chief of Educator Success, Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative

Laura Arnold, Director of Workforce Development, Nelson County Public Schools

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KWIB Partner Spotlight

February 4, 2026 • Noon (EST)

Kentucky Key Sectors Series: Healthcare
Partner Spotlight best practices and innovative approaches in Kentucky's workforce development system.

Beth Kelly, PhD., Research Director
Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)

Presenters:

Daniel Blandford, Senior Manager of Human Resources Owensboro Health

Dylon C. Baker, Assistant Vice President of Workforce Initiatives Appalachian Regional Healthcare, Inc.

John P. Hamm, JD, SHRM-SCP, Associate Vice President Kentucky Hospital Association

Leslie M. Sizemore, PhD, EdS, OT/L, Vice President Council on Postsecondary Education

Passcode: 431173

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REGISTER NOW
Team Kentucky Virtual Job Fair

Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2026
Time: 10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. EST
Focus: Healthcare

All employers are welcome to participate, including those from the targeted industry.

Schedule:

- 10:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M. - Veterans & Military Families
- 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. - Open to All Job Candidates

Future virtual job fairs will take place on the third Wednesday of each month.

Here's a preview of the upcoming dates:

- **March 18, 2026**
  Coming Soon
- **April 15, 2026**
  Coming Soon
- **May 20, 2026**
  Coming Soon

EMPLOYERS SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER.

JOB-SEEKERS SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER.

TEAM **KENTUCKY**®

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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

The EKCEP Phenomenon:

How Culture and Commitment Transform Hardship into Workforce Performance

Andrew Bercich
and Tony Coe

5 KEY FINDINGS:

EKCEP Punches Above Its Weight.

When you account for rural challenges – long travel, fewer employers, repeated disasters – EKCEP serves more people per captia and gets more credentials and placements than you would expect for a region its size.

Culture Is the Engine.

A shared, service-first way of working – from central staff to local direct service partners – keeps people engaged in services. That engagement produces more credentials, placements, and trusted employer relationships.

More Partners = More Reach and More Work.

Having nine local partners let EKCEP be everywhere they're needed, but it also means more coordination and overhead. That extra challenge and effort deserve recognition.

The "Alchemist" Archetype Powers the System.

EKCEP's culture – the report's "Alchemist" profile – turns hardships into possibility: central staff and CAP partners translate mission-driven problem-solving into tangible support, trust building, and local practices that amplify outcomes across 23 counties.

Supports Drive Success.

Participant supports – transportation, childcare, connectivity, and emergency aid – feed/promote higher completion and placement rates.

Researched and written by:

Summit WorX
SOLUTIONS

Executive Summary

A workforce system succeeds when employers, training providers, and public supports connect effectively. So, when one system outperforms other systems, the question becomes: what blend of structure, practice, and culture powers that success?

*One such board, Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc. (EKCEP) outperforms in several ways. Serving 23 counties through nine partner agencies, the board reached **12,820 unduplicated clients**, recorded **3,332 placements**, and supported **959 credentials**[1] in program year 2024 – outcomes that look especially strong once normalized across its 425,934[2] population. Research conducted for this analysis points to this explanation: EKCEP pairs a solid operational backbone (well-defined roles among service delivery partners, harmonized case management, strong employer relationships) with everyday practices that keep people engaged in this deeply distressed part of the country – frequent outreach, consistent supports, dedicated staff, and an intense drive as many community members as quickly as possible. These systems and service dynamics help participants stay connected to training and employers – even when transit, broadband, childcare, and employer scarcity make placement harder. Together, these*

metrics and on-the-ground evidence explain how a relatively small, high-need region can produce outsized service volumes when delivery is networked, intentional, and people-centered. Additionally, with the help of EKCEP's expansive Community Action Partnership (CAP) network, they can expand their local presence and ability to scale emergency recovery work after floods and other shocks that further drive demand, which is why place-adjusted comparisons, not raw benchmarks, best capture the board's true impact. EKCEP's culture shapes everything staff does: central staff prioritize relationships, continuous problem-solving, and data-informed follow-through, while CAP partners mirror those norms at the local level through consistent practice, trusted referral behavior, and willingness to accept risk on behalf of their participants. That shared culture turns policies and processes into action, including higher participant engagement, steadier employer partnerships, more consistent case outcomes across 23 counties, and the agility to scale recovery work after floods or other shocks. In short, this culture doesn't just accompany performance — it magnifies it. As work becomes the engine that rebuilds lives, families, and local economies, EKCEP converts hardship and coordinated effort into real opportunity, turns resilience into shared prosperity.

EKCEP Performance in Context – Comparative Strengths, Structural Barriers, and Place Metrics

EKCEP delivers measurable public value at a scale and depth that is uncommon in a largely rural service area. In Program Year 2024 (PY24), the Board reported 2,915 new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) enrollments (2,045 Adults; 760 Youth; 110 Dislocated Workers) and a consolidated snapshot of 2,325 concurrent participants[3]. Across program streams, EKCEP's PY24 materials record 12,820 unduplicated clients served, 3,332 total job placements, and

959 credentials earned (959 is 152% of the PY24 credential goal of 630)[1]. Those headline volumes, when normalized across EKCEP's 23-county service area, amount to roughly 580 participants per 100,000 residents, a per-capita penetration that significantly exceeds many single-county metropolitan boards that report similar absolute caseloads but draw from populations measured in the millions. When combined with an independent Lightcast ROI summary and state recognition for sector strategy and disaster-response work, these figures show how EKCEP converts reach into documented outcomes in a place of persistent adversity.

To understand why that per-capita penetration matters, consider a few concrete place indicators: the Census Bureau's American Community Survey Indicators workbook for EKCEP's 23 counties shows a weighted poverty rate of ~27.0%, a weighted median household income of roughly $40,673, and a population-weighted mean commute of ≈ 28.2 minutes. Only about 0.2% of commuters in the region use public transportation, while ~79% drive alone and ~12% carpool[4]. Those numbers document a low-income, high-need region where travel costs and the absence of transit multiply the practical barriers to attending training and accepting new work.

An operating dimension that further differentiates EKCEP from many peers is its distributed delivery model. The board works with nine Community Action Partnerships as direct service providers to reach its 23 counties. Most workforce areas — especially single-county metros — operate with one or two primary providers. Running a network of nine partner providers multiplies the complexity of coordination, quality assurance, data reconciliation, and consistent service design. This networked model requires EKCEP to harmonize schedules across geographies, standardize training curricula and credentialing practices, align case management protocols, and maintain tighter compliance and reporting processes so outcomes can be aggregated reliably. At the same time, the CAP network expands coverage and local presence, allowing EKCEP to reach deeply into remote communities and to mount rapid, localized responses after disasters; it also raises the per-participant administrative and coordination burden in ways that metropolitan boards rarely confront. EKCEP achieves high credential and placement volumes while managing nine distinct providers, evidence of its institutional capacity and systems leadership.

The research team also compared EKCEP to three single-county metropolitan boards because each reports caseloads broadly similar to EKCEP's PY24 totals while operating in fundamentally different local markets; Dallas-WorkSource with 2,252 WIOA participants served (Dallas County, TX), CareerSource South Florida with 2,259 served (Miami-Dade County, FL), and the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County with 2,443 served (King County, WA)[3]. The population differences are substantial. Each compared county contains roughly 2.2–2.7 million residents versus EKCEP's ≈ 425,934 across 23 counties, so an equivalent absolute caseload yields a per-capita penetration roughly five to six times larger in EKCEP. (EKCEP's PY24 unduplicated reach implies ≈ 3,010 participants per 100,000 versus roughly 478–564 per 100,000 in the comparator counties for the same caseload.) Transportation and spatial structure also amplify this disparity. EKCEP's service area is overwhelmingly personal vehicle-dependent, with near-zero public-transit share and routine multi-hour travel burdens for participants. By contrast, the metropolitan counties possess greater transit availability and denser employer networks, which reduce travel distances and lower the time and scheduling friction involved in cohort attendance, employer engagement, and timely job starts. Consequently, serving an equivalent absolute caseload is administratively and operationally less costly in the metropolitan comparators than in EKCEP's dispersed, low-density region, and therefore per-capita penetration and place-adjusted measures provide a more appropriate basis for comparative performance than raw caseload counts alone.

A comprehensive reading of the data requires attention to the structural and episodic barriers that raise the real cost of achieving those outcomes. Over the last decade, Eastern Kentucky's labor market has been reshaped by the reduction of coal and its supply chain, leaving fewer stable, year-round employers and thinner hiring pipelines than exist in denser metropolitan economies. That employer scarcity reduces the number of robust apprenticeship slots and durable job offers that typically lift conversion and long-term retention metrics. Geography compounds the problem. Many participants face

long drives or multi-hour commutes to reach training sites or interviews, and public transit options are sparse (EKCEP public-transit share ≈ 0.2%). For low-income households, the time and fuel costs of travel are substantial and recurrent, and they materially increase the likelihood of missed sessions or delayed starts. Broadband gaps and inconsistent connectivity further complicate delivery by limiting the effectiveness of virtual training options and requiring more intensive, in-person case management. Finally, childcare shortages and limited availability of informal care in rural communities mean cohort attendance frequently imposes direct household costs that are proportionally higher than in urban settings.

Overlaying these structural frictions is a sequence of high-impact shocks that have repeatedly interrupted EKCEP's work and the region's hiring capacity. Eastern Kentucky experienced major flood events in late February–early March 2021, catastrophic floods July 25–30, 2022, and again in mid-February 2025. Each event caused infrastructure damage, housing displacement, and business interruptions that fractured cohorts, closed hiring windows, and redirected household priorities toward immediate recovery. The COVID-19 pandemic similarly disrupted delivery, shifting childcare, employer demand, and cohort continuity for extended periods. Those episodic shocks do more than produce short-term dips in metrics; they change the risk calculus for households considering training, disrupt employer pipelines that would otherwise absorb graduates, and temporarily erase the local job opportunities that make credentialing immediately valuable.

These systemic and shock-related constraints help explain why some standardized metrics in the consolidated WIOA snapshot run below statewide averages — for example, training-conversion at ~39.8% (versus a Kentucky mean of 57.4%) and Q4 retention around 63.8% (versus a state mean near 82.8%)[3]. However, these statistics do not capture the whole story. EKCEP's credential and placement volumes, its rapid

upscale of EKY FLOOD recovery programming – which enrolled over 1,050 people – and ROI estimates from Lightcast of participant earnings gains and taxpayer returns, together, show the board achieves substantial, measurable impact despite constrained, local demand, and repeated interruptions. Where metropolitan comparators such as Dallas-WorkSource (Dallas County), CareerSource South Florida (Miami-Dade), and the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County may operate with abundant employers, short travel times, and stronger supportive infrastructures, EKCEP sustains similar throughput while absorbing far greater logistical cost, higher per-participant case intensity, and more operational complexity — a comparative insight that reframes apparent shortfalls as evidence of outsized regional impact.

The most defensible interpretation of the evidence is therefore comparative and contextual: EKCEP reaches deeply into its communities and operates intensively for each participant, achieving credentialing, placements, and measurable service gains in a setting that continually tests both households and providers. The organization's scale, documented outcomes, disaster-response capacity, and ROI together support the central conclusion of this white paper: EKCEP's performance is best assessed by the combination of scale, throughput, resilience, and the place-adjusted impact it sustains within a high-barrier operating environment, rather than any single statewide benchmark taken in isolation.

EKCEP Culture in Context

This section summarizes the approach and principal findings of the SummitWorX Solutions' study of organizational culture and employee engagement at EKCEP, explicitly including the nine CAPs that serve as EKCEP's direct service providers. The study characterizes culture as the set of behaviors, practices, and norms that

support EKCEP's effectiveness as a workforce development board and identifies levers for strengthening staff engagement and operational capacity. Key methodological and instrument details are incorporated below to substantiate validity and replicability.

Model & Instrument

SummitWorX used an archetypal culture profile framework based on the Organizational and Team Culture Indicator (OTCI)[5], an instrument designed to identify dominant archetypal patterns in organizational cultures. The OTCI was originally published in 2003 by Dr. Carol S. Pearson and Dr. Allen L. Hammer as part of a broader program of archetypal instruments that also includes the Pearson Marr Archetype Indicator (PMAI)[6]. The OTCI maps organizational narratives and collective patterns onto a 12-archetype system (e.g., Hero, Magician, Sage) to make implicit cultural dynamics explicit and actionable. The OTCI and related Pearson instruments are widely referenced in applied organizational work and have been translated for wider commercial use (after the tool was acquired by Kenexa/IBM).

A recognized developer of the 12-archetype system, Dr. Carol S. Pearson has authored foundational texts on archetypal theory and its application in personal and organizational development (for example, The Hero Within and Awakening the Heroes Within). Her work underpins the theoretical rationale for using archetypal profiles to interpret organizational culture and to link culture with engagement and performance outcomes.

SummitWorX Solutions has adapted the research process to further define the Cultural Values of an organization by analyzing the Rational Facts, Emotional Truths, and Personality of an organization. These dynamics can also be analogous to a person, which allows us to define an organization via an exemplar. For example, an organization that values knowledge, adventure, and risk embodies the character of Indiana Jones, which can be better understood by the common layperson without the need for advanced Industrial Psychology training. This model has been honed over the past 20 years with more than

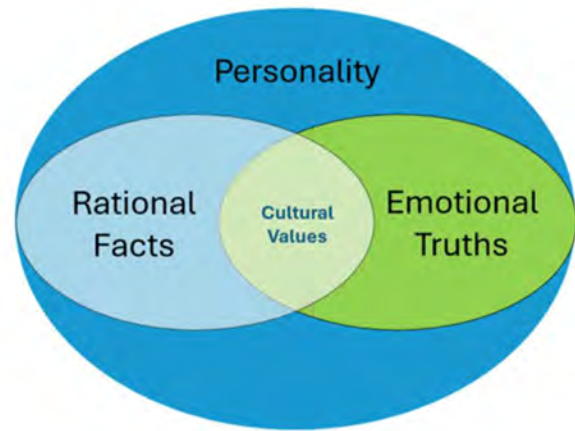100 global organizations and more than 1 million employees.

Figure 1: The SummitWorX Solutions Culture Model

Sample, Administration, and Psychometrics

The assessment and qualitative inquiry covered the EKCEP regional system, which comprises 103 employees in total: 27 direct EKCEP central staff and 76 staff employed by the nine contracted CAPs that deliver direct services across the 23-county region. Survey participation included 27 of 27 (100%) of EKCEP central staff and 45 of 76 (59.2%) of CAP staff[7], yielding an overall participation rate of 69.9%, which is slightly below the expected response rate of 72 – 78%. These counts and participation rates are reported here to provide transparency about the sample frame and response distribution.

The Archetypal Culture Profile instrument operationalizes culture through aggregated responses to items tied twelve archetypes; instrument developers report evidence of construct coherence across archetypal scales and practical validity for organizational diagnosis. Where possible, SummitWorX compared EKCEP results to established engagement benchmarks for the survey tool; those benchmark ranges are reported alongside EKCEP scores for context and comparison.

The statistical comparison of EKCEP staff and partner survey responses shows a clear, but only modest, alignment in how each group perceives organizational culture. Across 55 matched survey

items, the scatter of question-level means produces a positive relationship (Pearson r ≈ 0.35, $R^2 ≈ 0.12$), indicating that when EKCEP staff rate an item higher, partners tend to do so as well, yet the association is not tight. Visually and numerically, many points fall below the 1:1 line. Partner scores are frequently lower than internal scores, and the fitted regression (Partners ≈ 0.45 × EKCEP + 1.34) implies partner ratings increase more slowly as EKCEP internal ratings rise.

Equally notable is the systematic offset between the two perspectives. On average, EKCEP employees score items ~0.75 points higher on the 1–5 scale than partners do, a non-trivial gap that is visible across archetypes and many individual items. The pattern suggests broad shared recognition of which cultural traits matter, but a meaningful difference in perceived intensity: EKCEP staff report stronger process, care, and learning signals than partners observe in partner-facing interactions. In plain terms, the two groups largely point in the same direction, but partners consistently perceive those strengths as less pronounced — an important nuance for interpreting the organization's influence on their partner's culture or performance.

Qualitative Methods and Analysis

SummitWorX Solutions conducted a process of qualitative inquiry to complement the archetypal survey and provide contextual interpretation. Data collection included site visits, one-on-one leadership interviews, and focus groups with front-line staff and community partners. Seven focus groups were conducted with cohort sizes of 3-8 participants, for a total of 39 EKCEP or partner employees; 25 leaders, managers, and strategic frontline EKCEP employees were interviewed individually to surface strategic perspectives and implementation constraints. SummitWorX applied thematic analysis (inductive coding) to transcripts and facilitator notes to identify recurrent patterns, representative quotes, and points of divergence between central office and CAP experiences. Results are anonymized and randomized for reporting purposes. Findings from the qualitative analysis were triangulated with the archetypal culture profile survey results

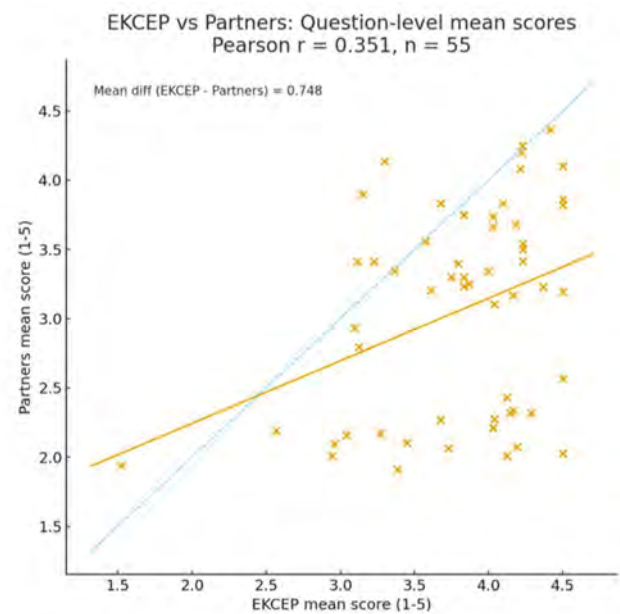to produce a coherent narrative of culture and engagement across the regional network.

Figure 2: EKCEP vs partners question-level; analysis

Key Findings

Across methods, EKCEP and its CAP partners present a broadly positive cultural sentiment characterized by strong interpersonal bonds, a service orientation, and programmatic pride (for example, in apprenticeships, reentry services, and CDL programs). The archetypal profile is dominated by the Ruler, Caregiver, and Sage archetypes, indicating a predisposition toward learning, competence, stewardship, and reflective practice in both central and frontline teams. Engagement scores were high relative to Archetypal Culture Profile benchmarks (89.9% versus a benchmark of 76%)[7]; engagement was strongest for mission driven and client facing work and lower for administrative and compliance tasks. Several CAP respondents emphasized that time-sensitive requests originating at the central level can have downstream impacts on frontline service delivery.

The archetypal pattern and qualitative themes suggest EKCEP's cultural strengths, pride, stability, mission focus, and mutual support

create favorable conditions for high quality service delivery across the regional network.

Conclusion

EKCEP demonstrates a level of operational reach and measurable public value that is unusual for a largely rural, multi-county workforce area. Program metrics and ROI work document thousands of enrollments, hundreds of placements, and credentials, and multi-million-dollar earnings and fiscal gains, outcomes delivered and sustained through repeated regional shocks. EKCEP's throughput and monetized returns show a board that not only achieves scale but converts scale into economic benefit for individuals and for the Commonwealth.

The research team sees EKCEP through the lens of "the Alchemist," an exemplar that provides the most convincing explanation for that
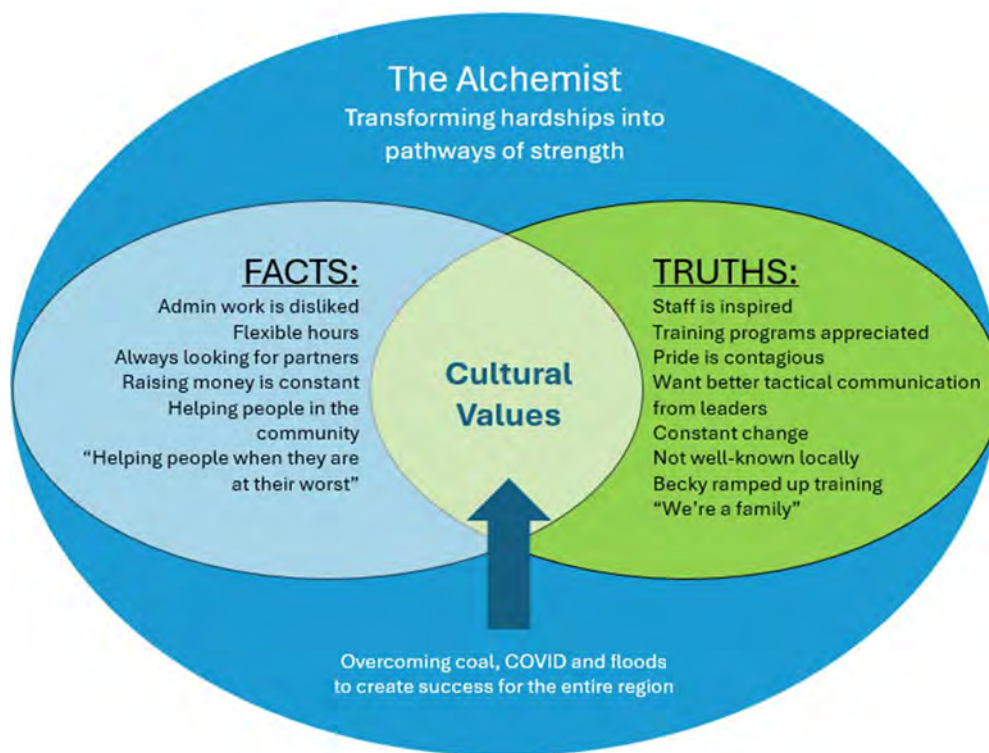

Figure 3: The EKCEP Culture Model

performance. The leadership of EKCEP has set high standards for the organization and its partners and has created a culture that inherently leads to positive outcomes. Internally, staff report

high levels of purpose, pride, care, and process orientation; partners generally agree on the shape of the organization's strengths but consistently report those qualities with less intensity. That pattern suggests a powerful internal culture that translates into operational discipline and rapid, localized action. In plain terms, EKCEP's internal culture is so strong that it sets a standard sometimes unseen at the partner level. It both enables exceptional system performance in hard places and, in practice, exists within a halo over partner perceptions, making partners feel the organization's intensity, but somewhat less directly than internal staff does.

Taken together, the programmatic results, monetized ROI, and cultural profile argue for interpreting EKCEP's performance through a place-adjusted lens. The board's combination of scale, resilience, and distributed delivery capacity constitutes an unusually effective public system response in an area with thin employer markets, long travel distances, constrained supports, and repeated disasters. For state and national audiences evaluating comparative performance, the most informative frame is therefore contextual: EKCEP should be recognized as an exemplar of high-impact delivery under high barriers, and its cultural strengths — the "Alchemist" capacity to transform hardship into pathways of strength — are central to that achievement.

Study References

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About the Authors

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2026 Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board Quarterly Board Meetings

All meetings are scheduled for 1:30-3:30pm ET / 12:30 – 2:30pm CT and will be conducted in-person with a virtual option. Networking in person begins at 1:00pm ET / 12:00 CT. Captioning is available via the Zoom platform.

(date change) **March 26** – CPE Building

   100 Airport Road, Frankfort, KY

May 21 – Location TBD

August 20 – EKCEP, Hazard, KY

November 19 – Location TBD

For more information or for any questions, please reach out to Debbie.dennison@ky.gov or by calling 502-871-2752