



**Kentucky Workforce
Innovation Board (KWIB)
Employer Engagement Committee**

**March 7th, 2024
10:00am – 11:30am EST
Zoom Meeting**

PARTICIPANTS PRESENT: Beth Davisson, Dallas Kratzer, Sam Chinn, Stephanie Collins, Michelle DeEsch, Eric Sproles, Kaci Compton, Luke Ramsay, Suhas Kulkarni, Sara Tracy, Kevin Nolan, Charlotte Kerns, Michaela Mineer, Correy Eimer, Katie Raney, Lisa Banner, Emily Sayers, Karen McFadyen, Jess Metzmeier, Myra Wilson, Dylon Baker, Lori Davis, Marci LoGiudice

Staff: Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, Elishah Taylor, Katy Lawrence, LaChrista Ellis

10:01am Welcome and Overview of Committee Goals

Beth Davisson, Chair, Senior Vice-President of the Kentucky Chamber Foundation, welcomed everyone, highlighting the commitment to align with the state strategic plan. As part of the executive committee, she acknowledged the importance of effective organization and introduced key topics for consideration. Beth stressed the need to assess the plan's relevance, initiate execution, implement best practices, and evaluate ongoing performance. She celebrated Kentucky's leadership in collaborative efforts, emphasizing the role of local leaders in daily contributions to the state plan.

Committee Objectives Presentation

Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB), presented on the board's background and its relevance to workforce in the state. The focus is to support individuals and businesses in talent training and development to meet industry needs across Kentucky. He shared a brief PowerPoint which can be viewed in the post-meeting packet. He highlighted the strategic plan which serves as the guiding "North Star" for the committee, encompassing four specific goals:

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

Alisher detailed each goal, emphasizing their ongoing importance and alignment with Kentucky's strategic vision. The KWIB landscape, also available in the post-meeting packet, demonstrates committee alignment. Special recognition was given to the Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIBs) in the ten regions. Alisher expressed gratitude, illustrating how ideas translate into operations. Key Employer Engagement committee objectives were shared that overarchingly

include collaboration with partners establishing clear channels for employer engagement, increasing participation in work-based learning, and engaging employers in education from early childhood to post-secondary study.

Discussion – Committee Input

Following the presentation, Beth thanked Alisher for sharing the overview, stating that the information was very helpful, and opened the floor for questions or additional input. Discussion was had on the importance of businesses participating in state-led educational initiatives, like "[Everybody Counts](#)" initiative; Governor Andy Beshear was commended by business representatives and a specific example of Ford Company's program was mentioned in addressing the readiness gap for college and career-bound students. Beth Davisson appreciated the shared example, especially in the context of the "Everybody Counts" program for students uncertain about career pathways and steps to pursue them. Beth urged participants to continue to bring up innovative ideas and ask questions, expressing gratitude to the governor for continuing the strategic plan initiatives.

Beth shifted focus on operationalizing the goals of the plan within the committee. She acknowledged the work being done at local levels is critical in involving employers in the workforce development process, understanding business needs, and in boosting workforce participation numbers. Beth sought input from the group on how to operationalize the plan.

One of the local workforce development area directors lifted the joint LWIB effort to obtain funding designated for disconnected youth. Data from 2021 revealed that 77,000 youth were neither working nor in school, prompting the decision to concentrate efforts on this population group. The focus would specifically be on youth aged 16 to 24. Further discussion was had on the opportunity to support businesses in developing plans for these youths.

Discussion continued around the challenges of limited resources to connect jobseekers, particularly those with professional backgrounds and limited English proficiency, to growth opportunities. The need for jobs with good wages and strategies to tap into a new talent stream, including considerations for the foreign-born and/or new citizens was also lifted.

A member emphasized the importance of reaching out to migrants, proposing the idea of bringing employers to them and finding ways to help employers understand the hiring process. A committee member suggested that engaging this population is best achieved through promoting partnerships, emphasizing the significance of trust. They also recommended encouraging them to utilize the Kentucky Career Center (KCC) services.

A recommendation was provided, that employers connect with Kentucky Adult Education programs, Kentucky Refugee Ministries, local libraries, and Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) in support of English Language Learners (ELL) talent. Libraries, viewed as community hubs, were specifically identified as comfortable spaces for many English Language Learners, e.g. [Lexington Public Library, ESOL](#). The comments also addressed challenges related to

licensure, emphasizing the need for cultural awareness in integrating migrants into the workforce.

Additional emphasis was placed on ensuring employers feel comfortable and understand compliance requirements. A member shared success engaging with migrants. Beth proposed a case study to gauge employer engagement.

A member highlighted General Electric Appliances (GEA) proactive investment in bilingual leadership, emphasizing the importance of trust. She stressed educating employers on immigration terms and providing language support. Another member emphasized facilitating the cultural transfer of knowledge to ensure success and that foreign-born populations often include educated males, presenting an opportunity for targeted training due to potential cultural bias affecting female education. It was also pointed out that Louisville has the third-largest Cuban population, emphasizing the need for employers to be aware and involved in integrating foreign-born populations.

A Kentucky Educational Television (KET) video was recommended as a model to promote opportunities for immigrant employment. An example shared around hiring veterans was covered by KET and is available [here](#).

Alisher shared a workforce pipeline view of underutilized or untapped talent [link](#) in the chat. Beth highlighted the importance of raising awareness and exploring various opportunities.

A recommendation was made to use social media and creating interactive elements into videos may appeal to a younger audience (a new generation of workforce).

There was also discussion on engaging adult learners in opportunities to help employers grow their workforce internally. The [Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education \(FAME\)](#) model has been successful and could be replicated where possible. [KCTC's Education First Employers initiative](#) was brought up as an example of employers taking innovative approaches to recruiting and retaining talent.

The conversation shifted to funding, with a member explaining that Kentucky [TRAINS](#) dollars could be utilized for customized training, covering 75 percent of costs for incumbent worker training, including English as a Second Language (ESL) training. Credit for prior learning was lifted as a valuable way to provide credentials to individuals.

A recommendation to explore resources from colleges and workforce development agencies and make employers aware of available resources was made. Additional discussion around the success of apprenticeships was also lifted, emphasizing the need for more companies to engage in the apprenticeship model. The following resources were also shared including: the [University of Louisville's Modernized Apprenticeship Pathways to Success](#).

There was a proposal to create a 1-2 pager with best practices for workforce development, covering various demographics. Alisher suggested creating a document for employers to use in recruitment and retention, providing businesses with clear, easily digestible steps in communicating the worker's value.

The discussion concluded with gratitude, excitement about the work ahead, and a commitment to quarterly online meetings to maintain engagement.

11:29 am Adjournment

ACTION ITEMS

1. Contacting GEA to document how the company recruited and continues to retain the immigrant and refugee untapped talent pool via a case study.
2. Creating a resource package for recruitment and retention highlighting various workforce agencies that could assist businesses.
3. Sharing information through the KWIB website, exploring collaboration with KET as a potential partner, and creating video articles to normalize endeavors.



Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB)

Employer Engagement Committee

AGENDA

March 7th, 2024

10:00am – 11:00am EST

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84099381552?pwd=adwAB9bmpwB7FKh5G0iwWSoLxhBEES.1>

Meeting ID: 840 9938 1552/ Passcode: 356803

10:00am	Welcome and Overview of Committee Goals	<i>Beth Davisson, Chair Vice-President, Kentucky Chamber Foundation</i>
10:15am	New Committee Members Brief Introduction	<i>Beth Davisson</i>
10:30am	Committee Objectives Presentation	<i>Alisher Burikhanov Executive Director, Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board</i>
11:00am	Discussion and Next Steps	<i>Beth Davisson</i>
11:30am	Adjournment	<i>Beth Davisson</i>



**Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB)
Joint Committee Meeting of
Education Attainment and Completion
And
Employer Engagement**

**December 13, 2023
10:00am – 11:00am EST
Via Zoom**

PARTICIPANTS PRESENT: Beth Davisson, Scott Pierce, Marci LoGiudice, Dallas Kratzer, Beth Hargis, John Catron, Karla Tipton, Stephanie Collins, Sara Tracy, Regan Satterwhite, Dr. John Gregory, Correy Eimer, Beth Engle, Myra Wilson, Leslie Sizemore, Kim Humphrey, Elizabeth Daniels, Karen McFadyen, Deputy Commissioner Michelle DeJohn, Charlotte Kerns, Tom Thompson, Emily Sayers, Lori Davis, Kim Grasberger.

STAFF PRESENT: Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, Elishah Taylor, LaChrista Ellis

10:01 AM WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF COMMITTEE GOALS

Beth Davisson, Sr. VP of the Kentucky Chamber Foundation and Committee Chair, called the Joint Employer Engagement / Education Attainment Committees meeting to order and walked through the agenda. She thanked everyone for all that they have done over the last several years. She commented that this is the last joint “super-committee” meeting and in 2024 will be split into two committees to focus more deeply on the Strategic Plan design and goal elements.

CTE CERTIFICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW AND APPLICATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Beth Engle, Academic Program Manager, CTE Programs and Pathways Branch, Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), thanked Beth and everyone for being on the committee. She reviewed the process for certification review and identified three certification applications reviewed at the December 4th CTE Certification Review Working Group’s meeting. She shared the Business Education Alignment Taskforce (BEAT) team’s recommendations on recently reviewed applications. For more information on the application process and a link to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) current certifications, please visit the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) site / CTE Certification process [here](#).

Beth shared that the BEAT team thoroughly reviewed the requests received. The team is recommending moving the Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) Preparatory Learner’s permit forward. The CDL Prep Learners permit was approved adding it to the transportation program area. They are not recommending the AutoDesk Fusion 360 (as it already exists) and the Home Inspector licensing (as it is not currently a high-demand career path). After reviewing the process, Beth then opened the floor for questions.

Questions seeking clarification were raised regarding the home inspector certification process for home improvement and the reasons for not recommending it move forward. The response was that there was no pathway for that certification process because it is not available as part of the field of study currently. **Alisher Burikhanov, Executive Director (KWIB)**, highlighted that home improvement stands as a point of focus for the “Energy and Environment” contractors at present (a reference to [Infrastructure Funding](#)) and indicated that it might resurface as a pertinent topic in the future.

Kim Humphrey, Alliance Coal, *made a motion to accept* the recommendations. **Dallas Kratzer, Senior Associate, Workforce and Education Initiatives**, *seconded the motion*. *The motion unanimously passed* without opposition. Beth Davisson thanked the CTE team and turned the meeting over to **Karla Tipton, Branch Manager of the Data and Investment Branch**.

CARL PERKINS LEADERSHIP FUNDS PROCESS

Karla Tipton provided updates on the Perkins Leadership Fund and the status of subcommittee work. She outlined the application and review process and noted that committee interviews will be held in February 2024. Recommendations will be presented to the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) for approval. There will be approximately \$2 million allocated for awards in innovation and personnel development for eligible applicants. Beth Davisson inquired about invitations to both committees and the expected timeline for volunteers to join the committee. Karla confirmed that invitations have been sent to those who in the past have expressed interest. For anyone else interested in participating, please contact KWIB staff to be added to the invitations. Beth emphasized the robustness of the process, highlighting the strong expectations for performance outlined in the applications. Beth thanked Karla and then asked Alisher to share the State Plan listening tour results.

STATE PLAN LISTENING SESSION REVIEW

Alisher thanked Beth and congratulated Beth Engle on her promotion within the Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE).

He shared information on the Strategic Plan and the WIOA State Plan to make sure everyone was familiar with the process of both documents. Clarifying the strategic plan offers valuable guidance for the state's plan. He stressed that participating in the process is a meaningful form of service. He shared an overview of the “listening tour” and expressed gratitude to stakeholders and colleagues statewide, enabling the state to engage with focus groups and understand existing obstacles and best practices. He shared that there was a total of 33 focus groups and 348 participants. There were 198 workforce partners, 82 businesses, 51 elected officials, and 17 individuals at the various locations. He outlined common threads and themes. The PowerPoint used can be found in the post-meeting packet.

Recommendations from the tour included:

- business involvement in workforce development is vital.
- identification of skills needed for jobs and ability to utilize flexible skills for needs.
- Intentional creation of good jobs
- Investment and understanding of work-based learning and all the “ships” available.
- Tying high-demand sector needs to education pathways in the state.

- easily providing access to available talent to employers
- investments in youth

In conclusion, Alisher noted that we can always improve on what we do in workforce development. Beth Hargis added that the OCTE fully supports early exploration and commented in chat appreciation for work done with youth. She further conveyed the importance of engaging youth in the decision-making process and supporting them is critical for positive outcomes.

Kim Humphrey emphasized the importance of sessions where employers have a significant presence, highlighting the need for peer-to-peer invitations to encourage participation and further emphasize the value they bring to the table. She remarked that it represented a positive direction and suggested the group plan to enhance employer engagement further. There are additional challenges for employers with workforce shortages and it is imperative to continue to connect, engage, and provide a return-on-investment information to employers to engage in building their employees and a pipeline for the workforce.

Beth Davisson inquired of the group whether there were any additional comments or questions for Alisher, specifically seeking to ascertain if everyone understood the distinction between the state plan and the strategic plan. No questions were asked.

Adding to the discussion, Alisher made a note that there is an Annual [Narrative](#) that is provided to the Department of Labor. He reassured the group that the 4-year State Plan was coming together and shared a timeline for public comment and review in early 2024.

QUALITY JOBS IN KENTUCKY DISCUSSION

Alisher shifted to the objectives of the *Job Quality Academy* and its endeavors to comprehend the essence of job quality and establish a pilot program accordingly. He shared the principles of quality employment provided by the Departments of Labor and Education, including recruitment, benefits, diversity, empowerment, job security, organizational culture, compensation, skills, and career advancement. The list is available in the post-meeting packet for review.

He asked the committee how Kentucky might fulfill promoting these initiatives. A recommendation to create a playbook detailing available resources for employers was made. He proposed that understanding available resources could assist businesses in implementing best practices. He asked what the group's thoughts were on this suggestion. The group shared enthusiasm about the playbook concept, seeing it as a crucial tool to enhance impact and aid businesses in effective execution. The idea is to utilize common elements already established and connect them for implementation.

Beth Hargis, Associate Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), mentioned the OCTE initiative "Futurity" and shared the creation of a survey that will provide information about available jobs and the necessary training for those jobs. She emphasized that this comprehensive process involving KYSTATS is anticipated to launch in March 2024 and updates would be forthcoming.

A recommendation was lifted about the possibility of incorporating a certification for businesses as "Good Job Certified" in Kentucky, aiming to include the related elements in the playbook. Alisher acknowledged the recommendation and suggested that the Chamber might be a good partner to pursue this.

There was a discussion about how adopting a standard like obtaining a "Good Job Certified" status could enhance accountability. **Dallas Kratzer, KY Commission on Military Affairs and Council on Postsecondary Education Sr. Fellow** mentioned that the military might serve as an initial reference point for this endeavor.

In summary, there was consensus that pursuing this approach would elevate our current efforts, particularly in emphasizing high-paying sectors in demand. This includes initiating discussions on establishing criteria for a "good job certification." Beth thanked Alisher for the good work and the group for the input and dialogue.

2024 SELF-SELECTION OF COMMITTEE SURVEY

Beth shared a survey that KWIB staff will be sending to group members, offering them the choice to participate in either the Education Attainment or the Employer Engagement committees. She urged group members to complete the surveys, encouraging them to share the survey with contacts and build partnerships.

There was an inquiry about the extent of commitment required. Beth recommended that KWIB staff incorporate information that serving on a committee takes approximately two (2) hours per quarter of time. A survey link was made available in the chat and will also be emailed to committee members with pertinent committee commitment information.

NEW BUSINESS / UPDATES

Dallas Kratzer shared a Kentucky Education Television (KET) video featuring the 2nd Annual Veterans Employment & Training Symposium (VETS) that occurred on November 16th. (The video link can be found in the post-meeting packet) Beth expressed gratitude to Dallas for sharing.

Beth Asked for any new business.

She shared information about the upcoming Chamber Foundation Civics Bee Middle School State Competition. More information can be found [here](#).

Dallas shared information on a pilot program with the Chamber Foundation that serves as a military academy that invites employers annually to engage with military installations, supporting an initiative from the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs (KCMA). Additionally, Dallas highlighted the SHRM Veterans Ambassadors Program.

Michelle DeJohn, Deputy Commissioner, of the Department of Workforce Development discussed the Disaster Recovery Grant or QUEST Grant. Additionally, she shared information on the *Ready for Industry* initiative. This initiative intends to prepare individuals through five self-paced courses applicable for late

high school, post-secondary, and workforce training. Scheduled for launch in January, it's accessible at no cost to employers and job seekers statewide. Beth asked how they could be of assistance, and Michelle offered to send out launch information for dissemination. Additionally, Beth proposed a future agenda item: a presentation on this topic.

11:16AM ET ADJOURNMENT

Beth expressed gratitude to everyone and extended warm holiday wishes, looking forward to reconvening in 2024. A motion was proposed to adjourn the meeting, initiated by Dallas, and seconded by **Karen McFadyen, ZyBooks**. The motion was unanimously approved, officially concluding the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

- Exploration will be undertaken to develop a resource guide or playbook for businesses to access resources and support related to the principles of a good job and explore the possibility of creating a certification or recognition program for businesses meeting the criteria for a good job.
- The exploration of sector-specific resource guides or certifications for industries such as healthcare will be considered.
- Committee members will receive an email to choose between the Education Attainment or Employer Engagement Committee and fill out a survey to express interest or nominate suitable candidates for committee service.
- Investigate incorporating employer support from the Guard and Reserve into the military academy and connect with businesses interested in the higher military academy.
- Furnish details for the launch of the Ready for Industry training.
- Plan for a future agenda to include a presentation about Ready for Industry.

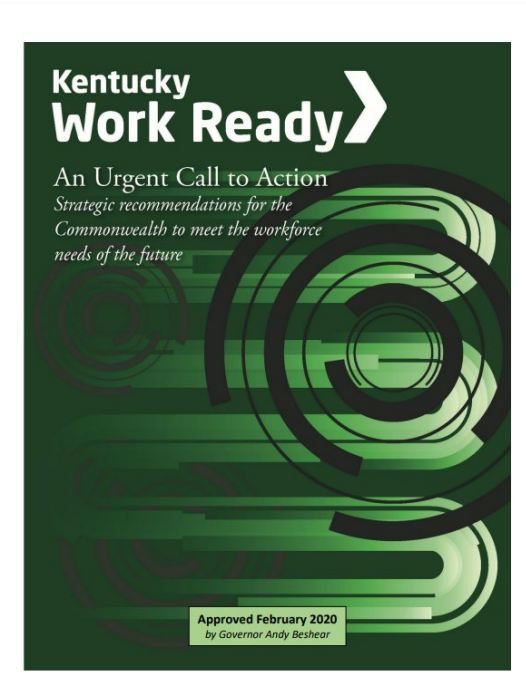
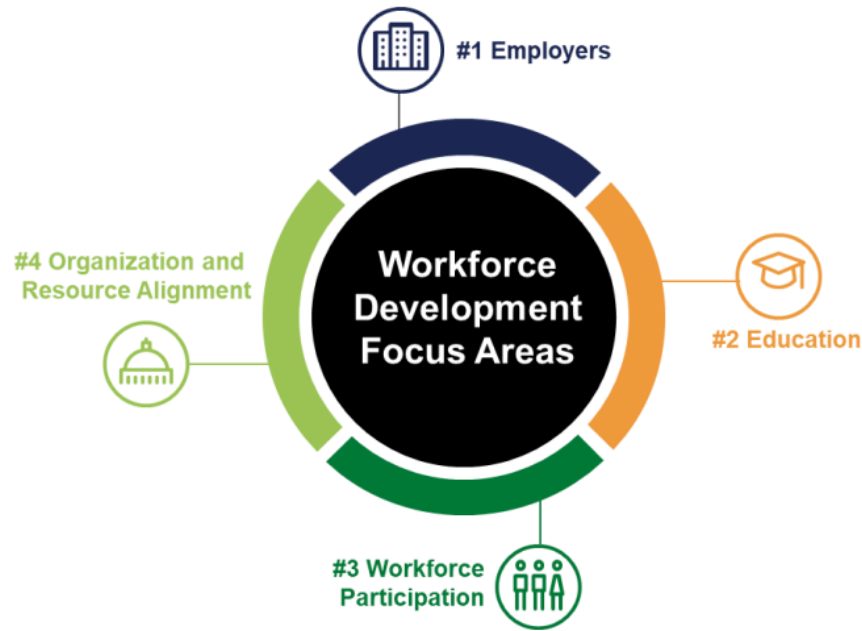


EDUCATION AND
LABOR CABINET

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) Employer Engagement Committee

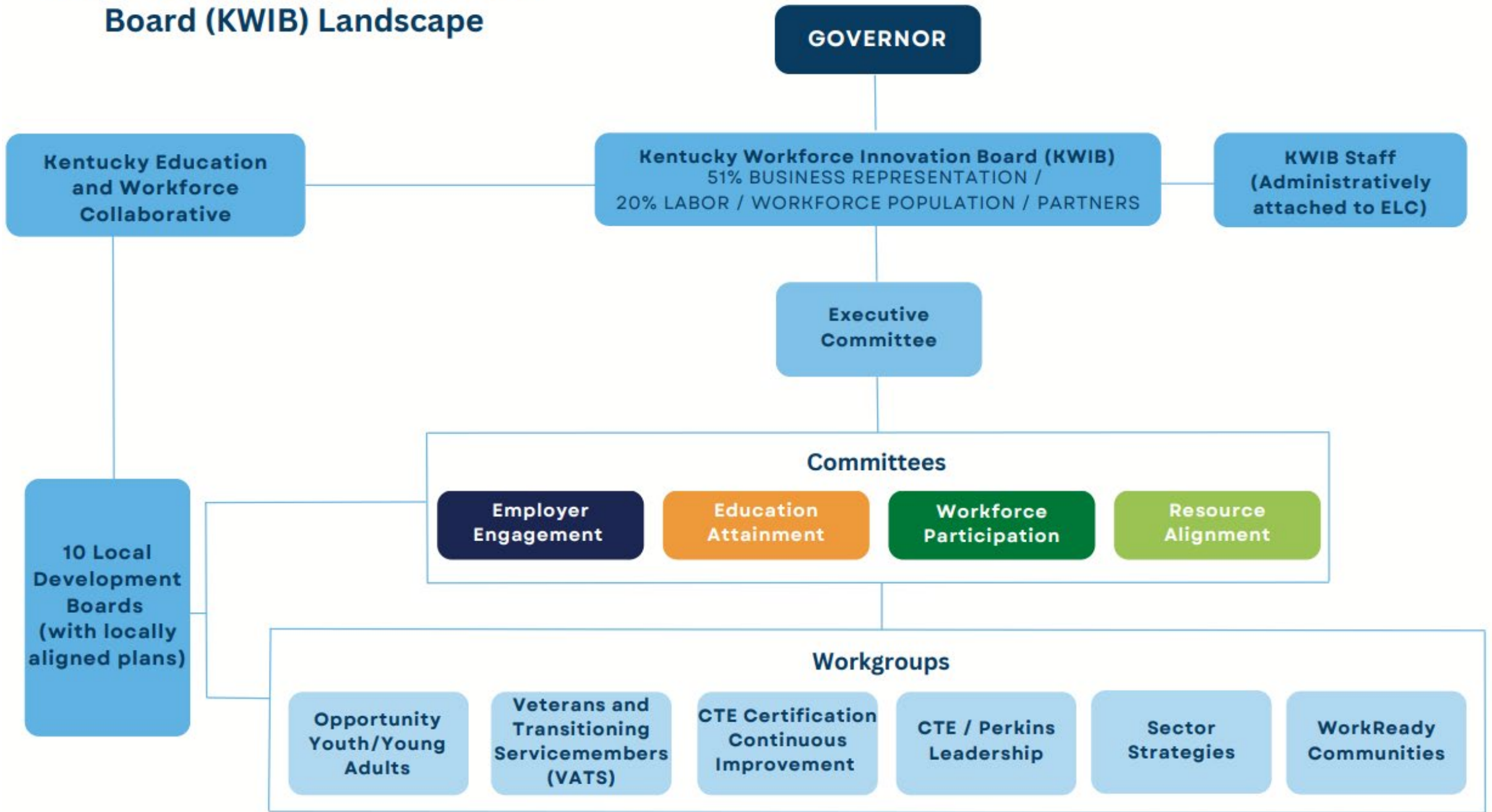
March 7th, 2024

State Board Strategy



“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.”

Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) Landscape



Employer Engagement Strategic Objectives

Objective 1a: Create a workforce development system that is valued by employers.

Note: In PY22, Kentucky engaged with 54,338 employers (36.7%) of which 43% were repeat customers

Employer Engagement Strategic Objectives

Objective 1b: Establish a clear channel for employer engagement in workforce development services.

Employer Engagement Strategic Objectives

Objective 1c: Increase the number of employers participating in work-based learning experiences and apprenticeships, while also establishing employer champions.

Note: There are 5,029 active apprentices in a Registered Apprenticeship programs (12.2% annual increase). Also, other work-based learning (such as KY-FAME), currently 175 students participate across 11 KCTCS colleges

Employer Engagement Strategic Objectives

Objective 1d: Engage employers in education efforts from early childhood through Kindergarten, Grade 12, and postsecondary study.

Employer Engagement Strategic Objectives

Objective 1e: Leverage employer data on workforce projections and training needs, using the talent pipeline management system of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and a revamped business service team network.