

## **State Plan**

### **“BIG” GOALS-**

Between 2017 and 2027, the state will produce

- 1) A million middle-skill, industry-valued and recognized postsecondary credentials.**
- 2) During this time the state will also double the number of people enrolled in apprenticeship programs.**

Between 2017 and 2027, the state will produce a million “middle-skill” industry-valued and recognized postsecondary credentials broadly defined here as sub-baccalaureate credentials with demonstrable labor market value, including industry-recognized certificates, or certifications, or certificates of completion of apprenticeship, or professional licenses, recognized by California or the federal government, as well as industry-valued associate degrees that facilitate movement into either the labor market or longer term educational programs aligned with the state’s workforce needs. During this time the state will also double the number of people enrolled in apprenticeship programs.

These goals are aspirational in nature and are based on the need for workforce and education programs to calibrate the production of credentials to labor market trends. The actual number and type of credentials awarded will be determined regionally on the basis of systematic industry engagement. This requires that employers and other industry sector leaders be engaged to help lead the assessment and, where necessary, work with training and education providers to redesign relevant training and education programs. In this regard, regional partnerships between industry and labor, training and education providers, and Local Boards will be vitally important to the success of the State Plan.

Additionally, any and all efforts to align training and education programs with regional labor market trends should be validated by the labor market. This will be done by examining the employment and wage rates of those who participate in and complete relevant programs. The real test of whether programs are serving the needs of both employers and workers is whether those who are receiving services are getting good jobs that put them on a path to upward mobility.

### **3 POLICY OBJECTIVES-**

1. Fostering “demand-driven skills attainment”. Workforce and education programs need to align program content with the state’s industry sector needs so as to provide California’s employers and businesses with the skilled workforce necessary to compete in the global economy.
2. Enabling upward mobility for all Californians, including populations with barriers to employment. Workforce and education programs need to be accessible for all Californians and ensure that everyone has access to a marketable set of skills, and is able to access the level of education necessary to get a good job that ensures both economic self-sufficiency and economic security.
3. Aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services to economize limited resources to achieve scale and impact, while also providing the right services to clients, based on each client’s particular and potentially unique needs, including any needs for skills-development.

### **7 PROGRAM STRATEGIES-**

In furtherance of the *Big Goals* and the *3 Policy Objectives*, the State Plan envisions using seven program strategies:

1. **sector strategies:** aligning workforce and education programs with sector needs; the success of these efforts will depend on the depth of industry engagement.
2. **career pathways:** enabling progressive skills development through education and training programs, using multiple entry and exit points, so that each level of skills development increases the likelihood of success in the labor market; these pathways should be flexibly designed and include, where necessary, remedial programming, so as to allow those with basic skills deficiencies an ability to participate
3. **regional partnerships:** building partnerships between industry leaders, workforce professionals, education and training providers, and economic development leaders to support regional economic growth; the success of these efforts will depend on the depth of industry engagement
4. **“earn and learn”**—using training and education practices that combine applied learning opportunities with compensation; the success of earn and learn programs depends on sustained employer engagement, and where appropriate, the involvement of organized labor, especially as this pertains to the development of partnerships with labor-management apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs
5. **supportive services:** providing ancillary services like childcare, transportation, and counseling to facilitate program completion
6. **integrated service delivery:** braiding resources and services to meet client needs
7. **creating cross-system data capacity,** including diagnostic labor market data to assess where to invest, and performance data to assess the value of investments

### Regional Plans and “Regional Sector Pathways”

California’s State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements pertaining to coordination between the K-12, community college, and WIOA systems, as well as state mandated efforts to implement sector strategies as the operational framework for the state’s workforce system are met under this State Plan by making federally required WIOA regional plans the primary mechanism for achieving the state’s mandated alignment of educational and training programs with regional industry sector needs

Alignment at the regional level will be accomplished through the regional implementation of three of the seven policy strategies discussed in the preceding section: sector strategies, career pathways, and organized regional partnerships. All three of these policies will be required under the regional planning guidance issued by the State Board to Local Boards organized into the regional planning units required under WIOA Section 106.

A primary objective and requirement of regional plans will be to work with community colleges and other training and education providers, including the state’s Adult Education Block Grant regional consortia and other providers on the state’s eligible training provider list to build “regional sector pathway” programs, by which we mean, career pathway programs that result in the attainment of industry-valued and recognized postsecondary credentials aligned to regional industry workforce needs. “Regional Sector Pathway” programs should be flexibly designed and include, as appropriate, remedial programming, so as to allow those with limited basic skills, including limited language skills, an ability to work their way along these pathways.

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The State Board, working alongside other state agencies such as CCCCCO, CDE, EDD, and Go-Biz will provide technical assistance to regional partnerships, comprised of industry leaders, workforce professionals, and regional training and education providers to help align programs and services delivered with industry sector workforce needs.

Under the State Plan, the key regional partners involved with the development and implementation of regional plans will include the following:

- Industry sector leaders, associations, business organizations, and organized labor (required under this State Plan)
- Regionally organized local workforce development boards (required under WIOA)
- Local economic development agencies (required under WIOA)
- Regional consortia of community colleges (required under this State Plan and pending state legislation)
- Regional consortia of adult basic education providers, including both WIOA Title II and other state-funded basic education programs (required under this State Plan)
- Representatives of K-12 CTE programs funded by either federal Perkins funds or various state-specific CTE funding streams, when relevant county offices of education and other local educational agencies determine that participation will benefit the students participating in their CTE programs (required under this State Plan)

Additional regional partners may also include ETP (California's state-funded incumbent worker training program); DOR; and County Welfare Agencies. These entities may wish to participate in regional plans and the regional planning process to leverage the employer engagement efforts required and made central to regional planning efforts.

The State Board will encourage and recommend broad partnerships that include community-based organizations (CBOs) and non-profits, but the State Board will grant considerable flexibility for Local Boards and their partners to determine the nature, scope, and depth of these partnerships based on local and regional needs and priorities as long as regional plans and partnerships are consistent with the policy direction and goals of this State Plan.

Regional efforts under WIOA are expected to build upon the State Board's regional SlingShot initiative discussed later in the State Plan.

### Industry Engagement

This State Plan adopts a dual-customer focus and is intended to provide policy direction for a system that serves both employers and job seekers. The State Plan attempts to do this by laying out a policy framework for aligning education, training, and employment services with regional labor market needs through a process of regional industry sector engagement. By organizing currently fragmented employment and training programs to meet the skill demands of employers in industry sectors that are driving regional employment, the system helps create opportunities to move workers up a career ladder using targeted incumbent worker training while also moving new hires into jobs using strong employer engagement practices, relevant training investments, supportive services, and basic skills remediation where necessary.

### Serving Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Both federal and state law mandate that services be provided to individuals with barriers to employment.<sup>1</sup> As noted above, the State Board believes the best way to serve both employers and job seekers, including those with barriers to employment, is to align training, education, and employment services with industry needs,

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including the skills and training needs of California's employers. This will mean, in many instances, providing access to training and education programs that align with regional labor market trends. For some individuals, this will also require the provision of remedial education services, including services designed to improve literacy and numeracy, English language literacy, as well as programming that facilitates high school dropout recovery, to better position these individuals to participate in training and education programs that are calibrated to employers' needs.

### Job Placement in Quality Jobs

The ultimate goal of the workforce system is to help people get a good job, and for those who don't have the requisite skills to immediately get a good job, the goal is to ensure access to the employment services, supportive services, training, and education programming that will help these individuals eventually get a good job.

State law directs the State Board to develop strategies that help people enter and retain employment and emphasizes the development of policies that lead to "placement in a job providing economic security or job placement in an entry-level job that has a well-articulated career pathway or career ladder to a job providing economic security."<sup>2</sup> State law defines these jobs as those that provide, "a wage sufficient to support a family adequately, and, over time, to save for emergency expenses and adequate retirement income, based on factors such as household size, the cost of living in the worker's community, and other factors that may vary by region."<sup>3</sup>

The State Board recognizes that not all jobs are good jobs and that education and training alone will not solve the problem of poverty. There is a hidden cost to low wage work that is ultimately borne by communities, particularly communities of color and immigrant populations. The State Board is committed to developing a workforce system that enables economic growth and shared prosperity on the basis of innovation, quality, and skills attainment rather than low wages, contingent employment, and low or no benefits. As such, state plan partners and providers covered by the plan should make it a priority to work with employers who offer jobs with good wages and benefits, support for ongoing skill training and employee advancement, good working conditions (including paid sick days, paid family leave, and paid medical or short-term disability leave), and adequate hours with predictable schedules that enable employees to meet their family caregiving commitments.