



VIRGINIA BOARD OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2019

BUILDING A WORKFORCE SYSTEM THAT WORKS FOR VIRGINIA



Sara J. Dunnigan
Deputy Chief Workforce Development Advisor
Executive Director
Virginia Board of Workforce Development
Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam

sara.dunnigan@governor.virginia.gov
804.663.7464



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On behalf of the Virginia Board of Workforce Development, I am pleased to present the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan approved on March 22, 2018. I want to thank the members for their hard work developing this plan, particularly Lane Hopkins and the rest of the Strategic Plan Task Force. The document you created offers valuable insight into our workforce system as it is now and as it should be in the future.

Our task is clear. We must align the Commonwealth's workforce system with economic development strategies at the state and regional level. Training programs should be demand-driven, and informed by employers to provide Virginians with educational pathways that lead to economic independence and prosperity. The Commonwealth deserves a best-in-class

delivery system for workforce services that is accessible and effective for job seekers and employers alike. As stewards of taxpayer dollars, we must ensure that every investment in workforce development drives high-impact outcomes. I look forward to your continued partnership and support, as we build a better future for Virginia's businesses and workers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathaniel X. Marshall".

Nathaniel X. Marshall - Chairman
Human Resources Generalist
BWX Technologies, Inc.

VIRGINIA BOARD OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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Designee for Chancellor Glenn Dubois

Virginia Community College System

Dr. Daniel Lufkin

President
Paul D. Camp Community College

VIRGINIA BOARD OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STAFF TEAM

Special acknowledgment goes to the following members of the Board’s cross-agency staff team who contributed to the development of this plan and provide invaluable staff support and expertise to support the Board and its work.

Sara J. Dunnigan

Deputy Chief Workforce Development Advisor
Virginia Board of Workforce Development

Jim Andre

Director of Adult Career Coaching
and Transition Programming
Virginia Community College System

Dr. Jeffrey Brown

Workforce Services Director
Virginia Employment Commission

Charlie Palumbo

Director, Transition and Training Programs
Virginia Department of Veterans Services

George Taratsas

Administrator, Federal Workforce Programs
Virginia Community College System

Reverend Dr. Robert Walker

Director, Veterans Education,
Training and Employment
Virginia Employment Commission



VISION, MISSION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Virginia Board of Workforce Development (VBWD) is a business-led board that acts as the principal advisor to the Governor, providing strategic leadership to the state regarding the public workforce development system. The mission of the VBWD is to build a strong workforce with skills aligned to employer needs.

The Board’s roles and responsibilities are described in Virginia law as well as the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Board has several deliverables for which it is responsible, including policy and budget recommendations; the provisions of specific guidance, policy, and oversight for the programs funded by WIOA; the development of state-level performance metrics for the workforce system; the production and dissemination of an annual workforce system report; a review of agency budgets; and a comprehensive cross-agency workforce plan.

To accomplish its mission, the Board has endorsed a set of guiding principles.

Vision

We envision a Virginia where every business has a qualified, job-ready workforce, and every Virginian has the skills needed to connect with meaningful employment and advance in their career.

In order to achieve the best possible result for our customers, the Board and all workforce system partners need to:

- Be business-driven and customer focused in all that we do
- Be flexible, nimble, and responsive culture of continuous improvement
- Be collaborative in engaging a network of partners to accomplish our goals
- Be innovative in our approach, including integrating technology and new ways of doing things
- Move beyond compliance and embracing a culture of innovation and invention
- Use data and evidence in our policy and decision making



The public workforce system includes eight agencies and 25 programs organized under three secretariats. Appendix A includes a complete listing and description of the partner agencies and their programs. The Board recognizes that the workforce system in Virginia includes important players beyond these state agencies and programs, including private training providers, community-based and faith-based organizations, and others who share our vision and mission. The Board encourages collaboration at the state and local level to ensure public and private sector resources are fully leveraged to deliver effective solutions to workforce challenges.



VIRGINIA SNAPSHOT

There are a number of factors driving the need for continuous improvement in the way Virginia develops and delivers workforce services.

- ⊙ **At 3.6%, Virginia's unemployment rate is among the lowest in the nation.** 151,000 residents are currently seeking employment.
- ⊙ **Rates of unemployment are not evenly distributed** across the Commonwealth. Unemployment rates at the regional level range from a low of 2.5% in Alexandria/Arlington to a high of 5.4% in Southwest Virginia.
- ⊙ **Unemployment is not evenly distributed** across occupational groups. Nationally-recognized economic modeling and labor market information firm, EMSI, estimates that the unemployment rate for individuals in Construction and Extraction Occupations may be as high as 8.1%. In contrast, Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations are experiencing an unemployment rate of 1.2%.
- ⊙ **The unemployment rate is only part of the picture.** Underemployment and low labor force participation rates mean many Virginia's are not reaping the benefits of a strong economy. The system must work to reengage individuals who are out of the labor market and provide opportunities for individuals to strengthen their skills for advancement.
- ⊙ **Virginia's economy is expanding** at a slow rate; some suggest that a workforce shortage is limiting the rate of economic expansion.
- ⊙ **Uneven distribution of growth reinforces the need for strong leadership** and strong regional strategies to address workforce challenges.
- ⊙ **Unfilled jobs with Virginia employers represent unrealized economic potential.** In September of 2017, the Virginia Employment Commission reported 269,536 advertised jobs across the Commonwealth. Given Virginia's annual mean wage of \$53,000, these jobs represent an estimated \$14.29 billion in unrealized annual income. Each day these positions remain unfilled, \$39 million dollars are withheld from Virginians, their families, and the economy.
- ⊙ **The human resource requirements of businesses are changing rapidly.** This pace demands a responsive, nimble approach to workforce development and reliable, timely labor market intelligence to inform policy.
- ⊙ **Virginia's economy is changing.** Shifts in federal spending are impacting growth in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads, and transitions in the coal industry are deeply affecting the economy in southwest Virginia. The workforce system can be a catalyst to support needed economic diversification.
- ⊙ **While demand for middle skills jobs is strong, Virginia is experiencing a shortage in individuals with sufficient training.** The National Skills Coalition reports that between 2014-2024, 45 percent of job openings will be for middle skills jobs. While middle skills jobs currently account for 49% of the labor market, only 39% of the state's workers are trained at the middle-skill level.
- ⊙ **Virginia's economic development landscape** and strategies are changing, requiring us to realign our workforce development system at the state and regional level. This can be accomplished by partnering and coordinating with entities like the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and GO Virginia while encouraging stronger regional partnerships among workforce and economic development entities.
- ⊙ **Virginia's future workforce needs are substantial.** Our economy is projected to create 368,000 new jobs between 2014 and 2024. Businesses will need to fill an additional 920,000 jobs over the same period, primarily due to retirements. The pipeline for the workforce of the future must be built today.
- ⊙ **Virginia's workforce system must have an identity** and visible and known access points for job seekers and employers. The system must provide a high level of service across all regions of the state.

PLAN FRAMEWORK

In its previous Strategic Plan, the Board laid out four bold, paradigm-shifting objectives for Virginia's public workforce system. We remain focused on sustaining this work and ensuring the public workforce system has the capacity to meet emerging challenges. This new Strategic Plan seeks to build on our successes, and refine Virginia's continuing efforts to develop our workforce.

This plan represents a two-year strategy to accelerate the transformation of the workforce system in Virginia, prepare people for work, and help businesses fill openings. This transformation will require the hard work of dedicated professionals, system-wide process improvements, and cross-agency enhancements. The Board, through the execution of its Strategic Plan and through its

guidance in the implementation of the state's combined plan for workforce development, will help build the strong workforce needed to support Virginia's growing economy.

One Future

The Board has embraced the concept that every workforce development stakeholder in Virginia must commit to building a single vision and future for our workforce system. The Board will stimulate change by highlighting performance expectations, promoting best practices, and reducing barriers to success for customers. Most importantly, the Board will assist the Governor in articulating and sustaining a common vision for building Virginia's workforce today and in the future.

Two Customers

The Board endorses a dual-customer model that recognizes and meets the needs of businesses and job seekers. For the system to be successful, partners must know and understand the ever-changing needs of Virginia business and support workers by delivering quality workforce development services that promote self-sufficiency and success.

Three Partners

Virginia economic success relies on a strong partnership between workforce development agencies, economic development ventures, and targeted industry sectors. The Board is committed to convening system stakeholders across these functional roles, including the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, GO Virginia, the State Board of Education, and the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia, to improve the alignment of resources and drive high-impact outcomes for the Commonwealth.

Four Objectives

This plan describes four key objectives for the Board. These objectives will be achieved through the actions and activities of the Board's standing and ad hoc committees.

1. **Identify current and future workforce needs.**
2. **Endorse and advocate for programs that match trained workers with available and emerging jobs.**
3. **Create a customer-centric workforce system that is easy to access, highly effective, and simple to understand.**
4. **Improve alignment and performance of the states publicly funded workforce system.**

Five Goals

In order to improve system alignment and improve transparency, the Board endorses the following common performance measures. Clarity of purpose around these goals will be critical in driving strategic investments and demonstrating the system's impact.

1. **Prepare and Place Virginians in In-Demand Jobs:** Track system resources and employment outcomes that support Virginia's economic development priorities.
2. **Deliver Value-Added Services to Our Business Customer:** Collaborate with business customers to address skills shortages in priority industries and in-demand occupations; measure the activities and results.

3. **Improve the Quality of the Labor Force:** Invest in credential attainment, work-based learning, on-the-job training, and apprenticeship to improve career prospects for served Virginians and support employers' success.
4. **Improve Wage Quality:** Achieve family-sustaining, career-oriented wages for all Virginians.
5. **Ensure a Positive Return on Investment (ROI):** Develop a reliable and replicable way to measure ROI for system customers and taxpayers across programs.



PLAN OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Priority Objective One

Identify current and future workforce needs of Virginia businesses and align responsive workforce programs to address them.



Strategy 1.1

Endorse state and regional lists of High Priority Demand Occupations to target high demand job clusters that align with Virginia’s economic development strategies and unmet demand.

Strategy 1.2

Gather and disseminate business intelligence on jobs in high-demand for which there is a critical shortage. Lead and convene Industry Workforce Roundtables, to enhance our understanding of changing labor market trends and skills requirements.

Priority Objective Two

Recommend and support strategies to better prepare and match trained workers and close the skills gap.



Strategy 2.1

Create a list of common competencies and describe the foundational skills of work readiness, endorse strategies to learn skills including work experience, and work based learning.

Strategy 2.2

Advocate for a user-friendly and effective web-based labor exchange system, specifically targeting the job posting features for business and the tools used by candidates to improve functionality.

Strategy 2.3

Advocate for strategies that streamline access to services for veterans and improve Virginia’s ability to retain and attract former service members and their families.

Strategy 2.4

Explore and endorse best practices from around the country to help Virginia address its most pressing workforce challenges.

Priority Objective Three

Create a customer-centric workforce system that is easy to access, highly effective, and simple to understand.



Strategy 3.1

Champion and monitor the implementation of a statewide, customer-focused brand that increases awareness and use of Virginia's network of One Stop Career Centers.

Strategy 3.2

Design and implement a statewide business satisfaction survey.

Strategy 3.3

Create a "road map" providing job seekers with general information about potential career pathways and the various routes to meaningful employment.

Strategy 3.4

Advocate for broader dissemination of information to help individuals make smarter career choices based on an awareness of jobs, skills in demand, and related educational pathways.

Priority Objective Four

Improve alignment and performance of the state's publicly funded workforce system by reviewing program inputs and outcomes.



Strategy 4.1

Develop and deliver a consolidated budget report that improves transparency in workforce funding to enable smarter policy decisions. Advance recommendations to the Governor to improve system alignment, accountability, and efficiencies.

Strategy 4.2

Endorse a set of common state performance measures and champion the delivery of a Performance Accountability System to track workforce program outcomes.

Strategy 4.3

Promote a model that determines the return on public investment for workforce system programs in order to inform policy and resource allocation.



PLAN SUMMARY

The following table represents the Virginia Board of Workforce Development's plan framework and outlines its key objectives and supporting strategies. The Board has specific statutory authority to provide policy recommendations to the Governor and will execute that authority in a way that supports this plan.

The Board acknowledges that this strategic plan is a living document and commits to an annual review of Board priorities in addition to a periodic evaluation and reporting of progress towards these goals. The Board recognizes that the Virginia economy is dynamic and will be responsive to changing business conditions.

Virginia Board of Workforce Development

 <p>Priority Objective One</p> <p>Identify current and future workforce needs of Virginia businesses and advocate for the alignment of workforce program resources to address them</p>	 <p>Priority Objective Two</p> <p>Recommend strategies to better prepare and match trained workers with available and emerging jobs</p>	 <p>Priority Objective Three</p> <p>Create a customer-centric workforce system that is easy to access, highly effective, and simple to understand</p>	 <p>Priority Objective Four</p> <p>Improve alignment and performance of the state's publicly-funded workforce system through continuous review of program outcomes and regular evaluation of resource alignment to ensure alignment with business needs</p>
Strategies	Strategies	Strategies	Strategies
<p>Identify high priority, demand occupations</p> <p>Convene industry workforce roundtables</p>	<p>Endorse and champion a common set of employability skills and work experiences</p> <p>Build a user-friendly and effective labor exchange system</p> <p>View veterans as Virginia assets</p> <p>Explore and endorse best-practices</p>	<p>Support the statewide branding initiative</p> <p>Develop a statewide business customer satisfaction survey</p> <p>Create a "roadmap" to workforce services in Virginia</p> <p>Build most tools for students and job-seekers to inform career choices and provide information about career-pathways</p>	<p>Review workforce system budget</p> <p>Embrace common performance measures</p> <p>Develop a return on investment model</p>

A. Defining Virginia's Workforce System

Virginia Workforce System Program Descriptions

<i>Agency/Program</i>	<i>Program Description</i>
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired	
Vocational Rehabilitation Program	Provides services (employment preparation and assistive technology) to help to make employment opportunities available to persons with visual disabilities.
Department for Aging and Rehabilitation Services	
Vocational Rehabilitation Program	Provides employment services, assistive technology and disability determination to help those with disabilities to prepare for, find and keep a job.
Department of Education	
Adult Education and Literacy	Provides integrated education and training to adult populations in support of improved employment outcomes.
PluggedIn VA	Provides low-skilled adults with a program that incorporates digital literacy skills, professional soft skills, and 21st Century Skills into a traditional GED® curriculum and a Career Readiness Certificate.
Career and Tech Ed/Secondary Perkins	Provides young people in grades 6-12 with technical training courses, credentials, and industry certifications.
Workplace Readiness Skills Assessment	Provides funding for young adults to work toward the Workforce Readiness Skills Assessment certification.
Department of Labor and Industry	
Registered Apprenticeship Program	Provides coordination of apprenticeships in a range of trades including on-the-job training, theoretical instruction, and journeyman certification.
Department of Social Services	
SNAP Employment and Training	Provides job preparation, training, and support services to assist SNAP clients in gaining employment.
VA Initiative for Employment not Welfare	Provides job preparation training and support services to assist TANF clients in gaining employment.

Virginia Community College System

Institutes of Excellence	Provides focused education and cutting edge training in areas that support Virginia's business and industry.
Non-Credit Workforce Training	Provides customized, open-enrollment training based on Virginia business needs.
Postsecondary Perkins	Provides funding for Career and Technical Education in community colleges and Career Coaches program.
WIOA Adult	Provides job search and placement assistance as well as employment plans, counseling, and training and support services.
WIOA Dislocated Worker	Provides employment, training and support services for workers who are losing their jobs as a result of layoff or company closing.
WIOA Youth	Provides intensive services including employment plans, Counseling, training, and support services for youth aged 16-24.
WIOA Rapid Response Layoff Aversion	Provides businesses with employee hiring, staff restructuring and training support. Rapid Response is most noticeably front and center to Virginia's workers when their place of employment is downsizing and a significant number of workers lose their jobs, but the program also helps firms avoid layoffs, especially through upskilling initiatives.

Virginia Economic Development Partnership

Virginia Jobs Investment Program	Provides funds to offset recruiting and training costs incurred by companies that are either creating new jobs or implementing technological upgrades and provides assistance to companies with workforce-related challenges and organizational development workshops.
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Virginia Employment Commission

Trade Adjustment Assistance Program	Provides re-training, job search and relocation support for workers being laid off because of jobs moving overseas.
Veterans Program	Provides job search and counseling services and training to Veterans and candidate matching services to employers.
Wagner-Peyser	Provides employment assistance services to job-ready workers who are unemployed and recruitment assistance to employers.
WIOA Rapid Response	Provides timely and comprehensive Rapid Re-employment services to laid-off workers who are the subject of WARN notices. The goal is to place workers in new jobs so that they can transition to new employment opportunities immediately in an effort to reduce the average duration of unemployment insurance compensation they may require.



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