

# Higher Education and Commerce Committee Informational Hearing on Workforce Development

# Introductions



Mark Argosh, Chair, Governor's Workforce Council; Executive Director, Social Venture Partners CT



Dr. Kelli Vallieres, Executive Director, Office of Workforce Strategy; Vice-Chair, Governor's Workforce Council



Mohit Agrawal, Deputy Policy Director, Office of the Governor



Alice Pritchard, Chief of Staff, CSCU; Chief Operating Officer, CSCU



Martin Guay, Vice President, Business Development, Stanley Black & Decker



Cathy Awwad, Executive Director, Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board



Colin Cooper, Chief Manufacturing Officer, State of Connecticut

# Agenda

1. Workforce Development in CT (5 min.)
2. Governor's Workforce Council – Strategic Plan and Initiatives (20 min.)
3. Concluding Remarks and Next Steps (3 min.)
4. Q&A (30 min.)

Workforce development is a key strategy to help the state grow following the pandemic.

- The state's workforce system encompasses the breadth of birth-to-retirement
- Training and funding provided by state and local agencies, educational institutions, private companies, and others.
- A high-quality workforce development system will attract new businesses to Connecticut and help individuals impacted by the current recession a fighting chance to get back to work quickly.

## Gov. Lamont has taken multiple actions on workforce development during his term.

- In November 2019, the Governor signed EO4, which created the GWC.
- In summer 2020, the administration stood up the OWS as a unit of DECD.
- OWS, GWC, and state agencies partnered to develop the statewide Strategic Plan.
- OTG and OPM have worked closely with OWS, GWC, DOL, DECD, SDE, OHE, and other state agencies on preparing legislation for the 2021 session.
- OWS supported workforce development efforts during the pandemic.

# The Governor's Workforce Council released its strategic plan on workforce in October 2020.

The Governor's Workforce Council  
**WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN**  
2020



- After one year of development, the GWC released its Workforce Strategic Plan on October 28, 2020.
- The Plan puts forward a coordinated, statewide strategy for **building an equitable, inclusive, and innovative workforce** that meets the needs of the current economic environment.
- The Plan recommends strategies in four key areas: business leadership, education, equity and access, and data.
- This Plan was a collaborative effort and solicited feedback and recommendations from industry representatives, educators, philanthropic and community-based organizations, and other key groups.

## Business Leadership



Build a dynamic workforce through a system of regional sector partnerships that integrate businesses needs with supporting parties.

## Career Building



Help students explore and enter educational programs that are aligned with in-demand career pathways.

## Workforce Participation: Equity & Access



Reduce the barriers that have limited access to training, sustainable work, and high-quality career opportunities.

## Accountability and Data-Driven Management



Design and implement innovative workforce solutions focused on delivering a comprehensive, intuitive, customer experience.



Objective	Significance
Develop a system of <b>regional sector partnerships</b> across the state.	Address the regional and local workforce needs through convening industry partners, educators, economic development practitioners, etc.
Build a <b>credential registry</b> that houses all secondary and postsecondary credentials offered in CT.	Allow students and job seekers to explore different credentials that are tied to in-demand careers in Connecticut.
Design three <b>skills-based hiring</b> pilots in 2021 and develop a statewide strategy for skills-based hiring in CT.	Develop cheaper, faster, and more inclusive hiring practices across Connecticut employers.
Develop a statewide strategy for <b>retaining college graduates</b> and launch retention plans in three cities by 2022.	Help retain college graduates so they are contributing to the CT economy and creating a robust talent pipeline to attract companies.
Develop a <b>program inventory and a standardized outcomes measurement system</b> across our workforce boards.	Track program success and outcomes and make recommendations for additional investment.





Objective	Significance
Develop new and expand existing <b>career pathway and dual enrollment opportunities</b> that are aligned with in-demand industries.	Facilitate and expedite learning in high school and beyond so that students can easily find work in a growing industry.
Develop new and expanding existing short-term <b>sector-based training programs</b> .	Allow job seekers to find affordable, short-term, training programs for quickly finding work in in-demand industries.
Develop a statewide model for creating and coordinating <b>work-based learning opportunities</b> .	Create more experiences for students to explore careers while also gaining meaningful skills and supporting CT employers.
Develop a statewide strategy for delivering effective and comprehensive <b>education and career advisory</b> services to students.	Allow students to better leverage technology and services to explore different careers early on in their education.
Develop a series of pilots and recommendations that improve <b>teacher professional development</b> .	Create new programs that enhance teachers' abilities to better prepare students for learning and working in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.
Create a plan for a more integrated, student-centered, <b>adult education</b> system.	Coordinate across the state to develop programs and policies that are effectively serving adult learners.



Objective	Significance
Create an accessible, affordable, and high-quality statewide <b>childcare</b> system.	Ensure that students and job seekers have access to affordable and high-quality childcare during school, training, and work.
Reduce barriers to affordable <b>transportation</b> for students and job seekers.	Prioritize increasing student and worker access to affordable transportation services across the state.
Increase the number of <b>Supportive Employment Services</b> slots in CT by 2,000.	Create more opportunities for workers to receive support in finding rehabilitation, employment, or other supportive services.
Remove the adverse effects of <b>benefits cliffs</b> that CT residents are currently experiencing.	Increase workforce participation and economic mobility for low-income residents across the state.



Objective	Significance
Propose a comprehensive <b>online services redesign</b> by year-end 2021.	Ensure that students and job seekers have access to a robust suite of workforce development services, including career preparation, exploration, and matching services, as well as robust capabilities for analyzing workforce outcomes.
Create a series of <b>performance dashboards</b> and ROI templates.	Allow decision-makers to access and utilize valuable labor, education, and workforce data to make informed decisions.
Expand the <b>P20 WIN</b> system to include a broader range of education, workforce and supportive service agencies.	Allow for richer and more responsive analysis of key questions on workforce development.

# Establishing the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS)

- Led by the state Chief Workforce Officer
- Be the Governor's principal advisor on workforce policy/strategy/coordination
- Represent the Governor and the needs of the workforce system on various boards and commissions
- Support DECD to help meet the workforce needs of the state's businesses or potential businesses that may move to the state
- Use workforce data to improve outcomes in the workforce system
- Convene and align members of the workforce ecosystem, including state agencies, educational institutions, and private employers
- Coordinate the state's implementation of WIOA and staff the Governor's Workforce Council

## The OWS helped coordinate the state's workforce response to the pandemic.

- Partnered with CT's regional workforce development boards to administer \$14M in CARES Act funding to launch new workforce training programs designed to meet current employer needs
  - \$9.5M was spent on job training programs that trained an estimated 850 individuals in high-demand fields like advanced manufacturing, IT, and healthcare.
  - \$5M was spent on creating an additional 4,000 childcare slots for residents and increasing the supply of childcare workers.
  - An estimated 340 workers were trained in healthcare, 210 in IT, 130 in manufacturing, 110 in other industries (e.g., construction, finance, transportation, warehousing), and 85 in multiple industries .
- Launched the CT Back to Work program that offered free, high-quality online training for credential programs that are aligned to Connecticut industry, to thousands of residents who were laid off due to the pandemic