

Whitepaper: Equitable Prosperity For All

June 29, 2021

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Table of Contents

Introduction	06
Summary of Task Force Findings	11
Imperatives	14
Recommended Policies or Programs	28
Footnotes	38
Conclusion	40



June 11, 2021

Letter from the Co-Chairs of the Equitable Prosperity Task Force:

Over the past 18 months, Oregon's economy has been devastated by the effects of COVID-19 and calamitous wildfires which have had disproportionate impacts on BIPOC, rural and marginalized communities. More than 285,000 workers in Oregon lost jobs between February and April 2020, and nearly 130,000 of those jobs have still not returned today. As these impacts on Oregon's workforce became clear, the members of the Workforce and Talent Development Board quickly mobilized and formed the Equitable Prosperity Task Force (EPTF), with the goal of creating a plan for economic recovery which considers critical changes to the entire system of workforce development and training.

The taskforce members were clear from the start: our collective purpose was to create a case for transformational change. We recognized that incremental changes would be too slow and insufficient to address the need. The EPTF sought to reimagine the way Oregon serves disenfranchised, BIPOC, rural, and dislocated adults and meets the talent needs for employers. This meant reimagining workforce services and readiness supports across the state.

The report which follows outlines four imperatives as the core elements of our plan to fuel the long term prosperity of the state. These four imperatives are in addition to the Task Force's comprehensive goal of improving workforce and job outcomes for **BIPOC, rural, and other disenfranchised communities**:

- Foster deep, sustained engagement by key industry leaders, employers, and labor unions to identify and communicate skills necessary for competitive employment
- Center the workforce system on the user
- Improve alignment with agencies and nonprofits that provide wraparound supports
- Extend the apprenticeship model beyond manufacturing and the construction trades

Currently, Federal funding is on its way to Oregon as a result of the 2020 CARES Act as well as additional infrastructure projects, of the magnitude only seen once in a century. We believe this is a critical moment for Oregon, and we call upon our State Leadership to consider funding the recommendations in this report as an opportunity to reshape Oregon's economy for a more equitable and prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Shari Dunn

Mark Mitsui



Introduction

Task Force Purpose

The state's talent needs have only grown in recent years, and Oregon's key workforce development stakeholders—employers, community colleges, workforce agencies—must develop better frameworks, relationships, and tools to effectively deliver the skills that a 21st Century economy demands. The urgency of this matter has escalated considerably due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly impacted adult workers, particularly with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and other disenfranchised communities. The charge to the Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB) and this Equitable Prosperity Task Force (EPTF) is to describe a redesigned system that would invigorate and empower these actors and organize them in productive, collective, and collaborative work to help thousands of Oregonians share in equitable prosperity in the post-pandemic economy.

Overview of the Need

Oregon's 40/20/20 attainment goal recognizes that, since 1980, technological progress has outpaced gains in educational attainment and contributed to a record-high college-wage premium. Over four decades, automation has eliminated routine work, and jobs have grown at the low- and high-wage poles—with many of the middle-wage jobs in production and office administration replaced by robots or software. Many technologists anticipate a rapid acceleration of automation and a disruption of work across the wage spectrum.

Economists see the labor force challenges caused by technology, but they don't fear a jobless future. Demography is changing alongside technology and, in many places, a surge in retirements will create more job openings than automation will displace.

Now to these longstanding technological and demographic trends, this year adds a pandemic, a recession, and a racial justice movement. The pandemic's job losses have been borne disproportionately by younger workers with lower levels of attainment. The racial justice movement has put systemic inequities into even higher relief and amplified demands for marked improvement of education delivery—especially for Black Americans.

Task Force Scope and Milestones

The Equitable Prosperity Task Force was convened in November 2020 with the following scope:

- Discussing, strategizing, and providing reimagined solutions for the current and future support and advancement of Oregon's Adult Dislocated Workers impacted by COVID-19.
- Recommending solutions for these Oregonians that translate into shared and equitable prosperity through upskilling and reskilling, resulting in meaningful work.
- Working in coordination with the Governor's Racial Justice Council.
- Developing private-sector led and employer-driven solutions that result in jobs and careers that have business and employer buy-in and accountability mechanisms that are demand-driven.
- Fostering deeper, sustained engagement by employers in identifying and communicating the skills and behaviors they need from employees.
- Centering the talent development system on the needs of users and overall user experience for both workers and employers, and recognizing the variability of needs among different populations and regions in the state.
- Recommending and supporting less expensive, short-term education and training pathways that can be done quickly and provide value to business and a return on investment for people that are in need.
- Improving alignment with agencies and nonprofits that provide wraparound supports.
- Submitting a final report that includes prioritized policy and investment recommendations and other mechanisms that address challenges and/or opportunities and provide value-added solutions to the Governor's Office and Legislature on talent and skill development for pandemic-impacted adults dislocated from their jobs/careers.

Key Milestones Included:

- Presenting Strategies at the Oregon Business Plan's December 14, 2020 Event;
- Completing Draft Report by March 2021 WTDB Quarterly Meeting; and
- Submitting Final Report at the June 2021 WTDB Quarterly Meeting for approval, including recommendations on benchmarks, funding, redeployment strategies, and schedules.

Task Force Process

The Equitable Prosperity Task Force followed a process of evaluation, research, and synthesis over a period of 8 months. The process is summarized below.

Activity/Deliverable	18-Nov	1-Dec	7-Dec	11-Dec	14-Dec	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21
Phase 1												
Task Force Design Meeting 1												
Task Force Design Meeting 2												
Task Force Design Meeting 3												
WTDB Meeting												
Summary Report / Business Summit												
Phase 2												
Task Force Design Meeting 4						13-Jan						
Task Force Design Meeting 5							17-Feb					
Task Force Design Meeting 6								17-Mar				
Task Force Design Meeting 7									21-Apr			
Task Force Design Meeting 8										19-May		
Task Force Design Meeting 9											7-Jun	
WTDB Meeting												
White Paper / Final Recommendations												

Phase I

During Phase I of the process, Coraggio Group guided and facilitated four WTDB Task Force meetings with the goal of developing and recommending five to six high-level recommendations to best support dislocated adult workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent wildfires. A key component of this effort was to leverage existing, forward-thinking proposals already identified and developed by the WTDB, the state's various Local Workforce Boards, and partner state agencies. In addition, the Task Force explored new ideas, including those proposed by businesses and employers. As a result of the first Phase of work, the WTDB Task Force produced a Summary Report outlining five high-level recommendations. These recommendations were:

- 1 Foster deeper, sustained engagement by employers in identifying and communicating the skills they need
- 2 Explicitly identify outcomes and solutions to address the persistent lack of employment opportunities for disenfranchised communities
- 3 Center the system on the user
- 4 Improve alignment with agencies and nonprofits that provide wraparound supports
- 5 Extend the apprenticeship model beyond manufacturing and the construction trades

The Summary Report was presented at the Oregon Business Council Leadership Summit on December 14, 2020.

Phase II

Between January and May 2021, the WTDB Equitable Prosperity Task Force convened again over six meetings with the goal of incorporating in-depth research, analysis, and perspectives to refine and provide detail for the above recommendations. Similar to the process outlined to develop the Summary Report, a starting point for the draft White Paper was recommendations, ideas, and perspectives from the WTDB, the state's various Local Workforce Boards, partner state agencies, and business and industry leaders. In addition, Task Force members and WTDB staff incorporated technical research and studies from other institutions, including regional workforce boards, Oregon Volunteers, Oregon Youth Corps, the STEM Council, and other state and national organizations. As the Task Force continued to refine its final recommendations, stakeholders were consulted for their input and guidance.

This report formally documents solutions and recommendations that were developed through this process and are intended to be championed by the WTDB and HECC leadership, as well as the Governor's Office and key Legislative Committees. The final recommendations have been drafted with an eye toward multiple paths of implementation, whether directly through Executive Branch (HECC, Governor's Office), or the Legislature via Emergency Board meetings or the 2022 Legislative Short Session.

Task Force Membership

Name	Organization
Anne Mersereau	Portland General Electric
Ben Cannon	Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Charter Sponsor
Camille Preus	Oregon Community College Association
Cathy Reynolds	Legacy Health
Clay Martin	Workforce and Talent Development Board
David Gerstenfeld	Oregon Employment Department, Charter Sponsor
Duncan Wyse	Oregon Business Council
Heather Ficht	East Cascades Works
Jeff Reardon	State Representative
Jennifer Baker	Governor's Office, Charter Sponsor
John Johnson	Genentech
John Tapogna	ECONorthwest
Josh Hall	Oregon AFL-CIO
Karen Humelbaugh	Office of Workforce Investments, Charter Sponsor
Ken Madden	Madden Industrial Craftsmen, Inc., Charter Sponsor
Kim Parker-Llerenas	Willamette Workforce Partnership
KS Venkatraman	Nvidia
Kyle Ritchey-Noll	Oregon Business Council
Mark Mitsui	Co-Chair, Portland Community College
Michael Dembrow	State Senator
Patrick Crane	Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development
Shari Dunn, Co-Chair	ITBOM
Todd Nell	Workforce and Talent Development Board



Summary of Task Force Findings

The Equitable Prosperity Task Force identified four imperatives to explore and center recommendations. The following four imperative are in addition to the Task Force's primary goal of improving workforce and job outcomes for BIPOC and other disenfranchised communities.

Imperatives

- E** Foster deeper, sustained engagement by employers in identifying and communicating the skills they need.
- U** Center the system on the user.
- W** Improve alignment with agencies and nonprofits that provide wraparound supports.
- A** Extend the apprenticeship model beyond manufacturing and the construction trades.

Many, if not all, of the policy and programmatic recommendations outlined below are consistent with and closely aligned to core workforce priorities identified in Governor Brown's 10-Point Economic Recovery Plan and the work of the State's Racial Justice Council, including but not limited to:

- Investing in Oregon's hardest hit workers (those currently unemployed or underemployed);
- Supporting Oregon's workforce (those currently employed but struggling);
- Creating opportunities for Oregonians (workforce development);
- Supporting BIPOC communities to gain access to high value jobs;
- Supporting communities hardest hit by COVID-19 with workforce training supports; and
- Targeting investments to reduce barriers to jobs, especially housing and childcare support.

Workforce Development Policy and Program Recommendations



Policy or Program	How will recommendation improve outcomes for BIPOC, rural, and other disenfranchised communities?	Imperative Alignment			
		E	U	W	A
A. Create Oregon’s Job Driven Training Agenda - A statewide platform to better align and commit Oregon’s existing workforce development, education, and training providers around a clear set of shared goals, objectives, and expectations to make Oregon’s workforce and training system more job-driven, integrated, and better for the user.	Establishing system-wide shared goals, objectives, and expectations will ensure providers and stakeholders can collectively target the needs of disenfranchised communities.				
B. Establish an Upward Mobility Indicator - Create an upward mobility indicator and establish measurement targets to more clearly define desired economic outcomes and to align Oregonian’s many local and state workforce and economic development actors around a shared objective.	Upward mobility and economic opportunity are closely tied to geography and demographics. Developing an upward mobility indicator—clear metrics and targets—aligns workforce development providers and stakeholders around measurable outcomes.				
C. Ensure Communities Traditionally Left Behind Have Prominent Seat at the Workforce System Design and Implementation Table - Inclusive representation will enable better outcomes and solutions to address persistent and well documented lack of employment & training opportunities for disenfranchised communities.	Representation matters. Workforce, employment, and education/training gaps for disenfranchised communities are well documented. Ensuring these communities, their voices, and their ideas are at the table is critical to addressing persistent gaps.				
D. Research & Evaluation Project - Invest in regular and consistent research, outreach, and other information gathering activities with dislocated workers to better understand the support needed and design programs to address workforce challenges and opportunities.	A commitment to continuous improvement and an investment in research and stakeholder engagement will ensure an understanding and approach to the challenges and opportunities experienced by disenfranchised communities.				
E. Create Oregon’s Talent Pipeline Management - Implementation of a state-level initiative that leverages existing business and employer associations to source more effective solutions related to skilling up, reskilling, and career success.	Better workforce and job outcomes for disenfranchised communities will require a commitment from both public and private sectors. Partnering with existing business and employer associations is essential to identifying solutions.				
F. Develop an Asset Map for Workforce-Related Wrap-Around Services - Identify, map, and communicate existing workforce support programs—access to childcare, broadband, transportation, and housing, etc.—to the broader workforce “system” to enhance access and improve coordination of services.	Clearly identifying and mapping wraparound support services and “assets” will create significant leverage opportunities to provide more comprehensive and better services to disenfranchised Oregonians.				
G. Connect and Integrate Data Regarding Wraparound Services and Outcomes - Gather baseline data and information to identify gaps and better align support services. This work will also assist with eliminating duplication, investing in successful outcomes, etc.	Gathering baseline data specific to the effectiveness and alignment of wraparound support services will enable the workforce system and partners to continuously improve and achieve better long-term outcomes for disenfranchised Oregonians.				
H. Communicate and Streamline Access to New and Existing Wraparound Resources - Utilize the WTDB’s established Website Improvement Taskforce (WIT) to build awareness of the workforce system and available services for job seekers and employers.	Complex systems require effective communication. Building awareness of the wraparound support services will improve outcomes for disenfranchised Oregonians.				
I. Expand Pathways to Opportunity - Invest in PTO to increase access to resources and services to support students and displaced workers facing barriers to attending and completing college such as tuition, transportation, food, books, childcare, etc.	Growing disparities in educational attainment and income have increased for disenfranchised communities, stagnating economic mobility. Investing in proven, effective models like PTO increases equitable student success and economic mobility.				
J. Implement Career Connect Oregon - Utilize a public-private partnership model to leverage existing CTE/STEM Education Plans and current curriculum development focused on “jobs of the future” to increase access to career-connected learning.	Access to quality career connected learning is uneven, particularly for disenfranchised communities. Career Connect Oregon is designed to drive a coordinated and equitable approach to the statewide implementation of career-connected learning.				
K. Competency-based Education, Training, and Assessment - Establish a pilot program to issue grants to public post-secondary institutions to fund promotion, expansion, and implementation of competency-based education programs.	Learners advance based on what they know and can do, rather than time spent in class. With a more flexible structure, CBE programs offer learners high levels of customization and the opportunity to better meet the needs of disenfranchised communities.				
L. Invest in Apprenticeship Modernization - To improve preparation of young people to enter careers, invest in the development of registered youth apprenticeship programs through mutually beneficial partnerships across schools, industry, and communities.	Youth apprenticeship programs create opportunities for disenfranchised youth to finish high school, start their postsecondary education at little-to-no cost, and participate in paid work experience alongside a mentor that can set a path for their future.				
M. Invest in Stackable Credentials and Continuous Education for Registered Apprentices - Modernized registered apprenticeships to provide an opportunity to earn stackable credentials that ensure skill proficiency and reflect the most current, relevant skills needs of local employers.	Long-term stability of apprenticeship programs coupled with stackable credentials through scholarships, tax incentives, and other financial incentives will enhance workforce and job opportunities for disenfranchised communities.				

E = Improved Engagement | U = Centering the User | W = Wraparound Services | A = Apprenticeships

Imperative 1

Foster deep, sustained engagement by key industry leaders, employers, and labor unions to identify and communicate skills necessary for competitive employment

Overview

Across the state, genuine, long-term engagement from the business and employer community with workforce and talent development partners has been inconsistent, challenging, and ineffective on many counts. We believe we need employer-based consortiums. The reimagining of this private-sector engagement must include more meaningful methodologies that foster and sustain higher-quality collaboration, accountability, and commitment from employers.

Without this strategic shift, we will continue to fall short in meeting the needs of Oregon's workers and our business and employer communities. Those Oregonians most negatively impacted by the pandemic, particularly from communities of color, low-income communities, those with physical and mental disabilities, and from rural areas, need our leadership now more than ever. It is time to step up. Oregon's long-term "economic success" fundamentally includes economic prosperity for all of these disenfranchised populations.

Proven and Promising Models

Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) – US Chamber of Commerce¹

The Talent Pipeline Management initiative is a strategic alignment that connects the classroom, students, employers, and careers. The TPM approach develops talent pipelines with long-term strategies for upskilling, gap filling, career pathway development, and succession planning. Seventy-eight percent of hiring managers say the skills gap persists across industries. Employers need a talent strategy that will help them better communicate their most critical jobs and skills needs to their partners in education.

According to the US Chamber of Commerce, the key benefits of this initiative are that it:

- Builds on industry best practices and is Authentically employer-led;
- Generates granular, actionable data on employer demand;
- Provides a structured process for collective action and decision making;
- Engages the full spectrum of talent sourcing providers;

- Creates shared value, competitiveness, and accountability; and
- Focuses on employer Return on Investment.

TPM is a demand-driven, employer-led approach to close the skills gap that builds talent supply chains aligned to dynamic business needs. The demands of today's economy require a strategic alignment between classroom and career, so through this approach, employers play an expanded leadership role as "end-customers" of our education and training systems. There are six, key strategies to TPM.

1. Organize employer collaboratives

Create a collaborative that organizes employers to identify the most promising opportunities for engagement around similar workforce needs.

2. Engage in demand planning

Develop projections for job openings to determine with accuracy the type of talent and how much of it employers need.

3. Communicate competency & credential requirements

Create a shared language to better communicate competency, credentialing, and other hiring requirements of critical jobs in ways that allow employers to signal similarities and differences.

4. Analyze talent flows

Identify where employers historically source their most qualified talent and analyze the capacity of those sources—as well as untapped talent sources—to meet projected demand.

5. Build talent supply chains

Build and manage the performance of talent supply chains to create a positive return on investment for all partners.

6. Continuous improvement

Use data from your talent supply chain to identify the most promising improvement opportunities to generate a better return on investment in the future.

State-Level Consortium Strategy via Industry Intermediaries - Colorado Workforce Development Council

Over the past three decades, globalization and technology-induced changes such as automation and digitization have irrevocably altered US industry and jobs. According to a 2015 McKinsey Global Institute report on the impact of digitization on the US economy, the speed of technology-induced skill displacement is projected to double over the next decade. Fifty percent of workforce activities could be automated with existing technologies, but only 15 percent have been automated to date. As a result, more than 30 percent of US workers will need to change jobs or upgrade their skills significantly by 2030, and 65 percent of today's primary-school students will hold jobs that don't exist today.

The patchwork of workforce-development efforts in the United States has historically struggled to respond to these issues and failed to adapt to the needs of employers and individual workers. According to a Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce report, approximately \$1 trillion is spent on workforce development and training annually. However, the pervasive view among stakeholders is that the returns on such investments have fallen well short. What can we do about this issue?

Seven initiatives to transform workforce development are to:

1. Develop new educational models that can meet the rapidly evolving needs of a new economy;
2. Shift more employers from hiring to actively building the pipeline;
3. Take a granular, fact-based view of workforce planning and establish quantifiable goals;
4. Create an integrated, systemwide view of agencies involved in workforce development and establish concrete goals;
5. Deploy insights and technology to support better decision making by states, employers, and educators;
6. Help individuals navigate career options; and
7. Replicate and expand programs that have worked well elsewhere.

State Apprenticeship Program ROI Calculator -- Oregon Employment Department and Bureau of Labor and Industry in partnership with HECC Office of Workforce Investments²

Businesses across the United States use Registered Apprenticeship programs to train workers in the skills they need to stay competitive in an ever-changing marketplace. Registered Apprenticeship is a proven business investment with associated costs and benefits. This [Return on Investment \(ROI\) Calculator](#) is just one tool businesses can use to explore Registered Apprenticeship program options. This type of calculator could be adjusted and used for determining the ROI for other work-based learning models in specific business sectors.

This tool provides common costs and benefits for businesses regarding apprenticeships and guides users through the calculation process to better understand the potential ROI on apprenticeships. Businesses have often reported that it is easier to place a dollar value on costs than it is for benefits. Even if the calculator initially shows a negative

ROI, users can explore the [Resources Page](#) to have a more comprehensive understanding of the numerous benefits that can be used to estimate the overall value of apprenticeships to the employer.

Oregon businesses that were interviewed during the development of this ROI Calculator, and businesses participating in other studies, have reported a wide range of valuable benefits that are realized by utilizing the apprenticeship model. Overall, the calculator can help turn rough concepts into dollars and those who use it can discover why Registered Apprenticeships are worth the investment.

Imperative 2

Center the system on the user experience and acknowledge different pathways for different people and industries

Overview

A reimagined system should put the user at the center of the process. Every user experiences the system differently. Entry processes may be straightforward to some applicants and overwhelming to others. In addition, pathways vary by industry. The redesign should address how “design thinking” could be applied to Oregon’s workforce system to differentiate the experience across the diverse profile of job seekers and industries. The redesign should also explain how the system would stabilize a household’s financial conditions, restore confidence for those who have suffered a job loss or other disruptive life event, provide pathways for communities traditionally underrepresented in certain industries, offer a range of in-person and online training opportunities, bring greater clarity to career navigation, and provide continued supports after job entry.

Proven and Promising Models

Promise Neighborhood – Federal Grant Program, Washington, DC

A Promise Neighborhood is both a place and a strategy. Many Promise Neighborhoods have experienced economic distress and its consequences, often facing inadequate access to high quality early learning opportunities, struggling schools, low high school and college graduation rates, high rates of unemployment, high rates of crime, and indicators of poor health.

A Promise Neighborhood is also a strategy for addressing the issues faced by communities in distress. Strong lead organizations and partners work to ensure that over time all children in a Promise Neighborhood have access to a continuum of solutions, or pipeline, that support them from cradle to career. By “braiding” federal and other resources, communities can create opportunities and achieve better results for all. Promise Neighborhoods build pipelines of programs, service, and supports so that children and youth in distressed communities can succeed in school and beyond. This is one piece of a multi-agency strategy to address struggling schools, high unemployment, poor housing, persistent crime, and other problems in high-poverty neighborhoods.

The Promise Neighborhoods program is designed around a Results Framework with ten results that each community aims to achieve, from

children being ready for kindergarten to families and community members supporting learning in Promise Neighborhoods schools. Progress in achieving these ten results is measured using the associated indicators. The Promise Neighborhoods program also recognizes that each community is unique and provides flexibility for how the results will be achieved.

Results Framework

Education

- Children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school
- Students are proficient in core academic subjects
- Students successfully transition from middle school grades to high school
- Youth graduate from high school
- High school graduates obtain a postsecondary degree, certification, or credential

Family and Community Support

- Students are healthy
- Students feel safe at school and in their community
- Students live in stable communities
- Families and community members support learning in Promise Neighborhood Schools
- Students have access to 21st century learning tools

Skills for an Inclusive Economic Recovery: A Call for Action, Equity, and Accountability – National Skills Coalition, Washington, DC

An inclusive economic recovery is an expansion of the U.S. economy in which the workers and businesses who were most impacted by this recession, as well as workers who were previously held back by structural barriers of discrimination or lack of opportunity, are empowered to equitably participate in and benefit from the economy's expansion and restructuring. We believe a set of expansive, industry- and worker-targeted skills and policies at both the federal and state levels, accompanied by the necessary income and social service supports to keep workers and businesses whole during this transition, must be part of the strategy in pursuit of that goal.

Federal and state governments should provide immediate and sustained relief to those who are out of work, out of business, or just barely hanging on. Income support, healthcare assistance, paid leave, and payroll protection to mitigate small business layoffs will be necessary for some time to come. These immediate responses are essential, but policymakers also need to start investing in our future today, in a way that ensures that every worker and every small business can be part of our nation's economic recovery. A set of generation-defining investments in inclusive skills policy can contribute to addressing the disproportionate impact of the economic crisis on workers of color, immigrants, and workers with a high school diploma or less; the essential role of small businesses who hire locally and invest in their people but need policymakers to be their partner; and the moral and economic imperative to dismantle structural racism within workforce education and training.

Principles

- Invest in those first who have been hurt the most
- Measure the impacts of our interventions and hold ourselves accountable
- Eliminate structural racism in skills policies
- Better jobs than before the pandemic
- Sustainable careers vs. Just a job
- Industry-specific partnerships with small businesses at the table

Goals

- A safety net that supports workers' long-term pathway to a skilled career
- A comprehensive approach to retraining and reemployment for all displaced workers
- Publicly funded job creation that includes training for those in need of a new career
- Support to local businesses to avert layoffs and encourage upskilling
- Sector partnerships to drive industry specific training and hiring strategies
- Digital access and learning for all working people at home and on the job

This initiative is about high-quality, job-ready education for those who need to re-enter the labor market, including making college work for working people. This work requires public data and accountability regarding who is being included in this recovery.

The New School, Institute on Race and Political Economy – New York, NY

Around the world and across the United States, unjust identity-group based social stratifications harm individuals and communities. Inequalities that formed over centuries cannot be undone with small ideas. Structural problems require transformational ideas grounded in rigorous research. The Institute on Race and Political Economy advances research to understand structural inequalities and works to identify transformational ways to promote equity. As a premier cross-disciplinary hub, the Institute draws on faculty across The New School in New York City, which has long fostered innovative thinking about power, structure, design, politics, economics, and society. The Institute engages researchers and practitioners, including community and business leaders, policymakers, philanthropists, and journalists across the nation and around the world.

The New School and Institute on Race and Political Economy Principles:

Building relationships beyond academia

As a convenor and supporter of partnerships and relationships, the Institute aims to connect researchers to leaders in civil society—members of community organizations, policymakers, workers groups, business leaders, philanthropists, journalists, and activists—to take on society's most difficult inequities.

Advancing knowledge, measurement, theory, and methodology

The Institute aims to house innovative research teams that will make new contributions to theory and methods, and to make measurements and release findings that can help everyone see inequity more clearly than ever before.

Identifying, testing, and scaling transformative solutions

From Baby Bonds to a Federal Job Guarantee to innovations that have not yet been developed, the Institute supports imaginative, bold ideas to shift policy and practice so that government, business, and nonprofit entities can advance equity in large and measurable ways. As a research lab, the Institute will work to put these ideas on the public agenda—and work with partners on pilot projects, implementation, measurement, evaluation, and taking successes to scale.

Fostering a new generation of scholars

The Institute aims to support the success and empowerment of scholars, especially scholars who are Black, Latinx, other people of color, women, Indigenous People, or those who hold other social identities subordinated by dominant groups. Further, the Institute aims to be part of conversations about ways academic institutions that too often perpetuate and exacerbate inequalities can transform themselves into engines of equity. The work will involve fusing insights from multiple disciplines to improve our understanding of the causes, consequences, and remedies associated with racial, ethnic, gender, and other stratifications in a host of domains including education, employment, criminal justice, health, housing, environment, asset accumulation, and other vital sectors across the regional, national, and international landscape.

State Policy Road Map for an Equitable Economic Recovery – Jobs for the Future, Washington, DC

In response to historic inequities that have only been exacerbated during times of crisis, Jobs for the Future (JFF) urges policymakers to think about COVID-19 recovery differently. This recovery must be equitable, with a vision that ensures systemic transformation, fosters community revitalization, and provides individuals from all backgrounds with career and educational opportunities and the supports they need to succeed. JFF invites policymakers, business and civic leaders, and their community partners to use this Road Map to guide their states' recoveries from the pandemic-induced downturn and to establish a longer-term vision for resilient, diversified, and inclusive economies for a better and brighter tomorrow.

The question now in front of state policymakers is how to create the conditions for an economic recovery that benefits everyone and ensures that all workers have opportunities to contribute to a more resilient and more prosperous future.

Experience and evidence indicate it will take concerted effort to help people, places, and systems in the following ways:

1. Help people rebound and advance by equipping all workers and learners with the knowledge, tools, and experiences needed for career entry and advancement.

- Skill-building and work supports that are aligned to in-demand career paths—especially those involving skills that will prove to be most valuable in the post-COVID era, with a focus on individuals hardest hit by the current crisis and those most at risk of being left behind in a recovery.
- Universal career navigation services that are tech-enabled, place-based, and advancement-driven, and are available to workers and learners in real time, so they can make informed decisions about employment and education pathways.

- Innovative financing options that enable workers and learners facing economic insecurities to pay for education and training, and thereby open up new opportunities for (re-)employment and strengthen their financial stability.
- Strong safety nets for vulnerable families that seamlessly integrate education, workforce development, and human and social services.

2. Revitalize regional economies by investing in quality jobs and broadening access to them, co-designing talent development solutions with employers to address pressing skill demands and business growth opportunities and empowering the community to play a role in charting a course for economic development.

- Job-generating investments in projects such as broadband deployments, public health initiatives, and infrastructure improvements that integrate financing to distressed communities with family-supporting employment and skills development opportunities.
- Sector-based strategies to strengthen talent pipelines, close skill gaps, and limit workforce shortages in industries and occupations critical to regional economic recovery and resilience.
- An inclusive approach to economic development that builds diversified and resilient regional economies through strategies that are intentionally designed to benefit vulnerable, disadvantaged communities and encourage investments in small businesses, entrepreneurs, and emerging industries.
- Efforts to improve job quality for workers and better meet the needs of employers by utilizing strategies that incorporate the voice of the worker—with a focus on jobs that are essential to regional economic growth during the crisis and recovery.

3. Redesign education and workforce development systems by scaling and sustaining what works, spurring innovation, dismantling inequitable and arcane structures, and fostering collective action across systems in order better serve the skill needs of all workers, learners, businesses, and regional economies.

- A skills-based education and employment infrastructure that embraces outcomes-focused innovation and uses individuals' skills—no matter where or how they acquire those skills—as the principal measure of how much they've learned, the credentials they're qualified to receive, and their ability to do a job.

- Accelerated and efficient pathways that provide all learners with opportunities to acquire skills and credentials that are valued in the labor market.
- Integration of learning and work to provide individuals with real-world opportunities to apply the lessons learned in classroom settings, earn money while they learn, and get a head start on the road to a career.

Pathways to Opportunity – Oregon Community Colleges Initiatives

Pathways to Opportunity (PTO) is a state-wide initiative supported by the Oregon President's Council and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's Office of Community College and Workforce Development. The initiative is designed to increase equitable student success and economic mobility. The project aims to increase access to resources and services that can better support students facing financial barriers to attending and completing college. Examples of financial barriers include tuition and fees, transportation, food, textbooks, testing fees, and more.

Record economic growth, historically low unemployment rates, and increasing rates of educational attainment have occurred across Oregon since the last recession.³ Unfortunately, this growth has not taken place across all communities. Growing disparities in educational attainment and income are increasing for communities of color and rural residents, stagnating economic mobility for generations. At the same time, employers are in need of a more robust and skilled talent pool to meet their workforce needs. Community colleges are working to address these disparities and to fill these skills gaps.

Oregon is out front nationally and forging the way with Pathways to Opportunity. Under the vision of Portland Community College President Mark Mitsui, the college is leading the statewide Pathways to Opportunity initiative that was codified under HB 4043. The initiative brings together a coalition of all 17 community colleges, state agencies, philanthropists, and anti-poverty advocates. Pathways to Opportunity closes opportunity gaps and increases economic mobility by expanding the federal, state, and local resources available to low-income students so more individuals can attend and complete college. Addressing these inequities is a social justice imperative, and an economic development necessity to meet the current and future needs of communities and industries across Oregon.

Pathways to Opportunity is an innovative approach that brings together a dynamic coalition of stakeholders. Through this coalition, participants have learned from national policy experts and educational equity leaders. This community of practice provides a forum to lift up promising practices and share information about benefit programs that can support college access, completion, and entry into family wage career paths.

Imperative 3

Improve alignment with agencies and nonprofits that provide wraparound supports

Overview

User-centered design requires special attention to critical, adjacent services that allow trainees the time to focus on skill-building. The pandemic has underscored the critical role of childcare in parents' ability to engage in training and ultimately enter the labor force. Many job seekers will also need assistance with transportation and other basic needs, including food. The redesign should describe how a new system will integrate programming and funding from state and local human service, health, and education to provide holistic support to trainees.

Proven and Promising Models

TANF Youth Employment Program (YEP) - Oregon

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) provides cash assistance to low-income families with children while they strive to become self-sufficient. Cash assistance is intended to meet a family's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and utilities. The Jobs Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS) program is the state's employment and training program for low-income families on TANF. The JOBS program provides job search, work experience, employment, high school and GED completion, life skills, and other services to parents in the JOBS program. The TANF Youth Employment Program (YEP) is intended to be a year-round program providing employment experiences for youth in the JOBS Program. The focus of the YEP is on eligible teen parents, non-parenting teens, young parents, and TANF related youth in the Child Welfare Independent Living Program and Vocational Rehabilitation Program between the ages of 16-24. Oregon DHS administers these programs.

YEP is designed to give youth the experience of working, gaining occupational skills, and learning what it feels like to receive a paycheck. Placements are encouraged at organizations that have occupations of interest to youth. Three DHS districts have piloted a year-round program and the following are some best practices for districts implementing the year-round model:

- Offer pre-work activities to get youth ready for a job, such as career exploration activities, job shadows at work sites, and money management;
- Provide unpaid short work experiences that work better for some youth who do not want to commit to very many hours;
- Build relationships during the school year with school counselors and for after school activities around career exploration and job readiness for summer placements;
- Engage with apprenticeship programs;
- Develop sites based on youth interests;
- Focus on financial literacy workshops during pre-placement work;
- Provide family coach home visits to help with engagement;
- Help school-aged youth learn to research their goals and career interests in advance of summer employment placements; and
- Focus on the older youth during the school year, as the school-aged youth are not usually willing, or able to work due to clubs, sports, and other activities.

DHS partnered with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) through an inter-agency contract in order to sub-contract with the Workforce Boards for placements in YEP. This streamlined the process for DHS with one contract to manage, and maximized an HECC strength in managing sub-contracts. This allowed funds to be available through sub-contracts for YEP participants sooner and more efficiently. Another benefit of this partnership

was an alignment of resources. Existing HECC sub-contracts with local workforce development boards (WDBs) provided WIOA Title I funds for youth services closely aligned with YEP services. Local WDBs also receive additional youth services funding from a variety of sources. These aligned, combined, and leveraged funds provide better outcomes for youth.

SNAP Training Employment Program (STEP) – Oregon

The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offers food benefits to eligible, low-income individuals and families. SNAP has an Employment and Training (E&T) component known as the SNAP Training Employment Program (STEP) and is administered by DHS in Oregon. This program assists clients in gaining valuable skills, training, or experience that will improve employment prospects leading to self-sufficiency and a reduced reliance on SNAP benefits. This program provides employment-related services to federally defined mandatory adult SNAP clients.

Oregon STEP offers a number of services to eligible participants:

- Supervised job search and job search training;
- Basic education and English language acquisition;
- Work-readiness training;
- Career/Technical and vocational training;
- Pre-apprenticeship/Apprenticeship, work experience, and on-the-job training;
- Childcare, transportation, and other supportive services; and
- Clothing, tools, and equipment.

The SNAP 50/50 program reimburses 50% (50 cents per dollar invested) for SNAP E&T program costs exceeding those covered by 100 percent of federal SNAP funds or for supportive

services provided to participants. Funds eligible for reimbursement can include state or local funds or non-federal funds put up by "third-party" providers contracted by states to offer E&T services. Oregon DHS has expanded SNAP 50/50 programming to align, increase, and leverage workforce systems, state resources, and community-based organization and community college investments. Numerous partners participate in these aligned and expanded resources.

A particular success is the Oregon Community College SNAP 50/50 Consortia. The colleges are reimbursed for 50 percent of their expenses related to the project while the other half comes from existing college resources, like state, local grant, or foundation funding. Colleges offer extra support and resources that can help students complete their GED, improve their English skills, earn a college credential, do an internship, and/or find a job that leads to a living-wage career. The Consortia allows for careful and intentional allocation of college resources to create new, expanded or enhanced services that can increase college access and success for SNAP recipients and lead to living wage careers. The colleges use a skills-based approach to increase college access and completion, career pathway advancement, and connection to living wage careers. Reimbursements are reinvested back into the program, providing key staffing and support services for students (tuition, fees, books, tools, transportation, etc.).

Imperative 4

Extend the apprenticeship model beyond manufacturing and the construction trades

Overview

The U.S. has looked to Europe's more advanced system of apprenticeships as a way to expand training, meet employers' needs, and keep costs down for trainees. Oregon is already in a leading position, with more than 10,000 active apprentices—or roughly 0.5 percent of the work force. But Oregon's system is concentrated in about 27 occupations in the manufacturing and construction sectors (e.g., carpenters, electricians, machinists, plumbers, roofers).

Oregon has an opportunity by some experts accounts to nearly triple the number of occupations served by registered apprenticeships. Candidates for expansion include: 1) occupations that pay living wages and are growing (e.g., customer service representatives, patient representatives, medical secretaries); and 2) occupations that have faced “degree inflation”—jobs that require a bachelor's degree that may not have previously (e.g., billing and posting clerks, executive or administrative assistants, medical record technicians, payroll and timekeeping clerks). All these occupations offer an opportunity for employers and educators to collaborate on training options that require less sacrifice—in income and time—from trainees.

Automation, Artificial Intelligence, and other technical innovations continue to create ever-increasing challenges and opportunities for many of Oregon's workers and students. Women, youth, and BIPOC members from both metro and rural Oregon face even more challenges and barriers around access to time-tested, high-quality registered apprenticeship programs and resources.

Registered apprenticeship programs are proven workforce development models that afford participants the opportunity to earn while they learn. These programs typically take extensive time and resources to create and manage. Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-value career pathway where employers develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a nationally recognized, portable credential. In addition to being registered under the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI) in our state, employers can choose to register their programs with the United States Department of Labor (DOL) to show employers and prospective job seekers that their apprenticeship program meets national quality standards.

Education and training pathways into some of the most in-demand careers in Oregon, including careers in the Care Economy, technology, and advanced manufacturing, often come at a high cost to students. As a result, many Oregonians, particularly from underserved communities, choose a different career path. Further, there has been a persistent lack of diversity in apprenticeship programs in Oregon, and women and those from BIPOC communities often feel unwelcome.

Registered apprenticeship modernization efforts include expanding investments in these programs for Care Economy jobs like Community Health Workers, Alcohol and Drug Counselors, Mental Health Clinicians, other Healthcare related fields, Early Childhood Education and Care Providers. It also includes investments in the Technology sector for careers in IT Support, Cybersecurity and Cloud Computing. Expanding apprenticeships in Advanced Manufacturing and Registered Youth Apprenticeships are also key to modernizing Registered Apprenticeship in Oregon.

Proven and Promising Models

Madden Apprenticeship Program (MAP) - Madden Industrial Craftsmen

Registered apprenticeship programs are proven workforce development models that afford participants the opportunity to earn while they learn. These programs typically take extensive time and resources to create and manage. Apprentices are usually placed with one employer. As they increase their skills via work-based learning and college level courses, apprentices receive incremental pay increases.

The Madden Apprenticeship Program (MAP) is different than the traditional model. It is the first-ever registered apprenticeship program in the country that is managed by a staffing agency. Approved by the Federal Department of Labor and the Bureau of Labor and Industry in Oregon, this promising practice creates a pool of workers with a variety of skill sets. As a state registered, high-quality apprenticeship program, it increases worker skills, meets employer needs, and enhances performance outcomes. However, if a manufacturer faces a downturn or layoff, Madden will help to place employees with other clients, which means a wider range of on-the-job training for the worker and more flexibility for the employer.

Apprentices in the Madden Apprenticeship Program are able to continue building their journey-level certification while earning a national, industry-recognized credential toward an associate degree. The program reduces the cost to businesses for participating in apprenticeship training. The Madden Apprenticeship Program handles Human Resources administration, skills verification, essential employability skills (soft skills) screening, education tracking, and payroll, thus giving manufacturers of all sizes the ability to offer apprenticeships. Employers no longer need to implement a 5-year program on their own and can simply hire apprentices as demand dictates. Not surprisingly, this model results in reduced turnover costs, little to no training start-up costs, highly skilled and capable workers, and higher productivity and flexibility.

New America and Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA) Nationwide⁵

Youth apprenticeship transforms how the nation's education system prepares young people to enter careers and launches them into a successful adulthood through mutually beneficial partnerships across schools, industry, and communities. These partnerships create opportunities for youth apprentices to finish high school, start their postsecondary education at little-to-no cost, gain paid work experience alongside a mentor, and start along a path that broadens their options for the future.

For employers, youth apprenticeship is a cost-effective talent strategy, as apprentices build

skills to meet ever evolving business needs and develop into valued contributors to the profitability of the employers.

The Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA), a multi-stakeholder initiative led by New America, has awarded nine grants in the first joint philanthropic investment to expand youth apprenticeship in the United States. These grants support place-based partnerships of employers, educators, community partners, and policy leaders who are working together to build high-quality youth apprenticeship programs that promote inclusive economic development and create new opportunities for young people.

Selected from a pool of over 220 applicants from 49 states and Puerto Rico, in 2019, the grantees launched and expanded high-quality youth apprenticeship programs in multiple cities, regions, and states, and in a range of business and sectors.

Grant funding supported strategy development and implementation activities over a 17-month period, beginning in May 2019. During this period, grantees engaged in cross-site learning and received tailored technical assistance from PAYA National Partner organizations and other leading experts in the education, workforce, and policy sectors.

Grantees also joined the newly formed PAYA Network, a national learning community designed to link high-potential, dynamic partnerships working across the country to launch, expand, and improve apprenticeship opportunities for high school-aged youth. The PAYA Network was formed to recognize, support, and connect high-potential leaders identified through the PAYA Grant Initiative, and to support them as they work to build the emerging field of youth apprenticeship. PAYA resources network members to organize and host a range of activities, including national workgroups and in-person gatherings, and to elevate their impact on the students and employers in their communities.

Medical Assistant and Surgical Tech Apprenticeships - Southern Oregon Workforce Board (SOWIB)⁶

The Medical Assistant Apprenticeship with 22 employers statewide, including Samaritan Health Services, Aviva Health, Grande Ronde Hospital, and others, creates a true earn and learn pathway to employment for job seekers, leading to a nationally recognized credential, the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA), through National Healthcareer Association. Medical assistants complete administrative and clinical tasks in the offices of physicians, hospitals, and other healthcare facilities. Their duties vary with the location, specialty, and size of the practice. Benefits to employers include increased numbers of MAs completing training with certification and a formalized onboarding process. This results in the potential to lower recruitment costs by centralizing processes through the apprenticeship program.

The Medical Assistant Apprenticeship program takes just one year to complete. Apprentices are responsible for completing the online coursework on their own time. The term of the apprenticeship program is 2,000 hours of on-the-job, paid work experience. Apprenticeship costs are currently covered by grants, including CCMA test preparation and testing fees.

The online related training delivered by a Registered Nurse with a master's degree includes Foundational Knowledge and Basic Science, Anatomy and Physiology, Clinical Patient Care, Patient Care Coordination and Education, Administrative Assisting, Communication and Customer Service, and Medical Law and Ethics.

Growth of the program has been strong and from 2018 through 2020 the apprentices increased from 30 registered in 2018 to 53 that registered in 2020 for a 76.7% increase. There have been 125 apprentices go through the program and 94% of the 53 apprentices registered in 2020 are on track to complete. The apprentices in the program have achieved a 100% pass rate on CCMA exam since inception. And, in spite of 2020, the program has registered another 7 apprentices in the first two months of 2021.

Youth Apprenticeship Program - Idaho Business for Education State of Idaho⁷

Youth Apprenticeships provide education, work experience, and access to postsecondary education, training, and certifications. This Youth Apprenticeship program connects 16-24-year-olds to jobs, training, and careers in Idaho. Building workforce-ready labor requires a collaborative effort among government, business, and education. As such, through a multi-partnership effort between the Idaho Workforce Development Council, Idaho Department of Labor, Idaho public secondary and post-secondary institutions, and Idaho Career and Technical Education, Idaho Business for Education (IBE) is scaling up this program and has a goal of placing 400 apprentices by 2024 in some of the 1,228 federally registered apprenticeships available.

In Idaho, the Youth Apprenticeship program combines On-the-Job (OJT) training with related "classroom" instruction. Apprentices learn job specific skills, gain work experience, and can earn a nationally recognized certificate or credential. Programs can be designed for high school or college students, youth with a GED, young veterans, and others. Apprentices are company employees, earning at least minimum wage and progressively higher wages as skills increase.

What about the benefits? Youth Apprenticeship promotes individual economic stability, business growth, and Idaho's economic prosperity. These apprenticeships help Idaho in reaching its goal of having 60% of 25- to 34-year-old workers hold a postsecondary credential. Eighty percent of apprentices remain with the employer after the apprenticeship program ends, while innovation typically increases for the employers as apprentices bring classroom-based learning to the workplace. These programs invest in the local community, help to build the local talent pipeline, and help to provide solutions for an aging workforce.

The role of Idaho Business for Education (IBE) is to work with local employers to recruit, interview, and hire apprentices. IBE also works with educator(s) to adapt instruction to meet training needs. They work with high schools and colleges to find quality apprentice candidates. IBE provides support to the employer and apprentice throughout the process and shares apprentice data as appropriate.

The role of employers in the Youth Apprenticeship program in Idaho is to partner with IBE to interview and hire apprentices. They also help to identify specific skill sets needed and how these align with existing apprenticeship programs. Businesses partner with IDOL to customize the training to meet the employer's specific needs. Employers provide an apprentice training plan, mentoring, feedback, on-the-job-training, and share data.



Recommended Policies or Programs

The Equitable Prosperity Task Force identified 13 policy and program recommendations. Each of these recommendations aligns with the Task Force’s primary goal of improving workforce and job outcomes for BIPOC, rural, and other disenfranchised communities, in addition to two or more of the Task Force’s Imperatives as outlined below.

1. Create Oregon’s Job-Driven Training Agenda

The state’s workforce and talent needs have grown in recent years, and Oregon’s key workforce development actors—employers, community colleges, workforce agencies—lack the cohesive framework to effectively deliver the skills that a 21st Century economy demands. The current pandemic has magnified the need for Oregon to envision and commit to a shared Job-Driven Training Agenda; one that builds off Governor Brown’s 2018 Future Ready Oregon initiative and leverages the success of the Obama Administration’s Ready to Work: Job-Driven Training and American Opportunity initiative, and the Biden Administration’s American Jobs Plan.

Summary of Proposed Initiative

The goal of the Oregon Jobs-Driven Training Agenda is to better align and commit Oregon’s workforce development, education, and training providers around a clear set of shared goals, objectives, and expectations. It is an action plan to make Oregon’s workforce and training system more “job-driven, integrated, and effective,” and ensure that improvements center on a foundation of equity for underserved communities. The purpose is not to create a set of new programs or to stand up new agencies and organizations, but to better align and utilize what is already at our disposal; to improve the return-on-

investment of the existing system and break down persistent silos. In short, through strong leadership at the state level, use the existing resources we have better as well as braid in American Recovery Plan resources to ensure maximum impact.

An opportunity exists for Oregon’s Job-Driven Training Agenda to center on principles and practices similar to those outlined at the federal level:

- **Engaging Employers:** Work up-front with employers to determine local hiring needs and design training programs that are responsive to those needs – from which employers will hire.
- **Earn & Learn:** Offer work-based learning opportunities with employers – including on-the-job training, internships, and pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships – as training paths to employment.
- **Smart Choices:** Make better use of data to drive accountability, inform what programs are offered and what is taught, and offer user-friendly information for job seekers to choose programs and pathways that work for them and are likely to result in jobs.
- **Measurement Matters:** Measure, analyze, and evaluate employment and earnings outcomes.
- **Steppingstones:** Promote a seamless progression from one educational step to another and across work-based training and education, so individuals’ efforts result in progress.
- **Opening Doors:** Break down barriers to accessing job-driven training and hiring for any Oregonian who is willing and able to work, including access to job supports and relevant guidance.

Intended Outcome

There are two primary outcomes of this proposal. First, increased alignment between existing workforce actors and system resources. By ensuring there are clear and shared goals, objectives, and expectations, efficiencies can be gained. The second intended impact is improved job and employment outcomes for current and historically underserved populations in Oregon. Significant disparities existing in the state’s BIPOC, rural, and underserved communities could be addressed if the workforce system was better aligned, and job-driven.

Operational Resources & Implementation Requirements

The proposal is for Oregon to utilize existing and new ARPA resources and use the financial and human capital resources we already have better. Launching the Oregon Jobs Driven Agenda would likely require a Governor’s executive action or be initiated through the legislative process. Development and stewardship of the agenda could be managed by an existing body such as the state’s Workforce and Talent Development Board, with support from relevant state agencies.

2. Establish an Upward Mobility Indicator

Indicators are necessary to guide policy, drive data collection strategies, and measure progress. Indicators can act as the point of contact between goals, initiatives, and data. There are clear summary statistics of economic growth, poverty, and productivity, Why not opportunity? For Oregon to achieve its desired workforce and economic development goals, we need clear and credible indicators of upward mobility to have an idea of whether our programs and policies are increasing economic opportunity.⁸ This has the benefit of creating a culture of shared accountability to the success of all Oregonians.

Summary of Proposed Initiative

Upward mobility is about all Oregonians improving their economic position. Much of the existing research around upward mobility has been led by Raj Chetty, economics professor at Harvard University. Chetty's research seeks to answer the question: Is the United States really the land of opportunity?⁹ Tracking upward mobility is necessary to understand if existing workforce and economic development policies and programs are resulting in improved economic opportunity for Oregonians. The goal in creating an upward mobility indicator and establishing measurement targets is to more clearly define desired economic outcomes and to align the Oregonian's many local and state workforce and economic development actors around a shared objective.

Intended Outcome

An important reason to develop an upward mobility indicator is to track opportunity outcomes by demographics (race/ethnicity, gender, language, disability, geography, etc.) and tailor programs and policies to address current and historical disparities. Developing and adopting an upward mobility indicator will also align the state's myriad of workforce and economic development resources toward a more unified goal.

Operational Resources & Implementation Requirements

The proposal is to leverage existing data analysis efforts—such as the Oregon Data Strategy or the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's (HECC) State Longitudinal Data System—and local, regional, and state entities like the Workforce and Talent Development Board, Business Oregon, Oregon Employment Department's Office of Workforce and Economic Research, WorkSource Oregon, and Local Workforce Development Boards to provide policy, data analysis, and administrative support.

3. Ensure Communities Traditionally Left Behind Have Prominent Seats at the Workforce System Design and Implementation Table

Disenfranchised groups—communities of color, Tribes, LGBTQ+, people with differing abilities, rural communities, etc.—experience significant barriers when seeking to enter our workforce system or obtain meaningful employment. The redesign should prioritize closing well documented workforce and employment opportunity gaps, particularly in education and training required for employment. Communities traditionally left behind should have prominent seats at the design and implementation table to ensure their experience is understood and their voice is heard.

4. Research and Evaluation Project

Together with the WTDB Committee for Continuous Improvement, invest in research, focus groups, interviews, and other information gathering activities with Oregonians who have lost their jobs during the pandemic in order to understand the challenges they face and their employment aspirations in the short and long run. The aim of this research and collaboration is to better understand the support needed to survive and thrive without preconception concerning existing programs and services.

Consider investing in the creation of a workforce system “strike force” team to launch, test, and pilot innovative initiatives and/or leverage best practices across the state focused on getting displaced workers re-skilled and into livable wage jobs as soon as possible.

5. Create Oregon's Talent Pipeline Management (TPM)

Many public and private organizations included in the workforce system suffer from lack of genuine engagement coupled with convening and meeting fatigue. Implementation of a state-level initiative that leverages existing business and employer associations and/or consortiums (intermediaries) to garner genuine support, focus, and investment acknowledges this weariness around yet “another meeting” while honoring existing work, professional networks, and sector expertise and knowledge.

Increased investment in Public-Private Partnership models that leverage these existing associations in key sectors like Healthcare, Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Forest Products, Food and Agriculture, Sports and Apparel, Leisure and Hospitality, and others will result in more effective solutions related to the skilling up, reskilling, and career success of Oregonians.

The Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) initiative is once such model that provides strategic alignment and connects job seekers, students, employers, and careers. The TPM approach is a national best-practice that develops talent pipelines with long-term strategies for upskilling, gap filling, career pathway development, and succession planning.

This state-level initiative:

- Builds on industry best practices and is authentically employer-led;
- Generates granular, actionable data on employer demand;
- Provides a structured process for collective action and decision making;
- Engages the full spectrum of talent sourcing providers;
- Creates shared value, competitiveness, and accountability; and
- Focuses on employer Return on Investment.

The demands of the recovery and the fourth industrial revolution require a strategic and adaptable alignment between education, training, and career. TPM employs a demand-driven approach that helps to skill up and reskill Oregonians, while building talent supply chains that are aligned to dynamic business needs. With this approach, employers are expected to genuinely play an expanded leadership role in human-capital development and end-customers of our education and training systems.

6. Develop an asset map for workforce-related supportive/wrap-around services by region through the effort and coordination of the WTDB and Local WDBs.

The WTDB has identified an Imperative in their 2020-2021 Strategic Plan—Increase understanding and utilization of the system. The following are Objectives under this Imperative:

- Increase user (individual, employer, stakeholder/organization, and local board) awareness
- Increase utilization by workers and employers

These are directly connected to the recommendation to develop an asset map for workforce-related supportive/wrap-around services by region through the effort and coordination of the WTDB and Local WDBs.

Federal, state, and local government agencies and organizations, a variety of primarily postsecondary education institutions, numerous nonprofit and community-based organizations, and others make up the workforce “system;” yet, many of these entities are unaware of related components of the system and thus their programs and services are disconnected and unaligned. This disconnection is a particular concern related to components of the system that serve already underserved and disconnected communities in Oregon. Clearly identifying these “assets” and building awareness will create significant leverage opportunities and provide more and better services to Oregonians.

Important pieces of the larger workforce system are programs, services, and resources that support Oregonians seeking education and training related to employment and those seeking employment for the first time or after a layoff. These needs are unique to the individual. However, some important categories rise to the top including access to:

- Child Care
- Internet/Broadband Wi-Fi
- Transportation
- Housing

Underserved populations, communities of color, and rural communities must be intentionally engaged in mapping these assets, both to provide a more complete map and to build trust in the final product.

As mentioned before, mapping and communicating these assets will foster better alignment and expand the quantity and quality of services and resources particularly for underserved populations. The asset map will significantly help to identify gaps in supportive/wraparound services and prioritize existing resources, as well as support and guide new investments in resources to fill these gaps.

Work connected with this recommendation can be coordinated and executed in a similar way to the ongoing Oregon Self-Sufficiency Report. This work must also be in strong partnership with the Governor’s Racial Justice Council. The asset mapping work itself is best conducted by a third-party expert in needs assessment research at a cost of \$60-80,000.

7. Connect and integrate data regarding individuals, supportive/wraparound services, and outcomes.

Using the completed supportive services asset map, gather baseline and available historic information identifying the services, resources, and outcomes received by Oregonians. This data then must be analyzed and reported out to identify gaps and better align services. This work will also assist with eliminating duplication, investing in successful outcomes, etc.

A component of this effort might be better use of existing data through the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) at the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), and the Performance Reporting Information System (PRISM) at the Employment Department. These may inform and assist with data alignment related to supportive and wraparound services.

Initial gathering and reporting of the data and reviewing opportunities from existing data and data systems requires a high-level research analyst.

8. Communicate and streamline access to new and existing wraparound resources

A map of available supportive services or a current and accurate inventory of supportive services is only valuable if those who might need or be interested in supportive services are aware of the information and its location, can access it easily and in a form that they can engage with, and can seamlessly connect with providers of supportive services. The work of developing an asset map must be strongly linked with an effective delivery system for the information. The result is that everybody has the supportive/wraparound services and resources that they need and that gaps are closed.

The WTDB has established a Website Improvement Taskforce (WIT) to work with stakeholders and ultimately community members to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the WTDB’s website. A key piece of this work is to utilize the website as a way to build more awareness of the workforce system in Oregon for both job seekers and employers.

This work is intended to address, via the improved website, the WTDB’s Strategic Plan objectives to:

- Build awareness of the talent and workforce development system and increasing participation in all programs;
- Increase user (individual, employer, stakeholder/organization, and local board) awareness; and
- Increase utilization by workers and employers.

This work is expected to result in recommendations and actions to improve the WTDB’s website where one aspect will include streamlined communication of available supportive services. This work is funded and underway and engagement by stakeholders and users is critical to a successful result. The Governor’s Office and the Governor’s Racial Justice Council can assist with this work.

A step further is the creation of a single, one-stop system that provides co-enrollment in all eligible services including supportive services among state agency partners. This recommendation must include staff training and clear, accessible instructions to ensure easy, equitable access to all services. This requires strong aligned leadership from the Governor’s Office, the legislature, and agency heads. We need data and technology SMEs to determine operational needs and create a multi-year, fully-costed proposal for implementation.

9. Align and Leverage Wraparound Program Services

Increase investment in aligning and leveraging wraparound program services with/for registered apprentice candidates including childcare, transportation, housing credits, and other services/resources).

Record economic growth, historically low unemployment rates, and increasing rates of educational attainment have occurred across Oregon since the last recession.¹⁰ Unfortunately, this growth has not taken place across all communities. This dynamic has only been exacerbated by the pandemic. Growing disparities in educational attainment and income are increasing for communities of color and rural residents, stagnating economic mobility for generations. At the same time, employers need a more robust and skilled talent pool to meet their workforce needs. Community colleges are working to address these disparities and to fill these skills gaps.

Leverage and increase investments in Pathways to Opportunity (PTO), which is a proven model and state-wide initiative supported by the Oregon President's Council and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's Office of Community College and Workforce Development. The initiative is designed to increase equitable student success and economic mobility for younger students and displaced workers. The project aims to increase access to resources and services that can better support students facing financial barriers to attending and completing college. Examples of financial barriers include tuition and fees, transportation, food, textbooks, testing fees, and more.

10. Implement Career Connect Oregon

We recommend that Oregon utilize a public-private partnership model to leverage existing CTE/STEM Education Plans and current curriculum development focused on "jobs of the future" to increase access to career-connected learning.

Oregon recently completed the 2020-2024 Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Plan, resulting from the authorization of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V). This Plan represents a significant step forward by focusing more fully on integrating academic knowledge and technical employability skills for all learners, ensuring that historically and currently marginalized populations have the supports needed to feel welcome and be successful in the CTE program of their choice. The plan's vision is: Oregon will reimagine and transform learner experiences to enhance learners' future prospects; empower their communities; and ensure equity in an inclusive, sustainable, innovation-based economy.

Major shifts included in the State CTE Plan are to:

1. Create statewide Programs of Study aligned to workforce priorities identified in our Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) state plan to better integrate education and workforce/economic development;
2. Expand work-based learning opportunities in equitable ways so that more of our learners have the professional skills and social capital to be successful when they transfer from education into the workforce;
3. Expand career exploration into middle school to support diversifying the students entering prioritized CTE programs; and
4. Support more comprehensive career advising across K-12 and college through adulthood to communicate the economic opportunities available in our state.

These shifts in focus will be catalysts for the larger process of transforming Oregon's CTE. Implementing Oregon's CTE State Plan and disrupting current inequities in programming, participation, and outcomes requires that workforce, higher education, K-12, and business and industry come together to align our work and support our common goals.

Further, these shifts are supported by the perspectives of national CTE leaders related to improving equity in CTE. First, they identify a need for better advising to help students understand both the immediate and long-term benefits of a particular opportunity and the trade-offs they may be making by selecting it. Next, CTE leaders identify a need for much better communication and information flow to all relevant stakeholders, including students, participants, and parents. Third, CTE programs are still stigmatized, and many students and parents continue to have outdated views of what it means to be enrolled in a CTE program. Stigma is an equity challenge because some parents who still believe that CTE is only for low-income students not bound for college may not want their children to participate, even though CTE is now an opportunity for many kinds of students to explore pathways to successful career opportunities. Finally, restrictive CTE program access criteria may create equity challenges by artificially limiting access for those who can be successful in a given program.

While there is enthusiasm around CTE, there remains a lack of coordination, consistency, and quality assurance. This is particularly true related to the broader umbrella of career-connected learning. As a result, access to quality career connected learning is uneven, particularly for BIPOC and other currently and historically underserved communities. Employers become fatigued by multiple requests for participation from a variety of organizations and we miss the opportunity to create an economy of scale.

Career Connect Oregon is a proposed public-private partnership designed to drive a coordinated and equitable approach to the statewide implementation of career-connected learning for all Oregonians. Following the model of Career Connect Washington, this collaborative effort will include three core elements: 1) the establishment of a Career Connect Oregon Taskforce; 2) the development of a Career Connect Oregon Strategic Plan; and 3) the formation of a Career Connect Oregon State Team.

Career Connect Oregon will increase access to career-connected learning for Oregonians, particularly those from BIPOC and other underserved communities, by ensuring that career-connected learning is being implemented statewide, in a coordinated manner, and with accountability. A key vehicle for this effort will be increasing access to CTE programs in high school and postsecondary education. A number of career-connect learning efforts and investments already exist and would be included under the Career Connect Oregon umbrella.

These include:

- Oregon Youth Corps
- The High School Graduation and Career Readiness Fund
- Perkins V – federally funded CTE
- Oregon's Regional STEM Hub Network
- Postsecondary Career Pathways at Oregon's community colleges

Staff from ODE and HECC have formed an informal career-connected learning team to coordinate efforts across agencies. These staff have also been part of an Oregon team participating in the National Governors Association's Learning Labs on Work-based Learning. These teams could easily transition into a more formal Career Connect Oregon State Team. Proposed funding includes \$2 million for pilot programs based on the recommendations developed by the Career Connect Oregon Taskforce and approximately \$500,000 for staffing and support.

11. Establish competency-based education, training, and assessment pilot program to expand and improve its use for adult Oregonians.

In 2017, the Lumina Foundation identified four equity gaps that competency-based education, training, and assessment could help reduce:

- **Achievement Gap** – The achievement gap is the difference in learners’ academic standing often connected to race, class, and/or gender;
- **Attainment Gap** – Closely related to the achievement gap, this is the difference between those who earn a postsecondary credential and those who leave without completing;
- **Opportunity Gap** – The opportunity gap is the difference in the quality and quantity of opportunities and supports available to learners, often because of who they are or where they live; and
- **Skills Gap** – The skills gap is the difference between what individuals can do and the skills they need for a role or responsibility, oftentimes in the workplace.

There is currently a shift in education and competency-based initiatives are increasing. Learners advance based on what they know and can do, rather than time spent in class. With a more flexible structure, CBE programs offer learners high levels of customization. This is most important for those who juggle school along with work and family. Flexible learning pathways are often the only real option for working adults, especially those who take care of children or other family members.

Oregon House Bill 2378 (2021, proposed) directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to establish a pilot program for competency-based education and requires that the pilot program issues grants to public post-secondary institutions of higher education to fund promotion, expansion, and implementation of competency-based education programs. Research and policy development must consider and work closely with this work and related efforts. More importantly, this research and policy development must be based on stakeholder input from disenfranchised communities to prioritize investment in CBE programs and guide the geography and pedagogy of CBE programs.

Policy direction may include giving unemployed workers better information on their location in the skills landscape. Improved approaches work off a more focused, realistic skill-matching framework as outlined by ECONorthwest.¹¹ This requires working with business and industry on identifying skills required, particularly for lower wage jobs more vulnerable to economic downturn and developing badges reflecting these skills that are broadly accepted. It includes working with workforce development organizations to create crosswalks for industry badges to pathways to additional credentials, degrees, and certifications and also to jobs in other industries having related skill requirements. Policy direction also likely includes significantly expanding credit for prior learning in postsecondary education and badging for current work competencies with the goal of forward momentum toward a career path versus cyclical unemployment and low wage jobs.

12. Invest in Apprenticeship Modernization

Invest in apprenticeship modernization through the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Office of Workforce Investments, the Bureau of Labor and Industries, and other state and federal funding partners in alignment with recommendations sent to Oregon’s Governor’s Office by the Office of Workforce Investments (OWI) that can help inform a student’s path with transferable skills that give them a lifelong set of opportunities, including high-demand Essential Employability Skills.

This work includes investment in the development of registered youth apprenticeships. Registered apprenticeships for youth transform how the nation’s education system prepares young people to enter careers and launches them into a successful adulthood through mutually beneficial partnerships across schools, industry, and communities. These partnerships create opportunities for youth apprentices to finish high school, start their postsecondary education at little-to-no cost, gain paid work experience alongside a mentor, and start along a path that broadens their options for the future. For employers, youth apprenticeship is a cost-effective talent strategy, as apprentices build skills to meet ever evolving business needs and develop into valued contributors to the profitability of the employers.

Oregon has recently been invited by New America to apply for a grant. The Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA), a multi-stakeholder initiative led by New America, has awarded several grants in the first joint philanthropic investment to expand youth apprenticeship in the United States. These grants support place-based partnerships of employers, educators, community partners, and policy leaders who are working together to build high-quality youth apprenticeship programs that promote inclusive economic development and create new opportunities for young people. Information from the research, recommendations and reporting done by the WTDB Essential Employability Skills (EES) Task Force will be integrated into the grant application.

13. Invest in stackable credentials and continuous education for registered apprentices that reflect the workforce needs in local communities.

Modernized registered apprenticeships should ensure that students have value at different phases of their experience in all apprenticeship programs, regardless of career track or industry sector. For example, at 6-month, 2-year, and 4-year intervals there should be opportunities to earn stackable credentials that ensure skill proficiency and reflect the most current, relevant skills needs of local employers.

This strategy should also strive for adoption of legislation to support the long-term stability of apprenticeship programs coupled with stackable credentials through scholarships, tax incentives, and other financial incentives to support underrepresented populations and displaced workers.

Footnotes

1. National Governor's Association and US Chamber of Commerce
2. State of Oregon and National Governor's Association
3. Leher, 2019
4. Ken Madden, WTDB Board Chair, 2021
5. New America and Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship Website <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/partnership-advance-youth-apprenticeship/>
6. Alane Jennings, Apprenticeship Coordinator, Southern Oregon Workforce Investment Board (SOWIB)
7. Maureen O'Toole, Vice President of the Youth Apprenticeship Program, Idaho Business for Education and Youth Apprenticeship Program gives Idaho youth a chance at early success, KPVI
8. Reeves, Richard V. Chapter 13 How Will We Know? The Case for Opportunity Indicators. Economic Studies, Center on Children and Families, Brookings Institution, 2016, www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ReevesOpportunityIndicators-1.pdf.
9. Economic Mobility: Measuring the American Dream. United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr_edge_featd_article_071414.html.
10. Leher, 2019
11. Effects of Social Distancing on Oregon's Leisure and Hospitality Workers, ECONorthwest, 2020 https://www.oregon.gov/workforceboard/talent/Documents/Social%20Distancing%20Effects%20Report_09_09_2020.pdf
Oregon Talent Assessment – 2020 Update, ECONorthwest
12. <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/workforce/SiteAssets/Pages/talent-summit/2020%20Talent%20Assessment%20Update.pdf>





Equitable Prosperity Task Force

Task Force Purpose

The state's talent needs have only grown in recent years, and Oregon's key workforce development stakeholders—employers, community colleges, workforce agencies—must develop better frameworks, relationships, alignment, and tools to effectively deliver the skills that a 21st Century economy demands. The urgency of this matter has escalated considerably due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has significantly impacted adult workers, particularly **Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), rural, and other disenfranchised communities**. The charge to the Equitable Prosperity Task Force (EPTF) is to envision a redesigned workforce system to better help Oregonians share in **equitable prosperity in the post-pandemic economy**.

Task Force Membership

		Heather Ficht	East Cascades Works	Kim Parker-Llerenas	Willamette Workforce Partnership
Anne Mersereau	Portland General Electric	Jeff Reardon	State Representative	KS Venkatraman	Nvidia
Ben Cannon	Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Charter Sponsor	Jennifer Baker	Governor's Office, Charter Sponsor	Kyle Ritchey-Noll	Oregon Business Council
Camille Preus	Oregon Community College Association	John Johnson	Genentech	Mark Mitsui	Co-Chair, Portland Community College
Cathy Reynolds	Legacy Health	John Tapogna	ECONorthwest	Michael Dembrow	State Senator
Clay Martin	Workforce and Talent Development Board	Josh Hall	Oregon AFL-CIO	Patrick Crane	Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development
David Gerstenfeld	Oregon Employment Department, Charter Sponsor	Karen Humelbaugh	Office of Workforce Investments, Charter Sponsor	Shari Dunn, Co-Chair	ITBOM
Duncan Wyse	Oregon Business Council	Ken Madden	Madden Industrial Craftsmen, Inc., Charter Sponsor	Todd Nell	Workforce and Talent Development Board

Four Primary Task Force Imperatives

Initial work of the Task Force identified four imperatives to explore and recommend viable solutions. The following four imperative are in addition to the Task Force's primary priority of goal of improving workforce and job outcomes for **BIPOC, rural, and other disenfranchised communities**.

- E** Foster deep, sustained engagement by key industry leaders, employers, and labor unions to identify and communicate skills necessary for competitive employment (E = Improved Engagement)
- U** Center the workforce system on the user (U = Centering the User)
- W** Improve alignment with agencies and nonprofits that provide wraparound supports (W = Wraparound Services)
- A** Extend the apprenticeship model beyond manufacturing and the construction trades (A = Apprenticeships)

Alignment of EPTF recommendations to forthcoming American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding

Many, if not all, of the policy and programmatic recommendations outlined below are consistent with and closely aligned to core workforce priorities identified in Governor Brown's 10-Point Economic Recovery Plan and the work of the State's Racial Justice Council, including:

- Investing in Oregon's hardest hit workers (those currently unemployed or underemployed)
- Supporting Oregon's workforce (those currently employed but struggling)
- Creating opportunities for Oregonians (workforce development)
- Supporting BIPOC communities to gain access to high-value jobs
- Support communities hardest hit by COVID-19 with workforce training supports
- Target investments to reduce barriers to jobs, especially housing and childcare support.

Workforce Development Policy and Program Recommendations



Policy or Program	How will recommendation improve outcomes for BIPOC, rural, and other disenfranchised communities?	Imperative Alignment			
		E	U	W	A
A. Create Oregon's Job Driven Training Agenda - A statewide platform to better align and commit Oregon's existing workforce development, education, and training providers around a clear set of shared goals, objectives, and expectations to make Oregon's workforce and training system more job-driven, integrated, and better for the user.	Establishing system-wide shared goals, objectives, and expectations will ensure providers and stakeholders can collectively target the needs of disenfranchised communities.				
B. Establish an Upward Mobility Indicator - Create an upward mobility indicator and establish measurement targets to more clearly define desired economic outcomes and to align Oregonian's many local and state workforce and economic development actors around a shared objective.	Upward mobility and economic opportunity are closely tied to geography and demographics. Developing an upward mobility indicator—clear metrics and targets—aligns workforce development providers and stakeholders around measurable outcomes.				
C. Ensure Communities Traditionally Left Behind Have Prominent Seat at the Workforce System Design and Implementation Table - Inclusive representation will enable better outcomes and solutions to address persistent and well documented lack of employment & training opportunities for disenfranchised communities.	Representation matters. Workforce, employment, and education/training gaps for disenfranchised communities are well documented. Ensuring these communities, their voices, and their ideas are at the table is critical to addressing persistent gaps.				
D. Research & Evaluation Project - Invest in regular and consistent research, outreach, and other information gathering activities with dislocated workers to better understand the support needed and design programs to address workforce challenges and opportunities.	A commitment to continuous improvement and an investment in research and stakeholder engagement will ensure an understanding and approach to the challenges and opportunities experienced by disenfranchised communities.				
E. Create Oregon's Talent Pipeline Management - Implementation of a state-level initiative that leverages existing business and employer associations to source more effective solutions related to skilling up, reskilling, and career success.	Better workforce and job outcomes for disenfranchised communities will require a commitment from both public and private sectors. Partnering with existing business and employer associations is essential to identifying solutions.				
F. Develop an Asset Map for Workforce-Related Wrap-Around Services - Identify, map, and communicate existing workforce support programs—access to childcare, broadband, transportation, and housing, etc.—to the broader workforce “system” to enhance access and improve coordination of services.	Clearly identifying and mapping wraparound support services and “assets” will create significant leverage opportunities to provide more comprehensive and better services to disenfranchised Oregonians.				
G. Connect and Integrate Data Regarding Wraparound Services and Outcomes - Gather baseline data and information to identify gaps and better align support services. This work will also assist with eliminating duplication, investing in successful outcomes, etc.	Gathering baseline data specific to the effectiveness and alignment of wraparound support services will enable the workforce system and partners to continuously improve and achieve better long-term outcomes for disenfranchised Oregonians.				
H. Communicate and Streamline Access to New and Existing Wraparound Resources - Utilize the WTDB's established Website Improvement Taskforce (WIT) to build awareness of the workforce system and available services for job seekers and employers.	Complex systems require effective communication. Building awareness of the wraparound support services will improve outcomes for disenfranchised Oregonians.				
I. Expand Pathways to Opportunity - Invest in PTO to increase access to resources and services to support students and displaced workers facing barriers to attending and completing college such as tuition, transportation, food, books, childcare, etc.	Growing disparities in educational attainment and income have increased for disenfranchised communities, stagnating economic mobility. Investing in proven, effective models like PTO increases equitable student success and economic mobility.				
J. Implement Career Connect Oregon - Utilize a public-private partnership model to leverage existing CTE/STEM Education Plans and current curriculum development focused on “jobs of the future” to increase access to career-connected learning.	Access to quality career connected learning is uneven, particularly for disenfranchised communities. Career Connect Oregon is designed to drive a coordinated and equitable approach to the statewide implementation of career-connected learning.				
K. Competency-based Education, Training, and Assessment - Establish a pilot program to issue grants to public post-secondary institutions to fund promotion, expansion, and implementation of competency-based education programs.	Learners advance based on what they know and can do, rather than time spent in class. With a more flexible structure, CBE programs offer learners high levels of customization and the opportunity to better meet the needs of disenfranchised communities.				
L. Invest in Apprenticeship Modernization - To improve preparation of young people to enter careers, invest in the development of registered youth apprenticeship programs through mutually beneficial partnerships across schools, industry, and communities.	Youth apprenticeship programs create opportunities for disenfranchised youth to finish high school, start their postsecondary education at little-to-no cost, and participate in paid work experience alongside a mentor that can set a path for their future.				
M. Invest in Stackable Credentials and Continuous Education for Registered Apprentices - Modernized registered apprenticeships to provide an opportunity to earn stackable credentials that ensure skill proficiency and reflect the most current, relevant skills needs of local employers.	Long-term stability of apprenticeship programs coupled with stackable credentials through scholarships, tax incentives, and other financial incentives will enhance workforce and job opportunities for disenfranchised communities.				



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