

North Carolina Workforce Credentials Advisory Council

2024-2028 Strategic Plan

MEMBERSHIP

Chair, Annie Izod, Ph.D.

Executive Director, NCWorks Commission

Vice Chair, Andrew Gardner, Ed.D.

Associate Vice President Workforce Strategies

NC Community College System

Council Representation

- North Carolina Community College System - Andrew Gardner, AVP Workforce Strategies
- North Carolina Department of Commerce (3) - Andrea DeSantis, Assistant Secretary for DWS, Meihui Bodane, Assistant Secretary for Policy, Research & Strategy, Susan Fleetwood, Executive Director Economic Development
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction - Trey Michael, Senior Director, Office of Career and Technical Education
- Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina - Vacant
- Employer Representatives (11) - Elizabeth Brodie, SVP Bank of America, Jeff Toner, President James Tool Machine & Engineering, William Cockerham, President & CEO W.C. Construction Company, LLC, 8 vacant seats
- Industry Associations (2) - Andrea Fleming, Director NC Tech Association, Jill Forcina, Assoc. Director NC Area Health Education Centers Program
- Local Workforce Development Boards (2) - (Incoming) Danielle Harrison, Executive Director-GuilfordWorks Workforce Development Board, David Garrett, Director-Southwestern Workforce Development Board
- Minority-Owned Business or Nonprofit Intermediary - Philip Cooper, Executive Director of Operation Gateway
- myFutureNC - Cecilia Holden, President & CEO
- NCWorks Commission - Annie Izod, Executive Director
- North Carolina Chamber of Commerce - Debra Derr, Director
- North Carolina Business Committee for Education - Caroline Sullivan, Executive Director
- North Carolina Community Colleges (2)- Margaret Roberton, VP Central Carolina Community College, Stacey Gerard, VP, Beaufort County Community College
- North Carolina Public School Unit - Career and Technical Education Directors (2) - Both vacant
- North Carolina Society for Human Resource Management - Vacant

Background

Across North Carolina, workforce development, education, and economic development organizations are hard at work meeting the needs of businesses and connecting people to jobs. This includes working with employers to identify the critical skills needed to support growth and stability, focusing on family wage-sustaining careers.

To address these challenges, key leaders from the NC Community College System, the NC Department of Commerce, the NCWorks Commission, the NC Department of Public Instruction, local workforce boards, and the Governor's Office created an advisory council and clarified a state definition for high-quality non-degree workforce credentials. In addition to defining high-quality non-degree credentials, the Council will engage businesses and other stakeholders in developing strategies to leverage resources that support North Carolinians in obtaining the skills associated with the identified workforce credentials. The goals of the Council are to support

the development of a robust NC workforce by:

- Providing a source of high-quality, regularly-validated information on what businesses need and non-degree credentials they value to inform education, workforce development, and economic development efforts;
- Identifying high-demand skills and the valued credentials that reflect those skills, which provide pathways to jobs providing a family sustaining wage for NC citizens;
- Developing policies and procedures that support access to skills training aligned with identified credentials; and
- Ensuring access to qualified talent for NC's existing and growing businesses and industries.

Council Responsibilities

The Chair and Vice Chair shall be responsible for convening and establishing agendas for Council meetings. The Council will meet, at minimum, two (2) times a year. The Council should be representative of the North Carolina workforce. The Industry Associations/Employer representatives will rotate through the 13 primary industries in North Carolina: (1)Advanced Manufacturing; (2)Aerospace & Defense; (3)Agriculture & Natural Resources; (4)Biotechnology & Life Sciences; (5)Construction & Building; (6)Education & Training; (7)Energy; (8) Financial Services; (9) Healthcare; (10)Hospitality & Tourism; (11)Information Technology; (12)Public Safety & Administration; and, (13)Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics.

The Council must have representation from all identified agencies and entities, including representatives of all 13 industry associations or employers. The industry association/employers will serve two year terms. At least one employer representative should be currently serving in a human resources role. The Council may add staff and additional stakeholders as appropriate, including experts from Career and Technical Education, workforce development, business/industry, and work-based learning.

Each goal will be represented by a committee of the Council members. These committees will convene as needed to meet the expectations of the goal. The committee can create a subcommittee to assist with meeting the goal if necessary. Each committee should identify subject matter experts to assist with the work of the committee. The committees will provide regular updates on their work during Council meetings.

Council Vision

All North Carolinians will be aware of and have affordable access to industry-recognized training that results in high-value credentials, delivered efficiently through accelerated pathways, and leads to employment providing a family-sustaining wage.

Council Mission

To ensure greater employment stability for NC citizens through access to earn post-secondary education and high value non-degree credentials to prepare workers for in-demand jobs and to meet our statewide attainment goal of 2 million North Carolinians ages 25-44 with a post-secondary degree or high-quality credential earned by 2030.

Council Goals

The council has identified four goals and outlined initial actions to address those goals.

Goal 1: Credential Identification and Review:

Provide a source of regularly-validated information on what businesses need and high-quality credentials they value to inform education, workforce development, and economic development efforts.

- Continue to accept applications and review new credentials proposed through the existing process.
- Explore opportunities for new credentials to receive an expedited review if they have already been vetted through a partner agency.
- Develop a biennial vetting process for previously approved credentials to ensure they are still of value to learners in the labor market and valued by employers.

Goal 2: Credential Attainment:

Identifying in-demand skill sets and the high-quality credentials that reflect those skills, which provide pathways to careers that provide a family sustaining wage for NC citizens is critical to meeting our educational attainment goal in North Carolina.

- Develop a standardized reporting framework that allows for tracking high-value credentials tied to specific pathways and courses that allow for consistent NC Workforce Credential definitions and encourage alignment among workforce stakeholders

- Develop a mechanism to collect student-level information on credential and licensure attainment for the high-quality credentials approved by the NC Workforce Credentials Council.
- Establish an annual report on credential and licensure attainment and explore opportunities for longitudinal analyses that track credential holders into the marketplace to be certain that credentials identified as high value may lead to greater employment outcomes for learners over time.

Goal 3: Employer and Learner Outreach and Engagement:

Promote engagement and outreach to best understand employer needs and connect learners with affordable training to pursue high-quality credentials valued by employers. Work with business and industry associations to identify the in-demand credentials that are valued by industry using specific criteria, including the extent to which employers state in their job postings and advertisements which credentials are required or preferred.

- Elevate the voice of business and industry from all sectors throughout the identification process and partner with local leaders to develop an approach that addresses regional workforce needs.
- Develop outreach and communication strategies to ensure future learners and educators are aware of the approved NC Workforce Credentials and the available training opportunities to pursue those pathways.
- Further integrate NC Workforce Credentials into NCCareers.org so users can see which occupations these high-quality credentials are aligned with and where they can receive training toward these credentials.
- Explore other opportunities for new credentials to be identified through methods outside of the existing application process, including those identified by employers through an employer survey or other methods identified by the committee.

Goal 4: Policy and Governance:

Recommend, develop and implement policies and procedures that support access to skills training aligned with identified high-quality, and in-demand credentials.

- Identify and recommend funding needs, policies, implementation strategies, and maintenance requirements aligned to workforce needs, with a focus on educational equity and diversity.
- Provide an annual update to the leadership of partner institutions and stakeholders on the status of the NC Workforce Credentials list, implementation progress, and recommendations; and,
- Develop goals for the initiative that are actionable and measurable.

Approved October 1, 2024