

## **CHAPTER 3: VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES – NORTHWEST REGION**

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### **A. VISION**

Promote business-driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals, and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the state's economy.

Create a coordinated workforce pipeline that responds to businesses' needs, for key sectors, while increasing opportunity for individuals.

Region 6 will work toward achieving the vision using these principles as guideposts for policy development and program service delivery. Each partner will use its resources to support the following principles:

- Business demand-driven orientation through a sector strategy framework
- Strong partnerships with business at all levels
- Career pathways to jobs of today and tomorrow
- Integrated service delivery
- Access and opportunity for all populations
- Cross-agency collaboration and alignment for developing and / or promoting career pathways and industry recognized stackable credentials
- Clear metrics for progress and success
- Focus on continuous improvement and innovations
- Make the manufacturing sector a priority.
- Make the healthcare sector a priority.
- Make the transportation sector a priority.
- Make information technology, across these three sectors, a priority.
- Integrate workforce, education, and economic development.
- Increase collaboration, communication, and shared resources.
- Engage business owners and managers as solutions-forming partners.
- Increase skill levels of individuals through career pathways.
- Focus on eliminating or minimizing barriers to education and employment.
- Create user-friendly processes and systems, intake through exit.
- Improve outreach, branding, and identity.

### **B. GOALS**

The Region 6 partners will collectively use the following goals to support Illinois' vision to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development strategies at the state, regional and local levels to improve the economic growth and competitiveness of the state's employers and their workforce.

- Foster improvement and expansion of employer-driven, regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.
- Expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.
- Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge

programs.

- Expand information for employers and job-seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

### **C. REGIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIES AND SERVICES**

Region 6 will use a variety of strategies for the implementation of these goals with A focus on improving community prosperity through more competitive businesses and workers.

- Pursue data-driven collection activities that strive for as close to real-time, detailed demand data regarding positions and the individual tasks involved in the positions
- Pursue data-driven activities that strive for detailed demand data regarding immediate available positions and projected positions for 3 and 5 years forward
- Identify and eliminate duplicated services to leverage resources with partners
- Develop a regional cross-agency benchmark report for stakeholders and the public.
- Provide data and tools to support regional planning for aligning education, workforce and economic development strategies in support of demand data
- Align and integrate business and job-seeker services among the core education/training partners along with regional economic development partners.
- Create new pathways for success by preparing very low-skill adults to take advantage of sector-based bridge programs.
- Identify best practice models.
- Support awareness and adoption of innovative private sector models, such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative.
- Form a committee of the partners to visit the local businesses together to listen to needs and tour. Revisit business with suggest strategies.
- Provide Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits on-line application assistance and explain Benefit Rights Information.
- Attend Rapid Response and WARN meetings.

- Implement National Emergency Grant (NEG) Sector Partnership (SG) strategies for the health care sector.
- Implement work-based learning programs and strategies.
- Utilize business intermediaries, including but not limited to U. S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation.
- Organize recruiting and hiring events with employers on-site and off-site.
- Participate in partner employment service-related events and activities, including but not limited to Department of Corrections Re-entry Summits and Summits of Hope.
- Promote partner re-training programs and events using IDES outreach notices.
- Make employer interview appointments for job seekers, following the job development process.
- Conduct employer outreach, explaining benefits of hiring military veterans, including but not limited to Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC).
- Each partner will determine how its services can best address the needs of unemployment insurance recipients and get them back into the workforce.
- Continue to share workforce intelligence and organize hiring events, through partners, local economic development entities, and businesses.
- Pursue development of the a new partnership with Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC).
- Continue expanded shared business services through combining local areas' team meetings.
- Expand recently begun series of employer forums, focusing on manufacturing, involving all core partners.
- Apply for a local area Youth Career Pathways Grant through Illinois Department

of Commerce (DCEO).

#### **D. ALIGN AND INTEGRATE EDUCATION, WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Form a committee of interested sector employers, beginning with manufacturing, to request specific employment data (confidentially) that would be shared among the partners. The participating businesses would need to pay for the data supplied to be compiled.
- Work with existing employer sector groups, beginning with health and medical, and community colleges, to expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated training and work-based learning, leading to industry-recognized credentials, resulting in improved employment and earnings.
- Participate in the region's several Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning processes with economic development professionals.
- Participate in the region's several Area Planning Council (APC) Area Plan development processes with education professionals and community college administrators.
- Participate in the region's several workforce development initiatives of Chambers of Commerce and United Way organizations.
- Support Illinois Economic Development Association (IEDA) through membership.
- Expand career services and opportunities for special populations of all types, facing barriers to educational attainment and economic advancement.
- Create public – private partnerships or alignments with businesses and not-for-profit agencies that serve special populations.
- Improve public / private data infrastructure by collecting regional data and investigating methods to make the data accessible.
- Work closely with local community college partners in bridge programs.
- Provide work-based training for those who qualify for Title V services.
- Co-enroll individuals with local partners programs, as needed to assist those with multiple barriers to become successful.
- Request opportunities to make presentations to economic development practitioners and professionals, through chambers of commerce and economic development association.
- Host workshops for economic development practitioners and professionals.
- Connect with entrepreneurs and those starting businesses, to assist with workforce needs.
- Assist communities and chambers with requests for information from businesses that may relocate or expand.