



Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board

Strategic Plan 2023-2026

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I. Introduction

This plan has been developed to help the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) set strategic priorities and guide our efforts to strengthen the region's workforce.

This plan serves as a tool to help us in making decisions - it offers us a touchstone to refer to when deciding upon a course of action; it is our guide by which we set our course. It offers us full flexibility while pointing us in a determined direction. In this regard, the plan is meant to be a fluid and living document.

The plan has developed through an inclusive and collaborative process with feedback from our partners and regional stakeholders, informed by data and labor market information.

II. Who We Are

MISSION

The Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board will create, and continue to improve, an innovative and quality strategic direction for the regional workforce development system.

VISION

Northwest Wisconsin will have a workforce system that matches businesses to their workforce. Training will be available locally through industry initiatives and career pathways that are responsive to local labor dynamics and trends. The system will be recognized as the system of choice for constituents and economic growth.

ABOUT

The NWWIB is a private sector led 501(c)3 responsible for the oversight of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other training and employment initiatives in the ten counties of Northwest Wisconsin; Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Price, Iron, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor and Washburn and the tribal nations of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, and St Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin. The board is comprised of business leaders, workforce development partners, and tribal representatives who are committed to creating a workforce system that meets the needs of the employers and workers in the region.

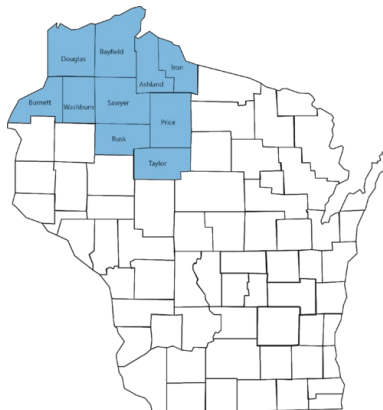


Figure 1: NWWIB serves the counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Price, Iron, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor and Washburn.

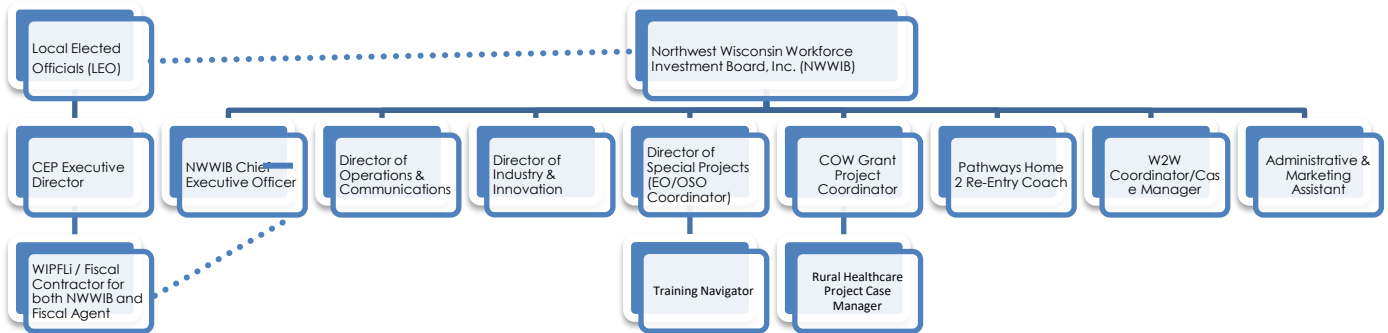
III. How We Operate

To help visualize the Workforce Development System within which NWWIB operates, we have included the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Development System Chart (below).

You will notice at the top of the chart that our system is led by a Local Elected Official (LEO). In our region this position is held by an appointed individual. Board appointment is made by the LEO. The LEO holds primary fiduciary responsibility for the entire system and appoints members to the NWWIB.

The NWWIB and Northwest Wisconsin CEP operate as separate entities. Both the NWWIB and the CEP receive administrative support from the Finance Director and related staff.

The NWWIB oversees the policies and performance of the job centers, youth programs, and other WIOA and workforce initiatives. Within the Workforce Development system, the NWWIB has been structured to have a full board which serves as the overarching and directing body, and sub-committees which focus on priority areas (please refer to the NWWIB Committee Structure Chart).



- The connection from the NWWIB to the CEP Executive Director and CEP organization indicates Fiscal Agent designation. It also indicates direct oversight and financial accountability to WIOA and the NWWIB. The Local Elected Official retains financial liability.
- The dashed line from the Local Elected Official to the NWWIB reflects the role the Local Elected Official has in appointing the Board.
- The dashed line from the NWWIB to the Fiscal Contractor reflects the support role the Fiscal Contractor plays to the Board. WIPFLi serves as the fiscal contractor for both the NWWIB and fiscal agent.

The NWWIB relies heavily on its sub-committees to assist in carrying out its mission. See below for a brief outline of each of the NWWIB’s committees, their roles, and information about when they meet.

NWWIB Committees

- Strategic Directions and Development Committee
- Youth Committee
- One-Stop Operator Committee
- Executive Committee
- Finance Committee

- The NWWIB Executive Committee is chaired by the NWWIB Chairperson and is comprised of the three officers of board and two at-large members appointed by the NWWIB Chair.
- Ad-Hoc Committees/Workgroups are established by the NWWIB Chair with approval from the board.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The Executive Committee is a committee comprised of the NWWIB officers and two additional board members. This Committee has conditional authority to act between NWWIB meetings to expedite operational decisions. The NWWIB Board will review the business of this Committee at the regular Board meetings. This Committee is charged with the establishment of plans, priorities and goals of the agency and Workforce Development Area. The committee is responsible for the review of programming changes, proposals, new programs and projects proposed by the staff throughout the year. Requests by any group or organization, for the use of funds shall be reviewed by the committee. The Executive Committee meets monthly or more frequently if needed.

YOUTH COMMITTEE:

The Youth Committee is a committee comprised of members of the NWWIB and other community members with a special interest or expertise in youth policy. The Committee will elect its own chairperson. It shall be the responsibility of the Youth Committee to provide strategy and guidance to the agency in the administration of the various youth programs authorized and funded by WIOA.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

This Committee consists of a cross section of NWWIB members from the public and private sector. It will elect its own chairperson. The committee may recruit additional members to complement its pool of expertise. The additional members do not need to be NWWIB members but should be appointed by the Board.

Strategic Directions and Development Committee Goals (Responsibilities):

- Work to meet the workforce development needs of businesses in selected industries and

occupations with high wage career opportunities.

- Support initiatives which increase the labor supply for high demand industries, both current and future, in cooperation with state and local economic development partners.
- Work to create a bridge between educational institutions, business, and industry by identifying skills and needs and communicating them to educational partners.
- Create a public branding strategy for the workforce development system
- Create sustainability for our efforts
- Dedicate and identify resources to maintain customer service centers in each of the ten counties, or at minimum one for each industry cluster region.
- Provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, including issues relating to compliance with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding providing programmatic and physical access to the services, programs, and activities of the one-stop delivery system, as well as appropriate training for staff on providing supports for or accommodations to, and finding employment opportunities for, individuals with disabilities.

ONE-STOP OPERATOR COMMITTEE:

This committee consists of a combination of standing and elected members who contribute time, talent and/or treasure to the Job Centers. Standing members include regional executives with the authority to carry out functions and direct actions of local level staff. Members represent partners and constituent groups as identified in Section 121 in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

STAFF

The NWWIB employs staff and consultants, as the Board deems necessary to carry out its mission and implement initiatives. The current staffing structure includes eight staff and a fiscal contractor. Their duties are:

Chief Executive Officer: The NWWIB Chief Executive Officer provides the day-to-day operational leadership for the organization. The Chief Executive Officer hires and supervises all staff of the organization. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing the NWWIB's Strategic Plan and supporting the Board and its committees in the policy development and oversight of the region's workforce investment system. The Chief Executive Officer is hired by and reports to the NWWIB Board of Directors.

Director of Operations & Communications: The Director of Operations & Communications is responsible for the monitoring, coordination, and marketing of employment, training, and education initiatives in the region. The Director of Operations & Communications provides assistance to the Chief Executive Officer and the NWWIB in the areas of planning, operations and oversight, communication, and resource development. This position reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board.

Director of Industry & Innovation

The Director of Industry & Innovation is responsible for operating as the lead convener of WDA 7's Business Services Team. Coordination and interaction with other partner organizations to establish and maintain good working relationships is a critical component of this position. The Director of Industry & Innovation also monitors system performance measures and progress towards performance objectives related to the region's business

services. In direct collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer, this position manages the successful implementation of special projects and programs. This position reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board.

Director of Special Projects (EO/OSO Coordinator)

The Director of Special Projects is responsible for the compliant administration, skilled operational performance, and financial integrity of all procedures, programs, and activities of designated workforce grants and local contracts as assigned. The Director of Special Projects will learn and become familiar with the rules and regulations of the grants and other applicable regulatory and administrative regulations. This position also oversees and performs the One-Stop Operator and Equal Opportunity Officer duties. This position reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board.

COW Grant Project Coordinator

The Collaboration of Wisconsin: Rural Investment in Community Healthcare (COW) Grant Project Coordinator supports the work of the teams organized around the initiative. COW is a special project administered and managed by the NWWIB that focuses on training in identified healthcare occupations. The COW Grant Project Coordinator is responsible for the operations, oversight, and implementation of the program. In addition to these administrative duties, this position also provides case management to participants enrolled in COW. This position reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board.

Pathways Home 2 Re-Entry Coach

The Pathways Home 2 Re-Entry Career Coach provides pre-release and post-release career services to individuals currently incarcerated in a state, county, or local facility. Pathways Home 2 is a special project in partnership with other workforce development boards. This position provides case management and career services to assist participants in career exploration and planning and connecting participants to the resources required to help them transition back to their communities. This position reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board.

W2W Coordinator/Case Manager

The Windows to Work (W2W) Coordinator/Case Manager is responsible for providing case management for several NWWIB programs, including but not limited to W2W, Support to Communities, Worker Advancement Initiative, and other special projects. Case management services include assisting participants in executing their employment plans and providing connections to resources to be successful in their career path. In addition to case management responsibilities, this position also oversees the grant reporting of the W2W program. This position reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board.

Administrative & Marketing Assistant

The Administrative & Marketing Assistant leads the administrative functions for the organization, assists with communications and marketing efforts, and coordinates board of directors and committee meetings. This position also performs data entry and data collection for NWWIB programming. The Administrative & Marketing Assistant is responsible for the administrative details relating to our work and contact community members and organizations. This position reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board.

Fiscal Contractor

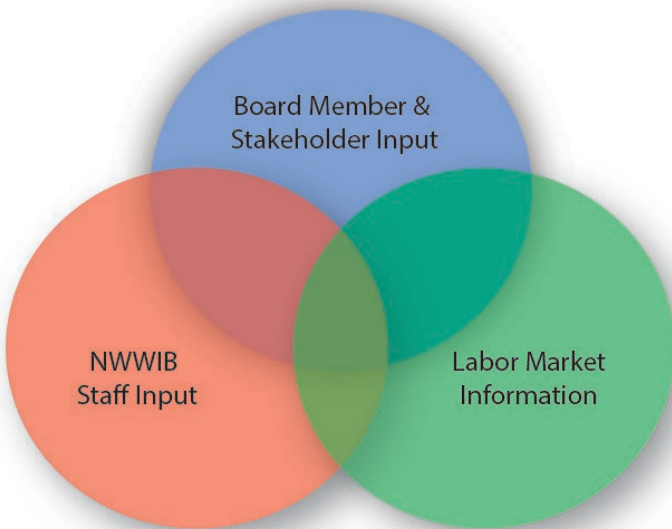
The NWWIB has contracted with Wipfli to provide financial services. Wipfli oversees the accounts receivable and payable, provides payroll support, manages budgets within the accounting software, prepares monthly budget reports, reconciles bank statements, and handles the preparation of required tax documents. Assistance is also provided for state monitoring activities and annual audits.

IV. Strategic Planning Process

This plan builds upon NWWIB's past work and accomplishments to set a future course for successful workforce development in our region, designed to ensure that the area's workforce is ready to meet the needs of our employers.

Through the strategic planning process, the NWWIB has developed a comprehensive plan for meeting the challenges within the ten-county region served by the Board. The NWWIB's Strategic Directions and Development Committee played an instrumental role in developing strategies to meet the needs of employers and job seekers within our workforce development area. Central to this process was the collaboration among a wide range of stakeholders including business, labor, education, economic development, local government, and community-based agencies. Transforming this vision into a plan that can be set in motion has required stakeholders to work together to identify solutions to continue to work towards bridging the gap between regional workforce supply and demand.

METHODOLOGY



The strategic planning update began in Summer 2022 with a comprehensive, external environmental "re-scan" which included a review of region and labor market data prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development - Office of Economic Advisors as well as ancillary information from Job Center Monthly reports, Board member surveys, small committee work and other means of data collection. Through an extensive review performed by Strategic Direction and Development Committee members, key issues, questions and priorities to be addressed as part of the strategic planning process were identified. This part of the process also included significant input gathered from business, community partners, and stakeholders at regional events and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

The regional data and labor market information was then used to guide the Strategic Directions and Development Committee's discussion regarding priorities and goal development. Armed with these overarching goals, the Committee worked with support from the NWWIB staff to define data-driven activities for each goal.

The committee worked together to develop goals, tactics, and benchmarks to determine success. The problems identified in the NWWIB's strategic plan addresses some of the critical issues that were apparent in the environmental scan and anecdotal information gathered from collaborative stakeholder events. The Strategic Plan Map contains an action plan that addresses the goals and specific objectives that will be reviewed on an annual basis. Through quarterly reviews, the Committee will assess the progress that has been made to address each problem area. Strategies and tactics will be revised as needed in order to ensure that the plan is meeting the needs

of the region. The Committee views the strategic plan as a compass; not an inflexible blueprint for action. The Board of Directors will also play a critical role in reviewing the progress of the plan and assuring that strategies, if needed to be changed, are done so appropriately to reflect the current economic conditions. Staff will perform the documentation required for their review as well as carrying out periodic monitoring of the plan’s progress and making reports to the Committee and Board.

IV-A. Northwest Wisconsin Regional Demographic Data

As noted in the previous section, the NWWIB staff and Committee members reviewed a number of labor market sources and data points to inform its strategic planning process. This section contains a compilation of some of this information and provides a snapshot and context for the planning process in terms of our regional economy and workforce.

Charts 1A through 1E below provide an overview of the population in the whole of the ten counties, giving context to the demographics of our local economy and the changes which have implications for our workforce development efforts.

Economy Overview

176,692

Population (2021)
Population grew by 2,057 over the last 5 years and is projected to grow by 3,940 over the next 5 years.

74,060

Total Regional Employment
Jobs decreased by 1,962 over the last 5 years but are projected to grow by 2,821 over the next 5 years.

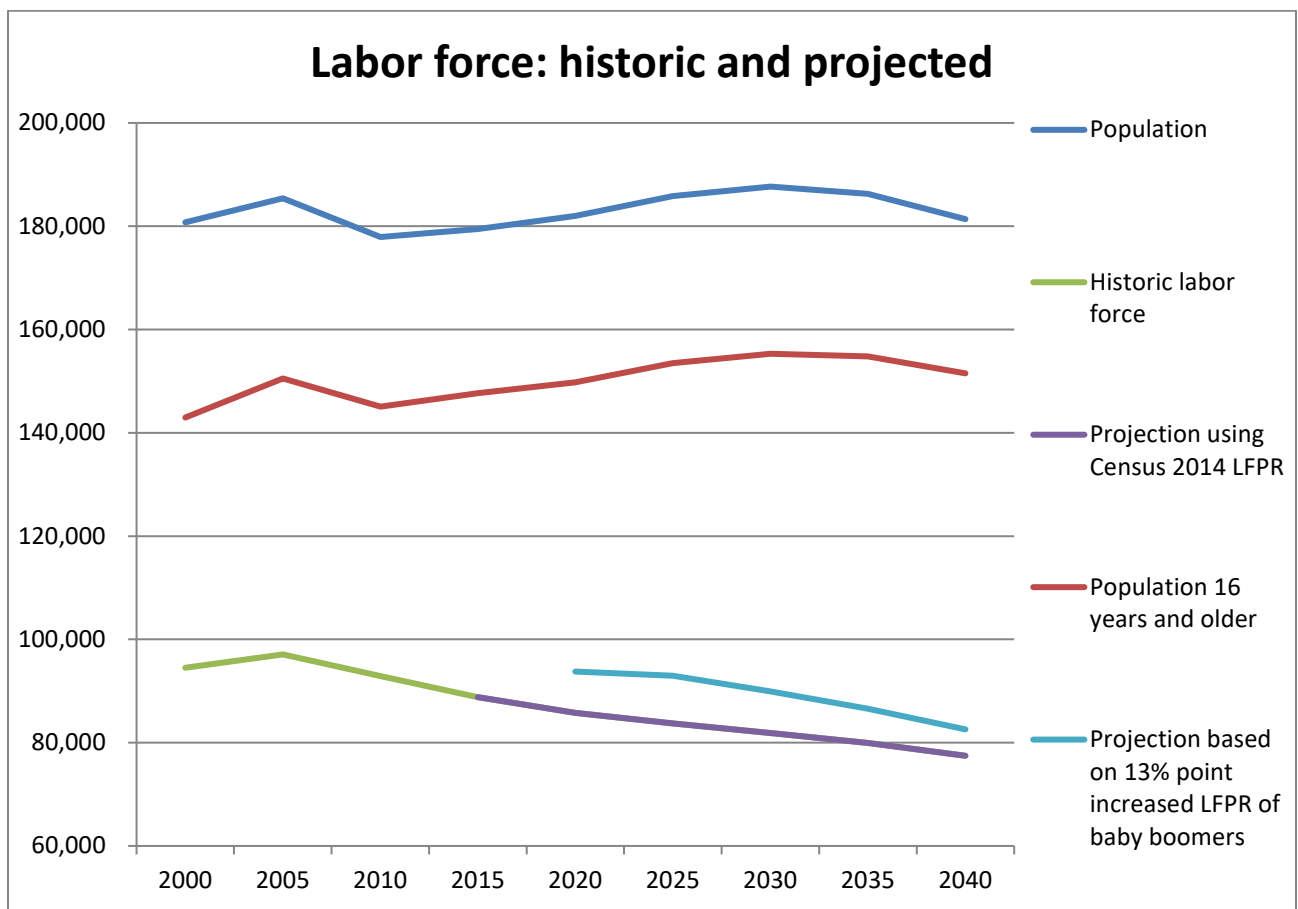
\$54.7K

Avg. Earnings Per Job (2021)
Regional average earnings per job are \$23.1K below the national average earnings of \$77.8K per job.

Takeaways

- As of 2021 the region's population increased by 1.2% since 2016, growing by 2,057. Population is expected to increase by 2.2% between 2021 and 2026, adding 3,940.
- From 2016 to 2021, jobs declined by 2.6% in WDB 7 - NW Wisconsin from 76,022 to 74,060. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 1.8% by 4.4%. As the number of jobs declined, the labor force participation rate decreased from 62.0% to 58.3% between 2016 and 2021.
- Concerning educational attainment, 15.1% of the selected regions' residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (5.2% below the national average), and 13.0% hold an Associate's Degree (4.3% above the national average).
- The top three industries in 2021 are Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals, Education and Hospitals (Local Government), and Restaurants and Other Eating Places.

Chart 1A- The Labor Force



Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, August 2019

Jun 2022 Labor Force Breakdown



Table 1B - Population by Age Cohort

Age Cohort	2020 Population	2026 Population	Change	% Change	2026 % of Cohort
Under 5 years	8,328	8,549	221	3%	4.73%
5 to 9 years	9,026	9,274	248	3%	5.13%
10 to 14 years	10,301	9,958	(343)	(3%)	5.51%
15 to 19 years	9,727	9,762	35	0%	5.40%
20 to 24 years	8,468	8,165	(303)	(4%)	4.52%
25 to 29 years	8,667	8,125	(542)	(6%)	4.50%
30 to 34 years	8,455	9,342	887	10%	5.17%
35 to 39 years	9,334	9,218	(116)	(1%)	5.10%
40 to 44 years	9,402	10,117	715	8%	5.60%
45 to 49 years	9,470	10,297	827	9%	5.70%
50 to 54 years	10,865	9,379	(1,486)	(14%)	5.19%
55 to 59 years	14,417	11,504	(2,913)	(20%)	6.37%
60 to 64 years	15,741	14,578	(1,163)	(7%)	8.07%
65 to 69 years	14,833	16,282	1,449	10%	9.01%
70 to 74 years	11,401	14,123	2,722	24%	7.82%
75 to 79 years	7,557	10,358	2,801	37%	5.73%
80 to 84 years	4,915	6,243	1,328	27%	3.46%
85 years and over	4,704	5,360	656	14%	2.97%
Total	175,611	180,633	5,022	3%	100.00%

The Northwest Wisconsin Demographic Profile (Charts 1A, 1B and 1C) identifies the total population for the ten-county region as 177,594. As this data indicates, Northwest Wisconsin has an aging population and has a large population of “working-class” households; nearly 80% of the region’s individuals have a per capita income below \$45,000 per year. On the other hand, the region has seen a 9.4% increase in per capita income in the past ten years; higher than the rest of the state average. Total personal income (TPI) includes income from three main sources: net earnings; dividends, interest and rent; and transfer receipts. Net earnings make up the vast majority of income in the Northwest Workforce Development Area (WDA) as it does elsewhere, with the remaining percentage divided between the other two components. In the Northwest WDA, just over half of TPI is from net earnings, a significantly lower percentage than the statewide average of 65.0%. Government transfer receipts make up much of the remaining income from benefits like Social Security, unemployment insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, and public assistance. This

was much higher than the state and national percentages. Given this, and the low proportion of income from earnings, this indicates an older population on average. This fits given the aging demographic of the Northwest Wisconsin region.

Chart 1C- Population by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2020 Population	2026 Population	Change	% Change	2026 % of Cohort
White, Non-Hispanic	157,437	157,682	245	0%	87.29%
American Indian or Alaskan Native, Non-Hispanic	7,771	7,985	214	3%	4.42%
Two or More Races, Non-Hispanic	3,809	4,821	1,012	27%	2.67%
White, Hispanic	2,674	3,834	1,160	43%	2.12%
Black, Non-Hispanic	1,341	1,937	596	44%	1.07%
Asian, Non-Hispanic	1,150	1,847	697	61%	1.02%
American Indian or Alaskan Native, Hispanic	768	1,094	326	42%	0.61%
Two or More Races, Hispanic	327	605	278	85%	0.33%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic	176	325	149	85%	0.18%
Black, Hispanic	103	325	222	215%	0.18%
Asian, Hispanic	31	99	68	219%	0.05%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic	24	80	56	233%	0.04%
Total	175,611	180,633	5,022	3%	100.00%

The data in Chart 1C shows the demographics by gender and race/ ethnicity. The region is primarily White, Non-Hispanic with American Indians as the next largest population. A review of this data also suggests that the career centers have served people of color in proportion to their representation in the unemployed population. However, there is still room for improvement in serving those populations, especially those who are not attached to the labor market or currently collecting unemployment insurance. Programmatically, this translates into continued need for culturally appropriate services and training for these vulnerable populations in our region. Gender diversity in our region is nearly exactly equal (Chart 1E).

According to information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in July 2022, 55.3 percent of young people (persons ages 16 to 24) were employed. This measure was up from 54.4 percent in July 2021. The July 2022 figure remains below its level of 56.2 percent in July 2019, prior to the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. These numbers indicate the ongoing challenges involved in developing young adult work readiness skills and the continued need for finding suitable employment for this underserved population. The continuing decline in the youth employment rate was only exacerbated by the pandemic. Overall, when looking at youth education and employment data, it is imperative that the NWWIB continue to support student success and the development of pathways to career readiness and success for both in-school and out-of-school youth throughout our region, with special attention paid to vulnerable youth.

Chart 1D: Personal Income Summary

CA1 Personal Income Summary: Personal Income, Population, Per Capita Personal Income														
Per capita personal income (Not Adjusted for Inflation)														
Bureau of Economic Analysis														
County														
GeoName	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	5-year Chg	10-year Chg	5-year % Chg	10-year % Chg
Ashland, WI	\$31,419	\$31,726	\$32,417	\$31,972	\$33,888	\$33,133	\$33,431	\$34,209	\$34,093	\$34,292	\$ 1,159	\$ 2,873	3.5%	9.1%
Bayfield, WI	\$35,046	\$36,014	\$36,459	\$37,602	\$38,979	\$37,764	\$37,709	\$39,864	\$39,203	\$39,945	\$ 2,181	\$ 4,899	5.8%	14.0%
Burnett, WI	\$33,544	\$34,152	\$34,492	\$35,023	\$35,221	\$36,129	\$36,587	\$37,025	\$37,376	\$37,966	\$ 1,837	\$ 4,422	5.1%	13.2%
Douglas, WI	\$32,228	\$33,074	\$34,458	\$35,048	\$34,779	\$35,280	\$35,684	\$35,596	\$35,773	\$36,697	\$ 1,417	\$ 4,469	4.0%	13.9%
Iron, WI	\$32,550	\$32,932	\$34,009	\$36,668	\$40,884	\$42,552	\$41,788	\$44,662	\$45,522	\$46,905	\$ 4,353	\$ 14,355	10.2%	44.1%
Price, WI	\$34,749	\$34,235	\$35,519	\$36,638	\$36,380	\$36,907	\$36,810	\$38,400	\$38,025	\$39,454	\$ 2,547	\$ 4,705	6.9%	13.5%
Rusk, WI	\$28,534	\$28,256	\$29,510	\$29,606	\$30,351	\$30,690	\$30,707	\$31,915	\$31,865	\$33,424	\$ 2,734	\$ 4,890	8.9%	17.1%
Sawyer, WI	\$35,933	\$36,011	\$38,881	\$36,184	\$37,786	\$37,973	\$38,083	\$38,949	\$38,919	\$39,154	\$ 1,181	\$ 3,221	3.1%	9.0%
Taylor, WI	\$31,954	\$31,892	\$32,158	\$32,075	\$31,357	\$31,526	\$31,710	\$32,964	\$33,307	\$34,260	\$ 2,734	\$ 2,306	8.7%	7.2%
Washburn, WI	\$32,097	\$32,137	\$32,859	\$35,346	\$35,465	\$36,826	\$38,254	\$39,830	\$39,600	\$40,337	\$ 3,511	\$ 8,240	9.5%	25.7%
Northwest WI	\$32,719	\$33,040	\$34,114	\$34,507	\$34,997	\$35,312	\$35,604	\$36,573	\$36,580	\$37,421	\$ 2,110	\$ 4,702	6.0%	14.4%
Metropolitan WI	\$43,782	\$45,036	\$45,301	\$45,032	\$44,240	\$43,924	\$44,775	\$45,577	\$45,104	\$45,804	\$ 1,180	\$ 1,322	2.7%	3.0%
Non-Metro WI	\$35,669	\$35,959	\$36,788	\$36,916	\$36,888	\$37,187	\$37,981	\$38,759	\$38,721	\$39,613	\$ 2,426	\$ 3,944	6.5%	11.1%
Wisconsin	\$41,591	\$42,589	\$43,015	\$42,860	\$42,285	\$42,140	\$42,979	\$43,784	\$43,430	\$44,186	\$ 2,046	\$ 2,595	4.9%	6.2%

Per capita personal income (2017 dollars)														
GeoName	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	5-year Chg	10-year Chg	5-year % Chg	10-year % Chg
Ashland, WI	\$33,514	\$34,739	\$34,664	\$35,347	\$36,578	\$36,345	\$36,567	\$38,017	\$38,516	\$39,621	\$ 3,275	\$ 6,106	9.0%	18.2%
Bayfield, WI	\$38,694	\$41,083	\$40,449	\$40,407	\$42,666	\$41,434	\$42,689	\$43,703	\$44,396	\$45,438	\$ 4,004	\$ 6,745	9.7%	17.4%
Burnett, WI	\$34,083	\$34,629	\$36,608	\$37,306	\$37,924	\$38,237	\$38,698	\$40,695	\$40,341	\$40,774	\$ 2,537	\$ 6,691	6.6%	19.6%
Douglas, WI	\$36,551	\$36,557	\$37,296	\$37,466	\$37,653	\$37,693	\$38,644	\$40,260	\$40,044	\$40,846	\$ 3,153	\$ 4,295	8.4%	11.8%
Iron, WI	\$35,799	\$39,722	\$40,495	\$40,670	\$42,609	\$43,120	\$43,633	\$46,466	\$47,695	\$48,393	\$ 5,273	\$ 12,594	12.2%	35.2%
Price, WI	\$38,982	\$38,686	\$40,318	\$40,450	\$42,278	\$40,823	\$42,632	\$44,201	\$44,080	\$44,166	\$ 3,343	\$ 5,183	8.2%	13.3%
Rusk, WI	\$31,334	\$32,437	\$34,074	\$34,789	\$37,004	\$37,718	\$40,054	\$42,064	\$41,900	\$42,704	\$ 4,986	\$ 11,369	13.2%	36.3%
Sawyer, WI	\$37,376	\$39,098	\$40,167	\$40,353	\$41,874	\$41,465	\$41,668	\$43,005	\$43,173	\$43,724	\$ 2,259	\$ 6,348	5.4%	17.0%
Taylor, WI	\$34,351	\$34,040	\$35,259	\$35,478	\$37,039	\$37,256	\$37,947	\$39,523	\$38,427	\$38,313	\$ 1,057	\$ 3,962	2.8%	11.5%
Washburn, WI	\$37,649	\$37,733	\$39,201	\$40,527	\$42,789	\$42,217	\$43,808	\$45,079	\$44,645	\$45,307	\$ 3,089	\$ 7,657	7.3%	20.3%
Northwest WI	\$46,513	\$45,473	\$45,614	\$46,627	\$47,664	\$47,055	\$48,077	\$49,961	\$50,353	\$50,874	\$ 3,819	\$ 4,361	8.1%	9.4%
Metropolitan WI	\$38,255	\$38,107	\$38,899	\$39,707	\$40,760	\$40,454	\$41,534	\$43,034	\$42,950	\$43,395	\$ 2,496	\$ 4,695	6.2%	12.3%
Non-Metro WI	\$35,902	\$36,587	\$37,543	\$37,942	\$39,267	\$39,066	\$40,053	\$41,642	\$41,530	\$42,153	\$ 3,087	\$ 6,251	7.9%	17.4%
Wisconsin	\$44,303	\$43,514	\$43,834	\$44,800	\$45,851	\$45,328	\$46,371	\$48,163	\$48,437	\$48,941	\$ 3,613	\$ 4,638	8.0%	10.5%

Chart 1E - Population by Gender

Gender	2020 Population	2026 Population	Change	% Change	2026 % of Cohort
Males	88,710	91,405	2,695	3%	50.60%
Females	86,901	89,228	2,327	3%	49.40%
Total	175,611	180,633	5,022	3%	100.00%

IV-B. About the Region's Current Employment and Industries

The Northwest's total labor force numbered about 88,476 in August 2022, a decrease of -1.01 percent from August 2019. This decrease is explained by the region's stagnating population and the increasing number of residents whom are of retirement age. In direct relation to the labor force number, 85,032 residents were employed in August of 2022, a decrease of -1.07 percent from 2019 numbers. The number of unemployed residents in the region stood at about 3,444 with an associated unemployment rate of 3.9 percent. Though this ten-county region is geographically large, it comprises only about three percent of Wisconsin's total workforce, ranking smallest among Wisconsin's 11 designated WDA regions.

In August 2022 Northwest's unemployment rate was down 0.2 percentage points from its August 2019 level. The number of unemployed decreased by -6.23 percent since 2019.

* Population demographics indicate an aging labor force and a dwindling number of new

entrants and youth staying in the region.

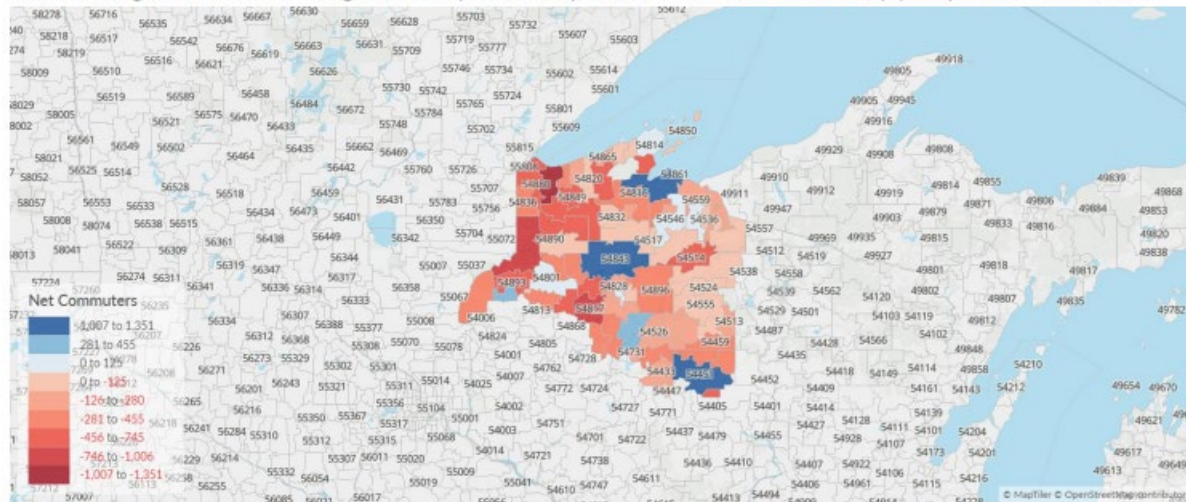
* The Northwest has a much larger share of people over 65 years of age than the rest of the State.

Recruitment and retention issues are of paramount concern to employers in northwest Wisconsin. The out-migration of youth and competition with urban areas for talent are often the primary concerns that employers voice. In turn, the NWWIB collaborates with economic development and local and regional efforts to address high-turnover and recruitment.

Not all regional residents work in the region. In 2014, 59.8% of the Northwest Wisconsin residents worked in the region and 40.2% left the 10-county region to commute to work. Additionally, in 2014, 25.6% of the region's workforce commuted into the region from a county outside of the Northwest Wisconsin workforce development area. A large percentage of the region's residents face a commute longer than 20 miles (each way) every day.

Place of Work vs Place of Residence

Understanding where talent in the region currently works compared to where talent lives can help you optimize site decisions.



Where Talent Works			Where Talent Lives		
ZIP	Name	2021 Employment	ZIP	Name	2021 Workers
54880	Superior, WI (in Douglas...)	14,090	54880	Superior, WI (in Douglas...)	14,593
54451	Medford, WI (in Taylor c...)	7,195	54451	Medford, WI (in Taylor c...)	5,843
54806	Ashland, WI (in Ashland...)	6,479	54806	Ashland, WI (in Ashland...)	5,472
54843	Hayward, WI (in Sawyer...)	6,476	54843	Hayward, WI (in Sawyer...)	5,365
54848	Ladysmith, WI (in Rusk ...)	3,207	54801	Spooner, WI (in Washbu...)	3,192

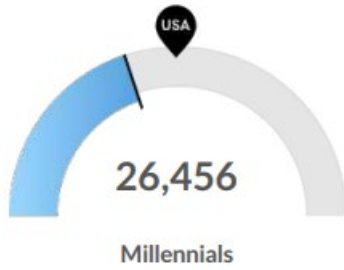
Educational Attainment

Concerning educational attainment, **15.1% of the selected regions' residents possess a Bachelor's Degree** (5.2% below the national average), and **13.0% hold an Associate's Degree** (4.3% above the national average).



	% of Population	Population
● Less Than 9th Grade	1.7%	2,283
● 9th Grade to 12th Grade	5.7%	7,417
● High School Diploma	34.3%	44,812
● Some College	22.9%	29,938
● Associate's Degree	13.0%	16,976
● Bachelor's Degree	15.1%	19,804
● Graduate Degree and Higher	7.3%	9,603

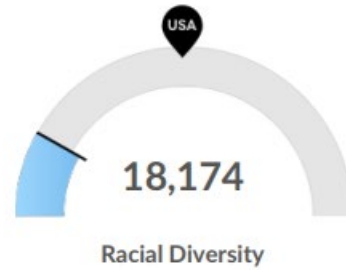
Population Characteristics



Your area has 26,456 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 36,189.



Retirement risk is high in your area. The national average for an area this size is 52,266 people 55 or older, while there are 73,568 here.



Racial diversity is low in your area. The national average for an area this size is 70,733 racially diverse people, while there are 18,174 here.



Your area has 13,842 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 9,506.

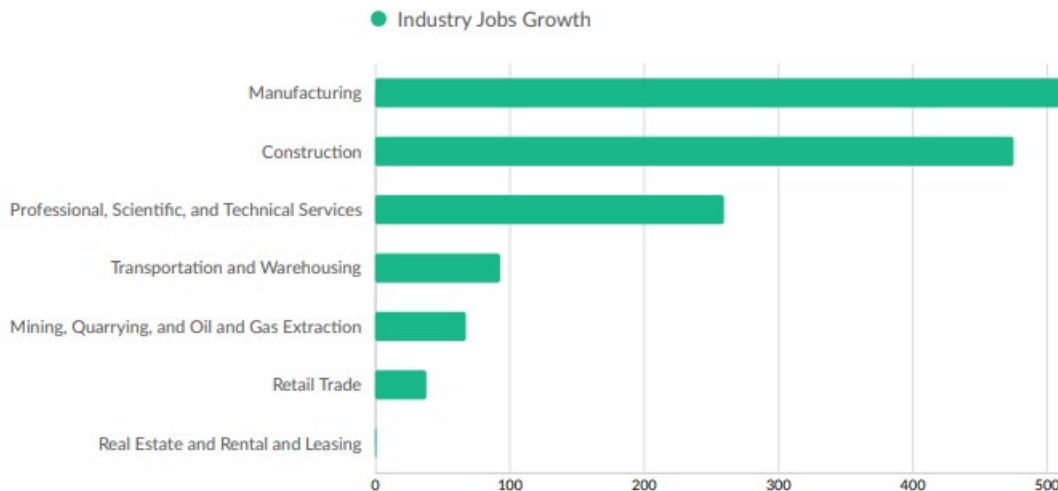


Your area has 1.93 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 3.62 per 1,000 people.

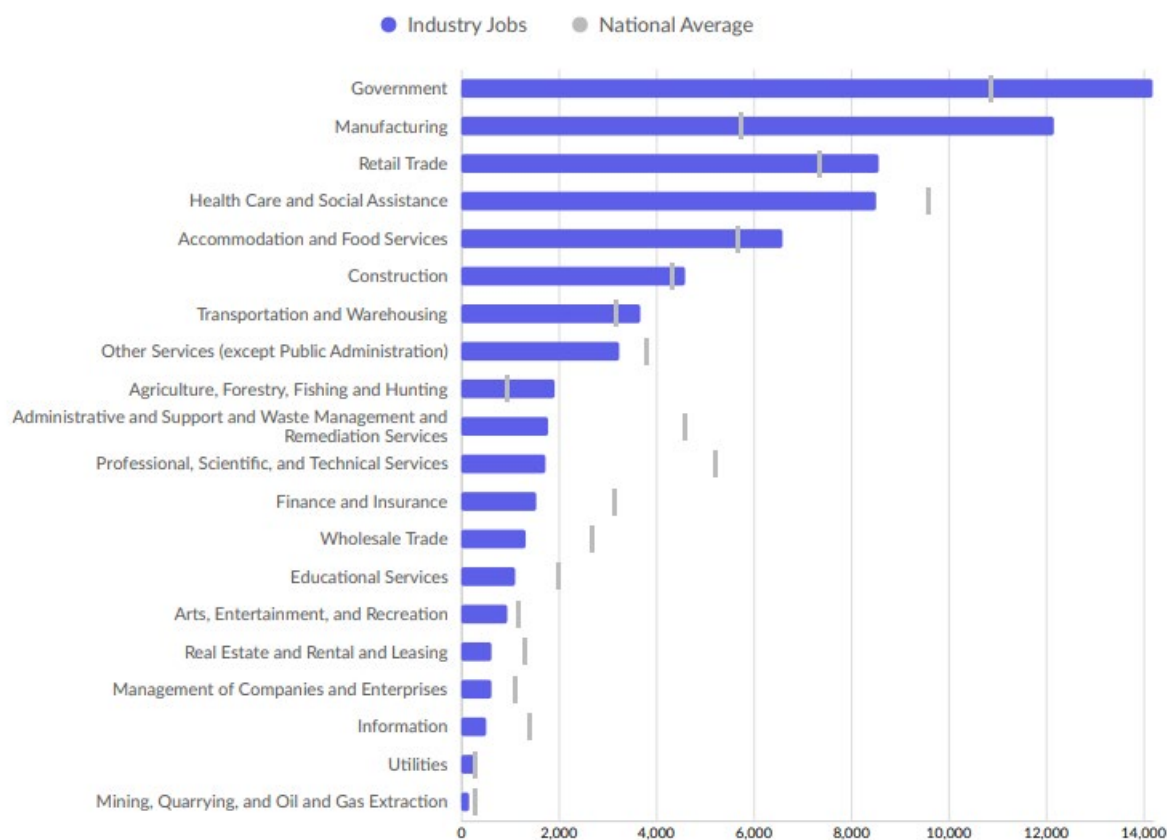


Your area has 15.31 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 17.91 per 1,000 people.

Top Growing Industries



Largest Industries



IV-C. Family Centered Employment / 2GEN Initiatives

This is an exciting time to rework the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board’s Strategic Plan. In March of 2019 the NWWIB adopted a new strategic framework that fosters innovation, builds community partnerships, and integrates a family-centered approach across traditional functional areas. The Board has implemented the 2Gen/ Family-Centered Employment (FCE) approach to improve services provided to families with children. This commitment to serve families holistically requires continued coordination across all workforce partners and agencies as well as education and human service programs.

Stakeholder insights and the employment and vacancy data points in earlier charts, taken together, identify some key challenges the region is experiencing in workforce development - these same challenges have existed since our previous strategic plan developed in 2016.

- a. Increasing difficulty recruiting the skills or talent needed
- b. A declining but still high regional employment rate
- c. An increase in the duration of unemployment
- d. An increase in the number of unemployed low-income residents
- e. A high unemployment rate for youth

- f. Changing employment trends, in terms of in-demand industries and top employers
- g. Rampant retirements and an aging workforce will present future challenges

NWWIB’s leadership took these challenges into consideration in creating this strategic plan, and in outlining its six key goals, listed below. It recognizes the need to continue its approach of connecting job seekers with employment in our region’s top industries and in serving our top employers more directly. It also recognizes the need to serve those struggling the hardest to maintain connections to employment: the long-term unemployed as well as those with the most limited educational levels and barriers to success and the least amount of access to services and resources

V. 2023 - 2026 NWWIB Strategic Issues

After its robust strategic planning process outlined above, NWWIB has arrived at six key issues that must be addressed in our region.

1. Establish a customer-centric system that promotes collaboration, access, and measureable outcomes.
2. All targeted sectors have a robust and demand-driven action plan. Increase overall services to the businesses in the region.
3. Incorporate technology and applied technological solutions to increase collaboration and innovation as well as the development of entrepreneurs.
4. Develop messaging and strategic partnerships to advance the initiatives and priorities of the NWWIB.
5. Build capacity to support implementation of the board’s priorities and while implementing continuous improvement strategies.

In order to ensure the above issues are addressed, each will be assigned to the appropriate NWWIB sub-committee or tasks force which will then be responsible for developing the specific implementation strategies necessary to meet the goals/activities and will track performance using the benchmarks below.

Additionally, each committee will utilize the NWWIB Scorecard, Job Center Survey data, as well as other state and local tools and reports to regularly measure and evaluate efforts toward meeting the strategic goals.

The following Strategic Plan Map provides an at-a-glance view of our priorities and objectives.

IV. Contact Information

For information regarding this plan, please contact:

Mari Kay-Nabozny
 Chief Executive Officer
 Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board
 301 Ellis Ave, Suite 3

Ashland, WI 54806

Email: mari@nwwib.com

Phone: (715) 685-1427

Strategic Plan Thought Leadership

NWWIB is established as an expert in workforce development, continuously improving data collection and collaboration efforts in order to support regional economic development and the provision of employment services.

Mission

The Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board will create, and continue to improve, an innovative and quality strategic direction for the regional workforce development system.

Overarching Principle

Access to employment with adequate pay is critical for families' stability and livelihood. Children who grow up in poverty tend to do worse in school, have poorer health outcomes, and do worse in the labor market as adults than children who do not (Sherman and Mitchell 2017). The absence of work is associated with high poverty rates for households, although nearly 20 percent of households in poverty in 2015 were working (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2017). These data demonstrate the importance of helping parents access good jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. Such jobs increasingly require education beyond high school, suggesting the need to help people access not only jobs but education and training as well. The public workforce system helps job seekers access training and jobs and can contribute to the economic stability of children, yet we know little about how the system meets families' needs.

Strategic Objectives

Establish a customer-centric system that promotes collaboration, access, and measureable outcomes	All targeted sectors have a robust and demand-driven action plan. Increase overall services to the businesses in the region	Incorporate technology and applied technological solutions to increase collaboration and innovation as well as the development of entrepreneurs	Develop messaging and strategic partnerships to advance the initiatives and priorities of the NWWIB	Build capacity to support implementation of the board's priorities and while implementing continuous improvement strategies
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Key Strategic Activities

<p>Continue and enhance the work the NWWIB is doing to increase access to child care Focus Area 1A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve image of child care as an occupation Work with Governor's Council on Workforce Investment to develop a credential for basic required coursework for early childhood education Focus Area 1B(i) Assist entrepreneurs and communities in the development of child care sites Focus Area 1C Promote enrollment in Wisconsin Shares or Partner Up programs for eligible families Focus Area 1A 	<p>Emphasize services to businesses including incumbent worker training, customized training, subsidized work experiences and hiring and recruitment assistance Focus Area 2A, 2D</p>	<p>Support broadband initiatives, work from home strategies, and shared work space efforts throughout the region Focus Area 3A, 3D, 3E</p>	<p>Share and align educational messaging about the "benefits cliff". Align with partners who can assist in our efforts Focus Area 3A, 3B, 4D</p>	<p>Collect existing data on employer needs and identify any gaps in the data Focus Area 4B</p>
	<p>Operate or partner on training for targeted populations in growth or demand sectors Focus Area 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D</p>	<p>Support digital literacy efforts with businesses and job seekers. This includes social media, navigating technology, and utilization of those same technologies.</p>	<p>Align any new initiatives with targeted partners and strategic organizations Focus Area 3D, 3E, 4C, 4D</p>	<p>Measure What Matters. The NWWIB will identify the metrics and objectives and key results that define success Focus Area 4C, 4D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key indicators should reach beyond WIOA performance measures and be a part of a standardized internal reporting system Develop ROI methodology on service provision, programs, Job Center visits, etc.
	<p>Explore ways to increase in-school youth programming and career pipelines. (waivers, CESA partnerships, additional resources) Focus Area 1A</p>	<p>Promote entrepreneurial programming and entrepreneur development Focus Area 1C</p>	<p>Update the marketing and outreach plan to reflect the new strategic priorities</p>	
	<p>Work with Labor partners to develop industry exploration cohorts that focus on females, minorities and other non-traditional populations Focus Area 3A, 3C, 3D</p>		<p>Utilize targeted outreach lists and efforts to focus messaging Focus Area 1A, 2D, 3C, 4A</p> <p>Ensure that regional stakeholders and legislators are informed of workforce programming and efforts Focus Area 4D</p>	
<p>Educate communities and employers about the value and important of training programs focused on re-entry and substance abuse Focus Area 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D</p> <p>Increase collaboration and connections through youth employment opportunities and activities Focus Area 2A, 2B</p> <p>Collaborate with technical colleges to increase the number of entry-level career pathways opportunities. This includes the short-term credentialed academies Focus Area 1B(iii)</p>	<p>GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT FOCUS AREAS 2022-2026 * see back page for details.</p> <p>Focus Area #1: Education: Reinvigorate Wisconsin's culture and value of education and innovation to fuel ideas, businesses, people, and the next generation for future economic well-being and ensure that individuals from all backgrounds have access to the education, training, and support they need to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>Focus Area #2: Employers: Engage all employers to drive, build, and utilize Wisconsin's workforce development system.</p> <p>Focus Area #3: Workforce: Increase Wisconsin's workforce participation by promoting infrastructure to improve access to job opportunities, incentivize workforce participation, and by improving the sustainability of work for individuals and families.</p> <p>Focus Area #4: Organization & Resource Alignment: Advocate for resource alignment to maximize return on investment and use data for continuous improvement of the workforce system.</p>			<p>Utilize technology to measure outcomes and identify historical trends as well as upcoming systemic changes or trends Focus Area 4B</p>



Focus Area #1: Education

Reinvigorate Wisconsin's culture and value of education and innovation to fuel ideas, businesses, people, and the next generation for future economic well-being and ensure that individuals from all backgrounds have access to the education, training, and support they need to achieve their full potential.

- **Objective 1A:** Early Childhood Education – Support the initiatives presented by the Departments of Public Instruction (DPI) and Children & Families (DCF) in the Preschool Development Grant Birth to 5 Statewide Strategic Plan to ensure that by 2023 all Wisconsin families will have access to high-quality, affordable, local early care and educational opportunities.
- **Objective 1B(i):** Career Pathways – Increase career exploration opportunities while students are in K-12 and provide all students the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment, earn a certificate/credential, or participate in work-based learning prior to high school graduation with emphasis on credentials where dual secondary and post-secondary academic credit is awarded.
- **Objective 1B(ii):** Career Pathways for Adults – Expand opportunities for adults from all populations to earn a certificate/credential, participate in work-based learning, and access other career pathway possibilities that allow fair and equitable access to meaningful, family-sustaining employment.
- **Objective 1C:** Entrepreneurship – Include or strengthen entrepreneurship as an outcome within workforce development and educational planning/programming.



Focus Area #2: Employers

Engage all employers to drive, build, and utilize Wisconsin's workforce development system.

- **Objective 2A:** Increase the number of employers that offer work-based learning experiences and lifelong training for all youth and adults.
- **Objective 2B:** Support employers' efforts to attract, hire and retain employees from all populations.
- **Objective 2C:** Expand opportunities for employers to provide input regarding their current and future workforce needs and requirements (e.g., specific skills, credentials, people, resources) to the workforce development system.
- **Objective 2D:** Improve employer awareness and utilization of the workforce development system.



Focus Area #3: Workforce

Increase Wisconsin's workforce participation by promoting infrastructure to improve access to job opportunities, incentivize workforce participation, and by improving the sustainability of work for individuals and families.

- **Objective 3A:** Strengthen collaboration and support the equity and inclusion plan to coordinate programs among public and private entities that can help historically underrepresented/under-resourced individuals and families overcome barriers to employment.
- **Objective 3B:** Incentivize workforce participation for individuals currently receiving public benefits in order to support their transition to sustainable employment.
- **Objective 3C:** Coordinate programs serving specific populations across the agencies to promote workforce participation.
- **Objective 3D:** Develop and promote strategies and programs for employers to attract and retain diverse talent/workforce.
- **Objective 3E:** Develop and target strategies that increase the number of individuals who are work and career ready.
- **Objective 3F:** Support policies that promote resilience of incumbent workers.



Focus Area #4: Organization & Resource Alignment

Advocate for resource alignment to maximize return on investment and use data for continuous improvement of the workforce system.

- **Objective 4A:** Identify and address the organizational and structural changes necessary to improve collaboration and accountability.
- **Objective 4B:** Continue developing a longitudinal data system and identify opportunity for collaboration and expand capacity to support evidence-based decision making.
- **Objective 4C:** Define and create an effective state and local partner communication strategy to increase awareness of workforce services.
- **Objective 4D:** Build a stronger, more coordinated relationship between state and local workforce partners.