

Nebraska Workforce Development Board

Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2025

Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center

1800 North 33rd Street, Lincoln, NE 68503

<https://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/Training/WIOA/NWDB>

Agenda item 1. Call to Order

Acting Chair Bradley Schoeder (hereafter referred to as Brad) called to order the meeting of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board (hereafter referred to as the Board) on June 13, 2025 at approximately 9am at the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center, 1800 North 33rd Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68503.

Agenda item 2. Roll Call

Brad asked Kelly Flanagan to call role for purposes of establishing a quorum of the Board. Kelly called roll and advised Brad that quorum was established (19 of 28 Board Members attending).

Governor-appointed members *attending*

1. Jim Bulkley
2. Gary Dixon, Jr.
3. Joanna Estrada
4. Michael Geary
5. Jim Hansen
6. Kyle Nixon
7. Sherla Post
8. Terri Ridder
9. Sara Riffel
10. Bradley Schroeder, Acting Chair
11. Jennifer Sedlacek
12. Bryan Slone
13. Keisha Thomas
14. Kevin Wetuski
15. Courtney Wittstruck
16. Mark Wright

Ex officio members *attending*

1. Lindy Foley
2. Tate Lauer
3. Katie Thurber

Ex officio members *absent*

1. KC Belitz
2. Steve Corsi
3. Governor Jim Pillen
4. Senator Merv Riepe

Governor-appointed members *absent*

1. Elizabeth Babcock
2. Susan Martin
3. Don Nordell
4. Paul Turman
5. Lisa Wilson

Also in attendance were the following members of the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) Board support team.

1. Erick Carrillo, Interim Director, Division of Reemployment Services
2. Kelly Flanagan, Administrator, Division of Reemployment Services
3. Jacob Winters, Attorney II, Office of the General Counsel
4. Joseph Tisko, Program Analyst, Division of Reemployment Services

Agenda item 3. Notice of Publication

Kelly Flanagan announced that public meeting notices were published, in accordance with the [Nebraska Open Meetings Act](#), in the Beatrice Daily Sun, Columbus Telegram, Grand Island Independent, Hastings Tribune, Kearney Hub, Lincoln Journal Star, Norfolk Daily News, North Platte Telegraph, Omaha World-Herald, and Scottsbluff Star-Herald. Kelly announced that public meeting notice was also published on the [State of Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar](#).

Agenda item 4. Approval of Minutes

Brad called the next order of business, which was the approval of the draft meeting minutes from the March 14, 2025 meeting of the Board. The draft minutes from the March meeting were emailed to Board Members on June 11, 2025. The meeting minutes were included in Board Member packets as Handout 1.

Brad opened the floor to Board Members for comment on the draft minutes. Board Members did not comment on the draft minutes. Brad opened the floor for public comment on the draft minutes. Public comments were not provided.

Michael Geary motioned to approve the March minutes, as provided and Sherla Post seconded the motion. Members of the Board voted on the motion by roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda item 5. Old Business

a. Modification of Board bylaws

Brad provided a brief update on modification of Board bylaws relating to the Board's decision to discontinue its subcommittees, stating that the Nebraska Department of Labor Legal Division is evaluating proposed revisions to the bylaws.

b. Board effectiveness updates

(1) Board Member interest survey

Brad advised the Board that the Board Member interest survey was sent to all Board Members on June 2, 2025, reminding Board Members to complete the survey if they hadn't done so already.

Kyle Nixon asked if the survey link could be resent to Board Members. Kelly Flanagan resent the survey link to all Board Members after the meeting.

(2) Board Member training

Brad informed the Board that the Board's administrative support team is developing a training plan for Board Member training, a portion of which is dependent on responses to the Board Member interest survey.

(3) Board Member portal

Brad let the Board know that the Board's administrative support team is still investigating options for establishing a portal for Board Members only where they may obtain information about Board roles and responsibilities and other relevant and current information relating to the purposes of the Board, including workforce system performance.

Agenda item 6. New Business

a. Commissioner of Labor – Conversation about the Board

Board Member Katie Thurber, Commissioner of the Nebraska Department of Labor, provided updates to the Board concerning Federal and State matters that are relevant to the Board's role and purpose.

- Federal: The President's budget plan will result in significant changes to WIOA.
 - Several programs are slated for consolidation into one block program, changes that must go through the Federal budget process.
 - Some programs are nominated to be cut, others are nominated to be combined under Make America Skilled Again Grant Consolidation Act.
 - The "Make America Skilled Again Grant Consolidation Act" is a proposed initiative within the Trump administration's budget, aiming to consolidate several existing workforce development programs into a single "Make America Skilled Again" (MASA) grant for states. This consolidation is part of a broader effort to streamline workforce funding and give states more flexibility in how they allocate resources.
 - Regardless of the budget, the Administration and Federal legislators are looking at WIOA reauthorization again; legislators do not want to change much from what was proposed in December under the proposed "Stronger Workforce for America Act".
- State: LB 265, "Manufacturing Modernization and Workforce Development Pilot Investment Act"
 - LB 265 consolidates funds and creates a unified approach to workforce development in Nebraska and will do so in partnership with the Board
 - The Board will be tasked with developing proposals for grants from the consolidated funds.
 - The Governor is calling on the Board to be idea generators. Further information is coming in the next few months.
 - Going forward we will be implementing changes to Board meetings to allow time for idea generation and may need to bring something like subcommittees back as part of this new bill.

Katie reminded the Board that during the March meeting of the Board she advised the Board that a call to action would be coming and it has come through LB 265. Katie stated that now is the time to answer this call and the Board must make this work and drive action through full, active, and enthusiastic engagement if the Board is to be successful.

Board Member Michael Geary asked about the general timeline concerning the Federal budget. Katie indicated that the budget should be passed by September; however, if that does not happen a continuing resolution is most likely. Katie also indicated that the house is considering taking up WIOA reauthorization again in the next couple weeks but doesn't know how long that will take or how quickly that will go through.

b. 6 Regions, One Nebraska

Roberta Pinkerton with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development presented to the Board on the "[6 Regions, One Nebraska](#)" initiative mentioned during the March Board meeting. Roberta's presentation was provided as Handout 2 in meeting packets.

Board Member Bryan Slone, President of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce, commented that when the blueprint of the process was first launched, approximately 6,000 people responded and 100s would show up. Now 1,000s of people show up. Nebraska has to deal with the fact that Federal money is not going to increase, and we don't have enough State money to fix housing. Bryan posed a question to the Board: How do we make our solutions reach the next generation? He went on to say that Nebraska needs to leverage Federal/State/local knowledge, as well as the State money we have, and that the solutions for one Nebraska region are different from solutions for another region.

c. Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS)

Matt Hastings, Executive Director of the Nebraska Statewide Workforce and Educational Reporting System (NSWERS).¹ Matt's presentation is provided as Handout 3 in meeting packets. NSWERS, is a state-of-the-art data system that promotes a strong economy, good jobs, growing business, and thriving communities. NSWERS is unique, the only resource in the state that integrates education and workforce data over time, from preschool to grade 12, through college, and into work, creating a holistic view of the learning and earning journey.

- Michael Geary asked about how Nebraska's talent retention rate compares to other states.
 - Matt didn't have an answer for Michael but did say that most states don't have this type of data.
 - Generally, NSWERS data suggests that people who leave Nebraska typically don't come back.
 - When breaking down data by highest education received retention rates drop as levels of education increase.
 - Two main factors in retention are social ties and economic ties. Nebraska has a hard time keeping people who are not from Nebraska, while people who are from Nebraska tend to remain in Nebraska.
- Board Member Jim Hansen asked if Nebraska colleges take residency into account when considering applicants for enrollment. Jim also asked if Nebraska colleges should be prioritizing Nebraska applications over out-of-state applicants.
 - Matt responded by pointing out that out-of-state students are often working and generate \$1 billion per year in wages in the State of Nebraska.
 - Matt also mentioned the "estimated earnings needed" graph relating to talent retention (slide 20 of Handout 2). Matt stated that NSWERS considers data in that graph as data that paints a picture of how invested individuals are in Nebraska's economy, rather than attaining specific levels of earnings.

d. Alignment Workgroup update

Dylan Wren, Chair of the Board's Alignment Workgroup provided a short update on Alignment Workgroup activities. Dylan indicated that the Workgroup will be focusing on "common intake". The term Common intake refers to a streamlined process where jobseekers and workers can access various workforce development services through a single point of entry, often at an American Job Center (also known as a one-stop center), rather than having to navigate separate intake procedures for each program. This unified approach aims to improve efficiency, reduce duplication of effort, and enhance the customer experience.

e. Career Pathways Workgroup update

Tim Faunce, Chair of the Board's Alignment Workgroup provided a brief update for the Board on the activities of the its Career Pathways Workgroup. Tim provided an overview of the Workgroup's four phase plan as presented on page 60 of [Nebraska's Combined State Plan](#).

f. Lincoln AJC tour

Dylan Wren (Administrator, Greater Lincoln Workforce Development Area) presented to the Board on the recent tour of the Greater Lincoln American Job Center by Board Members, which occurred on June 2, 2025. Dylan posed a question to the Board for future consideration: *How can Nebraska's one-stop centers further support Nebraska's jobseekers and workers?*

g. Omaha AJC tour

Erin Porterfield (Executive Director, Greater Omaha Workforce Development Area) presented to the Board on the recent tour of the Greater Omaha American Job Center by Board Members, which occurred on June 9, 2025.

Board Member Joanna Estrada commented that she attended the tour and remarked on the volume of individuals served through Greater Omaha's American Job Center. Board Member Jennifer Sedlacek also commented that she attended the tour, stating she was impressed with the facility and noted the vast number of individuals served by the Greater Omaha American Job Center and the wide range of available services.

¹ [Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 48-3701 – 48-3704](#)

Agenda item 7. Member Updates

Brad asked Members of the Board for updates on their respective industries or organizations and local workforce development area activities for the Members who also serve on local workforce development boards. Members of the Board provided updates as requested.

Agenda item 8. Next meeting date, time, and location

Brad reminded the Members of the Board that the next meeting of the Board is scheduled for September 12, 2025 from 9a to 12p and will be held at the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center, 1800 North 33rd Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68503. If the date, time or location of the meeting changes, Brad advised Board Members that they will be notified by email.

Agenda item 9. Public comment

Brad opened the floor for public comment. One public comment was received.

Brady Rhodes, Collaborative Coordinator, United Way of South Central Nebraska, encouraged outreach to businesses. Brady also mentioned that collaboratives are going to be the key to finding solutions, indicating Nebraska has to find ways to accelerate legal assistance for workers.

Agenda item 10. Adjournment

Brad asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Board. Courtney Wittstruck motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Joanna Estrada seconded the motion. Members of the Board voted on the motion by roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:40am.