



# **Workforce Development & Higher Education: Collaboration, Coordination, & “Quality Credentials”**

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# Background

- WIOA: sought to better align infrastructure, funding, and service-delivery across programs
  - Most explicit alignment (& federal requirements): WIOA Title Programs
- “Alignment” through “strategic planning” (WIOA State, Regional, & Local Plans): further alignment & coordination between WIOA programs and other workforce, economic development, social services, and education/training programs - including apprenticeship
  - MN’s “Combined State Plan”: WIOA Title Programs + TANF + SNAP E&T + Perkins V
  - Referenced in State Plan – but less aligned at system-level: DOC (Second Chance Act), DLI (apprenticeship)
- The differences in state agency set-ups, state workforce systems, and state higher education systems often makes WIOA and federal guidance around “alignment” challenging to do statewide – often perpetuating challenges at the local/regional level

# Background

(continued)

- MN State:
  - Perkins V strategic plan is included in the WIOA State Plan, but implementation is not coordinated with/through CareerForce
  - Disparate strengths & types of partnerships statewide; strongest connections are between an LWDA or LWDA's grantee and a specific college/campus – generally tied to a singular project or program (\$)
- MDE:
  - WIOA Title II – required in State Plan, but further coordination/alignment desired by many
  - Disparate strengths & types of partnerships between workforce and P-12, but common struggles
  - Oversight of the “World’s Best Workforce” legislation, which at one point the GWDB was involved with – but connections to this work between the GWDB & MDE have not been maintained
- MN P-20 Education Partnership
  - Similar entity, but in “education space”
  - “Alignment Summit” & ongoing collaboration
  - NSC Quality Credentials Policy Academy

# NSC “Quality Credentials” Policy Academy

- 2019-2021: interagency group (DEED, OHE, MN State, DLI, MDE) was funded through *NGA Educate for Opportunity Grant* that resulted largely in identifying barriers to more alignment across programs, agencies, and systems
- Summer 2021: GWDB & P-20 Education Partnership “Alignment Summit”
- Fall 2021: DEED, OHE applied for an NSC Policy Academy position (grant & TA)
- 2021-now: OHE & DEED are co-chairing the group, with other leadership/partnership from MN State, largely to continue this previous work
  - “Internal” working-group: OHE, DEED, MN State (meets 2x/month)
  - Larger partner & stakeholder group (meets monthly – Wanda Jensen from WDI helps rep. LWDBs)

# “Quality Credentials”:

## Existing DEED Definitions; Goals of the NSC Policy Academy

- US DOL requires states to have policies in place to determine & ensure quality for training
  - DEED most substantively has this policy/language in place within the [ETPL Guidelines](#)
  - ETPL Guidelines meets the minimum requirements, while [Career & Education Explorer](#) meets the federal requirement that this be made available to job/training seekers
- US DOL, NGA, NSC, NAWB, & other states: achieve alignment through common policies & definitions
- Goals of the NSC Policy Academy:
  - Collaboratively develop language that can be better utilized across WFD & higher education
  - Consider other policy language or proposals to drive WFD-education alignment
  - With stakeholders: ID opportunities to deploy new lang/policy, & propose to state agency leaders
  - Aligned definitions & policies would ideally:
    - Eliminate confusion or quality concerns for job/training seekers
    - Make it easier for some job/training seekers to transition from short-term to degree program (stackability)
    - Help point employers or WFD partners towards more clear lists of certifications or identify talent pools
  - Further the “alignment agenda” of the GWDB & P-20 Education Partnership

# WFD-Education Alignment:

## Seeking Input from LWDBs

- Are there community/technical colleges in your area/region that are a “go-to” training provider that you regularly turn to?
  - If yes: Why is that partnership/collaboration successful? If no: Why not? What’s needed (or not)?
- What is the connection like with Perkins V in your area/region?
  - Do you, your staff, or members participate in regional/strategic planning done by MN State?
  - Could the GWDB and/or DEED do something to help support a stronger connection here?
- When trying to bring forward “the workforce perspective”, what big things should I be considering when talking about “quality credentials” definitions or policies?
  - How could this be useful with you in serving job seekers? Serving employers? Selecting training providers?
  - If a new definition is created, where should it be housed/posted? Is the ETPL Guidelines enough?
- Are there other disconnects at the state level that impact locally/regionally?
- Am I missing anything when it comes to alignment across WFD & higher ed?
  - Whether specific to the “Quality” definitions/policies, the ETPL, or more broadly?

# Thank You!

## Questions? Comments?

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