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**Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI)  
CWI Full Council Meeting**

August 27, 2026  
9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**St. Norbert College**  
100 Grant Street  
De Pere, WI 54115

**AGENDA**

**9:30-10:00 a.m. – Networking**

- I. Welcome and Opening Remarks – CWI Chair Sachin Shivaram
- II. Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)  
Dr. Eric Fulcomer, President and CEO, WAICU  
Dr. Laurie Joyner, President, St. Norbert College
- III. Approval of the June 10, 2026, Meeting Minutes – **Action Required**
- IV. Department of Workforce Development Updates – Secretary Amy Pechacek
- V. Workforce Pell Update – Pat Lonergan, Strategic Policy Advisor, DWD

**-Break-**

- VI. Portrait of a Graduate – Department of Public Instruction
- VII. Committee Reports
- VIII. Adjourn

Meeting materials will be posted on the CWI web site at <https://cwi.wisconsin.gov/>.

For questions about the agenda, contact Emily Hein, Department of Workforce Development, Division of Employment and Training by phone at (414) 250-6503 or by email at [CWIADMIN@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:CWIADMIN@dwd.wisconsin.gov). DWD is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need assistance with this information, please dial 7-1-1 for Wisconsin Relay Service. Please call (608) 266-8990 to request information in an alternate format, including translated to another language.

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**Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI)**  
**Q2 Full Council Meeting**  
**Wisconsin Operating Engineers – Training Center**  
June 10, 2026  
10:00a.m. – 2:00p.m.

***DRAFT MEETING MINUTES – PENDING OFFICIAL APPROVAL***

**Attendance:** Sachin Shivaram (Chair); Sec. Amy Pechacek (Executive Director); Jonathan Abraham; Masood Akhtar; Becky Bartoszek; Chris Conard; David Crowley; Bob Davis; Meredith Dressel; Ann Franz; Jake Gorges; Amanda Hoefling; Sen. Andre Jacque; Nick Kapsa; Shaun McHugh; Layla Merrifield; Melissa Meschke; Mike Ward (on behalf of John Miller); Margaret McMahon (on behalf of Sec. Jeff Pertl); Jeriah Rave; Kathi Seifert; Rep. Shelia Stubbs; Michelle Tressler; Anne Troka; Sara Knueve (on behalf of Dr. Jill Underly); Sen. Jamie Wall

**Guests:** Finn Eckes; Stephanie Elmer; Rachel Harvey; Emily Hein; Grace Johnson; Kristina Krizan; Pat Lonergan; Ryan Long; Christina Lorge; Kathy Paul; Halle Pokela; Megan Stritchko; Bethany Thier; Diane Treis; Liz Wallace; Danielle Williams

**I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks**

Chair Sachin Shivaram called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Roll was reflected in the meeting minutes, and quorum was established. The chair reviewed the agenda and introduced the group's hosts, Shaun McHugh and Dan Sperberg. They welcomed the group and gave an overview of the Wisconsin Operating Engineers – Training Center.

**II. Approval of the Feb. 24, 2026, Meeting Minutes – Action Required**

A motion was made by David Crowley to approve the Feb. 24, 2026, meeting minutes. Jonathan Abraham seconded the motion, and the meeting minutes were approved unanimously and without correction.

**III. Department of Workforce Development Updates**

Secretary Amy Pechacek provided department updates. In December 2025 the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) enacted a waiting list for new consumers after not receiving full funding in the state budget. That list has grown to over 7,000 people waiting to receive services. DWD requested additional funding and the Joint Committee on Finance approved \$600,000 for state fiscal year 2026 and DVR has begun serving those with the most significant needs. In the last year the state has seen record high employment rates for people with disabilities and this delay in services could have been avoided.

Last month, DWD announced that they are accepting applications from employers for the WisTRAIN grant. These grants are intended to help employers grow their workforce to adapt to technological evolution within their industry as well as grow technical occupations. At the end of June an announcement will go out for the Healthcare Employment, Access, Rural Transformation (HEART) program. These grants will support innovative projects in

rural communities to support career pathways for rural health care providers, and fund services provided by community health workers.

**IV. Regional Labor Market Updates**

Ryan Long, the regional economist for WDAs 4 and 5, provided an update on state and regional labor market indicators. He highlighted industry employment changes across the state and in the region, unemployment claims, layoffs, and industry trends. Additionally, he highlighted new research that his team is working on: AI exposure by college major, manufacturing turnover by age, and Wisconsin's registered nurse supply and demand forecast results.

**V. 2026-30 CWI Strategic Plan – Action Required**

The committee chairs provided a brief overview of their committee's north star metric and objectives in the council's strategic plan. Ann Franz made a motion to approve the strategic plan. Shaun McHugh seconded the motion, and the strategic plan was approved unanimously.

**VI. Bylaw Revisions**

The council reviewed a summary of the proposed changes to the council bylaws. Sec. Pechacek made a motion to approve the changes. Jake Gorges seconded the motion and the changes to the bylaws were approved unanimously and without correction.

**VII. Workforce Pell Overview**

DWD and WTCS provided an overview of Workforce Pell, new legislation that was passed in July 2025 as part of the One Big Beautiful Bill. The program expands federal Pell grant eligibility, helps low-income students access short-term, career-focused training without a full degree, and boosts employability for in-demand employment sectors. Programs must be at least eight weeks but less than 15 weeks, provide 150 to 599 clock hours, and meet specific industry alignment and outcome metrics. Wisconsin has established a workgroup made up of subject matter experts from DWD, WTCS, the Universities of Wisconsin, WAICU, Literacy Services of Wisconsin, and consults with DPI and members from the financial aid community as needed. CWI will be responsible for consulting with the workgroup to endorse statewide criteria and standards, review labor market methodologies, recommend alignment with state policies and priorities, and monitor statewide outcomes. Their role will be to advise the Governor, DWD, and higher education partners on recommended programs, cross-agency data alignment, industry demand, and future policy changes. The program is scheduled to go into effect on July 1, 2026.

**VIII. Council Updates**

- Wisconsin's WIOA State Plan modification was submitted to DOL in April.
- Performance results for program year 2024 were released and included in the meeting packet. The state met or exceeded the adjusted level for all overall state programs and performance indicators. Additionally, there were no failures for any individual program area.
- DWD's Office of Veterans Employment is accepting applications through July 31<sup>st</sup> for their Vets Ready Initiative. Every year they recognize businesses who go above and beyond for the veteran workforce. Winners will be announced in November.

**IX. Closing Remarks & Adjournment**

Chair Shivaram thanked all attendees for their participation and contributions to a productive meeting. Members were given a tour of the Wisconsin Operating Engineers – Training Center.

# Establishing a Statewide Portrait of a Graduate



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
**Public Instruction**  
Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent

# Welcome & Introductions



**Dr. Jill Underly**  
State Superintendent



**Sara Knueve**  
Asst. Deputy State  
Superintendent



**Dr. Laura Roeker**  
Director  
Bureau of Teaching and  
Learning



**Karin Smith**  
ACP and Dual  
Enrollment Education  
Consultant



**Chris Gleason**  
Arts and Creativity  
Education Consultant

# Session Objectives



- **Share** exciting progress towards the goals in our strategic plan.
- **Frame** the value and importance of a portrait of a graduate alongside strong academic knowledge.
- **Reveal** the official Wisconsin Portrait of a Graduate and descriptors.
- **Consider** personal and business connection points and messaging related to the portrait.
- **Identify** important next steps and the future

Captioned version available at: [The Future of Work: Will Our Children Be Prepared? \(YouTube Video\)](#)

# Workforce Trends

## The High Demand for Durable Skills



- 7/10 most requested skills in job postings are Durable Skills (such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity).
- Employers seek Durable Skills nearly 4x more frequently than the top five technical skills.
- Demand is greatest in jobs more aligned to the future of work:
  - 91% of management jobs
  - 86% of business operation's jobs, and
  - 81% of engineering jobs demand Durable Skills.
- Jobs at greatest risk of automation in the near term have lower demand for Durable Skills.

(Source: Cole, Lauren, et al. *The High Demand for Durable Skills*. Oct. 2021)

# What Is a Portrait of a Graduate?

**A Portrait of a Graduate** defines the durable skills students need to thrive in school, work, and life. When paired with academic proficiency, these skills prepare students for life after high school, regardless of the path they choose.



# Wisconsin Examples

## KETTLE MORAINES SCHOOL DISTRICT GRADUATE PROFILE

As a community and school district, we strive for each Kettle Moraine graduate to be a:

COMMUNICATOR

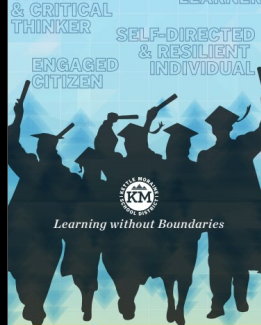
COLLABORATOR

CREATIVE & CRITICAL THINKER

ENGAGED CITIZEN

CONTINUOUS LEARNER

SELF-DIRECTED & RESILIENT INDIVIDUAL



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

CITIZENSHIP

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Portrait of a Graduate

Portrait of a Graduate is a collective vision that articulates the community's aspirations for all students.

**Lead**  
Our students will set an example for others to follow by thinking critically, solving problems, and communicating effectively.

**Care**  
Our students will show care for themselves, others, and their community by displaying empathy, compassion, and respect.

**Contribute**  
Our students will contribute to their classrooms, schools, communities, and the world by being self-directed, productive, and accountable.

AASD GRADUATES



## APPLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENTS WILL BE



## BELOIT MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE



**RESILIENT LEADER**

**CRITICAL THINKER**

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR**

**FEARLESS LEARNER**

**AMBITIOUS INNOVATOR**

**GLOBAL CONTRIBUTOR**

**COMMUNICATORS**

**PRODUCTIVE & ACCOUNTABLE**

**SELF-DIRECTED & DEMONSTRATES INITIATIVE**

**CRITICAL THINKERS & PROBLEM SOLVERS**

**EMPATHETIC & COMPASSIONATE**

**RESPECTFUL**

**CAREER, COLLEGE, AND COMMUNITY READY**

thinking beyond now  
School District of Beloit

## HARTLAND LAKESIDE MISSION:

To empower every student to discover and develop their unique gifts in a nurturing environment, preparing them to thrive as compassionate, critical thinkers and lifelong learners.



**Grow**

- Learn from mistakes
- Keep trying when it's hard
- Strive to improve every day
- Explore new ideas

**Think**

- Use critical thinking and common sense
- Be curious and ask questions
- Solve problems creatively

**Share**

- Communicate thoughts clearly
- Listen to understand
- Spent up respectfully and confidently

**Care**

- Show empathy and kindness to self and others
- Respect all people and perspectives
- Support the well-being of others

**Collaborate**

- Work well with others
- Be a reliable team

## FUTURE-PREPAREDNESS FRAMEWORK: A Cardinal's Journey



**THE CARDINAL MINDSET**

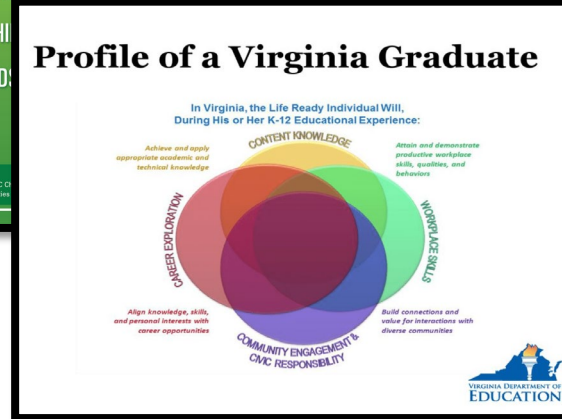
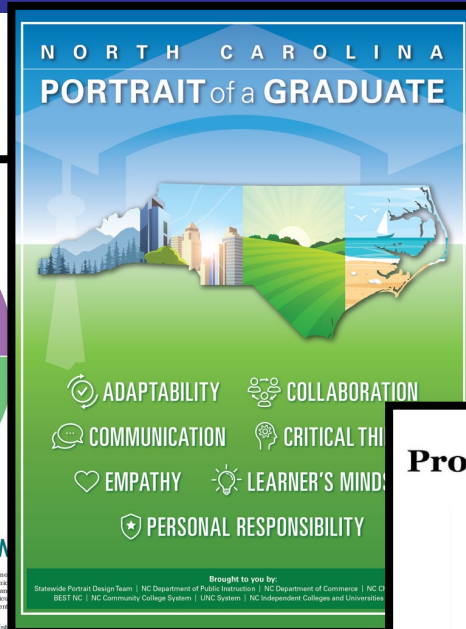
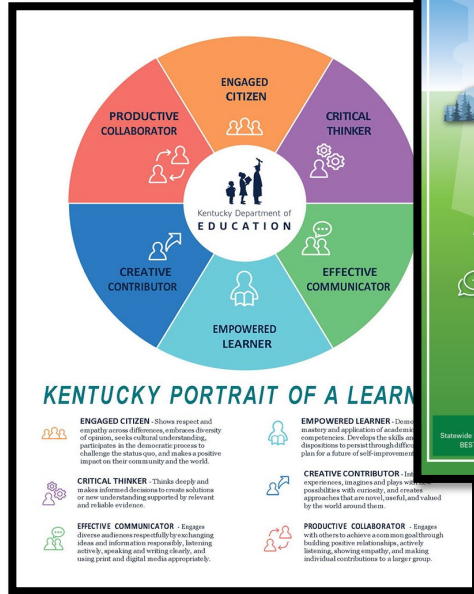
- Community-Oriented
- Curious
- Accountable
- Self-Aware

**THE CARDINAL FOUNDATIONS**

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Communication

MIDDLETON: CROSS PLAINS  
MILWAUKEE: CROSS PLAINS  
WISCONSIN: CROSS PLAINS

# National Examples



# The Wisconsin Portrait of a Graduate



**EMBARGO**

# Discussion

Help us with an elevator speech: how would you explain Wisconsin's Portrait of a Graduate to your organization?

In what ways can we partner with CWI as we launch Wisconsin's Portrait of a Graduate?



# Wisconsin's Roadmap to Portrait of a Graduate

A year-long initiative by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, in partnership with AASA, to co-create a "Portrait of a Graduate" defining essential skills, mindsets, and literacies for future success through extensive community and stakeholder engagement.

## The 5-Phase Journey (October 2025 - October 2026)



# Next Steps and Ways to Stay Involved

Follow our progress, learn about upcoming in-person and virtual meetings, and submit your ideas and thoughts using our landing page.

[DPI's Portrait of a Graduate Website](#)



# 2026-30 CWI Strategic Plan

This report provides an update on the progress of our strategic plan, highlighting key accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, and milestones achieved in meeting our core targets. Our overarching focus remains centered on expanding workforce participation, scaling non-degree credential pathways, and strengthening labor market outcomes across the state.

## Overall Plan Updates:

- The strategic plan has been published on the [CWI website](#).
- The website and each committee area will be updated with the new language from the strategic plan.
- The dashboards will be updated both by removing and adding data elements required to monitor progress. Each committee's north star metric will be the prominent data element.
- A plan will be developed to regularly update the dashboards and develop automation where possible.
- Work will begin on the CWI 2026 Annual Report – required to be submitted to the new administration in January 2027.

## Education Committee:

**Target:** Increase the number of counties in Wisconsin where 60% of working-age adults living in that county have an industry-recognized credential.

**Current Status:** 3 counties (Dane, Waukesha, Ozaukee) – There is a 42.2 percentage point gap between the counties with the highest and lowest attainment rates.

### Key Action Items:

- Exploring strategies to increase the connection between business/industry and local school districts and institutions.
- Portrait of a Graduate: Analyzing feedback to identify key themes and priorities. These insights inform the development of a draft Portrait of a Graduate framework that reflects voices from across the state.
- Implementing Workforce Pell:
  - Policy published on July 21<sup>st</sup>
  - Technical Assistance webinar hosted on August 24<sup>th</sup>

## Employer Committee:

**Target:** Achieve a 10% increase in the number of businesses served by the workforce system.

**Current Status:** 12,404 businesses served in PY 2025 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)

### Key Action Items:

- Develop an employer engagement framework to create a continuous improvement model around serving employers.
- Business Climate Survey: Enhance current questions to make the survey more impactful to the council.

#### Target Dates:

- Survey distribution - July 2027

- Analyze survey results – August 2027
- Develop a focus group for survey respondents – Winter 2028
- Employer-led training grants:
  - WisTRAIN: Over 80 applications received
  - HEART:
  - Implementing Workforce Pell:
    - Policy published on July 21<sup>st</sup>
    - Technical Assistance webinar hosted on August 24<sup>th</sup>

## Workforce Committee:

**Target:** Maintain the employment-to-population ratio of adults aged 25-54 of at least 80%.

**Current Status:** 80%

### Key Action Items:

- Explore skills-based hiring in Wisconsin: What resources are available for employers and what best practices are we seeing at the local level.
- Exploring how we are currently assessing job seeker skills and determine what resources are available to help job seekers identify transferable skills and help employers identify transferable skills.
- Continued investment in credentialed pathways, stackability, and credit for prior learning.

## WIOA Governance & Resource Alignment:

**Target:** Achieve passing WIOA performance each program year.

**Current Status:** PY 2024 – Passing score received for all overall state programs.

### Key Action Items:

- Modernize the state's case management system and Job Center of Wisconsin website.
- Enhance the Integrated Service Delivery Teams
- Assess future workforce needs:
  - [Economic Impact of Opioid Use Disorder in Wisconsin](#)
  - [2026 WI RN Supply & Demand Forecast 2024-2050](#)
- WIOA Performance: [State Performance Assessment](#)
  - WIOA State Plan Modification: Approved
  - Staff worked with US DOL to complete overall state negotiations.
  - Technical assistance and local negotiations currently underway.