

STRATEGIC OPERATING FRAMEWORK

Delaware Workforce Development Board

WORKING DRAFT
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STRATEGIC OPERATING FRAMEWORK

This framework summarizes the Delaware Workforce Development Board’s (DWDB) five-year goals and investment principles, as well as short-term priorities for 2020-2022. It was developed through surveys and interviews with workforce system stakeholders, alongside three board retreats held on October 13, November 9, and November 23, 2020.

VISION

DWDB provides leadership and resources to develop a skilled workforce that is responsive to the evolving needs of business and communities.

- ▶ By doing so, employers, job seekers and youth are aware of, see value in, and actively use or benefit from DWDB’s services.

DWDB FIVE-YEAR GOALS

GOAL 1. MOVE DELAWARE RESIDENTS TOWARD ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

- 1.1. Help residents facing barriers, especially those in Promise Communities, to access education and employment opportunities that lead to self-sufficiency.
- 1.2. Support people building skills for jobs with promising futures.
- 1.3. Effectively connect Delaware job seekers to employers.
- 1.4. Engage and reconnect youth in education and work experiences aligned with career pathways.

GOAL 2. SUPPORT THE WORKFORCE NEEDS AND COMPETITIVENESS OF INDUSTRIES THAT FUEL DELAWARE’S ECONOMY

- 2.1. Directly connect workforce investment to critical Delaware industries, enhancing the state’s competitiveness.
- 2.2. Work with employers via industry and occupational sectors to understand job demand, enhance shared training capacity, and provide a collective response to changing demand.

GOAL 3. BUILD A RESPONSIVE AND AGILE WORKFORCE SYSTEM, STATEWIDE AND LOCALLY

- 3.1. Enhance the responsiveness and agility of the system to continually improve and respond to changing economic needs.
- 3.2. Implement a detailed system of outcome measures, allowing the board to assess the success of its investments and shift strategies accordingly.

BOARD MEMBERS’ DESIRED RESULTS FROM THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM

Assistance to adults and youth that provides:

- ▶ Skills for upward career mobility
- ▶ Jobs that produce self-sufficient income
- ▶ Employment stability over time

Partnerships with business and industry that provide:

- ▶ Responsive solutions to workforce needs
- ▶ Agile system for continuously upskilling workers
- ▶ A strategic advantage for doing business in Delaware

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The work of the Delaware Workforce Development Board is based on the following set of principles that guide priorities and investment decisions.

- ▶ **STRATEGY BASED** – Board focuses on the big picture of workforce development (creating a system, not merely a collection of programs) to match supply and demand more effectively.
- ▶ **CUSTOMER FOCUSED** – Systems are built around customer needs, including job seekers, employers, and youth (rather than funding streams) and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ▶ **LEVERAGED PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES** – Strategies leverage other resources and are based on strong partnerships, building on existing collaborations when possible.
- ▶ **OUTCOME DRIVEN** – Outcomes are clearly defined, communicated, and measured with investments made accordingly.
- ▶ **INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY** – Programs are focused on outcomes and do not duplicate each other but work collaboratively to deliver services to the customer instead.
- ▶ **INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALIGNED** – Workforce programs and services are aligned with regional industries and economic growth strategies.
- ▶ **ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT** – There is a clear process for making decisions about the system that is informed by analyzing data and evaluating performance standards.

CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE DWDB

- ▶ **CONVENER/BROKER** – Building and nurturing strong local partnerships with community organizations, including business, education, one-stop partners, and economic development associations, recognizing that it requires the capabilities of multiple partners to build a world-class workforce system.
- ▶ **SYSTEM MANAGER** – Designing and managing a customer-centered service delivery that leverages private sector board representation, and providing oversight of the workforce system, ensuring it is functioning efficiently and that funding is being managed responsibly.
- ▶ **OPTIMIZER** – Using data to drive decisions and continuous improvement, monitoring performance, and adjusting the system in anticipation of trends and how to respond to them.
- ▶ **CAPACITY BUILDER/INVESTOR** – Leveraging public investments with commitments from industry, labor, public, and community partners to implement new ideas and strategies.

SNAPSHOT OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

GOAL 1. MOVE DELAWARE RESIDENTS TOWARD ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

OBJECTIVE	PLANNED RESULT	IMPLICATIONS FOR OPERATIONS
<p>1.1. Help residents facing barriers, especially those in promise communities, to access education and employment opportunities that lead to self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>People receive coordinated and comprehensive services that help them gain skills and find stable employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The system recognizes that people facing barriers need long-term resources to enable them to reach and retain employment. ▶ Funding sources and reporting are braided at the state level, emphasizing wraparound services.
<p>1.2. Support people in building skills for jobs with promising futures.</p>	<p>People assisted through the workforce system have the wherewithal to build highly employable skills and find lasting employment with pathways for upward mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There is better understanding of how high-demand occupations align with desired outcomes, such as livable wages, job stability, and upward mobility. ▶ Participants placed in jobs receive ongoing support and training to advance. ▶ Investments in training programs are focused on strategic industries driving growth in Delaware’s economy.
<p>1.3. Effectively connect Delaware job seekers to employers.</p>	<p>Job placement services are highly valued by job seekers and employers, providing timely and expert assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A strong employer engagement process involves companies at critical points throughout the system, not just when it is time for job placement. ▶ Advanced technology tools are used to help job seekers assess their skills and find relevant jobs building on their competencies.
<p>1.4. Engage and reconnect youth in education and work experiences aligned with career pathways.</p>	<p>More youth complete high school, participate in work experiences, and pursue postsecondary education and training aligned with future careers in growing sectors of the state’s economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Investments support efforts that launch youth toward the full range of skills and experiences needed for future prosperity. Programs and experiences are linked to increase interest and build momentum. ▶ Organizations will need to further develop shared strategies to leverage their collective capabilities and resources, recognizing the complexity of serving youth facing multiple barriers.

PROGRAM AND SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2021-2022

1. Greater alignment of ITA and cohort training investment to self-sufficiency outcomes and critical industries.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish a tiered high-demand list. Tier 1 list includes middle skill occupations paying at least \$15/hr with turnover rate no greater than state average, and above average projected growth or employment concentration. Occupations are verified by industry/employers. ▶ Map adult career pathways against critical industries in different regions of the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Will focus 70% of ITA and cohort training dollars (WIOA and any Blue Collar funds) on Tier 1 occupations.

2. Continued support of Wilmington Youth Alliance and justice-involved initiatives, expanding the system’s capacity to share resources, strategies, and roles across multiple service providers.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide DWDB investments to support efforts such as process mapping, facilitation, and action planning for coordination and training of case managers, braiding of funds, and collaborative service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Will require Blue Collar system-level project funds, as well as funding from Health and Human Services, Juvenile and Adult Correction Departments, and other stakeholders.

3. Address the needs of those most impacted by COVID-19, especially women dropping out of the workforce.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Form Governor supported, multi-agency task forces around targeted populations and develop immediate action plans to reconnect affected populations to the workforce and mitigate further impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Will require a set aside and use of Blue Collar Temporary funds.

4. Enhance the ability to assess changing job skills and occupations.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explore the deployment of shared state-of-the art occupational assessment tools that match employer needs, and train One-Stop staff and partners on current and future job demands and industry needs and expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Any required funding for new tools and training could be funded under Blue Collar system-level project funds and matched by other state agencies.

GOAL 2. SUPPORT THE WORKFORCE NEEDS AND COMPETITIVENESS OF INDUSTRIES THAT FUEL DELAWARE’S ECONOMY

OBJECTIVE	PLANNED RESULT	IMPLICATIONS FOR OPERATIONS
2.1. Directly connect workforce investment to critical Delaware industries, enhancing the state’s competitiveness.	There is a systemic structure for engaging industries and employers that increases the agility and responsiveness of workforce investments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Standing and active partnerships with industry groups and employers are built (or enhanced) to identify demand and training needs, define service needs, and evaluate effectiveness. ▶ Administrative capacity to organize and support sector strategies is developed. ▶ Private sector representation on the DWDB includes critical industries and there are active channels for industry to provide proactive input.
2.2. Facilitate convening of sector groups to build career awareness, enhance shared training capacity, and provide a collective response to changing demand.	Training investments support high priority occupations, verified by industry, and most likely to help grow Delaware’s economy and enhance its competitiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There is a focused and strategic list of demand occupations guiding investments in ITAs, leading to greater impact on workforce outcomes. ▶ Training in cohort groups is funded for specific employers or employer groups, including OJTs and apprenticeships, in addition to ITAs. ▶ System operates with a “wholesale” approach (groups of occupations) rather than “retail” (one job at a time).

PROGRAM AND SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2021-2022

1. Develop an employer engagement strategy and implementation plan.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create an implementation plan that includes processes for establishing industry relationships, engaging employers in different aspects of the workforce system, coordinating agencies and provider outreach roles, and connecting jobs to training investments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Primarily accomplished with staff time and existing resources.

2. Roll out employer engagement strategy to a selected number of critical industries.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Focus on a limited number of industries’ most likely job openings over the next 12-24 months that correspond to the Tier 1 high demand list verified by employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Will require set aside and use of Blue Collar Opportunity Seed Funds.

3. Pilot industry led cohort training to upskill workers.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish employer-led cohort training initiatives to upskill incumbent entry-level workers into next level jobs; target occupations where vacated jobs can be backfilled with entry-level workers through the system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Will require set aside and use of Blue Collar Opportunity Seed Funds.

GOAL 3. BUILD A RESPONSIVE AND AGILE WORKFORCE SYSTEM, STATEWIDE AND LOCALLY

OBJECTIVE	PLANNED RESULT	IMPLICATIONS FOR OPERATIONS
3.1. Enhance the responsiveness and agility of the system to continually improve and respond to changing economic needs.	Customers see value and relevance in the workforce system’s programs and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ DWDB investments include targeted efforts to build its capacity or drive innovation. ▶ The board plays a greater role as convener, facilitating partner-based solutions, and helping to leverage resources across the system. ▶ Systems improvements are driven by outcome data and customer input.
3.2. Implement a detailed system of outcome measures, allowing the board to assess the success of its investments and shift strategies accordingly.	Enhanced sophistication and improvement in workforce programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ There is a structured format and process for gathering and evaluating input from customers. ▶ Measured results assess the effectiveness of investments and local needs to guide programmatic priorities.

PROGRAM AND SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2021-2022

1. Enhance board capacity to lead the workforce system.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Evaluate and refine DWDB’s committee structure and roles, develop orientation and ongoing training, and create an annual board calendar and workplan. ▶ Review staffing needs, especially related to strategic planning and integration, and roles within state government, developing recommendations for Governor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Development costs are covered with existing resources. ▶ Additional costs for implementing recommendations may require Blue Collar system-level project funds.

2. Define a set of program and system outcomes measures and evaluation processes.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop outcome measurements and processes for regular evaluation by the board, leading to system refinements and shifts as needed. ▶ Establish a roadmap for the evaluation of major program components at least every three years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Initial development is covered with existing resources. ▶ Periodic review of major programs may require Blue Collar system-level project funds.

3. Continue to move toward an integrated and coordinated workforce system for Delaware.

MAIN ELEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	IMPLICATIONS FOR DWDB RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Evaluate and identify opportunities to strategically align agencies across state government to provide focused, cost-effective workforce services. Identify national best practices and develop an implementation plan. Direction from Governor is needed to refine this scope of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Preliminary workplan included within current resources. Ongoing implementation will require additional funding from DWDB and other agencies.

OUTCOME MEASURES

Measuring effectiveness of workforce investments will require outcome metrics over and above WIOA reporting measures. The following list of metrics represent an *initial* list for which a more structured program evaluation process will be developed. These measures are directly connected to desired outcomes of the board such as self-sufficient income levels, employment stability, and upward mobility, as well as operational indicators that can compare program and cost-effectiveness among investments.

SYSTEM-LEVEL OUTCOMES

1. Satisfaction of strategic industry customers with system outcomes
2. Satisfaction of strategic community partners with system outcomes for their clients
3. Amount of resources leveraged
 - a. From other partners
 - b. From private sector
4. Costs per outcome

ADULT JOB SEEKER OUTCOMES

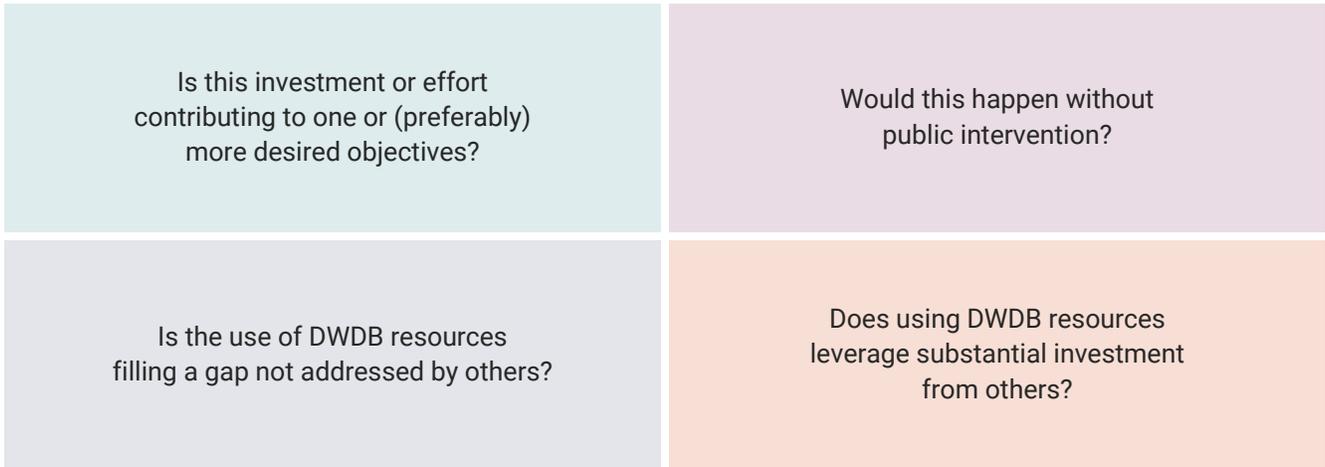
1. Job placement
 - a. Overall placement rate, numbers
 - b. Placement in training-related occupation
 - c. Placement in strategic industry
2. Wage rates and income
 - a. Wages at placement
 - b. Percent of clients placed in jobs exceeding the livable wage target set by the board
 - c. Percent of participants gaining an additional 10% or more in wages within two years of training or placement
3. Continued employment for 2-3 years
4. Training program completion rate and numbers
5. Number and percentage of enrollees attaining industry-recognized credentials.

YOUTH OUTCOMES

1. Number and completion rates of credentials
 - a. Completion of high school or GED®
 - b. Completion of post-secondary credentials
2. At least 80 hours of paid work experience
3. Demonstrated understanding of workplace expectations and conduct
4. Clear roadmap for achieving goals over next 3-5 years

INVESTMENT DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

The needs of Delaware’s residents, businesses, and communities far exceed available resources in the workforce system. Therefore, resources must be focused on areas of strategic importance where limited public funds can have the greatest impact. At a minimum, DWDB will filter investments based on the following decision framework.



ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT CRITERIA FOR FLEXIBLE FUNDS

With demand outpacing the availability of resources to address workforce challenges, DWDB seeks to maximize the impact of flexible investments by applying additional funding filters to specific programs. These filters will be clearly communicated in funding guidelines and decision criteria that shape where and how Blue Collar and other flexible funding is allocated. The DWDB seeks to focus flexible investments in efforts that:

- ▶ **TARGET CRITICAL COMMUNITIES** – Prioritize promise communities and those areas of the state with higher than average unemployment.
- ▶ **ALIGN WITH CORE ECONOMIC SECTORS** – programs and initiatives serving core industry sectors identified in the state’s economic strategy, ensuring participation by both large and small employers. (This would include sectors of strategic importance in each county.)
- ▶ **CONNECT TRAINING TO JOBS** – Prioritize investments in occupational training and other employment related programs to those that demonstrate a need verified by employers in the state, and that include employer engagement activities such as work experience, mentoring, and job placement services.
- ▶ **LEVERAGE OTHER FUNDS AND SERVICES** – Use flexible funds (e.g., Blue Collar) as seed or matching funds to leverage other resources, especially those that which can be sustained over time. Prioritize investments in efforts that integrate service delivery across agencies and providers or partner with groups of employers.

USE OF BLUE COLLAR AND OTHER FLEXIBLE FUNDS

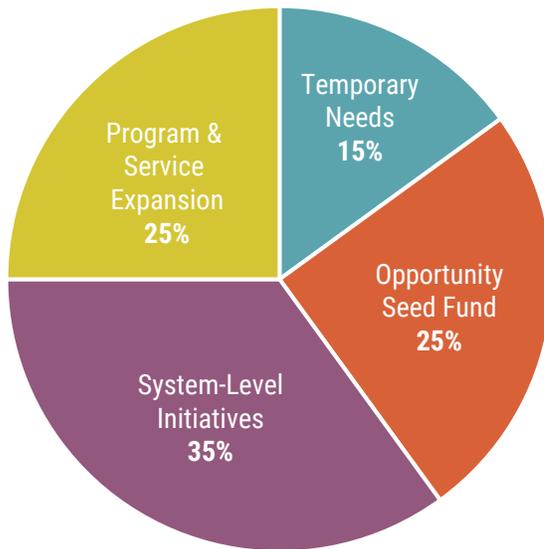
The Delaware Workforce Development Board has identified four categories of funding for flexible investment resources such as Blue Collar funds. Together, these investment categories address significant board responsibilities outlined in Executive Order 36 and provide a framework that can be used over a five-year strategic plan under which annual allocations and priorities can be identified.

Flexible funding categories include:

- ▶ **SYSTEM-LEVEL PROJECTS** – Targeted initiatives where DWDB funds are leveraged with other partners to enhance resource alignment and build capacity among agencies and partners to serve clients effectively and seamlessly, and with results that can be directly applied to other parts of the workforce system.
- ▶ **PROGRAM AND SERVICE EXPANSION** – Additional resources put toward traditional workforce training and participant support services (typically funded under WIOA) with annual priorities that clearly articulate a focus on specific populations or programs.
- ▶ **OPPORTUNITY SEED FUND** – Highly leveraged funds that accelerate industry engagement, are responsive to significant economic opportunities, such as a company relocation to or expansion in Delaware, and which help secure new ongoing/sustainable sources of funding and partnerships.
- ▶ **TEMPORARY FUNDS** – Funds that address time-sensitive and critical needs within a 12-month period, such as populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are gap investments (filling specific gaps in existing resources) with infrastructure already in place for quick implementation.

Figure 1 shows suggested funding proportions developed based on feedback from board members.

FIGURE 1. 2021 SUGGESTION ALLOCATION OF BLUE COLLAR FUNDS



Approximate distribution of funds, based on 2019 Blue Collar funding levels:

- \$1,300,000** System-Level Initiatives
- \$950,000** Program & Service Expansion
- \$950,000** Opportunity Seed Fund
- \$570,000** Temporary Needs

Source: Board member feedback from November 23, 2020 retreat.

BLUE COLLAR FUNDING PRIORITIES FOR 2021

The following chart identifies how each category of Blue Collar funding relates to primary board objectives, as well as investment criteria that would guide the selection of projects within each category. The chart also includes recommended 2021 priorities for programs and services that fall within each option.

FUNDING CATEGORY	DWDB OBJECTIVES	INVESTMENT CRITERIA	2021 PRIORITY PROGRAMS
System-Level Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Resource Alignment ▶ Enhanced Service Coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ For system development of coordinating case management and service delivery, not for running specific programs (e.g., the work being managed under Social Contract’s <i>Central Project</i>). ▶ Must leverage other sources of funding (for the project and for sustaining the efforts). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continued support of the Wilmington Youth Alliance. ▶ Re-entry programs for youth and adults.
Program & Service Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Expansion of high-demand training and client programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Align career pathways to industry sectors and identify high growth sectors. ▶ Focus youth programs on occupational skills training and work-based experience, especially for disconnected and justice-involved youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cohort training for adult career pathways focused on high growth industry sectors. ▶ Training and work experience for re-entry youth.
Opportunity Seed Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Employer and sector engagement ▶ Expansion of resources ▶ System responsiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Focus on industries with self-sufficiency wages and high economic impact (both regionally and statewide). ▶ Industry sector efforts to be led by or in partnership with an industry organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ At least one industry sector strategy pilot. ▶ Industry-led efforts to upskill workers.
Temporary Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Time sensitive and immediate needs ▶ System responsiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Resources must show a lack of funds and clear need. ▶ There must be the infrastructure in place to rapidly deploy funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A coordinated effort to assist women displaced from the workforce during COVID.

EXPANDING BOARD LEADERSHIP AND ROLES

The board understands that their strength lies in the ability to set an appropriate vision, convene the right partners, and broker a comprehensive set of solutions for business and job seeker customers. As such, the board seeks to take a more active role to do the following.

INCREASE EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

This was identified as the highest priority among board members.

- ▶ Aggregate job demand in critical industries and communicate these needs across the workforce system, especially jobs with changing employment competencies and skill requirements.
 - Develop working relationships with the state’s industry associations and economic development organizations to establish conduits to groups of employers. Start with a targeted list of industries and expand each year.
- ▶ Be a recognized facilitator of events and discussions that bring employers and other external stakeholders to the table to work on specific workforce needs.
 - Co-host annual industry summits where groups of employers can articulate their workforce needs in a structured fashion, communicating to multiple providers at once.

PROMOTE RESOURCE ALIGNMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY AMONG AGENCIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

This was identified as a close second priority among board members.

- ▶ Take an active role as a convener to identify solutions for workforce system gaps and challenges, leading the development of resources and partnership to address them.
 - Oversee continuous improvement efforts with the WIOA Leadership Team, identifying one or two primary issues each year to evaluate and make operational enhancements. The Leadership Team is a group of approximately 40 people representing the variety of state agencies directly involved with workforce development, as well as some external organizations.
- ▶ Regularly evaluate program and system results based on data, providing insights to help improve performance and to refine investments based on effective strategies.
 - Work with WIOA Leadership Team to develop definitions and standards for outcome measures.
 - Assign board committee(s) to review results with service providers at least quarterly, presenting summary information to the board, including recommendations for the future.

STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP ROLE AS THE STATE’S WORKFORCE VOICE

The board identified this as a moderate priority with a more phased approach over time.

- ▶ Become a thought leader that envisions, influences, and leads an integrated workforce system (lead, not react to agency needs).
 - Support policies that affect the ability of people to access jobs and education (e.g., address barriers to employment of those with criminal records, training incentives for employers, etc.)

- Identify and bring attention to workforce issues that have sudden and significant impact on targeted populations. Lead or actively participate in the governor’s task forces and special projects to develop cross-agency responses to these challenges.
- ▶ Further develop the strategic leadership capacity of board members and staff.
 - Staff and board members participate in national conferences and forums to learn about successful approaches. Learning from events is distilled and incorporated into board plans as appropriate.
 - Staffing for the DWDB is enhanced to include both strategic leadership as well as operations and compliance management and should include adequate administrative support.

IMMEDIATE SYSTEM-LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS

While additional work through planning teams will be conducted to identify opportunities for systemwide innovation and coordination, there are several immediate steps that should be taken to implement the priorities and direction set by the DWDB.

REFINEMENT OF FUNDING GUIDELINES

Given the direction and priorities reflected in this framework, funding guidelines should be immediately updated to reflect the following:

- ▶ Adding the 2020-21 goals and objectives as reflected on pages 3 to 6 of this document.
- ▶ Updating funding allocations and general considerations, including the use of Blue Collar funds to reflect the board’s investment principles and short term priorities as reflected on pages 10 to 11 of this document.
- ▶ Refine “Adult Pathways” descriptions to reflect priorities on Tier 1 occupations and outcomes and employer engagement requirements as described on page 4 of this document.

ENHANCEMENT OF BOARD STRUCTURE AND SUPPORT

With immediate DWDB vacancies and changes in leadership over the next 12 months, action should be taken to:

- ▶ Ensure private sector appointments are aligned with the state’s critical industries, especially those targeted by Delaware Prosperity Partnership; include both large and small employers.
- ▶ Work with Governor’s Office to develop a succession plan for board leadership.

PLANNING TEAMS

To develop more detailed action and implementation plans for priorities identified in this document, the DWDB will form three teams, each with a select number of board members and partners to work in collaboration with the consulting team from December 2020 through March 2021.

TEAM 1: TARGETED OPERATIONAL AND ACCOUNTABILITY ENHANCEMENTS

Objective: To develop an action plan for implementing opportunities that strategically align investments in training and career services to specific board outcomes. This would include building out processes to:

- ▶ Develop a two-tiered high-demand list that more closely aligns career pathways with critical industries and income and employment objectives and develop a process by which occupations are verified by Delaware employers.
- ▶ Develop an outcomes dashboard to measure effectiveness and impact of investments. Identify specific data sources alongside the collection processes for gathering and analyzing data.

TEAM 2: INDUSTRY SECTOR/EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

To establish a work plan and identify specific actions to create a comprehensive employer-engagement process, based on national best practices, that engage industry sectors and groups of employers in different aspects of the workforce development system. The strategy would specially address issues identified by the board including:

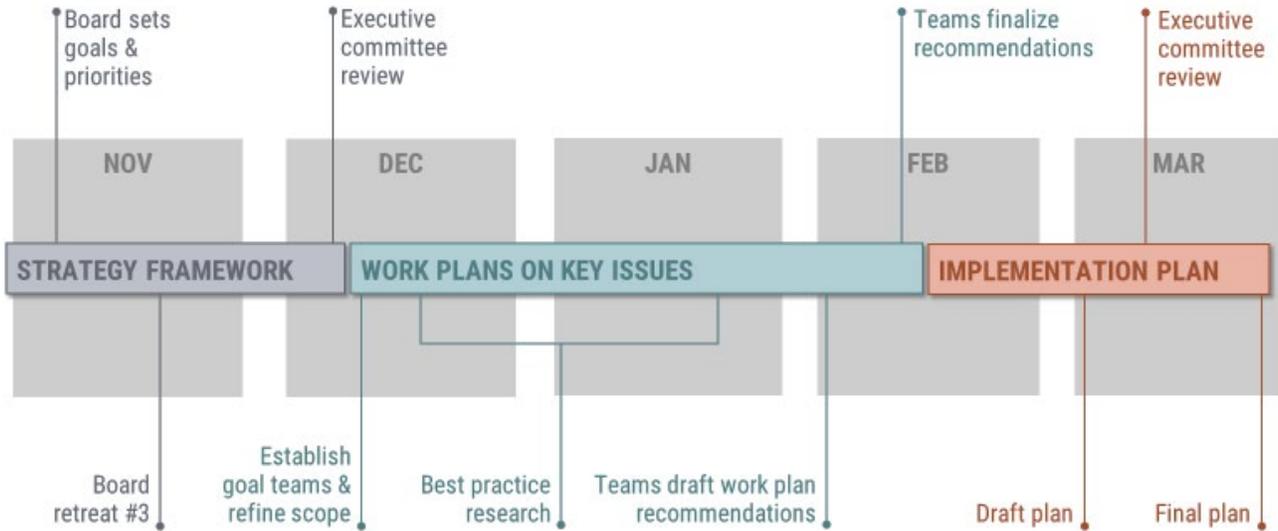
- ▶ Methods to aggregate job demand and engage employers in verifying high-demand occupations and skills.
- ▶ Opportunities to create greater connections between training funded through the workforce system and job placement within critical industries.
- ▶ Opportunities to leverage private sector training investments and partnerships, especially around the ability to upskill those already in the workforce to enhance upward mobility and employment security.
- ▶ Coordination of outreach and communication between services providers and employers/industry groups.

TEAM 3: SYSTEM ALIGNMENT AND DWDB GOVERNANCE

Objective: To identify systems level enhancements for aligning services and resources and strengthening the governance of the DWDB. This includes:

- ▶ A set of priority recommendations for specific actions to enhance alignment of workforce functions and resources across agencies and within DOL.
- ▶ Recommended governance enhancements to DWDB including staffing and board structure and operations (e.g., committee structures, annual board calendar, etc.).

PROJECT TIMELINE AND MILESTONES



INTEGRATION OF 2019 PRIORITIES

In 2019, the DWDB identified five priorities which have been integrated into various aspects of this strategic framework.

1. **ADULT CAREER PATHWAYS** – The work and priority focus on adult career pathways continues in this framework: overall with training and One-Stop support (Objective 1.2 and 1.3 of goal #1), as well as with specific initiatives to better connect career pathways to growing industry sectors of employment. The development of a tiered high-demand list is an example of this alignment. Furthermore, goal #2 which develops a structured system for engaging employers throughout the workforce system is a national best practice for enhancing the outcomes and impact of career pathways.
2. **WILMINGTON YOUTH INITIATIVE** – This effort continues to be a funding priority of the DWDB as identified in objectives 1.1 and 1.4 as well as with desired projects to be funded with Blue Collar and other funds. The board is especially interested in supporting aspects of this initiative that coordinate services, case management and braid funding.
3. **PRISON RE-ENTRY** – This effort continues to be a priority of objective 1.1 which is focused on helping residents with multiple barriers access training and employment. It was also identified as a potential priority for funding under Blue Collar funds.
4. **RESOURCE ALIGNMENT** – Since this priority is an ongoing process, rather than a discrete program, it has been integrated into the decision-making framework and principles that guides the work of DWDB, as well as becoming a focal point of goal #3.
5. **PROCESS REDESIGN** – Similar to resource alignment, the DWDB views this as a continuous process to be supported by a more structured approach for evaluating outcomes and effectiveness on an ongoing basis.