



New Board Member Orientation Guide

Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc.

Officers

Bob Cavanaugh, *Chief Elected Official*

Al Searles, *Chair*

Jason Trull, *Vice Chair*

Bill Green, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Carteret County

Mike Kraszeski	Vice-President	Veneer Technologies, Inc.
Jessica Adams	Department of Social Services Director	Carteret County Government
Sheila Glazewski	Director of Administration	Parker Offshore, LLC

Craven County

Anthony Cruz	Labor Representative	Int Assoc. of Machinists & Aerospace Workers
Bill Green	Vice President	Truist
Jason Trull	Human Resources Manager	Chatsworth Products

Duplin County

Al Searles	Owner	AJS Farms, LLC.
Dr. Jay Carroway	President	James Sprunt Community College
Joe Wood	General Manager	United States Cold Storage, Inc.
Brenda Upchurch	Human Resources Manager	Sturdy Corp

Greene County

Angela Bates	Executive Director	Greene Lamp, Inc.
Judy Darden	Owner	Darden Bookkeeping
Rick Davis	Site Manager	TideTamer, Inc.

Jones County

Frank Emory	Owner	Emory Construction
David Hill	President	DP Hill Manufacturing
Dr. Norma Sermon-Boyd	Executive Director	Jones County Partnership for Children

Lenoir County

Dr. Rusty Hunt	President	Lenoir Community College
Craig Foucht	Director of Business and Project Management	Global Transpark Economic Development Region
Jenna Stafira	Human Resources Manager	MasterBrand Cabinets, Inc.

Onslow County

Wesley Watson	NCWorks Regional Operations Director	NC Division of Workforce Solutions
Veronica Perez	Global Account Management	Concentrix
Sam King	Plant Manager	MSA Safety

Pamlico County

Carla Byrnes	Owner	B&B Yacht Designs
Dr. Jeremy Johnson	Superintendent	Pamlico County Schools
Kim Riggs	Regional Manager	DHHS Vocational Rehabilitation

Wayne County

Amy Hartley	Executive Director	Wayne Opportunities, Inc.
Charles Brodgen	Manager	Franklin Baking
Melanie Sanders	Human Resource Manager	Caswell Center

Our Vision Statement...

Our vision is a qualified workforce with an educational attainment level that meets the needs of local firms so they can compete in today's marketplace.

Our Mission Statement...

Our mission is to develop the workforce through a collaborative, customer-focused approach that facilitates partnerships between job seekers, workers, employers, and educators, aligning workforce requirements to economic needs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 – NCWorks Commission

The NCWorks Commission	1
Guiding Principles of the Workforce Solutions	2
A Market Driven System	3
WIOA Funding Flow	4
ECWDB Organizational Chart	5
The Business Relationship	6
Workforce Services	7

CHAPTER 2 – THE WORKFORCE BOARD

Role of the Board	9
Planning	10
Strategic Planning	10
Attracting and Involving Employers	11
Targeting Industry Clusters.....	13
Using Labor Market Information	14
Building Strategic Partnerships.....	14
Aligning Resources	15
Operational Planning	16
Strategic Versus Operational Responsibilities	16
Oversight	16
DWS Evaluation of Board Oversight Capability	17
Accountability	17
Performance Standards	18
Performance Measures	18
Board-Defined Standards	18
Board Performance	19
Evaluation	19
Sanctions	20
Fiscal Responsibility and Liability	21
Board and Funds Management	22
Board Coordination in Policy Development	23

CHAPTER 3 – THE WORKFORCE BOARD MEMBER

Areas of Responsibility	24
The Appointment Process	25
Key Characteristics of A Successful Board Member.....	27
Networking.....	28
Conflict of Interest.....	29
Board Policy on Conflict of Interest.....	30
Open Meetings.....	31
Liability.....	32
Board Staff.....	33
Service Providers.....	34
In Conclusion.....	35

Chapter 1

NCWorks Commission

The NCWorks Commission is designated as the state's Workforce Development Board under the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014. Led by a business sector chair, the 25-member Commission includes representatives from the business community, heads of state workforce agencies, educators, community leaders, and representatives from organized labor. All members are appointed by the Governor.

The NCWorks Commission recommends policies and strategies that enable the state's workforce and businesses to compete in the global economy.

The commission leads, builds partnerships, forms alliances, and is accountable for strengthening North Carolina's innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system.

NCWorks Commission

The mission of the NCWorks Commission is to ensure that North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity.

Overall, the commissions's planned goals provide the framework for the board to align its plan of work and develop realistic goals and objectives that are not only attainable, but are also supported by the broad range of workforce and economic development partnerships.

**GUIDING
PRINCIPLES
OF THE
NCWORKS
COMMISSION**

Guiding principles of the NCWorks Commission include:

- Strategies will be developed locally, regionally, and statewide to address the unique needs of different areas of the state.
- Best practices will be identified and replicated across North Carolina.
- The workforce system will be flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of the economy and state.
- Strategies will focus on the needs of today's economy and developing talent for tomorrow.
- The workforce system will focus on target industries and career clusters.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce's Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) provides staffing and support for the work of the NCWorks Commission. DWS administers a statewide system of workforce programs that prepare North Carolina's citizens for employment. Work within the Division is focused on the planning and oversight of Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), Wagner-Peyser Act, and Trade Adjustment Act funding received annually by the state and from special grants. They are charged with aligning their work and organizational structure with the mission and goals of the N.C. Department of Commerce.

**NC Workforce
Development
Boards**

A Workforce Development Board is a group of community leaders appointed by local elected officials and charged with planning and oversight responsibilities for workforce programs and services in their area. In North Carolina, 23 local Boards are responsible for:

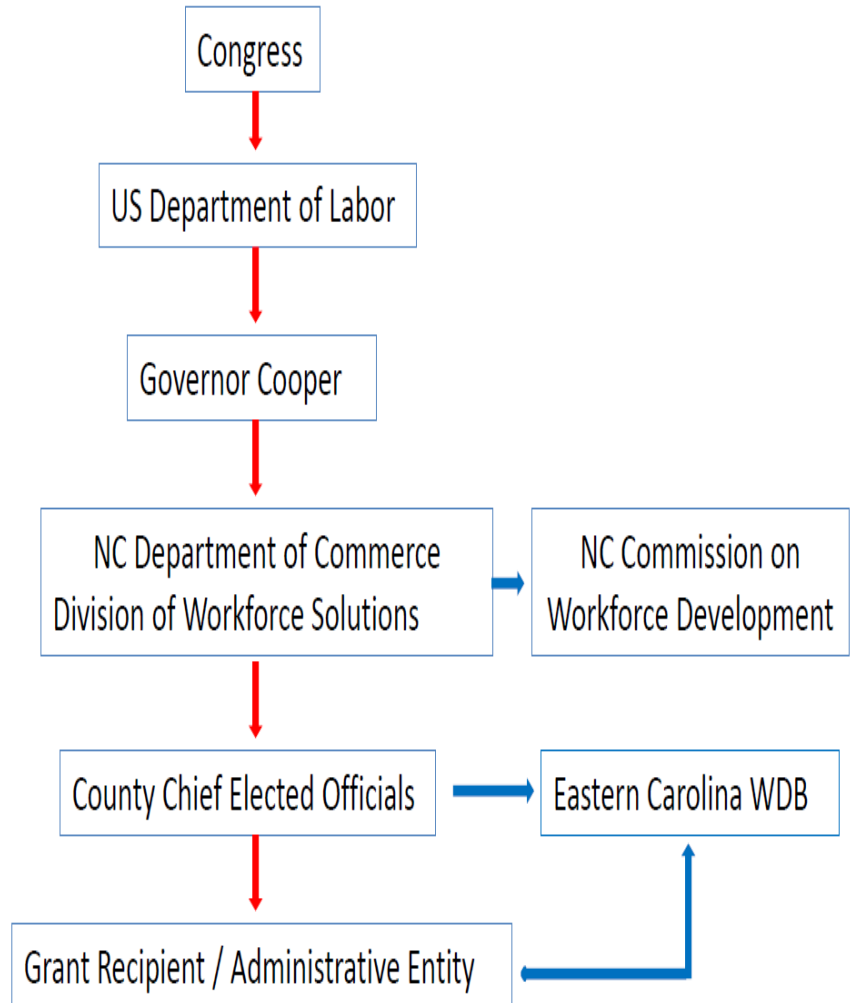
- developing local plans for the use of WIOA funds
- oversight of the local service delivery system
- coordinating activities with economic development entities and employers in their local areas

The majority of each Board is represented by members of the local business community. In all, Board membership includes individuals representing business and industry, economic development agencies, community-based organizations, education, organized labor, public assistance agencies and more.

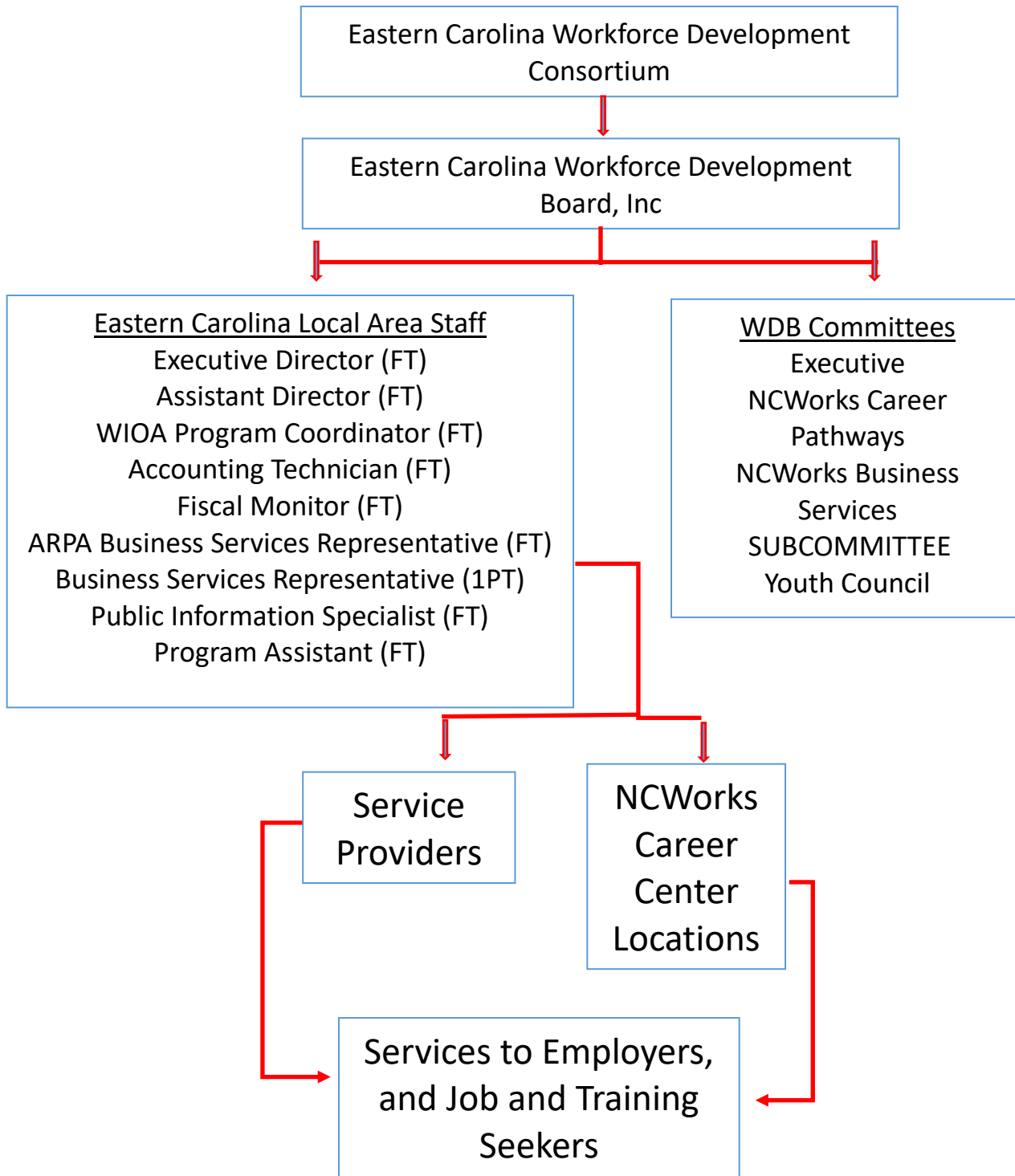
Each Board also has a **Youth Council** which advises Board members on program policies and service delivery for youth.

WIOA Funding Flow

The total WIOA funds for Program Year 2022-2023 allocated to the Eastern Carolina Local Area is over \$7 million dollars for workforce development.



***Organizational Chart
Local Workforce Development System***



**A BUSINESS DRIVEN
SYSTEM**

Because all workforce remediation occurs within the context of a regional economy, the system emphasizes a business-driven model for service delivery. It also underscores the fact that, regardless of where or how preparation takes place, all job seekers must compete within a global labor market for work and wages earned.

This business-driven model is based on a framework that is responsive to:

- the specific workforce needs of employers
- worker job preparation and retention support needs
- skill upgrading and certification requirements of the workplace
- other workforce issues that individuals, communities, and employers in each regional economy face.

A business-driven system understands that meeting employer needs is essential to meeting the needs of job seekers. Services that address the changing needs of business and industry help increase a company's productivity and profitability. This includes layoff aversion initiatives, such as directing funds toward retraining current workers through customized training and skill upgrading. Collective efforts promote increased stability and sustainability within the local economy. This effort leads to greater worker self-sufficiency.

**THE BUSINESS
RELATIONSHIP**

Achieving a business-driven workforce system depends on the local system's ability to establish ongoing relationships with area businesses and training institutions that foster and champion employers' needs for skilled workers and provide job seekers with access to quality education, skills training and jobs.

To build these business-driven relationships, the local workforce system must understand the needs of business, work with employers to solve workforce problems, and design solutions that positively affect the employer's "bottom line." The suitability and quality of these solutions will determine whether the relationships flourish.

**WORKFORCE
SERVICES**

The Board can be a creative and supportive partner with local business and industry by implementing a flexible workforce system that offers services to employers that cover a broad spectrum of needs including:

- matching employers' job openings with qualified applicants
- working with state and local economic development entities to attract new employers
- providing economic and labor market information for a specific area, including wage and salary information that helps existing employers sustain and expand their business
- recruiting job candidates
- conducting pre-employment assessments for businesses, including new companies moving into the local workforce area
- matching local companies with educational institutions that provide specific employment certificate programs for jobs projected to be in demand in the local area's labor market
- assessing the education, interests, aptitudes and skill levels of an employer's current workforce
- arranging education and skills training for new and current workers, including customized training for individual employers or industries
- assisting in developing or obtaining customized training and associated labor market data
- sponsoring business-focused seminars on topics such as tax credits and local labor market conditions
- providing information and technical assistance on federal and state rules and regulations affecting employment
- providing assistance to employers who are restructuring
- enabling companies who are trying to avert layoffs

**WORKFORCE
SERVICES
--continued--**

Services to **job seekers** must complement the employer's needs by:

- matching qualified job seekers with the right employer
- providing timely outreach and registration
- offering job search, job referral and placement assistance
- conducting career counseling
- maintaining and providing update-to-date labor market information, including:
 - local, regional and national employment trends
 - job vacancies
 - skills needed for Board-targeted demand occupations
- assessing skills and needs
- assuring the availability of resource centers (e.g. internet access, resume writing, job search assistance, etc.)
- disseminating information on available services
- conducting individual job development
- developing and providing job clubs
- creating individual employment plans
- providing short-term prevocational services including progress checks
- offering relevant occupational skills training
- combining workplace training with related instruction to foster a cooperative education
- providing skills upgrading and retraining
- offering job readiness training
- providing entrepreneurial training
- offering adult education and literacy
- providing on-the-job training (OJT)
- offering customized training

Chapter 2

The Workforce Board

Using local economic development strategies, each workforce board plans, oversees, and evaluates workforce service delivery in its community. A major role of the Board is strategic planning to meet the employment and training needs of local businesses and industries. The wide variety of organizations represented on each board ensures input from experts throughout the community. Through oversight and evaluation, the boards ensure that their strategic and operational plans are implemented.

ROLE OF THE BOARD

Workforce boards assume critical leadership roles in the local workforce system. To ensure a comprehensive workforce system, your local workforce board plans, oversees, and evaluates in order to:

- build links between workforce and economic development and related activities
 - convene industry-specific groups and general business organizations to identify occupational skill needs and discuss basic employment skill requirements
 - form strategic alliances, negotiate relationships and leverage resources
 - identify training service providers and require that they meet industry standards
 - ensure that training meets business and labor market needs
 - designate, certify, and oversee Workforce Solutions Office operators
 - create measures of customer satisfaction
 - establish systems for gathering and publicizing local employment statistics
 - assess effectiveness of local workforce solutions
-

PLANNING

Planning is the *key responsibility* of a board. Each board orchestrates the design of a local plan, which it submits to DWS for approval. The plan includes both a strategic and an operational component, with federal law requiring that certain sections of the plan be modified annually. The plan must demonstrate that operations are designed to meet the skill needs of local employers and industry for competitiveness in the marketplace.

**STRATEGIC
PLANNING**

Strategic planning is our Board's essential foundation for local workforce development. It is the culmination of long-term goal setting, future-oriented thinking, and sound decision making. The strategic plan establishes a path between the present and a vision for the future.

The goal of strategic planning is to develop a vision and a mission for your board, determine performance indicators for fulfilling that vision and mission, and outline the steps necessary for meeting those performance outcomes.

Key steps in the strategic planning process

The following are key steps in the strategic planning process for workforce development:

- setting the local mission, goals, and objectives
- assessing the skill needs and expectations of employers and local elected officials in the workforce area
- assessing the past, present, and future development of job seekers and the workforce in the area
- analyzing regional and local labor markets and influences of state, national, and international economic factors and trends
- analyzing the influences of state and federal law as factors that affect the needs of employers and residents of the workforce area

**STRATEGIC
PLANNING****-- continued--**

- identifying the gaps between the skill needs and the workforce development capacity to address those needs
- developing service strategies, identifying and aligning resources
- identifying the performance indicators and measurements to gauge progress and judge success.

These steps serve to implement an employer-driven workforce system that encourages local innovation and community partnerships and supports our customers in their efforts to improve their lives.

**ATTRACTING
AND INVOLVING
EMPLOYERS**

Both the U.S. Congress and the North Carolina Legislature have mandated that employers drive the board's policy direction. It is imperative that the board includes in its planning a process for ensuring that local business and industry are an integral part of the workforce system. The Board will be successful only to the extent that it meets the workforce needs of employers. To serve job seekers successfully, the whole system must be fully responsive to employers' needs for skilled workers.

A quality system that reliably provides employers with trained and job-ready individuals in a timely manner will generate an ever-widening circle of employers who use the system and provide better job opportunities and careers for job seekers.

**ATTRACTING
AND INVOLVING
EMPLOYERS
--continued--**

By law, workforce boards must be comprised of a majority (51 percent) of area business sector employers, and the board Chair must also represent the private sector. These employer-driven boards are one way to ensure input from the local business community. What are some other ways to encourage employer participation both in planning and accessing workforce services?

- Build ongoing, personal relationships (created with an entrepreneurial spirit) with employers across the local economy in order to develop the capacity and legitimacy to help businesses achieve their goals.
- Connect workforce with economic development efforts, and develop an efficient and effective process for employers to communicate their labor market needs and how those needs are changing.
- Encourage employers to take a proactive role in defining training standards and shaping training curriculum and program design so program graduates will be more likely to succeed in the employer's workplace.
- Ensure that all employers in your workforce area are made aware of and have access to the workforce-related services available in your community.
- Use the language of business, not the language of bureaucracy.
- Focus on solutions and results, not processes and programs.
- Build a positive reputation in the community by operating strategically and making a commitment to ensuring quality services, building a good public image, and asking employers who have had a positive experience with the workforce system to spread the word.

**ATTRACTING
AND INVOLVING
EMPLOYERS**
--continued--

The more employers use the system, the better the system becomes. This includes board members themselves who set an example by taking advantage of the services available in the workforce system. Board members who use the system increase their insight into the system, which allows them to make more significant suggestions for improvement and contribute more meaningfully to planning, oversight, and evaluation.

**TARGETING
INDUSTRY
CLUSTERS**

The Board believes that understanding the skills needed by industries that pay competitive wages enables the workforce system to offer relevant assessment and training to prepare workers for high-paying jobs that exist, thus making the model a win/win for both employers and workers.

To maximize workforce system resources, the Board identifies and focuses attention on business and industry clusters in their local workforce areas that offer the best current and future employment opportunities. The key is creating a pipeline of qualified workers for existing needs that is able to adapt to the employer's future needs. Targeting and outreaching employers by industry cluster is an approach that engages employers not just on a one-on-one basis, but also by leveraging the combined resources of related business associations.

Targeted industries in our local area include:

1. Advanced Manufacturing
2. Aerospace and Aviation
3. Construction and Skilled Trade
4. Health Sciences
5. Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics

Board planning, oversight, and evaluation can shape methods to target and outreach employers by industry cluster in order to link employment and training services to the clusters and sectors of firms that drive local economic growth.

**USING LABOR
MARKET
INFORMATION**

A critical component for all workforce planning is the availability and application of labor market information. Labor market information is used during the planning process and used regularly to reassess and evaluate current labor market conditions when:

- analyzing economic factors and trends
- conducting needs analyses
- designing service delivery strategies

**BUILDING
STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIPS**

To ensure that a workforce that meets local needs and encourages the creation of new employment and training opportunities, boards work in partnership with:

- the chief elected officials in the local workforce area.
- the business community
- industry organizations
- economic development organizations
- local labor organizations
- schools and postsecondary institutions
- community-based and faith-based organizations

A partnership strategy encourages separate workforce-related entities to coordinate their efforts, directs public attention to immediate and upcoming problems, and encourages innovation in program design. This community-wide plan must necessarily involve the input and cooperation of many local players, including local officials, business and community leaders, and the general public.

**ALIGNING
RESOURCES**

The Board must plan a broad strategy that best allocates resources. Effective planning for the alignment and allocation of local resources is a critical board activity. This means the board must:

- be able to communicate the board's vision -- the board's ability to be effective depends on its reputation as a voice for employers and its standing in the community as a knowledgeable, impartial, and effective body.
- become comfortable acting in the political arena as much as any other public agency or board; the knowledge and influence of the board's members are its greatest asset
- pay considerable attention to communications, public relations, and advocacy for its agenda among local business and community leaders and the general public.
- create a strong, positive public image that encourages participation among employers and community organizations.

**OPERATIONAL
PLANNING**

Based on the strategic plan, the Board makes decisions that impact and shape operations.

The plan is a blueprint that focuses on how we will direct our resources to deliver services.

The ECWDB's planning guidelines identify key steps in the operational planning process for workforce development.

To complete the local area operational plan, the local board must analyze and provide a description of how the following are addressed:

- local governance and management structure
- operational goals and objectives
- performance expectations
- local service delivery system
- employer services and activities
- method of providing employer services
- job seeker services and activities
- method of providing job seeker services

**STRATEGIC VERSUS
OPERATIONAL
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Boards are responsible for strategic and operational planning, oversight, and evaluation. Each requires a different approach, but each is equally important to designing and maintaining a quality workforce development system in the local workforce area.

OVERSIGHT

Another key responsibility of the board is oversight. Once the Board's plan is approved, it is time for the Board to move into the oversight role. To ensure efficient management of the system, board members must clearly communicate

expectations to board staff, who are there to implement the plan as the board exercises its oversight responsibility.

OVERSIGHT
--continued--

Oversight begins with asking critical questions that determine whether the Board is an effective steward of the system and the tax dollars it manages on behalf of its constituents.

Board members must regularly evaluate the board's and its contractors' expenditures and progress toward meeting performance goals. The board directs board staff to develop a process to ensure that performance goals are achieved, and staff performance is evaluated on the outcomes. Oversight must be an ongoing, continuous process.

**DWS EVALUATION
OF BOARD
OVERSIGHT
CAPACITY**

In addition, state law directs the North Carolina Division of Workforce Solutions to evaluate local board's capacity to oversee and manage local funds and the delivery of workforce services. The Commission evaluates each board's performance and its compliance with:

- applicable laws and regulations
 - provisions of contracts and board plans
 - official directives.
-

ACCOUNTABILITY

Board and board staff are responsible and accountable for:

- meeting board-specific and statewide performance standards
 - monitoring contractors and subcontractors
 - ~~meeting any additional benchmarks set for our board~~
 - ensuring high quality service delivery in the local NCWorks Career Centers Offices.
-
-

**PERFORMANCE
STANDARDS**

DWS annually allocates funds to workforce areas and assigns related performance targets. Boards receive allocated funds to provide workforce training and services. However, with those funds come the responsibility to meet performance standards. The standards vary depending upon the services provided and their funding source.

While many measures are tied to funding streams now, there are efforts to evaluate the overall impact of workforce services in the community.

The United States Department of Labor developed "common measures" that share the definitions of program participants across workforce programs and agencies.

**PERFORMANCE
MEASURES**

Performance Measures indicate progress in our efforts to serve employers and offer employment and training resources, and transition and retention resources that enable job seekers to become self-sufficient.

The Board includes contracted performance targets in each service provider contract. The WIOA contract is based on a Federal Program Year (PY) of July 1 to June 30.

**BOARD- DEFINED
STANDARDS**

Besides required performance standards, our Board set its own additional standards, allowing the Board to measure the success of our staff and contractors, and determine the impact of all the workforce services provided in our community. Superior customer service, higher training-related placements, or lower dropout rates represent just a few examples of board-defined standards.

**BOARD
PERFORMANCE**

Boards and their staff are responsible for:

- maintaining comprehensive fiscal systems
- complying with the rules governing administration of grants and agreements
- meeting DWS-contracted performance measures
- complying with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations

Boards may direct their staff to provide reports on these activities and to run monthly performance reports that provide detailed and timely information about board performance on a wide range of services and measures.

Boards should look for answers to questions such as:

- Are services shaped by the demands of local business and industry?
- Are services customized and flexible enough to respond to the ever-changing needs of the local business community?
- Are we bringing more employers into the system?
- Are we meeting our performance targets?
- Do job seekers who go to work retain employment and meet the employers' skill needs?
- Are we getting the greatest value for our dollar from the agreements and contracts made?
- Do we deliver ever-improving value to customers, resulting in marketplace success?
-

EVALUATION

Another *key responsibility* for Boards is evaluation.

Evaluation is critical for ensuring positive outcomes. Boards must conduct periodic performance reviews of its contractors and all workforce services delivered in the area to ensure that proactive steps are taken to identify what is working well and what needs improvement. This ensures that the workforce development system, including the educational system, has the ability to meet the needs of local employers.

EVALUATION
--continued--

Effective evaluation should include questions such as:

- Are we meeting the needs of our customers, both employers and job seekers?
- Is the plan, as implemented, accomplishing what is intended?
- Are we making progress toward the goals set in our plan?
- What improvements need to be made, and what steps are required?
- Are there continuous improvement opportunities to streamline processes?
- Are there provisions that provide a systematic way to eliminate unnecessary parts?
- Are there tools used to analyze and understand processes and problems?
- Do we gather experts who actually work within the process?

Based on evaluation and quality assurance reviews, the board's workforce plan should be revised and refined to improve services if the objectives are not being met, or the value of services provided is not satisfactory.

DWS monitors service delivery based on statutes, regulations, and the board's approved workforce plan.

SANCTIONS

State performance accountability to the federal government is dependent on local boards meeting each performance requirement. The NCWorks Commission is responsible for oversight of board activities and for identifying difficulties in or failures to meet contracted performance levels or noncompliance with applicable statutes and regulations.

The purpose of a Board sanction is to correct deficiencies at the earliest possible time to ensure that services are appropriately delivered to the employers and residents in the area.

SANCTIONS
continued—

Sanctions encompass the assignment of sanction status and assessment of penalties. Penalties may be assessed on a case-by-case review of the circumstances surrounding the sanctionable acts. The NCWorks Commission will consider the steps necessary to ensure successful service delivery outcomes, customer needs, and accountability for contract management services and activities provided by the board.

**FISCAL
RESPONSIBILITY
AND LIABILITY****CEO Responsibility**

While local boards are primarily responsible and accountable to the Commission for the management administration of grant funds allocated to the local area; ultimately, the chief elected officials (CEOs) are liable to the state for any misuse of the grant funds.

To help administer funds, the CEOs and the board must designate in the partnership agreement a fiscal agent to receive and be accountable for the funds. The fiscal agent, often the board itself, shall be liable to the board and the CEOs for any misuse of funds. Such a designation does not release the local board or the CEOs from the liability for misused grant funds.

Board Liability

The local workforce boards are accountable for proper management of workforce funds received on behalf of the workforce areas. The state is ultimately responsible for all workforce funds received on behalf of the workforce areas. In the event that DWS determines funds are expended in an inappropriate manner and are deemed disallowed:

- the disallowed costs are the liability of the local workforce board, even if a board subcontractor made the improper expenditure;
 - the subcontractor is contractually liable for disallowed costs; and
 - repayment of disallowed costs must be from local funds
-

**BOARD AND FUNDS
MANAGEMENT**

As the steward of the workforce funds allocated to the workforce area, the board is fundamentally, as well as contractually, responsible for ensuring such resources are efficiently and effectively used to achieve the intended results.

Each board has a responsibility to manage the funds it receives. Annually before July 1, the Board develops and approves an itemized budget, covering the operation of that fiscal year. These budgets include detailed estimated expenditures and revenue data.

As a 501 (C) (3) not-for-profit organization, the North Carolina Office of the State Auditor requires the Board to file an annual financial and program activity report before March 31, following the close of the fiscal year. Additionally, the Board is audited on an annual basis by an independent auditing firm.

In overseeing these funds, the board, consistent with their strategic plan, oversight, and evaluation, uses competitive procurement to determine the best methods for disbursing funds for workforce employment and training services.

Services are funded through WIOA federal resources, and that funding comes with rules regarding expenditure and performance expectations. Boards must ensure that contractors comply with all applicable rules regarding funding and service provisions and that they meet performance standards. Funding is tied to performance targets set by the federal government.

**BOARD
COORDINATION
IN POLICY
DEVELOPMENT**

WIOA requires each board to be responsive to the goals, objectives, and performance standards established by the Governor. Although the NCWorks Commission has authority for statewide development of rules and policies relating to workforce services, the Commission recognizes that coordination with local workforce Boards improves the quality and implementation of these rules and policies. Under the statewide policy objectives, local boards must, therefore, give utmost attention to setting priority and policy formulation within their area. In the development of local policy, the Board coordinates these efforts with the Division of Workforce Solutions, which serves as the State grant recipient for the WIOA funds.

By implementing the responsibilities and duties given to local boards by federal and state law, boards can develop effective strategic initiatives, as local boards serve as the point of contact for assessing the skills of businesses and are entrusted to influence the direction of workforce programs through local strategic planning. Likewise, local boards, in their comprehensive evaluation of workforce services, must also monitor the overall effectiveness of one-stop centers and related workforce programs. All of these activities represent the local board's strategic role in workforce development.

Additionally, in North Carolina there is a North Carolina Association of Workforce Boards (NCAWB) which provides leadership, advocacy, and training for local boards. It also serves in an advisory role to local boards and its membership, and works closely with the NCWorks Commission serving on various work groups that impact program policies and rules affecting local workforce operations and the local workforce delivery system. The NCAWB serves as the communication focal point for local board chairs, local board members, and executive directors in discussions on workforce development policy issues. The NCAWB's website is www.ncawdb.org.

Chapter 3

The Workforce Board Member

Board members play a critical role in ensuring the success of workforce development in their local workforce area. Board members are carefully selected based on their willingness to commit time and energy to the board. You can have an immediate impact on workforce issues in the community by making every effort to use the services offered by your board, attending meetings regularly, and serving on committees as needed. One of the most important goals of a Board member is outreaching to the business community, inviting them to participate in the workforce development process, and taking their workforce issues back to the Board. You are an advocate for the employers and job seekers in your community.

Various entities work together to successfully plan, implement, oversee, and evaluate the North Carolina Workforce Solutions within your community. You must be engaged in the vision and strategic planning of the board. The board staff will see that your strategic plan is implemented, and they will oversee the day-to-day activities of board operations. Board members must review performance regularly.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Areas of responsibility for Board members include, but are not limited to:

- understanding and communicating employer needs
 - maintaining a strategic focus on workforce issues
 - building a plan based on the NCWorks Commission goals and objectives to meet the skill needs of local employers
 - taking a leadership role in setting local workforce policy
 - designing the area's workforce solutions
 - utilizing the services of workforce solutions
 - identifying employers who will hire trained workers
 - developing expectations of performance outcomes and of customer satisfaction
-

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

--continued--

- setting performance measures for the local workforce system that incorporate the Governor's goals and objectives
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the area's service providers
- directing Board staff to make adjustments, as appropriate, to ensure quality of services and attainment of goals
- designing solutions to assist job seekers in meeting the hiring needs of employers.

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) of a workforce area nominate members to the workforce board. The CEOs receive names of potential nominees from business or trade organizations to be represented on the board. CEOs select individuals who:

possess substantial policy-making authority within the entities they represent that

- utilize the workforce system
- represent the highest standards of leadership and expertise in their respective categories
- are actively engaged in the organization, enterprise, or field which they are nominated to represent
- have an existing relationship with the local workforce area through residence or employment
- reflect the gender, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the workforce area
- are willing to accept significant fiduciary responsibilities
- meet the composition requirements of the Board

Business Sector Representatives -Business sector representatives lead the local board. They must advocate the needs and interests of local employers.

- Business sector representatives must constitute a majority of the board.

**THE APPOINTMENT
PROCESS --
continued--**

- The Chair of the board must be a private sector representative.
- Business sector representatives must represent the area's industrial and demographic composition of local employers.
- Business sector representatives must be owners of business concerns, chief executives, or chief operating officers of nongovernmental employers, or other private executives who have substantial management or policy responsibility.
- At least 51 percent of a business sector representative's annual income must be from private sector sources.
- Business sector membership should include representatives of the region's larger employers and emerging growth industries.
- Not less than one-half of the business sector representatives must be, if possible, representatives of small businesses, including minority businesses.

The nomination of board members is a significant responsibility for CEOs and must be undertaken with great thought and care. These appointments determine the success of workforce solutions. The strength of a board lies in the quality of its membership.

Factors the CEOs may consider when reviewing nominations include, but are not limited to:

- whether the nominee is an employer and uses services provided by the NCWorks Commission
- whether the nominee has substantial authority in relation to the management or general business operations of the organization as a whole the number of workers for which the nominee has authority to hire, fire and promote
- whether the nominee meets board composition requirements, including ethnic, geographic and gender diversity of the workforce area

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERSHIP

This is an example of a board with the minimum required membership composition along with the Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board membership composition

Categories	Statutory Requirements	*Minimum Number of Representatives	Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board of Directors
Business Sector	must constitute majority- 51% or more	10	15
Organized labor, Apprenticeship, and Community-Based Organizations	must constitute not less than 20%	3	6
Educational Agency such as: Higher Education K-12 Education	one or more representatives	1	1 1
Economic Development	one or more representatives	1	1
State Employment Service	one or more representatives	1	1
Vocational Rehabilitation	one or more representatives	1	1
Adult Education and Literacy	one or more representatives	1	1
Public Assistance	one or more representatives	1	1
	Total	19	28

* Three Directors are to be appointed by the Chief Elected Official(s) of each county from within the Service Area and one (1) additional Director shall be appointed from the member county of the Eastern Carolina Job Training Consortium from which the current Chairman was appointed.

**KEY
CHARACTERISTICS
OF A SUCCESSFUL
WORKFORCE
BOARD MEMBER**

Successful workforce board members:

- bring their expertise, knowledge and goals to the table
- communicate the board's purpose to the community at large and advocate the use of workforce solutions
- focus on strategic planning and setting goals and direction; insist on positive outcomes
- stay abreast of local labor market and economic conditions; know emerging employer trends and important skill development needs
- share expectations with other board members and staff
- work toward consensus to ensure support and advocacy from all members
- make informed decisions
- actively participate and serve on committees
- avoid involvement in administrative and day-to-day operational details
- attend meetings regularly

NETWORKING

Individual members bring their experience and existing networks to the Board. Many board members serve on other important business or community councils, committees, and boards. These entities may have discussions about employment and training issues that you can be taken back to your workforce board. These contacts can also be used to share positive information about your workforce board.

As appropriate, the Board encourages its membership to take a leadership role in their respective county by participating in various stakeholder meetings with workforce, education, and/or economic development groups in order to gain from their knowledge and expertise, and possibly leverage resources.

NETWORKING**--continued--**

Facilitating collaboration among these entities encourages total community commitment and involvement, while enabling your board to better address and meet the needs of the community. Further, it contributes to creating the alignment of strategies and resources to accomplish common goals.

Ability to Network

It is imperative that all of your customers are aware of the workforce services available in the local workforce area. It is your responsibility as a board member to network throughout the community. This provides you the opportunity to:

- understand the skill needs of local employers
- bring workforce issues from the community to the workforce board
- promote the workforce services available to employers and job seekers
- contribute to the development of a quality workforce in your community.

**CONFLICT OF
INTEREST**

Because boards must maintain the public trust, individual members are directly accountable to the public.

Boards are responsible for administering hundreds of millions of dollars in public funds. Consequently, board members must avoid *even the appearance* of allowing personal interests to affect decisions involving the use of public funds. Board members must avoid all conflicts of interest or any appearance of a conflict.

**CONFLICT OF
INTEREST
--continued--**

With extremely limited exceptions, local Boards may not contract with the following persons or entities for workforce services:

- a board member
- a business, organization or institution that a board member represents on the board
- a board member's business, organization, or institution in which a Board member has a substantial financial interest, or
- a board employee

Board members are, however, not only encouraged but also expected to use workforce system services as a customer of the board's contractors. Board members may not vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or the member's immediate family.¹

Board members may not participate in any decision in which the member has a direct or indirect interest that is in substantial conflict with the member's duties on the board.

When a matter comes before the board in which the member or the member's immediate family has a real or apparent conflict of interest,² he or she *must*:

- disclose the conflict and remove himself or herself from discussions
- refrain from influencing the decisions of others, and
- abstain from voting on the matter

All Boards are required to maintain and enforce this policy. Board members must become familiar with the local policy.

¹ Immediate family is defined as any person related within the first degree of affinity (marriage) or consanguinity (blood) to the person involved.

² A conflict of interest may arise whenever there is a substantial interest in, or relationship to, a business or entity that would be affected by the board decision, or whenever board members believe that a conflict may exist (real or perceived)

**Article 33C
Meetings of
Public Bodies****Open Meetings**

The following quote is directly from the North Carolina General Assembly Article 33C:

“Whereas the public bodies that administer the legislative, policy-making, quasi-judicial, administrative, and advisory functions of North Carolina and its political subdivisions exist solely to conduct people’s business, it is public policy of North Carolina that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of these bodies be conducted openly.” (1979, c.655, s.1.)

This Article provides that meetings of public bodies must be open to the public, except in limited circumstances for expressly authorized closed sessions. As a public body, workforce development boards are covered under Article 33C and must comply with its provisions.

Boards must:

- give public notice of the date, time, place and subject matter of meetings, and
- post, in a place readily accessible to the general public, notice of all regular, special or called meetings. Local boards must generally post notice at least 72 hours before the meeting

When deciding how tax dollars are utilized, the public’s perception of the local board’s conduct of public business is paramount. Local boards must take great care to uphold the integrity of the workforce system through proper attention to Open Meetings compliance.

Article 33C
Meetings of
Public Bodies --
-continued--

For example, when a quorum of the members of a governmental body assembles in an informal setting, such as a social function, the board is subject to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act *if Board members engage in a verbal exchange about public business or policy*. A deliberation of public business outside of an Open Meeting should be avoided. Even if the conversation is purely social, it can be perceived as a business discussion.

Executive Session

A local board may gather in a closed session only in extremely limited circumstances specifically enumerated in the Article. For a governmental body to hold a closed session that complies with the Act:

- a quorum of the public body must be assembled in the meeting room
- the meeting must be convened as an Open Meeting pursuant to proper notice
- the presiding officer must announce that a closed session will be held, and must identify the sections of the law authorizing the closed session; and
- any action on the item that was discussed in session must be taken in the Open Meeting

Liability

Board Member Liability

The Board is covered by Directors & Officers Liability Insurance which provides protection for the director and officers of the Board in the event that they are sued in conjunction with the performances of their duties as it relates to the ECWDB, Inc. Director and Officers Liability Insurance protects board members and former board members from individual liability unless their acts are deemed to be:

- official misconduct,
- willful disregard of the laws, or
- gross negligence

Board Staff

A Board may employ professional, technical, and support staff as necessary to carry out its planning, oversight, and evaluation functions. However, Board staff must be separate from and independent of any organization providing workforce education or workforce training and services in the workforce development area. In fact, Board staff may not direct or control the staffing of any entity providing workforce services.

Neither the Board nor Board staff may operate as a service provider. Thus, the Board is prohibited from directly providing workforce training or one-stop workforce services. This prohibition applies even when the board is acting as a fiscal agent for a service provider.

Through the Board's guidance and direction, Board staff responsibilities include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- carrying out the Board's decisions and ensuring implementation of the plan by the service provider(s)
- devising methods for reaching out to various industry sectors and business organizations
- informing the board about labor market trends and current job skills requirements of area employers and the skills of the area labor force
- developing plans and budgets
- negotiating, processing, and managing contracts and agreements
- scoring, awarding, and examining contracts for workforce services
- measuring performance and analyzing outcomes
- reporting information to the Board and the state, such as status of services, programs, agreements, expenditures and performance measures
- ensuring that training provider curriculum aligns with skills requirements for local business and industry
- recommending service improvement options

BOARD STAFF**--continued--**

It is important that board members ensure that board staff fully understand:

- the Board's vision, goals, and objectives
- the Board's focus on employer needs
- the Board's strategic plan
- Board expectations and staff responsibilities
- reporting timeframes and requirements such as type of reports and level of detail

**Service
Providers**

Neither Board members nor Board staff can accomplish the board goals and objectives alone. Boards contract with service providers to operate provider services and to deliver training and other services. Examples of service providers include community colleges, apprenticeship training organizations, public/private schools, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and for-profit organizations.

Boards must ensure that these providers:

- have fiscal integrity
- have sufficient insurance, bonding, and liability coverage for the overall financial security of one-stop workforce services funds and operations
- comply with standards of conduct regulations
- avoid conflicts of interest or any appearance of conflicts of interest
- disclose conflicts of interest or any appearance of conflicts of interest
- do not use nonpublic information to obtain financial gain

IN CONCLUSION

Board members are customers, visionaries, catalysts for change, and guardians of the local workforce development system. Their effectiveness can be enhanced by:

Maintaining a strategic focus on the overall system instead of the operational details. Boards can concentrate on workforce issues that will have long-term impact on the economic development and the well-being of their communities. Decide what you want to do and how much it's going to cost, direct staff to implement the plan, examine the return on investment, and adjust accordingly.

Ensuring that you and the organization you represent on the Board continue to utilize workforce services, you effectively keep your fingers on the pulse of the system in your area.

Articulating voice and advocacy for the employers and job seekers in their area. You have the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives.