



GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Governor's Workforce Council Quarterly Meeting: 2025 Q2 Thursday, June 5 from 2:30pm-4:30pm

Join us on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85903145283?pwd=XZo0alcZdkwUgN9AIn8ufDaVUpVZjl.l>

2:30 p.m. – 2:35 p.m.	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ryan Drajewicz, Chair, GWC, and Head of External Affairs and Communications, Bridgewater Associates
2:35 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Governor Ned Lamont
2:45 p.m. – 2:55 p.m.	General Business, Votes, Updates from the OWS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Vice-Chair, GWC, and Chief Workforce Officer, OWS• Vote: 2025 Q1 Meeting Minutes
2:55 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Opportunity and Access <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mariana Monteiro, Chief Opportunity Officer, Office of the Governor
3:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Justin Curtis, PhD, Consultant, RSG, Inc.• Matthew Kaufman, Principal, Alta Planning + Design
3:45 p.m. – 4:25 p.m.	Panel: Education to College and Career Pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator: John Maduko, M.D., President, CT State• Panelists: <i>To be finalized</i>
4:25 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Next Steps and Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kelli-Marie Vallieres

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GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Governor's Workforce Council

February 6, 2025

Minutes are unapproved

Council Members Present:

Ryan Drajewicz; Kelli-Marie Vallieres; Amy Porter; George Anderson for Brian Doubles; Carol Kennedy for Anthony Medici; Charlene Russell-Tucker; Chris DiPentima; Cindi Bigelow; Dan O'Keefe; Dante Bartolomeo; Ed Hawthorne; Erika Smith; Gregory Ugalde; Bethany Zemba for Judy Olian; Keri Hoehne; Leslie Torres-Rodriguez; Jack Mahoney for Maggie Hulce; Matthew O'Donnell; Mark Argosh; Martin Guay; Rich Jacob for Maurie McInnis; Kyle Ballou for Melissa Turner; Michelle James; Molly Kellogg; Dr. Monette Ferguson; Nikitoula Menounos; Paul Costello; Nick Guillermo for Paul Pernerewski; Gladis Kersaint for Radenka Maric; Ray Pineault; Rebecca Rose; Dr. Sal Menzo; Peter Holland for Shane Eddy; Tracy Nixon Coyne for Shawn Coyne; Shellye Davis; Jonathan Harris for Steve Sullivan; Terrence Cheng; Rep. Toni Walker

Council Members Absent:

Herron Gaston; Jay Williams; Dr. Jeffrey Flaks; Dr. John Murphy; Joseph Gianni; Katheen Silard; Leticia Colon de Mejias; Nitin Kumar; Peter Nystrom; Rohan Freeman; Shehu Muhamed; Tiana Ocasio; Wes Alexander;

Vice-Chair Vallieres calls the meeting to order at 3:00pm. Introduces the item to be voted on. Committee motions on voting items.

1. Q4 Governor's Workforce Meeting Minutes from November 14, 2024. Motion to vote made by Greg Ugalde; seconded by Rebecca Rose. No discussion. 2 Abstentions. No nays. Motion passed at 3:09.

Item	Yay	Nay	Abstentions	Result
1. Meeting Minutes from Q4 Meeting, November 14, 2024	36	0	2	Motion passes at 3:09pm

Chair Drajewicz provides opening remarks at 3:10pm. Welcomes everyone to the first Governor's Workforce meeting of the year. Acknowledges the significant activities from Washington, including executive orders and policy changes and emphasized the importance of monitoring these changes for their potential impact on the Council's work, in collaboration with the federal delegation. Reiterated the Council's mission to continue progress made over the past six years clarifying that the Governor and Council do not support discriminatory mandates. Affirmed commitment to ensuring all have access to educational and workforce opportunities.

Vice-Chair Vallieres reviews OWS Report at 3:11pm.

- Discussed OWS's structured approach that drives positive outcomes in programs, policies, and partnerships. Emphasized the importance of aligning workforce systems and collaborating with stakeholders. Reiterated the commitment to removing employment barriers, promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and enhancing data collection and accountability.
- Updates were shared about the reinvigoration of the GWC Committees, including the Education and Career Pathways Committee, which is set to meet more frequently to encourage member involvement and expertise.
- Announced a successful compliance review by the U.S. Department of Labor highlighting Connecticut's best practices, along with two upcoming local reviews featuring interviews with adult customers, youth participants, staff, employer partners, and service providers. Capital Workforce Partners will conduct their review from February 24-28, 2025, and The WorkPlace from February 10-14, 2025.
- Highlighted the launch of Tech Talent Accelerator 3.0 program. Included in its successes, the Tech Talent Accelerator currently holds enrollment of 229 students, and focuses on building durable partnerships between higher education and industry.

Governor Ned Lamont remarks at 3:22pm. Emphasized the importance of retaining AI jobs in the state with a \$100 million investment in innovation and collaboration with universities to develop tech talent. Highlighted initiatives like the Youth



GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Service Corps for disengaged students and the new Endowment Trust Fund to support young learners. Discussed the employer student loan repayment program to reduce debt for graduates, encouraging business participation. Acknowledged the need to ease licensing fees and accelerate certification for tradespeople amid increased infrastructure projects. Concluded with optimism about the state's budget and workforce training efforts to bridge the gap between available jobs and skilled labor.

Vice-Chair Vallieres continues OWS Report at 3:31pm.

- Highlighted the launch of the new AI Skills for Jobs program. The project aims to equip community trainers with the ability to offer no-cost training in basic AI skills. Trainings will be provided in libraries, community centers, and other venues. Program is set to begin March 1, 2025-February 28, 2027.
- Highlighted the success of the 3rd Annual Regional Sector Partnership Convening in January at Central Connecticut State University, which brought together over 200 participants from industry, education, government, and community organizations.
- Announced the upcoming 2025 Connecticut Workforce Summit scheduled for April 22, 2025 at the Aqua Turf Club. The event, featuring keynote speaker Michelle Weiss, an expert in workforce development and author, will focus on developing future-ready talent and addressing durable skills that industries need.
- Discussed the reauthorization of a \$30 million bond for OWS, repurposed for unallocated expenses. Managed by an advisory group within the GWC, funds will support innovation and sustainability aligned with the strategic plan, modeled after the Manufacturing Innovation Fund. Through Career ConneCT and Good Jobs Challenge, OWS expects to support placement of 8,000 workers total.
- Discussed recent legislation work supporting data collection efforts by adding reporting requirements for Workforce Development Boards into P20 WIN. This will enhance visibility into the work being done within the workforce system, allowing OWS to showcase valuable contributions that often go unnoticed.
- Acknowledged the significant efforts of DDS Commissioner Jordan Scheff and group working on behalf of Human Support Professionals. The governor's budget proposes a wage reimbursement increase for Direct Support Professionals. This proposed wage increase will be a transformative step for Connecticut.

Vice-Chair Vallieres introduced Legislative updates at 3:42pm. Katie McGarry, Strategic Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor

- Discussed the expansion of the Employer Student Loan Tax Credit to include all student loans, with a bill in the Higher Education Committee to broaden the scope to pass-through entities. Interested businesses can contact katie.mcgarry@ct.gov.
- Reviewed the Governor's Bill on Dual Credit Opportunities, allowing students to earn college and high school credits simultaneously, expanding access by requiring NACEP accreditation for colleges.
- Addressed improving access to dual credit by partnering with universities to streamline agreements, allowing for easier setup of dual credit partnerships. The bill aims to identify potential dual credit students starting from grade eight.
- Ensured high school graduation credit for dual credit classes, adding data requirements to better understand access. The Governor's budget proposes \$7.5 million for permanent funding of dual credit programs starting in FY 27. Discussed workforce development, requiring boards to create data reporting standards with OPM and the Department of Labor, and ensure financial data is reported to Open Connecticut.
- Outlined the Governor's next steps to create an executive action committee to integrate work-based learning into dual credit and career pathways.
- Highlighted efforts to build public service career pathways alongside workforce board initiatives.



GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Vice-Chair Vallieres introduced Labor Market Update at 4:03pm. Patrick Flaherty, Director of Research, CT Department of Labor

- Provided an overview of the national and state labor market, noting the low unemployment rate and the balance between job openings and unemployed individuals.
- Highlighted the growth in healthcare, transportation, and education sectors, with a focus on the success of southeastern Connecticut's manufacturing sector.
- Discussed the importance of international migration and the changing demographics of Connecticut's workforce.
- Emphasized the need for equity and opportunities for all residents, with data showing the increasing diversity of the workforce.

Vice-Chair Vallieres introduced GWC Education and Career Pathways Committee for updates at 4:15pm. Terrence Cheng, Chancellor, CSCU and Charlene Russell Tucker, Commissioner, State Department of Education

- The recent meeting of the Education and Career Pathways Committee held on January 28 focused on advancing education and career pathway efforts. The committee aims to meet workforce needs through collaboration and coordination through three key strategies for the workforce plan: creating seamless pathways from K-12 to college and career through dual and career enrollment, expanding career pathway programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials, and building partnerships between higher education and industry.
- The committee emphasized the need for organized collaboration across sectors to achieve goals. Discussion centered around streamlining efforts to improve connectivity and reduce duplication within the state's initiatives. Acknowledgment of the involvement of high-level business, administrative, and government leaders in this process.
- Addressed work-based learning and its varied implementation across comprehensive high schools.
- Highlighted Connecticut's acceptance into a national CTE Task Force for analysis of work-based learning gaps. Citing a notable increase in dual credit enrollment, with over 80,000 students earning credits in grades 11 and 12.
- Committee extends open invitation for public participation in upcoming meetings. Encourages all interested to find more information on upcoming meetings at portal.ct.gov/gwc.

Vice-Chair Vallieres introduced the Digital Equity Plan at 4:27pm. Doug Casey, Executive Director, Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology

- Discussed the Commission for Educational Technology focus on effectively using technology for teaching and learning, encompassing higher education, K-12, and libraries. The digital equity plan aims to ensure residents can thrive in the digital economy, with a focus on basic skills necessary for job applications and workforce advancement. Part of a federal initiative under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to address broadband access and digital equity.
- Discussed the plans key covered populations include the aging, disabled individuals, and those living below the poverty line. Cited research done of state agencies and residents to identify barriers to online access and technology use including surveys. The Digital Equity Plan established three digital equity benchmarks. Current statistics show 73% connectivity, 66% basic skills, and 40% digital safety among residents.
- Discussed Future funding plans including a \$9 million investment in five major initiatives, and integration of digital equity resources into the 211 system for easy access.
- Emphasized on collaboration with stakeholders to ensure no resident is left behind in accessing digital services and support.
- For more information, the full digital equity plan is available online, and inquiries can be directed to digital.equity@ct.gov.



GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

Vice-Chair Vallieres takes questions, remarks, and discusses upcoming OWS events at 4:40pm.

- Announces slides and materials are made available after each meeting at portal.ct.gov/gwc and can be emailed upon request. Encourages all general inquiries and requests for materials be forwarded to gwc@ct.gov.
- Announces registration for 3rd Annual Workforce Development Summit on April 22, 2025 at the Aqua Turf now available on [Eventbrite](#).
- Announces after positive feedback in favor of bi-annual in-person meetings, the next GWC meeting will be held in-person on June 5, 2025. Details regarding the location and agenda to follow.

Meeting concludes at 4:44pm.

DRAFT