

**New York State (NYS)  
Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)  
Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

## Call to Order

A quarterly meeting of the NYS SWIB was held on July 24, 2024, at the NYS Department of Labor (NYS DOL) in Albany, as well as at public videoconference sites in Hicksville, New York City, Rochester, and Syracuse. The meeting was called to order at 3:00PM and was presided over by SWIB Secretary Kerry Douglas-Duffy. SWIB Chair Dawn Burlew was not able to attend the meeting.

## Attendees

### Members in Attendance:

- Daniel Chase (Proxy for Governor Kathy Hochul)
- NYSDOL Commissioner Roberta Reardon (in NYC)
- Ashley McCloskey (Proxy for ESD Commissioner Hope Knight)
- OTDA Commissioner Barbara C. Guinn
- Johanna Duncan Poitier (Proxy for SUNY Chancellor John B. King)
- Tonya Boniface (Proxy for OCFS Commissioner
- Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden)
- Senator Jessica Ramos
- Assemblymember Harry Bronson (in Rochester)
- Assemblymember Al Stirpe (in Syracuse)
- Greg Lancette
- Zach Arnold
- Tony Baird
- Albert Catalano
- Amy Desjardins
- Norb Fuest
- Patricia Fusco
- Katie Geise
- Harold King
- Annmarie Lanese
- David Mathis
- Rick Plympton
- Todd Tranum
- John Durso (in Hicksville)
- Jessica Johnson-Cope (in NYC)
- Sergio Esteban (in Syracuse)
- Shawna Papale (in Syracuse)
- Kim Townsend (in Syracuse)

### Members Not In Attendance:

- Chair Dawn Burlew
- NYSED Deputy Commissioner Ceylane Meyers-Ruff (Proxy for NYSED Commissioner Betty A. Rosa)
- Senator Sean Ryan
- Rose Duhan
- Melissa Fleischut
- Florence McCue
- Dan McGraw
- Rudy Wynter

## Announcements

1. **Welcome and Introductions** – SWIB Secretary Kerry Douglas-Duffy welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members for their continued dedication to the Board. The meeting was live streamed and there was no public testimony during the meeting.
2. **Members and Proxies** – Members and proxies around the room and via videoconference introduced themselves. There was a quorum at the meeting.

New members present included:

- Ashley McCloskey (VP of Special Projects and Operations; Empire State Development);
- Tonya Boniface (Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources; Office of Children and Family Services);
- Greg Lancette (President; CNY and Northern New York Building Trades Council); and
- Senator Jessica Ramos (NYS Senator, District 13, Chair of the Senate Labor Committee).

## Motions

There was one (1) item to vote on from the April 22, 2024 meeting; the draft April Meeting Minutes.

### 1. SWIB Meeting Minutes Voting:

- a. April Meeting Minutes – Rick Plympton moved to accept the meeting minutes as final, and Norb Fuest seconded. There was no discussion and all members voted in favor.

## Old Business

### 1. Asylum Seeker/New Americans Update – NYSDOL Associate Commissioner for Workforce Development, Dana Politis, provided updates on the asylum seeker initiative. Key updates included:

- a. Hotels currently hosting asylum seekers will be closing at the end of the year;
- b. Weekly hiring events are continuing to take place;
- c. NYSDOL is continuing to work with both the federal partners and NYC;
- d. Housing and social needs remain the number one priority;
- e. NYSDOL has made contact with almost 10,000 individuals and has provided over 104,000 career services; and
- f. There have been over 40 hiring events with over 3,000 individuals attending.

### 2. 2024 Teacher Ambassador Program – Dana Politis provided an update on the 2024 Teacher Ambassador Program. Key points included:

- a. The Program began in 2023 in partnership with NYSED. NYSDOL hires teachers for the summer to teach them about the workforce and expose them to local businesses and business workforce needs. Teachers are writing curricula and bringing that back to their schools;
- b. Thirty (30) teachers participated in the 2023 Program, representing nine (9) NYS economic regions;
- c. The 2024 Program now has sixty (60) teachers and all ten (10) economic regions are represented. NYSDOL also brought back five (5) teacher emeriti from the 2023 Program to support the new teachers;
- d. 24 Career Centers are represented with over 250 statewide industry visits so far;
- e. Over 10,000 students are being impacted by the work the teachers are doing and are our future workforce; and

- f. Teacher emeritus, Jaime Larmon, joined the meeting to share her experience. She is a work-based learning coordinator in Mount Vernon who stated the Teacher Ambassador Program was an incredible experience and that she learned so much from the Program. She was able to bring back what she learned to her students, which included incredible resources that many people are not aware of.

**Tony Baird** – How do you go about getting the teachers for the Program?

**NYSDOL Response** – We partner with NYSED’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) Office, and we also brought on a Project Coordinator. The team goes out and presents to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and we also rely on our partners to help spread the word. We also want to engage the teachers throughout the year. Teachers are telling us that students do not necessarily want to go to college anymore and instead want to learn about other options.

**Todd Trantum** – What topics are they using for curriculum?

**NYSDOL Response** – They cover topics from job exploration to writing resumes. It is about engaging students in the classroom and finding what is meaningful to them. Also, we do not just have teachers this year; we also have guidance counselors and school librarians in the Program.

**Lauren Andersen** – How do you recruit for the current cohort? We run something similar at the college level for professors. How does this scale through existing systems to reach teachers across the state? Do you see a role for teacher pipelines?

**NYSDOL Response** – The SUNY Master Teacher [Program](#) started ten (10) years ago to bring in high performing teachers to develop new teachers and continue their work. We are only in year two (2) of our Program, so we have a lot to do to scale. We welcome having conversations about teachers as a pipeline.

**Katie Geise** – I challenge SWIB members to get the word out and work with your local school superintendents to share the importance of this program.

**Amy Desjardins** – In other states with school guidance counselors they are making continuing education credits as part of recruitment. How can we get continuing education credits for professional development or guidance counselors up to scale?

**NYSDOL Response** – In addition to the teachers being employed with us, they also receive continuing education credits.

**Jaime Larmon** – We have to do 100 hours of Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) in five (5) years and just with one (1) year we can get 150 hours.

**Albert Catalano** – Can we introduce parts of the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) to your curriculum?

**Todd Trantum** – We discussed last year about work ethic, and it might be good for the SWIB to discuss this and how we can get this into curriculum.

**NYSDOL Response** – Yes, yes, and yes.

Additional comments and resources were shared by Amy Desjardins and Julie Hovey. Annmarie Lanese then suggested that it is difficult for businesses to keep up with all of the great resources that are available and maybe the SWIB could discuss developing a resource that could incorporate everything.

## New Business

1. **Committee Report-Outs** – SWIB Secretary Kerry Douglas-Duffy discussed new business of the Board, beginning with an update on the three (3) SWIB committees. Key points included:

- a. **Executive Committee** – The Executive Committee met on July 9, 2024, and included the Chairs and Vice Chairs of both the Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee and the Career and Education Committee, to discuss what they have been working on to date.
- b. **Strategic Investments and Evaluation Committee** – Committee Chair Katie Geise provided the following updates:

The Committee has met twice since the April 22, 2024 SWIB meeting. In early May 2024, we discussed State and local area performance negotiations and goals in plain language, which NYSDOL had also touched on during the April SWIB meeting. NYSDOL's Research and Statistics (R&S) Unit is finalizing the local performance goals, which should be coming out to the local areas within the next few weeks.

During our second meeting, we discussed the need to conduct business and job seeker customer service/satisfaction surveys. In lieu of a July meeting we did homework instead, and NYSDOL staff developed a draft of both surveys and asked the Committee members to provide feedback. The final draft will be sent out to the SWIB members for their feedback before it goes out to businesses and Career Center customers.

- c. **Career and Industry Committee** – Lauren Andersen provided the following updates:

The Committee has met twice and is proposing to change the name from the Education and Industry Committee to the Career and Industry Committee as what we are trying to do is a bit broader than the original goal. We are working on revising our Committee's goals, with the following four (4) main focus areas:

- i. Establishing industry and workforce practitioner-endorsed recommendations; or what it looks like to strengthen an equitable economy in NYS.
- ii. Identifying and leveraging the existing linkages that all our local districts have when it comes to education and training. There is so much work done in the local areas by the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) to do strategic planning. How can we pull some themes out of these strategies?
- iii. How do we support the expansion of partnerships and linkages by thinking about new emerging occupations that may need focus?
- iv. Coming together to think about a Statewide call to action for businesses and educational partners to take concrete action with support from local areas.

We will circulate these Committee goals for any feedback as we would love to capture the voice of the broader SWIB.

In addition, we will work on ad hoc items. One project that has come up is determining how to give guidance to local areas on supporting short-term credentials so that they feel confident in funding those trainings that may not be well defined under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act regulations. Are there sets of principles that local areas can use to support/not support the credential? Specifically we are looking at industry-recognized credentials. We welcome the SWIB members' thoughts on these kinds of supports.

- d. If any additional members are interested in joining one of these committees, please reach out to SWIB Secretary Kerry Douglas-Duffy ([Kerry.Douglas-Duffy@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Kerry.Douglas-Duffy@labor.ny.gov)).

2. **2024 Job Seeker and Business Workforce Survey** – Chris White, NYSDOL Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Development, discussed the results of the 2024 Job Seeker and Business Workforce Survey. NYSDOL has heard from over 11,000 businesses and more than 30,000 job seekers since the surveys were introduced in 2021.

**Key points from the Business Survey include:**

- a. NYSDOL is seeing that the struggle to find and retain workers is cooling (slightly); professional skills remain in high demand; and businesses are seeing operational impacts from a lack of necessary employee behaviors such as work ethic and motivation.
- b. Top business challenges include the quality of the available workforce, attracting new workers, and inflation.
- c. When asked whether implementing or considering implementing Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the next 12-24 months, 16% of business responders said yes, 55% said no, and 28% were unsure.
- d. Top job openings in NYS include Registered Nurses, Administrative Nurses, and Licensed Practical Nurses (Source: Help Wanted Online).
- e. Top job titles most in-demand include Teacher, Administrative, and Sales.
- f. Common soft skills that are lacking among job applicants and new employees include self-motivation, communication skills, and problem-solving/critical thinking skills. On the technical side the common skills that are lacking include basic computer use/computer literacy, software proficiency in Excel, and data analysis skills.

**Key points from the Job Seeker Survey include:**

- a. We are seeing that the need for training and upskilling is persistent and growing; worker flexibility is the future; and a lack of professional networks, experience, and credentials limits growth.
- b. When asked what work options/incentives job seekers would like employers to offer, 60% said paid time off, 60% said ability to work remotely full-time, and 59% said higher pay/higher starting pay.
- c. When asked what tools/methods job seekers use to apply for jobs, 94% said Indeed, 65% said LinkedIn, and 56% said word of mouth/referrals.
- d. Top barriers to employment include not having enough experience in the field; not having the right degree, certificate, or credential; and not having a large professional network.

**Assemblymember Harry Bronson** – Do you have the demographic information that matches these percentages (i.e., age, racial demographics, urban/rural/suburban)? I would be interested in the racial and age demographics.

**NYSDOL Response** – Yes on some and no on others. This is due to the pool size, but is something we can work on.

**Jessica Johnson-Cope** – For the barriers to employment, were there any statistics that speak to justice-involved people or how justice-involvement might be a barrier?

**NYSDOL Response** – We have that as an option on the survey and there were some who answered “yes” to this.

**Katie Geise** – Regarding driver’s licenses, we are finding that people need driving lessons, but they have no one to teach them and this is costly.

**NYSDOL Response** – Driver education used to be handled by schools and simulators and as you look at how our world has changed, the lack of training speaks a lot to that and social connections.

- e. When asked whether job seekers think their job or industry are at risk due to AI or automation in the next decade, 18% said high risk, 29% said moderate risk, 26% said low risk, and 27% said no risk.

- f. Top trainings desired for job seekers include digital skills, security, and Excel.

**Jessica Johnson-Cope** – With respect to the desired training, were there any insights about how the applicants wanted the training delivered and from whom they wanted it delivered?

**NYSDOL Response** – This year we did not ask that question, but we will next year.

**Annamarie Lanese**y – Have you delivered this presentation yet to the REDCs?

**NYSDOL Response** – Yes, for some of them, but not all of them.

**Annamarie Lanese**y – Regarding the data skewing older, are you getting the survey out to the Summer Youth Employment Programs (SYEPs)? Could the time period for the survey also be extended so you can get some younger people?

**Response** – No it has not gone out to the SYEPs, but that is a great idea. We have done some focus groups to reach that crowd. There is also a Youth Council where we did focus groups on employment items.

**Annamarie Lanese**y – I would also add gender to the demographics. Our data for women was skill skewing a lot lower for the same exact training.

- 3. **The Offices of Apprenticeship, Infrastructure, and Just Energy Transition** – Chris Pinheiro, Director of the Offices of Apprenticeship, Infrastructure, and Just Energy Transition, discussed the following three (3) offices. Key points included:

- a. **Infrastructure Office**

This Office is new and very project oriented, and we have staff located in Syracuse and Buffalo that are supporting infrastructure projects that are happening from a workforce perspective, such as the I-81 interstate exchange project and the Micron company locating to Syracuse. We are also working to support the Route 33 Kensington Expressway project in Buffalo and incorporating best practices from what we have learned from the Syracuse project to support this initiative.

We started working on the I-81 project in 2021 and this led to close collaboration with our partners at the NYS Department of Transportation (DOT). We have done two (2) events this year, which included a training fair in January and another event in June 2024 for a hire ready event, which included resume workshops. In addition to preparing for these two (2) events we created an intake form. Our partners at DOT liked the form so much that they are now using it on their website for anyone interested in work related to I-81 in Syracuse.

- b. **Office of Just Energy Transition**



We developed this office out of work from the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and started by creating a mission statement to make sure that populations that have traditionally been left behind in these kinds of transitions do not continue to be left behind. Our focus is on serving individuals and businesses. We have convened an interagency advisory group to guide the direction of the office and we meet bi-monthly. We also have an interstate group that we meet with on a regular basis to share best practices and differences between states (Colorado, Michigan, and Rhode Island). We were able to create a Green Jobs [Dashboard](#) on our website, which is a tool that job seekers can use to find out more about clean energy occupations. It also provides information on the level of education and skills that go into the occupation.

Regarding funding opportunities, our partners at the New York Power Authority (NYPA) were provided \$25M to support what our office is doing, and we have a Request for Proposals (RFP) coming out to provide training in clean energy. We have also been talking about funding for the LWDBs to provide training in this area. Both of these opportunities will also include a wraparound services component to make sure we are targeting traditionally disadvantaged communities.

**c. Registered Apprenticeship (RA) Program Office**

The RA Program is a training model that combines structured on-the-job training with related instruction (classroom style training) that supplements what apprentices are learning on the job. As of June 30, 2024, we had just over 16,500 active apprentices in NYS participating in a little over 900 programs. We are looking at updating our regulations and we are in the beginning of modernizing the system we use to oversee and monitor RAs; specifically, we are working on being able to have apprentices sign their agreements electronically.

**Senator Ramos** – When we look at industries like wind and solar, ordinarily there are individuals doing the assembly and the maintenance, but when you are talking about wind turbines, it is really just a crew that needs to be trained in all those trades in order to handle that work. Where are we on that?

**NYSDOL Response** – To your point, there is a large difference between the building of a wind turbine and the maintenance of a wind turbine. We have started discussions with some individuals in the wind turbine industry about what this occupation would look like.

**Senator Ramos** – Are you in touch with the Climate Jobs Institute at Cornell?

**NYSDOL Response** – Yes, we are.

**Norb Fuest** – There are some community colleges developing solar technical programs now. I know Genesee Community College has started one.

**Assemblymember Bronson** – One of the reasons I asked for the demographics in connection to the 2024 Workforce Survey, is that we have a window of opportunity where we have a shortage of employees, and we have a lot of individuals who have been on the economic and workforce sidelines for far too long from marginalized communities. Everything we can do to promote this is very important. If we could connect with the various business associations and have them think about developing an intermediary approach where the association gets a certified apprenticeship program, this would help with smaller employers. I think we can have an approach where the business associations really run the program in all different industries and then employees are part of an advisory board, so you are also getting employee voices.

**Daniel Chase** – How do employers start engaging with NYSDOL and what services are you offering to employers to navigate the system?

**NYSDOL Response** – We have an [interest form](#) available on our [website](#) and you can also reach out directly to Chris Pinheiro ([Chris.Pinheiro@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Chris.Pinheiro@labor.ny.gov)) with any questions.

**Johanna Duncan-Poitier** – We have really seen the number of apprenticeships go up beyond the building trades. We have been able to offer additional supports for students to go into pre-apprenticeships for the short-term and emergency needs, and this includes having \$500 available for employers who hire community-based apprentices, having a \$500 incentive for those who hire a registered apprentice, and \$500 available for students who stay in place for up to six (6) months (retention). This information is available on the NYSDOL Apprenticeships [webpage](#) in addition to SUNY’s [webpage](#).

- 4. Closing Statements** – Topics members would like to hear more about should be sent to SWIB Secretary Kerry Douglas-Duffy ([Kerry.Douglas-Duffy@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Kerry.Douglas-Duffy@labor.ny.gov)). The next meeting will be held on October 9, 2024, at 3:00pm in Building 12.

SWIB Chair Dawn Burlew has put together some suggested meeting dates for 2025 and 2026, which will still be on Wednesdays in January, April, July, and October. Additionally, we have discussed changing the start time of the meeting from 3:00pm to 1:00pm, which may work better for those traveling. These suggested dates will be provided following the meeting.

## **Main Motions**

**Approval of the April 22, 2024 Meeting Minutes:** Rick Plympton moved to accept the Meeting Minutes as final, and Norb Fuest seconded. The motion carried with 27 in favor and 0 against.

## **Adjournment**

Amy Desjardins motioned to adjourn the meeting, and this was seconded by Patricia Fusco at 5:00PM.