

SKILLSOURCE REGIONAL WORKFORCE BOARD

Okanogan Committee Meeting

MONDAY, September 14, 2026

12:00 – 1:30pm

(Lunch included)

Location: WorkSource Okanogan

126 S. Main Street - Omak

AGENDA:

❖ **Announcements: Upcoming Events**

- Poverty Simulation, Sept. 17th
- Fall Hiring Events
- WWA Summit – Nov 4-5 (Spokane- Davenport Grand)
- Board Retreat – March 11-12 (Leavenworth - Sleeping Lady)

❖ **Current Initiatives**

- Best Practices Requests – State & National
- HR1 Impacts: SNAP & Medicaid Work Requirements
- One Stop Operator Solicitation

❖ **One Stop Certification Results**

❖ **Strategic Plan 2 Year Update**

❖ **Adjourn 1:30**

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### **Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>**

**4:00 – 5:30 pm**

**via ZOOM**

### **Mission Statement**

*SkillSource builds workforce skills with business and one-stop partners to increase economic prosperity throughout North Central Washington and the Columbia Basin.*



**Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 29, 2026**  
**New Time— 4 PM**  
**Via Zoom**

## Okanogan Year-End Performance Report

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

### Training, Tools, Timing: How a Nespelem Neighborhood Was Saved From Fire

A fire line is a barrier cleared of vegetation to help stop a wildfire from spreading. Large equipment can clear paths up to a point, but when fire moves into neighborhood gullies and close to homes, smaller, more nimble equipment becomes critical.

Corby Turner, owner/operator of Four Bearz Contracting in Nespelem, had recently purchased a skid steer with support from a Community Reinvestment grant through SkillSource. It was ready when a wildfire raced across the grassy hills and threatened Corby's home and those of several family members.

Nearby homes and buildings had already been lost. Corby could hear cars exploding in the distance. "It felt like a war zone," he said. Along with his brother, Ranford Sanchez, Corby used the skid steer to dig additional fire lines, trim low branches, and remove combustible material just feet from the back fence of a home where a grandmother cares for her grandchildren. When a firetruck determined the terrain was not suitable for its equipment and pulled back, Corby, Ranford, their crew, and neighbors dug in.

Today, there is a distinct line showing exactly where the fire stopped. The tips of a ponderosa pine are crisp and blackened on one side, while branches on the other remain green. Beyond it, at least 13 homes still stand.



A \$15,000 business investment grant through SkillSource, funded by the Washington State Department of Commerce, helped Four Bearz purchase the skid steer, a dump truck, and other essential equipment. That investment is also helping the company prepare for the future through training and on-the-job learning. "Our training program serves our community members and gives young adults and youth the opportunity at gaining experience at building trades," Corby said—building skills and knowledge that will continue to serve Nespelem and surrounding Okanogan County.

Sometimes the return on an investment takes months or years to be realized. In this case, the return was immediate: an entire neighborhood still standing.



## Registration & Exit

YTD Actual

Annual Goal

**Total Served**

**264**

**319**

### Adults

**Registered**

**55**

**37**

**Placement Rate (% employed at exit)**

**89%**

**80%**

**Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)**

**57%**

**82%**

### Dislocated Workers

**Registered (includes incumbent worker trainees)**

**57**

**38**

**Placement Rate (% employed at exit)**

**98%**

**81%**

**Credential Rate (% trained in voc ed who earn a credential)**

**88%**

**81%**

### Youth

**Registered**

**28**

**32**

**Placement Rate (% of youth employed or in post sec ed)**

**72%**

**65%**

**Credential Rate (% youth who achieved a HSD or GED)**

**61%**

**51%**

Discretionary Grant Enrollments/Goal: State EcSA 45/22



| Participants in Occupational Education | 25-26 Students (YTD) |     |          |       | 24-25 Students (Year Total) |     |          |       |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------|-----|----------|-------|-----------------------------|-----|----------|-------|
|                                        | Big Bend             | WVC | WVC Omak | Other | Big Bend                    | WVC | WVC Omak | Other |
| Health Care                            | 21                   | 19  | 19       | 13    | 23                          | 24  | 20       | 15    |
| Office / Misc.                         | 9                    | 11  | 0        | 8     | 9                           | 7   | 0        | 7     |
| Industrial & Technical                 | 14                   | 8   | 0        | 50    | 16                          | 9   | 1        | 74    |



| Workforce Investment Fiscal          | Budget           | Expenditures     | Expenditure Rate |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Career Services</b>               | <b>690,503</b>   | <b>598,960</b>   | <b>92%</b>       |
| <b>Work Based Training</b>           |                  |                  |                  |
| On-The-Job/Incumbent Worker Training | 66,745           | 49,299           | 74%              |
| Work Experiences/Project Learning    | 52,414           | 77,829           | 148%             |
| <b>Occupational Education</b>        | <b>108,833</b>   | <b>101,926</b>   | <b>94%</b>       |
| Healthcare                           |                  | 46,416           |                  |
| Office/Other                         |                  | -                |                  |
| Industrial/Technical                 |                  | 55,510           |                  |
| <b>Basic Education</b>               |                  |                  |                  |
| Secondary Education                  | 172,102          | 182,136          | 128%             |
| <b>Support and Incentives</b>        | <b>55,766</b>    | <b>54,690</b>    | <b>98%</b>       |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>1,146,363</b> | <b>1,064,840</b> | <b>99%</b>       |

## WORKSOURCE OKANOGAN ONE-STOP CENTER CERTIFICATION: 2026-2029

### BACKGROUND:

Federal and State Policy require Local Boards to certify One Stop Centers in order to collect/receive infrastructure funds. The *One Stop Site Assessment and Certification Tool* was completed by the local One Stop team and the One-Stop Operator. The tool includes a checklist indicating how required programs provide meaningful information to the public about their services. It also requires partners to report performance against seven Criteria including Service Delivery, Physical and Programmatic Accessibility, Equal Opportunity, Outreach and Access, Customer Satisfaction, Employer Engagement and Staff Training. The Center has been certified previously in 2001, 2008, 2019 and 2023. State policy requires Centers to be certified every three years.

### CERTIFICATION TEAM:

A certification/evaluation team was formed that included SkillSource Board member Anthony Popelier and community partners Rena Shawver (Okanogan Community Action Council), Michelle Sandoval (FYRE), and Gabriella Perky (Community Foundation of NCW), as well as Board staff Lisa Romine, Kelli Martinelli, and Aaron Parrott.

The certification team received Okanogan's completed tool on August 7<sup>th</sup> and met with the Operator and partner agency staff on August 19<sup>th</sup> for a Center tour. They toured the building to learn how services are provided and coordinated between Center partners, then finished with a time of Q&A. Questions included details about business outreach and engagement, customer satisfaction results, data collection and partner coordination.



### RESULTS:

Overall, the certification team was impressed with the level of partner coordination, access to information and attention to customer service. Each Certification Team member completed the rating tool indicating all criteria have been met and ***recommends Certification for the period of July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2029.***

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Center Administrator Juan Martinez shared that the partner staff have established regular outreach hours in Brewster to accommodate communities in the south county; plans are underway to add a north county location as well to support isolated communities. The staff and local partners are looking forward to the next Workforce Collaboration Summit, which has moved to a two-year rhythm. The Center received the highest number of customer feedback surveys among the three WorkSource locations in the region since it was implemented; this feedback is reviewed regularly for process improvement. The Okanogan Business Services team, consisting

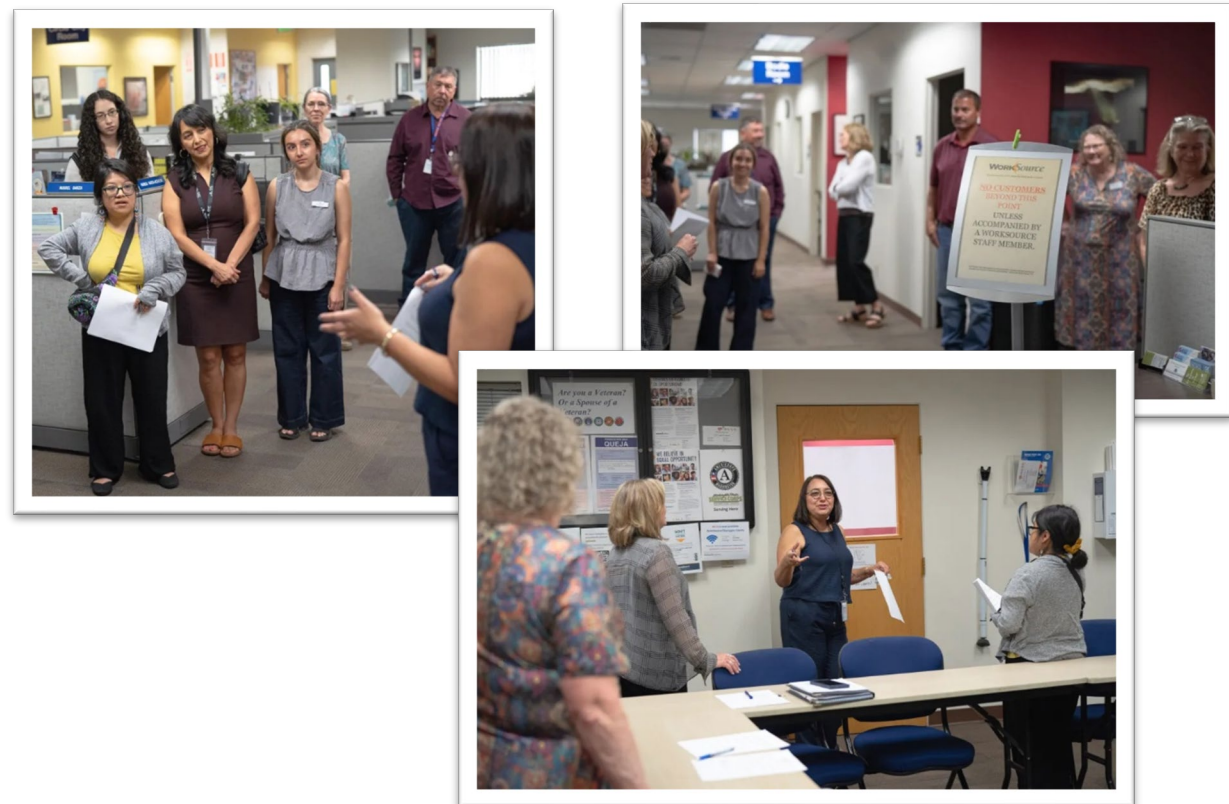
of One Stop partner staff and community organization members, is adapting the van tour model to visit employers across Okanogan County. A special highlight of the tour was meeting AARP representative Margie Bass, who herself was served by WorkSource Okanogan partners and after completing training was able to herself join the One Stop team, serving persons in need in Okanogan County.

#### **FUTURE IMPLICATIONS:**

As per WorkSource System Policy 1016, Revision 2, "In support of continuous improvement and performance excellence in the one-stop delivery system, the LWDB must ensure that, at least annually, a report describing the status of each certified site in the local workforce area is prepared, presented to the LWDB, and recorded in LWDB meeting minutes. For comprehensive, and affiliate one-stop sites, the report must describe the site's current status and progress toward higher quality standards in the following areas:

- Functional and programmatic integration
- Performance and accountability
- Service provision, including services offered, methods of access, hours of operation, equitable service delivery, and outreach to populations with barriers to employment
- Customer satisfaction
- Staff competence and participation in staff training
- Partnership development
- Employer engagement
- Physical and programmatic accessibility

Reports should include examples of best practices and identify areas for potential improvement. Annual progress reports may also be shared with the broader workforce development system, including the SWDB, to support system-wide evaluation and improvement.



# 2027 Regional Workforce Plan Two-Year Update

## Overview for Sub-Area Committees

### Why Is the Plan Being Updated?

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Local Workforce Development Boards develop four-year regional and local workforce plans and review them at least once every two years. SkillSource's current 2024–2028 Regional Workforce Plan remains in effect; the 2027 process is a **mid-cycle update, not development of a new plan**.

The purpose of the update is to determine what has materially changed since the plan was developed and ensure that regional strategies continue to reflect economic conditions, employer and worker needs, workforce system operations, performance expectations, and evolving state and federal priorities.

Sections of the existing plan that remain accurate **do not need to be rewritten or resubmitted**.

### What Will Be Reviewed?

SkillSource and its regional partners will review the existing plan to identify significant changes in areas such as:

- Regional economic, demographic, and labor market conditions
- Priority industries, occupations, and emerging economic opportunities
- Employer workforce needs and sector strategies
- Education, training, career pathway, and work-based learning strategies
- Workforce system service delivery and partner coordination
- WorkSource locations, operators, or service providers
- Priority populations and barriers to workforce participation
- Funding, resources, or program operations
- Performance strategies and continuous improvement
- Cross-regional partnerships and economic development coordination

Only areas with material changes will require substantive revisions to the existing plan.

### Required Areas of Alignment

In addition to reviewing what has changed locally and regionally, the State guidance requires the updated plan to demonstrate alignment with several current workforce priorities.

#### Workforce Pell and Credential Attainment

Support expanded access to short-term, industry-aligned education and training, stackable credentials, and training that is validated by employer demand.

#### No Wrong Door and Service Integration

Strengthen customer navigation, referrals, co-enrollment, and coordination among workforce system partners so individuals and employers can more easily access the services they need. The update will also address preparation for evolving federal work requirements.

## **Demand-Driven Workforce Strategies**

Continue strengthening employer engagement and aligning education, training, career pathways, and workforce investments with regional industries and occupations.

## **Performance and Accountability**

Review current WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance—including employment, earnings, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains—and identify improvement strategies where appropriate.

## **Federal Workforce Strategy Alignment**

The update must also demonstrate how our regional workforce strategy aligns with five federal workforce-system priorities (DOL's 5 Pillars):

1. **Industry-Driven Strategies** – Align workforce investments and training with employer and industry needs, including work-based learning and apprenticeship.
2. **Worker Mobility** – Help individuals enter, re-enter, and advance in the workforce through credentials, skills development, and career pathways.
3. **Integrated Systems** – Improve coordination among programs and partners and reduce fragmentation for customers and employers.
4. **Accountability** – Use performance and outcome data to guide decisions and investments.
5. **Flexibility & Innovation** – Adapt to changing workforce needs through new training models, technology, AI, rapid reskilling, and other innovative approaches.

Where the existing 2024–2028 plan already addresses these priorities, the update may reference existing strategies rather than create new ones.

## **Technology and Artificial Intelligence**

The State guidance also encourages workforce areas to consider how artificial intelligence and emerging technologies are affecting:

- Skills needed by workers and employers
- Training and career-development strategies
- Workforce staff skills and service delivery
- Responsible and ethical use of AI within workforce programs

If AI is being used in workforce service delivery, local practices should address privacy, security, transparency, appropriate use, staff oversight, and continued human-centered decision-making.

## **Governance, Certification, and Public Review**

The plan update will occur alongside review of Local Workforce Development Board certification requirements. The process includes review of board governance and statutory functions, completion of required assurances, and certification by the Local Workforce Development Board Chair and Chief Local Elected Official(s).

A draft plan will also be made publicly available for a **30-day public comment period**. Comments and responses will be documented before the final plan update is submitted for approval.

## General Timeline

|                       |                                                                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fall 2026–Winter 2027 | Review plan, update data, engage stakeholders, identify modifications |
| March 1, 2027         | Draft modifications submitted to State Workforce Board                |
| March–April 2027      | State review and feedback                                             |
| April–May 2027        | Local revisions and preparation of final draft                        |
| May–June 2027         | Public review and comment                                             |
| June 10, 2027         | Final signed modifications submitted                                  |
| June 2027             | State Workforce Board consideration and Governor approval process     |
| June 30, 2027         | Target date for final approval                                        |

## Role of the Sub-Area Committees

The Sub-Area Committees provide an important local perspective in this process. Committee members can help assess whether the assumptions, priorities, and strategies established in 2024 still reflect current conditions within their communities and identify significant changes, emerging opportunities, workforce challenges, and priorities that should inform the regional plan update.

### Possible Discussion Topics for Committee:

- Review DOL's 5 Pillars
- What has changed economically, with employers, workers, industries, education/training capacity, or community needs since the original plan?
- Are our priority industries and workforce strategies still the right ones?
- Are there emerging workforce needs, occupations, industries or populations that deserve greater attention?
- Where are there opportunities for stronger coordination, career pathways, employer engagement, training or service integration?
- What barriers—transportation, child care, housing, technology, skills, training availability, etc.—are materially affecting workforce participation?
- What should we be thinking about now that should influence the next several years of regional workforce strategy?
- Other?