

State Leadership and Policy



① State Leadership and Policy



② Outreach and Business Engagement



③ State Capacity to Develop, Launch, and Manage Programs



④ Pipeline of Apprentices and Increased Diversity



⑤ Alignment with Career Pathways and Post-secondary Education

Since fall 2016, states have been using State Apprenticeship Expansion grants from the U.S. Department of Labor to build capacity for Registered Apprenticeship, expand apprenticeships into new industry sectors, and increase participation by diverse populations. This series captures promising practices for state-driven efforts to grow Registered Apprenticeship, with five briefs focused on each of the five key elements of effective apprenticeship expansion. This brief explores Element 1 - State Leadership and Policy.

Visit the Apprenticeship State Expansion Grants Community, ase.workforcegps.org, for the full series of promising practice briefs and other resources on the five elements of apprenticeship expansion.

EXPANDING APPRENTICESHIP THROUGH STATE LEADERSHIP AND POLICY

State leaders play a critical role in successful Registered Apprenticeship expansion by communicating and managing to a strong vision

for expansion and providing organizational support for expansion efforts. They focus attention on the approach, develop policies that expand apprenticeship, and align organizational structures across the state to promote apprenticeship expansion. The following examples highlight the different ways state leadership and policies are helping to grow apprenticeship. *Italicized states are profiled in greater detail in this document.*

→ States are **ENGAGING APPRENTICESHIP STAKEHOLDERS** to create a shared vision and strategies for apprenticeship expansion. Some states like Kentucky convene annual apprenticeship summits, while others such as *Massachusetts* and Florida have engaged multiple stakeholders to **DEVELOP STRATEGIC PLANS**—building relationships along with widespread support. States like *Michigan* and *Idaho* are **ROLLING OUT STATEWIDE TRAINING** to grow understanding and awareness; increase collaboration across workforce, education, and apprenticeship systems; and define roles to support apprenticeship growth.

→ In many states, **GOVERNORS ARE SERVING AS CHAMPIONS** for apprenticeship, articulating the importance of apprenticeship to a vibrant state economy. For example, in states such as *Colorado* and *Iowa*, governors are providing vision and leadership for apprenticeship expansion, convening key partners, and serving as public champions for apprenticeship.

→ In some states, governors are **ALIGNING WORKFORCE, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** in support of apprenticeship expansion. For example, Maryland and Pennsylvania moved apprenticeship responsibilities into their workforce agencies, and North Carolina moved apprenticeship into the community college system, to better harness the resources of those systems to accelerate expansion.

→ States are **ADOPTING POLICIES AND LEVERAGING FUNDING** to remove barriers and encourage apprenticeship adoption. For example, *Colorado* issued guidance to local workforce areas emphasizing the value of apprenticeship and ways in which Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds can support them. The Kentucky legislature modified state Educational Excellence Scholarship rules to allow students to use the scholarships toward apprenticeship expenses, not just traditional college. *Montana* has also joined many other states—including Arkansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New York—in creating tax credits for businesses that hire apprentices.

This brief describes how leaders in several states are using key policy, funding, organizational, and communications levers to promote and expand apprenticeship.

MASSACHUSETTS: ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS FOR APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Massachusetts Governor and Labor Secretary are committed to making the State home to a vibrant and diverse apprenticeship ecosystem, and the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Expansion Plan is one example of the level of commitment state leaders have shown to growing Registered Apprenticeship. The plan represents an eight-month-long stakeholder engagement process resulting in a state-level approach to the expansion and diversification of Registered Apprenticeship Programs. The plan was created to achieve two primary objectives: 1) expand Registered Apprenticeship to new industries and occupations

to meet employer demand throughout Massachusetts, and 2) diversify the pool of apprentices within all industries to provide access to quality employment for all citizens of the State.

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

The Massachusetts Apprenticeship Expansion Plan was released in May of 2018 by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), in partnership with the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Advisory Group. Three underlying motivations drove EOLWD to undertake this effort and engage a broad range of stakeholders: 1) awareness that apprenticeship could make Massachusetts as a whole even more competitive, 2) understanding of the benefits of apprenticeship as an employment-based educational and career path that supports individuals financially, and 3) awareness of the utility of apprenticeships in creating new talent pipelines for employers.

EOLWD facilitated an eight-month stakeholder engagement process to inform the development of the strategic plan. In July 2017, the Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development convened an Apprenticeship Advisory Group of approximately 50 stakeholders that met four times and included representatives from union and non-union organizations and employers, community-based organizations, educational institutions, legislators, the public workforce system, government agencies, and other key stakeholders. In addition, EOLWD partnered with several industry organizations like the Associated Industries of Massachusetts, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council, and Employer Association of New England to host business roundtables. EOLWD also held individual conversations with employers in three targeted industry sectors—healthcare, manufacturing, and technology.

EOLWD used information gathered during this process to conduct a comprehensive analysis regarding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) that would be most relevant to consider during the expansion efforts and considered those as they finalized the plan. The results of the SWOT analysis combined with extensive stakeholder input generated seven recommendations. Each recommendation has detailed action steps to take as the plan is being implemented:

1. Define clear strategy, governance, and institutional infrastructure.
2. Formalize an apprenticeship recruitment pipeline.
3. Articulate simple pathways and transferability.

“It’s a long list of individuals who contributed and led us to a very comprehensive and thoughtful plan. As we implement the plan and develop its different components, it’s essential that our stakeholders are not only aware of what we are doing but that we ultimately articulate any necessary changes to the original plan.”

 **Patrick Mitchell**

Director, Apprenticeship Expansion & Work-Based Learning, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

4. Build a pipeline of employer partners.
5. Streamline processes to launch, monitor, and discontinue apprenticeship programs.
6. Articulate funding mechanisms.
7. Establish consistent evaluation systems.

IMPACT AND RESULTS

As of December 2019, Massachusetts had already achieved significant growth of Registered Apprenticeship, with 1,596 new apprentices in the State since 2018. The Massachusetts Apprenticeship Expansion Plan commits the State to increasing the total number of apprentices in the target industries of healthcare, manufacturing, and technology by 200 in 2020 and then 1,400 by 2026. By December 2019, the State was well on its way to achieving the first goal, with 175 apprentices in those key industries.

Interested in Learning More?

- ➔ Visit the Massachusetts apprenticeship website at www.mass.gov/topics/apprenticeships
- ➔ Access the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Expansion Plan at www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/06/20/Apprenticeship%20Expansion%20Plan%202018%20Final.pdf
- ➔ Contact Patrick Mitchell, Director, Apprenticeship Expansion & Work-Based Learning, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, at patrick.mitchell@state.ma.us

DRIVERS OF SUCCESS

- ✓ **STRONG STATE LEADERSHIP ENSURES POSITIVE RESULTS.** The Secretary of Labor and the Governor have both placed a priority on apprenticeship expansion and been very involved in the development and implementation of the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Expansion Plan. The impact of this support is evident in the state funding that supports recommendations in the plan.
- ✓ **MEANINGFUL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT INCREASES BUY-IN AND BROADENS PARTICIPATION.** The involvement of all stakeholders in strategic plan development resulted in a very comprehensive and thoughtful plan that was inclusive of both traditional and new apprenticeship stakeholders. This inclusive approach addressed potential resistance to change from traditional apprenticeship stakeholders, as well as resulting in enthusiastic support and a willingness to adapt. Continued engagement with these partners who put time and thought into the development of the plan has been critical for implementation success.
- ✓ **SUPPORTIVE STATE FUNDING IS CRUCIAL.** One of the factors in successful implementation has been two state-level funding supports that complement the plan—an apprenticeship line item in the state budget and a Registered Apprenticeship Tax Credit allowing for up to \$4,800 per qualified apprentice in the State's priority sectors of healthcare, manufacturing, and technology.

States Invest in Training to Increase Stakeholder Engagement

As states work to expand Registered Apprenticeship, they commonly grapple with how to grow understanding and awareness; increase collaboration across workforce, education, and apprenticeship systems; and define roles to support apprenticeship growth. To address these challenges, several states have developed and rolled out statewide apprenticeship training.

Michigan, for example, launched an Apprenticeship Learning Network (ALN) in 2017. Led by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economy Opportunity (LEO), in partnership with U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship staff for Michigan, the ALN is a training series open to all partners and stakeholders. The goal of the ALN is to build knowledge, experience, confidence, and relationships so that participants are better equipped to promote apprenticeship and support businesses that are interested in the model. The ALN has been attended by staff from a wide range of apprenticeship partners: local workforce boards and Michigan Works! agencies; community colleges; the Michigan Works! Association; employers and local manufacturers' associations; and LEO and other state agencies including Economic Development, Veterans' Employment Services, and Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives.

The ALN provided training in four foundational areas: introduction to apprenticeship, engaging underrepresented populations, increasing employer engagement, and growing apprenticeship in nontraditional industries and occupations. The training included employer voices, hands-on practice, and ample opportunity to network and build relationships. LEO emphasizes that the ALN is about more than growing the knowledge base and building comfort and confidence with apprenticeship—that partnerships, solutions, and actions come out of the sessions as the partners work through the material together.

As another example, Idaho took a slightly different approach. At the state level, the Governor envisioned close collaboration and alignment between the workforce and technical college systems, so he assigned staff in both agencies to jointly manage Idaho's apprenticeship expansion efforts. The State communicated this vision and encouraged alignment at the local level through policies requiring each of its six regions to create business services teams made up of a business specialist from the local job center and an apprenticeship training coordinator from the local technical or community college. The State provided apprenticeship onboarding training for the business services teams designed to equip them with a shared understanding of the apprenticeship model and standards development process, as well as a customer-focused, consultative sales mindset and ability to articulate why apprenticeship is a great opportunity for businesses.



To explore the training that these and other states have developed, check out the [State Apprenticeship Expansion Grantee Training Materials](#) page on the Apprenticeship Community of Practice website.

COLORADO:

GROWING APPRENTICESHIP THROUGH LEADERSHIP, POLICY, AND PARTNERSHIPS

Colorado has taken a comprehensive approach to expanding apprenticeship and other work-based learning strategies by involving businesses and state and local economic development, workforce development, and educational systems. The strong vision of two consecutive governors and key business leaders has allowed the State to advance quality apprenticeships. Through its strategic partnerships, Colorado has been successful in developing policies and leveraging resources to promote and expand Registered Apprenticeship.

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

In 2015, Colorado's Governor appointed the Business Experiential Learning (BEL) Commission, which brought together business and state agency leaders to develop a comprehensive work-based learning system, including apprenticeship, to meet the specific needs of the business community. In 2016, the Governor and the Chair of the BEL Commission led a delegation to Switzerland to study the Swiss model of apprenticeship. Key takeaways from that visit included the importance of embedding work-based models, including apprenticeship, into K-12 education; the broad variety of industries in which apprenticeship can be a meaningful strategy for developing talent; and the concept that businesses can be producers, as well as consumers, of workforce talent.

Staff of the Colorado Workforce Development Council also support the BEL Commission, ensuring that the goals and activities of these state boards are complementary and fully aligned with the Governor's vision for apprenticeship and other work-based strategies. State agencies and business leaders have also leveraged the success of their sector strategies work to build strong partnerships among business, economic development, workforce development, and education to enhance apprenticeship and the continuum of work-based learning strategies for youth and adults. With all partners focused on common goals for talent development, the State has been successful in seeking grant opportunities, obtaining commitments from private sector stakeholders, and braiding together resources to expand apprenticeship throughout the State.

“There are lots of good jobs openings in Colorado, but many of them require certain skills and qualifications. We need to make sure that people who want better jobs have a realistic way to get the skills they need for advancement... We are growing a talent pipeline and working to ensure that Coloradans are prepared for the jobs of the future.”

” Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado

Examples of the policies and practices that state leaders in Colorado have pursued to align systems and leverage resources to support the growth of apprenticeship include the following:

- ➔ **ISSUING GUIDANCE**, [Registered Apprenticeships in WIOA](#), to local workforce areas emphasizing the value of apprenticeship and how Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds and services can support them.
- ➔ **PROVIDING EXTENSIVE TRAINING**, including a statewide Registered Apprenticeship Bootcamp, and monthly technical assistance webinars to local workforce representatives to facilitate the development of apprenticeship programs that address the specific needs of communities throughout the State. Additionally, the Colorado Workforce Development Council offers a robust set of apprenticeship resources on its website for local boards, education partners, and businesses—including downloadable resources and communities of practice information.
- ➔ **EXPANDING YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP** by launching [CareerWise Colorado](#), a statewide youth apprenticeship program through which businesses are providing apprenticeship opportunities to high school students and working with educators to develop applied learning curricula. CareerWise is focusing on occupations not traditionally engaged in apprenticeship, such as customer service, information technology, and insurance underwriting. The program is gaining national attention and being adopted by other states and localities.
- ➔ **INVESTING IN STACKABLE CREDENTIALS AND COLLEGIATE APPRENTICESHIPS** in high-growth fields, including using State Apprenticeship Expansion grant funding to develop and expand a medical assistant Registered Apprenticeship Program at Arapahoe Community College.
- ➔ **ALIGNING APPRENTICESHIPS WITH STATE PRIORITIES AND INNOVATIVE INDUSTRIES** through the development of programs like the youth Registered Apprenticeship Program in wind energy.
- ➔ **COORDINATING WITH OTHER STATE APPRENTICESHIP INVESTMENTS**, such as State-legislated funding for apprenticeship outreach and marketing through the [Skilled Worker Outreach, Recruitment, and Key Training Act \(WORK Act\)](#), serving over 1,300 apprentices.

IMPACT AND RESULTS

Colorado is committed to expanding apprenticeship opportunities, and the Governor, state legislature, and other key policymakers are working to ensure apprenticeship policies are flexible enough to meet the needs of different business sectors as the State's economy continues to grow. The work that Colorado has undertaken to promote policies and resources for apprenticeship is producing results. Colorado has steadily increased new apprentice enrollments by about 48 percent in recent years, from 2,570 in 2015 to 3,798 in 2018. For a complete list of programs in the State, visit the [Colorado Registered Apprenticeship Programs Directory](#). CareerWise reports that a total of 419 high school apprentices were hired in 2019—an increase of 40 percent over 2018—and the program now has more than 125 employers participating.

Interested in Learning More?

- ➔ Visit Colorado's apprenticeship website at www.apprenticeshiprevolution.com
- ➔ Contact Denise Miller, State Coordinator for Apprenticeship and Experiential Learning, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment at denise.miller@state.co.us

DRIVERS OF SUCCESS

- ✓ **VISIONARY STATE LEADERSHIP PROMOTES PROGRESS.** Colorado's current and prior governors have demonstrated strong leadership in aligning state and local policymakers around a vision of meeting businesses' talent needs and preparing Coloradans for the jobs of today and the future through apprenticeship. As public and private partners see the value of these collaborative strategies, more are choosing to participate in future initiatives.
- ✓ **STRONG, INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS ARE VITAL TO SUCCESS.** Early work on sector strategies in Colorado set the stage for business, economic development, workforce development, and education partners to work together on strategies for expanding apprenticeship and other work-based talent solutions.

Business Tax Incentives Support Apprenticeship Growth

To address cost as a barrier to developing and operating Registered Apprenticeship Programs, many states offer tax credits for businesses that hire apprentices. These states range from those with tax credits in place for some time to several that have enacted tax credits in the last couple of years. This approach is intended to provide an incentive and partially offset employer costs for launching, operating, and expanding apprenticeships.

In Montana, for example, state and business leaders were essential to securing legislative approval of a new tax credit for employers beginning in tax year 2018. The Apprenticeship Tax Credit provides a \$750 credit for each new apprentice, and a \$1,500 credit for every apprentice that is a veteran. Employers are eligible for the tax credit once the apprentice has completed a probationary period or after six months, whichever is earlier. The credit may be applied against the employer's tax liability, for up to five years of each qualified apprentice's training program. In the second year of the tax credit, the Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program identified 416 employers, who had hired over 1,000 apprentices, as eligible to apply for the tax credit.



For information about other states with tax credits, visit the resource page on [*States That Offer Tax Credits to Employers for Hiring Apprentices.*](#)