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To: Local Workforce Area Signatory Officials
Local Workforce Area Board Chairs
Local Workforce Area Administrators

From: State Workforce Development Board

Subject: **High-Performance Board Incentive Award**

Date: October 16, 2026

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) authorizes the use of funds reserved by the Governor for statewide employment and training activities. The State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) directs the investment of these funds in alignment with state priorities. To recognize and incentivize Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) for their leadership and support of the state's workforce system through innovative practices, the SWDB has approved the development of a High-Performance Board Incentive Award.

A high-performing LWDB provides leadership to the local workforce development system, oversees opportunities to strengthen and build the local area's workforce and economic capacity, and leads the alignment with the state's education and workforce system to meet the needs of employers and individuals.

Incentive Award Eligibility

To be eligible, the LWDB must complete the following:

- Meet federal requirements, WIOA primary indicators of performance, and state-specific performance measures.
- Employ innovative practices aligning with one or more of the State Strategies from the WIOA Combined State Plan Modification:
 - Pillar I: Industry-Driven Strategies: Building reliable talent pipelines through a workforce system led by industry and aligned with America's economic priorities.
 - Pillar II: Worker Mobility: Bringing more Americans into the labor force and helping them advance, including through the innovative use of technology and labor market data.
 - Pillar III: Integrated Systems: Replacing a fragmented web of duplicative programs with a streamlined, coordinated system that delivers unified workforce services.

- Pillar IV: Accountability: Ensuring federally funded workforce programs deliver measurable results by linking investments to outcomes and enforcing performance discipline.
- Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation: Creating new models of workforce innovation built to match the speed and scale of AI-driven economic transformation.

For reference, the South Carolina 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan Modification can be found here:

[https://scworks.org/sites/scworks/files/Submitted_SC%20WIOA%20Plan%20PYs%202026-2027%20\(Mod\)_in%20Federal%20Review_2026-04-28.pdf](https://scworks.org/sites/scworks/files/Submitted_SC%20WIOA%20Plan%20PYs%202026-2027%20(Mod)_in%20Federal%20Review_2026-04-28.pdf)

The lead entity of an innovative practice or initiative must be the LWDB or LWDB's service provider. The LWDB must also be willing to assist other LWDBs or entities with implementing the promising practice.

Innovative practices or initiatives may be identified by the following criteria:

- Is, or will be, implemented in partnership with other education, workforce, economic development, social service, or non-profit entities
- Focuses on creating talent pipelines in high-growth, high-demand industries
- Targets priority populations and/or underserved communities
- Met or exceeded target outcomes or is on track to do so

Application and Evaluation

Application instructions and further information on the evaluation methodology will be sent to LWDBs at the end of Program Year 2026.

High-Performance Board Incentive Award(s) will be provided to the selected area(s) through a reimbursement grant. The LWDBs must complete all activities within a period of performance not to exceed 12 months from the date of award. **This deadline will not be extended.**

Incentive Payment Information

During Program Year 2027, LWDBs who meet the specific requirements will receive at least \$50,000, but no more than \$150,000, in the High-Performance Board Incentive Award funding based on their Program Year 2026 activities.

Questions may be directed to WorkforceSupport@dew.sc.gov