

Nebraska Workforce Development Board

Draft Meeting Minutes

June 12, 2026

Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center

1800 North 33rd Street, Lincoln, NE 68503

<https://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/Training/WIOA/NWDB>

Agenda item 1. Call to Order

Acting Chair Bradley Schroeder (Brad) called to order the meeting of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board (hereafter referred to as the Board) on June 12, 2026, at approximately 9:00 a.m. at the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center, 1800 North 33rd Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68503.

Agenda item 2. Roll Call

Brad asked Kelly Flanagan to call roll for purposes of establishing a quorum of the Board. Kelly called roll and advised Brad that quorum was established (13 of 21 Board Members attending).

Board Members *attending*

1. Jim Bulkley
2. Joanna Estrada
3. Shannon Grotirian on behalf of Steve Corsi
4. Jim Hansen
5. Thomas Helget on behalf of Sen. Kathleen Kauth
6. Tate Lauer
7. Don Nordell
8. Sara Riffel
9. Brad Schroeder, Acting Chair
10. Keisha Thomas
11. Katie Thurber
12. Kevin Wetuski
13. Courtney Wittstruck

Board Members *not attending*

1. Governor Jim Pillen
2. Senator Kathleen Kauth
3. Steve Corsi
4. Gary Dixon Jr.
5. Lindy Foley
6. Michael Geary
7. Jennifer Sedlacek
8. Paul Turman
9. Lisa Wilson
10. Mark Wright

Also attending were the following members of the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) Board support team.

1. Kathy Cedillo, Program Coordinator, Division of Reemployment Services
2. Kelly Flanagan, Administrator, Division of Reemployment Services
3. Stephanie Geery-Zink, Policy and Grants Management Coordinator, Division of Reemployment Services
4. Joel Green, Agency Legal Counsel, Office of the General Counsel
5. Gerald Pankonin, Attorney, Office of the General Counsel
6. Joseph Tisko, Program Analyst, Division of Reemployment Services
7. Ahtasham Qaisar, Policy Program Coordinator, Division of Reemployment Services

Agenda item 3. Notice of Publication

Kelly Flanagan announced that public meeting notices were published, in accordance with the [Nebraska Open Meetings Act](#), in the Beatrice Daily Sun, Columbus Telegram, Grand Island Independent, Hastings Tribune, Kearney Hub, Lincoln Journal Star, Norfolk Daily News, North Platte Telegraph, Omaha World-Herald, and Scottsbluff Star-Herald. Kelly announced that public meeting notice was also published on the [State of Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar](#).

Agenda item 4. Approval of March 13, 2026 meeting minutes

Brad called the next order of business, which was the approval of the draft meeting minutes from the March 13, 2026, meeting of the Board. The draft minutes from the March meeting were emailed to Board Members on June 10, 2026. The meeting minutes were included in Board Member packets as Handout 1.

Brad opened the floor to Board Members for comment on the draft minutes. Board Members did not comment on the draft minutes. Brad opened the floor for public comment on the draft minutes. Public comments were not provided.

Jim Bulkley motioned to approve the March minutes, as provided, and Joanna Estrada seconded the motion. Members of the Board voted on the motion by acclamation vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda item 5. Approval of May 4, 2026 meeting minutes

Brad called the next order of business, which was the approval of the draft meeting minutes from the May 4, 2026, meeting of the Board. The draft minutes from the March meeting were emailed to Board Members on June 10, 2026. The meeting minutes were included in Board Member packets as Handout 2.

Brad opened the floor to Board Members for comment on the draft minutes. Board Members did not comment on the draft minutes. Brad opened the floor for public comment on the draft minutes. Public comments were not provided.

Courtney Wittstruck motioned to approve the March minutes, as provided, and Katie Thurber seconded the motion. Members of the Board voted on the motion by acclamation vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda item 6. Old Business

a. Workforce Pell Eligible Programs

Labor Commissioner Katie Thurber said Nebraska is ahead of other states in preparing for implementation of Workforce Pell on July 1. Several businesses have signed up to take part in Workforce Pell, directing board members to the letters of support in the board packets. Each board member received a packet of information including forms and policies that are on the website at <https://dol.nebraska.gov/ne-workforce-pell>

a. Medicaid Work Requirements

Craig Steele, contractor with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Medicaid and Long-Term Care, presented Medicaid work requirements. He said Nebraska is the first state to implement new work rules (including school/apprenticeship, in a work program, and community service) in conjunction with receiving Medicaid. Work requirements only apply to those who are eligible for Medicaid under Medicaid expansion. There are about 70,000 people who are enrolled in Nebraska Medicaid expansion. Total Medicaid enrollment is around 336,000. Expansion members include adults aged 19-64, have low income defined as 138% of the federal poverty level, and are U.S. citizens or meet Medicaid immigration rules. Nebraska started enforcing the work requirements on May 1. The expansion members all needed to be contacted to inform them of the new rules. Board members Sara Riffel and Joanna Estrada asked questions regarding how many of the 70,000 expansion members have responded to letters sent about the new work requirements. Steele said no one needed to respond back, but that NDHHS needed to send letters to each person and conduct a member outreach effort through public service announcements and begin a social media campaign. More information on Steele's presentation is available in the board packet.

b. Building Nebraska's Future Workforce: A Statewide Landscape Assessment

Isaac Hill, Division Director at the Nebraska Department of Labor, presented about the Building Nebraska's Future Workforce: A Statewide Landscape Assessment report. The State developed and executed a comprehensive workforce program inventory across state agencies and public post-secondary institutions. Workforce program information, including program names, goals, performance metrics, and funding were collected to map workforce programs to create a clear, organized view of existing programs and initiatives. As part of the process, a survey on the state of workforce development was conducted. The conclusion was that there is untapped potential for Registered Apprenticeships and that labor demand remains high in several service priority sectors. Hill said the workforce system is extensive but fragmented across many agencies, creating navigation challenges for employers and individuals.

c. Nebraska Manufacturing Alliance Credential

Doug Rood, Senior Operations Manager at Collins Aerospace, spoke about the Nebraska Manufacturing Alliance Credential through the Nebraska Manufacturing Advisory Council. He said that NeMAC examined best practice in other industries and created core competencies for manufacturing in Nebraska. They considered the Six Regions-One Nebraska model and engaged all six community colleges to allow for local regional effort with a consistent statewide curriculum. This curriculum has been developed and aligned with Nebraska's industry expectations. There are eight modules to achieve the credential and four of the community colleges have already completed or began teaching the curriculum.

Labor Commissioner Katie Thurber said this is a model of success that we could replicate across the state for different industries. If there are other employers who are interested in this, they should reach out.

d. Nebraska State Apprenticeship Agency

Delta Wilson, Apprenticeship Coordinator at NDOL, presented an update on the Nebraska State Apprenticeship Agency. In answering a question by Joanna Estrada, Wilson said if an employer approached NDOL, already has an apprenticeship in place, but would like to have a Registered Apprenticeship program, the hardest part has already been completed – establishing an apprenticeship program.

Wilson reviewed results of Apprenticeship Week and that the move towards a State Apprenticeship Agency has begun with the passage of LB 847, the Nebraska Registered Apprenticeship Act. She also summarized the advantages of having the SAA in the state, as opposed to having an Office of Apprenticeship. With an SAA, NDOL will provide outreach and education to employers, assist in program creation, and will serve as an intermediary between Nebraska employers/partners and USDOL. The SAA will have direct access to the records in the national database so NDOL personnel can look up information and run reports directly. The next step will be for NDOL apply for SAA recognition from USDOL.

e. Title II and Workplace Literacy

Laura Ruppert, Adult Education Specialist at the Nebraska Department of Education, said her agency works with businesses to determine what their literacy needs are to tailor the learning to the needs. She summarized the workplace adult education and literacy activities as collaborative instructional programs developed with employers or employee organizations, delivered at the workplace or at off-site locations, and designed to improve workforce productivity by strengthening essential adult education and literacy skills. The instruction is customized to employee roles and workplace needs and is geared towards what the employee needs in the workplace, including safety procedures, workplace expectations, and employee benefits awareness. She said the benefits include improving collaboration and teamwork, promoting a safer work environment, and lower turnover while improving job satisfaction. WIOA Title II adult education providers include the six community colleges and Crete Public Schools.

f. Lexington Response Efforts

Erick Carrillo, Reemployment Director at NDOL, told the board about NDOL's response efforts at helping those who lost their jobs from the Tyson plant closure in Lexington. The Rapid Response personnel activated quickly, within two weeks of the plant closure announcement in November. One of the difficulties was finding translators to be able to communicate with those who were going to lose their jobs. Lincoln Literacy and the Lexington High School soccer team were able to translate Spanish, Arabic, and Vietnamese. Of the 3,200 who lost their jobs, 740 participated in Rapid Response activities and 280 registered for NEworks. Carrillo also discussed the Transportation Pilot program to transport former Tyson workers to their new jobs in North Platte. The bus has an average of 75 daily riders to and from Sustainable Beef and the Walmart Distribution Center. He said many of those laid off from Tyson want to remain in Lexington and are trying to find ways to do so.

Agenda item 8. Next meeting of the Board

The next meeting of the Board will take place on Friday, September 18, 2026, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the Nebraska Media Center, 1800 North 33rd Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Agenda item 9. Public comment

Brad opened the floor for public comment.

Carla Stucky Shuck with the Nebraska Department of Education said she was happy to announce that Nebraska was only one of two states that exceeded national targets in the top quartile in performance with the WIOA Title II metrics. She said this is thanks to partnerships across the state and 9,000 students.

Jody Stutzman, Regional Director at Proteus, said that her program is ready to partner with the Title I program.

Jay Ignowski shared information on a new apprenticeship program IBEW 22 is establishing with Heartland Workforce Solutions in Omaha.

Agenda item 10. Adjournment

Brad asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Board. Joanna Estrada motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Courtney Wittstruck seconded the motion. Members of the Board voted on the motion by acclamation vote. The motion carried unanimously. Brad adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:30 a.m.