

NCWORKS COMMISSION

February 11, 2026

Quarterly Business Meeting

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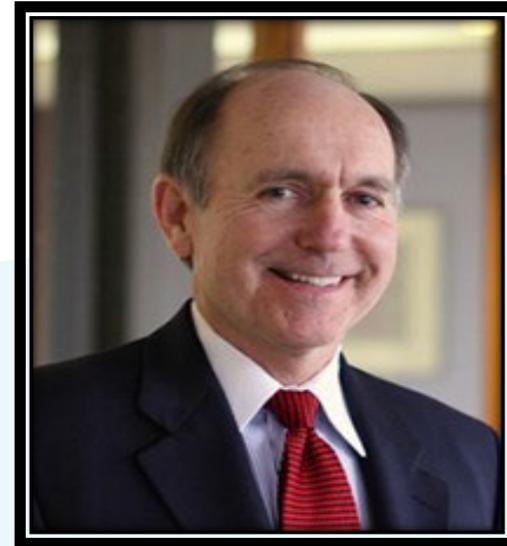


Meeting Instructions

If you experience any technical difficulties, or would like to ask a question, please use the Q & A feature to report issues to “All Panelists” and we will assist you.

Welcome and Opening Comments

**Tom Rabon, Chair,
NCWorks Commission**



NC is #1 in Workforce Development

Site Selection Magazine, 2026

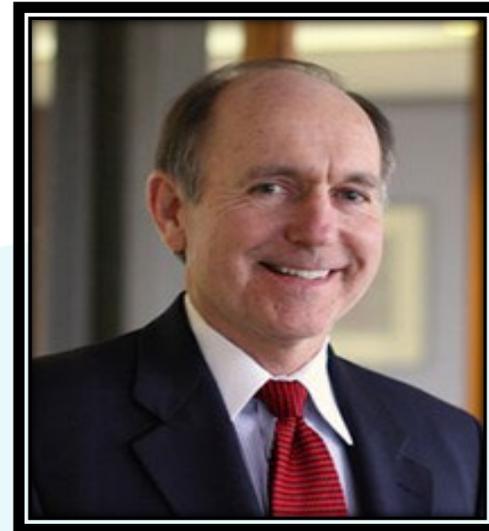


NC DEPARTMENT
of COMMERCE
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

NC
works

Workforce Updates

**Tom Rabon, Chair,
NCWorks Commission**





Workforce Pell Implementation

Andrea DeSantis, PhD

Assistant Secretary, NC Department of Commerce

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Workforce Pell Legislation

- Included in H.R. 1
- Funds eligible short-term Workforce Development programs at eligible Title IV Institutions (Public, non-profit, and proprietary)
- Shared federal funding with Pell Grants
- 8 – 15 weeks and 150 – 599 clock hours
- High standards
 - 70% completion
 - 70% job placement within 180 days
 - Limitations on tuition pricing

Key Stakeholders

- Eligible Title IV Institutions
- Governor
- Secretary of Education (federal)
- Secretary of Labor (federal)
- State Workforce Development Board
- State Workforce Agency
- State Higher Education Executive Offices & Boards
- Employers

Federal Timeline

July 2025

- Passage of H.R. 1 – includes Workforce Pell

December

- U.S. Dept. of Ed: Negotiated Rulemaking
- Committee consensus reached – consensus draft released on 1/29.

Late
Spring
2026

- U.S. Dept. of Ed to post consensus rule for public comment.
- U.S. Dept. of Ed to post final rule.

July

- U.S. Dept. of Ed is aiming to open the application process for institutions to submit eligible programs for approval (which are first approved at the state level).
- Official open date has not been released.

Negotiated Rulemaking Highlights

- U.S. Department of Education & U.S. Department of Labor Partnership
- Workforce Pell and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act alignment
- Emphasis on accountability and expectations that students will complete and enter the labor force upon completion.
- Governors have the leading role in program approval at the state level.
- States have flexibility to design policy and process.

North Carolina Timeline

November
2025

- Governor Stein directed Governor's Council to make recommendations for implementation.

November

- Agency staff from the Governor's Office, Commerce, NCCCS, NCICU, and UNC begin working with Education Strategy Group (ESG) to prepare for Workforce Pell.
- ESG is providing on-going TA to the state through implementation.

Jan. – Mar.
2026

- Agency staff and ESG to develop policy and application in alignment with federal law and regulations.

April

- Draft policy and application available for public comment

May 13th

- Policy and Application submitted for approval through the NCWorks Commission.
- Application to go-live soon after

July

- Goal to approve initial applications in advance of U.S. Department of Ed application opening.
- Timeline for approvals will be communicated beforehand.

Questions?

Committee Updates

Education & Credential Attainment - Sherry Carpenter

Committee Updates

Apprenticeships & Work-Based Learning - Tammy Simmons

Committee Updates

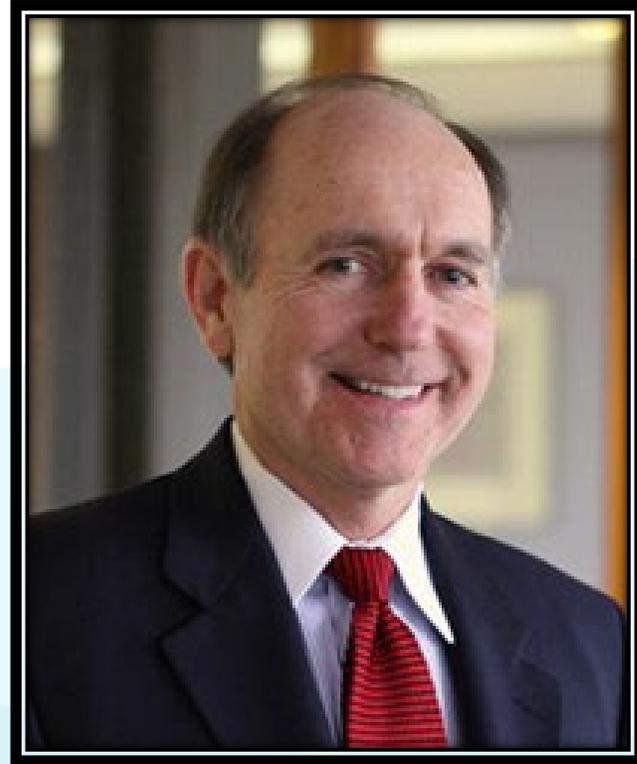
Future-Ready Workforce and Employer Partnerships - Mark Richardson

Committee Updates

Modernizing and Aligning the Workforce System – Dr. Cheryl Richards

Action Items

**Tom Rabon, Chair,
NCWorks Commission**



NCWorks Commission 2026-28 Strategic Plan

Dr. Annie Izod
Executive Director,
NCWorks Commission



Crosswalk of Goals and Aligned Strategies

Increase Education, Credential, and Degree Attainment

NCWorks Commission Committee: Education and Credential Attainment

Council Goals: 1,2, and 3

- Tracking and increasing credential and degree attainment
- Labor market alignment

Council Committee: Workforce Readiness

Council Strategies 1 through 8

- Expand industry-valued credentials aligned to employer demand
- Implement Workforce Pell for short-term workforce training
- Strengthen credit for prior learning, military service, and work experience
- Expand advising and career navigation supports (K–12 through adult learners)

Expand Apprenticeships and High-Quality Work-Based Learning

NCWorks Commission Committee: Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning

Council Goals 4,5,6, and 7

- Pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships
- Work-based learning opportunities
- Engage with 50,000 employers

Council Committee: Applied Workforce Experiences

Council Strategies 1 through 11

- Expand registered and youth apprenticeships
- Embed credentials and degrees into apprenticeship models
- Incentivize employer participation in work-based learning
- Reduce regulatory and administrative barriers for employers
- Expand work-based learning in state government and priority sectors

Crosswalk of Goals and Aligned Strategies

Strengthen Employer Engagement and Sector-Based Strategies

NCWorks Commission Committee: Future Ready Workforce and Employer Engagement

Council Goals 8, 9, and 10

- Sector-based strategies in emerging & high-demand industries
- Employer engagement
- AI Leadership Council recommendations
- Decrease state employment vacancy rate

Council Committee: Industry Driven Partnerships

Council Strategies 1 through 7

- Sector strategies in advanced manufacturing, education, and healthcare
- Formalize employer-led partnerships - education and workforce agencies
- Align training investments to regional and sector-specific demand
- Expand employer engagement
- Improve recruitment and retention in state government

Modernize and Align Workforce System

NCWorks Commission Committee: Modernizing and Aligning the Workforce System

Council Goal 11

- Labor market alignment
- System access and modernization

Council Committee: Workforce System Excellence

Council Strategies 1 through 4 Launch a coordinated statewide outreach and awareness initiative

- Integrate NCWorks.gov, NCcareers.org, and related platforms
- Improve data collection, disaggregation, and transparency
- Modernizing policies through WIOA State Plan and Commission Policy Statement

WIOA Unified State Plan Update

James Bain
Deputy Director,
NCWorks Commission



WIOA Unified State Plan Update

- **The 4-year WIOA Unified State Plan**
 - 2 -year update is in final draft
 - Approved by the Modernizing and Aligning the Workforce System Committee
 - Required to be submitted to the US Department of Labor in March
- US Department of Labor required elements: strategic vision, goals, and a four-year strategy for the core programs.
- Includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and activities that constitute State's workforce development system.
- Includes program-specific requirements for partner programs

WIOA Unified State Plan Update

The North Carolina plan:

- Leads with Governor Josh Stein's vision for workforce development - 11 goals and 30 strategies published by the Council on Workforce and Apprenticeships
- Outlines strategies and outcomes for the four titles of WIOA
- Collaborative process requiring multiple sectors and agencies to outline their goals and objectives
- Public comment period prior to formal submittal and public release
- Addresses the **five pillars** of **America's Talent Strategy 2025** addressing workforce needs of American industries and preparing labor market for future challenges:

[Industry-Driven Strategies](#) [Worker Mobility](#) [Integrated Systems](#) [Accountability](#) [Flexibility and Innovation](#)

Approval of Action Items – Plans & Policy Statement(s)

- **NCWorks Commission 2026-28 Strategic Plan**
- **NC WIOA Unified State Plan-2026 Modification**
- **CPS 06-2022, Change 2 - WIOA Monitoring/Oversight of Local Area WDBs**
- **CPS 01-2026, LAWDB Local Area Plan Modification**
- **CPS 02-2026 Selection Process for Service Providers and One-Stop Operators**
- **CPS 03-2026 Request for Approval to Provide WIOA Basic and/or Individualized Career Services and Notice to Provide Youth Services**

Executive Director Remarks

Annie Izod, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
NCWorks Commission



2026 MEETING DATES

- **May 13, 2026 – McKimmon Center (Raleigh, NC)**
- **August 12, 2026 – McKimmon Center (Raleigh, NC)**
- **November 18, 2026 – McKimmon Center (Raleigh, NC)**

Reminder: 2026 IEI Forum



NC STATE UNIVERSITY
Institute for
Emerging Issues

2026 Emerging Issues Forum **Future *Forward*** WATER

Feb 25 | Asheville,
Winston-Salem, Morehead City

#NCWaterFuture

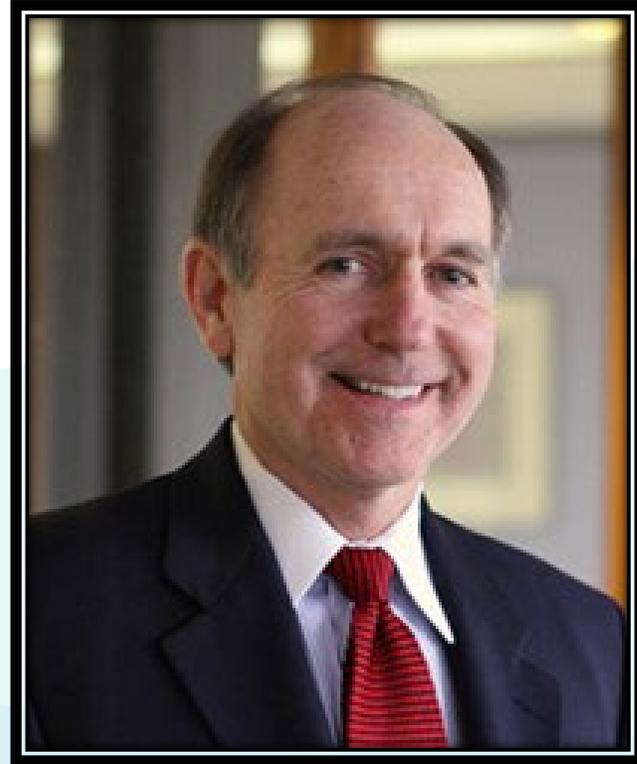
Student Discount: \$50

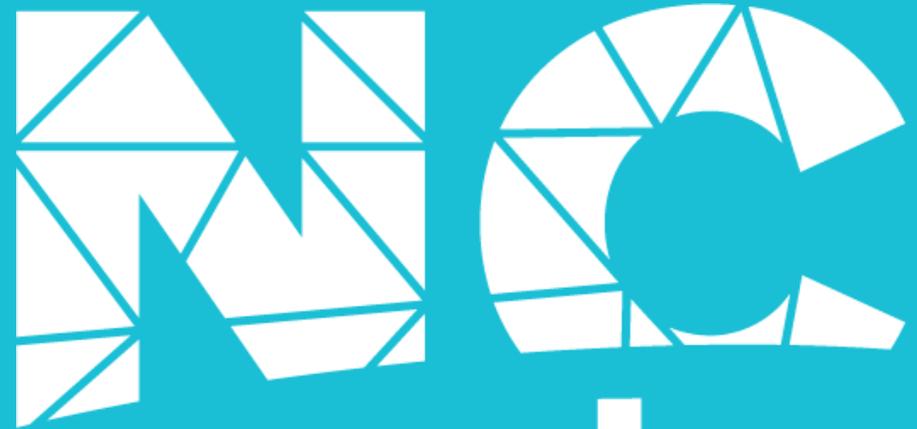


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go.ncsu.edu/2026forum

Closing Remarks

**Tom Rabon, Chair,
NCWorks Commission**





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COMMISSION

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