

LCWDB Talent Pipeline Committee Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 9:00 AM

College of Lake County – Lakeshore Campus

Eleanor Murkey Community Center

34 N Sheridan Rd, Waukegan, IL 60085

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Public Comment**
- III. **Chair Report**
- IV. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. October 2025 Joint Talent Pipeline and Employer Connections Committee Meeting Minutes [Attachment A](#)
 - b. January 2026 Talent Pipeline Committee Meeting Minutes [Attachment B](#)
- V. **Regular Business**
- VI. **Strategic Focus**
 - a. Workforce Pathways in Action: Developing Talent from Entry to Career
 - i. Young Professionals Panel
- VII. **Other Business / Updates**
- VIII. **Member Time**
- IX. **Adjournment**

Upcoming Meetings:

Employer Connections Committee Meeting

- Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 9:00 AM, at United Way of Lake County

LCWD Board of Directors Meeting

- Thursday, June 25, 2026, at 8:00 AM, at the College of Lake County, Room C106

Talent Pipeline Committee Meeting

- Tuesday, August 11, 2026, at 9:00 AM

**LCWDB Joint Talent Pipeline & Employer Connections Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 9:00 AM

UCC Environmental

2100 Norman Drive West, #6753, Waukegan, IL 60085

Present: John Castillo, Carolyn Corcoran, Steve DeBretto, Jennifer Everett, DeMar Harris, Lisa Johnson, Dr. Michael Karner, Nicole Large, Rachel Loberg, Eva Locke, Amy Maksudian, Dr. Carlotta Roman, Ashananti Ross, Jennifer Serino, Quinton Snodgrass, Amy Van Strien, Kimberly Wimer

I. Call to Order..... Chairwoman, Kimberly Wimer

The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 9:05 AM by Employer Connections Chairwoman Kimberly Wimer. Board staff thanked members for attending and noted that the purpose of this joint session was to move beyond program updates and focus on shared observations, emerging themes, and strategic alignment across committees. The discussion is centered on how employer engagement insights and talent pipeline work can more intentionally to inform one another.

II. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

III. Chair Report

No chair report.

IV. Regular Business (ACTION ITEMS)

a. Authorize staff to enter negotiations with Symbol Training Institute to develop a contract for manufacturing sector training and workforce development services, for an amount up to \$340,000, consistent with the proposal submitted.

i. Motioned to approve: Lisa Johnson

ii. Motion seconded: John Castillo

iii. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. *Authorize staff to enter negotiations with United Way of Lake County (UWLC) for implementation of the WIOA Education Sector Strategy: Expanding Parent Mentor Models Through School District Partnerships initiative, for an amount not to exceed \$100,000.*
 - i. *Motioned to approve: Jennifer Everett*
 - ii. *Motion seconded: Dr. Michael Karner*
 - iii. *One abstention was noted.*

V. **Strategic Focus**

a. **Shared Observations from Committee Work**

- i. *Committee members shared observations drawn from recent employer engagement, education partnerships, and program implementation, including:*
 - 1. *Employers across sectors are increasingly emphasizing **skills, adaptability, and work readiness** over formal credentials alone.*
 - 2. *There is growing demands for **short-term, industry-aligned training** that can quickly respond to hiring needs.*
 - 3. *Employers value **work-based learning models** (apprenticeships, internships, OJT) but often need support navigating these options.*
 - 4. *Job seekers and students benefit most when career pathways are clearly defined and tied directly to real hiring opportunities.*
 - 5. *Communication gaps sometimes exist between employer-facing efforts and talent development initiatives, limiting system-wide impact.*

b. **Strategic Discussion: From Observation to Alignment**

- i. *Building on these observations, committees engaged in a facilitated discussion focused on aligning strategies and priorities:*
 - 1. **Aligning Employer Demand with Talent Pipelines**
 - a. *Members discussed the importance of using employer engagement data to inform **training investments**, RFP development, and pathway design.*
 - b. *Emphasis was placed on ensuring that sector strategies reflect **current and future hiring needs**, not just historical demand.*
 - 2. **Strengthening Skills-Based Approaches**

- a. *The discussion reinforced the shift toward **skills-based hiring** and the need to embed skills language into career navigation, employer outreach, and training design.*
- b. *Members noted opportunities to better prepare job seekers to articulate transferable skills across industries.*

3. Work-Based Learning as a Core Strategy

- a. *Committees agreed that apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and OJT should be treated as **foundational system tools**, not add-ons.*
- b. *Employer Connections members highlighted the need for clearer messaging and simplified processes for employers interested in hosting work-based learning.*

4. Cross-Committee Communication and Coordination

- a. *Members identified opportunities to improve information-sharing between committees so that employer insights consistently inform talent pipeline decisions.*
- b. *Suggestions included joint planning sessions, shared data reviews, and intentional alignment around sector priorities.*

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 AM.

LCWD Talent Pipeline Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 9:00 AM

Zoom

Present: Carolyn Corcoran, Myra Gaytan, Lisa Johnson, Dr. Michael Karner, Rachel Loberg, Tim Kirschner, Amy Maksudian, Sarah Mitial, Crystal Odom-McKinney, Karen Rios, Gina Schuyler, Jennifer Serino, Amy Van Strien

I. Call to Order..... Chairman Dr. Michael Karner

The meeting was called to order on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 9:03 AM by Talent Pipeline Committee Chairman Dr. Michael Karner.

II. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

III. Chair Report

*Chairmen Dr. Michael Karner provided opening remarks and set the context for the meeting. He emphasized the importance of the Talent Pipeline Committee's work in ensuring Lake County's workforce system remains responsive to **emerging labor market needs and employer expectations**.*

*Dr. Karner highlighted the need for continued alignment between education, training providers, and employers, noting that talent pipeline strategies must prepare individuals not only for current job openings but also for **future workforce demands**. He underscored the value of skills-based approaches, work-based learning, and strong cross-sector partnerships in strengthening career pathways.*

Dr. Karner encouraged committee members to remain engaged in strategic discussions and to continue sharing insights from their respective sectors to inform committee priorities and system-wide planning.

IV. Consent Agenda

- a. Due to the meeting being held virtually, the approval of the October Joint Talent Pipeline & Employer Connections Committee Meeting Minutes will be tabled.*

V. Regular Business

VI. Strategic Focus

a. **Committee Purpose and Framing**

- i. *Board staff reviewed the purpose of the Talent Pipeline Committee and framed the discussion around **aligning education, training, and workforce strategies** to better prepare individuals for current and future labor market needs. Emphasis was placed on ensuring talent pipeline efforts are **employer-informed, data-driven, and equitable**.*

b. **Talent Pipeline Updates**

i. **Youth and Education Pathways**

1. *Board Staff provided updates on youth-focused initiatives and education partnerships, including:*
 - a. *Continued collaboration with secondary and postsecondary partners to strengthen career pathways*
 - b. *Emphasis on career exposure, work-based learning, and early engagement with employers*
 - c. *Alignment of youth programming with in-demand industries and regional sector priorities*
2. *Committee members discussed the importance of clearly defined pathways support successful transitions from education into employment.*

ii. **Adult and Dislocated Worker Pathways**

1. *Updates were shared on adult and dislocated worker programming, including:*
 - a. *Increased focus on short-term, industry-recognized credentials*
 - b. *Integration of transferable skills and work readiness into training design*
 - c. *Support for individuals navigating career transitions due to labor market shifts*
2. *Members noted the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in training options to meet evolving employer needs.*

c. **Strategic Discussion: Preparing the Talent Pipeline for Workforce Needs**

- i. *The committee engaged in a strategic discussion focused on preparing individuals for today's and tomorrow's hiring realities, including:*

1. **Skills-Based Approaches** – reinforcing the need to emphasize skills, competencies, and applied learning over credentials alone.
 2. **Work-Based Learning** – recognizing apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training as critical components of effective talent pipelines.
 3. **Employer Alignment** – ensuring employer feedback consistently informs pathway development and training investments.
 4. **Equity and Access** – identifying opportunities to remove barriers and ensure equitable access to training and career advancement opportunities.
- ii. Committee members agrees that these themes should continue to guide talent pipeline priorities and planning efforts.

d. Data and Labor Market Insights

- i. Board staff referenced labor market information and employer feedback to support discussion on:
1. High-growth and high-demand industries
 2. Skills gaps and emerging occupational needs
 3. Alignment between training offerings and regional labor market demand
- ii. Members emphasized the value of using data to guide decision-making and committee recommendations.

VII. Other Business / Updates

- a. Jennifer Serino shared information regarding an upcoming **Awards and Recognition Breakfast** planned for March 2026. Jennifer noted that the event will recognize workforce partners, employers, and programs for their contributions and impact across Lake County’s workforce system. Jennifer emphasized the importance of highlighting successes, celebrating collaboration, and elevating the visibility of workforce development efforts. Additional details regarding the date, location, and honorees will be shared as planning continues.

VIII. Member Time

- a. Nothing was shared during this time.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 AM.