

# PolicyGoal:

## An Educated, Highly Skilled Workforce

A robust economy requires a reliable supply of workers who have the technical knowledge and skills required to meet global standards for quality and productivity, and who are able to think critically and work collaboratively. Sustained growth in manufacturing productivity will require not only a new generation of globally competent workers, but also workers willing to embrace lifelong learning to keep pace with technological advancements and global competition.

### **Workforce development policy priorities include the following:**

Expand the use of the National Association of Manufacturers' "Manufacturing Skills Certification System." This system of nationally portable, industry recognized, "stackable" credentials is applicable to all sectors in the manufacturing industry. The credentials validate foundational skills and competencies needed to be productive and successful in entry-level positions in any manufacturing environment. Credentials can be earned from both secondary and postsecondary educational programs.

Expand the use of cooperative education, internships and apprenticeships. These experiential learning programs enhance talent recruitment and retention because participating students are exposed to company-specific, real-world job expectations and experiences. Students develop strong leadership and management skills by working closely with company staff who serve as their mentors/supervisors, and participating companies benefit from reduced recruitment and training costs.

Continue the work of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation in reforming the workforce development system. The system has been fragmented (over multiple programs and agencies) and misaligned with employer knowledge and skill needs. Common goals, measures, and talent pipeline development through industry workforce alliances will benefit both job-seekers and talent seeking businesses.

