

PolicyGoal:

An Adequate, Educated, Highly Skilled Workforce

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

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT POLICY PRIORITIES INCLUDE:

- Focusing state government and industry efforts on industry-led regional sector partnerships, guided by the statewide, OMA-led Workforce Leadership Committee. The committee's mission is to identify industry-specific workforce priorities, set standards for collaboration, align funding streams to minimize duplication of workforce programs and services, and evaluate program and service efficacy.
- Creating statewide strategies with clear funding sources supported by state agencies. Provide financial support for sector partnerships that have 1.) demonstrated industry leadership in their organizational structure, and 2.) gained meaningful commitments by way of financial and volunteer contributions to ensure they are truly demand-driven.
- Expanding the use of innovative earn-and-learn programs, including cooperative education, internships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships. Earn-and-learn programs enhance talent recruitment and retention because participants are exposed to company-specific, real-world job expectations and experiences. Students and employees develop job-specific and management skills by working closely with company mentors; participating companies benefit from reduced recruitment and training costs, while ensuring knowledge- and skill-transfer from their senior employees.
- Expanding the use of nationally portable, industry-recognized, “stackable” credentials in all sectors of manufacturing. Credentials validate foundational and technical competencies needed to be productive and successful in manufacturing career pathways.
- Incentivizing K-12 schools, as well as two- and four-year higher education institutions, to coordinate outcomes-based education and training programs along industry-driven career pathways. Multiple on- and off-ramps for entry-to leadership-level careers have been mapped to real industry needs and jobs. Industry-recognized credentials and certificate programs are being adopted across institutions to increase stackable and transferable credentials from classroom to workplace. Investment in demand-driven training programs that offer pathways to retain incumbent workers allow them to acquire new skills as job requirements shift.

- Supporting “Making Ohio” – a statewide manufacturing image campaign that is managed by the OMA to create a consistent, positive perception of Ohio manufacturing career opportunities and pathways.
- Urging state agency administrators to accurately measure and communicate the outcomes of recruitment and training efforts – including the number of industry-recognized credentials earned, as well as participation in earn-and-learn programs – while protecting individual privacy concerns. Having systems in place to produce these data will allow policymakers and industry leaders to better understand outcomes and create more informed policies and programs.
- Addressing the school funding disincentive for school districts to refer students to career and technical centers – a vital source of the skills training needed to fill the manufacturing workforce pipeline.
- Ensuring schools have career counselors whose sole focus is career planning – not just college planning – and equip them with an understanding of manufacturing career pathways and the various options for acquiring the skills necessary for success. Task them with sharing this information in meaningful ways with students, parents, teachers, and other influencers to better inform and align student career path choices.
- Providing meaningful professional development opportunities for educators to have exposure to industry so they can incorporate real-life exercises into lesson plans and classroom activities.
- Ensuring that career counselors within the network of OhioMeansJobs centers have a modern and accurate understanding of manufacturing career pathways to be able to share with adult job seekers and career switchers.