

Strategic Funding Alignment to Support Workforce Education Access

This Policy Outline provides an overview of federal funding that supports workforce education.

Workforce education prepares individuals with the knowledge and skills they need to enter and advance in the workforce. The various programs that deliver workforce education are targeted to serve different purposes and different segments of the population by age, income level, demographic group or specific service need. By aligning and coordinating the many different funding streams and programs that deliver workforce education, state policy leaders can develop a strategic and comprehensive approach to ensure that individuals can effectively prepare for jobs today and for the future.

KEY TERMS

Braided funding pools multiple funding streams toward one purpose while separately tracking and reporting on each source of funding.

Blended funding combines, or comingles, multiple funding streams for one purpose without continuing to differentiate or track individual sources.

Source: Urban Institute, "[Blended and Braided Funding](#)"

The chart summarizes the population each program serves (youth, postsecondary students/institutions, and/or adult workers/job seekers) and whether a program's eligibility is restricted to specific populations who typically face additional barriers to employment. Federal funding streams were included if a primary goal of the program is to prepare individuals to enter or advance in the workforce or if a program provides support services that can enhance completion of workforce education. This resource also highlights several block grant programs that include workforce education activities as an allowable use of funds. Block grants give states the flexibility to determine how they use program funds as long as expenditures align with the overall goals of the block grant program.

State leaders play a critical role in coordinating, leveraging, and braiding federal funding streams to deliver efficient and impactful workforce education services. For example, states can create a centralized office or entity that oversees all workforce education activities in the state, to ensure alignment and coordination across funding streams.

ALABAMA created the [Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation](#) (GOEWT) to ensure that more individuals have the education and skills they need to participate in the state's workforce. GOEWT's goals are to increase labor force participation, increase postsecondary credential attainment, and create career pathways for youth and adults. To achieve these goals, GOEWT is charged with braiding the state's federal funding for education and workforce development in support of a comprehensive education-to-workforce pipeline. GOEWT staff ensure alignment of the state's secondary and postsecondary CTE, adult education, and workforce development programs and strategic plans; oversee the state's P-20W Council; support registered apprenticeship activities; and more. This office was created in 2019 and its staff report directly to the governor.

COLORADO established the [TalentFOUND](#) talent development network in 2016; it comprises all the state's talent-related systems, partners, programs, and initiatives to ensure that students, job seekers, and workers have access to meaningful careers, and employers have access to skilled talent. TalentFOUND is supported by the Colorado Workforce Development Council and includes partners from secondary education, postsecondary education and training, workforce development, economic development, business, and community-based services. The TalentFOUND website provides one place for students, job seekers, and employers to connect with each other and with tools and resources of the network. In June 2021, TalentFOUND released a [guide to braiding and blending funding](#); the resource provides communities with examples of how they can coordinate and align funds to achieve the greatest impact for the state's residents.

YOUTH
(In School and/or Out of School)

POSTSECONDARY
(Students and/or Institutions)

ADULTS
(Current Workers and/or Job Seekers)

Low Income
Moderate Income
Veteran/Service Member
Justice Involved
Native American/
American Indian/
Individual With
Disabilities

Dept. of Labor

Dept. of Health and Human Services

Dept. of the Treasury

Dept. of Education

Dept. of Veterans Affairs

Dept. of Agriculture

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Employment Service									
Registered Apprenticeship Programs									
WIOA Youth Program									
Job Corps									•
YouthBuild									
Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grants									
					WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program				
					Trade Adjustment Assistance				
					Jobs for Veterans State Grants			•	
					H-1B One Workforce Grant				
					H-1B Rural Healthcare Grant				
Reentry Employment Opportunities - Youth					Reentry Employment Opportunities - Adult			•	
					Indian and Native American Programs				•
				Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants					
				CAREER National Dislocated Worker Grants					
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families								•	
					Native Employment Works				•
					Community Services Block Grant			•	
Coronavirus Relief Fund									
Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds									
Perkins V Career and Technical Education									
Native American and Native Hawaiian Career and Technical Education									•
				Higher Education Act					
				Federal Pell Grant Program			•	•	
				Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund					
				Reimagine Workforce Preparation Grants					
					Adult Education and Family Literacy				
					State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services and State Supported Employment Services				•
					American Indian VR Services			•	•
				Post-9/11 GI Bill				•	
					Veteran Readiness and Employment			•	•
					SNAP Employment and Training			•	

KEY

- Formula Funding
- Competitive Grant
- Block Grant
- Mandatory Entitlement
- One-Time Funding (COVID-19)