



The Council
of State
Governments

Future of Work

NATIONAL TASK FORCE

Report Summary and Suggested Strategies



Report Summary: Suggested Strategies and Opportunities Checklist

About the Report

The Council of State Governments Future of Work National Task Force set out in June 2019 to analyze workforce issues and determine how to grow state economies. Important topics like education, state governance and the delivery of state services, emerging technology, the evolving economy and equal opportunity and diversity were outlined as important pressing issues that should be addressed. The task force established four subcommittees to take on these topics:

1. THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW
2. SMART GOVERNMENT
3. WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE
4. EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Each subcommittee had a bipartisan and diverse composition of state leaders within both the legislative and executive branches who provided personal and professional insights.

CSG originally convened this task force of state officials and private sector partners to analyze workforce issues and figure out how to grow economies and succeed globally. However, when a

global health crisis swept across the world in 2020, the focus and priorities of this national task force were quickly realigned to meet the needs of quickly changing landscapes in state education, workforce and technology. While the long-term impacts of this pandemic and its resulting changes are still unknown, state leaders — including those serving on this national task force — are working to anticipate what the coming years might hold for the future of the country's workforce.

In the past year, states have dealt with the impacts of closed schools and the challenges presented by moving to online learning in the wake of rising cases of COVID-19, but policy conversations will return to how education serves the future of work. State leaders are recognizing the value of putting people first in an economy that will become more tech-centered and internet-based. Virtual court sessions and livestreamed government meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic have shown how smart governments are able to maintain continuity and enhance government services. Additionally, it is almost a certainty that the future workforce will include high levels of automation, and there are still opportunities for stakeholders to shape how automation gets introduced to the workplace.

In this abbreviated version of the CSG Future of Work National Task Force Report, you will find recommendations for states to consider when addressing challenges in its four targeted workforce areas. In addition, suggested strategies and ideas and



opportunities for implementation will be provided for each recommendation.

As states look forward to a more inclusive workplace, the findings of this national task force can help provide a road map as each state searches for opportunities in a future that is currently uncertain and full of potential difficulties, challenges, opportunities and innovations. The members of the CSG Future of Work National Task Force hope its full report and this summary and checklist of recommended strategies will serve to inform state policymakers on the universe of possibilities as they seek to build a stable and innovative workforce for all of their citizens.

Using the Checklist

In the pages that follow, a checklist will be provided for each of the four target areas of work analyzed by the task force:

1. THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW
2. SMART GOVERNMENT
3. WHAT'S NEXT? EMBRACING THE FUTURE
4. EQUITY AND INCLUSION

All of the recommendations fall in one of four categories:

(I) – INVESTMENTS

(P) – PARTNERSHIPS

(D) – DIRECTIVES

(L) – LEGISLATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

In the checklists, each opportunity for implementation will include the coordinating letter (I, D, P or LO) with the categories above to signal which type(s) of action is recommended. If you have questions about these items or about any other content of this or the full report, please contact futureofwork@csg.org.

Access the full report: web.csg.org/futureofwork

Recommendations and Suggested Strategies

The Workforce of Tomorrow

As the millennial generation was coming of age, many economic researchers attempted to predict how many jobs and careers members of this generation and the succeeding generations might have over the course of their lifetimes. The thinking was that rapidly changing technology, including advances in automation, artificial intelligence and communications, in addition to factors like globalization, shifting demographics and evolving knowledge and sharing economies would mean that the workers of the future would likely need to upgrade their skills many times during their careers as their existing skills became outmoded. Additional impacts resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic including the elimination of millions of jobs that may never return will also shape the future of the workforce. The Workforce of Tomorrow subcommittee recommends that states undertake policy activities that can pave the way to lifelong learning and measure career readiness.

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
Foster lifelong learning opportunities by supporting non-traditional partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support non-traditional partnerships. (P) Include pre-K, K-12, higher education and beyond technical education, apprenticeships, internships and other learning models in a lifelong learning model that continues into the employment years. (P)
Seek to redefine measurements of success for lifelong career readiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include soft skills and social-emotional learning tools that will be in demand from the workforce of tomorrow. (L) Include education programs for incarcerated populations and others as they set out to re-enter society. (I, P) Consider interoperable learning records, a digital wallet that follows a lifelong learner throughout their career, keeping track of new competencies gained along the way. (L, I) Streamline credentialing and incorporate experience and competencies mastered outside the classroom. (P)
Support efforts to reshape K-12 education to better serve students, lifelong learning and the future of work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support for quality early childhood education programs, which can be instrumental in getting children engaged early and establishing a course of lifelong learning. (I) Examine the ways in which education funding structures, credit allocation, enrollment requirements and standardized testing support or impede innovation in K-12 schools. (L) Work to identify and recognize innovative schools, school networks, pedagogies, domains of learning and practices that show success in preparing students for the future of work. (P, L) Create programs to seed and promote education innovation broadly. (L, I) Support efforts of schools and school districts to move toward personalized learning models that incorporate outside-the-classroom learning opportunities and demonstration of achievement in competencies aligned to student interests. (L, P)

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the progress of holistic approaches to education transformation such as the one proposed by the Maryland Commission on Innovation & Excellence in Education. They can also look to international successes in education transformation. (L, I, P, D) Consider whether this year's forced shift away from brick-and-mortar schools presents an opportunity to reconsider some of the traditional features of schools (grades, schoolrooms, designated hours of instruction). (L) Study the impact of canceled standardized testing during the coronavirus pandemic on students, accountability systems and college admissions. (L) Seek a waiver from provisions under the Every Student Succeeds Act, including the accountability provisions. (D) Create new assessments that are administered in innovative ways including computer-based and online components. (L)
Support the continuation and expansion of internship and apprenticeship programs that connect students to employers and valuable career experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with employers to create career-connected learning opportunities such as internships and apprenticeships, particularly in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields, and administer grant funding for such opportunities. (P) Create programs that seek to act as liaisons between high schools, colleges and businesses to catalyze apprenticeship opportunities. (P, L) Enact and expand career awareness and readiness programs in K-12 schools. (L) Consider providing greater flexibility and limiting regulations in the creation of such programs. (L, D) Seek to place career and technical education on par with four-year colleges particularly as it is emphasized in K-12 education. (D) Study the impact of canceled internships and apprenticeships and the transition to online internships during 2020 on the pipeline for tech jobs and careers in the STEM fields. (L, P) Support programs that seek to reduce geographic and transportation-related barriers to participation in internships, apprenticeships, upskilling and reskilling programs. (I, P)
Encourage the transition of higher education institutions to lifelong learning institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage colleges and universities to incorporate mastery- or competency-based programs into a holistic admission review process to allow students who progress under such programs to qualify for admission. (D, P) Encourage more higher education programs to serve non-traditional students including online learning, flexible schedules, vertical and stackable credentials, competency credentials, portable transcripts, credit for prior learning, transferrable credits and transcripts and student-owned transcripts. (D, P) Enact and support policies that seek to break down silos between K-12 education, community colleges, university systems and private sector employers and to better integrate academic and career work. (L) Enact lifelong learning savings accounts. (L)
Support programs that provide continuing education and credentialing to non-traditional students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support efforts to create interoperable learning records that capture new competencies and credentials attained by workers over the course of a career. (P)

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support efforts to create greater transparency in credentialing and the credential marketplace. (P) Support the integration of skills-based practices into workforce development efforts to ensure that credentials and competencies short of degrees can translate into jobs for American workers. (D) Enact policies that ease credit transfer between higher education institutions. (L) Support programs that provide college credits to veterans for their experience in providing service to the nation. (L, P) Support and work with others to support programs in state prisons that provide opportunities for the incarcerated to seek new skills and prepare for new careers prior to re-entry. (P) Provide new incentives for companies to train or retrain workers. (I)
Seek changes to standardized testing programs and accountability systems to better serve all students and measure readiness in the context of environment, barriers and challenges to overcome and growth made over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design accountability systems to include assessments of both college readiness and career readiness that provide relevant data to students, parents, educators and policymakers alike. (L) Seek to become more nuanced about using standardized assessment and the complex data it generates to make decisions about both the students it assesses and education policy. (D) Encourage schools and school districts to identify creative ways of measuring student competency, assessing work-relevant skills and tracking student growth. (D)
Seek to define new benchmarks of success for their assessment and accountability systems and seek to identify and mitigate inequities and gaps that may marginalize students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify new benchmarks by which to judge and base rewards for success of education programs, such as post-secondary degree attainment or how many students are fully engaged in work when they graduate. (L) Track college and career ready data such as dual enrollment for college credit, apprenticeship participation, industry-recognized credentials earned, Advanced Placement courses offered and credits earned, and community service hours served. (L) Encourage school districts to align themselves around clear goals and key performance indicators for college and career readiness and track progress towards readiness goals on a weekly or monthly basis. (D) Support digital transcripts that seek to capture a fuller picture of student aptitudes, skills, competencies, interests and abilities. (P)

Smart Government

The public sector workforce is facing multiple challenges related to attracting, retaining and building talent to keep government moving forward. To address these issues, the Smart Government subcommittee identified best practices for state governments that encourage data-informed decision-making that serves to create an engaged and educated citizenry and persuade qualified candidates to choose careers in the public sector. This subcommittee's recommendations focused on effective and efficient engagement to enhance government services and investing in the workforce of the future.

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
Prioritize accessibility and transparency of government services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit feedback from stakeholders on progress. (I) Offer multimedia communication. (D) Virtual court meetings. (D) Eliminate barriers to voting. (I, D, P)
Find solutions to accessibility and workforce issues during periods of crisis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with effected populations when making policy. (P) Create telework policies for the public sector. (D) Protect job security of all workers (L) Temporarily suspend the disconnection of essential utilities. (P, L) Invest in response training. (I) Engage frontline health care workers in decision making on preparedness. (I)
Enhance the state's online presence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create basic agency website standards. (L) Create one-stop shops for services. (I, L) Partner with independent vendors. (P) Utilize social media. (D)
Persuade workers to choose careers in the public IT sector. Make essential services and connections, such as broadband, available to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer alternative work solutions to public sector workers. (L) Protect workers from disruptive technology. (I, P) Partner with universities. (P) Utilize college students. (I) Offer student loan forgiveness to public sector workers. (I) Expand STEM and computer science opportunities to children. (I) Allocate additional resources to students experiencing poverty. (I, P) Ensure students stay connected through stakeholder partnerships. (P) Expand broadband access. (I, P)
Identify best practices from successful smart city solutions and expand them into state projects. Improve cybersecurity by regulating the devices storing sensitive information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use AI to find areas of improvement and inform decision-making. (I, P) Use AI and the cloud to reduce manual labor. (I, P) Provide free cybersecurity trainings. (I, D) Use a central, shared approach to state cybersecurity. (L) Appropriate funding to cybersecurity. (I, L) Legislate device manufacturers to equip them with security measures. (L)
Promote cultures of digital transformation. Create data hubs/stop data silos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State partnerships to achieve connectivity. (P) Innovative procurement processes. (D) E-procurement. (I) Data hubs. (I, D, P)

Recommendations and Suggested Strategies

What's Next? Embracing the Future

The pandemic has renewed conversations about broadband as an essential utility and state and federal officials from around the country turned their focus to addressing the various broadband-related gaps. States are expected to determine how they will thrive in spite of these technologies by evaluating data, communicating with stakeholders and predicting how these technologies will impact state workforces and economies. Determining pathways and strategies in advance for overcoming any obstacles that have potential to impact the financial security of workers, the need for workers to upskill, reskill or change careers and other challenges will help them maintain a competitive edge, attract top talent and continue to innovate and lead.

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
Ensure access to broadband in unserved and under-resourced areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder outreach and engagement. (D, P) Clear policy objectives. (L) Goal setting and progress measuring. (D) Fund accountability systems. (I)
Prioritize access to wireless 5G cellular connectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile vertical assets inventories. (D) Streamline regulations and applications processes. (L) Educate populations about the importance of cellular and the capabilities it brings. (P) Consider the value in installing 5G. (I)
Use multi-stakeholder approaches to examining automation decisions, adoption rates, and workforce impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an Artificial Intelligence Task Force. (D, L) Use sector-based development strategies. (D) Consider worker training tax credits and investment in digital infrastructure. (I)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider new sector and regional workforce partnerships. (P) Identify and address worker and community impacts in advance. (D) Gather specific information on the impact of automation by collecting data. (D, L)
Identify best practices for managing privacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act legislatively to protect individual data. (L)
Create organizations or staff dedicated to workforce policy issues and best practices for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire staff dedicated to examining the future of work. (D) Convene a Future of Work Task Force or Commission. (L)
Streamline and update unemployment insurance application systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in modernization, hardware and cybersecurity initiatives. (I, L) Consider partial unemployment insurance benefits legislation. (L)
Evaluate worker classification and consider unemployment for gig workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine unemployment insurance restrictions for workers. (L) Streamline online application systems. (D)

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate on business models that prevent worker exploitation. (D) Assist displaced workers with business ideas as they transition to being entrepreneurs. (D)
Consider portable benefits structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate how work structures need to be updated. (D) Start and leverage new innovation funds to fund portable benefits models. (L) Implement portable benefits models that are prorated and universal. (L) Expand eligibility for benefits to more workers, including non-traditional workers by considering which benefits to include, eligibility, funding and administration. (D, L)
Encourage, educate and aide residents in saving for retirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support consumer financial education, particularly in schools. (L, P) Adopt auto-IRA models that allow employers to use a state-facilitated IRA and receive automatic deposits from workers' paychecks. (L, D, P) Create or support non-employer based retirement benefits. (L, D, P) Expand and modernize Earned Income Tax Credit programs. (L) Create a wage insurance program for displaced workers over 50 years old. (L, I)
Improve the collection, measurement and sharing of information on career data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider banning enforcement of non-competes and no-poach agreements. (L) Improve employment data collection and sharing methods. (D, P)

Equity and Inclusion

The U.S. is currently facing a time of civil unrest amidst an ongoing public health crisis and many economic concerns. With protests continuing in cities across the country following the deaths of people of color, many Americans recognize the importance of addressing historical bias against many minorities. Charged with identifying and exploring how states can promote and encourage equity and inclusion in the new economy, this Equity and Inclusion subcommittee identified guiding principles to assist in its work, which include identifying commonalities for best practices for all communities to thrive, defining equity and inclusion for the future of work, obtaining relevant data and utilizing an evidence-based approach, examining workforce data up to 10 years out, and understanding that language and words are important.

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
Offer training for employers to learn how to build a stronger, more inclusive workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop best practices for recruiting and retaining employees. (D) Analyze data and identify gaps through reporting requirements. (L) Encourage colleges and universities to offer diversity training as a course. (D)
Lead by example by becoming model employers for underrepresented populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt policies that address historically untapped communities. (L) Adopt accountability systems that can inform decision-making. (L)



Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine and develop strategies around implicit bias. (D) Establish working groups to further explore equity issues. (L) Fund a position committed to equity and inclusion. (D)
Address barriers to equal employment opportunity by allocating resources to underserved populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a data driven approach identifying and examining barriers. (I) Invite key stakeholders to the table for discussions. (P) Enhance the availability of resources by sharing on a platform that is widely utilized by underrepresented communities. (I) Address livable community issues, like transportation and housing costs, to help underrepresented people prosper. (L)
Address income inequities and unmet social needs for the workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze local cost of living using a cost-of-living calculator prior to enacting policy. (L) Examine the issue fully to prevent unintended consequences of enacting legislation. (I)
Partner with private and nonprofit sector companies to train incarcerated populations for career placement upon release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage a focus on goal attainment instead of job placement to prevent recidivism. (D) Train incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people for a career, not just a job. (L) Invite stakeholders, including incarcerated people, to the conversation on career placement. (P) Address housing stability issues that former incarcerated people face when released from confinement. (I)

Recommendation	Suggested Strategies
Evaluate purchasing regulations to ensure that underserved populations have equitable opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a supplier diversity event. (I, P) Educate internal employees about the importance of supplier diversity. (D) Incorporate supplier diversity into enterprise values. (D) Identify and examine private sector members who are incorporating supplier diversity into their values. (P)
Identify ways to provide sick/family leave to uncovered workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider paid sick leave laws that exist in 14 U.S. states as a starting point for drafting legislation. (L)
Address license eligibility requirements that are barriers to licensing and credentialing for previously incarcerated populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require licensing boards to examine one's criminal history as opposed to blanket barring of individuals with a criminal history. (L) Offer certification exams in multiple languages. (D, L, I, P)
Support colleges and universities that serve traditionally underserved communities through prudent appropriations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide priority funding for institutions that are committed to serving underrepresented populations. (L, I) Provide funding for need based scholarships, as opposed to merit based funding. (D, L, I, P) Assist higher education institutions with building the capacity to serve underrepresented populations. (D, P)
Provide funding opportunities through grants and loans to underserved populations to help small business owners and entrepreneurs grow their business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set aside appropriations to foster minority owned business and startup growth. (L, I, P) Diversify their supplier pool. (D, L, P, I) Provide tax incentives for minority owned businesses. (L, I)

Lead Partners



Partners



View the full report and more information about the CSG Future of Work National Task Force: web.csq.org/futureofwork



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