

Summary of VDOL Report on Regional Workforce Expansion System
(Act 183 Sec. 5a)

Overview

The Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) was directed to launch a two-year pilot program to coordinate regional workforce expansion. VDOL provided a narrative update on the progress made in hiring staff, establishing interagency agreements, and supporting state-level work to expand the labor force.

Work Force Expansion System (WES)

The WES consists of a network of regional Workforce Expansion Teams (WET) which will carry out workforce strategies specified in the State Workforce Plan as well as the priorities of the State Workforce Development Board and VDOL.

Activities Initiated and Completed

VDOL's Economic and Labor Market Information Division released updated regional data providing information on the distribution and concentration of jobs by career and technical education region. Four workforce expansion (WE) positions including a WE Program Administrator and three WE Regional Coordinators have been created and assigned to the Department with recruitment for these positions starting in early 2023.

WE Positions

The WE Program Administrator's main responsibility will be to build, oversee, and represent a statewide Workforce Expansion System (WES). The Program Administrator will support WETs, facilitate the development of information that will help address regional workforce expansion issues, and will make recommendations to expand regional capacity to strengthen workforce networks.

Workforce Expansion Regional Coordinators will lead and oversee WETs in developing, implementing, and updating a regional Workforce Action Plan (WAP). WE Regional Coordinators will survey and collect information from regional employers to assess current and projected employment demand and what information is needed to better align regional education and training offerings with regional employment demand.

Matters for Consideration

Act 183 created the Special Oversight Committee on Workforce Expansion and Development (SOCWED) which will identify the "optimal organizational structure for the Vermont Workforce Development System. SOCWED testimony revealed possible changes to duties assigned to the WES pilot program. This could mean the potential restructuring of the entire program.