

Workgroup #3: Workforce Connections

Consideration for Maintaining Data Collection on Microcredentials and Microcredentials Completions

Credential WV is West Virginia's statewide initiative to expand access to high quality, workforce-relevant credentials that help learners gain skills and advance their careers while strengthening the state's economy. Based on conversations and feedback from a statewide convening in February 2025, three areas of focus were identified with three workgroups created to address the following topics:

- Transcription and Data Management
- Institutional Policy, Practice, and Quality Assurance
- Workforce Connections

The efforts of these groups have led to a set of recommendations that reflect both the shared vision and the practical steps needed to advance credentialing innovation in West Virginia.

This report presents the work of Workgroup 3: Workforce Connections. Co-led by Jodi Oliveto (WVHEPC/CTCS) and Cathy Monteroso (West Liberty University), the group was charged with exploring how higher education can maximize responsiveness to workforce needs at the state level and within individual workforce regions. The primary charge of the group was to develop and execute a plan for in-person meetings in each of the state's seven workforce investment boards by the end of 2025; this initiative was named *Credential WV Connect*.

Executive Summary

The Credential WV Connect initiative represents a comprehensive statewide effort to strengthen workforce connections across West Virginia's higher education institutions. This collaborative program encompasses all seven WorkForce WV regions of the state, involving 18 institutions ranging from universities to community and technical colleges, coordinated under the leadership of Group Three: Credential WV Connect.

Program Structure and Leadership

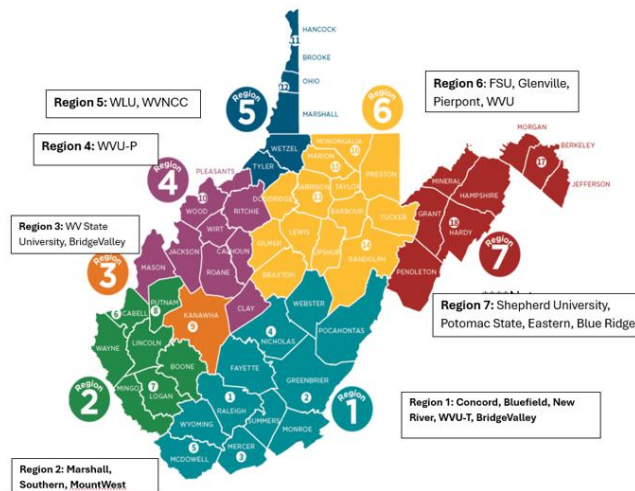
Primary Leadership Team:

- **Co-leads:** Jodi Oliveto (HEPC/CTCS) and Cathy Monteroso (West Liberty University)
- **Coordination:** West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission/Community and Technical College System (WV HEPC/CTCS)

The initiative operates through a distributed leadership model with dedicated Points of Contact (POCs), Provosts, and Workforce coordinators at each participating institution, ensuring comprehensive coverage and local ownership of program objectives.

Geographic Coverage and Institutional Participation

Regional Distribution



The Credential WV Connect initiative spans all seven regions of West Virginia, ensuring statewide coverage.

Implementation Timeline and Credential WV Connect Tour

The initiative includes a structured statewide tour designed to engage local communities and stakeholders. The Credential WV Connect Tour follows a strategic timeline from September through December 2025.

Workforce Development Impact

The initiative positions West Virginia's higher education system to more effectively respond to workforce needs through:

- Enhanced coordination between institutions
- Improved credential recognition and transferability
- Strengthened employer partnerships
- Regional specialization while maintaining statewide coherence

Educational Ecosystem Strengthening

- **Institutional collaboration in** reducing silos and improving resource sharing
- **Student mobility enhancement** through better credential recognition
- **Economic development alignment** connecting education directly to workforce needs

Conclusion

The Credential WV Connect initiative represents a significant step forward in West Virginia's higher education and workforce development strategy. Through its comprehensive geographic coverage, collaborative leadership model, and systematic community engagement approach, the program is well-positioned to strengthen the connection between educational credentials and workforce needs across the state.

The initiative's success will depend on continued coordination between participating institutions, sustained community engagement, and ongoing alignment with employer needs. The structured tour approach and distributed leadership model provide a strong foundation for achieving these objectives and establishing West Virginia as a leader in credential-workforce integration.
