



**State Workforce Development Board
Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2025
Central Maine Community College**

Approved by SWDB on March 12, 2026

Present: Michael Tyler, Kim Moore, Dave Duning, Will Gayle, Aileen Huang Saad, John Leavitt, Melissa Tinan Hue, Megan Dichter, Janet Kelle, The Honorable Amy Roeder, The Honorable Joseph Pietrowski, Catharine MacLaren, Christian Bartholomew, Abraham Furth, Jen O'Leary, Sam Fenderson, Phoenix Mclaughlin, Michelle Anderson, Joy Gould, Pete Parazo, Bruce Noddin, Gordon McAleer, Commissioner Laura Fortman, Ally Coombs, Chris Winstead, Alec Rogers,

Guests: Mike Paglia - US DOL, Reggie Parsons – Maine PFML, Erica Watson - MDF & MaineSpark, Colleen Quint – MaineSpark, Jenn Kimble, MaineHealth and Commission on Disability Employment

Staff: Chris Quint, Daniel Estes, Sam Dina, Mark McNerney

Welcome, introductions, agenda review

- Commissioner Fortman called meeting to order
- Gordon McAleer moved to adopt the September 12, 2025, SWDB meeting minutes; Second provided by Ally Coombs. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Director's report, Chris Quint, Director, SWDB

- Workforce Pell update – more information coming
- WorkSourceMaine.com - Chris Quint gave presentation on website features
 - Melissa Tinan Hue: How does language translation work on the site and how many languages the site is translated into?
 - Chris – The site is translated into Somali, Portuguese, Arabic, Spanish, French, Lingala, and Chinese.
 - Alec Rogers: Was this tested and who was part of the testing community?
 - Chris – The WSM user testers included a combination of public agency staff, career center staff, training provider staff, and clients. Approximately 45 people participated in user testing.
 - Jen O'Leary: How can we make sure education and training information is updated?
 - Chris - There is a process in place to work with each training provider to ensure education and training programs are updated regularly.

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- Once the site goes live on Monday, December 15, SWDB members are asked to test the website, engage users in testing, and share feedback.

PFML presentation – Reggie Parsons, Deputy Director, Maine Paid Family and Medical Leave Program

- PFML FAQs will be sent out to SWDB members to include in minutes.
- Administration side is going well & on track for May 2026 launch. Aflac will be the third-party administrator for the plan.
- A second public education campaign will raise awareness about how to get ready for the launch and how to access benefits.
- People are encouraged to visit the PFML webpage for more information
<https://www.maine.gov/paidleave/>.
- Gordon McAleer – What is the size of the portfolio?
 - Reggie will follow up with the exact number and will share actuary study.
- Phoenix McLaughlin –What does the state do with the money & how it can be invested?
 - Money goes to payment of benefits and administrative costs, and it is invested in a trust.
- Commissioner Fortman Laura – If you're interested in more information, there will be a labor committee report coming out in January 2026.

Labor market information presentation - Mark McInerney, Director, CWRI

- Maine Postsecondary Outcomes report – Maine Community College System and UMaine System document outcomes by campus, field of study. Also helpful for students to make informed decisions about what they pursue.
- Mark shared apprenticeship outcomes page by occupation, earnings and employment outcomes by occupation which includes wage gains, and program outcomes reports by employment programs like HOPE.
 - Jen O'Leary – Let us know if the UMaine System can partner better. I'm sure there are pieces that we can do better.
 - Mark shared partnerships are strong and happy to keep partnering on doing more evaluation on more innovative programs.
 - Commissioner Fortman emphasized need for continued partnerships as we work toward implementation of Workforce Pell.
- Mark presented on AI implications on Maine's workforce including key findings:
 - AI impact will be broader than specific industry or geographics areas or demographic areas.
 - Areas of highest impact will be office and administrative support, computer and mathematical, business & finance. Less impacted include construction, production, personal care
- Mark shared general LMI trends
- Questions from SWDB Members:
 - Gordon McAleer – Intrigued by 5,000 less jobs this year over last. What could be influencing that? Competition from other states?

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- Mark – There are a lot of factors influencing where people choose to live. A competitive housing market in Maine is one of the factors influencing this.
- Christian Bartholomew – Where will this greatest impact by AI in terms of counties?
 - Mark - Compared to automation that has a concentrated impact, there's little variation. There's more of an impact in central/southern Maine because there is a higher concentration of some of those jobs in those regions.
- Catharine MacLaren – We have 850 fewer jobs posted now than we did a year ago and we've become focused on how position control works and what we've ended up posting. Our providers are using AI a lot for scribing. Do we have any sense of how many people live in Maine but work for companies/organizations outside of Maine?
 - Mark – Overall, 20% have remote or hybrid work. And then there's the fully remote group, which is about 10%--some for a Maine based employer and some out of state. 95% or so working for a Maine based employer vs 5% working for out of State of Maine.
- Phoenix McGlaughlin – Are people who live in Maine and work for out of state companies captured in the Maine jobs count?
 - Mark – Yes.

Industry-Driven Skills Training Grant presentation – Sam Dina, Associate Commissioner, MDOL

- Sam provided an overview of the Maine Defense Shipbuilding and Advanced Manufacturing Training Fund, led by MDOL and the SWDB.
- The Training Fund will directly support employer-informed skills training for new hires and incumbent workers. Employers will access the Training Fund through WorkSourceMaine, a centralized one-stop portal that integrates training, education, supportive services, and career resources under one virtual roof to increase ease of access for employers and workers.
- MDOL/SWDB expects that 50% of grant funds will support training in defense shipbuilding, and 50% will be designated for other advanced manufacturing subsectors including, but not limited to, aerospace and other manufacturing subsectors to support training for 1,000+ participants.
- Sam will share a survey link with SWDB in meeting materials that go out next week.
 - Jen O'Leary - If there are other pieces that the University System can participate in, we can make sure we cover those areas.
 - Megan Dichter – Can we share this publicly?
 - Sam – Sharing provisional award is OK

MaineSpark/SWDB collaboration planning – Erica Watson and Colleen Quint, Maine Spark

- MaineSpark was awarded a Nellie Mae planning grant to strengthen statewide coalition
- Shift from educational attainment beyond high school to increasing economic prosperity through higher attainment & higher earnings

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- Question posed to the SWDB - How should Maine define a credential of value and set goals & strategies?
 - Alec Rogers – Does the age range stay until 2040?
 - Colleen—Shift is because some early retirees may have degrees, but they aren't counted any more
 - Catharine MacLaren – Given where we were in 2023, how close are we?
 - Colleen – We will be close to 58% and will be interesting to see what things like the Workforce Pell program and 529 expansion.
 - Gordon McAleer – Tell me more about how the funds are invested.
 - Colleen – they are invested in 529 account for education for all new babies. Doesn't need to be used in Maine and if folks move, they will still have it. And make sure they know about the workforce funding.
 - Chris Winstead – This dovetail's with Alford funding too.
 - Joy Gould – The idea of stackable credentials is where sweet spot is. Don't want to cut people off after the first credential value is earned.
 - Samantha Fenderson – Focus is people with disabilities. We face barriers for people who earn SSI and having to decide about going to work or earning income. I think that would be a place to look at re communicating benefits of working and supportiveness of earning those stackable credentials.
 - Catherine MacLaren: It seems aspirational.
 - Phoenix McGlaughlin: Has Lumina done modeling if nothing changed in Maine's policy landscape where would we land by 2040?
 - Bruce: How are folks that are incarcerated taken into account?

Public Comment Period

- Jen Kimble: Commission on Disability & Employment is a statutorily required commission and connection to SWDB focusing on Mainers with disabilities. Commission has been in conversation about connection to the SWDB so we are exploring having a member fill a seat w/ a voting role on the board

Adjournment

- Christian Bartholomew moved to adjourn; seconded from Abe Furth
- Motion to adjourn approved
- Meeting adjourned at 12:00pm

Next SWDB Meeting

December 12, 2025, 9:00am - Noon
Francis Perkins Room
MDOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta

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