

Ohio Skills Bank and the Creation of the Ohio Workforce Development System

The State of Ohio is working to develop an education and training infrastructure equipped to dramatically improve educational attainment, give employers the skilled workers they need and restore the promise of a middle-class life for hundreds of thousands of Ohioans. The programmatic home of this sustainable system will be the Ohio Skills Bank (OSB).

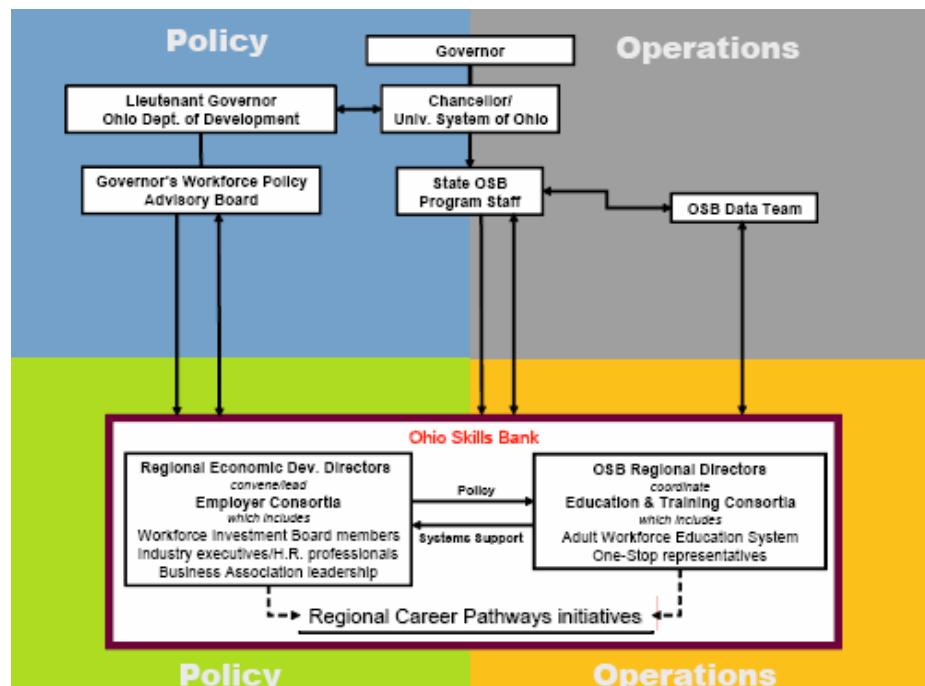
The OSB is designed to support regional partnerships in analyzing the critical occupation and skill shortages of key industries within regional labor markets and devising solutions to address these shortages, primarily through workforce education, training, and industry-recognized, portable credentialing. The OSB will be structurally aligned with the 12 designated economic regions. The two long-term goals of the OSB are to transform the core business practices of the state and local workforce and economic development systems by impacting how resources are spent and how stakeholders are interacting, and provide the framework for enabling postsecondary education and training institutions to come together as a “system” and remove articulation and transfer barriers.

A statewide OSB office will be created within the Board of Regents with the charge of restructuring the leadership and funding of adult workforce education and training to:

- Give Ohio business and industry a formal mechanism and greater voice in defining the state's workforce education and training priorities and a more direct role in making decisions about how workforce education and training programs are funded and held accountable for results;
- Help drive regional and state priorities for business and economic growth;
- Remove the inefficiencies inherent in the use of separately funded delivery channels and provide opportunities to focus available funding on education and training programs that are aligned with the needs of employers;
- Provide a decisive environment for systemic improvements that will strengthen the continuum of training and education opportunities for adult learners; and
- Enhance Ohio's ability to provide a full spectrum of postsecondary educational options for adult learners and for all students.

The design of this new OSB workforce and talent development system ensures employer *demand* by region would constantly be weighed against education *supply*. The Chancellor will ensure that workforce education institutions are responsive to OSB data-driven economic development priorities by region. The OBR will institute reforms that allow for the creation of customized learning pathways at the regional level that train and educate adult learners to immediately fill the types of jobs available. These reforms include establishing the relationships between different parts of the higher education system necessary to ensure that all appropriate degrees and certificates are offered at convenient locations, creating a workforce education system that is convenient both students and employers.

The graphic to the right illustrates the organization and/or direction of the Ohio Skills Bank initiative.



Presented by the Ohio Board of Regents during the January 23, 2008 meeting of the Governor's Workforce Policy Advisory Board