Minutes of the South Carolina Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD)
Research and Innovation Committee Meeting

09/08/2026, 1:00 PM, MS Teams

ATTENDEES

Dana Yow, (Committee Chair)

Hope Johnson-Jones (Committee Coordinator)

Dr. Rebecca Battle Bryant, Director, Office of Statewide Workforce Development, SCDEW

Marlena Isaac, Consultant, Office of Statewide Workforce Development, SCDEW

Carol Hayman, Analytics Coordinator, Labor Market Information, SCDEW (Committee OSWD Liason)

Taylor Hendrix, Workforce Insights Analyst, Labor Market Information, SCDEW (Committee OSWD Liason

Brandon Wilkerson, LMI Analytics Director, Labor Market Information, SCDEW

Alex Tomlinson, Executive Assistant, SCDEW

Dr. Erica Von Nessen, Office of the Executive Director, SCDEW

Kendall DeLong, Workforce Development Division, SCDEW

Mariana Manic, Office of Information Technology and Data Analysis, CHE

Moses Brown, Assoc. VP for Data Mgt. & Reporting, IT, SC State Tech

Daniel Lyons, Director of Data Analysis & Research, Academics, Student Affairs & Research, SC State Tech

John Vinson, Lead Quantitative Researcher, SC Dept of Education

Katie Gaul, Director of the Office of Healthcare Workforce, MUSC

Monica Gardner, HR Director of Finance & Administration, MUSC

Dr. Michelle Altvater, SCETV

Rachel Wilson, Research Manager, SCDVA

Bryan Manuel, Dean of Integrated Workforce Solutions, Tri County Technical College

Andrew Coleman, IT, SC LLR

Chris Finney, Director of Data Integration & Analysis, RFA

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Chair's Welcome & Committee Member Introductions
2. Formation of Working Group for Data Request Review and Prioritization
    a. Structure of Establishing/ Receiving Data & Research Requests
    b. Request & Classify Priority for Sensitivity & Impact of Data Requests
    c. Receiving Data Request Forms from Agencies/ Public
3. Annual Deliverables
4. Updates from Other Committees
5. Other Projects / Need to Knows

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Committee Agreed to Establish a Working Group

1. Review and prioritize data and research requests.
2. Classify requests by sensitivity, impact, urgency, and complexity.
3. Route vetted and prioritized requests to CCWD and identify when items should be elevated to the Executive Committee.
4. Maintain a statewide research inventory to reduce duplication and increase visibility.

Elevation of SC Launch Years Project

1. Launch Years (a 25-state consortium focused on postsecondary math readiness) was endorsed for elevation to the Executive Committee for a formal vote.
2. Executive Committee meets quarterly, with the next meeting anticipated in Nov/Dec.

Statewide Research Inventory

1. Committee reaffirmed the need for an ongoing inventory of research projects across agencies, capturing: Project name, Lead/contact, Audience, Estimated duration, Recurrence cadence
2. Increase transparency, reduce duplication, improve discoverability of reusable matched datasets.
3. Recommendation to collect inventory inputs in advance of the next meeting and publish summaries internally (Find Your Future noted as a repository option).

Research & Data Prioritization Processes

1. R&I Committee will vet all significant research/data requests and recommend next steps.
2. Executive Committee will not act on R&I matters without an R&I recommendation.

3. External (non CCWD) research requests may proceed through standard channels but may face longer times and limited data access without CCWD backing.
4. For some high-level external requests, an originating authority may still be required to access certain data sources.

Identified Deliverables and Recurring Analyses to Track or Coordinate Through CCWD

1. Supply gap analysis using CHE, K 12, and workforce match data.
2. Annual College- and Career-Readiness analyses, including postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion (via NSC, up to 6 years).
3. ROI and postsecondary degree/workforce training analyses (Act 67), occasional rather than annual.
4. National Student Clearinghouse Statewide Results
5. These outputs are informational to CCWD and may inform prioritization and shared practices across agencies.

Proposed Projects Highlighted

1. **SC Launch Years:** state participating in a 25-state consortium (South Carolina + 24 other states) focused on readiness for postsecondary math; USC, Clemson and technical colleges participating on student performance measures. Motion carried to elevate Launch Years to the executive committee for vote.
2. **Supply-gap analysis**: Historically supported by CCWD and RFA; matched datasets may answer multiple questions if surfaced in the inventory.
3. **Direct Employment as an Accountability Indicator Pilot**: Proposal to evaluate programs (CTE/dual credit) that place graduates directly into work.
4. **Direct Admission Proposa**l: Modeled after Georgia—issuing direct admission letters to qualified students to streamline transitions to in-state universities.

Employer Alignment Committee Updates

1. Newly formed committee (split from Pathways & Education Alignment) focused on employer voice and employer-sourced priorities.
2. Key deliverables:
    a. Develop statewide soft and hard skills frameworks.
    b. Produce regionalized workforce intelligence.
    c. Improve processes for employer feedback and regional priority occupations.
3. Challenges with job-posting language and the need to translate employer needs into shareable frameworks for education providers and students.

Pathways Committee Updates

1. Developing common definitions, a shared vocabulary, and a Google Doc inventory to capture pathway-related projects across agencies
2. Additional research and data-driven outputs will be needed to meet outcomes.

Staffing Updates

1. Charles Appleby submitted his resignation; position will be posted and recruitment will begin.

Next Steps & Action Items

1. **Small working group** will be formed and begin by updating the statewide inventory. The group will also examine best practices from other states to improve process efficiency.
2. **Teams will collect inventory inputs and deliverable updates** prior to the next meeting so the R&I committee can review, avoid duplication, and surface requests that merit CCWD endorsement.
3. **SC Launch Years will be forwarded to the Executive Committee** for formal vote and potential approval.

Upcoming Meetings

1. Next R&I Committee Meeting: October 13, 2026
2. Executive Committee: Meets quarterly (next session November 2026)