

# Meeting Agenda

## Yukon-Kuskokwim Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

### Quarter I Education & Workforce Development Working Group Meeting, March 29, 2022

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#### Attendees

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#### Meeting Objectives

- Discuss and confirm a set of indicators that can be tracked by CEDS partner(s) to measure whether the region is moving toward our desired outcomes within this focus area.
- Confirm key information for priority actions.

## YK CEDS Action Planning Discussion

**Lead/Partners:** *Is there at least one organization committed to leading the action/project? This organization will seek funding, manage the implementation and report on the status of the project over the life of the project.*

1. If a committed leader does not exist for this project, can one be recruited?
2. If a committed leader cannot be recruited, is this action/project really a priority at this time?

**Actions:** *Are the lead organization(s) for each action clear on what the action is and how it will be implemented?*

3. Does the action have a realistic scope of work? Is it doable within the next 1-5 years?
4. Should this Working Group coordinate with partners in other Working Groups?

## Education and Workforce Development

**STRATEGY 5: Prepare regional residents for work in emerging economic sectors, including aviation, energy, housing construction and rehabilitation, infrastructure, planning, transportation and resource development.**

PRIORITY ACTIONS	LEAD/PARTNERS
<b>5-A. Collectively develop and implement regional vocational training workforce development plans for key needed occupations.</b> Key industries to focus on include aviation (e.g., ground school instructors, pilots), communications (e.g., broadband technicians), energy (e.g., utility operators), health care (e.g., community health aides), housing construction/rehabilitation (e.g., skilled trade jobs), planning (e.g., climate adaptation), public safety (e.g., VPSOs), transportation (e.g., CDL certified drivers, traffic control technicians, surveyors, equipment operators), and resource development (biotechnicians, natural resource management, GIS).	<b>Lead:</b> Yuut Elitnaurviat <b>Key Partner:</b> AVCP Workforce Development <b>Other Partners:</b> Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (YK Delta Job Center), Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), human resources representatives from all major employers; <a href="#">TKC</a>

### 5-A Discussion and updates:

- Question – how were these needs identified? Was there a regional survey?
  - Answer: no, this list was compiled based on input from interviews, written comments, and past working group conversations. If any regional partners have conducted any workforce surveys, we would be eager to see the results.
- Add to partners list: The Kuskokwim Corporation (TKC). TKC just opened the Arviiq Regional Economic Development and Training Center, a new job training center in Aniak. TKC is working closely with Middle Kuskokwim employers to ensure their training programs are meeting current and anticipated future needs in the region.
- Yuut Elitnaurviat Update: The new Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) certificate program: cohort #1 underway, 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort starting in August; aircraft maintenance program was successful in its first year, 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort is growing.
- AVTEC is developing a Facilities Maintenance Worker Apprenticeship, and starting to offer coursework.

## Measures of Success Guiding Questions

- What are the most effective measures of success **each strategy**? What measures will tell an accurate story of what is going on with this specific sector and our region's economy?
- Which agency/organization(s) report these data?
  - If no one – Would we have to collect the data ourselves? If so, who would do that and how? Can they commit to doing that data collection and reporting on a consistent basis?
- If we can't track our most desired/the best indicator, what proxy indicator(s) can contribute to telling the story (for now)?

Priority Measures of Success	Data Source(s)	Where this is at Today	Where we want to be in 5 Years
<b>Jobs Created or Retained:</b> [#] of jobs created or retained among YK region in emerging-sector industries.	Need to ID	[#] of jobs created or retained among YK region in emerging-sector industries.	[#] of jobs created or retained in YK region among emerging-sector industries.
<b>Jobs Filled Regional Residents:</b> [%] of jobs filled by regional residents.	Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Alaska Resident Hire Information	84.9% of jobs filled by Kusilvak Census Area residents in 2020.	[#]% of jobs filled by regional residents. <a href="#">Move toward statewide average</a>
<b>Jobs Filled Regional Residents:</b> [%] of jobs filled by regional residents.	Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Alaska Resident Hire Information	75.2% of jobs filled by Bethel Census Area residents in 2020.	[#]% of jobs filled by regional residents. <a href="#">Move toward statewide average</a>
<b>Jobs:</b> [#] people in Bethel + Kusilvak Census Area(s) employed in [YEAR].	Bureau of Economic Analysis	10,437 people in Bethel + Kusilvak Census Area(s) employed in 2020.	[#] people in Bethel + Kusilvak Census Area(s) employed in 2025. <a href="#">Look at historical averages and growth; on par with the state</a>
<b>Wages:</b> \$[#] annual wages to Bethel + Kusilvak Census Area(s) employed in [YEAR].	Bureau of Economic Analysis	\$692,968,000 annual wages to Bethel + Kusilvak Census Area(s) employed in 2020.	\$[#] annual wages to Bethel + Kusilvak Census Area(s) employed in 2025. <a href="#">Per capita wages – move closer to statewide average</a>

## Measures of Success Discussion

- Reflections on the proposed list above
  - List is generally heading in the right direction

- Would be interested to see this by village – what is the variation? What communities have higher employment rates, and what are they doing differently? Would be interesting to do a needs assessment per village.
- Could we look at averages for other regions, and base our estimated growth on that?
- Hard to set targets without seeing the historical trends.
- Alaska Resident Hire Information – need to define whether this is based on the location of the worker, or the employer
- When setting targets- when we lag statewide trends/numbers, a good target would be to move the region closer to statewide per capita average (e.g., for annual wages); “we want to be on par with everyone else”
- Like participation rate – how many people are working now vs. in the past?
- Other Metrics to Consider (not included above)
  - Is there some way we can correlate individual employment, and its impact on the community? Greater employment = more vital community. We need to look at workforce development and community development in parallel.
    - Quality of life metrics – poverty rate, health indicators, crime rates, graduation rates (note: some of this already contained in the annual update)
    - Survey of staff that ask about how employment impacts their quality of life, their family, their community.
  - Unemployment; already included in annual update as a broad indicator
    - Can pay the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development for community-specific unemployment data and occupational data
    - Would like to see regional numbers go down closer to statewide rates (see annual update)
    - Between 2014 and 2017, unemployment went down in the region; any ideas why?
      - AVCP village based workforce development navigators?
      - More employment opportunities available?
  - Migration in-out of the region; already included in annual update as a broad indicator
- What are some metrics that training providers could share today?
  - Students on track to earn degrees
  - Students who are hired following graduation
  - Michael Ulroan, ANSEP:
    - Opened an Acceleration Academy in the region where high school students can take college courses. Tracking number of students participating, how many earn degrees, how many are from the region.
    - Offers Summer Bridge program – between high school and college, students are placed in paid internship program (partners have included Calista, ONC).

- What are some ideal metrics that would require a survey of employers?
  - Progress through career ladder. What growth opportunities are available? What does upward mobility look like in the region?
  - Metrics to track turnover/retention and longevity – how long are we keeping folks in their roles?
    - At Donlin, many employees are entering their 3<sup>rd</sup> year
    - TKC is launching a shareholder survey, which will include a question about in/out migration
    - Departures – encourage major employers to conduct exit interviews, and document categories to track termination reasons; could use standardized categories to share this data across
  - Important to track both temporary and permanent employment. For example, airport construction can be a major employer and local hire opportunity, even if it's temporary.
  - As part of employment data, identify the needed criteria for different industries and employers; examples: GED; 2 forms of identification; specific certifications, etc.
- What metrics are used today to evaluate the need for training and education programs? What additional information would be helpful?
  - Colin Stewart, AVTEC:
    - Existing programs each have an advisory board. The advisory boards help evaluate the programs annually, what the needs are, what portions of the curriculum need to be removed or added, what industry needs are.
    - Have tools for building new programs – questions to ask industry - what are your key needs?
    - Also look at percentage of students hired; if all students are being hired annually, indicator the demand is there. For example, with our IT program, if 100% of our graduates are getting hired, that's an indication the demand is there and our programs are working.
    - IT, diesel, welding – advisory board members are also the ones doing hiring, they know graduation is coming soon.
    - AVTEC sees placement rates over 90% of students leaving with a job; he would be happy to share more detailed metrics if helpful.
      - No one attended the diesel heavy graduation program this December because they were all already working!
  - Erin Haviland, Lower Kuskokwim School District
    - Work with partners like AVTEC and Yuut to see what programs they're offering, and offer mini or companion programs, including industry certifications when we can. Occasionally the YK Job Center will call me to share a need, and we do our best to funnel students to the right opportunity and program.

- Brenda Paccaro, Calista
  - Work with shareholder services to see where shareholders reside.
  - Hosts an annual resources and training meeting where employers come to present and share their needs, typically training providers participate. This year – creating a Facebook group who can post opportunities and projects in the region. Anyone can access the page and see what and where the opportunity is.
  - Just started a teacher-apprenticeship program to grow regional teachers.
- Meg Smith, Donlin
  - We put together a workforce development plan and needs assessment.
  - We looked at major occupations, put together a questionnaire and spreadsheet to identify current and projected need; what occupations are in highest demand?
  - Would be great to capture that, would need to have a champion who would send it out and collect the data. Could inform training and WFD programs.
  - Students at the high school level could also know what opportunities are coming up and where the future jobs will be in the region, that could help inform their postsecondary education decisions. Would like to see a more quantitative approach to this – data that helps us understand what collective industry needs are.
- Walt Betz, Yuut Elitnaurviat
  - YE is in close contact with key employers/partners (AVCP, YKHC, local contractors, etc.) to identify their needs. Lets us hear what their plans are and needs. “Data is important, but it cannot take the place of regional cooperation and partnership. Data depersonalizes our efforts...there are humans involved in this, it’s not just a data quest.”
- Shaanan Day, AVCP
  - Recently moved into the role of Training Coordinator. When she started, she made phone calls to employers – school districts, construction companies, etc. to see what kind of jobs available, and what kind of help is needed. Also reviewing scholarship awards, who is certified to do the jobs. Still working through the database.
  - AVCP has 43 job centers, with navigators to help people apply for jobs. Work on a list to send to everyone to see what the employment opportunities are available this summer. Shaanan will be helping set up and coordinate those trainings.
- Brenda (Calista) and Shaanan (AVCP) identified an opportunity to collaborate better about identifying and sharing upcoming employment opportunities with residents (they’re both doing this separately).

## Previously Identified Measures of Success (for reference)

Indicator of Success/Positive Change	Next Steps
<p><b>Tasks A-B.</b> Employment for YK residents.</p> <p><i>Creating a meaningful target for this indicator requires baseline information that is not readily available. To set a meaningful target will require communicating with major employers in the region to document their upcoming employment needs/opportunities, a key step in the workforce development plan listed in task A above.</i></p>	<p><b>Where to find the data:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p> <p><b>Who will collect it:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p>
<p><b>Tasks A-B.</b> Decrease average amount of time between graduating with a training/certification and getting a job.</p> <p><i>Creating a meaningful target for this indicator requires collecting baseline information from training partners in the region.</i></p>	<p><b>Where to find the data:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p> <p><b>Who will collect it:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p>
<p><b>Tasks A-B.</b> Amount of private funding invested in YK education and workforce development programs (e.g., foundation grants awarded, donations to YE for programs, investments in a project or business because the training is available).</p> <p><i>Creating a meaningful target for this indicator requires baseline information from task A above.</i></p>	<p><b>Where to find the data:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p> <p><b>Who will collect it:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p>
<p><b>Tasks A-B.</b> Average number of weeks employed for training graduates.</p> <p><i>Creating a meaningful target for this indicator will require baseline data be collected from graduating students.</i></p>	<p><b>Where to find the data:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p> <p><b>Who will collect it:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p>
<p><b>Tasks A-B.</b> Number and percentage of YK jobs, apprenticeships and internships filled by YK residents.</p> <p><i>Creating a meaningful target for this indicator will require baseline data be collected from the State of Alaska (for the estimated percentage of resident employment in jobs) and from training partners (for the estimate of residents enrolled in apprenticeships and internships).</i></p>	<p><b>Where to find the data:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p> <p><b>Who will collect it:</b> TBD at future Working Group meeting.</p>
<p><b>Task A.</b> Future indicator: Number of YK residents achieving renewable energy occupational endorsement (program is all online, funding available).</p>	

## Other Discussion

- ANSEP's Acceleration Academy is an opportunity for students to see what employment options are available in the region. They offer free food and convene on Fridays – if you're an employer and want to speak to students about your journey and background, contact Michael Ulroan @ ANSEP: [mikeu@alaska.edu](mailto:mikeu@alaska.edu)

## Next Steps & Wrap Up

- The group would be interested in reconvening in May for a shorter (1 hour) conversation
- Helpful to touch base; general interest in coming back together