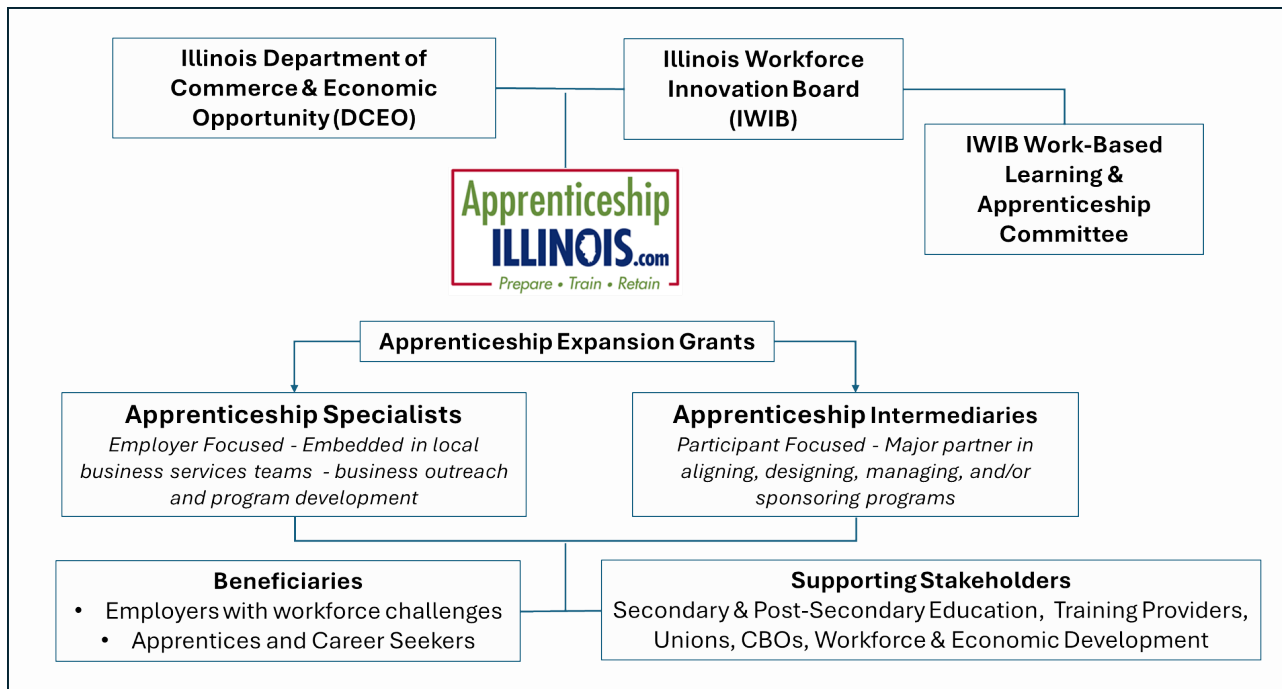


APPENDIX I: ILLINOIS APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION FRAMEWORK

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship Committee have determined support for Apprenticeship Intermediaries and Regional Apprenticeship Specialists are the best investment to build the foundation for apprenticeship expansion in Illinois. Apprenticeship Specialists and Apprenticeship Intermediaries represent two important sides of a statewide apprenticeship system: Specialists represent the demand side, e.g., businesses who want to host apprenticeships, and Intermediaries represent the supply side, e.g., the institutions and/or partnerships that coordinate and/or implement apprenticeship programs, including recruiting potential apprentices, preparing them to enter apprenticeships, and ensuring successful completion.



APPENDIX II: APPRENTICESHIP SPECIALISTS

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship Committee recognized the need for a consistent, statewide apprenticeship support system that aligns with Illinois' holistic apprenticeship framework. The Committee recommends continued funding of Apprenticeship Specialists and Intermediaries to accelerate the expansion of apprenticeship programs across more industries and occupations.

The Role of Apprenticeship Specialists

Apprenticeship Specialists help employers integrate apprenticeships into their workforce strategies, which, in turn, supports individuals in starting or advancing careers through “earn and learn” opportunities. As a key element of the Illinois Apprenticeship Expansion Framework (see Appendix II), Apprenticeship Specialists work directly with businesses to create new programs, strengthen sector partnerships, and support regional ecosystems.

To succeed, Apprenticeship Specialists must understand both business operations and workforce development. They must build relationships, assess employer needs, and collaborate with training providers, chambers of commerce, economic development, and other partners to identify need and implement solutions. Through these efforts, they engage employers, assess pain points and workforce gaps, and help develop employer and peer networks to support regional talent development.

Evolving the Apprenticeship Specialist Role

As Illinois evaluates the Apprenticeship Specialist model, including outcomes and structures, the state is evolving the role to integrate more fully with local integrated business service teams (IBST). These teams include representatives from WIOA core partners, education, workforce, and economic development organizations. This alignment is a focus of the Apprenticeship Illinois five-year strategic planning process, as required by U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) apprenticeship grants.

Early implementation revealed that apprenticeship expansion work cannot be carried out by a single individual. To achieve scale, a broader team must understand the apprenticeship model and its value to employers, job seekers, and communities. Through the first two rounds of USDOL's State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grants, Illinois reimagined the original Apprenticeship Navigators' role as an “Apprenticeship Specialist.” The new title reflects the shared responsibility and dependence among integrated business service team members, while still designating a point person to coordinate efforts and minimize employer confusion.

Supporting the Apprenticeship Network

Illinois continues to invest SAEF funds in Apprenticeship Specialists embedded into local or regional integrated business service teams, whose collective goal is to expand apprenticeship and work-based learning programs.

Core Functions of Apprenticeship Specialists

Outreach and Point of Contact

- Promote apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities to employers, intermediaries, and regional partners.
- Collaborate with integrated business service teams (IBSTs) for alignment and greater impact.
- Use labor market data and workforce plans to identify new opportunities.

- Serve as neutral conveners for sector partnerships addressing talent needs.

Regional Coordination and Systems Alignment

- Build partnerships with employers, the U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship, DCEO, secondary and post-secondary education stakeholders, and other agencies.
- Develop public-private networks to support long-term workforce planning and talent development.
- Leverage WIOA funding to support incumbent worker training, on-the-job learning, and more.
- Share best practices with other Apprenticeship Specialists and IBST members.

Employer Engagement and Program Development

- Conduct site visits and employer sales consultations to assess workforce and training needs to determine potential.
- Support program development from concept to implementation, offering technical assistance and connections to relevant partners and resources.
- Help employers with actual registration of new programs.
- Identify funding, tax credits, and other incentives to sustain programs.
- Provide guidance on using apprenticeships to improve workforce diversity and inclusion.

APPENDIX III: FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATED BUSINESS SERVICE

Apprenticeship Specialists will leverage the [Integrated Business Service Framework](#) as a guide to align efforts among other business services professionals within education, workforce, and economic development to expand apprenticeship. The framework supports strategies designed to assist partners in working together to address the workforce needs of businesses in a region. At the core are industry sector partnerships led by businesses and a focus on crucial industry clusters. Sector partners work collaboratively to listen to and understand businesses' workforce needs and develop customized solutions that respond to those needs, including apprenticeship and work-based learning. Eight foundational elements for the framework were identified for the integrated provision of business services:

- Sector-based – The provision of business services should align around regionally identified industry sectors significant to the regional economy.
- Transformational – The engagement of businesses should provide a platform for regular and ongoing dialogue, transforming the relationships between business and workforce partners.
- Regional – Service delivery should be regional in nature. It should align with the Governor's ten economic development regions, as well as multi-region and multi-state approaches when those are indicated by the needs of the sector partnership.
- Coordinated – The framework should describe coordinated approaches and strategies all partners use to meet business needs.
- United – Building upon efforts already underway, efforts should continue co-locating partners to ensure maximum coordination.
- Flexible – The framework should provide enough helpful guidance but also allow flexibility for regional innovation and customization.
- Aligned – Existing policies/procedures should be reviewed and revised to ensure alignment and progress toward business services integration.
- Allowable – Partners' federal mandates to provide specific, related services must still be met when developing the state framework.

There are five necessary components for the integrated provision of business services:

- (1) Organizational structure – Organizational structures that enable communication among partners to develop a single, reliable, agreed-upon strategy to support engagement and contact between employers and the workforce/economic development system should be developed.
- (2) Management of business intelligence – Given the need to share information across partners, management of business intelligence is critical.
- (3) Solutions-based service offerings – Service offerings provided to businesses must be focused on delivering timely solutions to expressed business needs.
- (4) Emphasis on work-based learning and other business-focused services – Closely tied to the solutions businesses seek is the expanded use of work-based learning (On-Site Work-Based Education, Registered Apprenticeships, Youth Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, Customized Training, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, and others).

(5) Accountability and performance measurement – Enables the measurement (and dissemination) of meaningful results of business services activities and establishes feedback loops to facilitate data-driven course corrections to the other four elements.