



Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: The Promise of State Sector Strategies

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Over the past decade, many states have adopted so called sector strategies that are designed to bring government, education, job training, and economic development stakeholders together in order to better meet the workforce needs of key industries. Sector strategies also make an explicit attempt to improve the skills, employment prospects, and earnings of workers. These sector-based workforce development initiatives can be used to create better job opportunities for less skilled and low-wage workers. (For a related discussion, see this article on Regional Clusters and Jobs for Inner City Workers.) The idea is to enhance state and regional competitiveness by engaging with employers in target industry sectors to connect them with the workers they need. Sector strategies can be particularly useful when industries have job openings that are hard to fill.

The NGA Center for Best Practices is spearheading an effort to encourage more states to adopt sector strategies and recently released a report that discusses the experience of and lessons learned from several initiatives underway around the U.S. The report points to evidence of success and provides a road map for state policymakers and regional leaders to use in designing and implementing sector strategies.