



May 28, 2020

Attention Washington Higher Education Institutions:

As our state begins to move toward economic recovery from the COVID crisis, there is added urgency in helping unemployed Washington workers quickly connect with education programs that lead to secure, high-wage jobs. To do this, we're publishing credentials from our state's Career Bridge site to a national credential registry through a grant-funded project with Credential Engine. We recently began testing how to move an initial batch of credentials to Credential Engine's national platform.

Initially, we were seeking voluntary buy-in from schools to move credentials to a national marketplace. But with the COVID crisis pushing unemployment to record levels, we realized we needed to take action more quickly. The Workforce Board now has trusted third-party authorization to publish credentials on our own.

### **What this means for you...and your institution's staff**

We continue to seek your active support, especially as this is a big first step toward credential transparency and demystifying the ever-expanding credential marketplace. But we will be doing the heavy lifting, with our staff moving credentials over to the Credential Engine site in the coming weeks, and over the summer. Your institution will not need to invest any additional staff time or resources. However, once the credentials are moved to the national platform, you can add more details, including skills and competencies within each credential, or add your school's logo. You'll also be able to opt out of publication, should the need arise.

### **Apprenticeships at the forefront**

We're focusing first on apprenticeships to provide national exposure to this high-skill, high-wage pathway. Earlier this month, we met with apprenticeship representatives from the state's Department of Labor and Industries (LNI) to talk through our plans. In our discussions, we realized some apprenticeship information posted to Career Bridge was out of date, or incomplete. Since then, we've come up with a new way to pull information. All registered apprenticeships now reflect the latest information on LNI's site.

### **What's next: Your continued buy in**

As we publish credentials from Career Bridge to Credential Engine, we encourage you to continue making the case for "credential transparency" to help advance the careers of Washington's workers, provide our employers with a skilled workforce, and demonstrate which programs pay off with actual jobs and paychecks.

Thanks for all you do to help Washington's workers and businesses thrive in this difficult time.