Midwest Credential Transparency Alliance

Kick-off Meeting

May 13, 2021

MHEC Background

- Legislatively created in 1991 through Council of State Governments, Midwest Legislative Conference
- 12 states, Midwest census region
- One of four regional higher education compacts (MHEC, WICHE, SREB, NEBHE)
- Governed by 60 commissioners and alternates

MIDWESTERN HIGHER EDUCATION COMPACT

What value do we provide to our states? What is the ROI?

- **Cost Savings Programs** – Technology hardware, software and services, property insurance, student health insurance, cyber insurance

- **Policy Related Programs** - OER, Credential Transparency, NC-SARA, MCMC, MSEP

- **Research** – Dashboard, regular reports on data trends informed by you as well as specific requests

- Convening Opportunities - bring together legislative, executive branch as well as higher education leaders to problem solve and share ideas

MIDWESTERN HIGHER EDUCATION COMPACT

MHEC's Credential-related Work

- eTranscripting contract with Parchment
- Comprehensive Learner Records Advisory Group
- Concurrent Enrollment Teacher Credentialing
- Multistate Collaborative on Military Credit

- And now…
- The Midwest Credential Transparency Alliance

MIDWESTERN HIGHER EDUCATION COMPACT
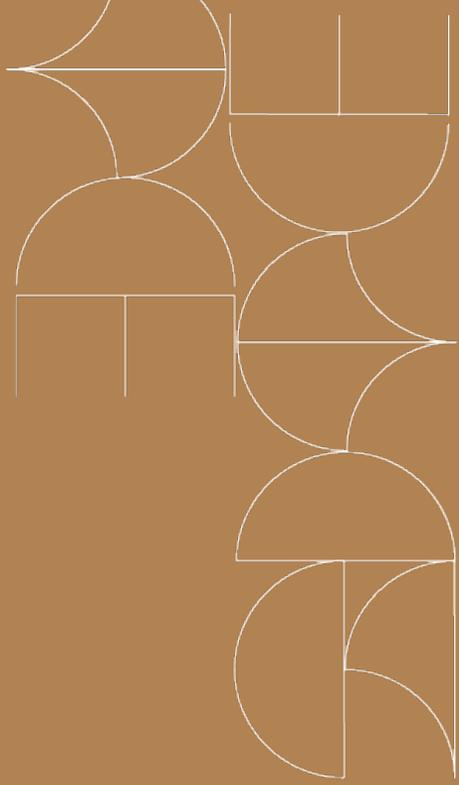
Building a linked, open, interoperable data network that everyone can access for timely and trusted information about credentials, competencies, quality, transfer, pathways, outcomes, etc.

That's the vision behind the support from Lumina, JPMC and Business Roundtable when they founded us, and Gates, Google, ECMC, Walmart, Ascendium, Siegel, NSF, Microsoft and others in sustaining this work.

Why It Matters

- The credential ecosystem is large, complex, and confusing
  - 967,734+ Unique Credentials in the U.S. alone;
  - Thousands of competency frameworks and models;
  - Close to $2t spend on education and training in the U.S. annually;
  - Well over 50,000 providers of credentials;
  - Various and unclear quality assurance entities, standards and public awareness

- Before Credential Engine, no common language to describe or compare credentials and competencies. Now the Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL) is recognized as the standard language to make credentials understandable, comparable, and discoverable.

- Without widespread adoption of this standard common language, people will continue to get lost and lose out on opportunities

State Breakdowns of credentials Issued by state-based entities for Diplomas, certificates, apprenticeships, Licenses and degrees.

Counting U.S. Postsecondary and Secondary Credentials

Credential Engine

February 2021

www.credentialengine.org

https://bit.ly/2Nk6VqJ
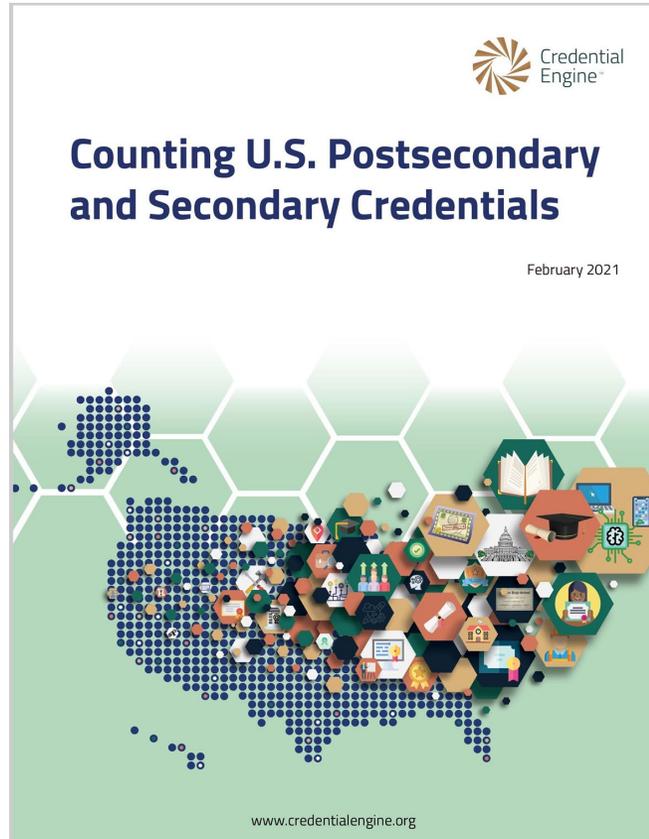
State	Degrees	Certificates	Apprenticeship	Licenses	High School Diplomas	Total
Alabama	2,563	1,291	145	94	141	4,234
Alaska	489	688	317	194	159	1,847
Arizona	2,789	2,654	226	193	680	6,542
Arkansas	2,871	2,578	131	320	500	6,400
California	16,079	14,058	1,094	379	2,064	33,674
Colorado	2,673	2,894	194	131	358	6,250
Connecticut	2,262	1,264	1,590	345	136	5,597
Delaware	716	713	393	249	30	2,101
District of Columbia	1,293	537	302	76	19	2,227
Florida	6,469	6,078	245	396	280	13,468
Georgia	4,759	3,880	152	216	187	9,194
Hawaii	649	134	81	86	4	954
Idaho	1,379	1,059	174	176	264	3,052
Illinois	8,512	4,918	465	432	515	14,842
Indiana	4,071	1,110	1,085	267	1,360	7,893
Iowa	4,702	2,210	799	161	330	8,202
Kansas	2,844	2,242	296	114	285	5,781
Kentucky	3,311	1,769	304	277	168	5,829
Louisiana	3,019	2,039	82	150	214	5,504
Maine	1,189	2,027	118	390	252	3,976
Maryland	2,814	1,753	201	167	48	4,983
Massachusetts	5,838	1,748	1,685	141	606	10,018
Michigan	6,860	3,380	1,096	238	1,312	12,886
Minnesota	5,518	3,561	210	353	394	10,036
Mississippi	2,250	694	84	88	564	3,680
Missouri	7,181	4,609	486	139	918	13,333
Montana	1,134	436	803	166	480	3,019
Nebraska	2,541	799	130	231	244	3,945
Nevada	971	958	94	176	76	2,275
New Hampshire	1,179	975	330	166	64	2,714
New Jersey	2,967	5,104	983	218	308	9,580
New Mexico	1,714	1,236	81	206	118	3,355
New York	13,659	6,326	880	161	7,220	28,246
North Carolina	6,489	4,597	692	397	684	12,859
North Dakota	998	265	100	134	432	1,929
Ohio	8,662	4,056	960	109	2,948	16,735
Oklahoma	2,871	3,167	112	267	866	7,283
Oregon	2,217	1,630	299	325	368	4,839
Pennsylvania	9,968	3,865	833	138	579	15,383
Rhode Island	1,013	277	569	183	43	2,085
South Carolina	2,519	1,675	968	197	170	5,529
South Dakota	1,120	268	107	193	149	1,837
Tennessee	4,452	2,480	301	208	129	7,570
Texas	10,741	5,373	389	121	7,581	24,205
Utah	2,179	1,151	198	112	89	3,729
Vermont	997	264	358	127	220	1,966
Virginia	3,687	3,071	1,961	107	262	9,088
Washington	3,753	2,241	204	170	257	6,625
West Virginia	1,512	769	166	121	55	2,623
Wisconsin	3,740	2,202	1,029	302	766	8,039
Wyoming	845	494	78	100	240	1,757

About Credential Engine

- **Who We Are**
  - Non-profit
  - Community built
  - Vendor agnostic
  - Data driven
  - Mission oriented around credential, competency, and pathways transparency

- **What We Do**
  - Advocate for credential transparency
  - Develop and support linked open data schemas
  - Provide open, interoperable infrastructure
  - Build and mobilize partnerships
  - Provide expertise and services for organizations implementing credential transparency

- **What We Do NOT Do**
  - Collect or verify personally identifiable information
  - Issue credentials
  - Verify issued credentials
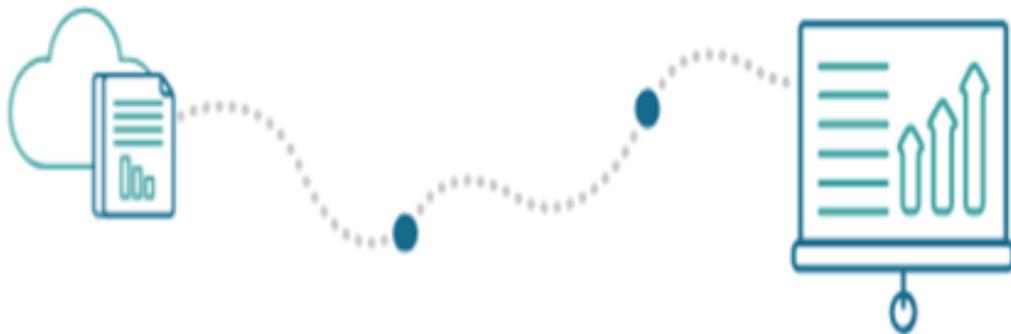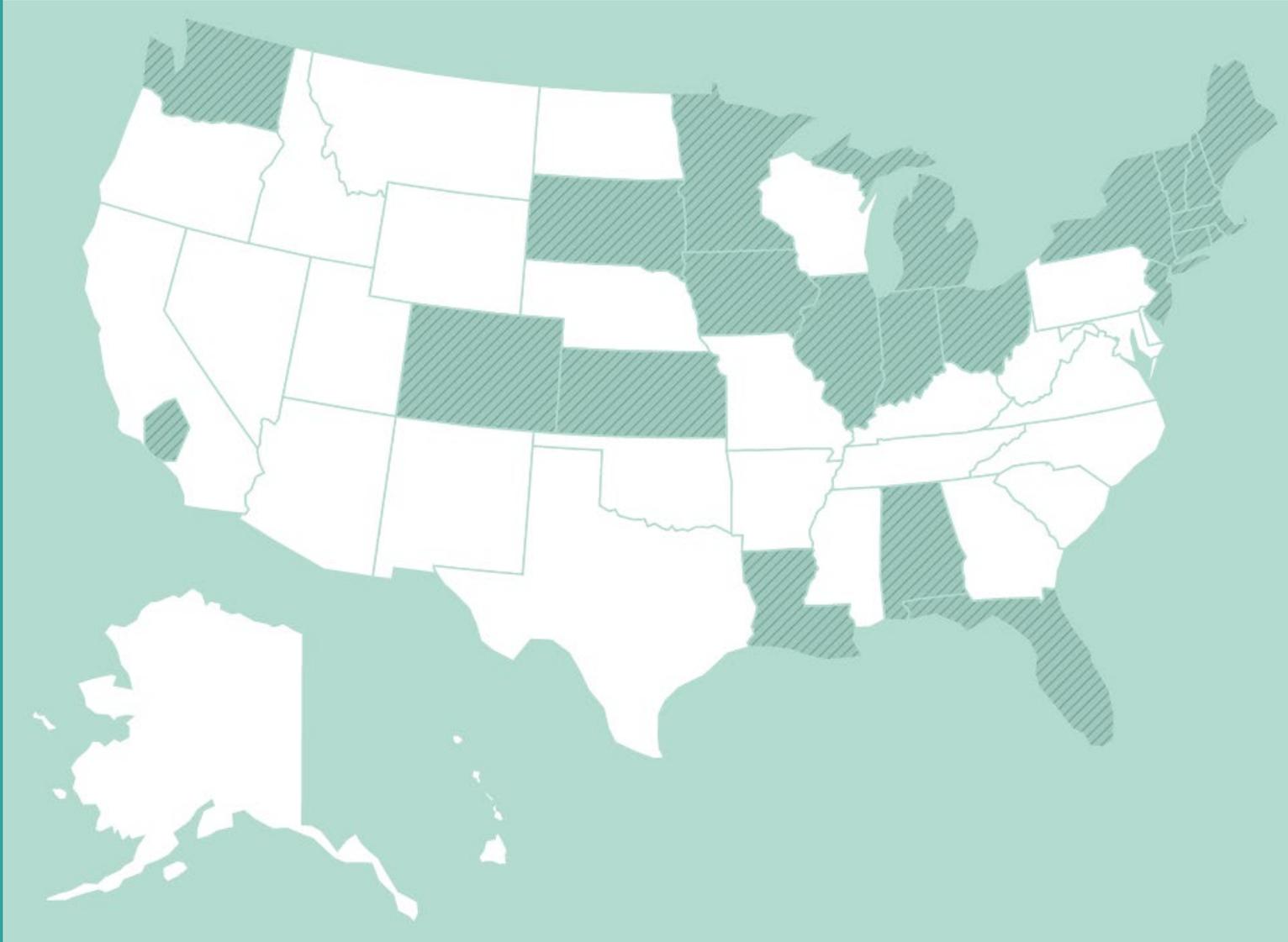
The work is already underway in **22 states and regions**, with 5-8 additional states in the pipeline.

www.credentialengine.org/ state-partnerships

State Roadmap & Action Guide to Transparency

State leaders are in unique positions to prioritize credential transparency and align it with efforts to identify credentials of value.

Create systems where credentials are:

- Accessible
- Understood
- Comparable
- Connected to other critical education and workforce data
- Communicated so that they serve everyone.

Credential Engine™
www.credentialengine.org

Making Sense of Credentials:
A State Roadmap and Action Guide for Transparency

November 2020

SHEEO
STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

CCSSO
Council of Chief State School Officers

DQC
DATA QUALITY CAMPAIGN

NCSL
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION

ESG
Education Strategy Group

EDUCATION QUALITY OUTCOMES STANDARDS BOARD

NASWA
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES

ADVANCE CTE
State Leaders Connecting Learning to Work

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION
Every worker. Every industry. A strong economy.

Credentials and Credentialing in 2021

National context...

Approximately 1M credentials in the US

Regional context...

Approximately 100K credentials in the Midwest

Source: Credential Engine. (2021). *Counting U.S. postsecondary and secondary credentials*. Washington, DC: Credential Engine.

MIDWESTERN HIGHER EDUCATION COMPACT

Credentials and Credentialing in 2021

Credentials can
- Reduce financial and social inequality
- Increase economic opportunity and social mobility
- Prepare people for informed citizenship and economic success

More likely to vote

Less likely to be food insecure

Active in the community

Healthier individuals and families

Source: Lumina Foundation. (2020). *A stronger nation*. Indianapolis, IN: Lumina Foundation.

MIDWESTERN HIGHER EDUCATION COMPACT

Credentials and Credentialing in 2021

Value-add of the regional approach ...

- Addresses transfer of credits and inter-state credential pathways
- Acknowledges the mobility of students, workers, and employers
- Acknowledges the increasing number of remote jobs that span state borders
- Builds upon the success of others (especially those with similar economies and demographics)
- Leverages MHEC's established relationships and professional communities
- Builds upon existing efforts within states

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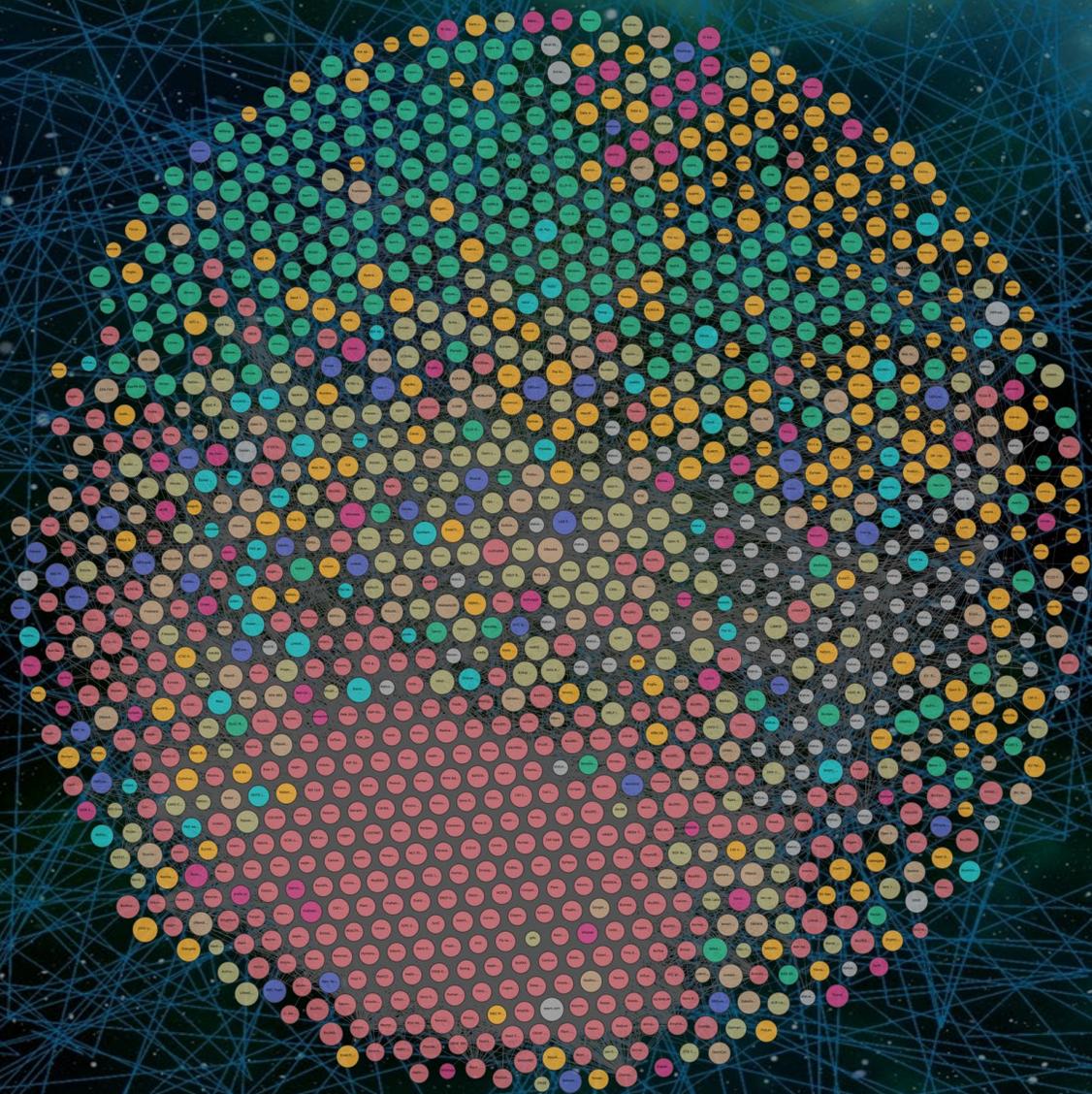
Linked Open Data

ceterms:Certification	
URI:	https://purl.org/ctdl/terms/Certification
Shorthand URI:	ceterms:Certification
Label:	*en-US:* Certification
Definition:	*en-US:* Time-limited, revocable, renewable credential awarded by an authoritative body for demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform specific tasks or an occupation.
Comment:	*en-US:* Certifications can typically be revoked if not renewed, for a violation of a code of ethics (if applicable) or proven incompetence after due process. Description of revocation criteria for a specific Certification should be defined using Revocation Profile.
Type of Term:	rdfs:Class
Status:	vs:stable
Subc	ceterms:Credential

ceterms:assessmentDeliveryType   ceterms:naics
ceterms:audienceLevelType   ceterms:name

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Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL)

https://purl.org/ctdl/terms/

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View the infographic online:

https://bit.ly/3pDmTsU
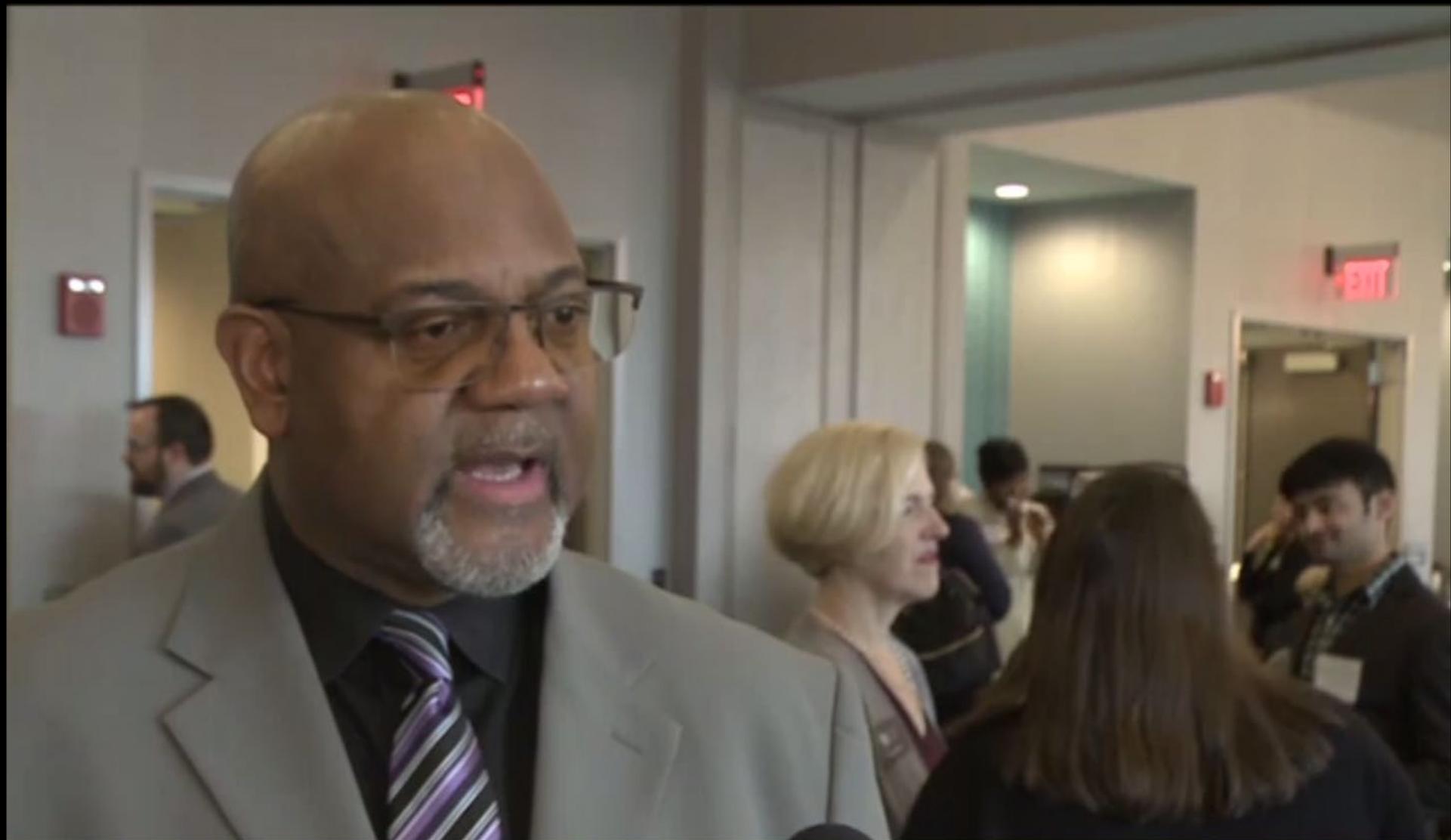
MAYOR ROD ROBERSON
(D) ELKHART

16 NEWS NOW

28° 5:34

86%

MHEC Commissioners
interested in Credential Transparency

Recommendation #1
Include all
stakeholders

Recommendation #2
Use web meetings &
small action teams

Working Draft: Charter

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Please note that this is a working draft of the MCTA Charter. We are seeking your feedback and input as we refine and update the document.

What is it?

The Midwest Credential Transparency Alliance (MCTA) is a regional alliance focused on advancing credential transparency in service of learners, workers, educators, employers and policymakers across the Midwest. Credential transparency is an approach to making essential information about credentials and competencies public, easily accessible, and actionable so that credentials can be better understood and pursued based on what it takes to earn them, what they represent, and the jobs they can lead to. We seek to reduce barriers to information, ensuring that all individuals have equitable access to the full range of learning, advancement, and meaningful career opportunities in the region.

The MCTA operates by hosting regular convenings to

1. Network (identify common challenges, project consulting, mentorship)
2. Create new resources (guidance, blogs, webinars, reports)
3. Form action teams (technical & business requirements, policy, research)
4. Advance dissemination (celebrate accomplishments, presentations, articles, social media).

The MCTA welcomes a wide range of participants, whether new to this effort or well underway, including individuals representing state agencies, secondary education providers, postsecondary education providers, employers, quality assurance organizations, workforce development agencies, and more.

Why does it matter?

America is searching for ways to help students and workers find the most efficient and cost-effective pathways to secure the right skills and credentials that lead to good jobs, but right now the learn and work ecosystem is fragmented and information about credentials is confusing and inconsistent. In the Midwest, states are working to break down data silos to empower an estimated 35 million workers in the region. This work entails advancing a linked open data strategy to consistently describe for the public the key attributes of about 150,000 credential offerings, such as their associated competencies, quality indicators, costs, transfer value, occupational codes, pathways, outcomes, and more. This information is critical for answering many basic questions, such as:

- **Career pathways:** What do I want to do? What are my options? How can I get started? What's the sequence? What are the benefits? Will this be a good fit for me?
- **Enrollment decisions:** What's the experience like? How much will it cost? How long will it take? How are these programs different? How effective has this offering been for people like me?
- **Transfer and prior learning assessment:** What are my options for transferring? How can I obtain advanced standing? Will my existing credits apply to program requirements? Will I lose any time or money?
- **Verifiable achievements:** Are my demonstrated skills and competencies valuable to employers? How can I communicate my achievements to others? How can I secure or advance my career?

The work of defining, accessing, combining, describing, sharing, and comparing information about credentials is difficult and too often falls upon isolated individuals with limited context, resources, or support. Credential transparency reduces barriers to information and makes opportunities more equitably attainable. For too long, gaining information about credentials has depended on personal social networks, wealth, and access to institutions, compounding structural inequities. Transparent access to information about credentials and their value can be a crucial element of working to dismantle systems that have created the racial bias we see today. The MCTA accelerates the midwest region's ability to ensure the public can access the information about credentials that opens their eyes to the full range of opportunities for learning, advancement, and meaningful careers.

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The MCTA is an alliance of people working toward credential transparency – at all stages and steps – from across the Midwest region. Given the broad range of work required to advance credential transparency, the community is intentionally eclectic and open so that it can collectively build a fully-informed, end-to-end network of aligned practitioners.
Anyone can be a credential transparency champion.

- **State government officials** (Legislators, leaders, Governor's office staff, and staff connected with state education and workforce departments, agencies, & commissions) can set policies, procedures, and strategic guidance to facilitate

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Midwest Credential Transparency Alliance (MCTA)   5

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How does it work?

Working Draft: Charter

publishing credential information to the Registry

■ **Secondary and postsecondary credential providers** (Presidents, chief academic officers, superintendents, principals, provosts, deans, career services staff, academic affairs staff & faculty) can use the many tools available for publishing detailed credential information to the Registry

■ **Data managers** (Chief technology officers, chief data officers, business analysis, institutional researchers, registrars) can advance interoperability and benchmark their technical systems for emerging use cases

■ **Business community** (Hiring managers, human resources staff, economic developers, workforce training professionals, & chambers of commerce) can discover aligned credential and competency pathways to fill critical positions

The MCTA welcomes a broad range of practitioners interested in this type of work and benefits from everyone's perspective.

How does it work?

The MCTA builds on, and accelerates, the Midwest region's focus on credential transparency by providing a loose structure for connecting distributed practitioners. The MCTA meets quarterly using Zoom and intends to host an annual in-person convening. Some topics require focused small group discussions, and the MCTA also supports volunteer action teams that meet more frequently between quarterly meetings. All convenings are open to the entire MCTA community.

There are many ways to connect with the MCTA. Simply attending the convenings regularly helps increase awareness of the value of credential transparency and its benefits for students, workers, employers, educators, policymakers, and others. Volunteers can also engage in more substantive ways by sharing their own credential transparency successes and challenges with others, such as by giving a presentation, writing a blog article, or contributing to a new shared resource. The MCTA supports all of these advances by providing a helpful forum and supportive network for your credential transparency efforts. All contributions are valued, needed, and celebrated.

The MCTA also works as a group to identify technical and business requirements for the procurement of tools and services related to credential transparency, such as the issuing of digital credentials, career planning and pathway services, transfer and prior learning assessment services, credential data management services, and more. Prioritized master contract opportunities will be advanced through competitive RFP processes in order to spur supportive technologies at negotiated prices.