



Gulf Coast Workforce Board
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120, Houston, Texas 77027
PO Box 22777 Houston, Texas 77227-2777
MAIN: 713.627.3200 FAX: 713.993.4578
www.wrksolutions.com

To: Gulf Coast Workforce Board Members

From: Executive Director Juliet K. Stipeche

Date: June 1, 2025

Subject: Upcoming June 3, 2025, Board Meeting

I hope this message finds you well. Our upcoming Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. It will be held in person at the Houston-Galveston Area Council, located at 3555 Timmons Lane, Conference Room A/B/C, Houston, Texas 77027. This meeting will adhere to the Texas Open Meetings Act and will be open to the public.

I am pleased to share key highlights and updates for our gathering. Your continued dedication and insightful contributions remain instrumental to the success of our region's workforce initiatives. We look forward to welcoming several new Board members to our June meeting.

The meeting will commence with opening remarks from Board Chair Mark Guthrie, who will also present a special resolution honoring ABC13's Nick Natario as the inaugural recipient of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Community Champion Award, recognizing his exceptional contributions to workforce development in our region over the past five years. I will deliver my Executive Director's report, highlighting recent achievements and ongoing initiatives. Subsequently, we will receive an update from Mr. Chuck Wemple, Executive Director of the Houston-Galveston Area Council. Committee reports include:

- Audit and Monitoring Committee Report by Chair Guy Jackson;
- Budget Committee Report by Chair Carl Bowles;
- Communications Committee Report by Chair Doug Karr, featuring an important website update from Mr. Phillippe Anchondo; and
- Executive Committee Report by Board Chair Mark Guthrie.

The Board will also receive the following committee reports with possible action items:

- Career Services Committee Report (Chair Adrian Ozuna), including discussion and potential approval of the Gulf Coast Provider Network—Local Eligible Training Providers Policy (WFS Policy Number 405).
- Procurement Committee Report (Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson), including discussion and potential approval of contract negotiations with 1) selected auditing firms and 2) renewals of contracts with our Adult Education and Literacy providers, contingent upon available funding and approval by the Texas Workforce Commission.

Additional informative presentations include:

- System Performance and Production by Mr. Philip Garcia;
- Financial Overview and Expenditures by Ms. Brandi Brown;
- Legislative Update from the 89th Texas Legislative Session by Mr. Desmond Taylor;
- Labor Market Trends by Mr. Parker Harvey and Mr. Mohammad Ahmadizadeh; and
- Communications and Outreach Activities by Mr. Russell Tomlin.

Since our previous Board meeting, we have conducted several impactful community roundtables to effectively engage stakeholders and communicate our strategic plan and available services. Recent successful events include:

- Matagorda and Wharton Counties Community Roundtable on April 10, 2025;
- Visit to the IUOE International Training and Education Center on April 11, 2025
- Greater Houston Area Community Roundtable on April 24, 2025;
- Asian Chamber of Commerce Leadership Meeting on May 8, 2025;
- Our New Board Member Orientation at Workforce Solutions East End on May 14, 2025; and
- Texas City Open House on May 22, 2025.

We sincerely thank all new and existing Board members who actively participated in these activities. Special thanks to Mr. Paul Puente who coordinated our visit to the IUOE International Training and Education Center and Mr. Bin Yu for



Gulf Coast Workforce Board
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120, Houston, Texas 77027
PO Box 22777 Houston, Texas 77227-2777
MAIN: 713.627.3200 **FAX:** 713.993.4578
www.wrksolutions.com

coordinating our successful engagement with the Asian Chamber of Commerce and Mr. Alan Heskamp for his participation and leadership as Chair of the Employer Engagement Committee. We also greatly appreciate everyone who attended the recent New Board Member Orientation. It was a real treat to be joined by former Texas Workforce Commissioner of Labor, Julian Alvarez III. Further, I would like to thank Brittany Eaton, our manager of Professional Development, for coordinating boat tours at the Port of Houston for our staff and Board members.

We are presently working on developing another Board Member Orientation focused on ethics and conflict of interest as well as training for the new Convene Meeting Portal. We are excited to implement this new cloud-based platform designed to significantly enhance board communication, streamline preparations, and boost overall governance efficiency. The Convene Portal provides Board members centralized, secure access to current and past meeting agendas, relevant documents, integrated scheduling tools, and capabilities for annotation, all intended to substantially reduce reliance on emails and printed documents. Members have received initial activation instructions from Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, who has been hard at work getting this software up and running. Follow-up invitations are forthcoming.

It has been a vibrant and busy period for our workforce community, from celebrating Apprenticeships Day on April 30 to hosting the successful Texas City Open House. Your ongoing dedication, valuable contributions, and active participation greatly enhance our strategic plan and goals. I look forward to seeing you at our June 3 meeting, where we will continue to shape impactful workforce initiatives together.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need assistance. I look forward to seeing you soon, and in the meantime, I wish you a wonderful and restful weekend.

GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD

AGENDA

Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.
2nd Floor, A/ B/ C, 3555 Timmons Lane
Houston, Texas 77027

This meeting will be in person only and open to the public.

1. Call to Order (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
2. Roll Call (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
3. Introduction of Newly Appointed Board Members (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
4. Adopt Agenda (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
5. Public Comment (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
6. Review of the April 2025 Meeting Minutes (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
7. Declare Conflicts of Interest (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
8. Reports:
 - a. Board Chair's Remarks: (Board Chair Mark Guthrie)
 - i. Resolution Honoring Nick Natario as the Inaugural Recipient of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Community Champion Award,
 - b. Executive Director's Report: (Juliet Stipeche),
 - c. H-GAC Executive Director's Report: (Chuck Wemple),
 - d. Audit and Monitoring Committee Report: (Committee Chair Guy Jackson),
 - e. Budget Committee Report: (Committee Chair Carl Bowles),
 - f. Communications Committee Report: (Committee Chair Doug Karr)
 - i. Website Update by Phillippe Anchondo
 - g. Executive Committee Report: (Board Chair Mark Guthrie).

9. Action Items:

- a. Career Services Committee Report: Briefing of the Career Services Committee meeting from Chair Adrian Ozuna including discussion and possible action regarding the following:
 - i. Approval of the Gulf Coast Provider Network—Local Eligible Training Providers (ETPL) Policy, WFS Policy Number 405.
- b. Procurement Committee Report: Briefing of the Procurement Committee meeting from Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson including discussion and possible action regarding the following:
 - i. Contract negotiations and approval with Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P.; Christine H. Nguyen CPA; and LaPorte, a Professional Accounting Corporation, in a combined amount not to exceed \$900,000.
 - ii. Contract negotiation and renewals with Houston Community College, Lone Star College, San Jacinto College, and Region 6 and contract extensions with Adult Education Center and BakerRipley for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, with the recommendation being contingent upon Texas Workforce Commission funding and approvals.

10. Presentations and Information:

- a. Performance and Production: Report on the system's performance and production (Philip Garcia),
- b. Expenditures: Report on the Board's budget and expenditures (Brandi Brown),
- c. Legislative Update: Update on the 89th Texas Legislative Session (Desmond Taylor),
- d. A Look at the Economy: Update on the Labor Market (Parker Harvey and Mohammad Ahmadizadeh), and
- e. Communications and Outreach Update: Report on relevant stories (Russell Tomlin).

11. Other Business

12. Adjourn



If you wish to make a public comment you may appear in person or do so by providing your comments in writing no later than 5:00 pm on Monday, June 2, 2025, to Dr. Maria Franco Cortes at maria.cortes@wrksolutions.net.

Meeting materials are available on our website at www.wrksolutions.com/about-us/meetings.

Workforce Solutions is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Please contact us at 713.627.3200 at least 48-hours in advance to request accommodations.

Deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech-impaired customers contact:
Relay Texas 1-800-735-2989 (TTY) or 1-800-735-2988 (Voice) or 711.

Equal opportunity is the law.

Gulf Coast Workforce Board – Workforce Solutions
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120, Houston, Texas 77027
P.O. Box 22777 Houston, Texas 77227-2777
713.627.3200
1.888.469.5627 toll-free
www.wrksolutions.com

GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025

1. Call to Order: The Tuesday, April 8, 2025, meeting of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Board Chair Mark Guthrie. The meeting was held on the 2nd Floor, A-C, 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027. Board Chair Guthrie dedicated the meeting in memory of the late Congressman Sylvester Turner.
2. Roll Call: Desmond Taylor, Program Administrator of the GCWB called the roll. The following members of the GCWB were present:

Below, Shonda	Johnson, Joyce	Riley, Monica
Bowles, Carl	Karr, Doug	Rodriguez, Grace
Cevallos, Rachel	Larmond, Shareen	Rodriguez, Melanie
Gonzalez, Melissa	Lindsey, Susan	Sarkar, Mou
Guido, Cheryl	Makany-Rivera, Tanya	Taylor, Sandra
Guthrie, Mark	Melton, Edward	Vazquez, Lizandra
Harris, Allatia	Ordonez, Sineria	Webster, Michael
Heskamp, Alan	Oser, Margaret	Yu, Bin
Jackson, Guy R.	Ozuna, Adrian	

Board Chair Guthrie determined a quorum was present.

3. Moment of Silence for the Late Congressman Sylvester Turner: The Board observed a moment of silence for the late Congressman and former Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner.
4. Introduction of Newly Appointed Board Members
 - Rachel Cevallos
 - Allatia Harris
 - Susan Lindsey
 - Tanya Makany-Rivera

The new members introduced themselves and were warmly welcomed by the Board.

5. Adopt Agenda: Board Chair Guthrie presented the proposed February 4, 2025, meeting agenda. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion passed.
6. Public Comment: There was no public comment.
7. Review of the February 4, 2025, Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the February 4, 2025, GCWB meeting were distributed electronically to all members before the April 8, 2025, meeting. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the minutes as presented with a correction to reflect Mr. Adrian Ozuna was not present at the February 4, 2025, meeting. The motion passed.
8. Declare Conflicts of Interest: No conflicts were declared. Chair Guthrie reminded the members that they could declare conflicts with items as they were taken up.
9. Reports:
 - a. Board Chair's Report: Chair Guthrie opened his remarks by reporting that he along with Dr. Bobbie Henderson and members of Board staff attended the National Association of Workforce Board's (NAWB) Forum in Washington, DC on March 29-April 1. Chair Guthrie also attended the NAWB Advocacy Day following the Forum. He mentioned his participation on two panel presentations at the Forum: Advocacy for Board Members and Public Policy as well as Board staff Crosby Brito who presented on another panel.

Chair Guthrie noted that some of his key takeaways from the Forum came from remarks by keynote speaker Mark Perna about the Gen Z generation, ages 10-28 y/o, who have started entering the workforce. Some of the observations about Gen Z that Mr. Perna shared included:

- They stand up for what they believe and will wait until they get it.
- They do nothing on faith.
- Eighty-four percent (84%) of them seek to own their own business and view risks in working for large corporations.

- College enrollment is down due to the cost benefit analysis of attending college, which is largely discouraging their attendance.
- There is currently a 40% college drop out rate.
- There is a significant etiquette gap among recent college graduates in job interviews:
 - 58% fail to make eye contact during interview,
 - 50% request unreasonable compensation,
 - 47% dress inappropriately for the interview,
 - 27% use inappropriate language during interview,
 - 21% refuse to turn on their camera during online interviews,
 - 19% brought a parent to the interview,
- Workforce developers and employers need to persuade them to “want to” and speak to lifestyles versus careers, and
- Skills first hiring increases the available talent pool for Gen Z by a factor of 10.3x compared to 9x for millennials.

WIOA Reauthorization Update: Chair Guthrie mentioned the negotiations on the WIOA reauthorization bill known as ASWA passed by the House of Representatives last Congress have started over. The future of WIOA reauthorization is unknown in this Congress. However, the leadership of the relevant House and Senate committees have changed—causing some hope that the reauthorization process will include and better reflect NAWB’s priorities. The latest word from the Hill is that last year’s ASWA version will be the starting point for WIOA reauthorization conversations. NAWB’s policy priorities for WIOA reauthorization remain the same in eliminating the following objectionable and detrimental included in ASWA:

- 50% training mandate for WIOA funds,
- 10% additional state set aside of WIOA Title I funds, and
- Consolidation of workforce boards by governors without local boards’ consent.

Locally, Chair Guthrie reported on the Board’s submission of the Local WIOA plan to TWC. He also reported that Board staff is planning a series of public meetings introducing our new strategic plan to chambers of commerce and economic development corporations with the first one

being on Thursday, April 10 in Bay City. All Board members are invited to attend. Also, on Friday, April 11, Board members are encouraged to attend the International Union of Operating Engineers campus tour in Crosby, Texas from 9:30 am-1:00 pm.

Chair Guthrie concluded his report- and no action was taken.

- b. Executive Director's Report (Juliet Stipeche): Executive Director Juliet Stipeche began her report by warmly welcoming new members to the Board. She highlighted her participation in the United Nations' Women's History Month event at City Hall, expressing special appreciation to Board staff member Dr. Maria Franco for the invitation. The event brought together numerous women leaders from across the region to engage in meaningful discussions regarding women's rights and freedoms.

Director Stipeche congratulated the Pearland Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and Board member Mou Sarkar on another successful Jobs Y'all event, which was notably attended by Pearland Mayor Cole. She provided updates on her involvement in several significant panel discussions since the previous meeting, including a forum on Early Childhood Education in collaboration with Harris County, and the Medical Education Summit hosted by Sam Houston State University. The Medical Education Summit underscored the critical regional need for more primary care physicians and psychologists.

Additionally, Mrs. Stipeche reported on recent job fairs organized by Workforce Solutions - Gulf Coast. Notable events included a healthcare-focused job fair held at Lone Star College - Kingwood and another in the Rosenberg/Richmond area, emphasizing opportunities within business, finance, and the broader healthcare industry.

Further, she shared details about her participation in a panel discussion featuring the Texas Southern University women's soccer team and her attendance at the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Forum in Washington, DC. Looking forward, Mrs. Stipeche highlighted the upcoming campus tour of the International Union of Operating Engineers in Crosby, Texas, and announced a series of Strategic Plan regional roundtable meetings scheduled as follows:

- Thursday, April 10: Bay City, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.;

- Thursday, April 24: Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.; and
- Wednesday, May 14: Fort Bend, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

In closing, Mrs. Stipeche shared thoughtful reflections on the remarkable contributions and dedicated public service of the late Congressman Sylvester Turner, noting his significant impact on the City of Houston and her personal growth and leadership journey. She thanked him for the opportunity to work as his Director of Education and champion programs such as Hire Houston Youth, which now continues as Hire Gulf Coast Youth.

Executive Director Stipeche concluded her report, with no formal action required by the Board.

- c. H-GAC Executive Director's Report (Chuck Wemple): Not present.
- d. Audit and Monitoring Committee (Committee Chair Guy R. Jackson):
Chair Jackson reported that the Audit and Monitoring Committee met in a hybrid meeting on March 25, at 3555 Timmons Ln, Houston, TX 77027, Room 2B/C at 1:00 p.m. Board Members present included: Guy Jackson, Dr. Bobbi Henderson, Paul Puente, Mark Guthrie, Cheryl Guido, Douglas Karr, Jeff LaBroski, Joyce Johnson, Jonathan Lowe, Shonda Below, Mou Sarkar, Carl Bowles and Sineria Ordonez. Board staff present included: Juliet Stipeche, Russell Tomlin, AJ Dean, Kristi Rangel, Jenny Johnson, Philip Garcia, Brandi Brown, Jennifer Starling, Thomas Brown, LaToya Casimere, Jennifer Graves, Jacinth Chapman, Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Jessica Smith, Desmond Taylor, Vanessa Salazar, Sabrina Uy, John Tran, Shawanna Thompson, Romana Paniagua, Kimberly Lindolph, Pamela Fanniel, Kevin Rodney, Sable Harris-Buck, Crosby Brito, Danielle Knotts, and Abdul Kargo.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Framework Update: The Gulf Coast Workforce Board continues to move forward with our Key Performance Indicators (KPI) framework to guide future program performance measurement development. Board staff worked on measures for our Employer Engagement Division. The focus has been on level 0 and level 1 KPIs as they are opportunities the Board can measure immediately. All KPIs are designed to align with the Workforce Board's strategic priorities:

1. Support Business-Forward Strategies to Fuel the Regional Economy,

2. Serve as a Convener & Forge Strategic Partnerships,
3. Increase Awareness of Services & Opportunities, and
4. Improve Service Delivery with Technology and Innovation.

Employer Engagement Program – Key Performance Indicators

Board staff will monitor and report on these foundational metrics:

- Number of employers receiving Texas Talent Assistance; and
- Percentage of employers returning for service.

Performance and Production

End-of-Year FY2024 Performance: The revised end-of-year performance data for FY2024 has been reviewed. Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast successfully met or exceeded 16 of the 22 performance targets established by TWC under WIOA. The results affirm the continued effectiveness and impact of workforce services provided throughout the 13-county Gulf Coast region, but 6 targets did not fully meet expectations, specifically those related to:

- Credential attainment for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Career & Technical (C&T) participants;
- Employed Q2 Post-Exit – Dislocated Worker; and
- Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post-Exit – Youth.

Technical Program Compliance

Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM): Board staff reviewed data and operations from March 2024 to February 2025 and assessed performance, compliance, information security, customer satisfaction, and worksites. The review identified recurring findings in case management, data validation entry, and maintaining supporting documentation in multiple areas. The recurrence in findings indicates a need for additional oversight, staff training, and coaching while working with Board staff to receive technical assistance and address concerns.

SERJobs: Board staff reviewed data and operations from March 2024 to February 2025. The review identified recurring findings in case management, the maintenance of supporting documentation in multiple areas, and data entry. At the time of the draft report, the lack of supporting documentation led to potentially questioned eligibility and support services costs. The recurrence in findings indicates a need for additional oversight, staff training, and coaching while working with

Board staff to receive technical assistance and address concerns. We are awaiting SERJobs' response to the draft report and Board staff will issue the final report by the beginning of April 2025.

Accountability and Improvement

Texas Workforce Commission Interventions

Adult Median Earnings Q2 Post-Exit (FY23): The Board staff continue to track enrollment efforts and work with TWC to show our progress on the Technical Assistance Plan (TAP) for FY23 WIOA Adult Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit FY23. The 2024 year-end report showed we met the adult median earnings target, and we continue to meet the target for 2025. We anticipate the TAP will be lifted.

GCWB Interventions

Adult Education Center: Board staff will place the Adult Education Center (AEC) on a Performance Improvement Plan. During the Board's financial monitoring review, multiple findings related to internal controls and disbursements were observed. Additionally, Board staff have observed consistently missed deadlines and a lack of communication related to contract deliverables, financial monitoring documents, Board Quality Assurance requests, and required property control tasks.

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 15, 2025, at 1:00 pm at Houston-Galveston Area Council, 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas 77027.

Chair Jackson concluded his report. No action was taken.

- e. Career Services Committee Report (Committee Chair Adrian Ozuna): Chair Ozuna reported that the Career Services Committee met in a hybrid meeting on March 18, 2025, at the Northline Workforce Solutions Career Office.

Board members present included: Adrian Ozuna, Jonathan Lowe, Cheryl Guido, Mark Guthrie, Guy Jackson, Marie Arcos, Mou Sarkar, Lizandra Vasquez, Rachel Cevallos, Dr. Melanie Rodriguez, Dr. Melissa Gonzalez, Edward Melton, Doug Karr, Dr. Bobbie Henderson and Sineria Ordonez. Board staff present included: Juliet Stipeche, Kristi Rangel, AJ Dean, Desmond Taylor, Russell Tomlin, Crosby Brito, Sabrina Parras, Brittany Eaton, Kevin Rodney, Philip Garcia, Jennifer Graves, Parker Harvey, Janine Haynes, Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Luisa Martinez, Jenny Johnson,

Shawanna Thompson, Jennifer Starling, Jessica Smith, LaToya Casimere, Gabriella Gonzalez, Wen Zheng, Ahmadizedeh Mohammed, Vanessa Salazar and Alexandra Mallett.

Request for Proposal Update: We're transitioning to a fully integrated one-stop career services model. This approach ensures seamless coordination among job seekers, employers, and service providers. By streamlining operations and reducing duplication, Board staff aims to align services with the regional economic demands more effectively. Service Delivery Highlights include unifying employer engagement and career offices, Mobile Workforce Solutions and Virtual- Only Services.

The service area /regional structure will transition from zip codes to defined service areas with a north region, a west region and a southeast region; this will expand service delivery with a targeted approach. The request for bid proposal will include estimated allocations based on the targeting populations, so bidders in a region know how many resources they need to staff their operations.

The request for Proposals timeline includes the anticipated release in early April 2025. The expected proposal due date, and evaluation period is set for June 2025, with procurement expected to be in July 2025 and then will be brought to the Board for review and possible approval in August 2025.

Workforce Access Virtual Experience (WAVE): The WAVE system is a key digital appointment management system designed to improve customer engagement. By deploying a digital queue appointment management system, we reduce wait times and enhance service delivery. This transformation ensures accessibility, especially in underserved communities, and supports ongoing improvements through data analytics. To guarantee a seamless and effective implementation, we have strategically adopted a phased system rollout, with full implementation rollout occurring the week of April 21, 2025.

Community Engagement: Community engagement remains a priority. With targeted outreach events such as the Lone Star College Kingwood Healthcare Career Fair, we have connected job seekers directly with employers, fostering economic growth across the region utilizing WOW services. "Workforce on Wheels" at the event added valuable services in a remote location, allowing us to expand access to career services.

The Workforce on Wheels served 24 individuals who received career services, including: Work In Texas registrations, resume building and updates, and job search assistance.

Education and Training: The GCWB is committed to ensuring that individuals seeking education and training have access to high-quality programs that lead to sustainable employment in high-demand industries. Recognizing the need for higher standards and stronger alignment between training programs and labor market demands, the GCWB has taken a proactive approach to enhance the evaluation and selection of training providers.

Our strategic objective is to elevate the Education and Training Vendor Standards and Guidelines to reinforce quality assurance and accountability in workforce training. To achieve this, we have implemented the following policy enhancements:

- Stronger Performance Benchmarks – Programs must meet or exceed both TWC and GCWB performance standards, ensuring measurable success in employment and earnings outcomes.
- Enhanced Financial Transparency – Training providers are now required to demonstrate financial stability by submitting Balance Sheets and Profit and Loss Statements as part of the application and renewal process.
- Annual Review and Renewal Process – Provider agreements will transition to an annual evaluation model, ensuring continuous compliance and quality improvement.
- Comprehensive Career Assessment Requirement – Before referral to a training provider, individuals will undergo a structured career assessment to ensure alignment with their skills, interests, and market demand.
- Targeted Investment in High-Skill, High-Growth (HSHG) Occupations – Funding allocations will prioritize scholarship-eligible programs that align with industry demand and economic growth projections.

A draft copy of the policy is attached to the Board packet for review.

Lastly, the Board seeks to take a proactive role in educating the public about financial literacy by partnering with an organization and/or bank to offer free courses throughout the region. Chair Ozuna concluded his report. No action was taken.

Ms. Grace Rodriguez inquired if entrepreneurial skills are included in the HSHG training. Executive Director Stipeche responded, "Not yet; however, entrepreneurialism is part of the 14 WIOA youth programmatic elements. We will look on how to best incorporate in some of the courses provided by our training partners."

- f. Education Committee Report (Committee Vice Chair Doug Karr): Vice Chair Karr reported that the Education Committee met in a hybrid meeting on March 13, 20205, at 11:00 a.m. at 3555 Timmons Ln, Houston, TX 77027.

Board members present included: Dr. Bobbi Henderson, Guy Jackson, Rachel Cevallos, Dr. Melissa Gonzalez, Doug Karr and Marie Arcos.

Board staff present included: Jennifer Starling, Jacinth Chapman, Cheryl Shepard, Danielle Knotts, Johnie Flores, Roderick Peoples, Ashley Glenn, Brandi Brown, Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Kristi Rangel, Leni Quick, Erica Jefferson, Russell Tomlin, and Juliet Stipeche.

Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C) Transition Updates: The Committee reviewed and discussed movement to a case management model with a focus on personalized care for customers rolled out in January 2025. There are a few challenges, including review of difficulties surrounding vendor payments (i.e. transition of payment issuance from bi-weekly to weekly), enrollment statuses, Wait List priority designations, and incorrect provider listings. Board staff is working closely with TWC to fix the errors and adequately address the 27,000 families currently on the Wait List and the 14-month waiting period for non-priority cases (4-month waiting period for priority cases).

Texas Rising Stars Mentoring Transition: After Children's Learning Institute (CLI) exited their contract, H-GAC temporarily onboarded 36 mentors. Thereafter, a plan was revealed to bring mentoring fully in-house. After a limited RFP response, the Board decided to hire 66 full-time mentors and support staff, expected by June 2025.

Career Pathways: This division was established in January 2025 aligning education and workforce services to support regional labor market demands. Programs in this division include:

- Adult Education and Literacy (AEL),
- Teacher Apprenticeship Program, and
- Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative.

Texas Apprenticeship Program in collaboration with the Houston Endowment's TNTP: The New Teacher Project was designed to help identify a pathway and train aspiring educators. On March 24, a group of stakeholders discussed a plan to develop a playbook/blueprint that will outline four-tiered apprenticeship structure; discussion of the collaboration between GCWB, the Houston Endowment and The New Teacher Project that is focused on meeting critical needs in our area; review of the development of a work group ("Charrette") for stakeholders to discuss funding and share resources.

Regional Convener Grant: This program has successfully been awarded phase two of the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative. Continuing efforts to boost credential attainment, streamline education to career transitions, and address regional workforce needs, through this initiative, the Board has contributed to dual credit opportunities, increased rates of direct college enrollment, and expanded access to workforce training, all while reducing student debt burden.

Hire Gulf Coast Youth Update: Review of the Summer Jobs Program (targeting 2,500 youth for summer employment), Summer Earn and Learn Initiative, and the Jobs Y'all Initiative.

Exploration of Nonprofit Foundation: The Committee discussed an opportunity to establish a nonprofit affiliate to attract philanthropic funding and pilot innovative programs aimed at advancing strategic priorities. A former legal proposal and consultation will be presented at the next Education committee meeting.

Vice Chair Karr concluded his report. No action was taken.

Ms. Joyce Johnson inquired on where the jobs are listed for the mentors and trainers that will be coming in-house. Executive Director Stipeche responded the positions will be posted on the H-GAC website. Board Chair Guthrie also raised a question regarding the space needed for training of the new staff, especially with the limited office space currently at H-GAC. AJ Dean shared that H-GAC leadership is working with a broker to identify additional space for the 66 new staff. An RFP

has been issued, and the proposal is being considered at the upcoming H-GAC Board meeting. Kristi Rangel added that we are not simply looking for desk space but also a facility that will accommodate large convenings for training—mandated by the TWC as well as for our providers. Chair Guthrie encouraged Board staff to proceed expeditiously with this effort, noting the importance of the child care quality function.

- g. Employer Engagement Committee Report (Chair Alan Heskamp): Chair Heskamp reported that the Employer Engagement Committee met in a hybrid meeting on March 12, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at 3555 Timmons Ln, Houston, TX 77027.

Board members present included: Board Staff: Alan Heskamp, Paul Puente, Guy Jackson, Mark Guthrie, Shareen Larmond, Cheryl Guido, Bin Yu, Lizandra Vasquez, Mou Sarkar, Sineria Ordonez

Board staff present included: Juliet Stipeche, Gabrielle Gonzalez, Alexandra Mallett, Ron Borski, Lacy Wolf, Roderick Peoples, Sable Harris, Melissa Steinmetz, Kristi Rangel, Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Romana Paniagua, Brandi Brown, Russell Tomlin, Parker Harvey, Desmond Taylor, Kevin Rodney, and Jeannette Dela Cruz.

Alexandra Mallett provided an update on key initiatives funded by the TIP Grant, the High-Demand Job Training Grant, and the Skills Development Grants. These efforts are deepening partnerships with employers and expanding training programs aligned with industry demand.

The team provided an update on the New Teacher Apprenticeship designed to help identify a pathway and train aspiring educators. On March 24, a group of stakeholders will meet to develop a playbook/blueprint that will outline four-tiered apprenticeship structure.

Gabi Gonzales shared updates on recent rapid response activity, including layoffs in the healthcare and energy sectors. SERCO continues to lead orientations for affected workers, helping them access retraining and job opportunities. The Committee emphasized the need for more targeted support and increased collaboration with employers to support successful career transitions.

Juliet Stipeche and Crosby Brito shared updates from the Governor's Healthcare Workforce Taskforce. Key priorities include expanding healthcare training pipelines and tracking legislative developments. A new advisory group will help keep stakeholders informed of policy changes that impact workforce development.

Ron Borski and Melissa Steinmetz presented regional trends in biotech and healthcare. They highlighted Houston's growing global role, with new partnerships through international biotech delegations. However, workforce shortages—particularly in retail healthcare—remain a concern.

The Committee also discussed building stronger partnerships with economic development councils, chambers, and trade groups. Employer advisory councils are being created for healthcare, IT, and manufacturing to ensure that workforce strategies are driven by industry needs.

The next meeting will focus on updates from the advisory councils and explore new ways to strengthen employer engagement.

Chair Heskamp concluded his report. No action was taken.

- h. Communications Committee Report (Committee Chair Doug Karr): Chair Karr reported that the Communications Committee met in a hybrid meeting on March 26, 2025, at 1:01 p.m. at 3555 Timmons Ln, Houston, TX, 77027.

Board members present included: Doug Karr, Guy Robert Jackson, Dr. Melanie Rodriguez, Lizandra Vasquez, and Sineria Ordonez. Board staff in attendance included: Juliet Stipeche, Kristi Rangel, AJ Dean, Russell Tomlin, Desmond Taylor, Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Romana Paniagua, Philip Garcia, Sabrina Parras, LaToya Casimere, Sable Harris-Buck, Jennifer Starling, Kevin Rodney, Janine Haynes, and Jenny Johnson. Also present were Tim Lankford and Dr. Michelle Cantú from Outreach Strategists.

Social Media and Outreach Report: LinkedIn presence has grown by 222 new followers—a significant and telling increase in the last 30 days among employers and policymakers. Facebook continues to be our most effective tool for community-level outreach. With a follower base of more than 10,000, we have focused our efforts on mobilizing engagement around programs that matter most to families and jobseekers. In the last 30 days, Facebook has recorded 5,000 views and 64 direct clicks, demonstrating that our strategy is not just building awareness, but also generating real traffic to our services. Instagram, often considered the most youth-centric of platforms, has also shown promise. WorkforceSolutionsNews.com was designed to strengthen our presence, broaden our reach, and drive traffic to Workforce Solutions News, we are launching a focused digital communications strategy built around purposeful content, platform engagement, and measurable outcomes.

The mission is simple: ensure that Workforce Solutions News becomes the go-to resource for career information, job opportunities, and employer solutions across our 13-county region. To ensure these messages reach a broad audience, our strategy includes a bilingual communications approach. All Facebook and LinkedIn posts will be shared in both English and Spanish. Instagram carousels will include Spanish captions, and all videos and Reels will feature subtitles in both languages. This dual-language model allows us to serve more residents across our region and reinforces our commitment to clear, inclusive communication.

Media Relations: We have earned media exposure totaling over \$214,000 in advertising value across ABC 13, Fox 26, and Houston Public Media, and the Houston Chronicle—nearly 900,000 estimated viewers reached.

Outreach included responses to high profile inquiries, promotion of workforce training, and apprenticeship initiatives.

Collateral and Messaging Development: The Hire Gulf Coast Youth completed its updated materials for the HGKY campaign, including printed collateral featuring QR codes that link directly to youth services, and a simplified web link: wrksolutions.com/hgcy.

Employer Services Push Card: A new card is being developed for use during employer meetings, showcasing how Workforce Solutions supports business needs.

WIOA Reauthorization Advocacy: At the request of Chair Mark Guthrie, we are producing a one-pager and push card to support the reauthorization of WIOA, positioning the Board as a thought leader in national workforce policy.

Branding & Identity Update: Outreach Strategists has reviewed and approved new design collateral. Updated materials are now being integrated into ImageSet and SharePoint, including refreshed PowerPoint and Word templates.

Community Engagement: A recent example is the February 25 Northshore Community Meeting held at the Anderson Center for the Arts. This event served as the starting point for reimagining service delivery in Northeast Harris County and reflects our commitment to engage authentically and collaboratively. We are now embedding a community-focused mindset across all engagement efforts. This includes:

- Stronger collaboration with Career and Technical Education (CTE) schools and training providers;
- Deepened relationships with employers, community leaders, and neighborhood organizations; and
- Clearer and more consistent messaging and branding that reflects our shared identity across all Workforce Solutions locations.

Recent Hiring Events:

February 20, 2025 – Healthcare & Allied Professions, Lone Star College – Kingwood:

- Job Seekers Registered: 399
- Job Seekers Attended: 325
- Employers Registered & Attended: 36
- Outreach Channels: Social media, email (GovDelivery), text messaging, and Career Advisor outreach.

March 20, 2025 – Business and Finance Hiring Event, Richmond Public Library:

- Job Seekers Registered: 1,148
- Job Seekers in Attendance: 442
- Employers Registered: 38
- Employers Attended: 25

- Outreach Channels: Social media, GovDelivery, Career Advisors (targeted by industry), recruiters, George Memorial Library staff.

Tools in Development: The current technological tools are in development:

- Power BI Dashboards: In development with consultant support to provide real-time, visual reporting of community engagement and outreach efforts;
- Central Events Calendar: Tracks upcoming and past events systemwide to reduce duplication, improve visibility, and enhance planning; and
- Pre/Post Event Surveys: Implemented via Eventbrite (pre-registration) and paper/QR codes (post-event) to better capture employer and job seeker feedback, assess satisfaction, and gather improvement ideas.

In conclusion, this quarter's achievements reflect more than operational progress—they mark a pivotal evolution in how Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast positions itself as a trusted, dynamic, and equity-focused voice in regional workforce development.

Chair Karr concluded his report. No action was taken.

Ms. Grace Rodriguez inquired about the Board's usage of YouTube, being that it is the most utilized social media platform. Chair Karr and Executive Director Stipeche both mentioned Board staff is working on short stories that are easily accessible and available via YouTube as well as other social media platforms. We are becoming more intentional about utilizing videos. Dr. Melanie Rodriguez complimented the news app, but mentioned in its current form, does it appear historical in nature. Executive Director Stipeche responded by letting her know the app has just launched; however, we are working to add job opportunities, upcoming job fairs, labor market reports, and other relevant information for employers and job seekers. Board Chair Guthrie requested an update on where we are with our website redesign. Kristi Rangel announced the website is scheduled to launch during early fall. AJ Dean added there has been several delays in negotiations during the procurement process, which has led to major delays in the roll out of final design.

10. Action Items

- a. Procurement Committee Report (Committee Vice Chair Doug Karr): Vice Chair Karr reported that the Procurement Committee met in a hybrid meeting on March 25, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at 3555 Timmons Ln, Houston, TX, 77027.

Board members present included Board Members: Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Doug Karr, Cheryl Guido, Mark Guthrie, Adrian Ozuna, Jeff LaBroski, Mou Sarkar, Paul Puente, Jonathan Lowe, Guy Robert Jackson, Doug Karr, and Grace Rodriguez. Board staff present included Juliet Stipeche, Desmond Taylor, Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Jennifer Graves, Russell Tomlin, Abdul Kargbo, Kevin Rodney, Romana Paniagua, Sabrina Uy, Jenny Johnson, Shawanna Thompson, Vanessa Salazar, Janine Haynes, Thomas Brown, Brandi Brown, Jessica Smith, and Sable Harris-Buck.

Updating Guidelines for Procurement and Contract Awards:

The Committee discussed the options presented by Board staff for approval guidelines for procurement and contract awards:

- Proposed Options for Contract Approvals:

Option 1: Authorizes staff to negotiate contract establishments, renewals, and amendments at or below \$249,999.99, with anything above \$250,000 requiring Board approval.

Option 2: Authorizes staff to negotiate contracts at or below \$49,999.99, with contracts \$50,000 or more requiring full Board approval, aligning with H-GAC's threshold.

- Contract Volume Impact:

- Option 1: 21 contracts would require Board approval.
- Option 2: 30 contracts would require Board approval.
- Nine contracts fall closer to the \$50,000 threshold.

- Board Oversight & Reporting:

- The Committee requested a reporting mechanism to track contract approvals made by staff.

- Emphasized the Board's role in oversight, not day-to-day negotiations.
 - Concerns raised regarding maintaining committee involvement regardless of the threshold selected.
- Threshold Justification:
 - The \$250,000 threshold aligns with the TWC procurement guidelines and remains below the allowable simplified acquisition threshold (recently increased to \$350,000).
- Risk & Liability Considerations:
 - Committee members inquired whether Option 1 posed greater risks than Option 2. Board staff confirmed no additional risk and noted all contracts remain subject to legal and procurement standards.
- Efficiency & Impact on Workload:
 - Option 1 would allow for faster contract execution and reduced meeting delays. Option 2 would require more Board involvement, increasing administrative workload. Committee members noted that delays in contract approvals negatively impact vendors, making it harder for them to forecast and plan. The importance of agility and innovation in procurement processes was emphasized.

Board staff recommended to the Committee, and the Committee recommended that the Board approve Option 1, with a reporting mechanism for staff to report to the Procurement Committee and the Board, all contracts approved by staff since the last meeting.

Mr. Alan Heskamp inquired on how cumbersome has it been to have contracts below \$250,000 come to the Board for approval. Vice Chair Karr responded with option 1, it would only require nearly 21 contracts to come before the Board compared to option 2, requiring nearly 30. Additionally, he added that the amount of time between the signing of a contract and Board approval could alter the rate. The number of contracts is miniscule compared to the overall operating budget.

Another question was raised as to how the number \$249,999.99 was reached? Most of the contracts fall between the \$50,000-249,999 range, particularly on services like printing, software, etc. Board Chair Guthrie also added that option 1 was the recommendation by Board staff.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt option 1: Authorizes staff to negotiate contract establishments, renewals, and amendments at or below \$249,999.99, with anything above \$250,000 requiring Board approval with staff to provide a written report to the Procurement Committee and Board all contracts approved by staff since the last meeting. The motion passed.

- b. San Jacinto College Award for the Advancement of Apprenticeships: Board Chair Guthrie reported that San Jacinto College, serving as the lead applicant for a statewide apprenticeship initiative supported by the TWC, has awarded \$50,000 for this initiative to each of the six participating workforce boards: Cameron, Capital Area, Gulf Coast, North Central, Northeast Texas, and West Central. This funding acknowledges the time, effort, and resources each board committed to the development and coordination of the initiative and supports ongoing implementation efforts. The GCWB will utilize the grant to supplement personnel and related costs associated with the promotion and expansion of registered apprenticeship programs in the region.

A motion was made and seconded regarding the acceptance of a \$50,000 grant from San Jacinto College related to the advancement of registered apprenticeship programs as part of the Board's regional outreach and strategic plan implementation. Dr. Allatia Harris abstained from the vote due to potential conflict of interest. The motion passed.

11. Presentations and Information:

- a. Performance and Production Report (Philip Garcia): (full report located in Board packet).

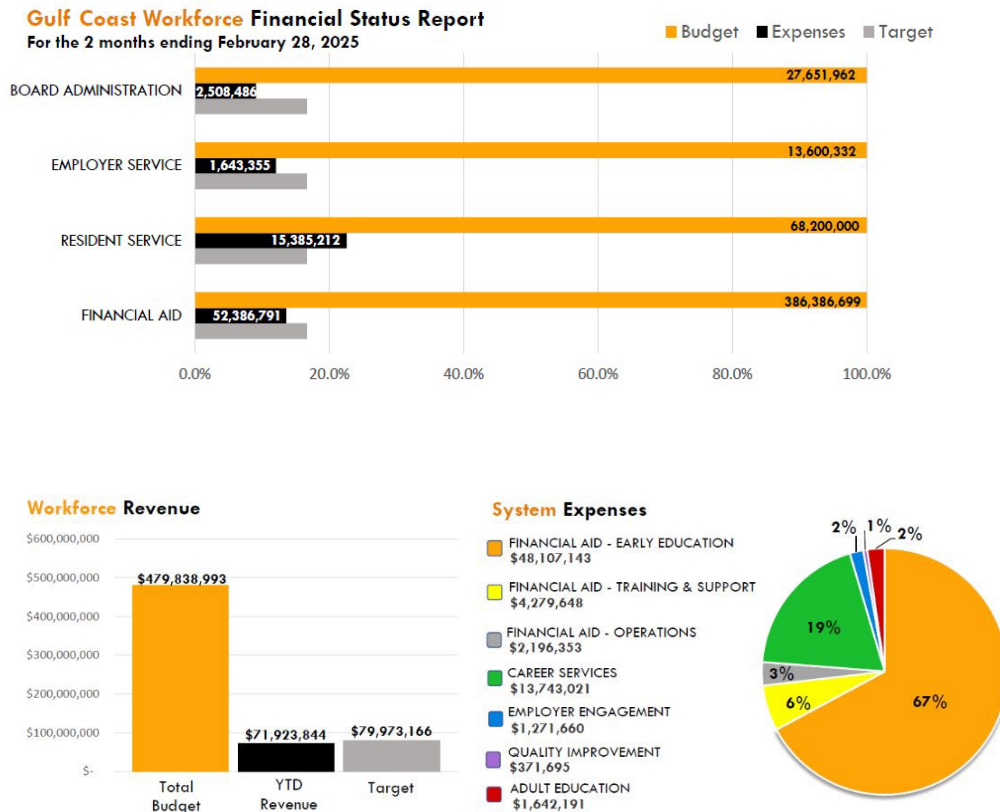
Timeframe	TWC Contracted Measures	Target	Performance	% of Target	TWC Action
Served: 10/23 - 9/24	Texas Talent Assistance	28,174	37,309	132.42%	
	Choices Full Engagement Rate - All Family	50.00%	57.27%	114.55%	
	Average Children Served Per Day	33,620	36,877	109.69%	
Served: 7/23 - 6/24	Measurable Skills Gains - Adult	66.00%	73.05%	110.68%	
	Measurable Skills Gains - DW	75.10%	74.16%	98.75%	
	Measurable Skills Gains - Youth	53.40%	55.13%	103.24%	
	Claimant Reemployment within 10 Weeks	60.00%	57.47%	95.79%	
Exited: 7/22 - 6/23	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Adult	\$6,500.00	\$6,536.16	100.56%	Lifted (Tap)
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - DW	\$9,400.00	\$12,084.51	128.35%	
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Youth	\$3,780.00	\$4,955.90	131.11%	
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - Adult	75.60%	74.76%	98.89%	
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - DW	83.10%	73.00%	87.84%	
	Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit - Youth	73.90%	66.28%	89.69%	PIA
	Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit - C&T	66.00%	63.10%	95.61%	
Exited: 1/22 - 12/22	Employed Q4 Post Exit - Adult	72.60%	71.72%	98.79%	
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - DW	79.50%	74.87%	94.18%	
	Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit - Youth	70.60%	66.89%	94.74%	
	Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post Exit - C&T	84.00%	82.90%	98.69%	
	Credential Rate - Adult	68.90%	56.17%	81.52%	PIA
	Credential Rate - DW	82.50%	68.02%	82.45%	PIA
	Credential Rate - Youth	55.70%	41.80%	75.05%	PIA
	Credential Rate - C&T	71.00%	54.90%	77.33%	

Addressing Performance Challenges in 2025:

- Enhanced Participant Assessments,
- Targeted, Stackable Training Investments,
- Expanded Work-Based Learning Models,
- Performance-Driven ETPL Policy Reform,
- Improved Youth Transition and Engagement,
- Sustained Post-Exit Support, and
- Enhanced Data Monitoring and Provider Accountability.

Board Chair Guthrie inquired if there is a way to assess the costs of each of the programs outlined in the chart. Yes, moving forward, costs will be included in the reporting chart. Mr. Guthrie followed up with Board staff to specifically outline which costs are allocated to adult learning versus youth programs as well as the amount it costs staff to administer these programs. The recommendation was received and will be included in future reports.

b. Expenditures Report (Brandi Brown):



- c. Legislative Update (Desmond Taylor): The 89th Texas Legislature convened its regular session on January 14, 2025, at noon and is scheduled to adjourn on June 2, 2025. Approximately 5,000 bills were filed, including forty-four specifically related to child care and/or workforce development. In addition to proposed legislation, several budget riders have been introduced addressing key priorities such as apprenticeships, skills development—particularly within health care workforce pipelines—and child care services.

Now well underway, the 89th Legislature is actively considering a range of policies with significant implications for workforce development and child care across the state. This update offers a high-level narrative overview of major legislative activity as of April 2, 2025, most relevant to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's mission. It highlights our visits and proposed workforce initiatives, child care legislation, and state budget provisions affecting the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), as well as significant education proposals—such as school vouchers and early education funding—that may indirectly impact workforce and child care

systems. The goal is to provide clear, professional insights that equip Board members with timely and strategic awareness of developments without delving into excessive detail.

Legislative Visits:

Senate Committee on Economic Development (formerly Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development): Executive Director Juliet Stipeche and Board staffer Desmond Taylor made several visits with key staffers of Members serving on the Senate Committee on Economic Development during their March 13, 2025 Capitol visits, specifically, the offices of Senator Carol Alvarado and Senator Phil King (chair). The emphasis of these meetings was sharing Gulf Coast Workforce Board's challenges with child care waitlists but also sharing innovative methods to decrease these lists as well as methods to enhance the region's workforce productivity and investments, such as partnerships with local EDCs and Chambers of Commerce as well as apprenticeship opportunities.

House Committee on International Relations and Economic Development: Executive Director Juliet Stipeche and Board staffer Desmond Taylor also met with key staffers of Members serving on the House Trade, Workforce, and Economic Development Committee, including the offices of Rep. Angie Chen Button (chair) and Rep. Armando Walle to discuss the Board's strategic plan, our legislative priorities, and child care challenges and opportunities.

Workforce and Child Care Bill Tracking: Board staff has been monitoring all pertinent bills relating to workforce and child care. Please find attached a list of bill numbers, author(s), description, and status as well as relevant budgetary riders for your file and review.

Workforce Development Initiatives: Workforce has emerged as a priority area this session, with an emphasis on expanding training opportunities, apprenticeships, and talent pipelines for high-demand industries. The Texas House even restructured its committees to elevate these issues – for example, it created a new Trade, Workforce and Economic Development Committee (absorbing duties from the former Business & Industry Committee) to specifically oversee workforce-related legislation.

***Refer to Board packet for 89th Legislative Bill Tracker*

- d. A Look at the Economy Update on the Labor Market (Mohammad Ahmadizadeh): Slides to full presentation attached in board packet.
- e. Communications and Media Update (Russell Tomlin): Rosenberg job fair recap video was shown via YouTube for meeting attendees.

12. Other Business: There was no other business.

13. Adjourn: Board Chair Guthrie adjourned the meeting at 11:56 a.m.

GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD

ARCOS, MARIE
Compudopt, Inc.
1602 Airline Drive
Houston, TX 77009
(713) 557-6575

Category: CBO

County: Harris

Marie.arcos@compudopt.org

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

BAKER, JENNIFER
Alief Independent School District
12160 Richmond Avenue,
Houston, TX 77082
(281) 796-7835

Category: Education

County: City of Houston

Jennifer.Baker@aliefisd.net

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

BELOW, SHONDA
Northeast Houston American
Federation of Teachers
5310 E Sam Houston Pkwy N, Ste M
Houston, TX 7701
(713) 598-7144

Category: Labor

County: Harris

sbelow@nehouaft.org

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

BOWLES, CARL
Bowles, Womack & Company, P.C.
24 Greenway Plaza, Suite 970
Houston, TX 77046
(713) 621-0050

Category: Private

County: Waller

carl@bowleswomack.com

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

CEVALLOS, RACHEL
Identity Plus, LLC
3205 Harrisburg Blvd.
Houston, TX 77003
(832) 797-7402

Category: Private

County: Harris

Rachel@identityplusllc.com

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

COCKRELL, DORIAN
JPMorgan Chase
712 Main St.
Houston, TX 77002
(817) 707--5957

Category: Private

County: City of Houston

Dorian.cockrell@jpmchase.com

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

DOBERT, MICHAEL
HR in Alignment, LLC
16331 Blossomwood Ln,
Sugar Land, TX 77498
(281) 889-9075

Category: Private

County: Fort Bend

mdobert@hrinalignment.com

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

FERDINAND, MICHAEL
Matagorda County Economic
Development Corp
4000 Avenue F,
Bay City, TX 77414
(979) 476-4334

Category: Private

County: Matagorda

mferdinand@mcedc.net

Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

GONZALEZ, MELISSA
Lone Star College
20000 Kingwood Drive
Kingwood, TX 77339
(281) 312-1644
Category: Education
County: Harris
melissa.gonzalez@lonestar.edu
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

GLENN, REX
Mechanical Contractors Association of
Houston
13810 Champion Forest Dr,
Suite 202, Houston, TX 77069
(281) 440-4380
Category: Private
County: City of Houston
glenn@rexassociationmanagement.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

GUIDO, CHERYL
Texas Workforce Solutions-VR Services
4424 North Freeway, Suite A
Houston, TX 77022
(713) 458-8593
Category: State Agency
cheryl.guido@twc.texas.gov
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

GUTHRIE, MARK
Board Chair
Winstead PC
600 Travis Street, Suite 5200
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 650-2730
Category: Private
County: City of Houston
mguthrie@winstead.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

HENDERSON, BOBBIE ALLEN
Vice Chair
Texas Southern University
4203 Charleston Street
Houston, TX 77021-1415
(713) 748-6508
Category: ABE
County: City of Houston
bobbieahenderson@gmail.com
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

HARRIS, ALLATIA
San Jacinto College
8060 Spencer Hwy,
Pasadena, TX 77505
(281) 459-7140
Category: ABE
County: City of Houston
Allatia.Harris@sjcd.edu
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

HESKAMP, ALAN
Heskamp & Associates LLC
311 Hoskins Broadway
El Campo, TX 77437
(979) 758-4521
Category: Private
County: Wharton
aheskamp@sbcglobal.net
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

JACKSON, GUY ROBERT
Vice Chair
Chambers County Abstract Co. Inc.
P.O. Box 640
Anahuac, TX 77514
(409) 267-6262, ext. 35
Category: Private
County: Chambers
grj@ccac.net
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

JONES, LAVONE
Comcast
8590 Tidwell Road
Houston, TX 77040
(346) 306-4770
Category: Private
County: City of Houston
Lavone_jones@comcast.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

JOHNSON, JOYCE
Why Sales Network
1605 Milby Street B
Houston, TX 77003
(713) 542-5711
Category: Private
County: Harris
joyce@whysalesnetwork.com
Term: October 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2026

KARR, DOUG
Pro Staff/Atterro
27 Canoe Birch Place
The Woodlands, TX 77382
(832) 967-7684
Category: Private
County: Montgomery
raiderkarr@aol.com
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

LABROSKI, JEFFREY
Plumbers Local Union No. 68
502 Link Road
P.O. Box 8746
Houston, TX 77249
(713) 869-3592
Category: Labor
County: City of Houston
ski@plu68.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

LARMOND, SHAREEN
West Gulf Maritime Association
1717 Turning Basin Drive, Suite 200
Houston, TX 77029
(713) 715-6430
Category: Private
County: Harris
shareen@wgma.org
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

LINDSEY, SUSAN
Texas Workforce Solutions-VR Services
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 790
Houston, TX 77027
(713) 503-4364
Category: State Agency
County:
Susan.Lindsey@twc.texas.gov
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

MAKANY RIVERA, TANYA
AT&T
6500 W Loop South
Bellaire, TX 77401
(832) 389-0902
Category: Private
County: Harris
tm457x@att.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

LOWE, JONATHAN
International Alliance of Theatrical
Stage Employees
3030 North Freeway
Houston, TX 77009
(713) 697-3999
Category: Labor
County: City of Houston
jonrlowe@yahoo.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

MELTON, EDWARD
Texas Library Association
5749 South Loop East
Houston, TX 77033
(713) 274-6600
Category: Literacy
County: Harris County
edward.melton@hcpl.net
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

ORDONEZ, SINERIA
Comerica Bank
2 Riverway Drive
Houston, TX 77056
(512) 203-5945
Category: Private
County: Harris
serdonez@comerica.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

OSER, MARGARET
United Way of Greater Houston
50 Waugh Drive
Houston, TX 77007
(713) 685-2788
Category: CBO
County: City of Houston
moser@unitedwayhouston.org
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

OZUNA, ADRIAN
Prosperity Bank
80 Sugar Creek Center Blvd
Sugar Land, TX 77478
(832) 259-7692
Category: Private
County: Harris
adrian.ozuna@prosperitybankusa.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

PUENTE, PAUL J.
Vice-Chair
Houston Gulf Coast Building and
Construction Trades Council
1301 West 13th St, Suite D
Deer Park, TX 77536
(713) 926-4433
Category: Labor
County: City of Houston
paul@hgcbctc.org
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

RILEY, MONICA
The Community Gatekeepers
P.O. Box 2082
Missouri City, TX 77459
(281) 235-3933
Category: CBO
County: Fort Bend
monicacriley7@gmail.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

RODRIGUEZ, GRACE
Impact Hub Houston
808 Travis Street, Suite 102
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 568-6835
Category: Economic Development
County: Harris
Grace.rodriquez@impacthub.net
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

RODRIGUEZ, MELANIE
Elevate Latinas, LLC
444 N Everton St
Houston, TX 77033
(713) 899-6559
Category: Private
County: City of Houston
melanie@elevatelatinas.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

RUPANI, NASRUDDIN
Worlds Gold & Diamonds, Inc.
7500 Bellaire Blvd #900
Houston, TX 77036
(713) 995-7033
Category: Public Assistance
County: City of Houston
rupani@locostleader.com
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

SARKAR, MOU
Pearland Economic Development
Corporation
3519 Liberty Drive, Suite 350
Pearland, TX 77581
(281) 997-3007
Category: Economic Development
County: Brazoria
msarkar@pearlandedc.com
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

SEGOVIA, VALERIE GARCIA
Director, Outreach & Education, TEES
Nuclear Engineering & Science Center
1095 Nuclear Science Road
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 240-5005
Category: Education
County: Matagorda
vsegovia@tamu.edu
valeriegsegovia@gmail.com
Term: January 1, 2024, thru December 31, 2025

SOROLA-POHLMAN, LENORA
Sorola Consulting Services, Inc
2314 Tannehill Dr,
Houston, TX 77008
(713) 628-7500
Category: Private
County: City of Houston
lenora@navarroig.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

TAYLOR, SANDRA
Tiny Toes Academy
1743 Trammel Fresno
Fresno, TX 77545
(832) 630-6301
Category: Child Care
County: Fort Bend
tinytoesacademy@yahoo.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

VAZQUEZ, LIZANDRA
Texas Workforce Commission
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
Houston, TX 77027
(713) 688-6890
Category: State Agency
lizandra.vazquez@wrksolutions.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

WEBSTER, MICHAEL
Houston Community College
3100 Main Street
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 718-8030
Category: Education
County: City of Houston
michael.webster@hccs.edu
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

YU, BIN
Asian Chamber of Commerce
3535 Briarpark Drive, Suite 108
Houston, TX 77036
(713) 818-9687
Category: Private
County: City of Houston
bin.yu@medxsunshine.com
Term: January 1, 2025, thru December 31, 2026

WORKFORCE BOARD KEY STAFF:

Juliet Stipeche, Director

Desmond Taylor, Program Administrator, Board Relations

Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Senior Planner, Board Relations

Kristi Rangel, Assistant Director of Workforce

Sabrina Uy, Senior Manager of Quality Assurance and Risk

Carl Salazar, Senior Manager of Strategy and Innovation

AJ Dean, Senior Manager, Fiscal Administration and Contract Management

Russell Tomlin, Senior Manager, Career Services

Parker Harvey, Manager for Regional Economic Analysis

Houston-Galveston Area Council

3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120

P.O. Box 22777

Houston, TX 77227-2777

(713) 627-3200

Fax: (713) 993-4578

<http://www.wrksolutions.com>

GULF COAST WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

BOARD COMMITTEES

Audit/Monitoring

- Guy Robert Jackson – Chair
- Carl Bowles – Vice Chair
- Cheryl Guido
- Mark Guthrie
- Doug Karr
- Paul Puente

Budget

- Carl Bowles – Chair
- Mark Guthrie – Vice Chair
- Bobbie Henderson
- Guy Robert Jackson
- Doug Karr
- Rachel Cevallos
- Paul Puente

By-Laws

- Michael Webster – Chair
- Adrian Ozuna – Vice Chair
- Mark Guthrie
- Alan Heskamp
- Guy Robert Jackson

Career Services

- Adrian Ozuna – Chair
- Cheryl Guido – Vice Chair
- Melissa Gonzalez
- Dorian Cockrell
- Michael Webster
- Bin Yu
- Edward Melton
- Rupani Nasruddin
- Michael Dobert
- Allatia Harris

- Paul Puente
- Lizandra Vasquez

Communications

- Doug Karr – Chair
- – Vice Chair
- Mark Guthrie
- Bobbie Henderson
- Guy Robert Jackson
- Jonathan Lowe
- Michael Webster
- Melanie Rodriguez
- Marie Arcos
- Rachel Cevallos
- Cheryl Guido
- Paul Puente
- Lizandra Vasquez
- Tanya Makany-Rivera

Education

- Bobbie Henderson – Chair
- Doug Karr – Vice Chair
- Shonda Below
- Cheryl Guido
- Mark Guthrie
- Alan Heskamp
- Jeff LaBroski
- Edward Melton
- Margaret Oser
- Monica Riley
- Valerie Segovia
- Sandra Taylor
- Rupani Nasruddin
- Grace Rodriguez
- Jennifer Baker
- Guy Robert Jackson
- Allatia Harris

Employer Engagement

- Alan Heskamp – Chair
- Jeff LaBroski – Vice Chair
- Cheryl Guido
- Mark Guthrie
- Bobbie Henderson
- Guy Robert Jackson
- Shareen Larmond
- Mou Sarkar
- Melanie Rodriguez
- Grace Rodriguez
- Marie Arcos
- Glenn Rex
- Michael Webster
- Allatia Harris
- Carl Bowles
- Paul Puente
- Lizandra Vasquez

Government Relations

- Guy Robert Jackson – Chair
- – Vice Chair
- Mark Guthrie
- Bobbie Henderson

Nominating

- Doug Karr – Chair
- Jeff LaBroski – Vice Chair
- Alan Heskamp

Procurement

- Bobbie Henderson – Chair
- Doug Karr – Vice Chair
- Cheryl Guido
- Mark Guthrie
- Alan Heskamp
- Jeff LaBroski
- Adrian Ozuna
- Paul Puente
- Guy Robert Jackson
- Rachel Cevallos

Report Card

Appointed by Board Chair as needed.

Strategic Planning

- Carl Bowles – Chair
- Paul Puente – Vice Chair
- Cheryl Guido
- Mark Guthrie
- Bobbie Henderson
- Doug Karr
- Adrian Ozuna
- Melanie Rodriguez
- Grace Rodriguez
- Michael Webster

GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD ATTENDANCE

	Board Member	02/04/25	3/4/25 (S/C)	04/08/25	06/03/25	08/05/25	10/07/25	12/02/25
1	Arcos, Marie	✓						
2	Baker, Jennifer							
3	Below, Shonda	✓		✓				
4	Bowles, Carl	✓	✓	✓				
5	Cevallos, Rachel		✓	✓				
6	Cockrell, Dorian	✓						
7	Dobert, Michael							
8	Ferdinand, Mike							
9	Gonzalez, Melissa	✓	✓	✓				
10	Guido, Cheryl	✓	✓	✓				
11	Guthrie, Mark	✓	✓	✓				
12	Harris, Allatia			✓				
13	Henderson, Bobbie Allen	✓	✓					
14	Heskamp, Alan	✓		✓				
15	Jackson, Guy Robert	✓	✓	✓				
16	Johnson, Joyce	✓		✓				
17	Jones, Lavone							
18	Karr, Doug	✓	✓	✓				
19	LaBroski, Jeff	✓	✓					
20	Larmond, Shareen	✓		✓				
21	Lindsey, Susan		✓	✓				
22	Lowe, Jonathan	✓	✓					
23	Makany-Rivera, Tanya			✓				
24	Melton, Edward		✓	✓				
25	Ordonez, Sineria		✓	✓				
26	Oser, Margaret		✓	✓				
27	Ozuna, Adrian	✓	✓	✓				
28	Puente, Paul	✓	✓					
29	Rex, Glenn							
30	Riley, Monica			✓				
31	Rodriguez, Grace	✓	✓	✓				
32	Rodriguez, Melanie		✓	✓				
33	Rupani, Nasruddin	✓	✓					
34	Sarkar, Mou		✓	✓				
35	Segovia, Valerie		✓					
36	Sorola-Pohlman, Lenora							
37	Taylor, Sandra	✓	✓	✓				
38	Vazquez, Lizandra	✓	✓	✓				
39	Webster, Michael		✓	✓				
40	Yu, Bin	✓	✓	✓				

Board Chair Remarks

Resolution Honoring ABC13's Nick Natario as the Inaugural Recipient of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Community Champion Award

Community Champion Award

Board Chair Mark Guthrie is proud to announce the establishment of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Community Champion Award. This award is created to recognize community members who have demonstrated extraordinary dedication, made significant contributions, and had an enduring impact on workforce development within the Gulf Coast region in partnership with the Board. It serves as a formal acknowledgment of outstanding community contributions that align with and significantly support the mission and vision of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board.

Honoree

The inaugural recipient of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Community Champion Award is Mr. Nick Natario, a distinguished multimedia journalist with ABC13 KTRK.

Background

Mr. Natario is being honored for his exceptional and consistent efforts in highlighting critical workforce issues and promoting meaningful employment opportunities throughout the Gulf Coast region. For approximately the past five years, coinciding with this significant 5th anniversary of our close collaboration, his work has played a pivotal role in elevating public awareness and understanding of workforce challenges and solutions. He has significantly supported our mission through impactful reporting, innovative storytelling, and committed community engagement. This enduring partnership between Mr. Natario, KTRK Channel 13, and the workforce development efforts in our region has been invaluable.

Notably, Mr. Natario's leadership in initiatives such as ABC13's "Who's Hiring" virtual job fairs, which began around April 2020 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, has directly connected thousands of job seekers with viable career opportunities. These efforts, conducted in collaboration with the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's operating affiliate Workforce Solutions - Gulf Coast, have been particularly crucial in strengthening economic resilience and prosperity across the region, especially during the challenging recovery from the pandemic. His

journalistic integrity, compassionate storytelling, and unwavering commitment to community empowerment have earned Mr. Natario widespread respect. As a testament to the impact of this partnership, Fort Bend County declared March 31, 2022, as "Nick Natario Day" in his honor.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board deeply appreciates Nick Natario and ABC13 KTRK for their invaluable partnership and steadfast commitment to public service journalism. Their collaborative work has not only consistently supported community well-being and workforce advancement but has also profoundly impacted the lives of countless individuals. By bridging the gap between job seekers and employers, this initiative has provided vital opportunities for residents to achieve financial stability and career growth, while simultaneously supplying businesses with the talent needed to thrive. This collective effort has truly changed lives for the better, fostering hope and strengthening the fabric of our entire Gulf Coast community.

Action

That the Gulf Coast Workforce Board adopts this Resolution Honoring Nick Natario as the Inaugural Recipient of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Community Champion Award.

Audit and Monitoring Committee

Update for May 2025

Executive Summary

The Audit and Monitoring Committee, chaired by Mr. Guy R. Jackson, met on May 15, 2025, at 3555 Timmons Ln, Houston, TX 77027, Room 2D at 1:00 p.m. Other board members present included Board Chair Mark Guthrie, Cheryl Guido, Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Joyce Johnson, Doug Karr, Lenora Sorola Pohlman, Mou Sarkar, and Lizandra Vasquez. Staff members present included Juliet Stipeche, Desmond Taylor, AJ Dean, Kristi Rangel, Russell Tomlin, Sabrina Uy, LaToya Casimere, Angelis Barnes, Willie Coleman, Abdul Kargbo, Romana Paniagua, Jenny Johnson, Shawonna Thompson, Vanessa Salazar, Thomas Brown, Brandi Brown, Jessica Smith, Johnathan Benjamin, Philip Garcia, Crosby Brito, Jennifer Starling, Sable Harris-Buck, Kimberly Lindolph, Freyah Richard, Angela Williams, Negail Dixon, Rauf Baig, Jennifer Roberts, Cheryl Shepard, and Pamela Fanniel.

Sabrina Uy was introduced as the new Senior Manager of Quality Assurance and Risk. The Committee received updates from Board staff on the development and implementation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across Early Education, Career Services, and Employer Engagement. These indicators are aligned with the Board's strategic goals, and staff presented progress on near-term Level 0 and Level 1 KPIs, along with noted challenges related to data access and reporting through the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

Board staff also provided a regional performance update for Q1 FY2025, which showed the Gulf Coast region exceeded statewide benchmarks in Measurable Skills Gains and Median Earnings for Adult and Dislocated Worker populations. While certain credential attainment and post-exit employment indicators fell slightly below targets, targeted improvement strategies are underway through Performance Improvement Actions (PIAs).

The Committee reviewed updates on service provider monitoring and technical program compliance. Quality Assurance staff shared findings from monitoring reviews of BakerRipley, Interfaith, and Equus career offices, citing recurring issues in case management documentation, SNAP and TANF cooperation, and data entry. Final responses are pending from each provider.

Additionally, updates were presented regarding financial monitoring. Since the last report, four final reviews have been issued with low overall risk findings, and six reviews are currently in progress.

Quality Assurance presented an overview of updates to implement the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) framework for Enterprise Risk Management. QA is also exploring cloud-based monitoring and risk management tools to improve coordination, reduce manual tracking, and support compliance across systems.

The Committee was briefed on current interventions. The Texas Workforce Commission has lifted the TAP for Adult Median Earnings Q2, affirming the Board's progress on this performance measure. Internally, Performance Improvement Plans have been initiated for the Adult Education Center and the BakerRipley Financial Aid Payment Office due to issues with internal controls, delayed financial claims, and communication challenges.

Updates on the PY24 TWC Monitoring reports were also shared. While most issues have been resolved, documents are being submitted in response to one remaining finding from the Adult Education report. Another issue regarding SNAP work activities from the TWC monitoring report is under Corrective Action. As part of this plan, QA will conduct monthly desk reviews for the next four months.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Framework Update

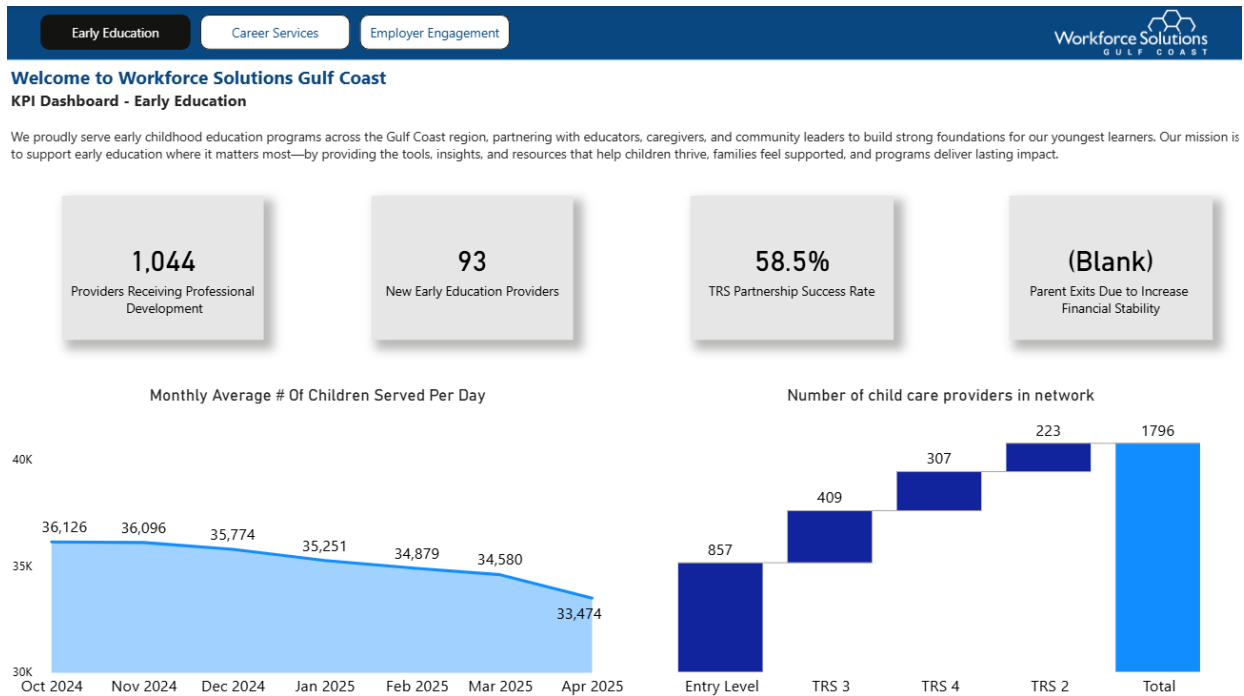
We continue to make progress in developing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to inform and guide future program performance measurement. Over the past three meetings, the Audit & Monitoring Committee has reviewed proposed KPIs for Early Education, Career Services, and Employer Engagement. Since then, we've focused on data analysis and dashboard development to support regular reporting of these activities.

As our data infrastructure is closely tied to systems managed by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), we have encountered some challenges in accessing certain data sets related to newly developed KPIs. We expect data availability and reporting capabilities to improve as TWC systems evolve. Additionally, some of the original indicators require technology enhancements—such as website upgrades—before we can fully track and report on associated activities.

Our current efforts have concentrated on Level 0 and Level 1 KPIs, which represent near-term, measurable opportunities. All KPIs are strategically aligned with the Workforce Board's priorities:

1. Support Business-Forward Strategies to Fuel the Regional Economy
2. Serve as a Convener and Forge Strategic Partnerships
3. Increase Awareness of Services and Opportunities
4. Improve Service Delivery through Technology and Innovation

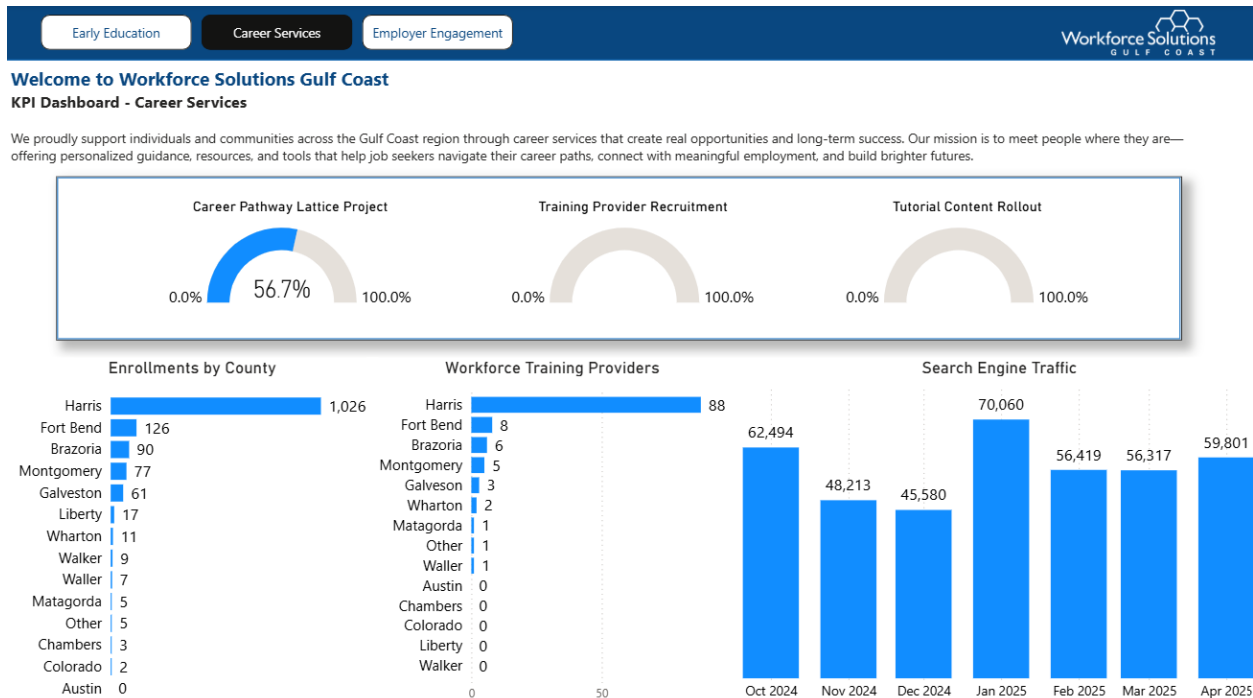
We are pleased to share the following activity:



Early Education – Key Performance Indicators

- **Goal:** Provide professional development for early education providers through virtual and in-person options. Since October 1, 2024, we have provided professional development support to 1,044 early education providers.
- **Goal:** Strengthen outreach and engagement with quality early learning centers. We are successfully partnering with 58.5% of licensed child care providers in our region.
- **Goal:** Develop and sustain partnerships with high-quality early learning providers. We added 93 early education providers this program year.
- **Goal:** Equip parents and guardians with resources to enhance family socioeconomic well-being. TX3C system challenges is limiting our ability to report in this area.

- **Foundational Metrics:** As of April 2025, we have 33,474 children enrolled in early education assistance and 1,796 early education providers.



Career Services – Key Performance Indicators

- **Goal:** Create and expand opportunities for technical degrees and career pathways. Our Regional Economic Analysis team is currently conducting a career lattice research project. 17 anchor occupations have been reviewed with 13 remaining to be validated.
- **Goal:** Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to prioritize visibility of career opportunities. Our website received 59,801 visits in April driven by search engine traffic demonstrating strong online engagement with career-related content.
- **Goal:** Expand the training provider network to meet the demands of local employers. We are in the final stages of updating our training provider guidance, which will support our ability to actively recruit new providers aligned with regional workforce needs.
- **Goal:** Develop online tutorials to guide users in utilizing Workforce Solutions resources. We are currently procuring a Learning Management System (LMS) that will offer external users access to short, self-paced training modules.

- **Foundational Metrics:** We currently utilizing 116 training partners in our network and have 1,439 customers enrolled training opportunities.



Employer Engagement Program – Key Performance Indicators

- **Goal:** Prioritizing employer outreach to demand industries and occupations that drive regional economic development. 34.7% of our staff entered job posting are currently in targeted industries.
- **Goal:** Strengthen collaboration among industry leaders, workforce partners, and economic development stakeholders to align workforce strategies with employer needs. The Employer Engagement team plans to hold our first advisory committee meeting in August.
- **Goal:** Expand employer access to Workforce Solutions through a centralized, user-friendly digital hub and targeted outreach efforts. The redesign of the Workforce Solutions website is currently 30% complete and is expected to significantly enhance the overall digital experience for employers.
- **Goal:** Enhance employer service efficiency by leveraging technology to provide real-time support, training, and feedback mechanisms. We have conducted 209 HR-focused seminars, providing employers with valuable education on a wide range of workforce-related topics. We are also procuring a survey software to collect feedback from employers.

- Foundational Metrics: We have assisted 7,172 employers of which 12.7% are returning employers who have reengaged with our services.

System Review

In our ongoing effort to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our system, this report offers a comprehensive review of performance, production, and expenditures at the contractor level for key service providers. This review encompasses assessments of technical program compliance, financial monitoring, and evaluations of customer experience. It prioritizes alignment with our strategic goals and tackles identified deficiencies through targeted interventions and technical assistance.

Performance and Production

Reporting Infrastructure Enhancements

Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast continues to work closely with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) as it undertakes significant enhancements to the statewide reporting infrastructure. While progress has been made and several reports have been successfully updated, data completeness remains a challenge in certain areas. To mitigate these gaps, we are actively implementing standardized reporting tools across all service providers. These tools are designed to enhance consistency, accuracy, and efficiency in data collection and reporting—key elements that support informed decision-making and high-quality service delivery across our region.

TWC recently shared an update reflecting our region's performance as of December 2024. However, the accompanying data source has not yet been provided. In the interim, we continue to rely on internally developed, predictive reporting models aligned with TWC methodologies. These models support proactive performance monitoring and continuous refinement of our reporting processes.

Provider Collaboration & Support

Strengthening collaboration with our service providers remains a top priority. To address reporting challenges and sustain high-quality performance outcomes, we have expanded our provider engagement strategies. Bi-monthly sessions with provider data management teams have been launched, creating a collaborative space for updates, best practice sharing, and strategy alignment. These sessions support a culture of shared accountability and continuous improvement.

In addition, we have rolled out a robust training series for both service provider staff and Board personnel. This series includes tools such as enhanced career

assessments and personalized interviewing techniques. The goal is to better equip frontline staff to guide job seekers toward meaningful, well-aligned employment opportunities, ultimately improving both individual and system-level outcomes.

Performance and Regional Comparison Summary (Q1 FY2025: October–December 2024)

The first quarter of FY2025 reflects a strong start for the Gulf Coast region, with performance exceeding statewide benchmarks in several key areas under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Notable highlights include superior results in Measurable Skills Gains for both Adult (+6.02%) and Dislocated Worker (+11.01%) participants, as well as gains in Median Earnings for both groups. These outcomes point to successful alignment between training investments and labor market needs and underscore the region's ongoing commitment to upskilling and career development.

Additionally, the region led the state in Claimant Reemployment within 10 Weeks (112.70%), reinforcing the effectiveness of our reemployment strategies and employer engagement efforts.

While credential attainment for Adult (78.20%), Dislocated Worker (72.06%), and Career & Technical (C&T) (74.51%) participants continues to lag behind the state, these areas are already being addressed through targeted Performance Improvement Actions (PIAs). Initial results from these initiatives are promising, with reforms focusing on program alignment, expanded training pathways, and enhanced follow-up services. Employment outcomes for Dislocated Workers in Q4 Post-Exit and for C&T participants in Q2 Post-Exit were also modestly below state averages but remain within a manageable range. These indicators are being closely monitored as part of our broader quality assurance and improvement strategy.

Youth outcome data was not available for this reporting period. However, system upgrades are in progress to ensure improved data availability and reporting in future cycles.

Overall, Q1 performance demonstrates the strength of our regional workforce system and validates the strategic improvements underway. The Gulf Coast Board remains committed to building on this momentum through sustained provider engagement, enhanced data practices, and continued investment in participant success.

Measure		% of Target		
		State Performance	Gulf Coast Performance	State vs Gulf Coast Difference
WIOA Outcome Measures	Employed Q2 Post Exit - Adult	94.86%	94.73%	-0.13%
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - Adult	89.14%	90.51%	1.37%
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Adult	87.26%	91.89%	4.63%
	Credential Rate - Adult	91.22%	78.20%	-13.02%
	Measurable Skills Gains - Adult	87.24%	93.26%	6.02%
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - DW	90.34%	95.63%	5.29%
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - DW	87.29%	80.72%	-6.57%
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - DW	98.29%	99.53%	1.24%
	Credential Rate - DW	91.28%	72.06%	-19.22%
	Measurable Skills Gains - DW	79.92%	90.93%	11.01%
	Empl./Enrolled Q2 Post Exit - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Empl./Enrolled Q4 Post Exit - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Credential Rate - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Measurable Skills Gains - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Employed/ Enrolled Q2 - C&T	88.82%	87.21%	-1.61%
	Employed/ Enrolled Q2-Q4 - C&T	91.19%	91.67%	0.48%
	Credential Rate C&T	88.87%	74.51%	-14.36%
Reemployment and Employer	Claimants Reemployment within 10 weeks	103.90%	112.70%	8.80%
	Texas Talent Assistance Rate	-----	135.98%	-----
Program Participation	Choices Full Engagement Rate	-----	-----	-----
	Average Children Served Per Day	105.07%	101.91%	-3.16%
Adult Education (Feb 2025)	Adult Ed Total 12+ Hour Students	132.73%	84.03%	-48.70%
	Integrated Education/Training - IET (All)	95.44%	56.84%	-38.60%
	Intensives	133.71%	76.53%	-57.18%
	Popular	-----	67.38%	-----

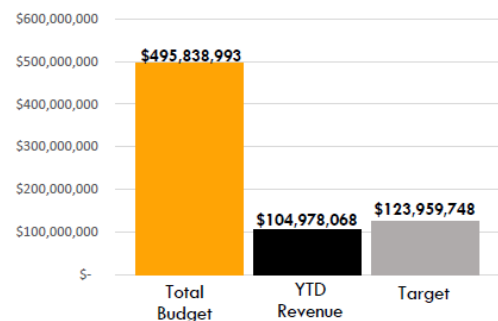
Expenditure Update

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board budget outlines how it intends to utilize its revenue to realize the objectives outlined in the Board's strategic plan. The budget details the allocation of resources to operate Workforce Solutions and generate positive outcomes in the region.

Revenue Overview

The 2025 budgeted revenue totals over \$495 million. The Year-to-Date revenue as of March 2025 is \$105 million, slightly behind the target of \$124 million.

Workforce Revenue



Expenditure Overview

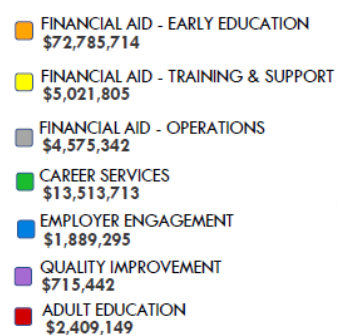
Financial aid represents \$82.4 million of expenditures with \$72.8 million for Early Education, \$5.0 million for Training & Support, and \$4.6 million for Operations.

Career Services represents \$13.5 million, and Adult Education represents \$2.4 million of the Resident Service expenditures.

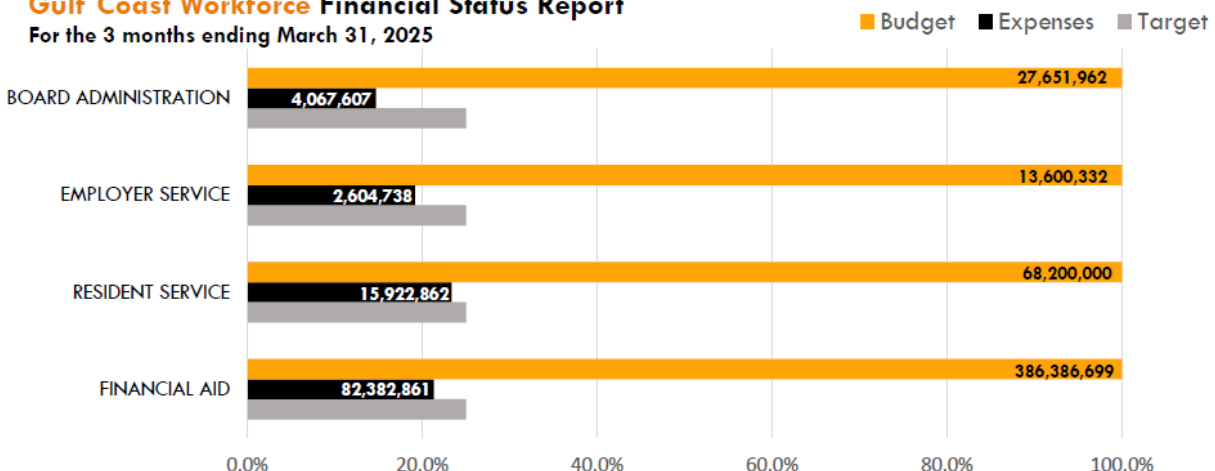
Employer Engagement and Quality Improvement represent \$1.9 million and \$0.7 million, respectively, for Employer Services.

Board Administration is \$4.1 million.

System Expenses



Gulf Coast Workforce Financial Status Report For the 3 months ending March 31, 2025



Technical Program Compliance

Technical Program Compliance reviews consist of compliance testing of contract and policy requirements and customer experience testing conducted by the Quality Assurance Team. The scope of each review is determined by the terms and conditions specified in the service provider's contract. Financial monitoring is conducted separately, which is discussed later in this report.

In addition to conducting program monitoring reviews, Quality Assurance facilitates document collection for Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) monitoring visits and responses. Quality Assurance conducts additional desk reviews when requested by TWC Audit Resolution.

BakerRipley Career Office: We reviewed data and operations from October 2023 to February 2025 and assessed performance, compliance, information security, customer satisfaction, and career office visits. The review identified recurring findings in case management, SNAP and TANF cooperation, documenting case notes in Work in Texas (WIT), and maintaining supporting documentation in multiple areas. The recurrence in findings indicates a need for additional oversight, staff training, and coaching while working with Board staff to receive technical assistance and address concerns. Areas that need improvement are:

- **Case Management**—Staff did not ensure assessments were completed and documented appropriately, that Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) were developed, and that they included all required elements. Participants were also not enrolled in appropriate services based on WIT case notes and the Individual Service Strategy (ISS).
- **SNAP Cooperation**—Staff did not enter case notes containing all required elements or submit required forms to Health and Human Services when appropriate. Accurate data entry of cooperation hours in WIT did not occur, and penalties for non-cooperation were not initiated within the required time frames. Appropriate Good Cause was not requested or properly documented in WIT.
- **TANF Cooperation**—Staff did not ensure that the participant completed the required literacy assessment and that it was entered in WIT if administered. They also did not ensure the accurate entry of submitted cooperation hours in the WIT Attendance ribbon, and that the non-cooperation penalty was appropriate and initiated within the required time frames. Case notes did not indicate that staff made efforts to move the participant toward self-sufficiency and the customer's next steps.
- **Choices Childcare Eligibility**—Staff did not enter an activity interruption and documented in case notes when a participant did not meet participation requirements. All participants tested passed eligibility.

- National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) – Staff did not enter the eligibility case note with all required information. All participants tested passed eligibility.
- Rapid Re-Employment (RESEA)— Staff did not develop the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to include all required information or review work logs and maintain them in WIT.
- Non-Custodial Parents (NCP)—Staff did not notify the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) immediately or attempt to re-engage participants prior to requesting removal from the program. When necessary, the request to remove was not submitted to OAG in a timely manner, and Activity 11—Planned Gap was not opened until approval was received. Staff also did not maintain weekly or monthly contact with participants as required and did not document all actions in both TWIST and COLTS.
- Staff Training and Professional Development — Staff did not complete the required training hours.
- Priority of Service – Monitors visited 11 career offices, and staff did not maintain written or electronic copies of the Priority of Service policy.

Equus Career Office: We reviewed data and operations from October 2023 to February 2025 and assessed performance, compliance, information security, customer satisfaction, and conducted career office visits. The review identified recurring findings in case management, SNAP and TANF cooperation, documenting case notes in Work in Texas (WIT), and maintaining supporting documentation in multiple areas. The recurrence in findings indicates a need for additional oversight, staff training, and coaching while working with Board staff to receive technical assistance and address concerns. Areas that need improvement are:

- Case Management—Staff did not ensure assessments were completed and documented appropriately. In addition, staff did not maintain appropriate monthly contact or make timely attempts to contact participants. Participants were also not enrolled in appropriate services based on WIT case notes and the ISS.
- SNAP Cooperation – Staff did not enter case notes containing all required elements or submit required forms to Health and Human Services as required. They also did not ensure accurate entry of submitted cooperation hours in the WIT Attendance ribbon, and if the non-cooperation penalty was appropriate, it was not initiated within the required time frames. Staff also requested Good Cause when it was inappropriate and not properly documented in WIT. Case notes did not indicate that staff made efforts to move the participant toward self-sufficiency and the customer's next steps. Staff submitted reconsideration for participants not meeting federal exemption to HHSC, and reconsideration case notes did not contain all

required elements, and reconsideration was not entered in the Good Cause ribbon.

- TANF Cooperation—Staff did not ensure that the participant completed the required literacy assessment and that it was entered in WIT if administered. They also did not ensure that Good Cause was entered in WIT and properly documented. Case notes did not indicate that staff made efforts to move the participant toward self-sufficiency and the customer's next steps.
- Choices Childcare Eligibility—Staff did not ensure that customers were participating in Choices at initial eligibility or redetermination. In addition, staff did not enter an activity interruption and document in case notes when a participant did not meet participation requirements. All participants tested passed eligibility.
- Support Services—Staff did not obtain receipts from customers or report not receiving receipts to the Financial Payment Office via FACS, resulting in potential question costs currently totaling \$218.16.
- Rapid Re-Employment (RESEA)— Staff did not data enter the assessment or develop the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to include all required information. The CLMI form was not maintained and the discussion with the customer was not noted.
- Youth Incentives — Staff did not document incentives in the ISS as required.
- Staff Changes — The Local Information Security Officer (LISO) did not notify Workforce Security to terminate staff access the same day as staff exited employment.
- Computer Security — Virus protection software was not current at the time of the unannounced visits.
- Required Posters – All applicable English posters were not displayed in the career office.
- PII Walkthrough – Staff did not ensure that customer information was not visible at an unattended desk and that desk drawers were locked when not present
- Priority of Service – Monitors visited three career offices, and staff did not maintain written or electronic copies of the Priority of Service policy.

Interfaith Career Office: We reviewed data and operations from October 2023 to February 2025 and assessed performance, compliance, information security, customer satisfaction, and conducted career office visits. The review identified recurring findings in SNAP and TANF cooperation and documentation in Work in Texas (WIT) case notes in multiple areas. The recurrence in findings indicates a need for additional oversight, staff training, and coaching while working with Board staff to receive technical assistance and address concerns. Areas that need improvement are:

- SNAP Cooperation—Staff did not enter case notes containing all required elements or submit required forms to Health and Human Services when appropriate. Accurate data entry of cooperation hours in WIT did not occur, and penalties for non-cooperation were not initiated within the required time frames. Appropriate Good Cause was not requested or properly documented in WIT.
- TANF Cooperation—Staff did not ensure that the participant completed the required literacy assessment. Staff also did not document in WIT case notes the submission of form H2583 to HHSC.
- National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG)—Staff did not complete the data entry in WIT for the eligibility case note, employment tab, or activities and services. All participants tested passed eligibility.
- Rapid Re-Employment (RESEA)— Staff did not enter the data for the assessment or develop the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to include all required information. Work logs were not reviewed or maintained in WIT. The CLMI form was also not maintained, and the discussion with the customer was not noted.
- Staff Training and Professional Development — Staff did not complete all the required training hours.
- Computer Security — Virus protection software was not current at the time of the review.
- Priority of Service – Monitors visited 13 career offices, and staff did not maintain written or electronic copies of the Priority of Service policy.

We are awaiting the responses to the draft report from all career office service providers and should have the final reports issued by early June 2025.

Current Reviews:

Quality Assurance has completed 14 of 18 reviews scheduled for PY2025. Reviews for the Financial Aid Payment Office and SERCO are in progress, and we are preparing for Summer Earn and Learn.

Financial Systems

The Board engages two CPA firms to conduct comprehensive financial monitoring of all workforce board service providers. Since the last update, we have received four (4) final reports. Six (6) reviews are currently in progress, and three (3) reviews are scheduled to begin later in the year.

Monitoring Update:

We have resolved (1) PY report that resulted in no questioned costs.

Final Reports Received Since the Last Update:

- Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries - Low Overall Risk
 - Interfaith of the Woodlands - Low Overall Risk
 - SERJobs - Low Overall Risk
 - FY24 Systemwide Financial Aid Payment Review - Low Overall Risk
- *Baseline to be determined

Reviews in Progress:

- Baker Ripley (FAPO, Career Office, AEL)
- Children's Learning Institute
- Equus (Career Office)
- Equus (Support Center)
- SERCO
- Systemwide Financial Aid Payment Review (Q1)

Upcoming in 2025:

- Systemwide Financial Aid Payment Review (Q2)
- Systemwide Financial Aid Payment Review (Q3)
- Systemwide Financial Aid Payment Review (Q4)

Spotlight

Monitoring and Risk Management Software

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board embraces innovation and new technologies as part of our culture. In line with this commitment, Quality Assurance is committed to using innovative tools to help us meet our compliance objectives and obligations. Currently, we are exploring cloud-based software solutions to house and perform our monitoring activities. Our current audit tools include SharePoint and the Microsoft Office Suite of products to coordinate and disseminate monitoring results with internal and external stakeholders and coordinate the responses back from subrecipients. While it is paperless, the coordination, tracking, and reporting are still manual processes that are time-consuming. The use of Word documents and spreadsheets for tracking risk issues is inefficient. We require a software solution.

Using a cloud-based case management system for our monitoring projects will allow us to streamline our planning, fieldwork, testing, and reporting, leading to reduced manual processes, increased collaboration, and more consistent work programs.

New Capabilities of Cloud-Based Case Management for Monitoring

- Linking risks and issues across monitoring projects and across programs.
- Ability to aggregate risks by program, entities, or processes.

- Automate document requests from auditees.
- Real-time status and progress reporting.
- Remediation of findings with the issue owners (including with outside stakeholders.)
- Options for dashboard creation.

This cloud-based software solution includes audit and monitoring software as well as a component to help with governance, risk, and compliance efforts.

Added Components for Governance, Risk, and Compliance

- Facilitate the Gulf Coast's application of the COSO risk management framework, providing:
 - One platform to assess, manage, and document operational, financial, and compliance risks.
 - Allow the creation of a risk inventory—implement a method to rank the risks, establish risk owners, coordinate responses on how risks should be mitigated, and facilitate reporting.
 - Option for the development of a portfolio view of risks.

This central repository supports the Board in completing the COSO framework's Internal Controls Questionnaire by sending it to as many stakeholders as needed and more regularly, rather than only annually. To this end, we have informally solicited and attended product demonstrations by three vendors. We anticipate having an update for the July committee meeting.

Accountability and Improvement

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and the Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) address performance and production issues with progressive intervention strategies to support improvement. This includes Performance Improvement Actions, formalized Technical Assistance Plans (TAP), or Corrective Action Plans (CAP). The current interventions from the TWC and GCWB include the following:

Texas Workforce Commission Interventions:

Adult Median Earnings Q2 Post-Exit (FY23): The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) lifted the WIOA Technical Assistance Plan (TAP). The Board has:

- Met the BCY 2024 WIOA Adult Median Earnings Q2 measure as of the end-of-year Monthly Performance Report (released February 2025); and,
- Implemented all the TAP's provisions

GCWB Interventions:

Adult Education Center: In response to documented issues with internal controls, quality issues, and responsiveness, Board staff placed the Adult Education Center (AEC) on a Performance Improvement Plan. AEC returned their response to the Plan on Thursday, April 24th. Board staff reviewed the response and determined it to be acceptable. Board staff will monitor AEC's performance and adherence to the plan moving forward and update the committee at the June meeting.

Baker Ripley – Financial Aid Payment Office: In response to ongoing and documented concerns related to financial management, communication, and project management, Board staff will place the BakerRipley Financial Aid Payment Office (FAPO) on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). These concerns include the recent submission of a late claims request totaling \$927,579 from the previous contract period, as well as recurring issues with delayed responses, operational inefficiencies, and inadequate oversight of key projects and initiatives.

As part of the Performance Improvement Plan, Board staff will request a comprehensive action plan from FAPO outlining steps to resolve deficiencies in financial controls, improve internal and external communication, and strengthen project management practices. The goal is to support the development of sustainable controls and policies that ensure accountability and performance moving forward.

Additional updates and progress on the Performance Improvement Plan will be provided at the June 2025 Audit Monitoring Committee meeting. Key areas of concern include:

Financial Management

- Late submission of a FY2024 claim totaling \$927,579
- Multiple billing reports submitted with errors and slow correction timelines despite follow-up
- Inconsistent delivery of required weekly Funds Management Reports

Communication

- The Financial Aid Payment Office has experienced delays in responding to inquiries and challenges in providing requested information.

Project Management

- The rollout of the new Financial Aid Management System (FAMS), initially planned for the fourth quarter of 2024, has been delayed until 2025. The

current system used to track and distribute customer financial aid is outdated and requires modernization.

- The launch of TX3C has introduced several challenges that require proactive and creative solutions. The Financial Aid Payment Office has faced delays in addressing system limitations and implementing the necessary adjustments to better support our customers.

Compliance and Review Updates

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Report Updates: The PY24 TWC Monitoring report was closed successfully, with an issue involving career office leases resolved. One issue for SNAP reconsiderations remained open with TWC Audit Resolution from the PY23 TWC Monitoring report. We have been working with TWC to provide additional SNAP testing. As of April 21, we are working with TWC Technical Assistance under a Corrective Action Plan. For the next four months, Quality Assurance will provide a monthly desk review for SNAP Work Activities.

We resolved two outstanding issues from the PY24 TWC Adult Education report and are working with TWC Audit Resolution to provide additional documentation to close the report.

Next Meeting

We propose scheduling the next committee meeting for 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 29, 2025, at Houston-Galveston Area Council, 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas 77027.

Budget Committee Report

Executive Summary

The Budget Committee convened on May 21, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), chaired by Carl Bowles. Attendees included Board Chair Mark Guthrie and members Rachel Cevallos, Adrian Ozuna, Doug Karr, Paul Puente, Guy R. Jackson, Edward Melton, Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Jeff LaBroski, Lenora Sorola-Pohlman, and Sineria Ordonez.

Chair Bowles led a comprehensive discussion on the committee's responsibilities and scope, emphasizing the necessity for enhanced involvement and oversight regarding budgetary matters. Board staff expressed challenges in obtaining financial reports from H-GAC's Finance Department, needed to finalize mid-year budget revisions given recent funding adjustments, despite numerous requests. Based on the foregoing, Chair Guthrie called a special meeting of the Board's Executive Committee, including all Chairs of the Board's Committees, to discuss the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's mid-year budget revisions and H-GAC Budget issues.

Members unanimously agreed on the importance of formalizing the committee's purpose through a detailed charter. Additionally, the committee recommended expanding its responsibilities to encompass financial oversight, exploring alternative funding opportunities, and broader fiscal planning initiatives.

Fiscal Administration Manager Brandi Brown presented an overview of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's financial performance through March 31, 2025, along with detailed insights into Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding utilization. Board staff provided updates on mid-year budget adjustments and associated processes.

Committee members expressed lingering concerns regarding limited access to essential budget documentation impacting workforce grants, with the acknowledgment that delays by H-GAC in providing these documents could hinder the Board's ability to adequately review and approve the budget. Chair Guthrie further emphasized that no budgetary decisions would be presented for Board's consideration at the June 2025 meeting until all outstanding budget inquiries have been fully addressed by H-GAC.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Revenue Overview & Update

The 2025 budgeted revenue totals over \$495 million. The Year-to-Date revenue as of March 2025 is \$105 million slightly behind target of \$124 million.

General Revenue Updates:

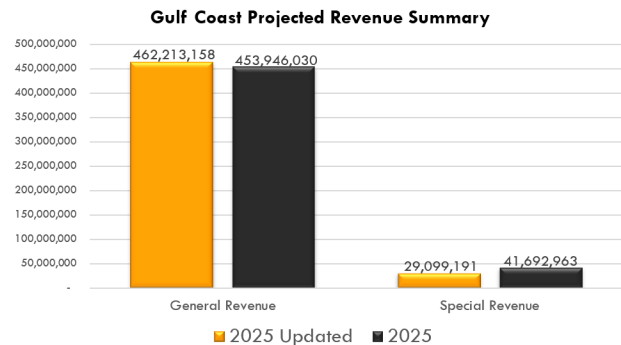
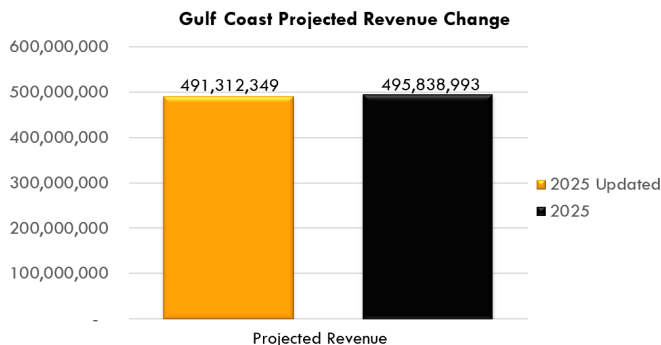
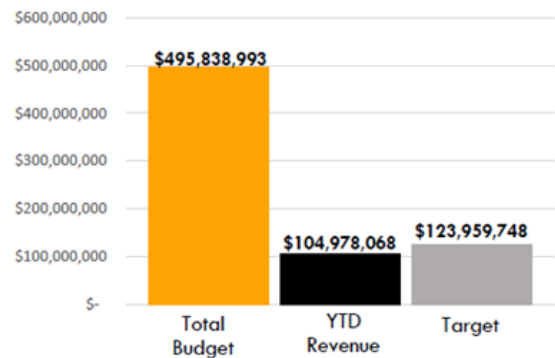
Received an additional \$7 million in Child Care Services and a \$1.8 million reduction to Vocational Rehabilitation-Summer Earn and Learn. Additional funding for Wagner-Peyser

Employment Services is expected to bring the allocation from TWC in line with needs for the full year. Estimated increase provided by TWC is \$230,000.

Special Revenue Updates:

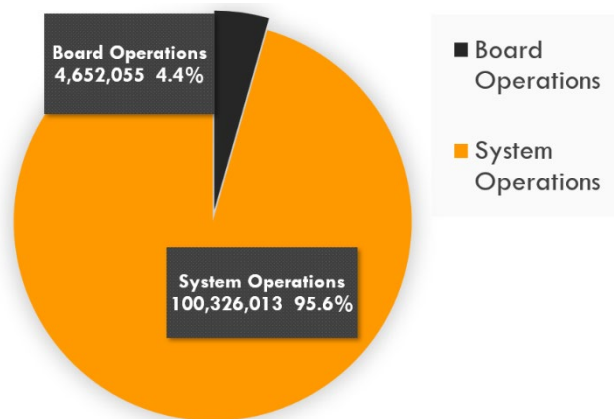
Reductions to National Dislocated Worker funding totaling \$12 million due to de-obligation. Adult Education carryover funding of \$500,000 is less than anticipated. The Board was also awarded a \$237,000 grant from the Texas Education Agency for the second phase of our Tri-Agency Regional Convener work.

Workforce Revenue



Expenditure Distribution

For the 3-month period ending March 31, 2025, Board Operations was 4.4% of expenditures. System operations for contracted service delivery was 95.6%. The budgeted amount for the year is 5.7% for Board Administration, and 94.3% for System Operations.



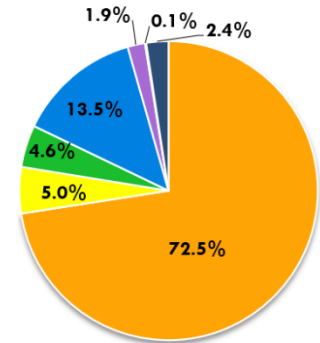
For System Operations, Financial Aid represents \$82.4 million with \$72.8 million for Early Education, \$5.0 million for Training & Support, and \$4.6 million for Operations.

Career Services represents \$13.5 million and Adult Education represents \$2.4 million of the Resident Service expenditures.

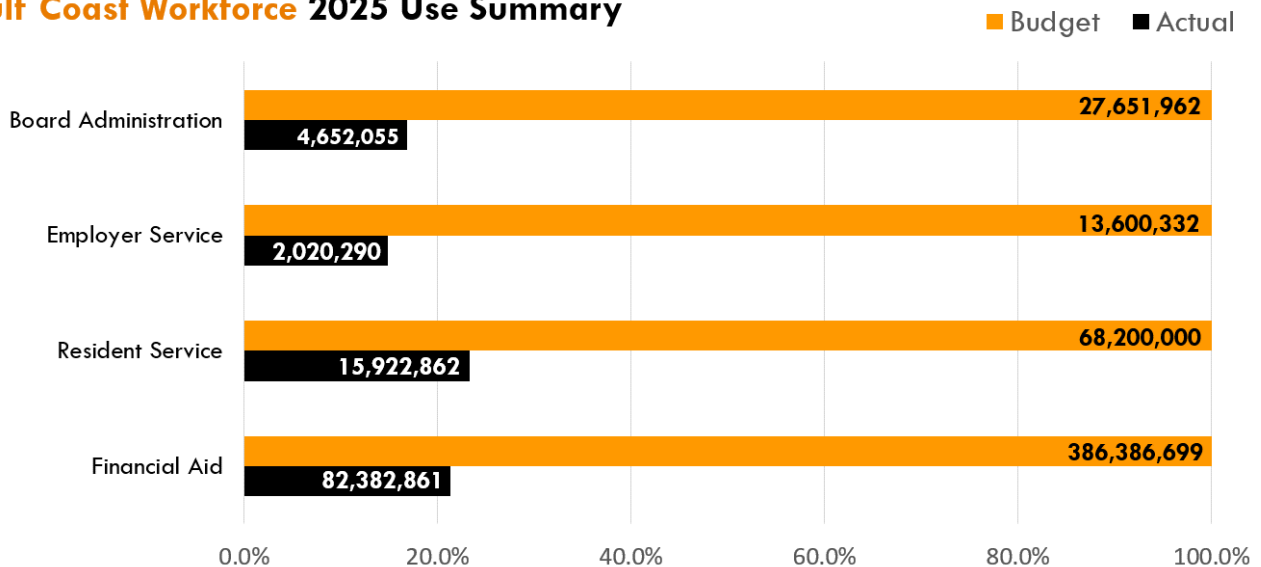
Employer Engagement and Quality Improvement represent \$1.9 million and \$0.1 million, respectively, for Employer Service.

System Operations

FINANCIAL AID - EARLY EDUCATION	\$72,785,714
FINANCIAL AID - TRAINING & SUPPORT	\$5,021,805
FINANCIAL AID - OPERATIONS	\$4,575,342
CAREER SERVICES	\$13,513,713
EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT	\$1,889,295
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT	\$130,994
ADULT EDUCATION	\$2,409,149



Gulf Coast Workforce 2025 Use Summary



Gulf Coast Workforce Board 2025 Budget Source and Use

Source		Use	
General Revenue	453,946,030	Board Operations	27,651,962
Special Revenue	41,892,963	Employer Service	13,600,332
		Resident Service	68,200,000
		Financial Aid	386,386,699
Total	\$495,838,993	Total	\$495,838,993

**Gulf Coast Workforce
2025 Budget
Projected Source Summary**

	2025 Updated	2025	Dollar Change	% Change
General Federal & State Revenue	462,213,158	453,946,030	8,267,128	1.8%
Child Care Services	374,171,834	362,763,396	11,408,438	3.1%
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity	54,629,934	55,779,934 -	1,150,000	-2.1%
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	16,808,059	16,843,059 -	35,000	-0.2%
Vocational Rehabilitation	6,328,105	8,196,064 -	1,867,959	-22.8%
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance	3,755,645	3,755,645	-	0.0%
Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment	3,971,879	3,821,879	150,000	3.9%
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	1,977,102	2,215,453 -	238,351	-10.8%
Veterans Employment and Training	565,600	565,600	-	0.0%
Trade Act	5,000	5,000	-	0.0%
Special Federal & State Revenue	28,899,191	41,692,963 -	12,793,772	-30.7%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	13,600,345	13,600,345	-	0.0%
Adult Education	11,682,258	12,250,372 -	568,114	-4.6%
NDW Disaster Relief Employment	2,910,762	15,423,420 -	12,512,658	100.0%
JOBS Plus	120,000	120,000	-	0.0%
Texas Education Agency - Regional Convener	337,000	100,000	237,000	237.0%
Texas Industry Partnership	100,000	100,000	-	100.0%
High Demand Job Training	98,826	98,826	-	100.0%
WIOA Statewide - Upskilling	-	-	-	-100.0%
Apprenticeship Grants	50,000	-	50,000	#DIV/0!
Middle Skills Initiative	-	-	-	-100.0%
Other Sources	200,000	200,000	-	100.0%
Houston Endowment	200,000	200,000	-	100.0%
Total Revenue	491,312,349	495,838,993 -	4,526,644	-0.9%

Gulf Coast Workforce Board
2025 Budget to Actual as of March 31, 2025
Use Summary

	Actual	Budget	% of Budget
Board Operations	4,652,055	27,651,962	16.8%
Salaries and Benefits	2,287,494	11,854,545	19.3%
Consultants & Contracts	813,265	7,394,850	11.0%
Travel	32,316	268,000	12.1%
Other	165,500	999,800	16.6%
Information Technology	119,101	1,325,534	9.0%
Rent	138,792	628,805	22.1%
Indirect	321,515	1,458,776	22.0%
Internal & Shared Services	774,071	4,444,536	17.4%
New & Vacant Personnel Costs ¹	-	(722,884)	-
System Operations	100,326,013	468,187,031	21.4%
Employer Service			
Employer Engagement	1,889,295	9,000,000	21.0%
Quality Improvement	130,994	4,600,332	2.8%
Resident Service			
Career Services	13,513,713	55,200,000	24.5%
Adult Education	2,409,149	13,000,000	18.5%
Financial Aid			
Early Educational Care	72,785,714	341,386,699	21.3%
Training & Support	5,021,805	29,000,000	17.3%
Operations	4,575,342	16,000,000	28.6%
Total	104,978,068	495,838,993	21.2%

¹New and Vacant personnel costs allocated to Workforce total \$722,884. These positions are pending a review and approval by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board Executive Director.

WIOA Cost Categories:

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), there are federal cost categories for reporting expenditures. These include:

Administration Cost Categories

- Administration
- Monitoring

Direct Program-Operations Cost Categories

- Career Services (staff and operating costs associated with expenditures reported in direct program and support services cost categories, as well as

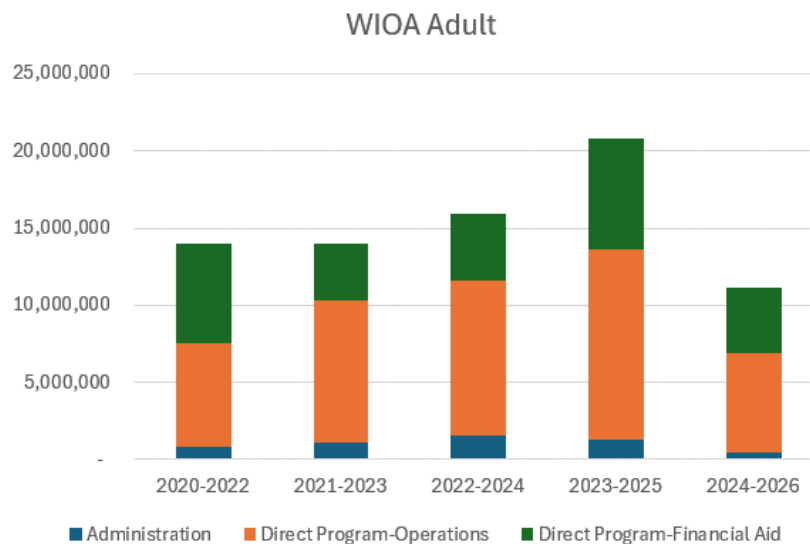
facilities, utilities, and similar costs associated with programmatic-type activities)

- Program Management & Support (Direct Recipient Only)
- Subrecipient Operating Costs

Direct Program-Financial Aid Cost Categories

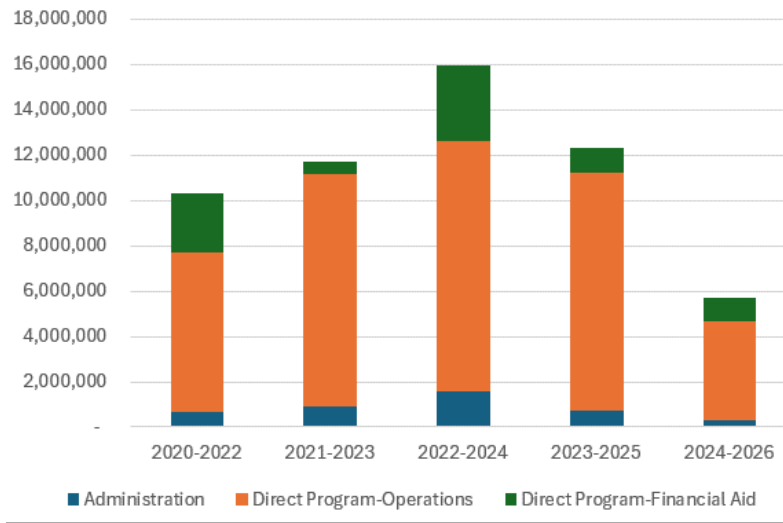
- Education & Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Pay for Performance
- Support Services-Transportation
- Support Services-Work-Related Incentives
- Support Services-Other
- Work Experience

Historical data of the breakdown of by cost category type as of March 31, 2025:



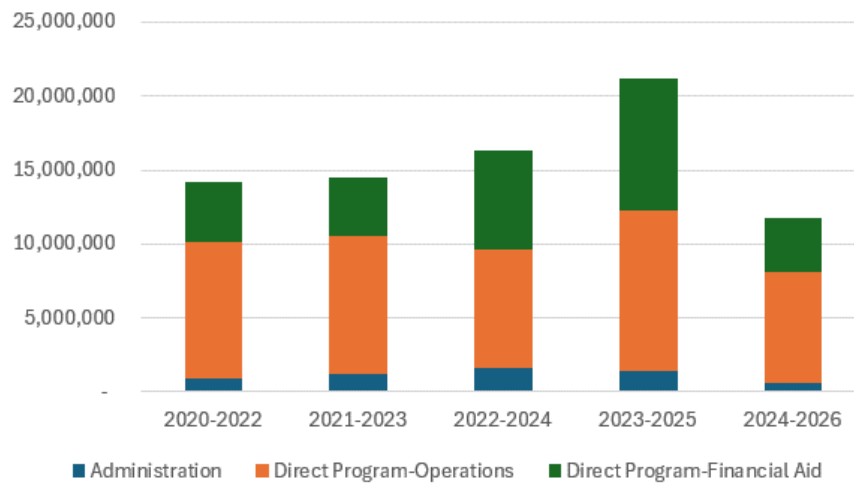
<u>WIOA Adult</u>	2020-2022	2021-2023	2022-2024	2023-2025	2024-2026
Administration	6%	8%	10%	6%	4%
Direct Program-Operations	48%	66%	63%	59%	58%
Direct Program-Financial Aid	46%	26%	27%	34%	38%

WIOA Dislocated Worker



WIOA Dislocated Worker	2020-2022	2021-2023	2022-2024	2023-2025	2024-2026
Administration	6%	8%	10%	6%	5%
Direct Program-Operations	68%	88%	69%	85%	77%
Direct Program-Financial Aid	26%	4%	21%	9%	18%

WIOA Youth



WIOA Youth	2020-2022	2021-2023	2022-2024	2023-2025	2024-2026
Administration	7%	8%	10%	7%	5%
Direct Program-Operations	65%	65%	49%	51%	64%
Direct Program-Financial Aid	29%	27%	41%	42%	31%

Communications Committee

June 2025 Update

Executive Summary

The Communications Committee, chaired by Doug Karr, convened on May 21, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. at 3555 Timmons Ln, Houston, TX 77027 (Room 2D). Board members in attendance included Mark Guthrie, Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Guy Robert Jackson, Paul Puente, Cheryl Guido, Lenora Sorola-Pohlman, and Sineria Ordonez. Board staff in attendance included Juliet Stipeche, Kristi Rangel, Dr. Maria Franco Cortes, Philip Garcia, AJ Dean, Sable Harris, Jenny Johnson, Benjamin Jonathan, Desmond Taylor, Romana Paniagua, and Phillippe Anchondo. Leigh Ann Arnold from Outreach Strategists also attended.

Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast amplified its digital presence and community impact during March and April 2025, achieving remarkable growth through strategic storytelling, targeted outreach, and innovative engagement. LinkedIn surged dramatically, demonstrating an extraordinary increase in interactions (+11,933%), driven by compelling, professional content tailored to regional workforce interests. Facebook also experienced robust audience growth, with a notable rise in interactions (+42%), showcasing effective community-building efforts. Challenges with Instagram underscored opportunities to refresh visual storytelling to captivate younger audiences, while YouTube engagement remained steady, poised for expanded content initiatives.

Our dynamic partnership with ABC13/KTRK Channel 13 reached a milestone fifth anniversary, significantly boosting regional visibility and highlighting individual success stories. Extensive media coverage amplified Workforce Solutions' services, producing nearly \$470,000 in advertising equivalency and over 1.2 million viewer impressions this quarter alone. Events featuring industry leaders and real-time job opportunities reinforced our commitment to practical solutions, accessible employment pathways, and responsive community engagement.

We advanced community impact through targeted hiring fairs, engaging regional roundtables, and the successful expansion of Workforce on Wheels, directly connecting hundreds of job seekers with essential employment services. Meanwhile, the comprehensive redesign of WrkSolutions.com nears completion, promising an exceptional digital user experience through rigorous collaboration, innovative design, and strategic content development, with an exciting launch set for Fall 2025.

These initiatives collectively reflect Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast's vibrant approach to communication, amplifying our influence, enhancing community connections, and

solidifying our leadership role in regional workforce development in alignment with the Board’s strategic plan.

Social Media and Outreach

March - April 2025

This report consolidates and updates data from Outreach Strategists and the Virtual Team, offering an overview of Workforce Solutions - Gulf Coast’s digital media impact over the last two months.

PLATFORM	FOLLOWERS	PAGE VISITS	VIEWS	INTERACTIONS
Facebook	+36.7%	+39.4%	+0.4%	+42%
Instagram	-28.9%	-23.1%	-25%	-42%
LinkedIn	+4.5%	+886.3%	+29.2%	+11,933.3%
YouTube	1414	n/a	4,300	147.4 hours (watch time)

Analysis of Platform Performance

Facebook: Facebook demonstrated a strong growth in followers, visits, and interactions, indicative of engaging content and improved outreach methods. However, the minimal increase in views (+0.4%) suggests opportunities to refine visual content strategies further. The increase in interactions (+42%) highlights successful community engagement and responsive posting, contributing to stronger audience loyalty and interaction.

Instagram: Instagram experienced notable declines across all metrics, signaling the urgent need for revised content strategies. The downturn in followers (-28.9%), page visits (-23.1%), views (-25%), and interactions (-42%) suggests that current content is not adequately engaging younger audiences or leveraging platform trends like reels and stories effectively. Immediate action in revising content strategy is recommended to reverse these trends.

LinkedIn: LinkedIn experienced exceptional growth primarily due to professional relevance, targeted content, strategic engagement, algorithm favorability, and strong partnerships. The massive spike (+11,933.3%) in interactions reflects effective audience engagement through timely, relevant posts, active participation in discussions, strategic tagging, and highlighting of workforce events. This platform remains highly beneficial and warrants continued investment.

YouTube: YouTube showed steady audience engagement, with consistent watch time (147.4 hours) and views (4,300). These metrics indicate solid interest but highlight the

opportunity to expand visibility through increased frequency and structured content series, such as regular educational videos and job seeker resources.

Strategic Recommendations

Given the foregoing, we offer the following recommendations for our social media outreach strategy:

1. Content Optimization and Diversification:

- Facebook: Increase video storytelling and interactive live sessions featuring real-time audience engagement. Consider using Facebook Live to share information regarding upskilling, workforce opportunities, and career exploration.
- Instagram: Leverage reels and interactive posts (polls, Q&A) to enhance engagement, utilizing visually appealing and concise storytelling formats.
- LinkedIn: Continue showcasing industry insights, workforce success stories, employer partnerships, and economic data, ensuring content remains professional and relevant.
- YouTube: Expand educational video content such as webinars, employer interviews, job seeker resources, and training highlights to further establish authority and boost subscriber engagement.

2. Community and Audience Engagement:

- Actively encourage user-generated content by featuring testimonials, employee success stories, and direct stakeholder engagement.
- Regularly host live Q&A sessions, webinars, and workshops to facilitate direct interactions and foster community engagement.

3. Enhanced Hashtag and SEO Strategy:

- Implement a robust hashtag strategy, incorporating trending, industry-specific tags to boost discoverability.
- Optimize video titles, descriptions, and posts with targeted keywords to increase organic search performance.

4. Performance Measurement and Adjustment:

- Regularly review analytics for all platforms, adjusting strategies based on engagement metrics and audience feedback to maintain content relevance and audience interest.
- Identify and replicate high-performing content patterns while promptly addressing areas of underperformance.

By strategically applying these refined recommendations, the Board can enhance digital outreach effectiveness, foster deeper community engagement, and sustain impactful connections with diverse audiences.

Media Highlights

The GCWB effectively leveraged multiple media channels during the second quarter of 2025, maintaining consistent visibility and demonstrating proactive engagement strategies. These efforts align closely with the GCWB's strategic plan, specifically its goal to increase public awareness, enhance community engagement, and improve workforce development services. Through its collaboration with Outreach Strategists, GCWB adeptly managed organic media opportunities, significantly advancing these strategic objectives.

On April 16, 2025, KTRK Channel 13 interviewed Deans for Impact, an Austin-based non-profit that supports educator-prep programs across the county, to discuss the importance of registered teacher apprenticeship programs in Texas. This served as a teaser for Workforce Solutions' teacher-focused job fair and "Look Who's Hiring Now" livestreamed show on April 17th at Bayland Community Center. The live show had Dr. Albert Talley from San Jacinto College's Education program and Danielle Knotts, Workforce Solutions' Manager of Career Pathways to discuss our registered apprenticeship program for teachers.

Shortly thereafter, the strategic partnership with ABC13 celebrated its fifth successful year on April 22, 2025, an occasion marked by extensive media coverage. ABC13 produced an impactful narrative highlighting a success story from a prior job fair, notably Antwyon Derouen's career progression into a certified professional in the oil and gas industry. The partnership with Nick Nataro and ABC13, valued deeply by GCWB, has proven critical in amplifying outreach, promoting workforce opportunities, and enhancing public understanding of available services. ABC13 coverage for April 2025 provided a total AVE of \$142,758.41 with a viewership of 491,546.

Board staff also responded efficiently to organic media inquiries, exemplified by KXLN-Univision 45's coverage on April 23, 2025, spotlighting employment opportunities for recent college graduates and successfully promoting the Hire Gulf Coast Youth initiative through spokesperson Dr. Maria Franco Cortes. This Spanish language, dual-segment coverage broadened GCWB's reach to vital demographic groups. Our total AVE from this coverage was \$130,954.91 with a viewership of 195,732.

An interview request from Houston Public Media was missed due to scheduling conflicts, highlighting an area for improvement in proactive planning and spokesperson availability. However, on April 10, 2025, Easter Sunday, the Houston Chronicle finally published its 935-word front page story about the [long wait for subsidized](#) childcare. The story focused on the significance of the child care scholarship waitlist, enhancing the GCWB's visibility and highlighted its proactive stance in addressing the systemic challenges parents experience in finding quality child care while seeking upskilling and employment opportunities. The story also quotes our Child Care Scholarship Manager, Jennifer Starling.

On May 2, 2025, Nick Natario also covered a Workforce Solutions job fair co-sponsored by METRO at the Bayland Community Center. This was the second “on the bus line” job fair Workforce Solutions and METRO have jointly held, underscoring the GCWB’s dedication to accessibility and transportation-aligned employment initiatives. This media coverage provided us with a total AVE of \$23,905 with a viewership of 260,681.

Our May job fair with ABC13 focused on careers in transportation, production, and maritime. On May 14, 2025, Channel 13’s Nick Natario visited with students enrolled in TSU’s Maritime Transportation Management & Security program to promote our monthly job fair, which took place on May 15, 2025, at San Jacinto College North targeted key sectors such as logistics, maritime, and production. This story earned a total AVE of \$23,905.28 with a viewership of 292,858. Our livestream show featured expert speakers, including Captain Amy Arrowood, Director of Maritime Credit Programs at SJC, and Houston Port Commissioner Roland Garcia.

Media analytics indicate impressive results:

- First Quarter 2025 AVE: \$325,224.16 | 1,247,681 impressions/viewers;
- Second Quarter 2025 AVE (through 5/15): \$469,787.39 | 1.24 m impression/viewers; and
- Year-to-day (through 5/3) *: \$795,011.55 | 2.49 million impressions/viewers.

These statistics reflect the importance of strategic media placements aligned with the GCWB’s goals to maximize public impact and stakeholder engagement. To continue strengthening GCWB’s media strategy in alignment with its strategic plan, several recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhanced Spokesperson Preparedness: Establishing a cadre of trained, readily available spokespersons to swiftly capitalize on all media opportunities through regular institutionalized training.
2. Proactive Media Engagement: Actively pitching tailored stories to diverse media outlets, emphasizing personalized narratives and success stories to exemplify program impacts effectively.
3. Sector-specific Outreach: Increasing targeted outreach within emerging sectors—technology, healthcare, and renewable energy—to demonstrate adaptability to economic shifts and job market evolution.
4. Analytics-driven Strategy: Regularly analyzing media engagement metrics to optimize strategic communication approaches for maximum effectiveness and sustained public visibility.
5. Integrated Digital Communication: Strengthening synergy between traditional media outreach and digital platforms to amplify reach, engagement, and impact across diverse community segments.

Adopting these strategies will enable GCWB to sustainably amplify its influence, deepen stakeholder engagement, and continue its vital role as a leading voice in regional workforce development initiatives.

Community Engagement

Events and Community Engagement Activities

Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast actively mobilized community engagement initiatives to expand awareness and enhance workforce opportunities within the region through targeted events, hiring fairs, and collaborative discussions. Between March and May 2025, we successfully coordinated several impactful events, each tailored to address specific regional workforce needs and foster meaningful employer-job seeker connections.

Event Highlights:

- March 20, 2025 – Business and Financial Professional Hiring Event
Location: Fort Bend County Libraries, Richmond, Texas
This strategic hiring event brought together 429 job seekers and 36 employers/community partners. It facilitated 174 direct interviews, resulting in three immediate hires, demonstrating targeted effectiveness in meeting the local demand for qualified business and financial professionals.
- March 27, 2025 – Northshore Community Conversation
Location: Blessed Hope Baptist Church
As part of initial mobilization efforts in the Northshore area, WFS-GC facilitated a panel discussion engaging 59 community members. Participants interacted with employers, entrepreneurial initiatives, and training programs, enabling informed career decisions. The presence of Workforce on Wheels (WOW) provided direct service connections, reinforcing the accessibility of WFS resources.
- April 10, 2025 – Matagorda County Regional Roundtable
Location: Bay City Convention Center
Director Stipeche introduced the Board's new five-year strategic plan at the Matagorda County Education and Industry Alliance meeting. This event brought together influential local leaders, including the Mayor of Bay City, educational administrators, business leaders, and economic development representatives, including new board member, Mike Ferdinand. Discussions focused on tailoring workforce services to rural communities and enhancing partnerships through initiatives like WorkforceSolutionsNews.com and Hire Gulf Coast Youth.
- April 17, 2025 – Community, Education, and Social Services Hiring Event
Location: Harris County Precinct 4, hosted by Commissioner Lesley Briones
This event at Bayland Community Center successfully attracted 529 job seekers, connecting them with 30 community partners and employers. Of these attendees,

231 participated in interviews, with significant engagement observed through the full utilization of the center's classroom and computer room, facilitated by Workforce on Wheels services.

- April 24, 2025 – Second Regional Roundtable
Location: H-GAC, Houston, Harris County, Texas
This event convened approximately 80 key stakeholders, including elected officials, employers, community-based organizations, education leaders, and economic development partners, as well as 12 board members. The session highlighted the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan, Hire Gulf Coast Youth initiative, and apprenticeship expansion efforts. The discussion, facilitated by Outreach Strategists, underscored the GCWB's leadership role and commitment to strategic partnerships.
- May 8, 2025 – LinkedIn Webinar Presentation and Asian Chamber of Commerce Meeting, H-GAC, Houston, Texas
LinkedIn Webinar: Director Juliet Stipeche presented "Powering Workforce Success with LinkedIn Tools," showcasing how WFS-GC utilizes LinkedIn's Recruiter, Job Postings, and Talent Insights platforms. Between March 2024 and April 2025, WFS-GC posted 318 jobs serving 82 companies, enhancing recruitment in key industries such as healthcare, logistics, and customer service.

Asian Chamber of Commerce Meeting: The meeting was coordinated with Board member Bin Yu and the Board's Employer Engagement Division. Several businesses from the Asian Chamber were invited to learn more about our services and resources. The meeting featured presentations by Wen Zheng, Crosby Brito, and Russell Tomlin, with participation from the Chair of Employer Engagement, Alan Heskamp. It facilitated productive dialogue and breakout sessions focusing on employer and resident career services.

- May 15, 2025 – Production and Transportation Hiring Event
Location: San Jacinto College North Campus
Continuing efforts in the Northshore community, this targeted event connected 220 job seekers with 23 employers and community partners. Workforce on Wheels provided crucial onsite services to 25 attendees, highlighting the program's growing importance in enhancing employment accessibility.
- Upcoming Event: May 22, 2025 – Texas City Open House
Location: Workforce Solutions – Texas City
We are coordinating an open house event to further community engagement, sending invitations via print and email to elected officials, community leaders, employers, and community-based organizations in Galveston County.

Activities and Tools

Outreach Strategists is enhancing Workforce Solutions' digital presence by editing and creating engaging content for key website sections including "Partner with Us" and "About Us."

WorkforceSolutionsNews.com experienced robust engagement with 3,204 page views from 826 unique visitors between April 1 and May 12, 2025. Visitors, on average, spent nearly 18 minutes per visit and viewed approximately 3.89 pages, underscoring significant engagement with digital content.

Economic Insights Video

A collaborative effort with Outreach Strategists produced a video featuring Director Stipeche and economist Parker Harvey, explaining the GCWB's labor market data-driven approach to workforce development. It serves as a valuable tool for presentations, community meetings, and digital platforms.

Launch of Monthly Workforce Solutions Newsletter – May 2025

The Communications team launched Volume 1 of the new monthly Workforce Solutions newsletter in May 2025. This digital publication is designed to highlight key programs, success stories, and updates from across the 13-county region and is currently being distributed to stakeholders, partners, and community members throughout the Gulf Coast area. The inaugural issue includes:

- An introduction to the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan;
- A county spotlight series featuring Liberty, Montgomery, and Walker Counties;
- Updates on major initiatives, including Hire Gulf Coast Youth, Career Pathways, Veteran Services, Childcare Quality, and Financial Stability;
- Partner features like the San Jacinto College ESL training program and Region 6 ESC's teacher certification and apprenticeship efforts;
- Highlights from recent events, including the Freedmen's Town Conservancy Fellowship Project; and
- Labor market data, including the monthly jobs report, career exploration tools, and county-level employment trends.

The newsletter supports broader efforts to increase awareness of services, share program impact, and reinforce visibility through WorkforceSolutionsNews.com and regional social media channels. Future editions will continue to feature regional voices and efforts aligned with Board priorities.

GCWB Regional Services Handbook – In Development

We are finalizing a new Workforce Solutions Handbook designed to serve as a clear, easy-to-navigate resource for individuals and organizations across the 13-county region. This compact guide brings together essential information on the full range of services offered—supporting job seekers, dislocated workers, employers, educators, and

community partners. The handbook is structured for quick reference and real-world usability, with content organized into major service areas, including:

- Employer Services, such as hiring support, training incentives, labor market strategy, and youth talent development;
- Job Seeker Services, including career coaching, training scholarships, support services, and specialized assistance for veterans, youth, and justice-involved individuals;
- Labor Market Intelligence, offering monthly reports, economic dashboards, and data tools to inform workforce planning;
- Youth Programs, including detailed information about Hire Gulf Coast Youth;
- Child Care Services, supporting both families and early education providers; and
- Community and Partner Engagement, highlighting collaboration with education, local government, and nonprofit sectors.

The handbook also includes a Career Pathways appendix, featuring accessible career maps in key industries such as healthcare, construction, technology, and energy. This project supports the strategic goals of:

- Improving Service Delivery, by making access to information more user-friendly and consistent across the region;
- Increasing Awareness of Opportunities, by clearly outlining available services and how to access them; and
- Forging Strategic Partnerships, by providing shared reference material for community outreach and partner engagement.

Once finalized, the handbook will be distributed in both print and digital formats and promoted via WorkforceSolutionsNews.com, career offices, employer visits, and regional events.

Collateral Development

Updated branding has been integrated into print collateral across the Workforce Solutions hub and ImageSet storefront.

Analysis and Recommendations:

The recent community engagement initiatives align strategically with GCWB's 2025–2029 strategic plan objectives, significantly enhancing regional workforce capacity and outreach effectiveness. Workforce on Wheels (WOW) has notably transformed service delivery, directly engaging communities, and increasing accessibility. Leveraging digital platforms, particularly LinkedIn and WorkforceSolutionsNews.com, and developing curated virtual workforce services via the WAVE appointment system represent innovative shifts toward comprehensive and accessible workforce solutions. Expanding virtual capabilities positions Workforce Solutions to reach larger, more regional audiences, aligning with best industry practices for scalable workforce development.

Additionally, Board staff is actively exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) can be thoughtfully incorporated into the WAVE system and other workforce services. The integration of AI technology promises to enhance operational efficiency, improve service effectiveness, and enable more personalized and responsive support for clients and employers across the region. Additional recommendations include:

- Sustaining and expanding WOW services to address geographic barriers.
- Strengthening long-term impact measurement through improved data collection.
- Amplifying digital outreach to maximize event engagement and visibility.
- Further developing virtual workforce services, optimizing the WAVE system for broader engagement, and integrating AI solutions to enhance service delivery.

These strategic directions solidify WFS-GC's innovative leadership and reinforce its commitment to impactful regional workforce development.

Website Update

The comprehensive redesign of WrkSolutions.com represents a strategic leap forward, positioning the Board to better serve our community with a modern, user-centered digital platform. The project, which has advanced through meticulous planning and development, is now nearing significant milestones thanks to collaborative efforts and extensive Board staff engagement.

Our journey began with the Discovery Phase, a foundational stage that involved rigorous research and thorough internal stakeholder consultations. By deeply understanding user behaviors, needs, and preferences, we laid a solid groundwork for a successful transformation of the website. The Information Architecture Phase created a cohesive and intuitive structure. This critical step ensures users will effortlessly navigate and interact with content tailored to their specific needs and interests, significantly enhancing their online experience.

Currently, we are deep into the Design Phase, already approximately 80% complete. Throughout this phase, extensive collaboration has been paramount. Dozens of interactive meetings with Board staff have yielded invaluable insights and refined our vision. These collaborative sessions have allowed for multiple rounds of thoughtful design iterations. Notably, the homepage redesign has been finalized, showcasing a sophisticated, engaging gateway that sets a high standard for the rest of the site, with final touches now underway on the remaining pages.

In parallel, we have begun the Content Phase, with approximately 5% completion. Leveraging a strategic partnership with Outreach Strategists, we have implemented a process for crafting compelling, targeted content across all website pages. Internal teams have actively engaged in initial content-development meetings, ensuring alignment with our mission and responsiveness to stakeholder expectations.

Upon completion of the Design Phase, we will swiftly transition into the Development Phase. This stage will focus on bringing the newly designed site to life, prioritizing functionality, accessibility, and seamless user interactions. We eagerly anticipate launching the new WrkSolutions.com in Fall 2025, marking a transformative advancement in how we connect and communicate with our community.

Special gratitude was extended to Assistant Director Kristi Rangel, Phillippe Anchondo, Web Administrator at Houston-Galveston Area Council, Outreach Strategists, and our Board staff for their remarkable dedication and invaluable expertise throughout this ambitious endeavor.

Chairman Karr commended Board staff and Outreach Strategists for their exemplary communication efforts since the last Board meeting. He also requested that staff highlight their notable achievement in significantly increasing LinkedIn engagement and being recognized for best practices at the recent Texas Workforce Commission webinar, conducted in partnership with LinkedIn, where Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast was featured as one of only two workforce boards statewide.

Executive Committee Report

The Executive Committee of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) met on May 29, 2025, at the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) offices located at 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas. Board Chair Mark Guthrie commenced the meeting with Paul Puente, Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Doug Karr, Dr. Michael Webster, Alan Heskamp, and Carl Bowles in attendance. Chuck Wemple, Christina Ordonez-Campos, Shaun Downie, Yvette Gonzalez, Juliet Stipeche, AJ Dean, Kristi Rangel, Russell Tomlin, Sabrina Uy, and Dr. Maria Franco Cortes were in attendance. The meeting was called to discuss the necessity for precise and timely financial data to effectively manage mid-year budget revisions amid anticipated funding changes.

Board staff provided an overview of expected budget adjustments, highlighting a projected \$10 million decline in total available revenue for the current fiscal year, reducing the projected revenue to \$485.9 million from the initial budget of \$495.8 million. This adjustment reflects a forecasted general revenue increase of approximately \$5.4 million, offset by a significant reduction of around \$15.4 million in special revenue, primarily from one-time funding sources.

Detailed reductions include a \$4 million decrease in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, a \$3.2 million reduction in Adult Education, a \$1.9 million decline in Vocational Rehabilitation funds from Summer Earn & Learn (SEAL), and a substantial \$12.5 million decrease in National Dislocated Worker Disaster Relief Employment. Conversely, Child Care Services funding is expected to rise by approximately \$11.4 million. Concerns were raised regarding the lack of finalized fourth-quarter early education funding estimates and potential federal budget cuts that could further impact workforce and educational programs.

The committee was briefed on the mid-year budget revision process, highlighting challenges due to misaligned submission deadlines between the Workforce Division and H-GAC's approval schedule. Significant discussion focused on the GCWB staff's restricted access to essential financial data from other H-GAC departments, attributed to limitations within the newly implemented Qwestica budgeting system.

Board Chair Guthrie voiced strong concerns about persistent delays in obtaining comprehensive financial reports covering direct, indirect, and "mixed" charges. He emphasized that these delays were inconsistent with prior assurances of transparency and full data access, highlighting significant discrepancies in the

current restricted access environment. H-GAC Executive Director Chuck Wemple and Finance Director Christina Ordonez-Campos acknowledged the limitations with the new financial software, but Mr. Wemple pledged to explore practical solutions, including generating detailed reports and examining options for system-based read-only access.

Doug Karr also requested that H-GAC provide financial reconciliation reports, clarifying variances between budgeted and actual expenditures monthly or, at minimum, quarterly, rather than delaying this review until year-end. The committee discussed strategies for equitably distributing budget reductions between direct workforce services and H-GAC's indirect and overhead expenses. There was a strong consensus on establishing a transparent and fair mechanism to manage financial cuts. This included a proposal to potentially reallocate certain services back to the GCWB's control as a cost-management approach. There was unanimous agreement on simplifying and consolidating various indirect costs into a single, transparent indirect cost rate.

To accommodate these budgetary revisions, the committee set new timelines. H-GAC committed to providing comprehensive budget revision documents by July 7, 2025, enabling the GCWB Budget Committee ample time to conduct a thorough review in July. The revised mid-year budget is slated for final approval at the GCWB meeting scheduled for August 5, 2025.

The committee deferred discussions regarding amendments to the GCWB-H-GAC agreement pending the resolution of current financial data access issues. However, the committee addressed potential revisions to the GCWB by-laws, including:

- Extending board member terms from two to three years to ensure continuity;
- Clarifying conflict-of-interest guidelines;
- Defining virtual attendance for quorum and voting purposes;
- Mandating committee participation for Board members;
- Creating Charters for all Committees;
- Possible consolidation or refinement of committees;
- Enhancing the Budget Committee's membership and charge; and
- Broadening the scope of the Audit & Monitoring Committee to include comprehensive risk management functions consistent with the COSO Enterprise Risk Management framework.

Executive Director Wemple informed the committee that internal evaluations regarding staffing adjustments at H-GAC were ongoing, with decisions still pending.

The Executive Committee emphasized the critical necessity of prioritizing the needs of the Workforce Division in budget planning and financial management. Timely access to detailed and comprehensive financial reports from H-GAC's various divisions that impact workforce funding — including information on vacancies, proposed FTE allocations, and related expenses—is essential. This will enable GCWB to perform rigorous financial analyses, strategically assess the impacts of funding reductions on staffing and operational expenditures, effectively identify redundancies, manage vacancies, and proactively prepare for future financial uncertainties. Ensuring precise and strategic financial planning will facilitate alignment with the Board's mission, vision, and long-term objectives, strengthening the organization's ability to successfully navigate anticipated budgetary adjustments.

Chair Guthrie adjourned the meeting, reiterating the importance of ongoing collaboration, transparency, and strong financial oversight.

Career Services Committee

Update

Executive Summary

The Career Services Committee of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board met on May 20, 2025, at the Houston-Galveston Area Council 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027. Chaired by Adrian Ozuna, the meeting focused on implementing systemic changes that reflect the Board's commitment to strategic alignment, operational efficiency, and transformation of workforce services. The committee was joined by Board members, including, Chair Adrian Ozuna, Vice Chair Cheryl Guido, Mark Guthrie, Paul Puente, Tanya Rivera, Rachel Cevallos, Dr. Melanie Rodriguez, Dr. Melissa Gonzalez, Doug Karr, Dorian Cockrell, and Bin Yu.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) is committed to improving workforce development in its 13-county region. This report analyzes the GCWB's strategic initiatives, operational updates, and outcomes from various programs. Key areas include the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for career services, enhancements in education and training standards, performance monitoring, and community engagement.

Status of Request for Proposal (RFP)

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) is actively advancing its mission through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process aimed at enhancing career services across its expansive 13-county region. This RFP is a critical component of the GCWB's strategic plan, designed to transform the delivery of workforce services and provide a more integrated, efficient, and effective support to job seekers and employers. The key objectives of the RFP include:

- A comprehensive, fully integrated one-stop shop model: transition from a decentralized service delivery approach to a regionalized, collaborative management system.
- Seamless Integration: Ensuring partners work together cohesively to provide a streamlined and consistent experience for all clients.
- Employer Engagement: Emphasizing strong connections with local businesses to understand their hiring needs and create opportunities for job seekers.
- Technology Adoption: Leveraging virtual and mobile service delivery to increase accessibility and convenience for clients.
- Data-Driven Decision-Making: Utilizing robust data analytics to inform program improvements and ensure optimal outcomes.

Timeline and Milestones:

- May 13, 2025: Target date for responses to questions about the RFP.
- June 5, 2025: RFP closing date.
- June 9-16, 2025: Evaluation period.
- October 1, 2025: Contract start date.

Office Transition Plan

The transition of career office operations to the selected service provider is scheduled for October 1, 2025. To ensure a smooth and efficient transition, the GCWB has developed a detailed transition plan that addresses all critical aspects of the transfer. The transition will take place over a 45-day window following provider selection in August 2025. Key priorities of the transition plan include:

- **Minimizing Service Disruption:** Ensuring that job seekers and employers continue to receive uninterrupted services throughout the transition period.
- **Preserving Local Partnerships:** Maintaining existing relationships with community organizations and businesses to leverage their expertise and resources.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Adhering to all applicable laws, regulations, and policies to maintain the integrity and accountability of the workforce system.

We are asking current and prospective service providers to support this transition by cooperating with the Board and one another to ensure continuity of services and facility access. Specifically, we are requesting providers to:

- Gather and share critical lease and utility account information related to their currently managed offices.
- Assist with the coordination of lease transitions, including assignment, termination, or negotiation of new lease agreements where needed.
- Document and communicate all community partnerships and shared space agreements to ensure seamless continuation of local services.

Policy and Guidance

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) is steadfast in its commitment to driving progress through innovation and excellence in workforce development. To ensure the highest standards of business continuity for the new RFP, the GCWB is implementing the Client Transition Plan.

Client Transition Plan

In alignment with our commitment to ensuring the highest quality service delivery to Workforce Solutions customers, the Board is developing a comprehensive Client Transition Plan to guide the reassignment of active case-managed clients from an outgoing service provider to a newly selected provider. This plan outlines

detailed timelines, defines staff responsibilities, establishes risk mitigation strategies, and prioritizes customer engagement to minimize disruptions and support successful outcomes.

The transition period beginning August 1, 2025, with the new service provider officially beginning services on October 1, 2025. Careful coordination and communication will be critical to the successful execution of this plan.

The Client Transition Plan is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Reassign all active case-managed clients, ensuring no participant is left unassigned or without appropriate support.
- Facilitate the accurate, complete, and secure transfer of client case records, maintaining full compliance with data security and documentation standards.
- Communicate proactively and consistently with clients, informing them about the upcoming changes, reassuring them of continued support, and providing guidance on their next steps.
- Launch services with the new provider on October 1, 2025, ensuring a seamless transfer of case management responsibilities without service gaps.

Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure an orderly and successful transition, the plan defines clear roles and responsibilities for all key parties:

Role	Responsibility
Local Workforce Development Board	Lead and oversee the entire transition process; manage timelines; conduct quality assurance on reassignment activities; resolve emergent issues.
Outgoing Service Provider	Finalize participant records in WorkInTexas (WIT) and the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS); complete Participant Transfer Summary Sheets; support information handoff to incoming provider.
Incoming Service Provider	Review transferred case files; assign new case managers; prepare for participant outreach; assume full case management responsibilities effective October 1, 2025.
Board MIS / Designated Staff	Review a sample of the case files and maintain a detailed reassignment log for audit and tracking purposes.
Workforce Center Manager	Provide day-to-day monitoring of transition activities; troubleshoot local challenges; ensure staff readiness and support participant communication efforts.

Client Communication Strategy

Recognizing the critical importance of maintaining client trust and engagement throughout the transition, a multi-faceted communication strategy will be implemented:

- Direct outreach to each participant via phone calls or text messages, followed by an email notification (where available) and a formal mailed letter providing details about the new provider and next steps.
- A standardized 'Notification Script' will be used by all staff to ensure that messaging is consistent, supportive, and transparent.
- Communication will emphasize the continuity of available services, introduce the new provider contact information, and confirm that services will continue starting October 1, 2025.

Special attention will be given to clients who may be at risk of disengagement, ensuring multiple contact attempts and escalation to supervisory staff if necessary.

Education and Training

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) is committed to ensuring that individuals seeking education and training have access to high-quality programs that lead to sustainable employment in high-demand industries. The GCWB is actively pursuing several key initiatives to enhance the quality and effectiveness of education and training programs.

Our strategic objective is to elevate the Gulf Coast Provider Network to reinforce quality assurance and accountability in workforce training. To achieve this, we have implemented the following additional policy enhancements:

- Stronger Progress and Attendance Reporting – Training providers must maintain continuous oversight of student progress and participation.
- Enhanced Vendor Code of Conduct – Training providers must uphold the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and compliance.
- Comprehensive Review for Coordination of Funding – Before referral to a training provider, staff must ensure customers are not required to incur debt to access WIOA-funded training.
- Review of Training Costs – Training providers training costs must be reasonable, publicly posted, transparent and consistent to ensure there are no inflation of pricing to WFS customers.

A second draft copy of the policy was reviewed, and the Career Services Committee moved to bring this forward for consideration and possible adoption to the full board. These additional enhancements will strengthen workforce

training outcomes and foster more meaningful partnerships between GCWB and training providers. This policy is affixed to Item 9a, as Attachment 9a.

Professional Development

Strengthening System Infrastructure: Procurement of a New Learning Management System

To support the evolving professional development needs of staff and streamline access to training resources, we have made significant progress on the procurement of a new Learning Management System (LMS). In collaboration with H-GAC Procurement and Fiscal Administration, we finalized and approved the LMS Request for Proposals (RFP) in OpenGov. This process represents a major infrastructure upgrade that will allow for enhanced tracking of staff development, easier access to training modules, and improved data collection on engagement and outcomes. Additionally, our team contributed to the development of the draft RFP for survey software solutions, which will help evaluate training effectiveness and support systemwide feedback loops. These steps are foundational to building a responsive learning environment that empowers staff to meet the demands of a changing workforce landscape.

Launching a Systemwide Industry Focus Series

We are proud to report the successful launch of Empowering Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast, our new monthly industry highlights series. This initiative is designed to increase staff familiarity with key regional industries and deepen their understanding of in-demand occupations.

Performance and Production

Performance Update and Reporting Period: December 2024 – April 2025

The following report provides a summary of career services performance across key workforce indicators—Measurable Skills Gain (MSG), Credential Attainment, and Enrollments—covering the period from December 2024 to April 2025. This data reflects our ongoing commitment to improving outcomes for all customer groups, including Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. Overall, we are seeing steady growth and positive momentum across the system.

Credential Attainment

Credential attainment rates have remained strong and steadily improved from December through April. These outcomes indicate increased completion of training programs aligned with in-demand occupations and reinforce our commitment to credential-bearing pathways.

Group	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Adult	82.70%	83.00%	83.00%	84.90%	88.40%
DW	91.20%	90.60%	90.60%	94.80%	97.80%
Youth	71.40%	72.60%	72.60%	77.10%	82.10%
Career & Training (C&T)	78.50%	78.90%	78.90%	81.60%	85.10%

Key highlights include:

- Dislocated Workers consistently led the system in credential attainment, reaching nearly 98%.
- Adults showed moderate but steady progress.
- Youth increased by nearly 5 points, closing at 82.1%.
- C&T programs demonstrated slow, consistent growth, ending at 85.1%.

Measurable Skills Gain (MSG)

Measurable Skills Gain (MSG) performance continues to trend upward across all customer groups. These gains are a strong indicator of clients' progress in education and training activities and reflect the effectiveness of our case management and support strategies.

Group	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Adult	83.90%	87.00%	87.00%	92.30%	102.60%
Dislocated Worker (DW)	81.40%	86.80%	86.80%	89.90%	94.50%
Youth	64.70%	77.20%	77.20%	82.30%	96.00%

Key Highlights include:

- Adult clients improved by over 10 percentage points, reaching a 102.6% MSG rate in April.
- Dislocated Workers showed steady monthly gains, rising to 94.5%.
- Youth saw the largest improvement, jumping nearly 14 percentage points during the period.

From December 2024 to April 2025, career services performance has shown measurable improvement across all key indicators. Gains in MSG and credential attainment demonstrate the system's ability to support participant progress toward meaningful employment. These collective achievements position our workforce system for sustained success as we continue to refine strategies, engage partners, and deliver high-quality services to job seekers in the Gulf Coast region.

National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG)

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board was awarded the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) to address the impacts of natural disasters—specifically the Texas Storms and Hurricane Beryl—across a 13-county region. The NDWG aims to support dislocated workers through reemployment services and occupational training aligned with regional labor market needs.

Program Focus & Partnerships

Primary employment opportunities under the NDWG include debris clean-up in disaster recovery roles.

- This initiative is delivered in partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission and key service providers, including Baker-Ripley and Interfaith of The Woodlands.
- The NDWG team operates through a coordinated structure involving Recruitment, Career Advising, Paid Work Experience, Employer Engagement, Financial Aid, and Tracking Units—ensuring seamless participant support and program oversight.

We are getting people to work by actively recruiting (National Dislocated Worker) NDW clients and guiding them through the NDW eligibility process. We are simultaneously building and strengthening partnerships with potential worksites, supporting them through the NDW worksite approval process to ensure alignment with program goals.

In addition to hosting a successful hiring event—where participating worksites made direct hiring offers to NDW clients—we are also providing ongoing support such as resume assistance, interview preparation, and job-readiness workshops to ensure candidates are fully equipped for a successful work experience.

We are monitoring placements, gathering feedback from both clients and employers, and offering continued follow-up to support retention. Our goal is not only to connect people to immediate job opportunities but also to establish long-term employment pathways and partnerships that contribute to workforce stability and economic growth in our region. The current updates include:

Worksites

To date, 8 worksites have been approved and are actively participating in the NDWG program. These include Formic Operations, T&B Construction, City of La Marque, KR Prestige City of Lake Jackson, Houston Tool Bank, City of Kemah, Precinct 4

Clients

We are proud to report that 100% of enrolled clients are employed. A total of 64 clients have been placed in disaster recovery-related employment:

- 35 clients under the Hurricane Beryl allocation
- 29 clients under the Texas Storms allocation
- Work Duration: Adjusted to six months instead of the previous timeframe of one year.
- Work Hours & Pay Rate: Each client will work 1,040 hours at up to \$25.00 per hour. This is still considered Temporary.

Training and Services

Currently, 8 clients are enrolled in Electrician Training, aimed at equipping them with in-demand skills for long-term employability. Additionally, 1 client successfully completed Small Crane Training on March 28, bringing the total number of individuals engaged in Service 300: Occupational Training to 9.

Initial Award Allocations

- Texas Storms
 - Award Amount: \$1,199,102.00
 - Approved Counties: Austin, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, Walker, Waller
- Hurricane Beryl
 - Award Amount: \$1,711,660.00
 - Approved Counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, Wharton

Worksites	Texas Storms	Hurricane Beryl
Formic Operations	5	13
T&B Construction	9	8
City of La Marque	2	5
KR Prestige	1	5
City of Lake Jackson	1	2
Houston Tool Bank	1	1
City of Kemah	0	1
Precinct 4	6	0
Total: 8	29	35

Participant Employment Overview

A total of 64 clients have been employed through the NDWG initiative.

Worksites by County

- Formic Operations: Austin Brazoria Chambers Colorado Fort Bend Galveston Harris Liberty Matagorda Montgomery Walker Waller Wharton
- T&B Construction: Chambers Fort Bend Galveston Harris
- City of La Marque: Galveston
- KR Prestige: Harris
- Lake Jackson: Brazoria
- Houston Tool Bank: Brazoria Fort Bend Galveston Harris Montgomery
- City of Kemah: Galveston
- Precinct 4: Harris

Data Tracking and Monitoring

Program progress, participant data, and worksite engagement are actively tracked using a centralized dashboard in Monday.com, ensuring real-time updates, accountability, and transparency across all teams involved.

Community Engagement

Career Services through Community Engagement works to convene strategic collaborations, coordinate services to increase Workforce Solutions' (WFS) footprint within communities across our 13- county region. We are focused on mobilizing within communities, increasing customer connection to services, determining where and how we engage to provide services and strategically foster partnership. We are steadfast at reimagining the way we do business, building stronger relationships to create better connections and improve WFS's reach.

Partnerships

Mobilizing communities through partnerships can lead to impactful and sustainable change. Our Community Engagement team has been working to establish relationships across the region. We convened meetings to raise awareness of WFS services, to create more opportunities for collaboration and planning, to maintain relationship for continued participation, to build an effective ecosystem, and to sustain efforts that will enable us to serve communities more effectively. Eighteen partners have been engaged to increase WFS' footprint and awareness of our services.

Events and Activities

Community Engagement has been mobilizing to create a better awareness and capacity within the region. WFS has held 3 regional events and one community conversation – panel discussion. These include:

- March 20, 2025, WFS presented the Business and Financial Professional Hiring Event in partnership with Fort Bend County Libraries. 429 jobseekers had the opportunity to be connected to 36 employers/community partners. From this event 174 job seekers were interviewed, and 3 individuals were hired.
- March 27, 2025, WFS presented a Community Conversation in partnership with Blessed Hope Baptist Church as an initial mobilization activity within the Northshore and surrounding community. The event enabled 59 community members to participate in a panel discussion with employers, entrepreneurial and training programs which allowed for questions and information to facilitate informed career decisions. WFS Workforce on Wheels was also available to connect them to WFS services and other supports.
- April 17, 2025, WFS presented the Community, Education and Social Services Hiring Event in partnership with Harris County Precinct 4 - Commissioner Lesley Briones. 529 jobseekers had the opportunity to be connected to 30 employers/community partners. From this event 231 job seekers were interviewed. This event had a high utilization Workforce on Wheels, which allowed for the use of the community center's classroom and computer room, which remained filled throughout the event.
- May 15, 2025, WFS presented Production and Transportation Hiring Event in Partnership with San Jac College North Campus. As WFS continues mobilization within the Northshore and surrounding community, 220 jobseekers had the opportunity to be connected to 23 employers and community partners. From this event 25 jobseekers participated in the Workforce on Wheels (WOW) services.

Tools

The first phase of the Events dashboard has been completed. This integration provides a central place for data that allows community engagement to track participation, measures effectiveness, tweak methodology for subsequent events. More so, this tool will allow Administration to view a snapshot of activities and metrics. We are expecting to expand this tool to capture all coordinated by WFS.

No further business was conducted. The only action item was the recommendation to advance the ETPL/GCPN policy to the full board for discussion and possible action.

ACTION: Staff requests Board approval of Policy Number 405, "Gulf Coast Provider Network – Eligible Training Providers Policy" and authorization for the Executive Director to make technical corrections as necessary and substantive changes returned to the Board for discussion and possible action.

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the procedures for Education and Training Providers wishing to be listed as Eligible Training Providers and offer services to eligible Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast clients. It also details the requirements for initial and ongoing eligibility, as well as performance standards.

RECISSIONS

WS 23-05 Education and Training Network Standards and Guidelines released September 5, 2024.

BACKGROUND

Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast (hereinafter referred to as Workforce Solutions) assists employers in meeting their staffing requirements and supports individuals in advancing their careers, enabling both to compete effectively in the global economy. To cultivate a skilled workforce, Workforce Solutions provides scholarships designed to help clients acquire essential skills and credentials necessary for securing employment, job retention, or career advancement.

Eligibility for training and scholarships is established through a comprehensive assessment of individual client needs, aligned with program requirements and available funding. Workforce Solutions professionals guide clients in selecting the most appropriate programs from an approved provider network. Scholarship administration is handled by the Workforce Solutions - Financial Aid Payment Office (hereinafter referred to as WFS-FAPO).

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), federal and state regulations mandate Local Workforce Development Boards, including the Gulf Coast Workforce Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board or GCWB), to identify and maintain current lists of in-demand occupations, target occupations, and in-demand industries. Clients receiving scholarships through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) administered by Workforce Solutions select training programs from providers within the Gulf Coast Provider Network.

The Board adheres to the following general guiding principles. Additional specifics regarding these principles can be found in the Education and Training Provider Standards and Guidelines.

POLICY:

1. WIOA Training Funds and Client Choice

The GCWB, through its Workforce Solutions' network—not training providers—determines a client's eligibility and need for training scholarships. WIOA training funds are only available to training and educational programs listed on the Texas Workforce Commission's statewide Eligible Training Provider List (hereinafter referred to as ETPL). To be eligible to serve clients in the Gulf Coast Workforce Board area, providers must also join the local Gulf Coast Provider Network (hereinafter referred to as the GCPN).

The Board facilitates informed client choice by ensuring Workforce Solutions staff provide clients with comprehensive information about eligible training providers, including program performance, costs, and available local work-based training options such as on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, internships, registered apprenticeships, and incumbent worker training.

Career Advisors present a range of training options tailored to each client's individual assessment and employment goals. Advisors assist clients in interpreting performance outcome data for each provider, including but not limited to metrics on program completion rates, employment outcomes, earnings potential, and credential attainment.

Reverse referrals from training providers do not influence or override Workforce Solutions' determination of need, suitability, or program selection.

WIOA emphasizes customer choice, and the Board is committed to equipping customers with clear and accurate performance data to support informed decisions aligned with successful workforce outcomes.

2. Becoming a Training Provider in the Workforce System

The process to become an approved training provider for the Gulf Coast region is two-fold. First, potential providers must apply for inclusion on the Texas Workforce Commission's (herein after referred to as TWC's) ETPL. Upon successful acceptance to the statewide ETPL, providers must subsequently join the Gulf Coast Provider Network (GCPN) to offer eligible training programs locally in this 13-county region.

All training provider applications or requests for the addition of new training programs, including those providing hybrid instruction, must be submitted through the Workforce Development Board corresponding to the provider's primary campus location. Providers with a primary address within the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's jurisdiction must submit their applications to join both the TWC's statewide ETPL and the GCPN directly to WFS-

FAPO. All inquiries and submissions concerning ETPL or GCPN membership must be sent via email to wfvendor@wrksolutions.com.

3. Step One: Join the Texas Workforce Commissions Statewide ETPL

Training providers must send their requests to join or include new programs on the ETPL to WFS-FAPO, and it will review the information, may require updates, and will submit provider/program information to the Texas Workforce Commission (hereinafter referred to as TWC) (pending student level data). Requests that receive initial approval are then forwarded to TWC for review, approval, and addition to the statewide list.

Eligible Training Providers (ETPs) are organizations that offer training programs funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) utilize Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to finance training for eligible participants in WIOA adult, dislocated worker, out-of-school youth or in-school youth participant, or other program participant eligible for training services.

The TWC maintains the statewide ETPL, a publicly accessible resource listing training programs approved for ITA funding. Inclusion on the statewide ETPL does not guarantee participant referrals from Boards nor does it assure financial support for specific training programs.

In the statewide ETPL application process:

1. Providers must submit detailed information regarding the provider, campuses, and training programs to their designated Board, determined by the location of the main campus. If it is within the Gulf Coast region, this information is submitted by the provider to WFS-FAPO.
2. WFS-FAPO conducts an initial review and may request additional information or updates from the provider.
3. Upon initial approval, WFS-FAPO forwards the provider and program information to TWC, contingent upon receipt of required student-level data.
4. TWC reviews the submission and may request further updates or clarifications.
5. TWC issues a Student Data Report (SDR) to the provider.
6. The provider completes and submits the SDR back to TWC.
7. TWC performs a final review of the provided data.
8. Approved programs are added to the statewide ETPL by TWC.

This entire application process generally takes between two to six weeks, depending primarily on the completeness and accuracy of the submitted information.

Eligible training programs for inclusion on the statewide ETPL typically include offerings from:

- Institutions of higher education,
- Career schools,
- Apprenticeship sponsors,
- Public or Private Training Providers,
- Community-based organizations, and/or
- AEL Providers.

These providers must comply with Chapter 62 of the Texas Education Code, possess the requisite licenses, and meet exemption criteria outlined in Chapter 132 of the Texas Education Code. Providers are required to demonstrate partnerships with local employers, and their programs must prepare participants for occupations listed on the statewide Target Occupations List.

Under WIOA, all ETPs (excluding Registered Apprenticeships) must provide verifiable performance data through Student Data Reports (SDRs) for all program participants. For new programs, submission of this data is required prior to inclusion on the statewide ETPL, ensuring program effectiveness and student benefit.

New providers may utilize the Initial Training Provider Tool to submit information to WFS-FAPO. Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) sponsors follow a distinct application process described further below.

4. Step 2: Join the Gulf Coast Provider Network

To become part of the Gulf Coast Provider Network, a training provider must first be listed on the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Applicants are required to verify their ETPL status prior to applying. Eligible providers must then complete the GCPN application process, submitting any additional documentation to WFS-FAPO. The provider's training programs must prepare clients for the occupations identified on the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Targeted Industries and High-Skills, High-Growth Scholarship Lists. Additionally, all training providers are expected to meet established performance standards mandated by the Board. (For detail application requirements, please refer to the Education and Training Provider Standards and Guidelines.)

Training providers must meet the following criteria to participate in the GCPN:

- Meet and maintain eligibility for the statewide ETPL.
- Conduct training in ADA compliant facilities including equipment, textbooks, and software that provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, where applicable.
- Demonstrate operation and financial stability (except public colleges and universities).
- Demonstrate that it offers its training programs in partnership with businesses by providing:
 - Letters of support from local employers and have hired a graduate from the training program within the last 12 months, or
 - Evidence of the existence of an employer-based advisory committee.
- Demonstrate that the training programs prepare clients for the occupations identified on the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Targeted Industries and High-Skills, High-Growth Scholarship Lists.
- Meet the established performance standards mandated by the Board.

5. Evidence of Operation and Financial Stability

At initial application, providers must demonstrate financial soundness and stability prior to receiving Workforce Solutions scholarships. This ensures provider viability, reduces risk to clients, and upholds program integrity.

Providers must submit annual financial documentation (such as audited or certified financial statements, profit and loss reports, or tax filings) as defined in the Provider Standards and Guidelines to verify financial thresholds are met.

Vendors should ensure that they are not solely reliant on funding from the Board, Workforce Solutions or Texas Workforce Commission to operate their business. Except for institutions of higher education, vendors must submit a financial analysis indicating the percentage of income derived from Board, Workforce Solutions, and/or Texas Workforce Commission funding.

6. Provider Performance Requirements

As part of the application and renewal process, training providers must submit clear and verifiable performance data for each client training program offered, in a consistent format prescribed by Workforce Solutions. Providers are responsible for ensuring the accuracy, completeness, and timely submission of this data.

Providers must meet or exceed the following performance standards:

Performance Standards for All Former Students	2025 ETP Reporting Period 7/ 1/ 2023-6/ 30/ 2025	2026 ETP Reporting Period 7/ 1/ 2/ 2024-6/ 30/ 2026	2027 ETP Reporting Period 7/ 1/ 2025-6/ 30/ 2027
Employed Quarter 2 Post Exit*	70%	70%	70%
Employed Quarter 4 Post Exit*	70%	70%	70%
Median Earnings Quarter 2 Post Exit**	\$7,800	\$7,800	\$7,800
Credential Rate	50%	55%	60%
Completion Rate	60%	60%	60%

Failure to meet one or more performance benchmarks for all students, or failure to meet one or more benchmarks when evaluating only Workforce Solutions funded students may result in a performance improvement plan, probation, or removal from Gulf Coast Provider Network.

7. Annual Review and Renewal

Continued eligibility to remain in the Gulf Coast Provider Network requires an annual renewal package including performance data, financial documentation, and employer support information.

Providers of programs that show employer partnership via a letter of support must keep their documentation up to date by submitting a new letter if the current one is older than 12 months. Those demonstrating employer partnership through an employer-based advisory committee need to provide the latest meeting minutes as soon as they are available.

8. Pricing Information

Providers must not charge Workforce Solutions more than the publicly advertised price or an amount that would be charged to a student who is not awarded a Workforce Solutions scholarship. All scholarships are subject to Workforce Solutions funding limits and will only be provided for allowable activities.

Providers must coordinate funding from other federal, state and local sources or private job training programs to assist the client in obtaining training services, in accordance with WIOA guidelines.

- a. Reasonableness and Cost Comparison
 - Training costs covered by Workforce Solutions scholarships must be reasonable in comparison to similar programs in the area.
 - Workforce Solutions must ensure they are not overpaying for training and that public funds are used efficiently.
 - Cost comparisons will include tuition, fees, books, and any other charges.
- b. Publicly Posted and Transparent Costs
 - "Publicly posted" means that tuition, fees, and related costs must be clearly disclosed and easily accessible to prospective students, stakeholders, and the public. This information should be consistently available through multiple accessible channels such as the institution's official website, printed materials (e.g., brochures, catalogs), and other informational resources provided directly to students and community members
 - Training providers must submit accurate tuition and fee information to be published on the statewide ETPL.
 - All tuition and fee costs must be clearly itemized and publicly posted in the training program listing on the ETPL to participate in the GCPN.
 - Providers must promptly report any changes in tuition or fees to WFS-FAPO to ensure publicly posted information remains current, accurate, and transparent.
- c. Consistent Pricing
 - Providers must charge Workforce Solutions scholarship clients at the same rate as non-scholarship students (i.e., they cannot inflate prices for workforce clients).
 - All discounts, scholarships, or cost waivers must also be made available to Workforce Solutions scholarship clients if applicable.
- d. Total Cost Must Be Disclosed
 - Programs must disclose the total cost of training, including tuition, fees, required books, equipment, and any mandatory exams or certifications.
 - If pricing includes bundled services (e.g., career services, equipment), the breakdown must be itemized.

9. Pell Grants and Coordination of Funding

Workforce Solutions staff must coordinate WIOA Title I, TANF Choices, and SNAP E&T training funds with other sources of financial aid, including Federal Pell Grants, to maximize funding and minimize out-of-pocket costs for clients. Staff must ensure clients are not required to incur debt to access Workforce Solutions funded training.

Exceptions to this requirement are the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs and Veteran's benefits. TAA fully covers training costs regardless of Pell Grant eligibility;

however, staff are still encouraged to assist TAA clients in applying for financial aid when appropriate to support co-enrollment and resources.

VA benefits for education and training services for veterans or their eligible spouses do not constitute benefits for education or training under WIOA's eligibility requirements. Therefore, eligibility for VA benefits for education or training services do not preclude a veteran or the veteran's eligible spouse from receiving WIOA funded services including training funds. WFS will not require veteran's or spouses to exhaust their entitlement to VA funded training benefits prior to allowing them to enroll in WIOA funded training. (See DOL TEGL 19-16).

10. Prohibition on Commission or Brokerage Fees

Workforce Solutions will not approve providers that use funds to pay commissions or brokerage fees to individuals referring clients to Workforce Solutions.

11. Student Loans and other private loans

Training providers must not require clients to apply for or accept student loans as a condition of receiving Workforce Solutions funded training.

Workforce Solutions funds may not be used to pay for any portion or term of training covered by a student loan signed by the client.

Providers shall not require students to enter private loans or financing arrangements as a condition of enrollment. Tuition agreements must be transparent, fair, and consistent with published rates.

12. No Guarantee of Funding

Placement on the statewide eligible training provider list does not guarantee funding or constitute an agreement or commitment to refer any Workforce Solutions client to the training provider.

13. Limit on Workforce Solutions Scholarship Funding

Providers should ensure that they are not solely reliant on funding from the Board, Workforce Solutions, or the Texas Workforce Commission to operate their business.

14. Student Progress and Attendance Reporting

Training providers are expected to maintain continuous oversight of student progress and participation. Continued funding of an ITA is contingent upon the availability of WIOA funds and on the participant's satisfactory training progress.

A participant's satisfactory training progress is defined as:

- A grade point average that does not fall below 2.0 for two consecutive terms, or
- A grade point average sufficient to graduate from, or receive certification in, the individual's approved area of study, or
- Sufficient credit hours to finish the approved course of study within the timeframe established under the approved training plan.

In the case of self-paced or ungraded learning programs, satisfactory progress means participating in classes and passing certification examinations within the timeframe established under the approved training plan.

Providers must provide timely progress reports for each Workforce Solutions funded client to allow for the processing of any subsequent tuition payment. These reports shall be submitted in a format supplied by Workforce Solutions and must include:

- Confirmation of the student's attendance in the first 5 sessions (classes) of the course,
- A mid-semester progress check – for semester courses longer than 10 weeks,
- Student demonstrating a pattern of absences, academic struggle, withdrawal, or an increased risk of withdrawal within 10 calendar days of occurrence,
- Report the attainment of any documented academic, technical, occupational or other form of progress towards credential or employment, and
- End of course reports – including whether the student:
 - completed the program,
 - received the certificate or degree awarded by the program, and copy of the certificate or degree,
 - any known information on student employment, including employment status, employer, job title, and salary or wage offer.

These notifications allow Workforce Solutions to initiate timely intervention and support of students as well as track outcomes. Repeated failure to notify Workforce Solutions in a timely manner may trigger corrective action or sanctions, up to and including withholding of payment or claw back of training funds paid or removal from the Gulf Coast Provider Network.

15. Termination of Enrollment

In determining when to terminate a client due to absences, providers shall follow their regulating bodies' requirements.

Providers must immediately notify WFS-FAPO if a client's enrollment has been terminated due to absences.

Clients who have their enrollment terminated must also have the refund policy applied.

Timely and complete reporting is a condition of final payment and continuation in the Gulf Coast Provider Network.

16. Client Withdrawal

Client withdrawal is defined as the situation when a Workforce Solutions client contacts the provider to report they are no longer taking a course or program. Providers must note the withdrawal date and apply the Termination of Enrollment Policy as of that date. Providers must also report the client withdrawal to Workforce Solutions.

17. Payment Policy

Workforce Solutions will only accept invoices after the provider confirms the student's attendance in the first five training sessions (classes). Invoices will be paid as they are due, up to 60% of the scholarship amount, with the remaining 40% paid upon receipt of the End of Course progress report (including any certificates or degrees conferred) from the provider.

18. Refund Policy for Early Withdrawal

All regulated training providers must maintain a clearly defined refund policy compliant with their regulating agency and apply this policy to Workforce Solutions scholarship clients. Workforce Solutions reserves the right to negotiate more favorable refund terms when necessary.

Providers must issue refunds to Workforce Solutions no later than 30 calendar days from the student's last date of attendance.

19. Non-Compliance Actions and Denial/ Suspension from Network

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in adverse actions outlined in TWC Rule 840 WIOA ETPs and TWC Rule 823 Integrated Complaints, Hearings and Appeals.

20. Site Visits

WFS-FAPO staff will conduct an initial site visit to each new provider and periodic site visits thereafter. These visits will assess instructional quality, ADA compliance, equipment, and consistency with application materials. Site visit findings will be documented, and noncompliance must be addressed promptly. Workforce Solutions staff may visit training sites unannounced to verify training is being conducted in compliance with the training provider agreement.

Action(s) of non-compliance found during site visits will be documented and subject to review for monitoring action.

21. Scholarship Eligible, High Skill-High Growth Occupations Training Allotments

Due to increasingly limited federal and state funding, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has established a scholarship allocation system. This system restricts the number of clients that can be trained in a specific industry within a given funding year. The purpose is to ensure support for employers and growth industries that contribute to the economic prosperity of clients. Requests for training exceeding allocation(s) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Training allocations will be established annually.

22. DOL Registered Apprenticeship Programs

DOL Registered Apprenticeship programs are vetted and approved by the US Department of Labor (DOL), making them automatically eligible for inclusion on the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) do not need to submit student-level data or meet additional state or local criteria to be listed on the statewide ETPL. Boards must recognize all RAPs on the statewide ETPL as linked to local targeted occupations.

23. Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAPs)

Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs or IRAPs are not registered programs with DOL and are currently not recognized at the national level. IRAPS continue under Texas state law and do not undergo the same vetting process as a DOL RAP. Vendors identifying themselves as offering an Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Program must follow the same process as all other vendors and submit the required eligibility and performance data.

24. Non-Local Training Vendors

Training providers in Texas who are not assigned to a specific Board area and wish to submit new programs for eligibility consideration must ensure their school is physically located within the 13-county Gulf Coast Workforce Board area.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DOES NOT PROVIDE SUPPORT TO VENDORS OUTSIDE OF TEXAS.

25. Healthcare and other Online Training Programs

Providers offering exclusively online training for healthcare occupations that require hands-on or experiential clinical experience before certification must provide Workforce Solutions with proof of an affiliation agreement with a local hospital or healthcare system that will facilitate the hands-on portion of the student's studies. This ensures that participants can complete their program of study and become eligible for the certification exam.

Training Providers for other occupations that require hands-on or experiential experience before certification must provide Workforce Solutions with proof of affiliation agreements that facilitate the hands-on portion of the participant's studies. This ensures that participants can complete their program of study and become eligible for the certification exam.

26. Third Party Providers or Indirect Service Providers

Vendors with subcontracted service providers are vendors who rely on a third party to deliver training services, i.e., the actual training is subcontracted. Workforce Solutions Payment Office will not approve vendors with subcontracted service providers without express written consent of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board Executive Director or designee. Vendors will be asked to verify whether they are direct training providers or if training is subcontracted to a third party.

27. Non-ETP programs

The following are allowable training services under WIOA that are not required to be on the ETPL:

- TAA Participants are not limited to programs on the ETPL and may access training from any private or public schools regulated by a state agency. However, costs must be reasonable and necessary.
- Pre-Apprenticeships are programs set of strategies designed to prepare individuals for entry into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) or other job opportunities. Depending on the agreement with a Registered Apprenticeship program, the graduating student from a Pre-Apprenticeship program may either have direct entry into a RAP upon graduation or given additional consideration upon application with a Registered Apprenticeship program. Funding preference is given to Pre-Apprenticeship programs that provide direct entry into a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) and/or results in a certificate or credential that is recognized by industry, as these outcomes are linked to the performance of the Board and Vendor. Pre-Apprenticeships are not vetted nor regulated by DOL and therefore must follow the same eligibility criteria as other vendors to be placed on the ETPL.
- Contract for Services-with prior approval from the Board (see Guidance for additional information).
- On the Job Training (OJT)-provided by an employer to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job. The employer may be reimbursed up to 50% of the participant's wage rate. Enhanced reimbursement rates of 75% are only available in limited circumstances (see Guidance for additional information). Workforce staff must document in the case file or in WorkinTexas.com case notes

the factors used when deciding to increase the wage reimbursement levels above 50% to 75%.

- Incumbent Worker Training.
- Customized Training.

28. Provider Code of Conduct

All training providers approved under the Gulf Coast Provider Network must maintain the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and compliance. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board expects its education and training providers to operate with transparency, professionalism, and accountability to both clients and the public.

As a condition of participation in the Gulf Coast Provider Network, providers agree to the following Code of Conduct:

- **Compliance with Law:** Providers shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, including WIOA regulations, civil rights laws, ADA requirements, and data privacy standards.
- **Integrity in Recruitment:** Providers shall not engage in deceptive marketing, high-pressure sales tactics, or misleading advertising. All promotional materials must accurately reflect the nature, cost, duration, outcomes, and credentials associated with the training.
- **Prohibition on Incentivized Referrals:** Providers shall not pay or offer commissions, bonuses, or any financial incentives to Workforce Solutions staff or any other party for referring clients to their programs.
- **No Predatory Lending or Enrollment Practices:** Providers shall not require students to enter into private loans or financing arrangements as a condition of enrollment. Tuition agreements must be transparent, fair, and consistent with published rates.
- **Data Accuracy and Transparency:** Providers must report timely, accurate, and complete data on enrollment, attendance, outcomes, and expenditures. Submission of false, misleading, or incomplete information is grounds for immediate removal from the Gulf Coast Provider Network.
- **Conflict of Interest Avoidance:** Providers shall disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest, including relationships with Board members, staff, or affiliated providers. Providers must operate independently of Workforce Solutions decision-making processes.
- **Professional Conduct and Respect:** Providers shall treat clients with dignity and respect. Discrimination, harassment, or any form of exploitation is strictly prohibited.

- **Cooperation with Oversight:** Providers shall cooperate with site visits, audits, monitoring, and data verification efforts. Obstruction, delay, or refusal to comply with monitoring requests may result in disciplinary action.
- **Financial Responsibility:** Providers must maintain sound financial practices and ensure tuition refunds, when applicable, are processed promptly in accordance with Board policy.

Violations of this Code of Conduct may result in corrective action, suspension of referrals, or termination of contract with the provider. The Board reserves the right to impose additional sanctions or refer matters for legal enforcement where warranted.

29. Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Conduct

Vendors must avoid actual, potential, or apparent conflicts of interest in all interactions when conducting business with or for Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast and the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. A conflict of interest arises when the personal or business interests of a vendor or its personnel could compromise, or appear to compromise, their judgment, objectivity, or impartiality in providing services or carrying out responsibilities on behalf of Workforce Solutions or the Board.

Vendors must immediately disclose to Workforce Solutions and the Board any circumstances or situations that constitute or could reasonably be perceived as constituting a conflict of interest. Disclosure includes potential conflicts involving the vendor's employees, subcontractors, officers, agents, or their family members, and any other business or financial interests that could impact impartiality or objectivity.

Additionally, vendors are required to uphold the highest ethical standards and promptly report any suspected unethical or improper conduct to Workforce Solutions. Vendors must notify Workforce Solutions immediately upon becoming aware of conditions or incidents that could affect their eligibility to provide services under state or federal requirements.

All vendors must fully comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations governing their business activities, including, but not limited to, standards set forth by the Texas Workforce Commission and applicable Texas statutes regarding ethical practices and conflicts of interest.

Failure to adhere to these conflict-of-interest and ethical conduct requirements, including violations of the Vendor Code of Conduct, may result in corrective actions, up to and including removal from participation as an approved vendor.

ACTIONS:

1. All Workforce Solutions staff, service providers, and training providers must be familiar with the requirements outlined in this policy and the Education and Training Provider Standards and Guidelines and comply with all applicable procedures.
2. Board staff and service provider management must ensure all relevant staff and providers receive comprehensive training and ongoing technical assistance to support compliance with eligibility, reporting, and performance requirements.
3. Senior leadership and contract management staff are responsible for actively overseeing provider performance, financial integrity, and adherence to student reporting requirements to maintain accountability and program quality.

REFERENCES:

- [WD 15-19, Change 2: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Eligible Training Provider Program, Eligibility Criteria, and Performance Expectations—Update](#) issued September 16, 2024.
- WD 12-19, Change 2 - Funding Training Programs outside of Local Workforce Development Areas through Client Training Accounts—Update.
[WD 14-19, Change 3](#) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: Individual Training Accounts and Training Contracts – Update issued September 16, 2024.
- [WD 14-24, Training Provider Complaint Procedures.](#)
- WD 17-19, Change 2 - Registered Apprenticeship Training Programs and the Eligible Training Providers List—Update.
- WD 29-19, Change 1 - Statewide Eligible Training Providers List—Update.
- WD 08-22 - Using Eligible Training Provider List for CCDF-Funded Initiatives.
- TWC [Chapter 823 Integrated Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals.](#)
- TWC [Chapter 840 WIOA ETPs.](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

QUESTIONS

Staff should first ask questions of their managers or supervisors. Direct questions for Board staff to Workforcepolicy@wrksolutions.net.

Procurement Committee Report

On May 15, 2025, Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson convened the Procurement Committee at 2:14pm to review contract recommendations. Other committee members in attendance included Chair Mark Guthrie, Doug Karr, Cheryl Guido, Adrian Ozuna, Guy Robert Jackson, Melissa Gonzalez, Mike Ferdinand, and Lenora Sorola Pohlman.

Service Provider	2025 Contract Request Amount
<i>I. Financial Monitoring</i>	
Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P.	
Christine Nguyen CPA	
LaPorte, A Professional Account Corporation	
	\$900,000
<i>II. Adult Education and Literacy</i>	
Houston Community College	\$4,060,800
Lone Star College	\$2,292,938
San Jacinto College	\$1,296,000
Region 6 ESC	\$1,885,469
Adult Education Center	\$50,000
BakerRipley, Inc.	\$50,000
	\$9,635,207
TOTAL	\$10,535,207

Procurement Committee

I. Financial Monitoring

The Board contracts with accounting firms to assist with the review of Workforce Solutions subrecipients, contractors, and workforce programs in areas such as accounting systems, disbursements, payroll, procurement, and cost allocation, providing written reports with findings and recommendations. The Board requires that these firms have experience with public funds and federal workforce dollars, and at least one principal must be a licensed Certified Public Accountant.

Board staff coordinates the reviews performed by these firms, participates in meetings, and addresses any potential findings.

For the last several years, Christine H. Nguyen CPA and Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P. have served as the financial monitoring contractors for the Board.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was released on March 5, 2025, to select contractors capable of providing the appropriate financial review of workforce service providers. Five (5) responses were received and evaluated to determine the best candidate for implementing this work:

Proposer	Rank	Score
Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P.	1	91.33
Christine H. Nguyen CPA	2	90.67
LaPorte, A Professional Accounting Corporation	3	78
Frovis Mazars, LLP	4	74
GilFlo Consulting Services, LLC.	5	58

Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P.; Christine H. Nguyen CPA; and LaPorte, A Professional Accounting Corporation scored the highest among the proposers.

Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P. is a Texas-based accounting firm with extensive experience with the Gulf Coast workforce system.

Christine H. Nguyen CPA is a Certified Public Accountant with over two decades experience in the Gulf Coast workforce system.

LaPorte, A Professional Accounting Corporation is an independent accounting and business advisory firm with personnel in New Orleans, Houston, and Baton Rouge.

The current contract year has demonstrated the need for a third monitor to balance the work and allow for greater flexibility. LaPorte has experience auditing federally funded contracts and their rate is significantly lower than the fourth and fifth place finishers.

Action

We request Board approval to negotiate contracts with Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P.; Christine H. Nguyen CPA; and LaPorte, A Professional Accounting Corporation, in a combined amount not to exceed \$900,000.

Procurement Committee

II. Adult Education and Literacy

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act – which authorizes the activities for publicly funded adult education – is part of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (Title II of the Act). The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is the grantee and fiscal agent for the Gulf Coast Adult Education Consortium. This consortium is built of 2 community-based organizations, 3 community colleges, and 1 education service center that operates as the lead agency providing technical assistance and support to the other members of the consortium.

In 2024, the Board was awarded 9 counties to provide services, including: Austin, Colorado, Fort Bend, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, and Wharton, with 60% coverage of Harris County. Services are offered face to face, remotely, or through hybrid instruction and includes English language instruction, literacy classes, adult basic education, adult secondary education, integrated education, GED preparation, and joint basic education-skills training classes, college and career readiness, employability skills, services for internationally trained professionals, job search assistance, training, workplace literacy and digital literacy.

Historically, funds have been allocated annually with clear guidelines on total available funding and performance expectations. These funds are used to support service delivery through the consortium of members who rely on timely and consistent allocations to plan staffing and program operations.

To date, full program funding details have not been released. The Texas Workforce Commission has only provided partial information, indicating that 50% of the total allocation will be made available at the beginning of the program year. The remaining 50% will be contingent upon future performance targets, which have not been finalized or communicated. As a result, we do not currently have sufficient information to make long-term funding commitments to our consortium members.

Given this uncertainty, it is necessary to re-evaluate how our consortium is arranged. We propose a reapportionment of funds that aligns more closely with the specific contracted services expected from each consortium member. Moving forward, the community colleges will take the lead in delivering direct content, technical, and outreach services. Adult Education Center and BakerRipley will conduct follow-up services for its Year 1 participants.

While we are renewing the contracts for the community colleges, we are issuing contract extensions for Adult Education Center and BakerRipley due to the reduction in the scope of work. These extensions reflect a narrower focus aligned with current priorities and available funding. The funding ranges below reflect the confirmed 50% allocation, with the potential for adding additional funding once performance criteria and total award amounts are clarified by the Texas Workforce Commission. The range below for Region 6 also includes the competitive procurement and purchase of a Customer Relationship Management system in Year 2. This purchase is in response to recommendations from the Texas Workforce System to strengthen the customer enrollment process in our service area.

Provider	Proposed Range	
Houston Community College	\$2,030,400	\$4,060,800
Lone Star College	\$1,146,469	\$2,292,938
San Jacinto College	\$648,000	\$1,296,000
Region 6 ESC	\$1,177,735	\$1,885,469
Adult Education Center	\$50,000	\$50,000
BakerRipley, Inc.	\$50,000	\$50,000
Total	\$5,102,604	\$9,635,207

Action

We request Board approval to negotiate contract renewals with Houston Community College, Lone Star College, San Jacinto College, and Region 6 and contract extensions with Adult Education Center and BakerRipley in the amounts shown above, not to exceed \$9,635,207, for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. This recommendation is contingent upon Texas Workforce Commission funding and approvals.

Performance and Production

Update for May 2025

System Review

In our ongoing effort to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our system, this report offers a comprehensive review of performance, production, and expenditures at the contractor level for key service providers. This review encompasses assessments of technical program compliance, financial monitoring, and evaluations of customer experience. It prioritizes alignment with our strategic goals and tackles identified deficiencies through targeted interventions and technical assistance.

Performance and Production

Reporting Infrastructure Enhancements

Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast continues to work closely with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) as it undertakes significant enhancements to the statewide reporting infrastructure. While progress has been made and several reports have been successfully updated, data completeness remains a challenge in certain areas. To mitigate these gaps, we are actively implementing standardized reporting tools across all service providers. These tools are designed to enhance consistency, accuracy, and efficiency in data collection and reporting—key elements that support informed decision-making and high-quality service delivery across our region.

TWC recently shared an update reflecting our region's performance as of December 2024. However, the accompanying data source has not yet been provided. In the interim, we continue to rely on internally developed, predictive reporting models aligned with TWC methodologies. These models support proactive performance monitoring and continuous refinement of our reporting processes.

Provider Collaboration & Support

Strengthening collaboration with our service providers remains a top priority. To address reporting challenges and sustain high-quality performance outcomes, we have expanded our provider engagement strategies. Bi-monthly sessions with provider data management teams have been launched, creating a collaborative space for updates, best practice sharing, and strategy alignment. These sessions support a culture of shared accountability and continuous improvement.

In addition, we have rolled out a robust training series for both service provider staff and Board personnel. This series includes tools such as enhanced career assessments and personalized interviewing techniques. The goal is to better equip frontline staff to guide job seekers toward meaningful, well-aligned employment opportunities, ultimately improving both individual and system-level outcomes.

Performance and Regional Comparison Summary (Q1 FY2025: October–December 2024)

The first quarter of FY2025 reflects a strong start for the Gulf Coast region, with performance exceeding statewide benchmarks in several key areas under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Notable highlights include superior results in Measurable Skills Gains for both Adult (+6.02%) and Dislocated Worker (+11.01%) participants, as well as gains in Median Earnings for both groups. These outcomes point to successful alignment between training investments and labor market needs and underscore the region's ongoing commitment to upskilling and career development.

Additionally, the region led the state in Claimant Reemployment within 10 Weeks (112.70%), reinforcing the effectiveness of our reemployment strategies and employer engagement efforts.

While credential attainment for Adult (78.20%), Dislocated Worker (72.06%), and Career & Technical (C&T) (74.51%) participants continues to lag the state, these areas are already being addressed through targeted Performance Improvement Actions (PIAs). Initial results from these initiatives are promising, with reforms focusing on program alignment, expanded training pathways, and enhanced follow-up services. Employment outcomes for Dislocated Workers in Q4 Post-Exit and for C&T participants in Q2 Post-Exit were also modestly below state averages but remain within a manageable range. These indicators are being closely monitored as part of our broader quality assurance and improvement strategy.

Youth outcome data was not available for this reporting period. However, system upgrades are in progress to ensure improved data availability and reporting in future cycles.

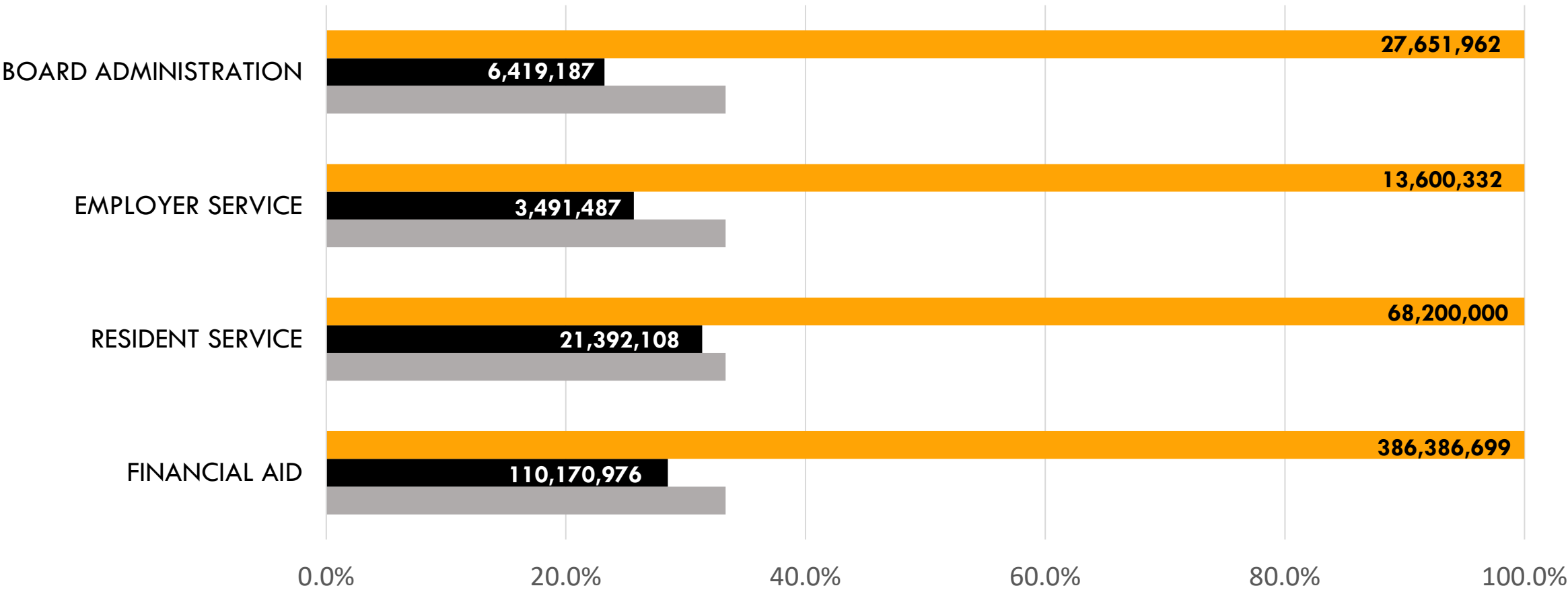
Overall, Q1 performance demonstrates the strength of our regional workforce system and validates the strategic improvements underway. The Gulf Coast Board remains committed to building on this momentum through sustained provider engagement, enhanced data practices, and continued investment in participant success.

Measure		% of Target		
		State Performance	Gulf Coast Performance	State vs Gulf Coast Difference
WIOA Outcome Measures	Employed Q2 Post Exit - Adult	94.86%	94.73%	-0.13%
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - Adult	89.14%	90.51%	1.37%
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Adult	87.26%	91.89%	4.63%
	Credential Rate - Adult	91.22%	78.20%	-13.02%
	Measurable Skills Gains - Adult	87.24%	93.26%	6.02%
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - DW	90.34%	95.63%	5.29%
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - DW	87.29%	80.72%	-6.57%
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - DW	98.29%	99.53%	1.24%
	Credential Rate - DW	91.28%	72.06%	-19.22%
	Measurable Skills Gains - DW	79.92%	90.93%	11.01%
	Empl./Enrolled Q2 Post Exit - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Empl./Enrolled Q4 Post Exit - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Credential Rate - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Measurable Skills Gains - Youth	-----	-----	-----
	Emplied/ Enrolled Q2 - C&T	88.82%	87.21%	-1.61%
	Emplied/ Enrolled Q2-Q4 - C&T	91.19%	91.67%	0.48%
	Credential Rate C&T	88.87%	74.51%	-14.36%
Reemployment and Employer	Claimants Reemployment within 10 weeks	103.90%	112.70%	8.80%
	Texas Talent Assistance Rate	-----	135.98%	-----
Program Participation	Choices Full Engagement Rate	-----	-----	-----
	Average Children Served Per Day	105.07%	101.91%	-3.16%
Adult Education (Feb 2025)	Adult Ed Total 12+ Hour Students	132.73%	84.03%	-48.70%
	Integrated Education/Training - IET (AE)	95.44%	56.84%	-38.60%
	Intensives	133.71%	76.53%	-57.18%
	Popular	-----	67.38%	-----

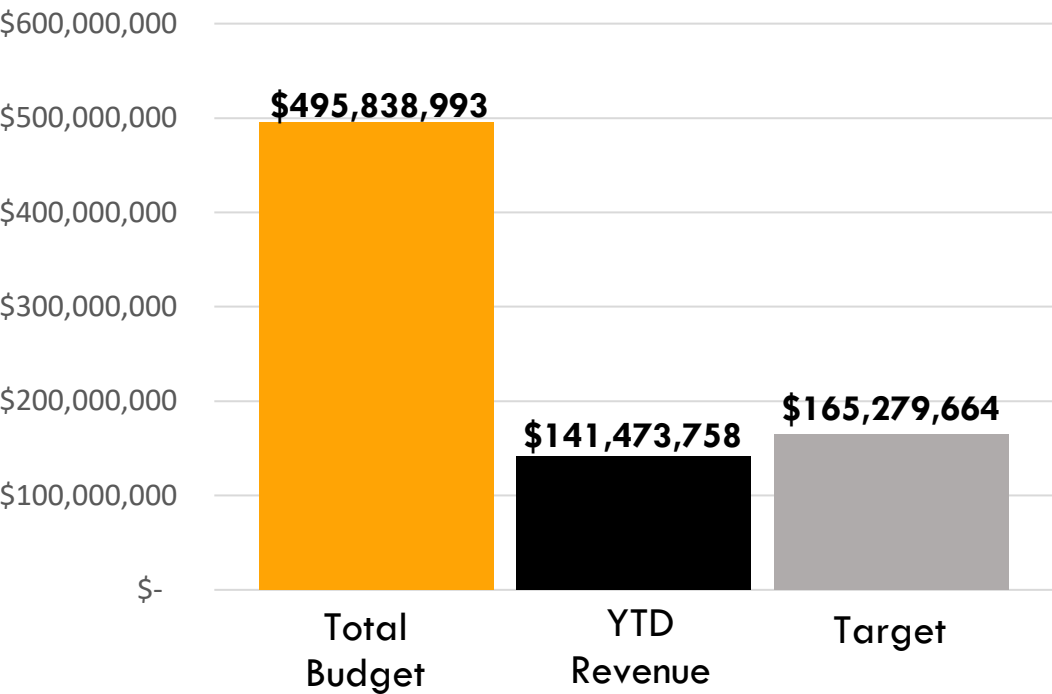
Gulf Coast Workforce Financial Status Report

For the 4 months ending April 30, 2025

Budget Expenses Target

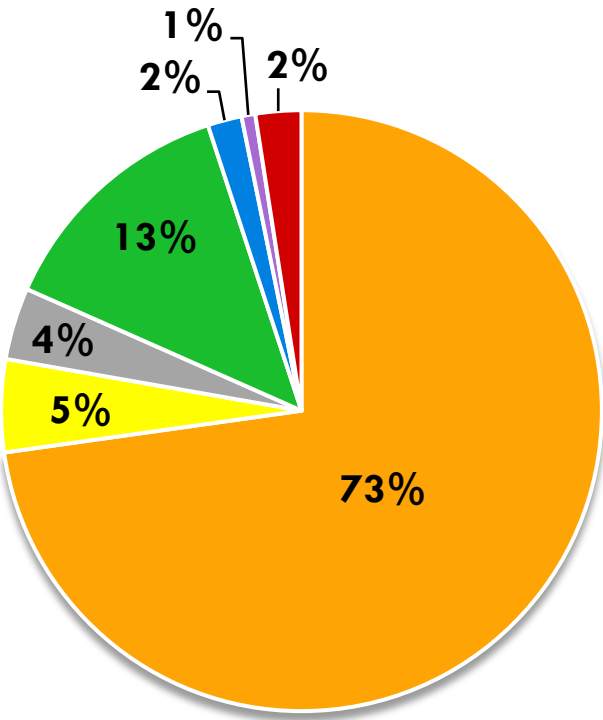


Workforce Revenue



System Expenses

- FINANCIAL AID - EARLY EDUCATION \$98,857,143
- FINANCIAL AID - TRAINING & SUPPORT \$6,066,379
- FINANCIAL AID - OPERATIONS \$5,247,454
- CAREER SERVICES \$18,052,491
- EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT \$2,490,548
- QUALITY IMPROVEMENT \$1,000,939
- ADULT EDUCATION \$3,339,617



89th Texas Legislative Session

Update

Executive Summary

The 89th Texas Legislature commenced on January 14, 2025 and concluded on June 2, 2025 (Sine Die). Approximately 5,000 bills were filed, including forty-four (44) specifically related to child care and/or workforce development. In addition to proposed legislation, several budget riders were introduced addressing key priorities such as apprenticeships, skills development—particularly within health care workforce pipelines—and child care services.

Common policy themes that dominated the session included the state leadership's focus on education, school choice, public safety, property tax relief, establishment of Texas Regulatory Efficiency Office, economic development, infrastructure, and individual rights. The session's outcomes will have lasting impacts on the state's policy landscape.

This update offers a high-level narrative overview of major legislative activity most relevant to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's mission. It highlights our visits and proposed workforce initiatives, child care legislation, and state budget provisions affecting the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), as well as significant education proposals—such as school vouchers and early education funding—that may indirectly impact workforce and child care systems. With the Governor's signature deadline on June 22, this report provides the Board an opportunity to assess and prepare for changes that may impact our services. Laws are set to go into effect on September 1, 2025, unless otherwise noted.

Important Deadlines:

- Last Day of Session (Sine Die): June 2
- Governor's Deadline for Signature: June 22
- Laws Take Effect: September 1, 2025

Relevant Enacted Workforce-Related Legislation

1. SB 856 – Expansion of Skills Development Fund

Broadens access to the Skills Development Fund by including entities like the Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station (TEES) and the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, aligning it with existing eligible institutions such as public community and technical colleges, community-based organizations, and local workforce development boards. This bill aims to address labor shortages by funding customized training programs for small and medium-sized businesses, trade unions, and community organizations. TEES can utilize the fund for the following:

- Recovering costs incurred in developing customized assessment and training programs in occupations experiencing labor shortages not addressed by existing local programs.

- Ensuring that wages for individuals completing such training are at least equal to the prevailing wage for that occupation in the local labor market.

2. SB 2448 - Rural Workforce Training:

Lawmakers approved a new Rural Workforce Development Grant Program (SB 2448) to support job training in rural areas. This bill authorizes the TWC, in consultation with education agencies, to award grants to nonprofits that assist rural colleges and school districts in closing skills gaps and meeting urgent workforce needs. Similarly, the House companion (HB 2545) passed the House but SB 2448 ultimately cleared both chambers and is on track to become law.

3. SB 153 – Social Work Recruitment and Retention Program

Creates a program offering financial stipends to social work students in accredited programs. Addresses workforce shortages in social services, particularly in mental health professional shortage areas. Managed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

4. HB 2189 – Enhancement of Health Profession CTE and Dual Credit Programs

Improves career and technology education (CTE) and dual credit programs related to health professions offered by school districts. Strengthens the pipeline for health care professionals by enhancing educational programs.

5. SB 1143 – Planning and Evaluation Requirements on Workforce Development Programs for Opportunity Youth

Mandates that state agencies involved in workforce development, including the Texas Workforce Commission, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, establish clear goals and performance metrics for their programs to be made publicly available and submitted to the legislature for data-driven policymaking and accountability in workforce development efforts. These metrics are designed to assess the effectiveness of initiatives targeting “opportunity youth” – individuals aged 16 to 24 who are neither in school nor employed. This demographic constitutes approximately 13.1% of Texas's young adult population, surpassing the national average of 10.9%.

6. SB 1535 – Nuclear Energy Workforce Development Program

Establishes an advanced nuclear energy workforce development program managed by the Texas Workforce Commission. This bill passed unanimously and awaits the Governor's signature.

7. SB 1620: Texas Forensic Analyst Apprenticeship Pilot program

Establishes the Texas Forensic Analyst Apprenticeship Pilot Program and awaits Governor's signature.

8. HB3000 (SB1377): EMT and Health Care Workforce: In response to critical shortages in emergency health services, lawmakers advanced HB 3000 (and its Senate companion SB 1377) to establish a Rural Ambulance Service Grant Program. This program would provide grants – up to \$500,000 for the smallest counties – to help rural EMS providers purchase ambulances and equipment. The bill had broad support from rural legislators and was reported out of the Senate on May 28, positioning it for final passage. This program is set to invest up to \$10 million statewide in ambulances and EMS workforce support in under-served counties, helping train and retain EMTs and paramedics in those communities.

9. HB 5265: Texas Health Care Workforce Education Fund: The Legislature created a framework to bolster the health care workforce with HB 5265 (with a related constitutional amendment, HJR 203) to establish the Texas Health Care Workforce Education Fund if approved by voters. This fund is designed to channel resources to universities for expanding nursing, medical, and other health profession training programs, addressing the state's long-term health worker shortages. (Notably, voters will decide on the constitutional amendment in November 2025, as required for the fund's creation.) In the short term, the budget appropriates initial funding to launch this initiative.

Relevant Child Care-Related Legislation

Lawmakers passed SB 1265, a bipartisan measure directing TWC to create a centralized web portal for employers with information on child care resources, tax credits, and best practices to help working parents. This low-cost, informational approach aims to boost employer-supported child care without new mandates, and it was sent to the Governor in mid-May 2025.

Child Care Access and Quality: Texas responded to the post-pandemic child care crisis with both funding and policy. The final state budget injects \$100 million in additional funding for child care scholarships, targeting nearly 95,000 children on waitlists. These dollars – sourced from unallocated federal funds – were added to the budget bill (SB 1) during final negotiations.

Further, HB 2294 was approved (sent to the Governor on May 28, 2025) to give local workforce development boards more flexibility in subsidizing high-quality child care providers. Under current law, boards could not pay above market rates even for Texas Rising Star-certified centers, but HB 2294 permits higher reimbursement rates for providers in low-income or underserved areas. Advocates note this will help sustain quality child care programs in “desert” areas by allowing higher payments to struggling providers. Another bill, HB 2310, was sent to the Governor to develop a strategic plan for improving early childhood education access for children with disabilities – a collaborative effort between TWC, the Texas Education Agency, and Health and Human Services.

State Budget Allocations for Workforce Programs (2024–25 Biennium)

The FY2024–25 Texas state budget (General Appropriations Act, 89th Legislature) includes significant investments in workforce development, job training, and child care:

- **Workforce Training & Apprenticeships:** Texas maintained or increased funding for key training initiatives. The Skills Development Fund – the state’s flagship upskilling grant program – is funded at approximately \$32.4 million in FY 2026 and \$32.45 million in FY 2027 (unchanged from prior levels) to support partnerships between community colleges and employers.
- **Registered Apprenticeship programs** received a boost: about \$46.5 million total for the biennium (roughly \$25.5M in the first year and \$21.0M in the second) is appropriated to expand apprenticeship training capacity. This will help address workforce shortages in skilled trades by supporting training stipend reimbursements and new apprenticeship program development. Lawmakers also funded a new “Lone Star Workforce of the Future Fund” at \$2.5 million per year, which is expected to pilot innovative workforce projects and partnerships (the result of prior legislation creating this dedicated fund).
- **Child Care Programs:** The budget sustains Texas’ substantial child care assistance system, which is largely federally funded. Annual spending for child care subsidies (low-income working family childcare scholarships) is about \$1.42 billion in FY 2026 and \$1.47 billion in FY 2027 for direct care assistance, plus additional funds for quality improvement and special initiatives. On top of this base, as noted, legislators negotiated a one-time \$100 million increase (using federal dollars) to address waitlists and provider stability.
- **Budget riders** also give TWC authority to pilot innovative child care models. For example, the Legislature signaled support for after-hours child care pilots and partnerships with employers (though a specific line-item for a “child care innovation pilot” was not separately funded, the policy framework from bills like SB 1249/HB 2652 may be implemented using existing funds in certain regions).
- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** The budget allocates about \$246.5 million in FY 2026 and \$308.7 million in FY 2027 for vocational rehab programs. This will fund programs such as vocational counseling, training for youth and adults with disabilities, supported employment, and the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center. The increase in the second year

reflects anticipated growth in federal VR grants and state matching contributions.

- **Workforce and Leadership Initiatives:** The state is investing in workforce leadership and innovation. For example, Texas State Technical Colleges will benefit from an \$850 million appropriation (from General Revenue) into a new Permanent Fund for technical education, contingent on voter approval of HJR 5. This will finance modernized equipment and expanded capacity at TSTC campuses, ensuring a pipeline of skilled tradespeople to meet industry demand. While not a direct TWC program, this investment in technical education infrastructure is a strategic workforce development move.
- The budget also continues funding for the Jobs Education for Texans (JET) grant program, which supports career and technical education equipment for schools and colleges. (Additionally, SB 1728 was passed to expand JET grants to include facilities run by the Juvenile Justice Department, further widening access to CTE training.)

Relevant K-12 Education Policy Outcomes

School Finance Reform (HB 2): In a breakthrough development, Texas lawmakers approved a major public school finance package – about \$8.5 billion in new funding – after several sessions of stagnation. The final bill, House Bill 2, passed with overwhelming support (122-13) and is headed to Governor Abbott, who has indicated he will sign. This legislation increases the basic per-pupil funding allotment by \$55 per student (a modest bump, but a start after no increases since 2019). More significantly, HB 2 dedicates over \$4 billion for educator pay raises to address teacher shortages and retention.

Career & Technical Education (CTE): While HB 2 did not explicitly overhaul CTE funding formulas, the overall funding boost indirectly supports CTE programs. Districts can use the increased basic allotment and new funds to sustain and expand CTE offerings. Earlier in the session, lawmakers spotlighted CTE through other proposals – for example, a bill to count Junior ROTC programs for CTE credit and accountability passed (HB 1079), and the JET grant expansion (SB 1728) will help equip CTE programs in juvenile facilities. In sum, no major new CTE-specific allotment was created, but CTE programs will benefit from the influx of general funds and equipment grants, as well as continued weighted funding for high-demand programs under existing law.

Early Education & Literacy: The finance package invests in early learning and reading as well. It sets aside funding for full-day Pre-K for eligible 4-year-olds and supports early childhood literacy and numeracy programs. It also restructures special education funding to be more needs-based – ensuring districts get more resources for higher-need special ed students. These

measures, coupled with a new requirement (via HB 2) that all K-5 reading and math teachers be appropriately certified by 2026, aim to improve student outcomes and long-term workforce readiness.

Teacher Shortage Initiatives: Beyond pay raises, the Legislature took some steps to address teacher shortages and pipeline issues. HB 2 establishes a new Teacher Retention Allotment (in the Senate's version, SB 26, this was a priority) to fund sustained raises for veteran classroom teachers. It also creates or funds teacher residency and mentorship programs, providing stipends for apprentice teachers and mentors to improve preparation (with money allocated for this in the budget).

Additionally, lawmakers passed HB 2249 to create the Texas Teacher Recruitment Scholarship Program (providing scholarships for aspiring teachers) – this bill was sent to the Governor. Efforts were also made to curb reliance on uncertified long-term substitutes: HB 2 mandates phasing out uncertified teachers in elementary core subjects by 2026, pushing districts to invest in fully certified educators. While these steps will not solve the teacher shortage overnight, they mark a substantial state commitment to making the teaching profession more attractive through better pay, training, and support.

School Voucher Program (Education Savings Accounts): Governor Abbott's signature education initiative – a statewide private school voucher/ESA program – achieved final passage this session. The Texas Senate fast-tracked the voucher bill (SB 2) in February, and in a historic outcome, the House voted to approve it in April after extensive debate. Gov. Abbott signed the voucher legislation into law on May 3, 2025. Key features of the new program:

- It creates Education Savings Accounts of about \$10,000 per student per year, which parents can use toward private school tuition or other education expenses. This amount is roughly 85% of the state's per-pupil funding for public schools.
- The program is one of the largest in the nation, open to most families (including many currently in private school). Lawmakers set an initial budget of \$1 billion for the first two years of the ESA program, signaling a significant state investment. (This \$1B is provided in the state budget contingent on the program's launch.)
- The voucher law will take effect Sept. 1, 2025, but the ESA accounts are expected to launch in late 2026 after administrative setup. Importantly, participating students will not have to take the STAAR test or follow public school curriculum requirements.

Workforce and Child Care Bill Tracking

Board staff has been monitoring all pertinent bills relating to workforce and child care. Please find attached a list of bill numbers, author(s), description, and status as well as relevant budgetary riders for your file and review.

89th Texas Legislative Session

At the conclusion of the 89th Texas Legislative Session, investments in workforce development and child care were featured prominently, supported by a strong economy and unprecedented state revenues that give lawmakers the means to invest in Texas' human capital. There were several bills introduced to enhance job training programs, expand apprenticeships, improve child care access, and better integrate services – many of which align with the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's mission to equip workers and support families in our region.

Moving forward, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board will continue to monitor the progress of relevant legislation – especially the items summarized in this report – and will assess the impact of any new laws or funding streams that emerge. While this session has ended, our advocacy and engagement with lawmakers will continue into the interim period in preparation for the 90th Legislative Session in 2027. Additionally, as a Board, we will continue hosting regional roundtables to discuss our new strategic plan with lawmakers and stakeholders while also aligning new policies to the services we provide.

****Disclaimer: Due to this report being generated prior to the conclusion of June 2, we will provide a final legislative summary, detailing enacted measures and their effects on our Board's programs. Until then, this narrative update should serve as a guide to the key developments and trends shaping workforce policy in Texas during the 89th Legislature.***

Federal Funding Status of Key Programs (WIOA, TANF, SNAP E&T, CCDF)

Texas workforce programs are highly dependent on federal funding. As of May 30, 2025, the status of major federal funding streams is as follows:

- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):** The WIOA – which authorizes Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth job training formula grants, as well as Adult Education and Literacy (Title II) – remains due for reauthorization. Congress has not passed a new WIOA reauthorization since the law's expiration. However, the programs continue to be funded through annual appropriations. For FY2024, federal WIOA funding was roughly level with prior years, and Texas' share of WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker grants remains steady (with slight adjustments based on unemployment and poverty factors). WIOA programs are operational under status quo funding, but no new authorization has been enacted. We continue to watch for any renewed reauthorization effort in 2025.

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):** The TANF block grant – the primary federal funding for welfare-to-work programs and certain child care funds – has also not been fully reauthorized in many years. Instead, Congress has extended TANF in short increments. Most recently, a continuing resolution in late 2024 extended federal TANF funding through March 31, 2025. In March 2025, Congress approved another short-term extension as part of budget proceedings, preventing any funding lapse. TANF’s annual funding (\$16.5 billion nationwide, ~\$486 million for Texas) has been flat since 1996, with no adjustment for inflation. As of May 2025, TANF is operating under a temporary extension, and Texas’ TANF-funded programs (cash assistance, workforce services for very low-income parents, and child care MOE funding) continue at existing levels. It is expected that Congress will pass a longer extension or reauthorization by fall 2025. Texas policymakers should note that any federal TANF changes could impact work activity rules and funding flexibility in the future.
- **SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T):** SNAP benefit amounts remain stable nationally, adjusting for inflation. However, new federal policies extending work requirements to individuals aged up to 54 years (previously 49) without dependents will likely increase demand for employment services provided by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, as more individuals must now engage in work or training to maintain their benefits. Significant federal SNAP cuts passed in the U.S. House by one vote, including shifting SNAP costs to states and further tightening work requirements. If enacted, Texas would face substantial financial pressure, potentially reducing SNAP eligibility or benefit levels. To date, no cuts have occurred to SNAP E&T program funding; instead, the federal government emphasizes expanding participation and accountability. With potential expansions in work requirements, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board could see increased participation in SNAP E&T programs, requiring expanded capacity and resources to support additional individuals needing job skills training, job placement assistance, and supportive services. We will continue to monitor the federal Farm Bill negotiations closely to swiftly adapt local SNAP E&T programming and outreach efforts accordingly.
- **Child Care Development Fund (CCDF):** The CCDF consists of discretionary CCDBG funds and mandatory child care funds (some tied to TANF). Federal support for child care saw a historic boost during the pandemic, but those one-time funds have expired. Currently, base CCDF funding is provided via annual appropriations. It is important to note that the enhanced child care funds from 2021-2022 (American Rescue Plan Act) are gone, leading to the loss of many stability grants. Texas has felt this “funding cliff” with reports of 75,000 child care slots lost in 2024 due to provider closures. In response, Texas is utilizing the

above-mentioned \$100 million in leftover federal funds to mitigate waitlists. Overall, current federal CCDF funding for Texas is steady and has even grown slightly year-over-year, but it falls short of meeting demand after the pandemic-era supports ended. Texas officials and providers are watching Congress for the FY2025 budget outcome, hoping for at least level funding to avoid further strain on the child care system.

Conclusion

Board staff will continue to closely monitor ongoing developments related to federal funding streams—including WIOA, TANF, SNAP E&T, CCDF, and other key workforce and education programs. We remain committed to proactively adapting our workforce strategies, service capacity, and community resources to effectively respond to potential changes in funding, eligibility, and policy requirements.

Workforce Bills- 89th Legislative Session (as of 05/28/2025)

HB= House Bill

SB= Senate Bill

Bill No.	Author(s)	Description	Companion	Status
HB 2	Rep. Buckle	Relating to public education and public-school finance.		Set on the House Items Eligible Calendar- 5/27
SB 59	Sen. Zaffirini, Judith	Relating to the use of funds awarded under the Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program.	HB 322 by Guillen, Identical	In Senate Education K-16; died in committee
HB 120	Rep. Bell, Keith	Relating to career and technology education programs in public schools, the Rural Pathway Excellence Partnership (R-PEP) program, and a high school advising program, including funding for those programs.		Passed Senate Vote (Y: 31/N:0)- 5/25
SB 232	Sen. Johnson, Nathan	Relating to the development and implementation of the Live Well Texas program and the expansion of Medicaid eligibility to provide health benefit coverage to certain individuals.	HB 895 by Lalani, Similar	In Senate- Health and Human Services; died in committee
HB 322	Rep. Guillen, Ryan	Relating to the use of funds awarded under the Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant program.	SB 59 by Zaffirini, Identical	Passed Senate Vote (Y:26/N:5)- 5/27
HB 406	Rep. Ordaz, Claudia	Relating to notification of the execution of certain local economic development agreements by a municipality or county to local workforce development boards.		Received in Senate-4/30; died in Senate chamber
HB 801	Rep. Gervin-Hawkins,	Relating to the application for funding for certain		Referred to Trade,

	Barbara	workforce development programs.		Workforce & Eco Dev, s/c on Workforce; died in committee
SB 856	Sen. Flores	Relating to the use of the skills development fund by certain entities.	HB 5008 by Bell, Keith, Identical	Signed by the Governor on 5/20; Effective date 9/1/25
SB 1143	Sen. Blanco	Relating to certain planning, notification, and evaluation requirements with respect to workforce development programs in this state.	HB 3173 by Talarico, Very Similar	Signed by the Governor on 5/27; Effective date 9/1/25
HB 1147	Rep. Gamez, Erin	Relating to the establishment by the Texas Workforce Commission of a workplace soft skills training pilot program.		Received in the Senate on 4/23; died in Senate
HB 1154	Rep. Gamez, Erin	Relating to the establishment of a skilled labor task force by certain local workforce development boards.		Received in the Senate on 4/23; died in Senate
SB 1535	Sen. Zaffirini	Relating to the establishment by the Texas Workforce Commission of an advanced nuclear energy workforce development program.		Senate concurred in House amendments Vote (Y:31/N:0)- 5/26
SB 1593	Sen. Hancock, Kelly	Relating to the Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs Grant Program.	HB 3260 by Bell, Keith, Identical	In committee- Economic Development; died in committee
SB 1620	Sen. Huffman, Joan, co-author Sen. Eckhardt, Sarah	Relating to the establishment of the Texas forensic analyst apprenticeship pilot program.	HB 5293 by Bonnen, Identical	Sent to Governor on 5/21

SB 1631	Sen. Campbell, Donna	Relating to the establishment by the Texas Workforce Commission of an advanced nuclear energy workforce development program.		In committee- Economic Development; died in committee
HB 2189	Rep. Donna Howard	Relating to methods to improve health profession- related career and technology education and dual credit programs offered by school districts.		Received in Senate on 5/9; died in Senate chamber.
HB 2545	Rep. Gerdes	Relating to the establishment of the Rural Workforce Training Grant Program.		Received in Senate on 5/14; died in Senate chamber.
SB 2603	Sen. Blanco	Relating to cooperation by economic development program participants with local workforce development boards.	HB 5390 by Ordaz, Identical	Withdrawn from the local calendar on 5/25
HB 2627	Rep. Garcia Hernandez, Casandra	Relating to the development and implementation of the Live Well Texas program and the expansion of Medicaid eligibility to provide health benefit coverage to certain individuals.	HB 895 by Lalani, Duplicate)	In committee- Public Health, s/c on Disease Prevention & Women's and Children's Health; died in committee
HB 2689	Rep. Guillen	Relating to the establishment of an intensive workforce readiness adult education pilot program.		In committee- Public Education, s/c on Academic & Career Oriented Education; died in committee
HB 2958	Rep. Slawson	Relating to the drug testing of certain persons seeking benefits under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.		In committee- Human Services; died in committee
HB 3173	Rep. Talarico	Relating to certain planning, notification, and evaluation requirements with respect to workforce development programs in this state.	SB 1143 by Blanco, Very Similar	Signed by the Governor on 5/27; Effective date on 9/1/25
HB 3260	Rep. Bell, Keith	Relating to the Texas Industry-Recognized	SB 1593 by Sen.	Sent to Governor on 5/23

		Apprenticeship Programs Grant Program.	Hancock, Kelly, Identical	
HB 3799	Rep. Orr, Angelia	Relating to the establishment of the Apprenticeship Training Program Sponsorship Fund.		In committee- Trade, Workforce, and Eco. Dev. s/c on Workforce; died in committee
HB 3800	Rep. Orr, Angelia	Relating to an advisory board established to develop a resource guide that facilitates collaboration in identifying and addressing local health care workforce needs.		Sent to Governor on 5/26
HB 3947	Rep. Davis, Yvonne	Relating to transportation planning by metropolitan planning organizations.		Received in the Senate on 5/09; died in Senate chamber
HB 5008	Rep. Bell, Keith	Relating to the use of the skills development fund by certain entities.	SB 856 by Flores, Identical	Substitute bill SB 856; signed by the Governor on 5/20; Effective date 9/1/25
HB 5194	Rep. Capriglione, Giovanni	Relating to improving the efficiency of state workforce development programs and apprenticeship pathways to address workforce shortages.		In committee- Trade, Workforce, and Eco. Dev. s/c on Workforce; died in committee
HB 5293	Rep. Bonnen, Greg	Relating to the establishment of the Texas forensic analyst apprenticeship pilot program.	SB 1620 by Huffman, Identical	In committee- House Homeland, Public Safety, Veterans; died in committee
HB 5390	Rep. Ordaz, Claudia	Relating to cooperation by economic development program participants with local workforce development boards.	SB 2603 by Blanco, Identical	In committee- House, Trade, Workforce, Eco. Dev; died in committee

Bill No.	Author(s)	Description	Companion	Status
SB 42	Sen. Zaffirini, Judith	Relating to providing free full-day prekindergarten for certain children	HB 358 by Bucy, Identical	In committee- K-16; died in committee
HB 358	Rep. Bucy, John	Relating to providing free full-day prekindergarten for certain children.	SB 42 by Zaffirini, Identical	In committee- Public Education; died in committee
SB 786	Sen. Alvarado, Carol	Relating to authorizing school districts to provide funding using money received under the Foundation School Program to community-based organizations for purposes of reimbursing private employers for paid internships provided to certain students in career and technology education programs in the district.	SB 2282 by Miles, Duplicate	In committee- K-16; died in committee
SB 972	Sen. Zaffirini, Judith	Relating to reimbursement rates for child-care providers participating in the Texas Rising Star Program.		In committee- Economic Development; died in committee
SB 1249	Sen. Blanco	Relating to establishing a certified caregiver pilot program in the Borderplex workforce development area.	HB 2652 by Ordaz, Identical	In committee- Economic Development; died in committee
SB 1265	Sen. Alvarado, Carol	Relating to certain duties of the Texas Workforce Commission with respect to child-care resources.	HB 5122 by Harris Davila, Identical	Sent to Governor on 5/16
SB 1803	Sen. Alvarado, Carol	Relating to a franchise tax credit for taxable entities that subsidize child-care costs of the entities' employees.		In committee- Finance; died in committee
HB 2395	Rep. Dutton, Harold	Relating to a grant program to provide free public school prekindergarten programs to certain children who are eligible for the subsidized child- care program administered by the Texas Workforce Commission.		In committee- Public Education; died in committee

HB 2652	Rep. Ordaz	Relating to establishing a certified caregiver pilot program in the Borderplex workforce development area.	SB 1249 by Blanco, Identical	Referred to Senate Economic Development Committee on 5/22
SB 2282	Sen. Miles, Borris	Relating to authorizing school districts to provide funding using money received under the Foundation School Program to community-based organizations for purposes of reimbursing private employers for paid internships provided to certain students in career and technology education programs in the district.	SB 786 by Alvarado, Duplicate	In committee- Education K-16; died in committee
SB 3007	Sen. Blanco	Relating to establishing a pilot program to increase the supply of child-care services and encourage employer partnerships to meet strategic workforce needs in certain regions of the state.	HB 5086 by Ordaz, Identical	In Senate Economic Development Committee; died in committee
HB 2271	Rep. Armando Walle	Requires child care providers to report capacity/enrollment to TWC; TWC to create a public child care slot availability portal.		Received in the Senate on 5/12
HB 4024	Rep. Armando Walle	Relating to the establishment of a child care scholarship fund administered by the Texas.		In committee- Trade, Workforce, and Eco. Dev; died in committee
HB 5068	Rep. Ordaz, Claudia	Creates a child care innovation pilot program to fund employer-provider partnerships that expand access to quality, affordable care.	May overlap with HB 5086 / SB 3007	Filed.
HB 5086	Rep. Ordaz	Relating to establishing a pilot program to increase the supply of child-care services and encourage employer partnerships to meet strategic workforce needs in certain regions of the state.	SB 3007 by Blanco, Identical	In committee- Trade, Workforce, and Eco. Dev; died in committee

HB 5122	Rep. Harris Davila	Relating to certain duties of the Texas Workforce Commission with respect to child-care resources.	SB 1265 by Alvarado, Identical	Substitute for SB 1265; Sent to Governor on 5/16
HB 5529	Rep. Bumgarner	Relating to establishing a child-care innovation pilot program.		In committee- Trade, Workforce, and Eco. Dev; died in committee

Riders:

- Rider by Rep. Lujan increasing General Revenue (GR) funding for Skills Development by \$15M to increase the number of emergency medical technicians - Adopted at 5M total.
- Rider by Rep. Walle increasing child care funding by \$181M GR to move 10,000 children off the state waiting list - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Wu increasing GR funding for Skills Development by \$1M to develop Houston-based partnerships seeking employees with skills in technical and industrial textiles - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Hernandez increasing GR funding for Apprenticeship by \$1M to fund Houston-based programs supporting hands on training and tool lending - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Simmons directing \$200,000 in GR funding for Labor Market and Career Information to study the education and retention of obstetricians and gynecologists - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Walle increasing GR Funding for Apprenticeship by \$20M to serve additional participants in the Chapter 133 Apprentice Training Program - Adopted at \$5M total.
- Rider by Rep. Plesa increasing GR funding for Skills Development by \$2M to create a pilot program using artificial intelligence by Direct Support Professionals in the care of individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities - Not Adopted
- Rider by Rep. Leach to create a new budget strategy for a Mobile Statewide Workforce Development Pilot Program funded at \$2M - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Barry increasing GR funding for Local Child Care Solutions by \$3M to support Vision Modernization and Data System Implementation programs - Moved to Art. XI.
- Rider by Rep. Ordaz increasing GR funding for Local Child Care Solutions by \$450,000 to create a certified caregiver pilot in the Workforce Borderplex Solutions area – Adopted
- Rider by an unnamed member to increase GR funding for Skills Development by \$5M to support health care

workforce nursing pipeline programs - Moved to Article XI.

- Rider by Rep. Bernal increasing GR funding for Vocational Rehabilitation by \$6M to partner with certain local providers to offer comprehensive VR services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Guillen appropriating an unnamed amount contingent upon passage of HB 1843, relating to a shared work UI program - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Thompson appropriating \$1M GR contingent upon passage of HB 2294, relating to Texas Rising Star Reimbursement Rates - Moved to Article XI
- Rider by Rep. Morales Shaw appropriating an unnamed amount contingent upon passage of HB 3059, relating to paid parental leave - Moved to Article XI
- Rider by Rep. Button appropriating \$5M GR contingent upon passage of HB 3191, relating to Child Care Contribution Partnerships - Moved to Article XI
- Rider by Rep. Orr appropriating \$8M GR contingent upon passage of unnamed legislation, relating to establishing an Apprenticeship Training Program Sponsorship Fund - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by an unnamed member increasing funding for Child Care Services by \$5.8B GR to serve all children age 0-4 with an income below 250% of the federal poverty level - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Hinojosa appropriating an unknown amount contingent on unnamed legislation, relating to a Texas company using a H1B visa - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Raymond to use \$1.5M in current funds to support vocational education partnerships between the City of Laredo and community colleges - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Walle to use \$1.6M in current funds to implement Enhanced Workforce Data Systems – Adopted
- Rider by Rep. Richardson to create a new budget strategy for a Mobile Statewide Workforce Development Pilot Program funded at \$2M - Not Adopted.

- Rider by Rep. Hernandez to use \$500,000 in current funds for creation of leadership development programs-Adopted.
- Rider by Rep. Raymond to use \$750,000 in current funds to support training programs aligning with the industry needs of Laredo - Moved to Article XI.
- Rider by Rep. Harrison prohibiting all Article VII funding from being used for programs not complying with biological realities - Not Adopted.
- Rider by Rep. Harrison prohibiting all Article VII funding from being used for Diversity, Equity, or Inclusion programs - Not Adopted.