



Gulf Coast Workforce Board
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To: Gulf Coast Workforce Board Members

From: Executive Director Juliet K. Stipeche

Date: August 3, 2023

Subject: August 8, 2023 Board Meeting

We look forward to seeing you at the August Board meeting which will take place at H-GAC's office, 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas in conference room A/B/C on the second floor. Please note that this meeting is in-person, and virtual attendance is not an option.

Our meeting will start with remarks from our Chair, Mark Guthrie, followed by my Executive Director's report. We will have updates from Carl Bowles, Chair of Strategic Planning, and Guy Jackson, Chair of Audit and Monitoring Committees. Board staff will present reports on system performance and production as well as budget and expenditures through June 2023.

We have several action items for the Board's consideration this month including:

- Approval of Service Provider for Employer Engagement;
- Approval of Renewal Contracts for FY24;
- Approval of Service Provider for Vocational Rehabilitation Services Payroll;
- Approval of Service Provider Contract Performance Measures; and
- Ratification of Items from Previous Meetings.

Board staff will present a communications update and a look at the economy.

We look forward to seeing you soon, and as always, please tell us if you have any questions or comments about the board packet or wish to discuss any item. I am available at your convenience.



GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD

AGENDA
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023, AT 10:00 A.M.
2ND FLOOR, 3555 TIMMONS LANE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77027

This meeting will be in person only and will be open to the public but restrictions regarding masks, allowable room capacity, and seating arrangements may be in place.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Adopt Agenda**
- 4. Public Comment**
- 5. Review June 2023 Meeting Minutes**
- 6. Declare Conflicts of Interest**
- 7. Consider Reports:**
 - a. Chair's Remarks: (Chairman Mark Guthrie)
 - b. Executive Director's Report: (Staff Contact: Juliet Stipeche)
 - c. Strategic Planning Committee: Briefing on the committee's June and August meetings (Chair Carl Bowles)
 - d. Audit and Monitoring Committee: Briefing on the committee's August meeting (Chair Guy Jackson)

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8. Information:

- a. Performance and Production: Report on the system's performance and production (Staff Contact: Philip Garcia);
- b. Expenditures: Report on the Board's budget and expenditures (Staff Contact: AJ Dean);

9. Action Items:

I. Procurement Committee Report: Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action:

- a. Approval of Service Provider for Employer Engagement (Procurement Committee Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson and Staff Contact Rebecca Neudecker);
- b. Approval of Renewal Contracts for FY24 (Procurement Committee Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson and Staff Contact Rebecca Neudecker)
 - 1. Financial Aid Support Center,
 - 2. Financial Aid Payment Office,
 - 3. Career Office Operations,
 - 4. Early Education Quality,
 - 5. Next Generation Youth Service Provider, and
 - 6. Public Information and Outreach Service Provider;
- c. Approval of Service Provider for Vocational Rehabilitation Services Payroll (Procurement Committee Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson and Staff Contact AJ Dean);
- d. Approval of Service Provider Contract Performance Measures (Procurement Committee Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson and Staff Contact Rebecca Neudecker).

II. Ratification of Items from Previous Meetings (Staff Contact: Aaron Sturgeon)

10. Communications Update: A review of our media outreach activities (Staff Contact: Michelle Castrow).

11. Look at the Economy: Update on the Labor Market (Staff Contact: Ron Borski)

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12. Other Business

13. 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, August 7, 2023**, to Deborah Duke at deborah.duke@wrksolutions.net.

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

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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.

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**MINUTES OF MEETING OF
THE GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD
TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Willie Alexander	Bobbie Henderson	Paul Puente
Anne Bartlett	Alan Heskamp	Monica Riley
Peter Beard	Guy Robert Jackson	Mou Sarkar
Sara Bouse	Doug Karr	Keri Schmidt
Carl Bowles	Jeff LaBroski	Valerie Segovia
Helen Cavazos	Michael Love	Richard Shaw
Melissa Gonzalez	Jonathan Lowe	Lizandra Vazquez
Cheryl Guido	Edward Melton	Carolyn Watson
Mark Guthrie	Adrian Ozuna	Michael Webster

H-GAC STAFF PRESENT

Crosby Brito	Parker Harvey	Kristi Rangel
Michelle Castrow	Nancy Haussler	Rebecca Neudecker
AJ Dean	Charles Hill	Juliet Stipeche
Deborah Duke	Danielle Knotts	

Chair Mark Guthrie called the in-person meeting of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board to order at approximately 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, June 6, 2023. Deborah Duke called roll to determine a list of members present. Chair Guthrie determined a quorum was present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Guthrie presented the agenda and requested a motion to approve the agenda as presented. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried, and the agenda was adopted as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Michael Gutierrez, Workforce Solutions Employer Services Project Specialist, provided comments to the Board regarding upcoming opportunities with the Automotive Standards of Excellence Education Foundation. Mr. Gutierrez reported that the organization reached out approximately 6 months ago requesting support and assistance with creating an improved pipeline to the automotive service

industry through students and alumni of area K-12 schools. The Board greeted this opportunity enthusiastically and expressed interest in providing assistance with this project.

Ms. Shefali Kapoor Patel, founder and CEO of Vijay Computer Academy, introduced herself and her organization to the Board. Ms. Patel described the organization's registered apprenticeship programs in the areas of software testing, cybersecurity and IT help desk programs. She expressed Vijay Computer Academy's desire to continue working with the Workforce Solutions Talent Development team to educate and empower individuals aged 50 and above to enroll and participate in registered apprenticeship programs. The Board thanked Ms. Patel for her comments.

MINUTES FROM APRIL 4, 2023, MEETING

Chair Guthrie asked for approval of the minutes as presented. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DECLARE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Chair Guthrie invited Board members to disclose any conflicts of interest related to today's action items on the agenda. No conflicts were reported. Chair Guthrie reminded members that they could also declare any conflicts with items as they were taken up, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the decision-making process.

CONSIDER REPORTS

a. Chair's Report.

Chair Guthrie provided a report on recent state and national developments, activities and conferences pertinent to workforce development.

Chair Guthrie reported that the President signed the bipartisan Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) to prevent the nation from hitting the federal debt ceiling. The FRA establishes overall spending caps which are intended to freeze current spending levels on domestic programs like Workforce Development at the current federal fiscal year 2023 levels in FY 2024 and would allow for a 1% increase in the discretionary funding for domestic programs in FY 2025. In addition, the FRA reforms the permitting processes for energy projects and imposes new work requirements for certain TANF and SNAP recipients. Under the new TANF requirements, the FRA would require by 2025 that states to report participant work outcomes which are aligned to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

within SNAP. Work requirements for able bodied adults without dependents will now include by 2025 those who are between 18 and 54 years of age, previously it was between 18 and 49 years of age, while exempting homeless veterans and individuals aging out of foster care. This legislation will not impact funding provided through the FY23 budget. Chair Guthrie stated that advocating for more investment in workforce development at the national level will be a challenge over the next two years but reported that the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) intends to continue that advocacy.

In Texas matters, Chair Guthrie reported the new Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Commissioner representing Labor, Alberto Trevino III, will visit Alvin Community College and Brazosport College next week to attend check presentation ceremonies.

Chair Guthrie reported that the By-Laws Committee has concluded its work and will present an action item later in this meeting for approval of the updated by-laws. He thanked Dr. Michael Webster, Committee Chair, Adrian Ozuno, Committee Vice Chair, and members Alan Heskamp, Peter Beard, Guy Jackson, and Carolyn Watson for their work on the Committee and stated that there are important changes in the by-laws, particularly in terms of strengthening conflict of interest policies.

Chair Guthrie previewed a restructuring and expansion of the Board Staff's Employer and Community Engagement team and commended Juliet Stipeche and Michelle Castrow for their strategy on this restructuring.

Lastly, Chair Guthrie reported that he will attend, along with Board members Edward Melton and Carolyn Watson, a Paving the Pathways program event on Saturday to judge the business problem competition for youth with disabilities that Cheryl Guido started 8 years ago. He invited interested members to contact Cheryl Guido if they would like to attend this event.

Chair Guthrie concluded his report and no action was taken.

b. Executive Director's Report.

Executive Director Juliet Stipeche delivered several important updates during the meeting. Firstly, she thanked members for their participation in the seven Board committee meetings, one by-laws workshop, and today's meeting. She reported there were many robust discussions about our strategy moving forward and thanked the Board for their commitment. She also thanked Alan Heskamp for extending an invitation to visit El Campo and the NEC which provided an opportunity to meet with employers and educators and learn about Wharton County. She also announced that today is the kickoff for Summer Earn and Learn

2023 and congratulated all those that participated. She stated that additional funding was obtained to accommodate individuals on the wait list for summer jobs.

Ms. Stipeche also reported participation in a TWC initiative called Jobs Y'all on the past Saturday which took place at the Lone Star College Kingwood campus. A \$35,000 grant was received from the TWC to provide an opportunity for career exploration and job awareness opportunities to benefit students, residents and employers. Through these events we want to inspire and attract young people to explore careers in collaboration with local employers. An event this Saturday will be held in collaboration with the City of Houston's Hire Houston Youth program at the George R Brown Convention Center and there will be another event on June 21st at the College of the Mainland. She expressed excitement about launching this initiative and thanked everyone who supported this effort.

Nancy Haussler, H-GAC Chief Financial Officer, provided the Board with background on the H-GAC budgeting process and how that intertwines with the Workforce Board. The Workforce Board develops budgets and H-GAC incorporates those budgets into the H-GAC overall budget. Ms. Haussler stated that H-GAC does budgeting twice a year. Several iterations of the budget are reviewed in September/October with H-GAC board approval coming in December of each year. The budget is reviewed again in June or July to true up those numbers and is again presented to the H-GAC board. Ms. Haussler stated that if Workforce Board Members are interested in the H-GAC budget process she will be glad to share it and invited members to attend the H-GAC board meeting. Ms. Haussler also stated that, to support the restructuring of the Employer and Community Engagement team, Human Resources is recruiting positions for Juliet 's department and currently has approximately 9 positions open with more to come.

Ms. Haussler concluded her report and no action was taken.

c. H-GAC Internal Audit Department

Charles Hill, H-GAC Internal Audit Director provided an overview of the contract award process within H-GAC. He reported that this process includes the activity of the Workforce Board and stated that steps in the process include a pre-award process which is designed to review the documentation and status of the entity, the costs and the potential for non-compliance. Program staff provides potential awardees a questionnaire or checklist, a list of the certifications required as well as documentation such as monitoring reports. Internal Audit reviews these items and follows a process to provide a report memorandum. The process varies depending upon the size of the award and may include a pre-award site visit depending upon the experience the contractor has with H-GAC, deliverables, and past experience. The objective of the pre-award process is to review any red flags that may initiate more review that internal audit staff may need to do, to review any items that the program staff may have missed and any past performance issues to ensure that

corrective actions have been taken. Mr. Hill reported the goals are to add quality assurance and to add value to the process.

Mr. Hill and Ms. Haussler responded to questions and discussion from Board Members related to contractor compliance with grant requirements and ongoing financial monitoring.

Mr. Hill concluded his report and no action was taken.

d. By-laws Committee Report

Committee Chair Michael Webster provided the following By-laws Committee report. At the October 2022 Board meeting, Chair Guthrie called for the formation of the By-laws Committee to review the current by-laws and propose any revisions needed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Board operations. The by-laws were last amended in 2005.

Dr. Mike Webster chaired the committee and Adrian Ozuna served as Vice Chair. The Committee members include Peter Beard, Guy Jackson, Carolyn Watson, Alan Heskamp and Chair Guthrie, who served as an ex-officio member.

Since its last report to the Board, the Committee met twice to finalize changes to the draft of the by-laws and also hosted a by-laws workshop for Board members. At its meeting on May 11th, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the full Board that they adopt the proposed changes. The workshop on May 15th provided an opportunity for Committee members to present an overview of the major changes to the by-laws and for Board members to ask any questions they might have regarding the changes.

On May 15th, Board staff emailed the materials from the workshop to all Board members as formal notification that we would be acting on changes to the by-laws today. As noted in the by-laws, the votes of two thirds of the members present are needed to adopt the changes.

We are confident that the proposed changes to the by-laws will improve our ability to function efficiently and effectively as a Board. The proposed by-laws and a chart explaining the changes are included at the end of this report. The major changes include:

- Clarifying the roles of the Board;
- Changing language regarding requirements for Board composition to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements;
- Removing open meetings requirements for all but Board and Procurement meetings;
- Strengthening conflict of interest provisions; and

- Creating a new Executive Committee to provide counsel to the Board Chair.

In addition to its work on the by-laws, the Committee and the Board Officers have continued to meet with members of the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Board to discuss the consortium and partnership agreement to better align efforts of the collective work for the region and the responsibilities of the two boards. Additionally, a memorandum of understanding between the H-GAC Board and Gulf Coast Workforce Board is under discussion to better clarify the relationship with respect to operations and administration. The Board will be apprised of any developments related to this effort as they unfold.

Chair Webster concluded his report and no action was taken at this time.

e. Strategic Planning Committee Report

Committee Chair Carl Bowles provided the following Strategic Planning Committee report.

The Strategic Planning Committee met on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 9:30 am. Members present included Carl Bowles (Chair), Willie Alexander, Peter Beard, Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Doug Karr, Adrian Ozuna, Carolyn Watson, and Mark Guthrie (Board Chair.) The committee received several updates. There were no action items.

Strategic Plan 2019-2023 – Top Line Results

The strategic plan starts with a narrative that articulates the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's purpose, mission, vision, values, and behaviors to achieve the desired results of more competitive employers, a better educated workforce, more and better jobs, and higher incomes. In February 2019, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board approved a Strategic Plan with a big-picture narrative and 24 measures to track progress towards achieving the Board's goals. Here is a summary of the current situation as of May 1, 2023:

Regional Workforce System:

- Education Credentials: The target is for 84% of the region's population aged 25 and older to hold an education credential. Currently, 84.41% of the population has achieved this target.
- Post-secondary Degree: The target is for 39% of the region's population aged 25 and older to hold a post-secondary degree. Currently, 41.18% of the population has achieved this target.
- Education Credential Attainment: The target is for 24% of those pursuing an education credential to earn one. Currently, 23.1% of individuals pursuing a credential have met this target.
- Job Creation: The target is for 3.23 million individuals to be employed in the region, reflecting the addition of 254,202 jobs created since 2018. Currently, there are 3,084,029 individuals employed, falling short of the target.

Workforce Solutions:

- **Market Share:** The target is for 31,500 employers in the region to use Workforce Solutions. In 2022, 17,837 employers utilized the services, and this number decreased to 13,762 by March 2023, falling short of the target.
- **Customer Loyalty:** The target is for 65% of employers using Workforce Solutions to be repeat customers. In 2022, 37% of employers were repeat customers, and this number increased to 43% by March 2023, falling short of the target.
- **Education Credential Attainment:** The target is for 76% of individual customers pursuing an education credential to earn one. In 2022, 70% of customers achieved this target, but the number decreased to 53% by March 2023, falling short of the target.
- **Job Creation:** The target is for 3,500 new jobs to be created through Workforce Solutions' partnerships with other business organizations. In 2022 and through March 2023, 2,536 new jobs were created, falling short of the target.
- **Employment:** The target is for 78% of individual customers to be employed after leaving Workforce Solutions. In 2022, 67% of customers achieved this target, and the number increased to 75% by March 2023, falling slightly short of the target.
- **Earnings:** The target is for 37% of individual customers exiting Workforce Solutions to have earnings gains of at least 20%. In 2022, 26% of customers met this target, and the number increased to 39% by March 2023, meeting the target.

In summary, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has seen progress in some areas, such as customer loyalty, employment rates, and earnings gains. However, there are areas where the targets were not met, such as employer market share, employer customer loyalty, education credential attainment, and job creation. A copy of the current performance on strategic plan measures is included in this packet for your file and review.

Strategic Planning Efforts for 2024-2028

In this transformative era, we are embarking on an exciting journey with the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and our community to create a new strategic plan for 2024-2028. This endeavor is driven by our commitment to engaging our board members and community stakeholders to ensure their perspectives shape our future efforts. To support this process, we will partner with Outreach Strategists and Savage Design. Together, we will delve into comprehensive discussions, analysis, and innovative thinking throughout the summer months.

Our aim is to present a visionary strategic plan at the February 2024 meeting of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. By fostering collaboration, embracing innovation, and prioritizing the betterment of our community, we are confident in our ability to

shape a path forward that enhances workforce development and fosters prosperity for all.

Career Office Utilization Update

Changes in consumer patterns of behavior since the pandemic have resulted in less walk-in traffic and utilization of Workforce Solutions career offices. This lower utilization coupled with significant increases in costs to lease retail spaces presents significant fiscal challenges going forward.

As a result, Board staff have begun developing metrics to identify opportunities to reimagine office service delivery to meet changing customer preferences. Possible strategies to address these challenges include reallocation of office space to expand provision of virtual services, relocation of offices to lower-cost or no-cost facilities by partnering with stakeholders, and consolidation of locations to enhance the effectiveness of traditional retail service delivery.

Proposed Pilot of Community Colleges and Other Community Based Organizations as Strategic Areas for Career Services

We are exploring strategic partnerships with community colleges and community-based organizations, aiming to leverage available space at minimal or no cost. We hope to first pilot with Houston Community College, Alvin Community College and Lone Star College. These alliances hold immense potential to enhance our service delivery capabilities and drive improved outcomes. Through a methodical piloting approach with our educational partners, we seek to establish robust collaborative networks and foster an environment of shared success. This deliberate approach allows us to assess the efficacy of our strategies, streamline operational processes, maximize the impact of our service delivery mechanisms, support our outreach efforts, and leverage the braiding of public dollars to enhance opportunities for our community's residents. We seek to transform our workforce development endeavors and establish a new roadmap to success. By harnessing the power of collaboration, innovation, and strategic foresight, we seek to unlock the full potential of our community's workforce. This collaborative undertaking underscores our commitment to continuous improvement, coordination of services with community partners, and optimized service delivery, ultimately strengthening the workforce and fostering prosperity for all stakeholders.

Support Center Restructuring and Proposed Transition of Scholarships to Career Offices

The Support Center was established to streamline training and childcare scholarship application processing. Despite a significant increase in funding, staffing at the Support Center has seen minimal growth, leading to challenges in effectively addressing calls. To address this, we are dividing the Support Center into separate units for eligibility and call center functions. We have assessed areas for improvement and are prioritizing enrollments and call center enhancements. Collaboration with our Support Center contractor, Equus and the hiring of a new

call center director have provided insights into staffing and technology improvements. We are implementing scheduling adjustments, hiring additional staff, and adopting Ring Central as the new phone system. An updated child care webpage has been launched to provide more information to parents. We will continue to work closely with the Support Center, install Ring Central by mid-June, hire more staff, and provide training for the new child care system.

Further, the Support Center was established to streamline the processing of training and childcare scholarship applications, but staffing has not kept pace with funding increases. Currently, the center consists of 89 staff members across eight functional groups, handling over 7,000 applications and 17,000 calls per month. To enhance customer service for training applicants, we are transferring eligibility determination and voucher processes to Tracking Units, aiming for faster outcomes. Workgroup and thinktank sessions with service providers are underway to ensure a smooth transition. Next steps involve continuing these sessions, commencing voucher and financial aid training, and updating contracts for the upcoming year to reflect the changes.

Additional details about the proposed change will be shared in the Education Committee and Procurement Committee reports contained in this packet.

Employer and Community Engagement Division

Board staff provided information on the plan to expand the Employer and Community Engagement Division of the Board's staff. This plan allows the Board to use a sector-based approach to support talent pipeline development. More information about the approach and structure is included in the Employer Engagement Committee report in this packet.

Proposed Career Services Division

At present, there is no dedicated division responsible for coordinating career services across the Board's various divisions and to serve as a liaison with our external service providers. Board staff proposed the establishment of a Career Service division responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive career services strategy that aligns with the needs of the local labor market.

This division will work closely with other divisions of the Board staff to ensure services at career offices are coordinated and resources are braided where appropriate and will work to develop and implement an integrated service delivery model that incorporates feedback from job seekers, employers, service providers, and other key stakeholders.

The anticipated return on investment for the Career Service Division is an increase in the number of individuals and businesses utilizing career services, resulting in a stronger and more competitive workforce.

Board members participated in a discussion surrounding target measures and workforce goals.

Chair Bowles concluded his report and no action was taken.

f. Education Committee Report

Committee Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson provided the following Education Committee report.

The Education Committee met on May 11, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. Members present included Bobbie Henderson (committee chair), Doug Karr (committee vice chair), Willie Alexander, Sara Bouse, Helen Cavazos, Cheryl Guido, Mark Guthrie, Michael Love, Edward Melton, Margaret Oser, Paul Puente and Carolyn Watson

Child Care Support Center Reorganizing Plan

To enhance the customer service experience for our training customers, we are streamlining the eligibility determination and voucher process by transitioning it to the Tracking Units. This change will result in faster eligibility determinations and voucher distribution for our customers. Currently, our Board staff is facilitating workgroup and think tank sessions with service providers to ensure a smooth transition.

To boost the performance and productivity of the Support Center, we are collaborating closely with the management team to restructure the operational model into two specialized units: one dedicated to eligibility and the other to call center operations. This strategic realignment is crucial to foster improved focus, specialization, and operational efficiency.

Over the past five years, the funds allocated for Child Care Financial Aid have grown by an impressive 65% to reach \$81 million. However, during the same period, staffing levels at the support center have increased by less than 10%. To address these staffing challenges and rectify operational deficiencies, our Board staff will present action items at the upcoming June 6, 2023 Gulf Coast Workforce Board meeting. These action items will propose the addition of more staff to enhance call handling capacities, expedite child care application processing, resolve bottlenecks in the eligibility and fulfillment processes, and accommodate the needs of a growing customer base.

Please refer to the Procurement Committee report for additional information regarding action items concerning the Support Center.

Early Childhood Quality

As of May 2023, The University of Texas Health Science Center - Children's Learning Institute (CLI) has successfully onboarded and trained approximately 60% of the

required staff to support our Early Education Quality initiatives. As a new service provider, our leadership team at CLI receives weekly technical assistance implementation and support from the Board staff.

Our current priorities encompass the following:

- Expanding the number of Texas Rising Star certified providers.
- Delivering professional development opportunities and classroom resources to early learning providers within our region.
- Facilitating new Pre-K partnerships between Texas Rising Star providers and school districts/charter schools.
- Offering child care referrals and consumer education to families.

In addition, we are thrilled to announce that this month, our Board has received permission from TWC to utilize Quality Child Care dollars for an innovative pilot program in collaboration with the Bright Offerings' Registered Apprenticeship Program. This pioneering initiative allows us to award scholarships to 60 early childhood educators. Remarkably, this marks the first utilization of these funds for such a purpose in the State of Texas.

Child Care Expansion Grant

The child care expansion team is currently overseeing the coordination and implementation of activities and deliverables associated with the TWC grant. To fulfill this endeavor, we have prepared and issued a request for proposal (RFP) seeking qualified contractor(s) for the development of a "Child Care Provider Bootcamp." At the time of this committee meeting, the RFP applications were still under review.

The primary objective of this project is to collaborate closely with childcare providers, community partners, and existing community resources in order to create a comprehensive strategy document. This document aims to enhance the quality of childcare programs, particularly in areas with limited access to such services, by:

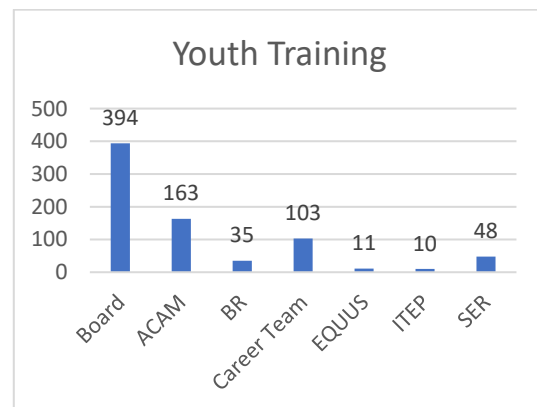
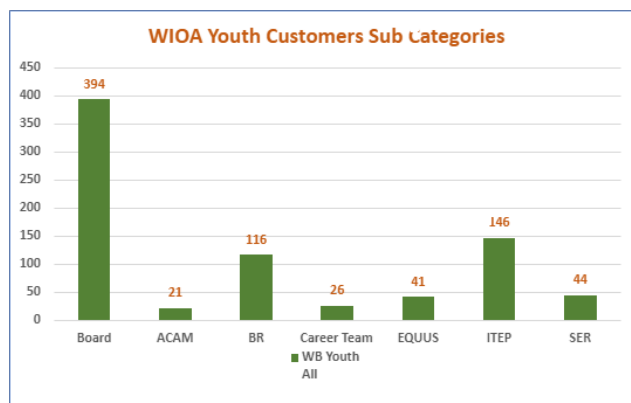
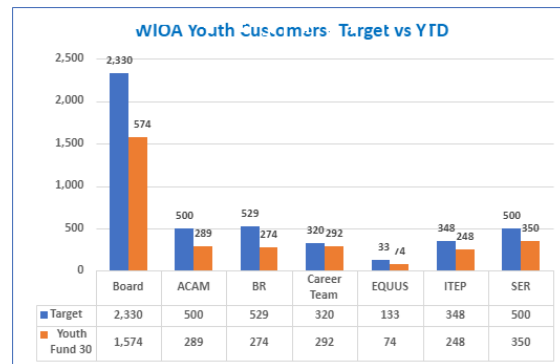
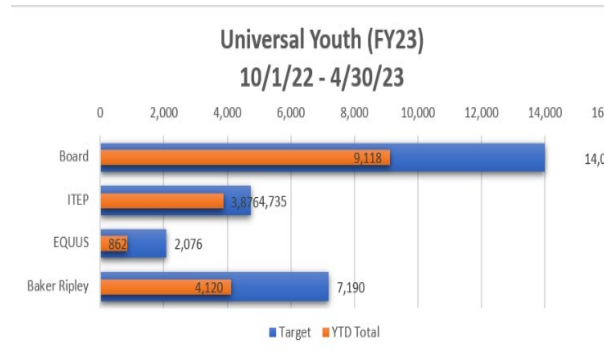
- Expanding awareness and availability of quality TWC programs for families and supporting sustainable business operations for childcare providers.
- Increasing awareness and accessibility of TWC partnerships for both childcare providers and families.
- Improving accessibility to TWC services within the childcare industry.
- Enhancing accessibility to upskilling and training opportunities offered through TWC programs for childcare teachers.

This work will involve the development of an effective ecosystem within the workforce system that fosters marketability within the child care industry.

Youth Services

Data

With five (5) months remaining in the year, all service providers have met more than 50% of their youth targets, and we are confident we will meet our overall targets for the 2023 contract year.



Our organization is shifting its goals beyond mere enrollment targets and placing a strategic emphasis on improving performance measures. Among these measures, the issue of measurable skills gained has been identified as requiring immediate attention. After analyzing the TWIST data, it was discovered that over 50% of the youth who obtained credentials did not demonstrate any measurable skill acquisition.

To address this concern, an educational session on measurable skills gained was conducted for our service providers. They are currently reviewing individual cases and implementing necessary changes accordingly. Going forward, we will engage in continuous monitoring of performance measures and hold monthly youth meetings to facilitate discussions on opportunities for improvement. By focusing on enhancing the acquisition of measurable skills, we aim to enhance the effectiveness and impact of our programs, ultimately ensuring that our youth achieve tangible and meaningful outcomes.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS SYSTEM PERFORMANCE
 CONTRACT YEAR OCTOBER 2022 - SEPTEMBER 2023
 March 2023 Report

Board Measures	Board			Interfaith		BakerRipley		Equus		ACS		ETC		ACAM		Career T		SER		Measure Period	Report Period
	% Current Target	Current Target	EOY Target	Current Perf	YTD Num	Current Perf	YTD Num	Current Perf	YTD Num	Current Perf	YTD Num	Current Perf	YTD Num	Current Perf	YTD Num	Current Perf	YTD Num	Current Perf	YTD Num		
					YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den	YTD Den		
Raise Education Levels	Achieve Education Credential	70.1%	76.0%	53.3%	616 1,160	55.2% 306	169 306	65.5% 333	218 333	54.8% 42	23 42		13.5% 192	28 99	71.7% 99	71 87.5%	98 112	16.0% 75	12 75	7/22-8/23	7/22-12/22
	Achieve Post-Secondary Certificate or Degree	73.1%	86.0%	62.6%	591 940	55.2% 306	169 306	67.5% 333	218 333	54.8% 42	23 42		0.0% 3	0 98	72.4% 98	71 88	89.1% 110	20.7% 58	12 58	7/22-8/23	7/22-12/22
	CredentialRate - WIOA Youth	108%	80.6%	65.2%	135 207	60.6% 33	20 33	56.8% 88	50 88	75.0% 8	6 8		21.9% 32	7 32		0 0		89.9% 69	62 69	1/21-12/21	1/21-8/21
	Measurable Skills Gains - WIOA Youth	69%	50.9%	35.2%	299 849	22.8% 123	28 123	33.3% 270	90 270	20.7% 29	6 29		36.3% 102	37 102	16.5% 127	21 127	63.8% 127	3.8% 183	7 183	7/22-8/23	7/22-3/23

Fourteen (14) Youth Elements

In addition to intake, eligibility determination, objective assessment, and individual service strategy development for youth aged 14 to 24, WIOA Title I Youth Programs are required to provide 14 program service elements. Youth enrollment is considered complete when they receive one of these elements for the first time. These 14 elements play a crucial role in supporting youth along their career paths and maximizing program impact.

Currently, our system requires stronger and more coordinated services that encompass the following elements:

- Tutoring, study skills training, dropout prevention, and recovery strategies,
- Leadership development,
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling,
- Financial literacy education,
- Entrepreneurial skills training,
- Mentoring, and
- Activities to prepare youth for postsecondary education and training transitions.

Although our programs partially incorporate some of these elements, it is imperative that we explicitly integrate all 14 measures into our activities. To achieve this, Youth Services is actively engaging in meetings with community-based organizations and corporations to establish partnerships that will ensure the consistent inclusion of these services in our current service delivery models.

Next Gen & Workforce Process Improvements

NextGen was established to address the gaps in effectively engaging with out-of-school, opportunity, and at-risk youth. Our dedicated Next Gen service providers actively connect with this population in the community, meeting them where they are to deliver tailored services. One standout feature of Next Gen is its flexibility in partnering with high-demand, short-term training providers, enabling young adults to rapidly acquire new skills and enter sustainable career paths. This initiative is funded through WIOA youth funding from the Texas Workforce Commission.

Currently, the integration of Next Gen service providers into the Workforce Solution financial aid payment office (FAPO) is incomplete, as they manage their budgets

independently. Moreover, each Next Gen service provider utilizes a different payroll vendor for work-based learning services. This lack of integration poses challenges in serving youth and employers, as well as providing scholarships for childcare and training to participants. Currently, Workforce Solutions may have up to four individual agreements with employers and training providers, creating confusion among our partners.

For the upcoming contract year, we propose the integration of NextGen funding within the Financial Aid Payment Office and the establishment of universal worksite agreements with employers and training providers to streamline coordination. This change will foster greater uniformity, enhance coordination efforts, and position us more effectively to serve our youth and employers. By centralizing financial management and standardizing agreements, we can maximize the impact of Next Gen, deliver comprehensive support to opportunity youth, and integrate this population into our Workforce Solutions' system.

Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL)

In collaboration with TWC's Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS), we are working to place 525 young adults with disabilities in paid work experience this summer. We have gained solid traction with our partners and employers and are pleased to report the following programmatic statistics:

- Referrals received from VR – 890;
- Active customers – 637;
- Customers on Waitlist – 253;
- Number of worksites – 851;
- Number of positions – 1456; and
- Worksite assignments made – 604 (94% of active customers).

Given the program's significant demand, the waitlist grew to 253 youth, and we are pleased to report that TWC has approved a \$1,000,000 amendment to support SEAL. These added funds will help to place additional youth from the current waitlist. Workforce Solutions' staff have been notified to begin contacting the waitlist customers and matching them to worksites. We are also working with ACS to increase the number of varied, high-quality work opportunities for this year's participants.

Paving the Pathway Program

In collaboration with VRS, we are working to provide additional skill building for young adults with disabilities. Participants from this project will participate in SEAL to practice the skills learned and developed. We are currently working to identify persons in the healthcare sector to serve as mentors for a 6-week special project for Paving the Pathway participants.

Hire Houston Youth (HHY)

In collaboration with the City of Houston (COH), Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast will place 100-120 young adults into paid work experience opportunities for the summer. We have received 130 referrals for youth and 4 employer referrals. Eligibility training for Workforce Solutions' staff is scheduled for 05/18/23.

Jobs Y'all

The Career Education Specialist (CES) team is planning four (4) Jobs Y'all events to be held across the 13-county region by end of June 2023. A \$35,000 Jobs Y'all grant is funding these events and activities. The goal of these events is to encourage youth to explore career opportunities including understanding pathways to in-demand careers, networking, internships, and other applied learning opportunities. We are encouraging attendance of both students and their parent/guardian. Our Employer Engagement and Partnership team is working to secure 10-15 employers for each quadrant. Some employers will provide career exploration, and others will offer employment opportunities. The team is working to incorporate several youth elements into the event.

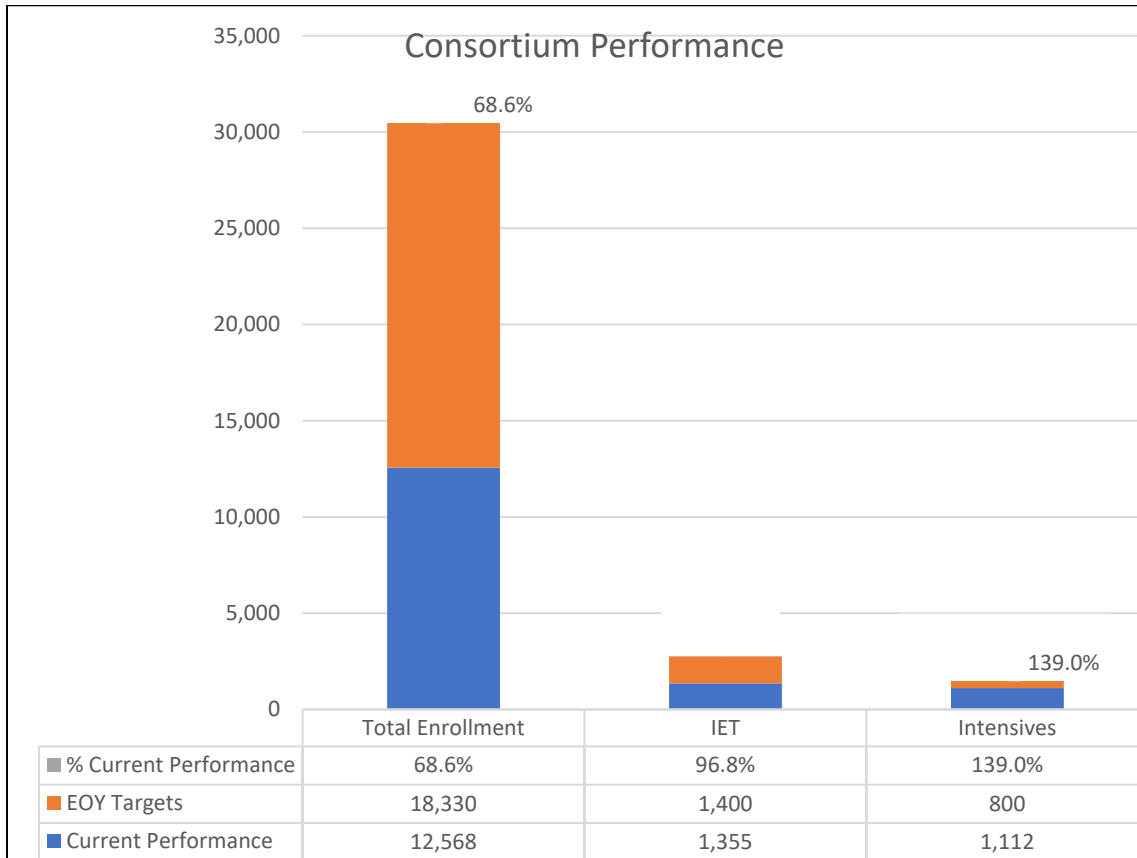
Adult Education & Literacy (AEL)

TWC has extended the contract for adult education for an additional year, and it is likely that the extension will be provided for the following year as well.

We review performance for our service providers in four different areas:

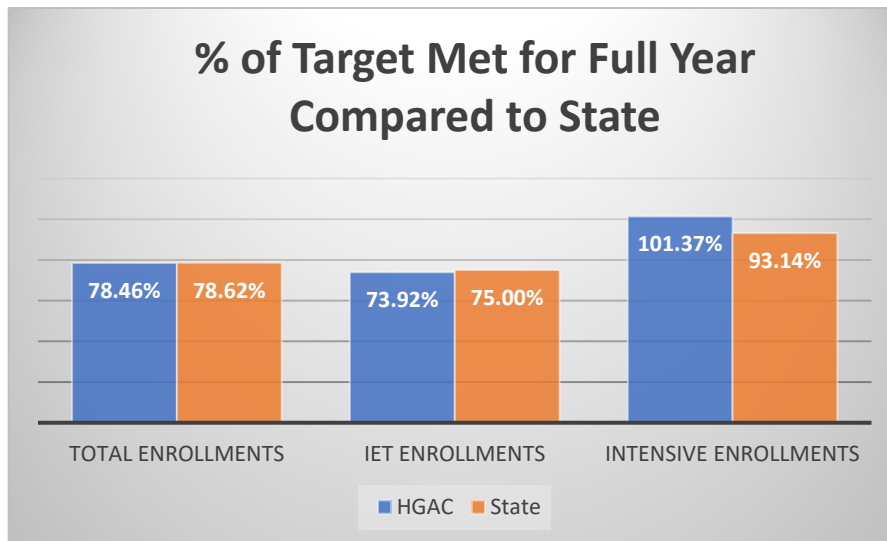
- **12+ Hour Students:** Includes individuals in adult education classes with 12 or more clock hours completed.
- **Integrated Education and Training (IET):** Includes individuals enrolled in Adult Education and Literacy classes concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for specific in-demand or targeted occupations for educational and career advancement; this also includes those that are co-enrolled in civics classes which were formally classified as integrated English language/ civics/training.
- **Intensive Services:** Includes individuals who receive various college and career-focused adult education options, including workplace Adult Education and Literacy activities, services for internationally trained English language learner professionals and transition assistance to offenders for re-entry and post-release services.

Performance through the month of March for the consortium is listed below:



We are exceeding one of the three measures and are on track to exceed one of the remaining two measures. However, we are lagging on our total enrollment measure. Performance in comparison to last year shows a 16% increase for total enrollment numbers.

In comparison to the state, we are inline in two measures and exceeding in one.



In the current year, the Adult Education and Literacy subdivision shifted from the Board's operation division to the Early Childhood Education and Strategic Educational Partnerships division. This shift has opened opportunities for closer collaboration with Early Childhood Education and Youth Services. Moving forward we will continue with our efforts to build our alignment within the Education division to support a stronger synergetic system.

In the upcoming program year, we will implement a blended learning model for students receiving English language instruction. In the 2023-2024 program year each provider in the Gulf Coast Consortium will incorporate a blended learning model into their English language instruction. Research shows that when students are given 40 hours of direct instruction paired with 20 hours or more of supportive instruction, students' education fluency levels increase.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Convener Grant

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and its operating affiliate, Workforce Solutions, are dedicated to fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including schools, colleges, local government entities, non-profits, social service providers, businesses, and philanthropy. Together, we address the economic, educational, and workforce needs of our region. By collecting and organizing local economic data, we empower employers to meet their human resource demands and enable individuals to build successful careers, ensuring their competitiveness in the global economy.

Through this grant, our primary focus is on high-skill, high-growth sectors such as healthcare, education, and building and construction, where we have established partnerships. Our mission is to bring together key stakeholders to develop a strategic regional plan that promotes effective communication, collaboration, and coordination. By doing so, we aim to create a seamless transition for individuals from K-12 education to post-secondary education and meaningful careers in these industries.

Our objective is to enhance K-12 education by providing students with immersive and practical job experiences within specific fields of focus. This approach allows students to develop social capital, establish networks with local educators and employers, and engage in "earning and learning" opportunities. To oversee this project and leverage the expertise of our workforce staff in educational institutions, work-based learning, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, as well as economic and business organizations, we will hire a dedicated full-time project director. This project will be informed by the comprehensive labor-market data and analysis provided by our skilled workforce labor market team

Chair Henderson concluded her report and no action was taken.

g. Employer Engagement Committee Report

Committee Chair Sara Bouse provided the following Employer Engagement Committee report.

The Employer Engagement Committee met on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 1:30 pm. Members present included Sara Bouse (Chair), Helen Cavazos, Cheryl Guido, Alan Heskamp, Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Guy Robert Jackson, Doug Karr, Mou Sarkar, Richard Shaw, Gil Staley, and Mark Guthrie (Board Chair.) The committee received several updates and acted on one item.

Current Production Measures

During the update provided by the Board staff, it was highlighted that Employment and Training Centers (ETC) is facing challenges in meeting performance measures, particularly in relation to education credentials. This issue is attributed to the delay in capturing pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship gains.

Our Employer Services efforts are under-performing, with the most critical underperformance occurring in TWC's required Market Share measure. This measure represents the number of regional employers utilizing Workforce Solutions through qualifying services and aligns with the Employer Receiving Workforce Assistance contracted measure from TWC (TWC) and excludes TWC's automated services. For FY 2023, the target for Market Share is 31,500, while the target for Employer Receiving Workforce Assistance is 32,270.

Analyzing the data from October 2022 to January 2023, the Board was meeting the Market Share target. With a target of 31,500, the monthly target was set at 2,625. From October 2022 to April 2023, the average monthly increase was 1,514. Additionally, 4,482 services counted towards the measure starting in October 2022, representing job postings rolled over from FY22 and eligible for the FY23 target. However, starting from February 2023, Market Share has fallen behind the straight-line target projections.

Considering the current monthly increases, we have two Market Share projections that yield comparable results:

- Method 1 employs a 6-month moving average, projecting end-of-year performance at 21,986, equivalent to 69.80% of the performance goal.
- Method 2 employs forecast modeling with a 95% confidence interval, projecting end-of-year performance at 22,226, equivalent to 70.56% of the performance goal.

To reach the target of 31,500 by the end of FY23, Market Share needs to add an additional 16,419 Market Share entries between May 2023 and September 2023.

The Board's subpar market share performance has prompted TWC to implement a Technical Assistance Plan for the Gulf Coast Workforce Board on May 30, 2023. It is critical for Board staff to address these performance shortfalls promptly and effectively with a comprehensive strategy.

The complete performance report for the Board and the two Employer Service contractors is included in this packet.

Employer and Community Engagement Division Update

A year ago, on June 6, 2022, Juliet Stipeche assumed the role of Executive Director of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and Workforce Solutions. After conducting interviews, observations, and assessments, she introduced a new organizational structure for the Board's staff, which includes six key divisions: Operations, Early Childhood and Strategic Educational Partnerships, Employer and Community Engagement, Quality Assurance, Risk Management, and Finance.

The new organizational structure became effective in mid-January 2023, providing the team with opportunities for greater focus and creativity. However, the team is currently operating with six vacancies, which will be repurposed to create stronger institutional ownership of employer relationships that were previously managed by contracted service providers.

The new Employer and Community Engagement division is designed to support the sector-based model of workforce development, as recommended in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to improve the Board's Employer Service measure performance. This model focuses on a region's workforce needs by identifying employers' and residents' needs, developing education and training strategies to upskill and reskill the workforce, and coordinating services to strengthen regional labor markets and create a more equitable distribution of jobs and careers.

To implement the sector-based approach, the new Employer and Community Engagement division includes three subdivisions or teams: 1) Regional Economic

Analysis, 2) Employer Engagement, and 3) Community Engagement.

The Regional Economic Analysis Team, led by Parker Harvey, provides critical analysis of economic, labor market, education, and other data to inform Workforce Solutions investments. This team will continue to provide fundamental industry analysis such as Target Industries, High Skill High Growth Occupations, and monthly jobs reports. The team expansion will allow for additional analysis of economic and workforce data and active participation in business organizations to disseminate the Workforce Board's data.

Using the Target Industries and High Skill, High Growth Occupations list approved by the Workforce Board in February 2023, the Employer Engagement team will include seven industry liaison positions to work with employers and economic development organizations. The seven industry liaisons will be organized using clusters of Target Industries. At the two-digit NAICS level, the industries include:

- Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction,
- Utilities,
- Construction,
- Manufacturing,
- Wholesale Trade,
- Transportation and Warehousing,
- Information,
- Finance and Insurance,
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing,
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services,
- Management of Companies and Enterprises,
- Administrative and Support Services,
- Educational Services,
- Health Care and Social Assistance, and
- Other Services (except Public Administration).

The job titles and cluster assignments of the seven industry liaisons will complement the industry clusters used by the Greater Houston Partnership and Texas Economic Development, except Education and Construction, which are not specifically named:

Greater Houston Partnership

Advanced Manufacturing
Aerospace and Aviation
Digital Technology
Energy
Headquarters
Life Sciences and Biotechnology
Transportation and Logistics

Texas Economic Development

Advanced Manufacturing
Aerospace, Aviation and Defense
Information Technology
Energy
Corporate Services
Biotechnology and Life Sciences

This team will play a strategic role in building the region's talent pipelines, addressing skill gaps, and creating meaningful career pathways for workers in important regional industries. The Employer Engagement team at the Board will complement the activities of the contracted service provider, who focuses on satisfying the human resource needs for today. Industry liaisons will focus on identifying long-term needs and addressing them proactively.

To maximize the effectiveness of industry liaisons and allow them to engage with outside business leaders, four project coordinators will provide administrative and technical support for events, projects, meetings, and collaborative tasks. They may also serve as technicians for communication tools. This team will also include a dedicated technical researcher/writer to ensure that Workforce Solutions speaks in industry language, not government or social service jargon.

The Community Engagement Team will have four primary functions including:

- Act as a liaison with organizations whose work intersects with Workforce Solutions in helping current and prospective job candidates advance in the local labor market. This function will increase the capacity of Workforce Solutions to develop the supply side.
- Serve as a liaison with contracted service provider staff who manage external outreach and engagement for Career Services and other units.
- Function as subject-matter-expert and technical administrator for Workforce Solutions branded communication tools, including web, email, social media, point-of-service materials, and media partnerships.
- Assist with the development of strong community partnerships with educational institutions, economic development councils, chambers of commerce, government entities, employers, public and private partners, and community-based organizations. This will enhance the braiding of funds, coordination of services, and enhancing wraparound services for our customers.

Following the Texas Talent and Economic Growth Action Plan framework, the Community Engagement Team serves as partnership managers. This team will create and manage more intentional partnerships to facilitate the talent solutions; pursue shared goals in support of a healthy and robust workforce and leverage joint resources.

Employer Engagement Staffing

The Employer Engagement team will have a supervisor and manager to guide the team, serve as internal program experts for the Board's contract management team, and liaison between Board staff and contracted service provider to ensure that both are working in concert at various levels to support the needs of the region's employers. The staffing will include:

- Manager,
- Program Administrator,
- Technical Writer,
- Account Liaison,
- Project Coordinator,
- Principal Industry Liaison – 1 of 7,
- Principal Industry Liaison – 2 of 7,
- Principal Industry Liaison – 3 of 7,
- Principal Industry Liaison – 4 of 7,
- Principal Industry Liaison – 5 of 7,
- Principal Industry Liaison – 6 of 7, and
- Principal Industry Liaison – 7 of 7.

Community Engagement Staffing

Sector strategies can only be effective if we meet the employers' demand by developing the supply of qualified workers through our existing and expanded community partnerships such as THRIVE agencies, local non-profits, philanthropic concerns. This team will also have responsibility for the Workforce Board's strategic planning and public policy advocacy. The Community Engagement team will have a supervisor and manager to guide work and ensure alignment with other areas at the Board in the field. Staffing recommendations include:

- Manager,
- Public Policy Analyst,
- Senior Planner,
- Labor Market Analyst,
- Program Administrator,
- Technical Writer
- Community Engagement Specialist – 1 of 4,
- Community Engagement Specialist – 2 of 4,
- Community Engagement Specialist – 3 of 4, and
- Community Engagement Specialist – 4 of 4.

After repurposing six open positions and creating three new positions to implement the sector-based structure by October 1, 2023, Board staff will propose remaining positions for the 2024 budget.

Procurement of Service Provider

The Workforce Board's Executive Director provided an update on procurement in the next contracting cycle of a single service provider for employer engagement. H-GAC's procurement representative shared improvements to the process to address issues and concerns expressed by Workforce Board members.

Criteria Recommendation for Texas Industry Partnership and High Demand Job Training Grants

TWC provides grant funding opportunities for local workforce development projects in support of current and prospective Texas businesses. The primary grant opportunities from TWC's Office of Outreach and Employer Initiatives include:

- Skills Development Fund,
- Skills Recruit Texas,
- Skills for Small Business,
- Self Sufficiency Fund,
- High Demand Job Training,
- Texas Industry Partnership, and
- Jobs and Education for Texans (JET).

On two of these opportunities – High Demand Job Training and Texas Industry Partnership, only the local Workforce Board may apply for the grants as matching or leverage to Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds on behalf of the partnership organizations.

The High Demand Job Training program supports collaborations between local workforce development boards (Boards) and Type A or Type B economic development corporations (EDCs). Through the High Demand Job Training program, Boards partner with local Economic Development Corporations to use their local economic development sales taxes for high-demand job training and other workforce-related activities.

The Texas Industry Partnership (TIP) program targets skills gaps and ensures a talent pipeline is available to address regional industry needs. Private employers, corporate foundations, and most 501(C)6 organizations can collaborate with local workforce development boards to apply for funding to support workforce development projects focused on high-demand, target occupations for job training in their communities.

Boards may submit multiple applications under each award type, however, the total combined funding awarded to the Board may not exceed \$150,000 per fiscal year, per award type.

Applications are taken throughout the fiscal year, starting on September 1, and ending on August 31, or until approved funding by TWC has been exhausted. However, to be awarded during the current fiscal year, applications should be submitted no later than July 31.

In April of 2022, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board partnered with the Manvel Economic Development Corporation to secure a High Demand Job Training grant to purchase equipment for Alvin Independent School District's dental academy.

Equipment installations were completed in February 2023. The staff is currently talking with the Tomball and Pearland EDCs about the High Demand Job Training grant.

For the Texas Industry Partnership grant, TRIO Electric and CenterPoint Energy have initiated requests for funding for the current fiscal year. Brazosport College and other potential applicants have made verbal inquiries. The requests for funding now exceed the annual award limit. Because the Gulf Coast Workforce Board service area is the largest in Texas, we anticipate that local requests for funding will increase and exceed the annual \$150,000 limit per award type.

TWC has increased outreach activities to encourage more applications. With more applications and the requests for funding exceeding the limit, we need parameters for these two grant programs.

The Committee approved a recommendation that the Workforce Board approve criteria as noted below for staff to evaluate funding requests, which will be taken up in the action items:

- Support for employers in the Workforce Board's Target Industries,
- Support for the Workforce Board's High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations
- Number of individuals to be trained,
- Credentials to be awarded,
- Potential for braided funding to support career progression,
- Maximum amount for High Demand Job Training of \$75,000 per application,
- Maximum amount for Texas Industry Partnership of \$50,000 per application, and
- Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis until annual award maximums are exhausted.

Chair Bouse concluded her report and no action was taken at this time.

h. Communications Committee Report

Committee Chair Doug Karr provided the following Communications Committee report.

The Communications Committee met on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 3 pm. Members present included Doug Karr (Chair), Alan Heskamp, Bobbie Henderson, Guy Robert Jackson, Keri Schmidt, Richard Shaw, Michael Webster, and Mark Guthrie (Board Chair.) The Committee received several updates. There were no action items.

Savage Brands

The team from Savage Brands provided updates on several projects including a new home page for wrksolutions.com along with new landing pages for employers and people, new designs for content pages, and plans for supporting staff with the development of a quarterly newsletter for employers. Board Chair Guthrie asked that staff circulate a copy of the March edition of the newsletter to the full board and include them on future distribution lists.

Outreach Strategists

The team from Outreach Strategists shared a broad overview for structuring the Board's strategic planning work. They discussed opportunities for conducting a national landscape analysis and engaging various stakeholder audiences to inform the plan with a target delivery of February 2024.

Current Contract Renewals

Both Savage Brands and Outreach Strategists are currently in the third year of a four-year procurement. Both contracts will go to the Procurement Committee with a recommendation for renewal of the fourth and final year under the current procurement. This final year of the contract will be focused on supporting the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's successful development of a new strategic plan for 2024-2028. Staff will subsequently begin work on a new procurement for marketing and outreach at the conclusion of this fourth and final year.

H-GAC Shared Services

H-GAC Executive Director Chuck Wemple presented on the services available to Workforce Board staff. He explained that shared services are charged to the departments as staff time is spent on requested work. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board allocates the equivalent of 1.5 FTEs to H-GAC's Communications staff.

Employer and Community Engagement Division Update

Board staff supplied additional information on the plan to expand the Employer and Community Engagement Division of the Board's staff. This plan allows the Board to use a sector-based approach to support talent pipeline development. More information about the approach and structure is included in the Employer Engagement Committee report in this packet.

Chair Karr concluded his report and no action was taken.

i. Audit and Monitoring Committee Report

Committee Chair Guy Robert Jackson provided the following Audit and Monitoring Committee report.

The Audit and Monitoring Committee met on May 25, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. Members present included Guy Robert Jackson (Chair), Carl Bowles (Vice Chair), Willie

Alexander, Sara Bouse, Cheryl Guido, Mark Guthrie (Board Chair), Bobbie Henderson, Alan Heskamp, Doug Karr, and Adrian Ozuna.

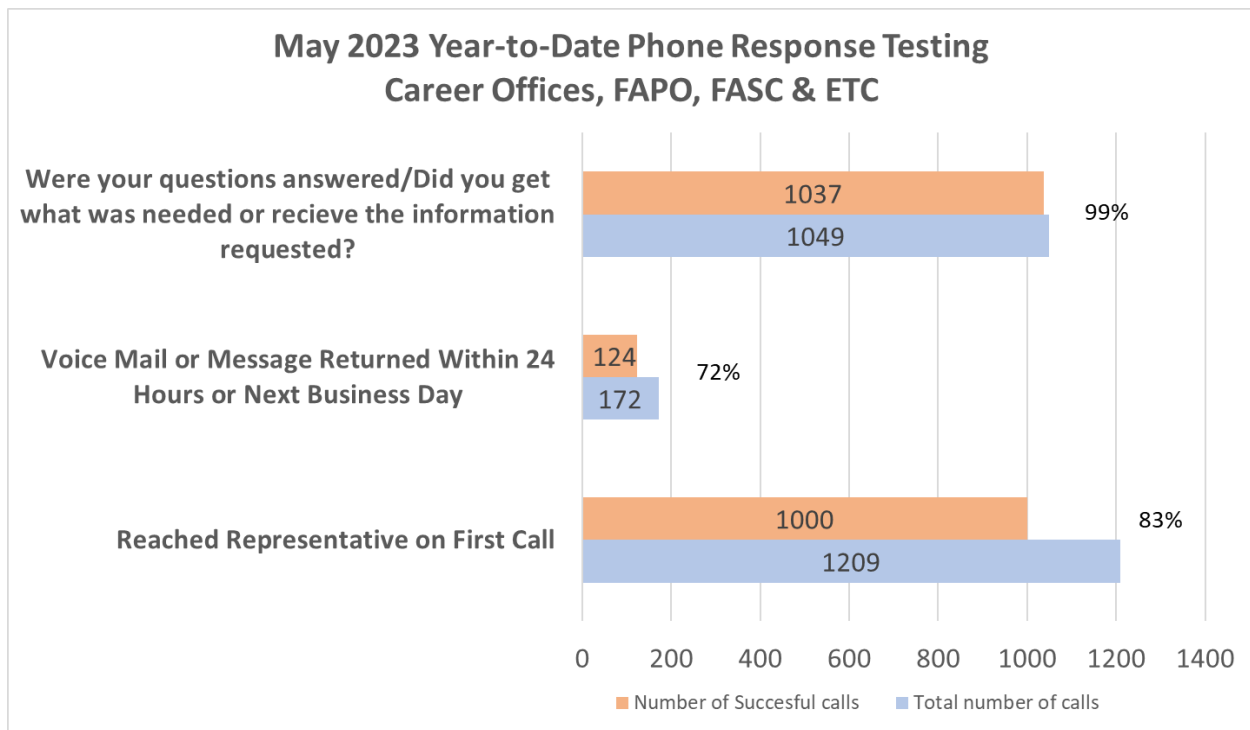
System Review

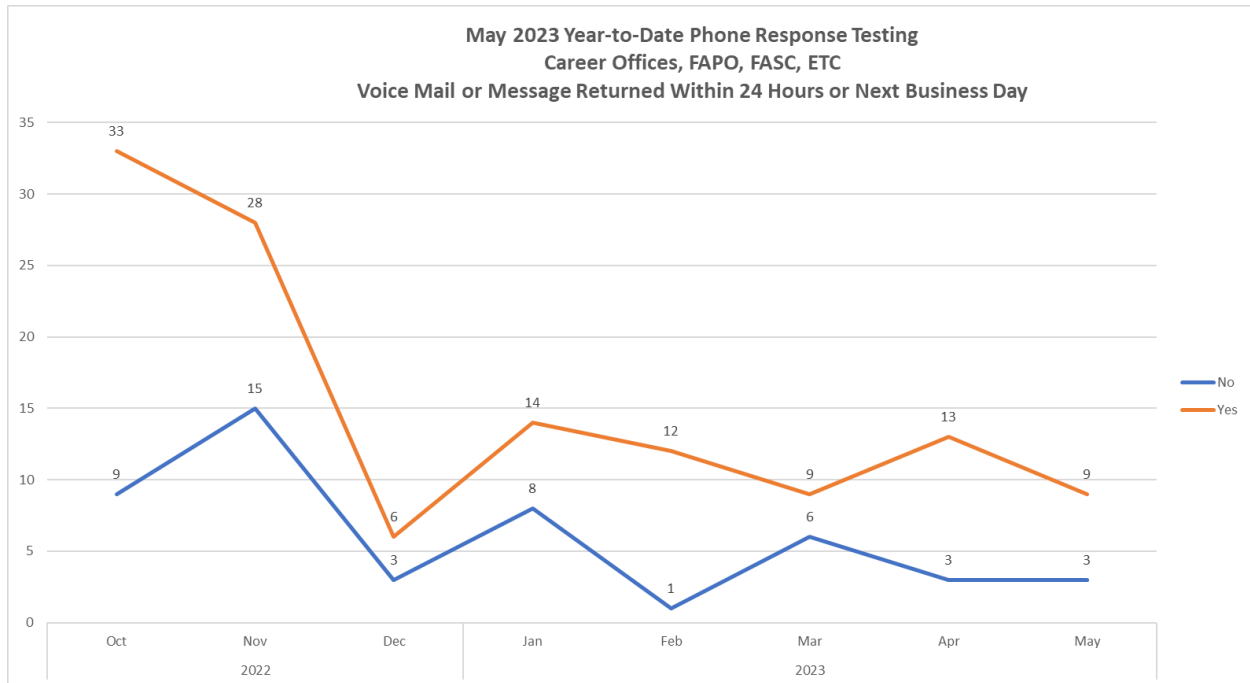
This report includes a system-level review of performance/production and expenditures and a contractor-level review of performance/production and expenditures.

Customer Experience

Phone Responsiveness

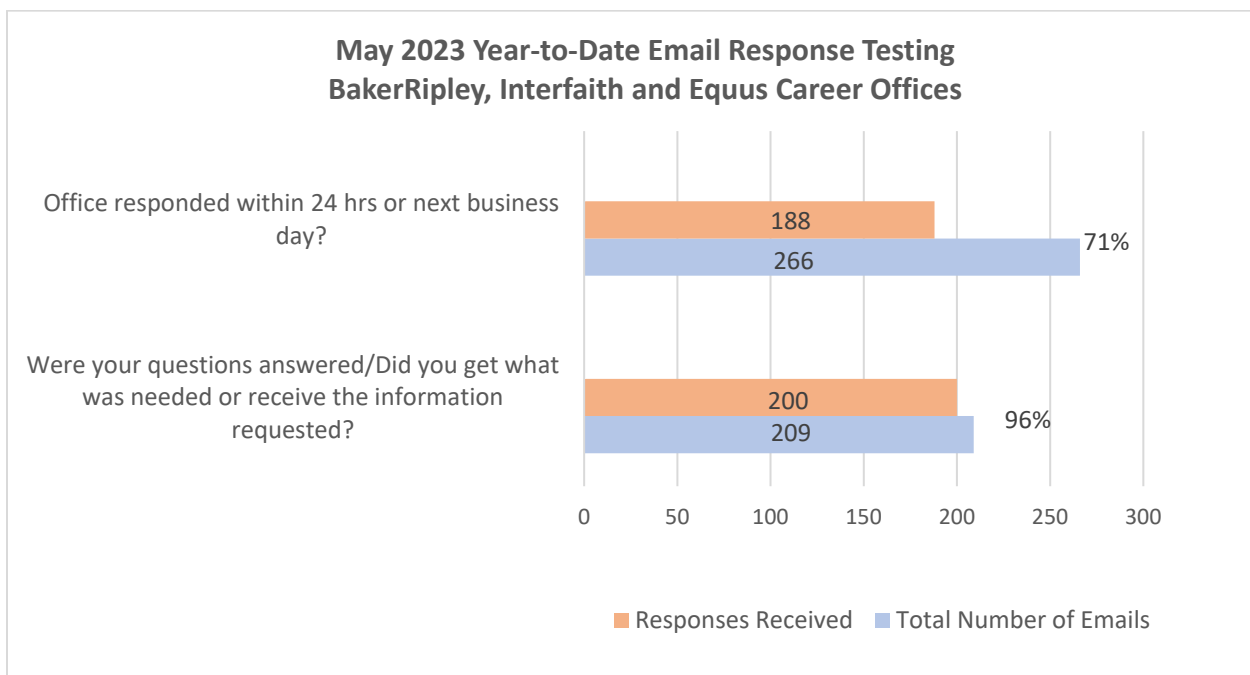
Voice mail responses within 24 hours improved in May 2023, slightly increasing the year-to-date result to 72% from 71% in March and April.





Email Responsiveness

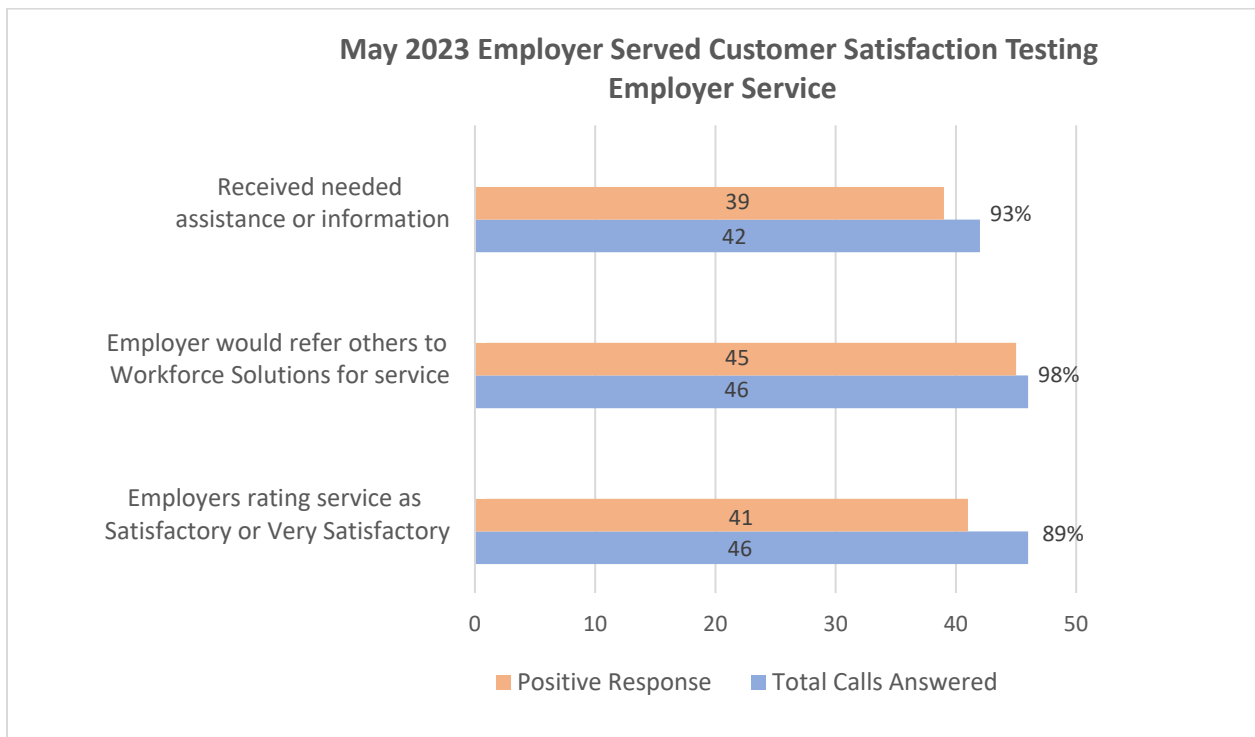
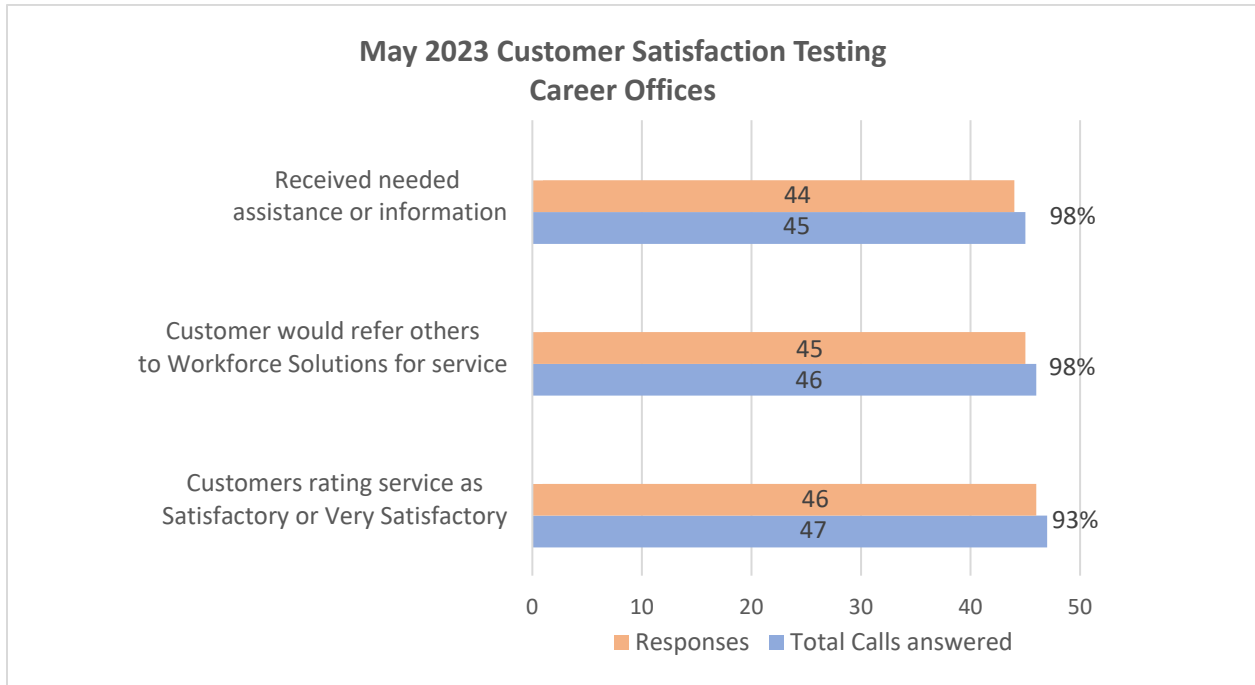
Staff tested the responsiveness of the career offices to emails sent to the career office email address found on Wrksolutions.com. The responses were good, but improvement is needed to ensure a customer receives an email response within 24 hours.



Customer Satisfaction

From a list of 114 customers receiving a service through a career office in April 2023, staff spoke with 47 customers. Staff called 27 employers who interacted with

Employer Service in the last three months and were able to talk with 12 employers. The charts below reflect what the staff heard.



Technical Program Compliance

Staff issued the final report for the Adult Education providers: **Region 6, BakerRipley Adult Education, and Wharton County Junior College**. All three reports were sent without any findings.

Final reports were also issued for the **Adult Education Center, Alliance for Multicultural Community Services, Boys and Girls Club of Walker County, Brazosport College, Chinese Community Center, College of the Mainland, Community Family Centers, Harris County Department of Education, Houston Community College, Lone Star College, and San Jacinto College.** Each service provider has addressed all findings noted during the reviews.

Last year the Audit and Monitoring Committee updated the rating scale used to evaluate service provider performance.

Excellent	10	Improvement Needed	0 to -5
Above Average	5 to 9.9	Unacceptable	- 4.9 to -10
Standard	0 to 4.9		

The new rating scale factors any critical findings from the most recent financial monitoring report and requires a performance improvement plan for providers with a rating of -5.

The table below shows the report card rating for program monitoring for each Adult Education service provider:

Adult Education Service Provider	Report Card Rating	Numeric Rating	Financial Monitoring
Adult Education Center	Improvement Needed	-.54	PY22 – reimbursed \$3,707 disallowed costs
Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans	Standard	4.29	PY22 – reimbursed \$4,831 disallowed costs
Alliance for Multicultural Community Services	Standard	.98	PY22 – reimbursed \$4,268.82 disallowed costs
BakerRipley Adult Education	Standard	2.28	PY23 – no findings
Boys and Girls Club of Walker County	Standard	4.08	PY22 – reimbursed \$3,549.42 disallowed costs
Brazosport College	Standard	1.10	PY22 – no significant findings
Chinese Community Center	Standard	2.96	PY22 – no significant findings
Community Family Centers	Standard	2.79	PY22 – no findings

College of the Mainland	Standard	.10	PY22 – no significant findings
Houston Community College	Standard	1.05	PY23 – no findings
Harris County Department of Education	Standard	.75	PY23 – no significant findings
Lone Star College	Standard	.30	PY22 – reimbursed \$1,688 disallowed costs
San Jacinto College	Standard	2.98	PY22 – no significant findings
Wharton County Junior College	Standard	3.24	PY23 – no findings
Region 6	Standard	4.00	PY22 – reimbursed \$218.34 disallowed costs

Financial Systems and Issues

BakerRipley Adult Education, Houston Community College, and Wharton County Junior College financial monitoring identified no findings. Financial monitoring for **Harris County Department of Education** had no significant findings identified.

Adult Education Center – The current year monitoring report is not finalized, pending a response from the Adult Education Center due on May 22, 2023. The review found repeat observations and potential questioned costs related to promotions and cost of living, inflation pay increases, missing procurement documentation and travel costs, and expenditures not listed in the approved budget narrative.

Alliance for Multicultural Community Services – The current year monitoring report is not finalized, pending a response from the Alliance. The review found multiple findings related to insufficient internal controls and potential questioned costs related to missing procurement documentation and expenditures not included in the approved budget.

Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA) (*presented in committee meeting but omitted from the written report*) - The current year monitoring report is not finalized, pending a response from the AAMA. The review found repeat observations regarding the cost allocation plan and indirect costs. Non-personnel questioned costs were \$20,937.00 related to missing procurement documentation. Total financial billing questioned costs are \$21,932 related to under/over reporting and line items not included in the budget.

Boys and Girls Club of Walker County – The current year monitoring report is not finalized, pending a response from the Boys and Girls Club of Walker County. The review found multiple findings related to insufficient internal controls and non-personnel potentially questioned costs for missing procurement documentation.

Chinese Community Center – The current year monitoring report is not finalized, pending a response from the Chinese Community Center. The review found non-personnel potential questioned costs related to missing procurement documentation and costs recorded in the wrong fiscal year.

The financial monitoring reports for the following adult education providers are pending because the providers failed to submit the documentation requested in a timely manner during the review:

Brazosport College (Exit May 25, 2023)
College of the Mainland (Exit May 23, 2023)
Community Family Center (Exit May 17, 2023)
Lone Star College (Exit May 17, 2023)
Region 6 (Exit May 19, 2023)
San Jacinto College (Exit May 18, 2023)

Corrective Action and Technical Assistance Plans

- In April 2022, **Harris County Department of Education (HCDE)** and **Houston Community College (HCC)** were placed on corrective action plans to address data integrity and accuracy. In May 2023, **HCC** received notification that they had met all of the requirements of the CAP, and the CAP has been lifted.

On March 13, 2023, **HCDE** was notified via correspondence of continued programmatic and operational concerns after ten months of being on a corrective action plan. They were also made aware of new issues concerning staff professional development data entry and programmatic processes related to Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS).

Recommendations for immediate process changes were offered, accepted, and implemented by the recommended date of March 31, 2023. Since meeting with the **HCDE** Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Education and Enrichment to discuss the ongoing issues in person, **HCDE** is showing greater effort to enhance our working relationship and focus on improvement.

- **Equus Support Center Corrective Action Plan** – On April 6, 2023, **Equus** was placed under a corrective action plan for a minimum of six (6) months to address growing customer complaints and a lack of progress in meeting contractual customer service standards. **Equus** was advised that a failure to demonstrate significant progress by the end of the fourth quarter evaluation could result in reduced funding or contract termination. The **Equus** CAP was finalized on April 20, 2023, with biweekly meetings scheduled beginning May 2, 2023.

To improve the performance and production of the Support Center, we are working closely with the management team to transform the current operational model into two specialized units dedicated to 1) eligibility and 2) call center operations. This strategic realignment is needed to foster enhanced focus, specialization, and operational efficiency.

We will ensure the seamless implementation of recommended strategies and conduct regular evaluations to gauge efficiency, economy, and efficacy. Moreover, our Board staff will actively participate in mandatory monthly TWC technical assistance meetings, reinforcing our dedication to continuous improvement. Additionally, we anticipate the installation of Ring Central, a cutting-edge communication solution, to be completed by mid-June, further augmenting the operational capabilities of the Support Center.

Over the past five years, the Child Care Financial Aid funds have grown by 65% to \$81 million dollars, while staffing levels at the support center have grown by less than 10%. To overcome the staffing challenges and address operational deficiencies, Board staff will present action items to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board at the June 6, 2023, board meeting. The action items will request additional staff to address call handling capacities, expedite child care application processing, correct bottlenecks within the eligibility and fulfillment processes, and limited capacity to serve a growing customer base.

- **Employer Engagement Service Providers** – Since the Audit and Monitoring Committee last met, staff has been working with both **Employment Training & Centers, Inc. (ETC)** and **Adaptive Construction Solutions, Inc. (ACS)** on performance issues.

In the case of **ETC**, the performance issues are tied to the percentage of job seekers obtaining credentials and measurable skills gains. The credential rate is related in part to the number of individuals served through registered apprenticeships. Workforce Solutions' involvement is often at the beginning of the apprenticeship process in the form of support for classroom training and on-the-job training. We cannot take credit for the end credential if we do not continue to work with the customer throughout the apprenticeship, which can up to four years. However, we can get credit for the end credential if we provide follow-up and any additional services that customers may need. Measurable skills gains are an issue that we see system-wide, and we are working with **ETC** and our other service providers to implement changes in how we record our work and our customers' achievements.

We have been working with **ACS** throughout their current contract to improve performance on market share, which measures the number of employers receiving services. Failure to meet this measure last year resulted in us not meeting our production measure with TWC for employer service.

As noted earlier, TWC implemented a Technical Assistance Plan for the Gulf Coast Workforce Board on May 30, 2023 for the failure to meet the employer service measure. TWC could put the Board on a corrective action plan if we do not meet it this year. In recent weeks, we asked **ACS** for a strategic plan to help us meet this measure and requested subsequent revisions to provide more detail. They failed to submit a satisfactory plan, and we began work on a technical assistance plan. We are attempting to negotiate a contract amendment with ACS to improve performance in this regard.

Adaptive Construction Solutions (ACS) Grievance

ACS filed a formal dispute with H-GAC Executive Director Chuck Wemple, and the H-GAC Internal Audit and Finance teams were tasked with re-evaluating the financial monitoring results. Following this evaluation, H-GAC concluded that the disallowed costs should be reduced from the amount originally reported of \$994,590 to \$428,298. **ACS** has agreed to repay this amount.

Chair Jackson concluded his report and no action was taken.

j. Procurement Committee Report

Committee Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson provided the following Procurement Committee report.

The Procurement Committee met on Thursday, March 25, 2023, with Committee Chair Bobbie Henderson, Committee Vice Chair Doug Karr, Willie Alexander, Gerald Andrews, Sara Bouse, Cheryl Guido, Alan Heskamp, Guy Jackson, Adrian Ozuna, Richard Shaw and Gil Staley in attendance.

The committee considered three action items and voted unanimously to recommend their approval by the full Board, which are explained more fully below.

1. Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, which falls under Title II of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, authorizes publicly funded adult education activities. For the 2023-2024 period, the Workforce Board will continue to act as the grantee/fiscal agent for the region's adult education consortium, with Education Service Center (ESC) Region VI serving as the lead agency providing technical assistance and support to the fourteen (14) contractors.

Accomplishments and Continuing Work

Our proposal entails the continuation of adult education instruction at the current 300 sites throughout the 13-county region. Consortium service contract providers will deliver adult education and literacy instruction through face-to-face, remote, or hybrid methods. Our services encompass English language instruction (also known as English Second Language (ESL)), literacy classes, adult basic education, adult

secondary education, integrated education, GED preparation, 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. Since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, adult education successfully transitioned from in-person to remote and hybrid instruction, continuing to provide the services referenced above to eligible residents in the Gulf Coast area.

For 2023-2024, Adult Education will continue to:

- Identify youth customers and collaborate with career offices to inform them about available workforce services.
- Integrate adult education with Employer Service to meet the increasing demand for on-site basic skills and English language instruction by employers.
- Expand the availability of workforce services to the community by establishing connections among adult education providers, career offices, NextGen providers, and vocational rehabilitation, ensuring easy access to services regardless of entry point.
- Foster closer collaboration with childcare and youth services divisions to build stronger synergy within our operating system.
- Enhance outcomes and capture co-enrollment across the workforce system by providing training to the lead agency and the workforce career navigator team on data cross-matching across three customer relations management workforce systems.
- Integrate services, such as adult education and literacy, throughout our system, so the services are not siloed and disconnected.

Develop stronger relationships with our AEL service providers to learn more about their communities, services, and supports to enhance our system with expanded partnership.

Recommendations:

Staff estimates that approximately \$22.6 million will be available for the adult education program in 2023. This year, we are piloting a new method of distributing funds based on the Audit and Monitoring Committee's report card and whether a service provider is on a corrective action plan or not.

The Audit and Monitoring Committee issues a report card with a program monitoring rating that is based on customer experience, compliance, and accountability with a scoring system that ranges from -10 to 10. In allocating funds to our service providers, we first determine whether the entity is on a corrective action plan or not. If an entity is on a corrective action plan, the entity is ineligible for an increase. Next, we examine the report card's scoring system which is outlined below:

Adult Education Service Provider	Report Card Rating	Numeric Rating	Financial Monitoring
Adult Education Center	Improvement Needed	-.54	PY22 – reimbursed \$3,707 disallowed costs
Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans	Standard	4.29	PY22 – reimbursed \$4,831 disallowed costs
Alliance for Multicultural Community Services	Standard	.98	PY22 – reimbursed \$4,268.82 disallowed costs
BakerRipley Adult Education	Standard	2.28	PY23 – no findings
Boys and Girls Club of Walker County	Standard	4.08	PY22 – reimbursed \$3,549.42 disallowed costs
Brazosport College	Standard	1.10	PY22 – no significant findings
Chinese Community Center	Standard	2.96	PY22 – no significant findings
Community Family Centers	Standard	2.79	PY22 – no findings
College of the Mainland	Standard	.10	PY22 – no significant findings
Houston Community College	Standard	.70	PY23 – no findings
Harris County Department of Education	Standard	.75	PY23 – no significant findings
Lone Star College	Standard	.30	PY22 – reimbursed \$1,688 disallowed costs
San Jacinto College	Standard	2.98	PY22 – no significant findings
Wharton County Junior College	Standard	3.37	PY23 – no findings
Region 6	Standard	4.00	PY22 – reimbursed \$218.34 disallowed costs

The chart above illustrates a numeric rating range spanning from -0.54 to 4.29, with a median value of 1.88. Our scoring system comprises four distinct ratings:

- Scores below 0: This category represents the lowest performance levels or areas requiring improvement.

- Scores between 0 and 1.88: This category includes ratings that fall below the mean of 1.88 but still meet performance expectations.
- Scores between 1.89 and 4.0: This category encompasses ratings equal to or higher than the mean of 1.88, indicating commendable performance.
- Scores of 4.0 and above: This category signifies excellent performance.

Through the utilization of this tiered distribution model, staff has assigned different performance levels based on the ratings, resulting in a curve that reflects the distribution of scores. Each eligible provider is allocated a category based on their score, with an associated percentage increase as outlined below:

- Providers on a corrective action plan, with a score below 0, or identified as "in need of improvement" receive no increase in allocation.
- Providers scoring between 0 and 1.88 are eligible for a 3% increase in allocation.
- Providers scoring between 1.89 and 4.0 are eligible for a 6% increase in allocation.
- Providers scoring 4.0 and above are eligible for a 9% increase in allocation.

Applying this method, the Procurement Committee recommends, based on staff recommendations the following proposed ranges for our service providers in 2023:

Provider	Current	Proposed Range		Increase
Adult Education Center	\$360,000	\$344,808	\$360,000	0%
A.A.M.A	\$770,000	\$737,506	\$839,300	9%
Alliance for Multicultural Community	\$705,000	\$675,249	\$726,150	3%
BakerRipley Adult Education	\$705,000	\$675,249	\$747,300	6%
Boys & Girls Club	\$360,000	\$344,808	\$392,400	9%
Brazosport College	\$820,000	\$785,396	\$844,600	3%
Chinese Community Center	\$370,000	\$354,386	\$392,200	6%
College of Mainland	\$1,350,000	\$1,293,030	\$1,390,500	3%
Community Family Center	\$687,000	\$658,009	\$728,220	6%
Harris County Department of Education	\$4,720,000	\$4,520,816	\$4,720,000	0%
Houston Community College	\$4,420,000	\$4,233,476	\$4,552,600	3%
Lone Star College	\$1,550,000	\$1,484,590	\$1,596,500	3%
San Jacinto College	\$820,000	\$785,396	\$869,200	6%
Wharton County Junior College	\$935,000	\$895,543	\$991,100	6%
Region 6 ESC	\$1,110,000	\$1,063,158	\$1,830,000	

Subtotal	\$19,682,000	\$18,851,420	\$20,980,070	
Board Administration	\$968,028	\$1,110,297	\$1,368,028	
Workforce Integration	\$400,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	
Total	\$21,050,028	\$20,161,717	\$22,648,098	

ESC Region VI

In the proposed range for ESC Region VI, the Procurement Committee recommends, based on staff recommendations that staff allocate an additional \$720,000.00 for the consortium to purchase Burlington English. This strategic investment will have a significant impact on our English language instruction programs during the 2023-2024 program year.

By purchasing Burlington English, we wish to sunset the use of free and lower quality programs from our system and anticipate gains in the English language proficiency levels of our students. This investment is to ensure that all students receive quality English language education.

Board Administration

The proposed Board Administration range encompasses funds to support a third-party consultant's involvement in reviewing our current adult education and literacy consortium. The consultant's expertise will be focused on key areas such as training expansion and outreach, upskilling and career pathways, system-wide sustainability, business development and stabilization, as well as accountability and monitoring. To ensure a timely and effective review, we aim to publish the request for qualification for a third-party consultant before the end of the current AEL program year, which concludes on June 30, 2023.

Additionally, within the proposed Board Administration range, funds are allocated to accommodate a promotion and the addition of two full-time employees at the Board level. These resources will be instrumental in supporting the expansion of educational services and the integration of adult education and literacy within the Workforce Solutions' system.

Recommendation

The Procurement Committee unanimously recommends for the full Board's consideration the following: Authorize staff to negotiate contracts with adult education providers as shown above and in the ranges of amounts above for the period July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, in total amount not to exceed \$20,980,070.

2. Child Care Support Center

As discussed in the Education Committee report, the Support Center is undergoing a comprehensive re-imagining and restructuring process to enhance operations and customer service. Presently, the center functions as a unified entity encompassing two distinct areas: 1) eligibility processing and 2) call center services.

Recognizing the unique skill sets required for each function, the Committee recommends restructuring the Support Center into two separate units, thereby ensuring optimal performance and outcomes.

Our Board staff conducted thorough visits to each of the eight departments within the Support Center, collaborating closely with the management team. Through this assessment, we found areas that were functioning effectively and areas that required improvement. Our primary focus lies in two critical areas: increasing child enrollments and improving call response capabilities.

While additional help has enabled the Support Center to conduct outreach to a larger number of customers on the Waiting List, the lack of ongoing capacity has created a bottleneck in the eligibility process due to limited staff devoted to case processing. As of May 4, 2023, temporary staff members are still undergoing training, with an estimated duration of one more month. Once their training is complete, we expect their contribution will significantly help in alleviating the bottleneck and reducing parent wait times for processing.

During our visits and in consultation with TWC, a major deficiency identified was the Support Center's inability to handle a higher volume of incoming calls. To address this concern, Equus has successfully recruited a director with over 10 years of call center background. Collaborating closely with the new director and the management team, Board staff has proactively focused on staffing and technology improvements. We are presently implementing changes to schedules to accommodate peak call times. However, there is still a crucial need to hire more contractor staff members to effectively manage the significant increase in call volumes.

In June 2023, we will launch Ring Central as the new phone system for the Support Center. Working closely with Ring Central, our management team is ensuring that the system supplies comprehensive reporting capabilities and the necessary functionality to seamlessly support our program's operations.

By restructuring the Support Center, recruiting qualified staff, and leveraging advanced technology, we are committed to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the center's operations. These strategic measures will enable us to enhance child enrollments, provide prompt call responses, and deliver a higher level of customer service to our valued residents.

Recommendation

The Procurement Committee unanimously recommends for the full Board's consideration the following: Authorize Board staff to amend the Equus Support Center contract for the current funding year (June 1 - September 30, 2023) by adding funding up to \$922,981.00 to implement a new tiered pay system for existing staff, hiring needed permanent staff, and purchasing furniture, equipment, and software licenses for the Support Center.

3. Child Care Expansion Boot Camp

In the summer of 2022, TWC announced a grant proposal targeting local workforce boards to provide comprehensive support for childcare outreach, expansion, and assistance. The TWC grant program specifically focused on three key goals: 1) the expansion of child care facilities in regions experiencing shortages, 2) the augmentation of child care services catering to infants and toddlers, and 3) the establishment of collaborative child care initiatives in partnership with employers. The Board applied and was awarded a \$2,880,507 grant dedicated to child care expansion, covering a project duration of eighteen months, beginning in October 2023.

This initiative entails close collaboration with child care providers, community partners, and existing resources to develop a strategy to substantially elevate the quality of child care programs, particularly in areas characterized as child care deserts. We wish to also address the need for more quality child care providers in our region. The comprehensive strategy encompasses the following key objectives:

- Enhancing awareness and accessibility of quality TWC programs for families, while concurrently fostering sustainable business operations for child care providers;
- Expanding the knowledge and availability of TWC partnerships for both child care providers and families;
- Enhancing the accessibility of TWC services specifically tailored to the child care industry; and
- Facilitating greater accessibility to upskilling and training opportunities provided through TWC programs, primarily targeting child care teachers and staff.

Current Situation

After securing the grant funding on November 9, 2022, the Board hired staff members to oversee the project's implementation and subsequently developed a request for proposal for development of a "Child Care Provider Bootcamp." We issued an RFP seeking qualified contractor capable of meeting the grant's stipulated requirements, and eight timely submissions were received from the following entities:

- Community Preschools Corporation,
- Craving For A Change Foundation,
- Mother Daughter ISH,
- Stephanie LaShaun Robinson, LLC,
- TNR Advisors & Management Consultants, LLC,
- Train Bright,
- University of Houston, and
- Wonderschool.

A panel of four qualified individuals conducted a review of the proposals, ultimately ranking the University of Houston as the highest-scoring proposer. The University of Houston showed notable strengths, including a proven record of enhancing child care capacity within our local communities. Moreover, their interdisciplinary team approach positions them to use their collective expertise effectively in delivering the proposed outcomes.

Recommendation

The Procurement Committee unanimously recommends for the full Board's consideration the following: Approval for Board staff to negotiate a contract with the University of Houston for the development of the Child Care Provider Bootcamp and related project activities in a total amount not to exceed \$525,000.

Upcoming Procurements:

The Committee discussed upcoming workforce system procurements. These procurements include:

System Component	Service Provider(s)	Procurement Year (Calendar Year/Fiscal Year)	Next Scheduled Procurement (Calendar Year/Fiscal Year)
Employer Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 	2023/FY24	2027/FY28
Public Information and Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savage Brands Outreach Strategists 	2020/FY21	2024/FY25
Career Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BakerRipley Equus Interfaith of the Woodlands 	2021/FY22	2025/FY26
Next Generation Youth Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM) Career Team SER Jobs 	2021/FY22	2025/FY26
Payment Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BakerRipley 	2022/FY23	2026/FY27
Support Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equus 	2022/FY23	2026/FY27

H-GAC Procurement

Finally, the Committee heard an update from Mary Tronnes, Manager of Procurement and Contracts for the Houston-Galveston Area Council who works closely with Board staff. She provided an overview of changes to the procurement process, including questionnaires that will provide additional performance information and interviews with proposers intended to evaluate their knowledge in real time. The Committee members provided their input, recommendations, and suggested changes which have been incorporated into the procurement process.

Chair Henderson concluded her report and no action was taken at this time.

TAKE ACTION

a. Approval of Revised By-laws.

Rebecca Neudecker, Board staff Senior Manager, presented a request to approve revised by-laws.

Background

In October 2022, Board Chair Mark Guthrie formed the By-laws Committee, appointing Dr. Michael Webster as Chair, and charged it with the purpose of updating the Gulf Coast Workforce Board By-laws, as last amended in 2005. The Committee's primary responsibility was to propose necessary revisions to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Board's operations and ensure compliance with current state and federal law.

Current Situation

On May 12, 2023, following a number of meetings, the By-laws Committee unanimously voted to recommend the adoption of proposed changes to the by-laws, as outlined in the comprehensive report of the Committee. Subsequently, a Board workshop was held on May 15, 2023, during which the Committee members diligently explained the proposed changes to attending Board members and Board members were provided the opportunity to ask questions and provide input. Additionally, the mandatory notice of intent to consider amending the by-laws at the June 2023 Board meeting, along with the detailed revisions, was duly and timely provided to the members of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board.

Action

Approve the proposed revisions to the Gulf Coast Workforce By-laws in the form attached.

After some discussion of the proposed by-laws, a motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. Approval of Adult Education and Literacy Consortium Contracts for 2023-2024.

Danielle Knotts, senior planner, presented a request to approve contracts for the Adult Education and Literacy Consortium.

Background

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, which falls under Title II of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, authorizes publicly funded adult education activities. For the 2023-2024 period, the Workforce Board will continue to act as the grantee/fiscal agent for the region's adult education consortium, with Education Service Center (ESC) Region VI serving as the lead agency providing technical assistance and support to the fourteen (14) contractors offering adult education and literacy (AEL) services.

Consortium service providers deliver adult education and literacy instruction through face-to-face, remote, or hybrid methods. AEL services encompass English language instruction (also known as English Second Language (ESL)), literacy classes, adult basic education, adult secondary education, integrated education, GED preparation, 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. These services are offered at 300 sites throughout our region.

Current Situation

For 2023-2024, the adult education consortium, with the oversight and supervision of Board staff, will continue to:

- Identify youth customers and collaborate with career offices to inform them about available workforce services.
- Integrate adult education with Employer Service to meet the increasing demand for on-site basic skills and English language instruction by employers.
- Expand the availability of workforce services to the community by establishing connections among adult education providers, career offices, NextGen providers, and vocational rehabilitation, ensuring easy access to services regardless of entry point.
- Foster closer collaboration with childcare and youth services divisions to build stronger synergy within our operating system.
- Enhance outcomes and capture co-enrollment across the workforce system by providing training to the lead agency and the workforce career navigator team on data cross-matching across three customer relations management workforce systems.
- Integrate services, such as adult education and literacy, throughout our system, so it is not siloed and disconnected.

- Develop stronger relationships with our AEL service providers to learn more about their communities, services, and support to enhance our system with expanded partnership.

Recommendations:

Using a rating system based on customer experience, compliance, and accountability, as well as each organization performance with respect to any corrective action plans and financial monitoring, Board staff and the Procurement Committee recommend authorizing Board staff to enter into contracts with consortium members as follows for the upcoming program year:

Provider	Current	Proposed Range		Increase
Adult Education Center	\$360,000	\$344,808	\$360,000	0%
A.A.M.A	\$770,000	\$737,506	\$839,300	9%
Alliance for Multicultural Community	\$705,000	\$675,249	\$726,150	3%
BakerRipley Adult Education	\$705,000	\$675,249	\$747,300	6%
Boys & Girls Club	\$360,000	\$344,808	\$392,400	9%
Brazosport College	\$820,000	\$785,396	\$844,600	3%
Chinese Community Center	\$370,000	\$354,386	\$392,200	6%
College of Mainland	\$1,350,000	\$1,293,030	\$1,390,500	3%
Community Family Center	\$687,000	\$658,009	\$728,220	6%
Harris County Department of Education	\$4,720,000	\$4,520,816	\$4,720,000	0%
Houston Community College	\$4,420,000	\$4,233,476	\$4,552,600	3%
Lone Star College	\$1,550,000	\$1,484,590	\$1,596,500	3%
San Jacinto College	\$820,000	\$785,396	\$869,200	6%
Wharton County Junior College	\$935,000	\$895,543	\$991,100	6%
Region 6 ESC	\$1,110,000	\$1,063,158	\$1,830,000	
Subtotal	\$19,682,000	\$18,851,420	\$20,980,070	
Board Administration	\$968,028	\$1,110,297	\$1,368,028	
Workforce Integration	\$400,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	
Total	\$21,050,028	\$20,161,717	\$22,648,098	

In the proposed range for ESC Region VI, we have allocated an additional \$720,000.00 for the consortium to purchase Burlington English. This tool will enable each of our providers to implement a blended learning model with 40 hours of direct instruction and at least 20 supportive instructions for students receiving English language instruction. Research has consistently shown that this type of instructional approach leads to notable increases in students' education fluency levels.

Action

Approve staff and Procurement Committee recommendations to authorize staff to negotiate contracts with adult education providers listed above within the proposed ranges listed above for the period July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, in a total amount not to exceed \$20,980,070.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. Helen Cavazos, Anne Bartlett and Michael Love declared conflicts of interest and abstained from voting. The motion was approved unanimously.

c. Approval of Service Provider for Child Care Expansion Grant.

Kristi Rangel, senior manager, presented a request for approval of a service provider for the Child Care Expansion Grant.

Background

In the summer of 2022, TWC announced a grant proposal targeting local workforce boards to provide comprehensive support for childcare outreach, expansion, and assistance. The TWC grant program specifically focused on three key goals: 1) the expansion of child care facilities in regions experiencing shortages, 2) the augmentation of child care services catering to infants and toddlers, and 3) the establishment of collaborative child care initiatives in partnership with employers. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board applied and was awarded a \$2,880,507 grant dedicated to child care expansion, covering a project duration of eighteen months, beginning in October 2023.

This initiative entails close collaboration with child care providers, community partners, and existing resources to develop a strategy to substantially elevate the quality of child care programs, particularly in areas characterized as child care deserts. The Gulf Coast region wishes to also address our area's issues with quality child care deserts in the region. The comprehensive strategy encompasses the following key objectives:

1. Enhancing awareness and accessibility of quality TWC programs for families, while concurrently fostering sustainable business operations for child care providers;
2. Expanding the knowledge and availability of TWC partnerships for both child care providers and families;
3. Enhancing the accessibility of TWC services specifically tailored to the child care industry; and
4. Facilitating greater accessibility to upskilling and training opportunities provided through TWC programs, primarily targeting child care teachers and staff.

Current Situation

See the related discussion in the Procurement Committee report above.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with the University of Houston for the development of the Child Care Provider Bootcamp and related project activities not to exceed \$525,000.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

d. Approval of Equus Support Center Contract Amendment.

Kristi Rangel, senior manager, presented a request for approval of a contract amendment for Equus Support Center.

Background

The Support Center, established to streamline training and child care scholarships, has experienced minimal staffing growth despite a significant increase in funding. Over the past five years, Child Care Financial Aid Funds rose by 65%, exceeding \$81 million, yet staffing has grown less than 10%. Unexpended funds in 2019 were \$25,000, escalating to \$18.5 million in 2022. The Support Center consists of 89 individuals across eight departments, handling a workload of 7,000 applications and 17,000 calls monthly. External assistance and temporary staff have become the norm due to staffing shortages, highlighting the need for expanded capacity. Staffing limitations result in the inability to address more than 50% of the 850 daily calls, which has been identified in QA audits and caught the attention of TWC. This issue has persisted with the current service provider, Equus.

Current Situation

See the related discussion in the Procurement Committee report above.

Action

Authorize staff to amend the Equus Support Center contract for the current funding year (June 1 - September 30, 2023) by adding up to \$922,981.00 to the present contract.

After some discussion of the proposed contract amendment, a motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

e. Approval of Criteria for Texas Industry Partnership and High Demand Job Training Grant Applications.

Crosby Brito, project manager, presented a request for approval of Criteria for

Texas Industry Partnership and High Demand Job Training Grant Applications.

Background

TWC provides grant funding opportunities for local workforce development projects in support of current and prospective Texas businesses.

For the High Demand Job Training and Texas Industry Partnership, only the local Workforce Board may apply for the grants as matching or leverage to Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds on behalf of the partnership organizations.

Current Situation

TWC has increased outreach activities to encourage more applications. With more applications and the requests for funding exceeding the limit, Board staff is requesting parameters for these two grant programs that reflect the Workforce Board's priorities. The Procurement Committee reviewed and recommends to the Board the criteria recommended by staff in the action item below.

Action

Approve the following criteria for Board staff to evaluate funding requests for the High Demand Job Training and Texas Industry Partnership grants:

- Support for employers in the Workforce Board's Target Industries,
- Support for the Workforce Board's High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations
- Number of individuals to be trained,
- Credentials to be awarded,
- Potential for braided funding to support career progression,
- Maximum amount for High Demand Job Training of \$75,000 per application,
- Maximum amount for Texas Industry Partnership of \$50,000 per application, and
- Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis until annual award maximums are exhausted.

After some discussion of the proposed Criteria for Texas Industry Partnership and High Demand Job Training Grant Applications, a motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

RECEIVE INFORMATION

a. Performance and Production.

Rebecca Neudecker, Senior Manager, presented Performance and Production measures October 2022 through March 2023. Ms. Neudecker stated that we are working with service providers to identify areas in need of improvement in order to

increase performance. We are reviewing six production measures that are not currently being met and identifying opportunities for improvement.

b. Expenditures

AJ Dean, Manager of Finance, reviewed the Financial Status Report representing expenses for the four months ending in April 2023. He reported that we are 26% expended overall and one third of the way through the year. We are lagging in our System IT category but expect to catch up as additional projects come online. Our year-to-date revenue is just under \$117 million. Our largest category of expenditures is financial aid.

c. Communications

Michelle Castrow, Senior Manager of Employer and Community Engagement, presented an update on increased social media activity as well as continuing increases in earned media coverage. Our social media channels currently have just over 22,600 followers collectively. As of April 30, 2023, our cumulative earned-media value since the onset of the pandemic now exceeds \$46 million.

LOOK AT THE ECONOMY

Board staff Parker Harvey presented a look at seasonally adjusted job growth in the Gulf Coast region through April 2023 which shows job adjusted job losses of approximately 5,100 jobs year over year. Data indicates that performance in the construction sector was a major contributing factor in these numbers. Regional unemployment remains low at 4.0%.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Stipeche introduced new Assistant Director, Aaron Sturgeon who joined the Board staff recently.

Chair Guthrie commented that, one year into Ms. Stipeche's tenure, the Board operates very differently than it did a year ago. He commended her leadership efforts and the hard work of the Board staff.

ADJOURN

Chair Guthrie adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:40 p.m.

**GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD BY-LAWS
BY-LAWS COMMITTEE**

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

The name of this organization is the Gulf Coast Workforce Board (hereinafter referred to as “Board”).

**ARTICLE II
OFFICES**

The principal office of the Board shall be located in the workforce development area at a location approved by the Board.

**ARTICLE III
PURPOSE**

The purposes of the Board are to plan and oversee the delivery of workforce training and services and evaluate workforce development in the Gulf Coast workforce development area in accordance with (i) the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as most recently amended and any successor legislation and regulations, Chapter 2308, Texas Government Code as most recently amended, and other applicable state or federal workforce legislation and regulations; and (ii) the Consortium Agreement for the Purpose of Creating the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Board, approved in 1995 by the Counties of Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton, and the City of Pasadena, as amended in 1997 to add the City of Houston to the Gulf Coast workforce development area, and as further amended in 1997 to amend the provisions on resource allocation, as the same may be amended or replaced from time to time in the future (the “Consortium Agreement”).

The Gulf Coast workforce development area is defined as the territory within the boundaries of the Counties of Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris (outside the boundaries of City of Houston), Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton, the City of Houston and the City of Pasadena.

**GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD BY-LAWS
BY-LAWS COMMITTEE**

**ARTICLE IV
FUNCTIONS, POWERS, AND DUTIES**

The functions, powers, and duties of the Board shall include, but are not limited to the following, provided, however, all such functions, powers and duties shall be consistent with the terms of the Consortium Agreement and applicable state and federal law:

- A. Develop and approve the strategic plan for workforce development services for the Gulf Coast workforce development area, or any policy modifications thereto,
- B. Approve the operating budget of the Board and any amendments,
- C. Review and approve proposed occupational skills training programs to ensure that the level of skills provided in the workforce programs is in accordance with the guidelines established by the Board,
- D. Review, monitor, and evaluate all workforce programs coming within the purview of the Board,
- E. Develop other funding sources for the enhancement of the mission and operations of the Board,
- F. Request, evaluate and approve proposals for workforce development services,
- G. Approve award of contracts for workforce development service providers, and approve the termination, modification or amendment of such contracts,
- H. Review, recommend, modify or terminate any Board program not meeting programmatic or regulatory standards,
- I. Enter into contracts for the Board's fiscal agent,
- J. Enter into contracts for the administration of service contracts on behalf of the Board,
- K. Enter into contracts for the Board staff and services,
- L. Provide input, guidance, and recommendations to the executive leadership of organizations providing Board staff or serving as Board staff concerning the performance of employees of organizations serving as Board staff,
- M. Perform any other actions or duties of a local workforce board organization permitted by applicable laws and regulations.

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**ARTICLE V
MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING**

A. Composition.

The membership of the Board shall be consistent with the requirements of state and federal enabling legislation, regulations, and guidance and the agreements governing this Board.

B. Board size.

The size of the Board will not be less than 37 members and not more than 67 members.

C. Representation by political jurisdiction.

Each political jurisdiction shall be entitled to appoint at least one Board member. Not more than one Board member will represent a county with a population of less than 100,000. Not more than two Board members will represent a county with a population between 100,000 and 200,000. Not more than three Board members will represent a county with a population from 200,000 to 1,000,000. Not more than eighteen Board members will represent a county with a population over 1,000,000 and not more than twenty-four Board members will represent a city with a population of 1,000,000 or more. Not more than three Board members will represent regional offices of state agencies. The Board will use data from the latest decennial census in determining the number of Board members representing each political jurisdiction in the workforce development area.

D. Nomination, Appointment and Terms of Members

Nominations for Board membership shall be solicited according to rules promulgated under applicable state and federal law. Each chief elected official for political jurisdictions within the workforce development area shall nominate representatives to the Board for approval by the Texas Workforce Commission. Each Board member will serve a term of two full calendar years beginning January 1 of the year after which their nomination was approved by the Texas Workforce Commission. Terms of Board members will be staggered. Board members shall serve until their successors have been duly appointed and qualified. There is no limit on the number of terms a Board member may serve.

The Board Chair or his/her designee will notify chief elected officials when a vacancy on the workforce board has occurred and the appointment of a replacement is required.

**GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD BY-LAWS
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E. Board Member Removal.

Any Board member may resign at any time by giving notice to the Board Chair, the chief elected official who nominated the Board member, and Board staff.

Board members may be removed for cause whenever in the judgment of two-thirds of the Board members present at a meeting and voting thereon, the best interest of the Board will be served thereby. Such cause may include, but need not be limited to, absences from Board meetings, lack of participation, undisclosed conflicts of interest, violation of conflicts of interest policy as set forth in these by-laws, or other conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the Board. Cause for removal of Board members also includes three consecutive absences from regularly scheduled Board meetings.

- F. In order to dismiss a Board member for cause, a statement of the charges constituting cause for removal shall be sent by hand delivery, common carrier delivery or by certified mail with delivery receipt to the Board member under charges at his or her last recorded address and to the chief elected official responsible for the Board member's nomination at least 15 days before final action is taken thereon. This statement shall be accompanied by a notice of the time and place the Board is to take action on the charges. The Board member shall be given an opportunity to present a defense at that time and place mentioned in the notice.

G. Vacancies.

Vacancies in unexpired terms are filled in the same manner as nominations and appointments are made. Any replacement appointed to the Board shall fill the unexpired term of the member such appointee has replaced

H. Voting.

Board members must be present to vote. A Board member may not give proxy voting authority to any other Board member or to any other person.

**ARTICLE VI
MEETINGS**

A. Open meetings.

The Board and its Procurement Committee will conduct all business in meetings in compliance with requirements of the Texas open meetings law. In accordance with state and federal law and regulations, electronic meeting technology may be used as appropriate to promote workforce board member participation.

**GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD BY-LAWS
BY-LAWS COMMITTEE**

B. Schedule of meetings.

1. *Regular Meetings.* The Board will meet at least once each two months throughout the year. The Board may meet more frequently, as it determines necessary.
2. *Special Meetings.* The Chair, the Vice Chairs, or twenty percent of the Board membership, may call a special meeting with a minimum of ten calendar days written notice to all Board members. Written notice may be delivered electronically or physically.
3. Attendance of a Board member at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting.

C. Presiding officer.

The Board Chair presides at all meetings. In absence of the Chair, a Vice Chair presides. In absence of both the Chair and a Vice Chair, a temporary Chair chosen by Board members present presides.

D. Parliamentary authority.

The Board shall conduct meetings in accordance with, in ranking order: federal and state requirements, Board by-laws and rules, and the latest version of Robert's Rules of Order.

E. Quorum.

A quorum will consist of fifty percent of the Board members for a full Board meeting and fifty percent of the Board appointed members for a committee meeting.

F. Conflict of Interest.

Prior to taking office and annually thereafter, Board members must provide to the Board Chair and Executive Director a written declaration of all Substantial Business Interests or relationships they, or their Immediate Family Members, have with all businesses or organizations that have received, currently receive, or are likely to receive contracts or funding from the Board. Such declarations shall be updated within 30 days to reflect any changes in such business interests or relationships. The Board shall appoint an individual to timely review the disclosure information and advise the Board Chair and appropriate members of potential conflicts.

1. Prior to a discussion, vote, or decision on any matter before the Board, if a Board member, or an Immediate Family Member of such Board member, has a Substantial Business Interest in or relationship to a business entity, organization, or property or a personal interest that would be pecuniarily affected by any official Board action, that Board member shall disclose the nature and extent of the interest

**GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD BY-LAWS
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or relationship and shall abstain from discussion, voting on, attempting to influence, or in any other way participating in the decision on the matter.

2. A Board member who personally has or has Immediate Family Members who have Substantial Business Interests or Representational Interests in proposals, requests for funds or persons or entities making them, may not vote, attempt to influence, or initiate or participate in discussion on any proposals or requests for funds which compete with the proposals, requests for funds, or persons or entities making them in which the Board member or Immediate Family Member has the interest.
3. A Board member who violates the requirements of this section may be removed from the Board, upon two-thirds vote of the Board in accordance with the procedures for removal specified in Article V, Section E of these by-laws.
4. All declarations of conflict of interest and abstentions from voting will be recorded in the minutes of Board meetings and Procurement Committee meetings.
5. A “Substantial Business Interest” is defined as: (1) ownership of ten percent or \$5,000 or more of the fair market value of the business; (2) receiving ten percent or more of gross income during the previous or current year from the business; or (3) ownership in real property of the business valued at \$2,500 or more.
6. An “Immediate Family Member” is defined as: (1) a great-grandfather, great-grandmother, grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, brother, sister, daughter, son, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, great-granddaughter, great-grandson, granddaughter, grandson, nephew or niece of the Board member, and/or (2) the present or former spouse of the Board member, and/or (3) a great-grandfather, great-grandmother, grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, brother, sister, daughter, son, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, great-granddaughter, great-grandson, granddaughter, grandson, nephew or niece of the Board member’s present or former spouse. Each of these terms includes step-relatives and adopted family members.
7. A “Representational Interest” is defined as: (1) employed by or under contract with the organization, and/or (2) a member of the board of directors, commission, council, or other direct governing body of the organization. A “Representational Interest” does not include members of advisory boards, commissions or councils which are not direct governing bodies of an organization and the member is not compensated for their service.

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G. Temporary Emergency Authority if Board is Unable to Meet

In the event of a declared Federal, State or Local emergency or disaster, if the Board is unable to convene in a duly or special called meeting, the Board officers can exercise temporary authority to empower the Board Staff to authorize related procurements, or agreements which require immediate action related to the declared emergency or disaster. All agreements, or procurements must be presented for ratification at the next duly or special called meeting of the Board.

**ARTICLE VII
OFFICERS**

A. Board Officers.

The officers of the Board will be a Chair and three Vice Chairs. Vice Chairs may be assigned functional responsibilities by the Chair.

B. Election and Term.

The Chair and Vice Chairs will be elected by majority vote of Board members present and voting at a regular meeting designated by the Board for elections. Each officer serves a two-year term, provided that an officer's term ends upon the effective date of his/her resignation from or inability to serve on the Board and ends when an officer is not re-nominated to the Board by his/her chief elected official, or when the officer's re-nomination is not approved by the Texas Workforce Commission.

C. Election Procedures.

1. The Chair will appoint a Nominations Committee to solicit nominations for Board officers from among the Board members. Board members desiring to serve as officers will submit their names, resumes, if requested, and the offices which they wish to hold to the Nominations Committee.
2. At the first Board meeting of each year, the membership will vote on those names submitted by the Nominations Committee and any nominations from the floor.

D. Chair.

1. The Board Chair must come from among Board members representing private business on the Board.
2. The Chair presides at meetings, appoints committees, certifies the quorum, and takes other duties as the Board may assign.

**GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD BY-LAWS
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E. Vice Chair.

1. The Vice Chairs may come from any membership category on the Board.
2. The Vice Chairs each in turn act in absence of the Chair.

F. Ex Officio Membership on Committees

Board officers may participate as Ex Officio members of all Board committees, with all the rights and privileges of committee members. When serving in this capacity, officers shall not be considered in determining if a quorum is present.

G. Vacancies.

The Board will elect a successor to fill the vacancy of a Board officer whose term has ended.

H. Removal.

Any Board officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Board members present at the meeting following the meeting at which the motion is made to remove the officer. Notice of the motion to remove the officer shall be sent by hand delivery, common carrier delivery or by certified mail with delivery receipt to the Board officer at his or her last recorded address at least 15 days before final action is taken thereon. This notice shall include the time and place the Board is to take action on the motion. The Board officer shall be given an opportunity to present a defense at that time and place mentioned in the notice.

**ARTICLE VIII
COMMITTEES**

A. Standing committees.

There are four standing committees of the Board: (1) the Audit/Monitoring Committee, (2) the Procurement Committee, (3) the Nominations Committee, and (4) the Executive Committee. Apart from the Executive Committee, the Chair recommends Board members to sit on each of the standing committees, and the Board votes to confirm committee appointments. Each standing committee shall develop and review a committee charter.

1. *Audit/Monitoring.* The Audit/Monitoring Committee will meet, on an on-going, and periodic basis, to review the auditing, monitoring and performance of grants and contracts approved by the Board.
2. *Procurement.* The Procurement Committee will meet, on an on-going and periodic

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basis to review and make recommendations for approval of grants and contracts, including material contract amendments and modifications, by the Board.

3. *Nominations.* The Nominations Committee will meet, on an on-going and periodic basis to receive nominations for Board officers and recommend officers for approval by the Board.
4. *Executive.* The Executive Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Chair and shall consist of the Officers plus the Chairs of the Procurement and Audit and Monitoring Committees. The Executive Committee will meet on an on-going and periodic basis and at the discretion of the Board Chair to provide counsel on Board agendas, policies, staffing matters and the strategic direction of Board. The Executive Committee may provide input to the executive leadership of any organization providing staff to the Board regarding the selection of and performance of the Executive Director of the Board.

B. Additional committees.

The creation of additional committees and appointment of committee members to these committees shall be at the discretion of the Chair as the need arises and as the Board may direct. Each additional non-standing committee shall develop and review a committee charter.

C. Committee term and other duties.

1. *Membership.* Board members who are not formally appointed to a committee may volunteer to join the committee and meet with appointed committee members to carry out committee business, including voting on matters before the committee.
2. *Term.* Committees that are not standing committees will be active for a necessary period until their objectives are met.
3. *Other duties.* Committees will submit progress reports as necessary or requested by the Board or the Board Chair, and if requested by the Board Chair, shall provide a final report.

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**ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended at a regular meeting of the Board by a two-thirds vote of the Board members present, provided previous notice has been sent to Board members and the proposed amendment(s) have been announced in the business agenda of the scheduled meeting. Notice of the proposed amendment(s) and a copy of the amendment(s) must be provided to members at least twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the meeting at which the amendment will come before the Board for vote.

Strategic Planning Committee

Meeting on June 30, 2023

The Strategic Planning Committee met on Friday, June 30, 2023, at 2 pm via hybrid meeting. Attendees included: Carl Bowles (Chair), Peter Beard, Sara Bouse, Bobbie Henderson, Adrian Ozuna, Paul Puente, Carolyn Watson, and Mark Guthrie (Board Chair).

Board staff provided a brief history of the Workforce Board's strategic planning efforts including an overview of how Texas Workforce Commission and Gulf Coast Workforce Board performance and production measures are used to gauge progress.

An overview of the proposed process and timeline to deliver an updated strategic plan to the full Workforce Board at the February 2024 meeting was discussed.

Outreach Strategists shared preliminary observations from a national landscape analysis. It concluded its presentation with a reminder that the initial input survey would remain open through the following week.

Chair Bowles initiated discussion regarding future meeting dates. Committee members indicated a preference to continue monthly meetings on Friday afternoons with a hybrid format. After three rounds of polling, the meeting schedule is as follows:

- Friday, August 4 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
Zoom registration: Committee members will receive a personalized panelist link for this meeting.
- Friday, September 1 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, September 22 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, October 6, 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Retreat – Strategic Planning Committee and Workforce Board Officers
Location TBD
- Friday, October 27 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom

- Friday, November 17 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, December 15 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, January 12 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom

No formal action was required before the meeting concluded.

Audit and Monitoring Committee

Update for July 2023

The Audit and Monitoring Committee met on August 1, 2023, at 1:00 PM Members - Guy Robert Jackson (Chair), Carl Bowles (Vice Chair), Willie Alexander, Sara Bouse, Helen Cavazos, Cheryl Guido, Bobbie Henderson, and Doug Karr attended. Also attending was Mark Guthrie (Board Chair).

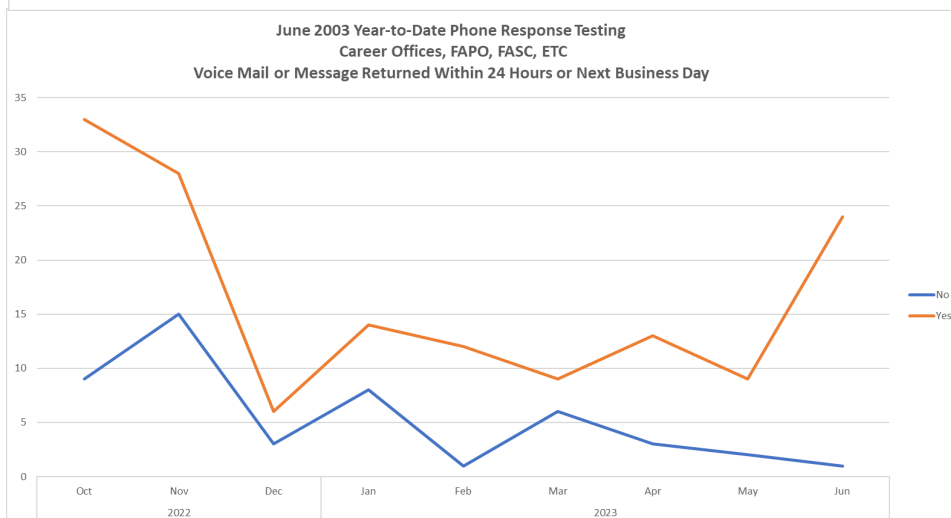
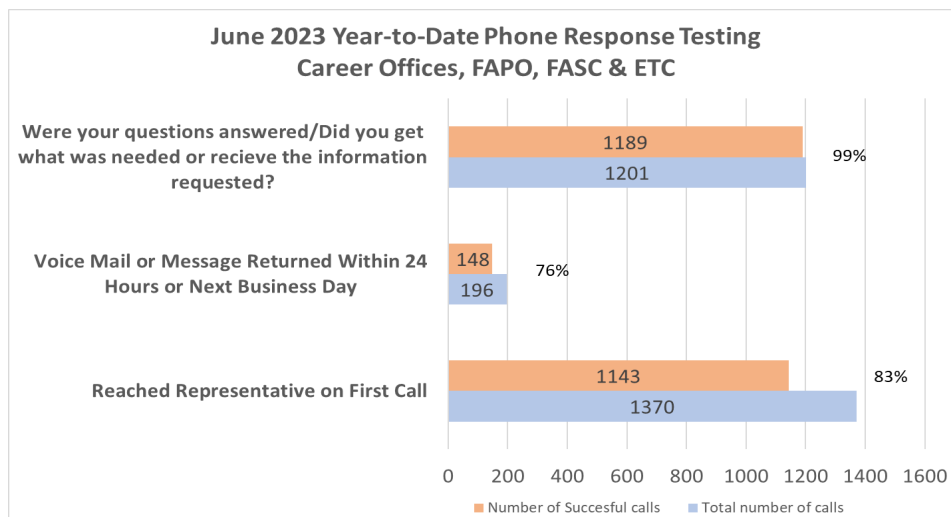
System Review

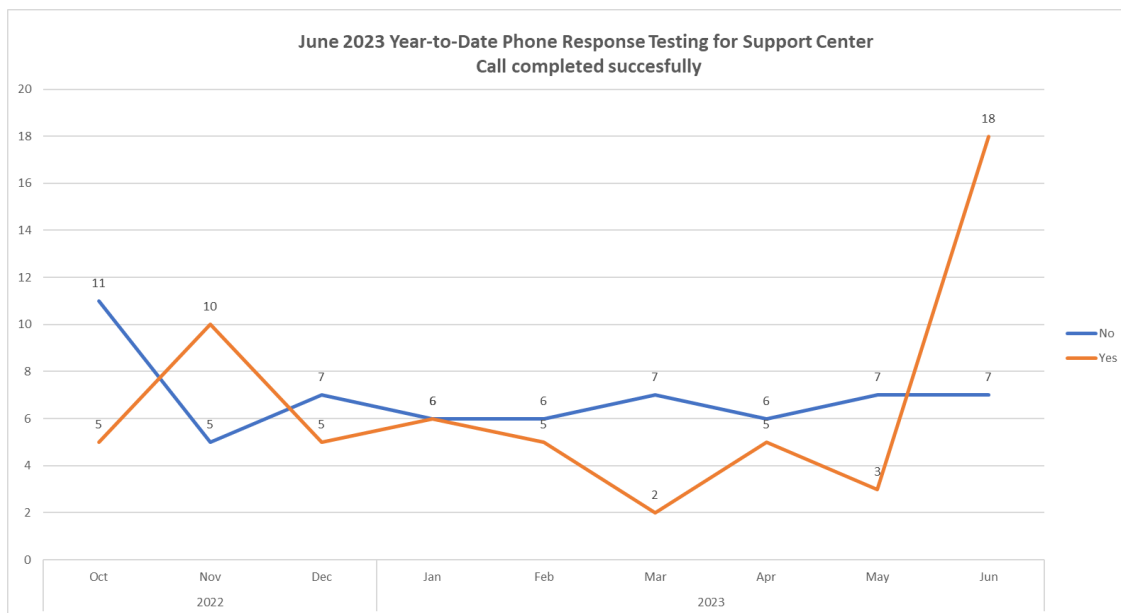
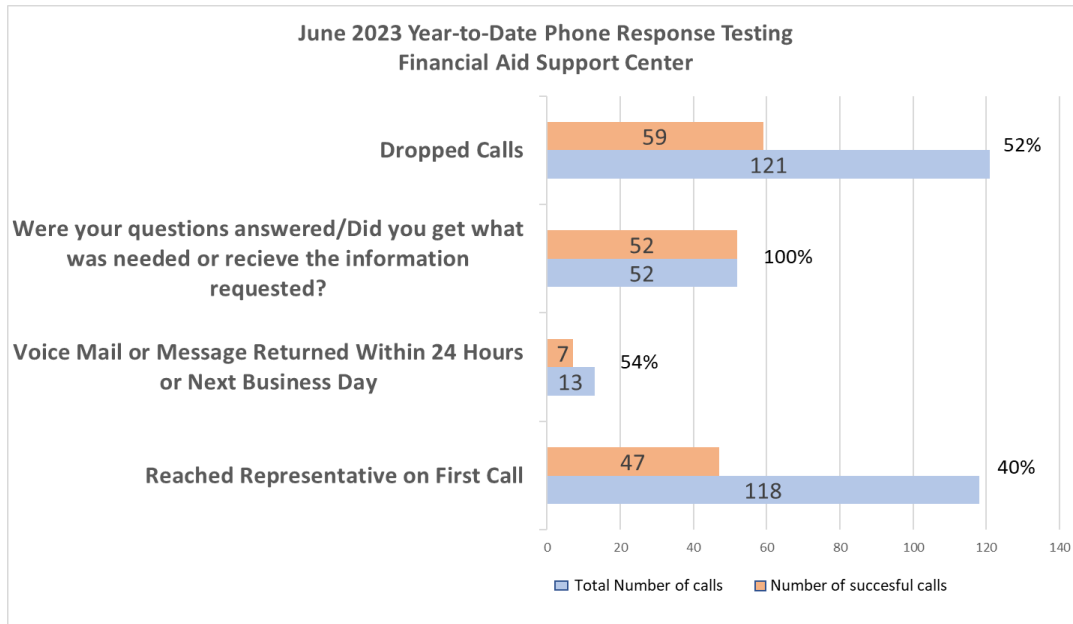
This report includes a contractor-level review of performance/production and expenditures.

Customer Experience

Phone Responsiveness

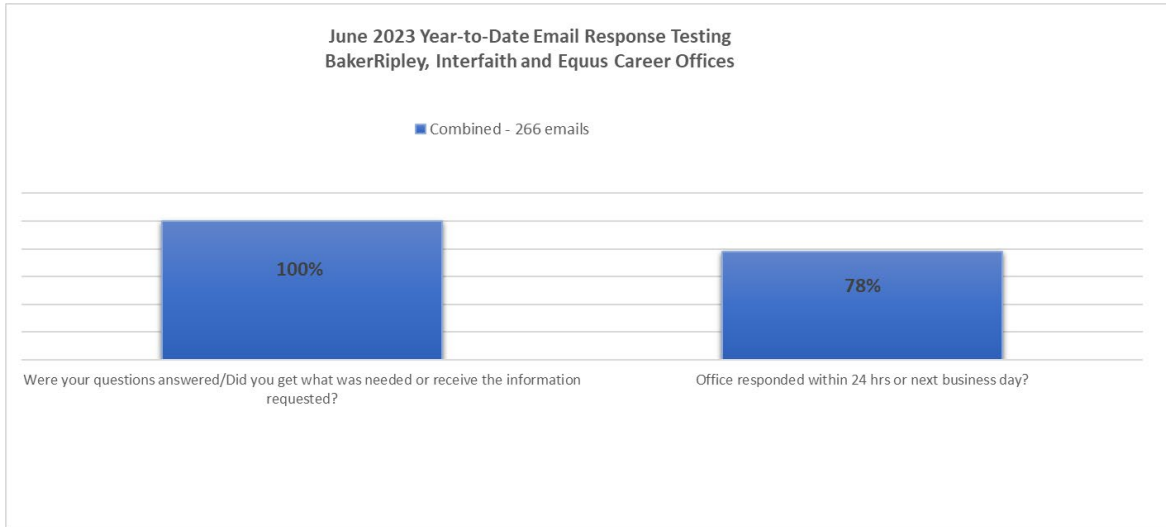
Voice mail responses within 24 hours improved in June 2023, increasing the year-to-date result to 76% from 72% in May and 71% in April.





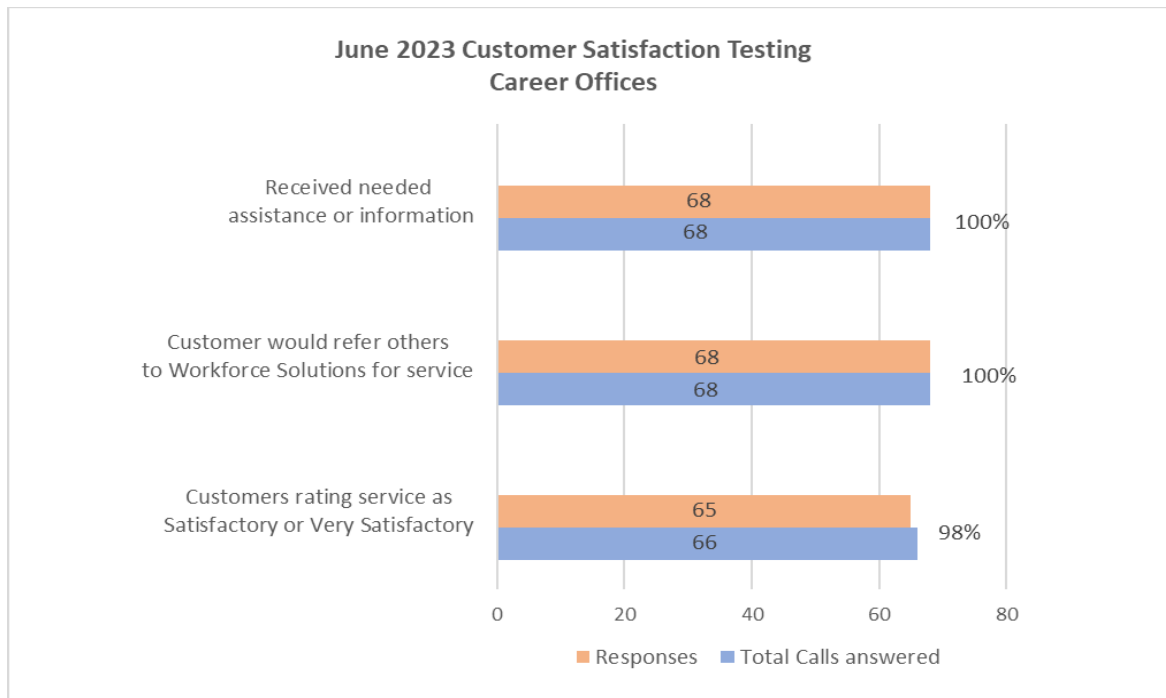
Email Responsiveness

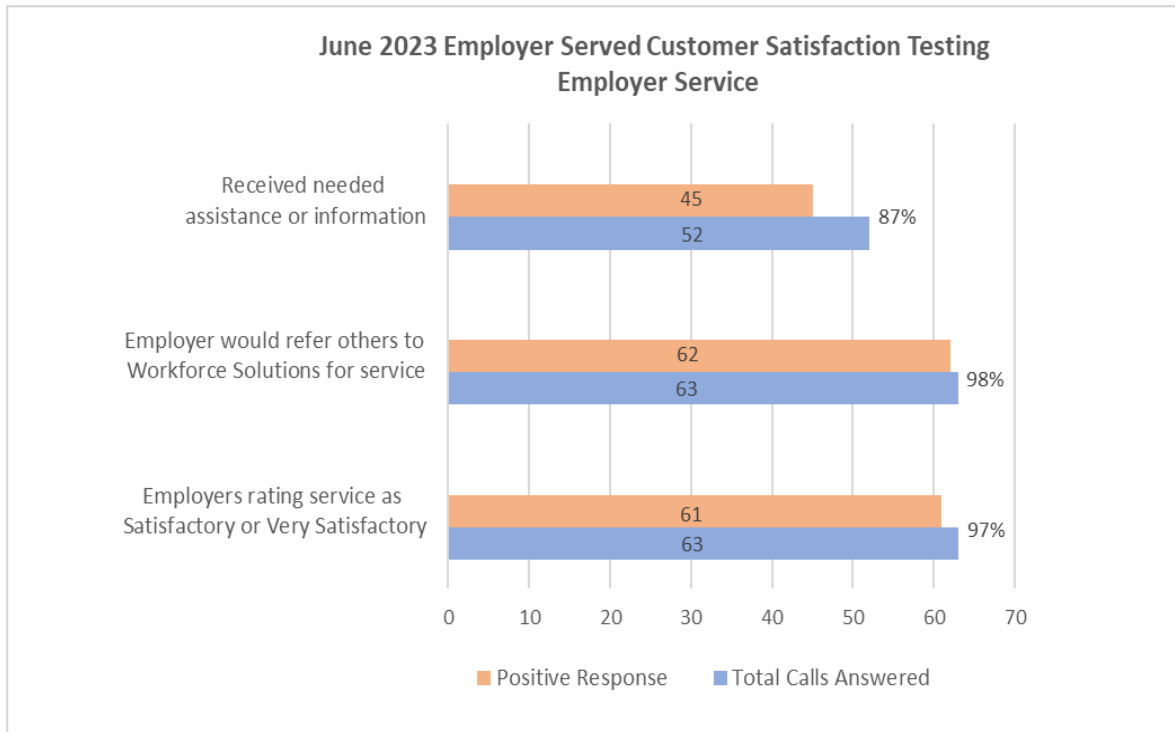
We tested the responsiveness of the career offices to emails sent to the career office email address found on Wrksolutions.com. The responses were good, but improvement is needed to ensure a customer receives an email response within 24 hours. Responsiveness within 24 hours remained the same as May testing.



Customer Satisfaction

From a list of 137 customers receiving a service through a career office in May 2023, we spoke with 66 customers. We called 208 employers who interacted with Employer Service in the last three months and were able to talk with 63 employers. The charts below reflect what we heard.





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 will be described later in this report.

We issued the draft reports for **Adaptive Construction Solution (ACS), Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM), Career Team, and SERJobs**. We are waiting for final responses from the service providers to issue final reports. Although the reports are not finalized, there were no findings that would prohibit the Board from considering contract renewal.

The **BakerRipley** final PY2022 Financial Aid Payment Office report showed some errors in the timely completion of data entry and document submission of required information security correspondence. All findings were addressed in the response.

We are reviewing **Employment & Training Centers** and beginning the career office service providers reviews. We are also conducting worksite visits to all Summer Earn and Learn participants. Visits have been completed for 441 participants at 223 worksites since June 15, 2023.

Financial Systems and Issues

The Board contracts with its procured CPA firms to conduct comprehensive financial monitoring of all Workforce Board service providers. The most recent finalized financial monitoring reviews include the following:

- **BakerRipley** and **Interfaith of the Woodlands** had no findings or questioned costs.
- **Equus** had multiple minor findings related to the need for improvements on existing policies and a nominal disallowed cost.
- Financial monitoring for **Career Team, ACAM, and SERJobs** had minor findings related to needed policy improvements but had no questioned costs.
- **Employment and Training Centers (ETC)** had a finding and questioned costs of \$22,751 in over-expensed administrative costs. The report is not final, pending a response from ETC.
- The Board is working with **Adaptive Construction Solutions (ACS)** to complete the reimbursement payment of \$428,298 in disallowed costs.

2022 – 2023 Service Provider Report Cards

Excellent	10
Above Average	5 to 9.9
Standard	0 to 4.9

Improvement Needed	-0.01 to -4.9
Unacceptable	- 5 to -10

The new rating scale factors any critical findings from the most recent financial monitoring report and requires a performance improvement plan for providers with a rating of -5.

The table below shows the report card rating for Program Year 2022 program monitoring for each service provider up for contract renewal:

Service Providers	Report Card Rating	Numeric Rating	Financial Monitoring
Career Office			
BakerRipley (<i>currently</i>)	Standard	.29	PY22 – no findings

<i>testing PY23)</i>			
Equus	Improvement Needed	-.98	PY22 –no significant findings
Interfaith of the Woodlands	Standard	.04	PY22 – no findings
Employer Service			
Employment and Training Centers <i>(currently testing PY23)</i>	Standard	1.16	PY22 – \$22,751 in over-expensed administrative costs
Adaptive Construction Solutions <i>(PY23 draft report issued)</i>	Status Review No rating	NA	PY22 –disallowed costs of \$428,298
Next Gen			
Alliance for Community Assistance Ministries <i>(PY23 draft report issued)</i>	Status Review No rating	NA	PY22 – no significant findings
Career Team <i>(PY23 draft report issued)</i>	Status Review No rating	NA	PY22 – no significant findings
SERJobs <i>(PY23 draft report issued)</i>	Standard	.52	PY22 – no significant findings
Financial Services			
Financial Aid Payment Office	Standard	.42	PY22 – no findings
Financial Aid Support Center (Interfaith)	Improvement Needed	-1.38	PY22 – no significant findings

Accountability and Improvement Plans

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

TWC Interventions:

- **Employer Workforce Assistance (EWA)** – On June 9, 2023, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board was placed on a Technical Assistance Plan (TAP) for the Employer Workforce Assistance performance measure. The Board has not met the performance target for four consecutive months. The TAP identifies six strategies the Board will implement to meet performance measures. We recently issued a progress report to TWC regarding this TAP and are awaiting its comments and input. TWC may lift the TAP when the Board meets its contracted performance target for four consecutive months and demonstrates the timely and effective implementation of all other elements of the TAP.
- **Measurable Skills Gain (MSG)** – In June 2023, the TWC requested a list of actions the Board is taking to improve performance documenting academic and occupational progress for customers enrolled in a WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Education or Training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment. We submitted the response with steps to improve Measurable Skills Gains (MSG), and on July 14, 2023, we received notice that our performance had improved and no additional response was required.

GCWB Interventions:

- **Adult Education and Literacy** – In April 2022, Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) was placed on a corrective action plan to address data integrity and accuracy issues. The Board staff continues to work with HCDE, and it continues to show a greater effort to enhance our working relationship and is focusing on improvement.
- **Equus Support Center Corrective Action Plan** – On March 29, 2023, the TWC offered technical assistance to the GCWB, given the increased number of complaints concerning the Support Center. On April 6, 2023, Equus was placed under a corrective action plan by the GCWB to address growing customer complaints and a lack of progress in meeting contractual customer service standards. Board staff continues to meet with TWC for Technical Assistance related to the Support Center. TWC has reported receiving fewer complaints and approves of the many interventions made by the GCWB to foster a better customer experience. Board staff will continue working closely with the Support Center to ensure changes are implemented and evaluated regularly.
- **Equus Career Office Corrective Action Plan** – On July 17, 2023, Equus Career Office was placed on a Corrective Action Plan to address deficiencies within the WIOA performance measures for WIOA Youth and continued programmatic and operational concerns. It was also made aware of issues concerning staff

professional development, career office systems and processes, and effective community engagement. Effective August 2, 2023, Equus will attend bi-weekly meetings for the next six months with board staff to address the concerns of the corrective action plan to ensure performance measures and staff development aligns more with the GCWB's vision.

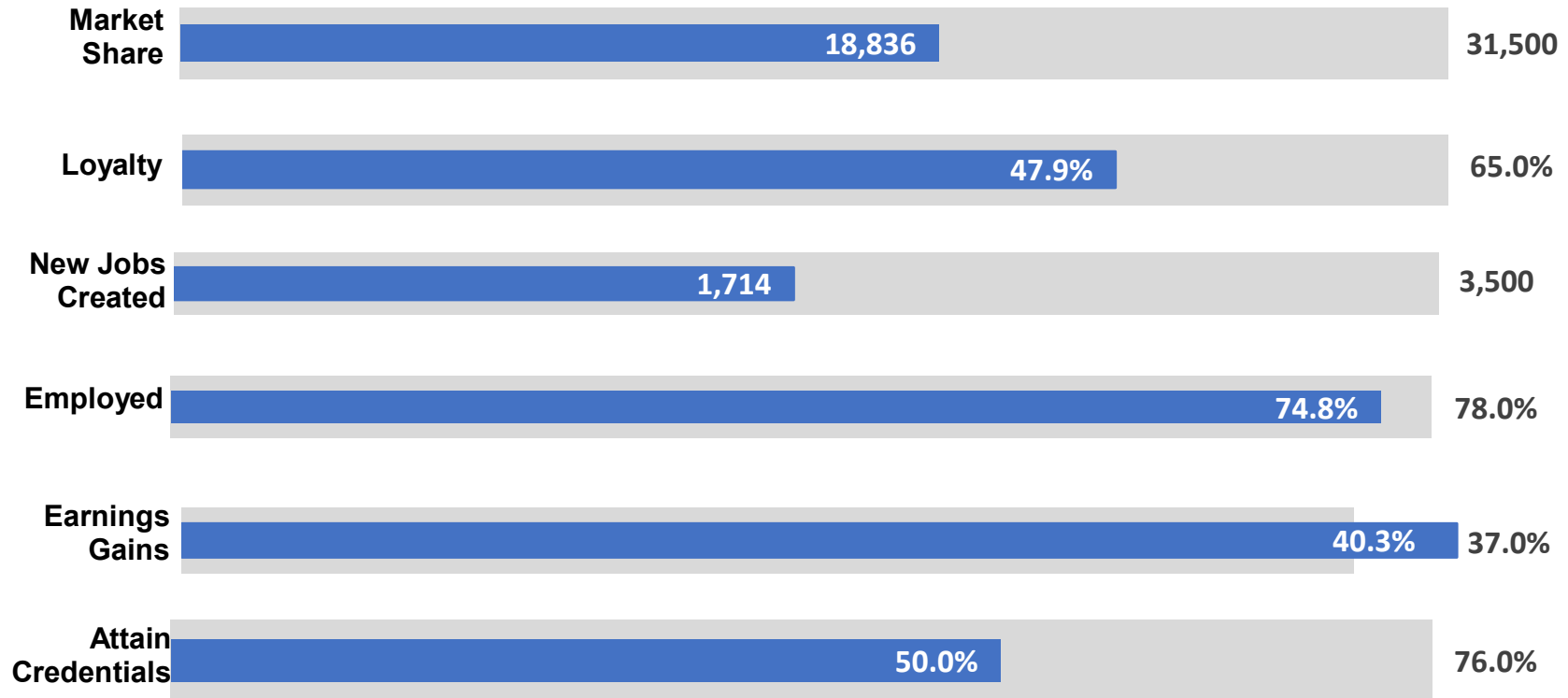
- **Employer Engagement** – Last month, we stated that Adaptive Construction Solutions would be placed on a corrective action plan, but we reached an agreement to modify ACS's contract to ensure that they would be focused on achieving market share. At present, ACS, ETC, and our Career Offices are supporting our Market Share Taskforce to achieve this year's market share requirement.

Next Meeting

We propose to schedule the next committee meeting for 1:00 PM on Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

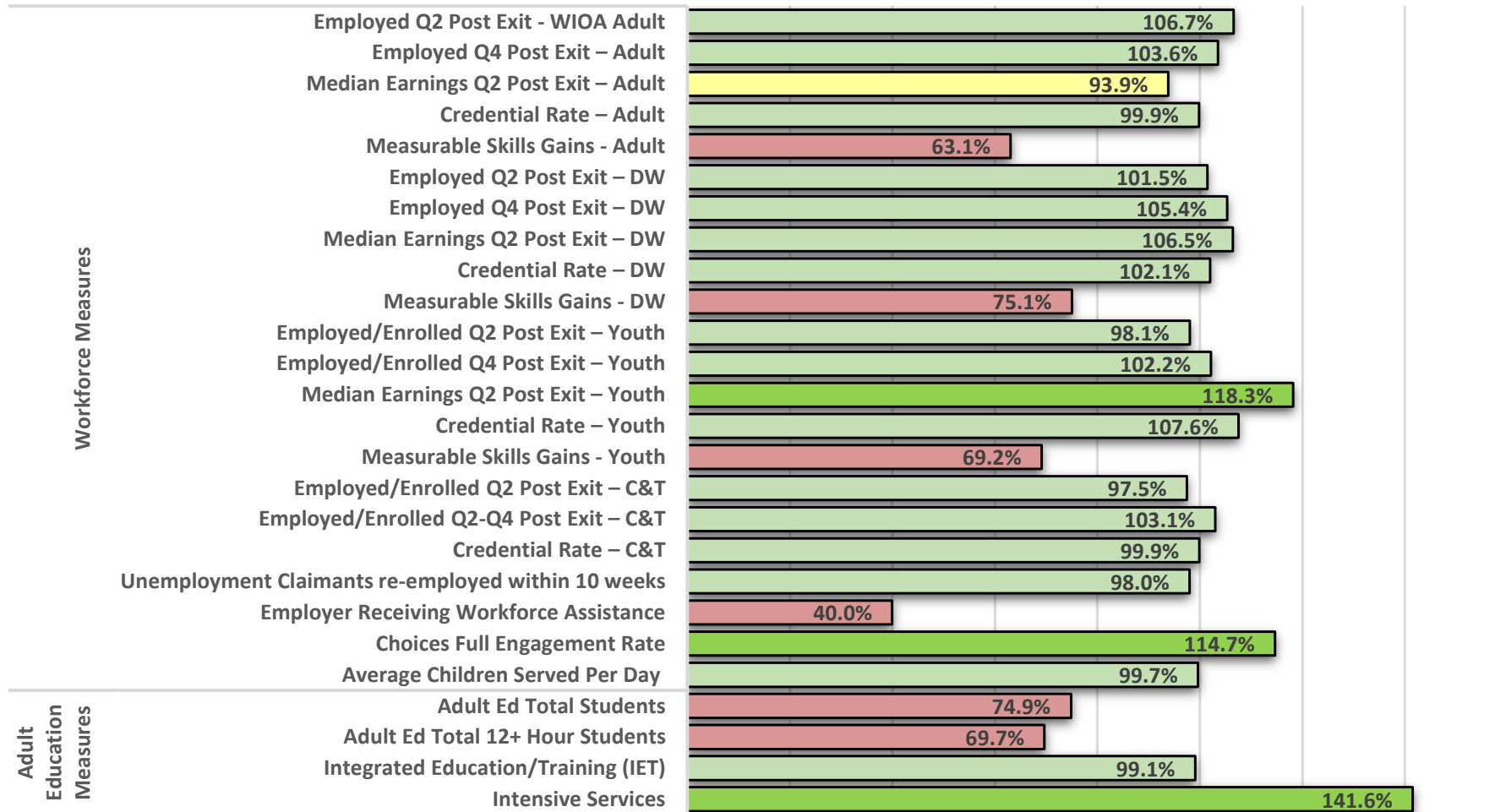
Performance Measures

October 2022 to June 2023



Production Measures

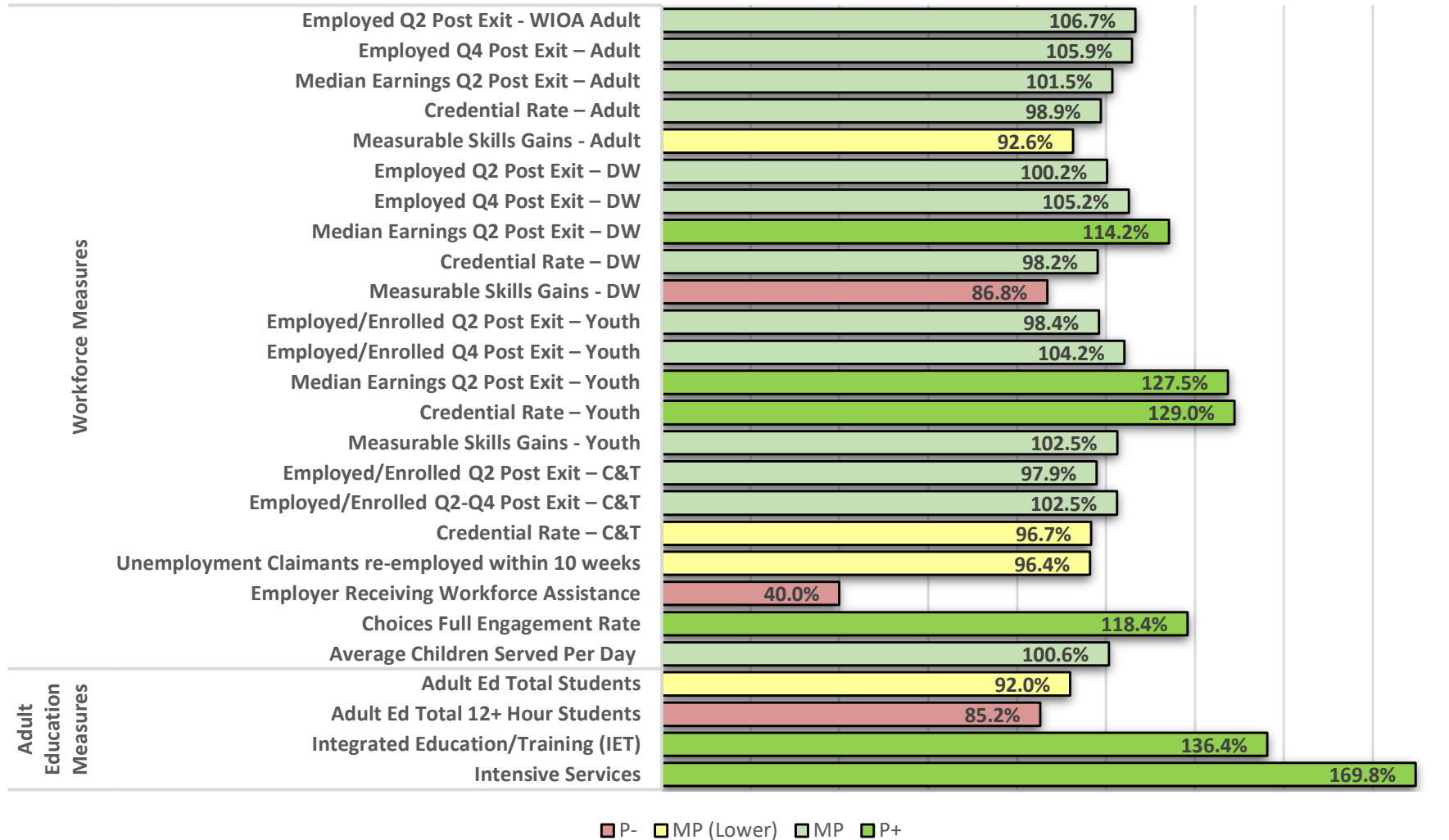
October 2022 to March 2023



■ P-
 ■ MP (Lower)
 ■ MP
 ■ P+

Production Measures

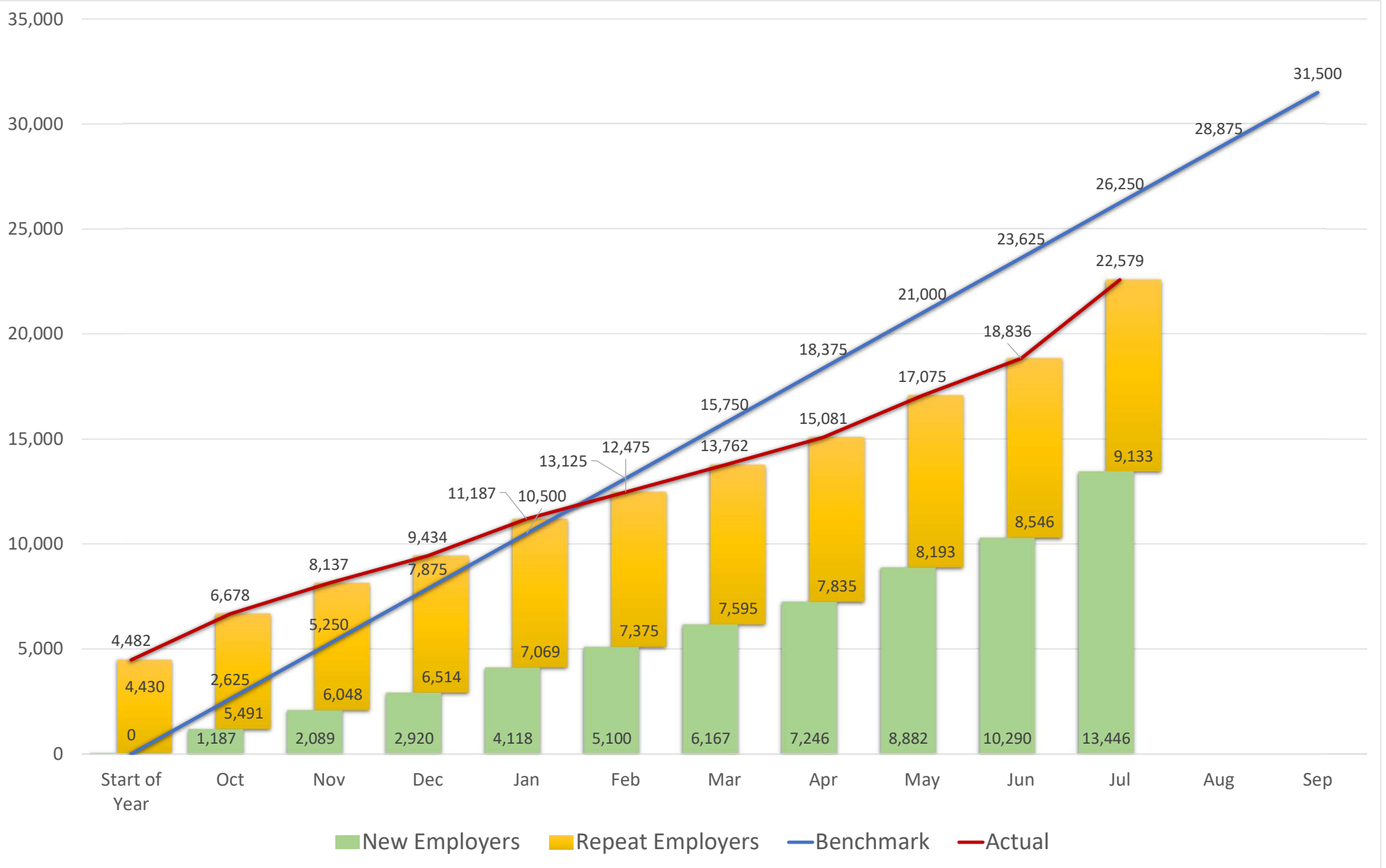
October 2022 to June 2023



■ P- ■ MP (Lower) ■ MP ■ P+

Workforce Solutions System Employer Workforce Assistance (Market Share)

June 2023



Workforce Solutions System Performance

June 2023

	Measure	Board			Interfaith		BakerRipley		Equus		ACS		ETC		ACAM		Career Team		SER		CLI		Measure Period	Report Period	
		Target	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current Perf.	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den			
Support Employers	Market Share	31,500	18,836								18,836											10/22-9/23	10/22-6/23		
	Loyalty	65%	47.9%	8,546 17,837																			10/22-9/23	10/22-6/23	
	New Jobs Created	3,500	1,714																				10/21-9/23	10/21-6/23	
	New jobs created with employers in targeted industries	75%	20%	351 1,714																				10/21-9/23	10/21-6/23
	New jobs created in targeted high-skill occupations	45%	8%	132 1,714																				10/21-9/23	10/21-6/23
Put People in Jobs	Employed in the 1st Qtr after Exit	78.0%	74.8%	48,305 64,544	73.9%	19,887 26,913	75.5%	24,783 32,824	71.4%	3,406 4,768			89.9%	509 566	75.8%	147 194	87.4%	111 127	78.7%	174 221			10/21-9/22	10/21-9/22	
	Customers, unemployed at entrance, employed by the 1st Qtr After Exit	76.0%	72.6%	39,593 54,500	71.7%	16,397 22,869	73.4%	20,344 27,721	68.6%	2,764 4,030			90.7%	323 356	75.0%	132 176	83.5%	76 91	78.9%	157 199			10/21-9/22	10/21-9/22	
	Customers employed in the entrance quarter	70.0%	62.1%	38,946 62,746	60.3%	14,962 24,825	63.2%	19,970 31,579	70/01/2022	2,825 4,806			41.7%	10 24	60.2%	259 430	63.6%	225 354	62.6%	430 687			4/22-3/23	4/22-12/22	
Keep People in Jobs	Employed in 2nd and 3rd quarters after exit	83.0%	81.6%	36,896 45,239	81.9%	15,655 19,122	81.3%	18,265 22,471	81.3%	2,578 3,172			81.7%	434 531	83.3%	5 6	75.0%	3 4	77.2%	139 180			4/21-3/22	4/21-3/22	
Increase Incomes	Exiters with Earnings Gains	46.0%	49.5%	36,039 72,781	48.2%	15,036 31,180	50.6%	18,085 35,720	45.9%	2,489 5,420			69.2%	452 653	77.8%	7 9	57.1%	4 7	62.4%	166 266			4/21-3/22	4/21-12/21	
	Exiters with Earnings Gains of at least 20%	37.0%	40.3%	29,306 72,781	39.1%	12,180 31,180	41.4%	14,803 35,720	37.6%	2,039 5,420			58.8%	384 653	44.4%	4 9	42.9%	3 7	49.2%	131 266			4/21-3/22	4/21-12/21	
Raise Education Levels	Achieve Education Credential	76.0%	50.0%	859 1,719	53.1%	257 484	62.6%	275 439	42.9%	33 77			12.8%	39 304	75.4%	92 122	86.1%	124 144	26.2%	39 149			7/22-6/23	7/22-6/23	
	Achieve Post-Secondary Certificate or Degree	86.0%	60.6%	820 1,353	53.2%	257 483	65.8%	275 418	43.4%	33 76			10.0%	1 10	76.7%	92 120	87.3%	124 142	36.5%	38 104			7/22-6/23	7/22-6/23	

Workforce Solutions System Production

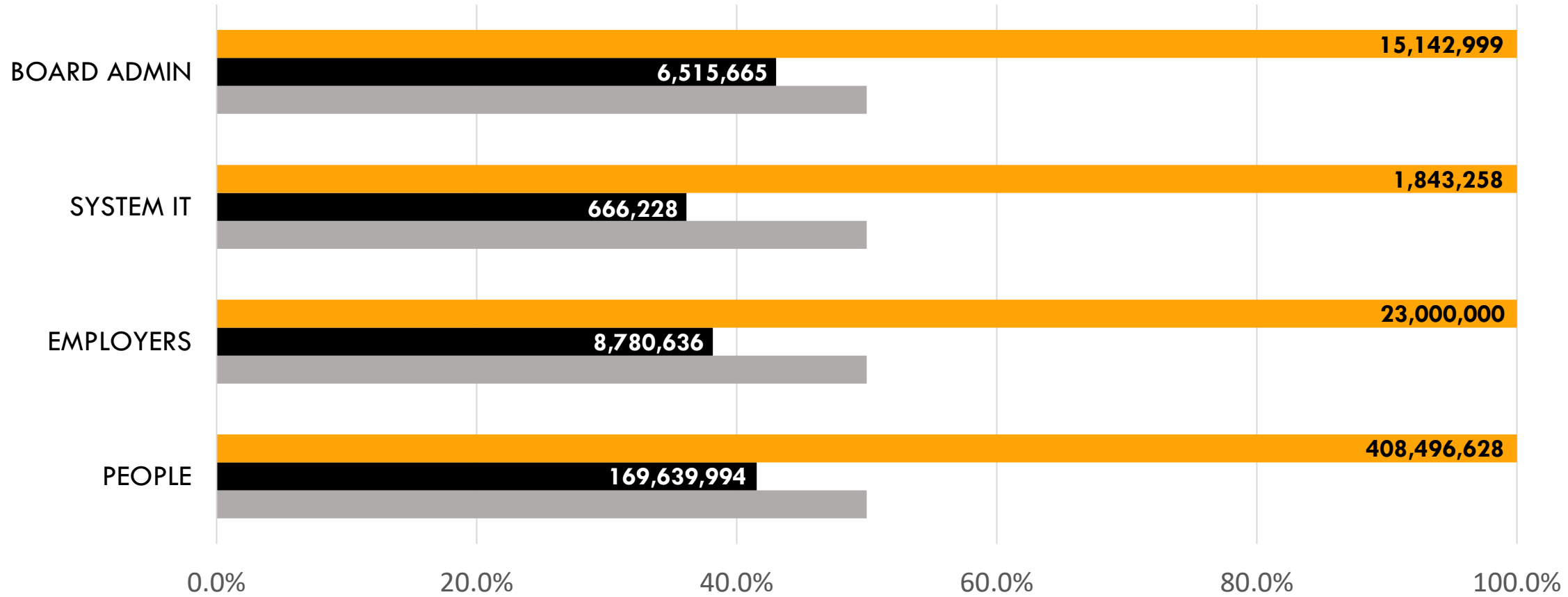
June 2023

	Measure	Board			Interfaith		BakerRipley		Equus		ACS		ETC		ACAM		Career Team		SER		CLI		Measure Period	Report Period
		Target	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den	Current	Num Den		
Support Employers	Employers Workforce Assistance	32,270	22,067																			10/22-9/23	10/22-6/23	
Put People in Jobs	Unemployment Claimants re-employed within 10 weeks	60.0%	57.8%	37,133 64,206	56.7%	13,670 24,108	59.0%	19,545 33,146	55.9%	3,834 6,861												7/22-6/23	7/22-3/23	
	Choices Full Engagement	53.0%	59.2%	1,078 1,821	52.7%	337 639	62.9%	608 967	61.9%	133 215													10/22-9/23	10/22-6/23
Keep People in Jobs	Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit - WIOA All	68.1%	66.6%	45,041 67,587	66.1%	19,470 29,464	67.3%	22,766 33,833	64.3%	3,181 4,949			79.5%	486 611									7/21-6/22	7/21-6/22
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - WIOA Adult	72.0%	76.8%	3,118 4,059	75.9%	1,098 1,446	76.6%	1,535 2,004	79.9%	218 273			78.1%	313 401									7/21-6/22	7/21-6/22
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - WIOA DW	79.1%	79.3%	662 835	81.2%	224 276	76.6%	298 389	80.6%	29 36			83.2%	134 161									7/21-6/22	7/21-6/22
	Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit - WIOA Youth	70.4%	69.3%	652 941	62.8%	103 164	70.6%	245 347	77.3%	34 44			78.3%	101 129	73.5%	36 49	70.7%	29 41	67.7%	128 189			7/21-6/22	7/21-6/22
	Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post Exit - WIOA All	83.4%	85.5%	43,986 51,469	85.6%	19,936 23,278	85.2%	20,701 24,307	85.8%	3,211 3,744			89.2%	445 499									1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - WIOA Adult	70.6%	74.8%	2,574 3,442	73.9%	973 1,317	74.3%	1,196 1,609	77.5%	172 222			79.3%	306 386									1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - WIOA DW	75.7%	79.6%	961 1,207	81.0%	316 390	77.6%	455 586	76.4%	42 55			82.6%	171 207									1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit - WIOA Youth	67.2%	70.0%	681 973	70.2%	134 191	69.2%	261 377	73.5%	36 49			87.6%	99 113	INA	INA INA	INA	INA INA	69.1%	168 243			1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	Average Children Served Per Day	29,908	30,098						30,098														10/22-9/23	10/22-4/23
	Increase Income	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - WIOA Adult	\$6,500.00	\$6,594.39																			7/21-6/22	7/21-6/22
Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - WIOA DW		\$9,400.00	\$10,733.52																			7/21-6/22	7/21-6/22	
Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - WIOA Youth		\$3,600.00	\$4,589.47																			7/21-6/22	7/21-6/22	
Raise Education Levels	Credential Rate - WIOA All	70.9%	68.6%	1,681 2,452	73.0%	704 965	73.0%	843 1,155	78.2%	186 238			16.3%	51 313									1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	Credential Rate - WIOA Adult	65.6%	64.8%	915 1,411	70.1%	370 528	70.7%	440 622	85.0%	108 127			13.1%	24 183									1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	Credential Rate - WIOA DW	79.6%	78.1%	615 787	85.6%	244 285	86.7%	307 354	92.3%	48 52			26.1%	29 111									1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	CredentialRate - WIOA Youth	60.6%	78.1%	615 787	62.7%	32 51	52.4%	87 166	40.0%	8 20			15.5%	9 58	INA	INA INA	INA	INA INA	88.3%	98 111			1/21-12/21	1/21-12/21
	Measurable Skills Gains - WIOA Adult	70.7%	65.4%	805 1,230	72.5%	395 545	67.7%	317 468	57.7%	60 104			63.6%	131 206									7/22-6/23	7/22-4/23
	Measurable Skills Gains - WIOA DW	78.9%	68.5%	150 219	78.4%	98 125	70.4%	69 98	66.7%	10 15			61.3%	19 31									7/22-6/23	7/22-4/23
	Measurable Skills Gains - WIOA Youth	50.9%	52.2%	559 1,071	26.3%	50 190	53.2%	167 314	34.1%	15 44			58.9%	66 112	91.2%	135 148	84.6%	99 117	45.5%	100 220			7/22-6/23	7/22-4/23
	Adult Ed Total Students	19,500	17,932																				7/22-6/23	7/22-6/23
	Adult Ed Total 12+ Hour Students	18,330	15,619																				7/22-6/23	7/22-6/23
	IET	1,400	1,909																				7/22-6/23	7/22-6/23
Intensives	800	1,358																				7/22-6/23	7/22-6/23	

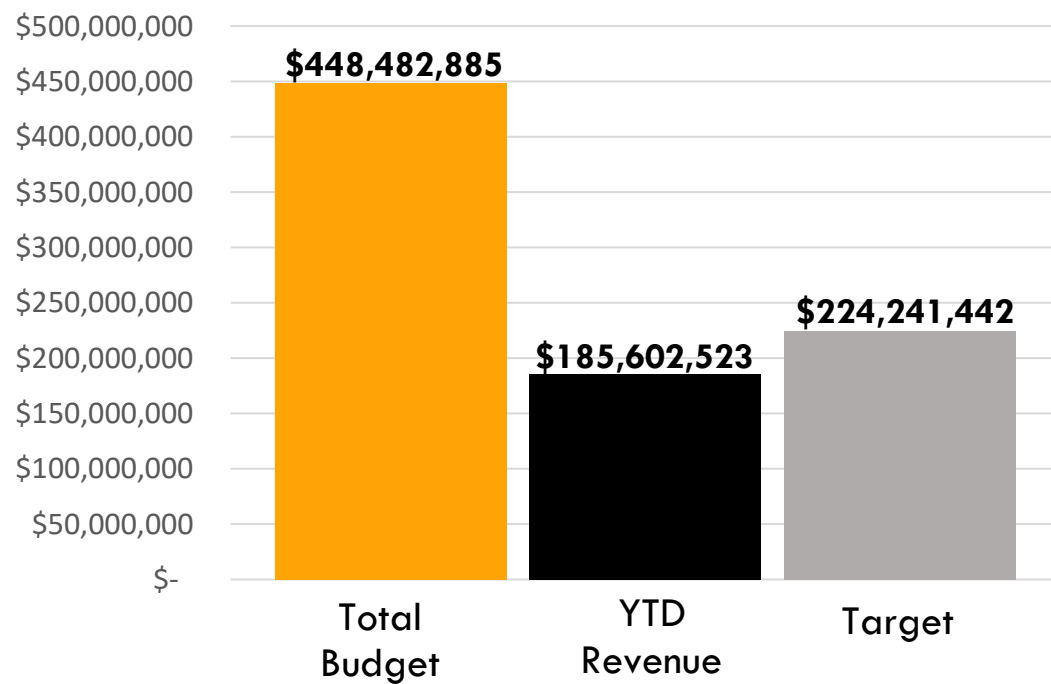
Gulf Coast Workforce Financial Status Report

For the 6 months ending June 30, 2023

■ Budget ■ Expenses ■ Target

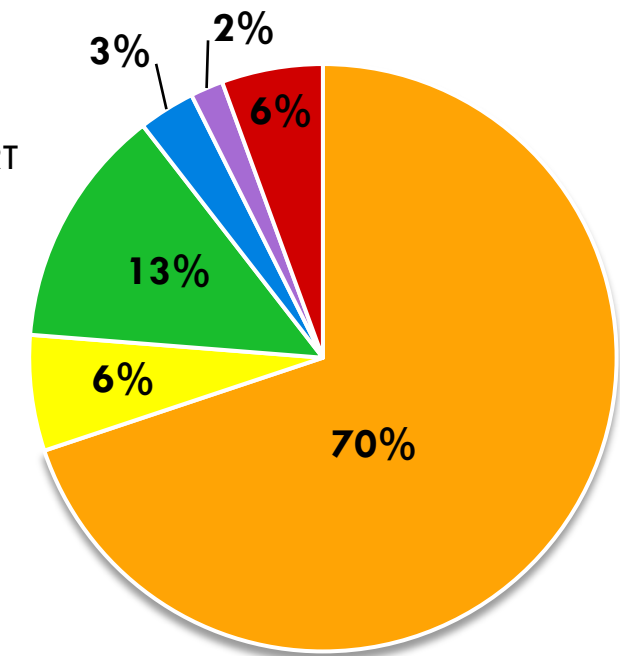


Workforce Revenue



System Expenses

- FINANCIAL AID - EARLY EDUCATION \$124,674,805
- FINANCIAL AID - TRAINING & SUPPORT \$11,365,789
- CAREER OFFICE NETWORK \$23,649,842
- EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT \$5,557,331
- QUALITY IMPROVEMENT \$3,223,305
- ADULT EDUCATION \$9,949,558



Procurement Committee

Employer Engagement

Background

Last year, Board staff issued a procurement for an Employer Service Provider. The Board chose to contract with the two incumbent providers, Employment & Training Centers, Inc, and Adaptive Construction Solutions, Inc. for FY23. The Board further decided to issue a procurement for single service providers to employers for FY24.

In the year since the last procurement, staff have revisited the model for delivery of services for employers. We have created a new Employer and Community Engagement Division. Within this division at the Board staff level, we have created an Employer Engagement and Partnership team that will include industry specialists and subject matter experts who will spearhead our work with key industry sectors and economic development organizations. Our procured service provider for employer engagement will collaborate closely with our in-house team to ensure that employers receive quality services to attract and grow their workforces.

On June 9, 2023, Board staff released an RFP for employer engagement services to advance the following core principles:

- Supporting employers to build a skilled and dependable workforce by using customized talent development service strategies including:
 - Education and technical skills training, essential workplace skills, adult education and literacy, and sector partnership development; and
 - Work-based learning, including paid work experience, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeship programs.
- Helping employers fill jobs by recruiting, screening, and referring qualified job seekers who meet job requirements.
- Helping job seekers find employment for which they are qualified to help establish long-term employment stability and earning potential.
- Facilitating job matching between employers and job seekers.
- Participating in clearing labor between states, including the use of a standardized classification system.
- Ensuring that unemployment claimants meet the work-test requirement by registering with the state Employment Service system.

- Providing high quality information on labor market conditions to employers and community partners.
- Addressing labor issues regarding state and federal laws; and
- Assisting with the development of partnership building with educational institutions, economic development councils, chambers of commerce, government entities, employers, public and private partners, and community-based organizations.

The maximum funding budgeted for the RFP was \$9,000,000.

Board staff received five (5) proposals from the following entities:

- SERCO of Texas, Inc.
- Employment and Training Centers
- DB Grant Associates, Inc.
- Intelligent Partnerships, Inc.
- 2 BD Enterprises, LLC

The top three candidates from the scoring of the project design and capacity, financial stability, and past performance and references participated in interviews, which were also scored. Board staff and Procurement Committee members developed questions, and Procurement Committee members were invited to observe the interviews.

Current Situation

The final ranking of the proposers was as follows, and at its August 1, 2023 the Procurement Committee voted to recommend to the full Board that it authorize staff to negotiate a contract with the highest scorer, SERCO of Texas, Inc.

Vendor	Final	Point Spread
SERCO of Texas, Inc.	141.23	0
Employment & Training Centers, Inc.	135.62	5.61
DB Grant Associates Inc.	121.73	13.89
Intelligent Partnerships, Inc.	46.74	
2 BD Enterprises LLC	37.13	

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate with SERCO of Texas, Inc. for a contract for employer engagement services renewable for up to three additional years in an amount not to exceed \$9,000,000.

Procurement Committee

Financial Aid Support Center

Background

In 2022, Equus was contracted to manage the Financial Aid Support Center (FASC or Support Center). This centralized support center was to process customers' applications for all types of financial aid, review and resolve financial aid inquiries, assist customers in arranging childcare, review and resolve financial aid appeals, and review and resolve potential exceptions to on-going eligibility. Equus works with a broad population including customers, career offices, the Financial Aid Payment Office, and Board staff.

FASC was created to be a comprehensive service provider for training and child care scholarships, streamlining services into a single point of access. Over the past five years, there has been a 65% increase in child care financial aid funding to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, amounting to over \$81 million to FASC, but despite the dramatic increase, FASC has experienced a capacity growth of less than 10%. In 2019, approximately \$25,000 in Child Care Development Funds (CCDF) went unexpended, but by 2022, this amount surged to \$18.5 million.

Due to staffing limitations and antiquated technology, the Support Center struggled to address the overwhelming workload of processing over 7,000 applications and 17,000 calls a month, and it was unable to address more than 50% of the incoming calls. This issue has been found in multiple quality assurance audits.

In response, in 2023, Board staff launched a comprehensive review and analysis, re-imagining and restructuring the Support Center to enhance operations and customer service. Presently, the Support Center functions as a unified entity encompassing two distinct areas: 1) eligibility processing and 2) call center services. Recognizing the unique skill sets required for each function, Board staff restructured the Support Center into these two separate divisions to enhance performance and outcomes. Additionally, new processes and supports were initiated to increase child care enrollments and improve the Support Center's call response capabilities.

During this review and in consultation with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the Support Center's inability to handle the higher volume of incoming calls was identified as a significant deficiency. To address this issue, Equus successfully recruited a director with over 10 years of call center experience. Collaborating closely with the new director and the management team, Board

staff is focused on staffing and technology improvements. Scheduling changes have been made to accommodate peak call times, and the Board approved an amendment to add funding to hire more staff members and purchase Ring Central, a new phone system. In June 2023, the Support Center launched Ring Central as the new phone system, and our management team is ensuring that the new system supplies comprehensive reporting capabilities and the necessary functionality to seamlessly support our program's operations.

By restructuring the Support Center, recruiting qualified staff, and leveraging advanced technology in this first year of the contract, we are committed to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Support Center's operations. These strategic measures were developed to enhance child enrollments, provide prompt call responses, and deliver a higher level of customer service to our valued residents.

In the 2022-2023 year, a process was developed to restructure and redesign the Support Center to address the many challenges compromising its effectiveness and efficiency, and to prepare for 2023-2024, the Board staff is modifying the Support Center's scope of work. First, the Board will incorporate the increased staffing and technological enhancements, and it also recommends that financial aid for training and scholarships move to the Career Offices.

Earlier this year, Board staff were made aware of numerous complaints made by customers to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) regarding delayed and/or inaccurate updates on outstanding applications. As a result, Board staff placed Equus, who operates the Financial Aid Support Center, on a Corrective Action Plan to address the issues raised by Texas Workforce Commission's Technical Assistance Team. In response, Equus replaced the leadership team at the FASC and tasked them with managing the increased funding approved by the Board to hire additional staff to ensure that customer applications are processed more efficiently, and customers are better able to receive prompt updates regarding their application over the phone, by text message, or through chat. To assist these efforts, the FASC is hiring additional staff for the quality assurance and training teams. Board staff have noted improvement in general management, communication, and planning by the new leadership team at the FASC. Additionally, Board staff advised Equus that the additional funding and staff will include additional oversight to ensure that funds are used to improve operations and better serve our customers.

Equus has been attentive and responsive to the necessary changes and improvements, and we recommend renewing the contract for APM Equus Holdings Corporation to continue operating the FASC for Fiscal Year 2 beginning on October 1, 2023. The Fiscal Year 2, 2023-2024 contract will be the second of

four (4) possible contracts, which was authorized by the Board last year, and the first of three (3) possible renewals. We propose a funding range with minimum and maximum amounts as described in the action item below.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with APM Equus to continue operating the Financial Aid Support Center.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with APM Equus Holdings Corporation not to exceed \$10,000,000. This is the first proposed renewal, and we will have the option to renew this contract for two (2) additional years subject to satisfactory performance and approval from the Board.

Financial Aid Support Center	
Operations Cost Range	
\$ 9,000,000.00	\$ 10,000,000.00

Procurement Committee

Financial Aid Payment Office

Background

Workforce Solutions has a central Financial Aid Payment Office (FAPO or Payment Office) that is responsible for handling vendor billing and payments for customer financial aid. The Payment Office collaborates with vendors by initiating vendor agreements and making billing and payment arrangements. This includes payments to childcare vendors, training providers, and support service vendors and to employers for on-the-job training and custom training projects. We procured this service in 2022 and can renew for three more years. One service provider, BakerRipley, manages our Payment Office operations.

Staff are satisfied with BakerRipley's performance of the Financial Aid Payment Office, which processes approximately 10,000 payments per month with over 2,300 active vendors. A sizable portion of financial aid supports early childhood education, and BakerRipley has made payments to support over 44,500 children this program year. (For context, this exceeds the overall seating capacity of Minute Maid Park which is 40,963 persons.) BakerRipley is currently working towards operational improvements including transitioning our reloadable support service cards to a new vendor and rolling out a new financial aid management system.

In the upcoming contract year, BakerRipley will assist NextGen service providers with accessing our financial aid vendor network. In 2022-2023, Board staff determined that the NextGen program and service providers were not fully integrated into FAPO, used a different payroll vendor for work-based learning services, and manage their entire budget independently. The lack of integration into the Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast system created a siloing effect, creating challenges in serving youth and employers and complicating access to child care scholarships, adult education and literacy services, and other training opportunities to participants.

Staff propose integrating NextGen funding at the Financial Aid Payment Office and creating universal worksite agreements with employers and training providers to streamline coordination. This change will create greater uniformity, enhance coordination, and will better position us to serve our youth and employers.

Further, as part of Texas Workforce Commission's implementation of a new statewide Child Care Case Management system, Texas Child Care Connection

(TX3C), BakerRipley is additionally tasked with adjusting the billing processes to align with the new system.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with BakerRipley to continue operating the Financial Aid Payment Office.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with BakerRipley not to exceed \$364,500,000. This is the first proposed renewal, and we will have the option to renew this contract for two (2) additional years subject to satisfactory performance and approval from the Board.

Financial Aid Payment Office			
Financial Aid	Operations Cost Range		Total
\$360,000,000	\$4,200,000	\$4,500,000	\$364,500,000

Procurement Committee

Career Office Renewals

Background

Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast has 28 career offices and 10 informational centers strategically located throughout the 13-county region. Our intention is for residents to go to a career office to talk to a workforce expert to find a job, keep a job, or find a better job. Every office has professional staff who offer practical advice on jobs, careers, and work, and for qualified candidates, referrals to open jobs listed with Workforce Solutions. Modeled after the public library system, career offices have resource areas with staff, personal computers, copiers, telephones, and fax machines. Customers can use resource materials on their own or with staff assistance. Career offices empower residents with information about jobs, hiring events, supportive services, and financial aid.

In 2021, we procured service providers for the Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast system, and the Board authorized up to four years of annual contracts with those responsible for operating our Career Offices including BakerRipley, Interfaith of the Woodlands, and APM Equus Holdings Corporation.

Our Career Office service providers are presently performing as follows:

- **BakerRipley** is on track to meet most of their targets for the current year. BakerRipley's staff is also participating in the Board-led Market Share Taskforce created to improve the efforts to increase production for the State's Employer Workforce Assistance metric, also known as Market Share.
- **Interfaith of the Woodlands** is on track to meet most of their performance targets for the current year.
- **APM Equus Holdings Corporation** is on track to meet most of their performance targets for the current year but lags on current State required Youth measures and has fallen behind in placing youth in work-based learning. In July 2023, Equus Career Office was placed on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address deficiencies within the WIOA performance measures for WIOA Youth and continued programmatic and operational concerns.

2023-2024 Modifications

In 2023, Board staff conducted a thorough review and analysis to determine whether financial aid determinations for training and scholarships should be moved from the Financial Aid Support Center to the Career Offices, and our analysis leads to this recommendation for the upcoming contractual year. We also recommend adding capacity to capable Career Offices to achieve the Texas Workforce Commission's Employer Workforce Assistance measure as we transition to a singular employer engagement service provider.

Board staff will further analyze the impact and return on investment of our 28 Career Offices and 10 part-time locations across the region as we analyze service delivery methods, which can be in-person or virtual, and community utilization. The traditional career office model centered on finding strategic locations throughout the region primarily focused on attracting walk-in traffic, but as Parker Harvey explained in our May 2023 Strategic Planning meeting, "[W]e have a unique opportunity to reimagine not only the physical configurations of the offices as well as the functional roles of the offices as locations from which to deliver services in-person but increasingly virtually as time passes." Board staff will continue to review and analyze the impact of our Career Offices' in-person delivery of services to determine whether we can find more efficient, effective, and economical ways to deliver services to customers across our region.

In anticipation of the new Strategic Plan and recognizing that the Board places importance on community collaboration, staff will develop a pilot to work with community colleges and/or community-based organizations as strategic areas to offer career services to our area residents. Staff proposes a limited pilot with our Career Offices and Lone Star College, Houston Community College, and Alvin Community College to determine whether this new method of delivering career services, sharing resources, collaborating, and coordinating will enhance our outreach and outcomes with area residents who may benefit from our services this upcoming year.

Further, Board staff plans to work with our Career Office service providers to enhance customer service and meet performance measures with the intent of doing a better job of ensuring that we are meeting the educational and training needs of our area residents while creating a strong talent pipeline to meet the workforce needs of our employers.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate contract renewals with each of our current career office service providers.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate contracts for the following Career Office service providers as described in the chart below with a range for each contract with the minimum and maximum stated amount. The fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023, will be the third year of four, authorized by the Board in 2021, and this contract will be the second of three possible renewals.

Career Offices	2023	2024 Proposed Range	
BakerRipley	\$25,000,000	\$25,000,000	\$27,000,000
Interfaith of the Woodlands	\$18,633,676	\$18,600,000	\$19,400,000
APM Equus Holdings Corporation	\$6,289,595	\$6,300,000	\$7,000,000
Total	\$49,923,271	\$49,900,000	\$53,400,000

Procurement Committee

Early Childhood Quality

Background

In March 2023, the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, Children's Learning Institute (CLI) became the Early Education Quality service provider for the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. CLI provides specific technical assistance, consulting, professional training, and best practice support for the largest group of our network vendors – early education and child care providers. CLI focuses on recruiting, assessing, reviewing, and supporting vendors in the Texas Rising Star quality rating system, laying the foundation for a better-educated workforce for the Gulf Coast area.

The Children's Learning Institute is a new service provider for the Board, and since the contract negotiation process was prolonged and did not end until March 2023, there was a delay in service delivery and expenditures. However, CLI leadership and Board staff have been working hard to catch up, meeting weekly to discuss and implement the specified and planned early childhood education priorities for the Gulf Coast region.

This year, CLI leadership and Board staff are strategizing and developing a work plan for PY24 to ensure quicker delivery of quality child care services to vendors, families, and the community. Most of the work for the remainder of this year and planned work in PY24 is to onboard and certify 1585+ current Workforce Solutions child care vendors into the Texas Rising Star quality rating system by September 2024 as mandated by the Texas Workforce Commission. This is because as of October 2022, any child care provider accepting our scholarship must be a part of the Texas Rising Star quality rating system.

Additionally, CLI will continue to recruit new child care providers for Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast, facilitate new Pre-K partnerships between Texas Rising Star providers and School districts/charter schools, and provide child care referrals, consumer education, and support to vendors serving families and children with disabilities.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, Children's Learning Institute (CLI) to continue early education quality services.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a second-year contract with the University of Texas Health Science Center – Houston Children’s Learning Institute for up to \$11,000,000.

Procurement Committee

Next Generation Renewals

Background

In 2021 we procured service providers for the Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast system, including providers for the Next Generation Youth initiative (NextGen). The primary responsibility of these selected providers is to engage with youth between the ages of 16 and 24, who are presently classified as opportunity youth due to their disengagement from both employment and educational pursuits.

The establishment of NextGen was motivated by the imperative to address critical gaps in effectively reaching out to out-of-school, opportunity, and at-risk youth, aiming to provide them with meaningful opportunities for personal and professional growth. To this end, NextGen service providers actively immerse themselves in the community, adopting a purposeful approach to connect with this target population at their convenience and preferred locations. This personalized outreach allows for the seamless delivery of services and opportunities. Another unique feature of NextGen is the flexibility in selecting high demand, short-term training providers that allow young adults to quickly upskill and enter sustainable career pathways.

This initiative is funded with WIOA Youth funds from the Texas Workforce Commission and underlines the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's shared commitment to uplift disconnected youth in our community, empowering them with the necessary tools and resources to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the workforce and broader society.

The NextGen service providers are making significant progress towards achieving the PY23 enrollment target, and the Board staff is actively collaborating with them to ensure the performance targets are met. This year, the program has successfully enrolled over 1,200 customers, and it is anticipated to serve 1,320 youth by the end of the current program year.

In the upcoming contract year, the Board staff will continue their concerted efforts to enhance NextGen's impact by facilitating youth connections to a more diverse range of work-based and immersive learning opportunities. Additionally, a key focus will be on successfully integrating the mandated 14 WIOA Title I Youth program service elements into the NextGen program. (These elements include intake, eligibility, objective assessment, and the development of individual service strategies for youth ages 14 to 24. It is important to note that youth enrollment is

considered to occur when the participant receives one of the required elements for the first time.)

Throughout this process, the Board staff has been actively engaged with NextGen providers, providing technical assistance and support to ensure the program's success. An example of this collaboration includes a summit that provided comprehensive training on branding and communication, production and performance, as well as effective collaboration with other system providers and programs, such as Adult Education and Literacy and Early Childhood Education, to enhance overall customer service.

For the past two years, Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast has maintained a surplus of WIOA Youth funds, which has generously funded NextGen service providers. Although the surplus has been depleted this year, we are committed to continuing our support by allocating resources from the current year's funds. Considering this situation, staff proposes that NextGen service providers access financial aid funds through the Financial Aid Payment Office (FAPO) moving forward, instead of directly paying for goods and services provided to customers. This change will offer better oversight and accountability for tracking the use of financial aid, further integrating NextGen into our Workforce Solutions' system. As part of this transition, NextGen service providers will experience a 20% reduction in contracts since they will no longer be directly responsible for covering these goods and services costs.

By implementing these measures and continuing our collaboration with NextGen service providers, staff are confident in the ability to enhance the program's effectiveness and positively impact the lives of the youth we serve.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate contracts with our current NextGen providers to continue services for youth.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate contracts for service providers not to exceed the amounts specified in the table below. The fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023, will be the third year of four years authorized by the Board in 2021.

Next Generation Youth (Next Gen)	2023	2024 Proposed
Total	\$6,300,000	\$5,040,000
SER-Jobs	\$2,300,000	\$1,840,000
Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM)	\$2,500,000	\$2,000,000
Career Team	\$1,500,000	\$1,200,000

Procurement Committee

Public Information and Outreach

Background

The Board currently contracts with two public engagement consultants delivering strategic expertise and materials supporting our regional workforce system. The contract with Outreach Strategists supports the Board's efforts to strengthen stakeholder understanding of Workforce Solutions and enhance service to the region through strategic planning. The contracts were procured in 2020 for up to four (4) years beginning with FY 21. This upcoming contractual year will be the fourth and final year of our contracts with Outreach Strategists and Savage Brands.

Outreach Strategists has focused its capacity on establishing a preliminary process for the development of an updated four-year strategic plan that is inclusive of Board members, Board staff, service provider staff, and external stakeholders including employers and individuals living in the Gulf Coast region. Surveys and a national landscape analysis are already underway. Additionally, Outreach Strategists has repurposed and catalogued content developed for "Your Career Your Choice" to make it suitable for use in social media, on our career office monitors and in conjunction with career exploration, job search and job readiness seminars.

In their FY24 contract, which will be the fourth and final contract year from the 2020 procurement, Outreach Strategists will continue developing, socializing, and refining the 2024-2028 strategic plan. This process will include stakeholder engagement, data analysis and alignment, and a review cycle with Board members and senior Board staff personnel. Remaining contract dollars will support ongoing efforts to expand distribution of "Your Career Your Choice" content by securing additional programming outlets, including municipal and education channels.

Savage Brands provides a wide range of strategic expertise aimed at supporting the efforts of the new employer and community engagement division and improving market share, including evaluating perceptions of Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast in the marketplace and implementing solutions to address deficiencies. The dynamics between Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast and its customers, particularly employers, shifted during this contractual period, and Savage is helping us adjust to new ways of doing business and to leverage existing resources to better serve the region.

In their FY24 contract, which will be the fourth and final contract year under the 2020 procurement, we propose to have Savage leverage its business-to-business marketing expertise to build on work to strengthen market share and overall development of the employer and community engagement strategy. This will include efforts to support sector-based talent pipeline initiatives. The funds in this contract will also be used to continue website improvements and support for the 2024-2028 strategic plan.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate contracts with Outreach Strategists and Savage Brands to continue strategic planning, public information, and outreach activities for the final year authorized by the 2020 procurement.

Actions

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with Outreach Strategists not to exceed \$500,000 and a contract with Savage not to exceed \$400,000.

Procurement Committee

VR Payrolling/Employer of Record

Background

In 2019 ProSource Solutions III, Inc. (ProSource) began serving as the payrolling service provider supporting Vocational Rehabilitation Services' young customers in year-round part-time jobs. Vocational rehabilitation staff find opportunities for customers, and ProSource serves as the employer of record for the duration of the customer's work experience. Our current contract with ProSource is set to expire September 30, 2023, and in February 2023, a Request for Proposal was released to reprocure this service.

Staff received seven responses to our solicitation, and organizations were evaluated based on their qualifications and experience, demonstrated model to deliver services, proposed costs, and financial declarations. Evaluator scores were compiled resulting in ProSource having the highest scoring proposal.

<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Score</u>
ProSource Solutions III, Inc.	95.25
G&A Partners	87.25
Acumen Fiscal Agent	79.25
MMC Group, LP	79.00
Crews Ferrell and Associates Inc	66.75
BuzzClan LLC	66.25
Tesseon	44.25

ProSource is currently meeting expectations as the employer of record for the Vocational Rehabilitation Services program. From October 2022 through June of 2023 ProSource received approximately 354 referrals from VR. Individuals receive timely payments, and we continue to see increases in the number of customers served each year.

ProSource proposes charging a percentage mark-up rate associated with payroll wages charge to this contract. The proposed range is 21% to 16%. This rate is

inclusive of payroll taxes. Staff recommends continuing our partnership with ProSource to deliver this service.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with ProSource Solutions to provide payrolling/employer of record services.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with ProSource Solutions III, Inc. for payrolling/employer of record service for Vocational Rehabilitation Services through Workforce Solutions in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000 to serve approximately 400 individuals.

Procurement Committee

Contractual Performance Measures

Background

Each year, our contracts include performance targets for our service providers. These targets include both Board measures contained in its strategic plan and the contractual production measures included in the Board's contract with the Texas Workforce Commission.

In the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, the Board including the following measures, baselines, and targets:

For the Regional Workforce System:

- Education Credentials
 - 84 percent of the region's population 25 years and older will hold an education credential
 - 39 percent of the region's population 25 years and older will hold a post-secondary degree
 - 24 percent of those pursuing an education credential will earn one
- Job Creation
 - 3.23 million individuals will be employed in the region, reflecting the addition of 254,202 jobs created since 2018

For Workforce Solutions:

- Market Share
 - 31,500 region's employers will use Workforce Solutions
- Customer Loyalty
 - 65 percent of employers using Workforce Solutions will be repeat customers
- Education Credentials
 - 76 percent of individual customers pursuing an education credential will earn one
- Job Creation
 - 3,500 new jobs will be created as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnering with other business organizations
 - 78 percent of individual customers will be employed after leaving Workforce Solutions

- Earnings
 - 37 percent of individual customers leaving Workforce Solutions will have earnings gains of at least 20 percent

In addition to these Board measures, baselines, and targets, the Texas Workforce Commission requires the Gulf Coast Workforce Board to meet the state's performance measures which have increased over time to a total of 26 unique measures, including 22 workforce measures and 4 adult education measures. They include:

- Workforce Measures:
 1. Employed Q2 Post Exit – Adult
 2. Employed Q4 Post Exit – Adult
 3. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Adult
 4. Credential Rate – Adult
 5. Measurable Skills Gains – Adult
 6. Employed Q2 Post Exit – DW
 7. Employed Q4 Post Exit – DW
 8. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – DW
 9. Credential Rate – DW
 10. Measurable Skills Gains – DW
 11. Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – Youth
 12. Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit – Youth
 13. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Youth
 14. Credential Rate - Youth
 15. Measurable Skills Gains - Youth
 16. Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit–C&T
 17. Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post Exit C&T
 18. Credential Rate – C&T Participants
 19. Claimant Reemployment w/i 10 Weeks
 20. Emp. Receiving Workforce Assistance
 21. Choices Full Engag. Rate - All Family
 22. Avg. # Children Served Per Day
- Adult Education Measures:
 23. Total enrollments
 24. 12+ hour enrollments
 25. Integrated Education and Training (IET)
 26. Intensive Services

The Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) increased production measures necessitate a stronger focus from the Board staff on holding service providers accountable. This entails providing them with comprehensive training, technical guidance, and support to ensure compliance with the state's standards. Moreover, the Board must prioritize meeting its unique targets, some of which overlap, as demonstrated by the Board's market share of 31,500, while the state's employer workforce assistance measure stands at 32,270. During the June 2023 Strategic Planning Committee meeting, the Board staff extensively discussed these changes and challenges as they initiated the current strategic planning cycle.

At present, the Board staff is thoroughly reviewing and analyzing the existing strategic plan measures, many of which trace back to the Board's initial planning efforts in the strategic planning process. While certain current Board measures, like employment rates after service conclusion in the 1st quarter, effectively support meeting the related TWC measure, others demonstrate consistency but lack full alignment.

With this analysis underway, staff is proposing that we suspend the following measures from the FY 24 contracts:

- Market share – this measure is very similar to the Employer Workforce Assistance (EWA) state measure.
- Loyalty – loyalty is a subset of the Market Share but has no analogous TWC measure.
- New Jobs Created and New Jobs Created in Targeted Industries and Occupations– these measures are intended to measure our work with economic development organizations to create jobs but are difficult to track as they are self-reported. There are no similar TWC measures. In addition, much of the work needed to meet these measures will be transitioning to Board staff in the next year.
- Customers, Unemployed at Entrance, employed by the 1st Qtr. After Exit – This measure is closely related to the board measure, Employed in the 1st Quarter After Exit, which we are recommending keeping.
- Customers Employed in the Entrance Quarter is a measure not related to any TWC measure and has not provided additional insight as wage information may not be accurate if previous employment was included in the same quarter.

Current Situation

At its meeting on August 1, 2023, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend to the full Board that FY 24 contracts contain only the Board measures suggested by staff, with additional measures possibly being added after the Strategic Plan is completed.

Action

Authorize staff to include TWC performance measures and only the Board measures included in the table below in FY 24 contracts beginning October 1, 2023.

Category	Current Measure	Recommendation to Include in Contracts
Workforce Board Measures	Market Share	
	Loyalty	
	New Jobs Created	
	New jobs Created with Employers in Targeted Industries	
	New jobs Created in Targeted High-skill Occupations	
	Employed in the 1st Quarter After Exit	X
	Employed in 2nd and 3rd Quarters After Exit	X
	Exiters with Earnings Gains	X
	Exiters with Earnings Gains of at least 20%	X
	Achieve Education Credential	X
	Achieve Post-Secondary Certificate or Degree	X
	Customers, Unemployed at Entrance, Employed by the 1st Quarter After Exit	
	Customers employed in the entrance quarter	

Ratify Board Actions April and June 2023

Background

Members are appointed by chief elected officials to serve on the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. Once selected, the nominees are sent to the Texas Workforce Commission, which must approve new Board members and ensure that all Board composition requirements continue to be met as members are appointed.

Prior to recent revisions of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board by-laws, members would serve two-year terms which were not staggered. While awaiting formal nomination and confirmation by the Texas Workforce Commission, expiring members continued to participate in Board meetings and committees.

In April 2023, we were informed by TWC that our Board was out of compliance with its membership.

Current Situation

All required documentation and process has since been completed, and at its July 18th meeting, the Texas Workforce Commission confirmed reappointments and new members totaling 20 in all. TWC has confirmed that we now have an official quorum to conduct business, however, all action items from the Board's April and June 2023 meetings must be ratified. Items which the Board approved at its April and June 2023 meetings are attached. The June Board meeting minutes are available at the front of the August Board packet, and the April Board meeting minutes are attached to this item.

Furthermore, approved amendments to the Board's by-laws state that Board members will serve until successors are duly appointed and qualified, thus reducing the likelihood that a similar situation will occur in the future.

Action

We request for the Board to ratify actions taken at the April and June 2023 meetings.

Date of Meeting	Action Item	Motion	Action Taken
4/4/2023	February 2023 Minutes	Approval of prior meeting's minutes	Approved
4/4/2023	G&A Payroll Contract	Increase contract by \$3,000,000, from 9,000,000 from to \$12,000,000	Approved
6/6/2023	April Minutes	Approval of prior meeting's minutes	Approved
6/6/2023	By-laws Revisions	Approval of proposed revisions to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board By-laws	Approved
6/6/2023	Adult Education and Literacy Consortium Contracts	Approve staff recommendations and authorize staff to negotiate contracts with adult education for the period July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, in a total amount not to exceed \$20,980,070.	Approved
6/6/2023	Child Care Expansion Grant Service Provider	Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with the University of Houston for the development of the Child Care Provider Bootcamp and related project activities not to exceed \$525,000.	Approved
6/6/2023	Equus Contract Amendment	Authorize staff to amend the Equus Support Center contract for the current funding year (June 1 - September 30, 2023) by adding up to \$922,981.00 to the present contract.	Approved
6/6/2023	High-Demand Job Training Grant and Texas Industry Partnership Grant Criteria	<p>Approve criteria for Board staff to evaluate funding requests for the High Demand Job Training and Texas Industry Partnership grants including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for employers in the Workforce Board's Target Industries, • Support for the Workforce Board's High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations • Number of individuals to be trained, • Credentials to be awarded, • Potential for braided funding to support career progression, • Maximum amount for High Demand Job Training of \$75,000 per application, • Maximum amount for Texas Industry Partnership of \$50,000 per application, and • Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis until annual award maximums are exhausted. 	Approved

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF
THE GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD
TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Peter Beard	Guy Robert Jackson	Paul Puente
Sara Bouse	Doug Karr	Monica Riley
Carl Bowles	Jeff LaBroski	Mou Sarkar
Helen Cavazos	Shareen Larmond	Valerie Segovia
Anthony Gay	Michael Love	Richard Shaw
Melissa Gonzalez	Jonathan Lowe	Gil Staley
Cheryl Guido	Rajen Mahagaokar	Katherine Taylor
Mark Guthrie	Edward Melton	Carolyn Watson
Bobbie Henderson	Margaret Oser	Michael Webster
Alan Heskamp	Adrian Ozuna	

H-GAC STAFF PRESENT

Ron Borski	Philip Garcia	Trudy Ray
Michelle Castrow	Rick Guerrero	Juliet Stipeche
AJ Dean	Parker Harvey	Chuck Wemple
Deborah Duke	Rebecca Neudecker	

Chair Mark Guthrie called the in-person meeting of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board to order at approximately 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, April 4, 2023. Deborah Duke called roll to determine a list of members present. Chair Guthrie determined a quorum was present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Guthrie presented the agenda and requested that it be amended to reflect approval of February 2023 meeting minutes. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the amended agenda. The motion carried, and the agenda was adopted as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jarale Jones, Genesys Works' senior manager of workforce initiatives, provided an overview of the commendable pre-apprenticeship programs targeting

young adults aged 18 to 24. She expressed sincere gratitude to the Board for its support and extended special recognition to Workforce Solutions' Talent Development team for its invaluable contributions in establishing and maintaining these programs. Ms. Jones emphasized the significance of our collaborative partnership in effectively serving the needs of youth and young adults.

Mr. Ken Morris, the Director of the Bay Area Houston Advanced Technology Consortium (BayTech), commented on BayTech's grant from the Texas Investment Council in 2021 which was designated for a project focused on training aerospace technicians and facilitating their seamless integration into aerospace companies within the Gulf Coast region. Mr. Morris underscored the pivotal role played by the Workforce Solutions' Talent Development team in the resounding success of this grant initiative, expressing sincere appreciation for their unwavering support and partnership. Mr. Morris also reaffirmed BayTech's commitment to future collaborations with the Talent Development team, recognizing its expertise and instrumental contribution to the consortium's ongoing endeavors.

MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 7, 2023 MEETING

Chair Guthrie asked for approval of the minutes as presented. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DECLARE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Chair Guthrie invited Board members to disclose any conflicts of interest related to today's action items on the agenda. No conflicts were reported then. Chair Guthrie reminded members that they could also declare any conflicts with items as they were taken up, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the decision-making process.

CONSIDER REPORTS

a. Chair's Report.

Chair Guthrie provided a comprehensive report on recent activities and conferences he attended pertinent to workforce development. In March 2023, he participated in the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Forum in Washington, DC. The forum centered on the theme of "Leadership" and 1,500 people from across the country, including Dr. Bobbie Henderson and several Board staff and contractors.

While at the NAWB forum, Chair Guthrie participated in a panel discussion focused on effective workforce board members. He also received very positive feedback from forum attendees about a panel presentation including Michelle Castrow on

storytelling strategies for workforce boards. Both presentations were well-attended.

Several noteworthy highlights emerged from the forum, including insights shared during a panel session on employer services. The panelists emphasized the importance of business consultants possessing a deep understanding of an employer's operations in order to propose viable solutions to that employer's needs. They emphasized the need for the business consultants to be proactive in providing solutions, including attending employer meetings with well-defined plans and solutions. The panel also stressed the significance of directing attention to small and medium-sized employers who may lack extensive human resources departments or comprehensive training programs.

In another panel session centered on alternative energy, Chair Guthrie learned that the Department of Energy anticipates the creation of approximately nine million jobs within the next decade in the areas of clean manufacturing, clean transportation, and utilities. These job opportunities, arising from recent federal Jobs Act legislation, federal infrastructure funding, and other federal initiatives, span various sectors such as IT, construction, and engineering. Many of these positions do not require a four-year degree, presenting a significant opportunity for our residents and workforce system. Chair Guthrie emphasized the importance of considering the regional workforce pipeline in anticipation of these forthcoming alternative energy jobs. The panel also lauded an energy industry fundamentals curriculum developed by the Center for Energy Industry Workforce Development, prompting Chair Guthrie to request a review of the curriculum by the Board staff.

During a session on cultivating a diverse workforce, led by former U. S. Assistant Secretary of Labor Jane Oates, the discussion emphasized that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), should extend to older workers who have yet to reenter the workforce after the impact of COVID-19. The panel also highlighted projected nationwide unfilled manufacturing job vacancies of 2.1 million by 2030. Additionally, the session addressed the potential role of adult education services in providing education and training opportunities for refugees and identified areas where the present services provisions may fall short.

In a federal policy session, an organization called Lightcast projected labor shortages persisting through the 2100s. Discussions also touched upon the potential consideration by the House of legislation reauthorizing of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in late summer or early fall. Chair Guthrie acknowledged that these timelines are delayed, cautioning that the legislation might face challenges due to significant differences in opinion between Republicans and Democrats regarding what a reauthorization of WIOA should look like. Notwithstanding, proposals with bipartisan support, such as allowing Pell grants for short-term training, hold a higher likelihood of being included.

Dr. Bobbie Henderson expressed enthusiasm for the forum sessions she attended and urged the Board staff to present more opportunities of a similar nature.

Turning attention to Texas, Chair Guthrie reported attending the Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB) meetings in Austin in February, accompanied by Guy Jackson and Juliet Stipeche. During the meetings, Mr. Jackson skillfully led a panel discussion on legislative matters, effectively representing the Gulf Coast region.

Chair Guthrie briefly updated the Board on additional activities during the TAWB meetings, highlighting the commendable efforts of TAWB in diligently tracking the abundance of filed legislation during the session. He mentioned House Bill 3203, which proposed subjecting the state's 28 workforce boards to sunset review but without provisions for workforce board dissolution similar to state agencies. The bill was referred to the House Committee on International Relations and Economic Development, with no scheduled hearings as of yet. Chair Guthrie also mentioned a bill aimed at increasing child care representation on workforce boards, which also was referred to the House Committee on International Relations and Economic Development.

Notably, Chair Guthrie reported that in mid- March, he and Juliet Stipeche provided invited resource testimony about workforce boards before the House Committee on International Relations and Economic Development. During his testimony, Chair Guthrie underscored the already robust oversight in place for workforce boards. He commended Ms. Stipeche for her testimony about Board operations and child care. During the same Austin trip, Chair Guthrie and Ms. Stipeche attended a Texas Workforce Commission meeting and had a productive meeting afterwards with Alberto "Albert" Trevino, the newest Texas Workforce Commissioner representing Labor, and his team.

Regarding local matters, Chair Guthrie provided an update on ongoing revisions to the by-laws and discussions surrounding the current partnership agreement with H-GAC Board. He mentioned that Dr. Michael Webster, the Chair of the By-laws Committee, would present a comprehensive committee report later in the meeting.

Chair Guthrie concluded his report and no action was taken.

b. Executive Director's Report.

Executive Director Juliet Stipeche delivered several important updates during the meeting. Firstly, she informed the Board that an onsite Department of Labor audit was currently underway, with expectations for it to continue for another week. She

commended Board staff for the hard work in preparing and participating in the audit.

Ms. Stipeche further reported that an extension has been secured for residual funds allocated in response to Covid-19 and winter storm Yuri. This extension has enabled collaborative efforts with partners through the Talent Development department, effectively utilizing these funds to empower customers by providing them with valuable educational opportunities.

In addition, Ms. Stipeche shared the outcomes of a recent employer survey conducted by Savage Brands. The survey indicated a favorable perception of our organization, with more respondents expressing positive views compared to negative ones. The survey results also provided valuable insights that can be leveraged to further enhance our services and strategic direction.

Ms. Stipeche concluded her report and no action was taken.

c. Audit and Monitoring Committee

Committee Chair Guy Robert Jackson provided the following report.

The Audit and Monitoring Committee met on March 30, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. Members present included Guy Robert Jackson (Chair), Carl Bowles (Vice Chair), Sara Bouse, Helen Cavazos, Cheryl Guido, Doug Karr, and Mark Guthrie (Board Chair).

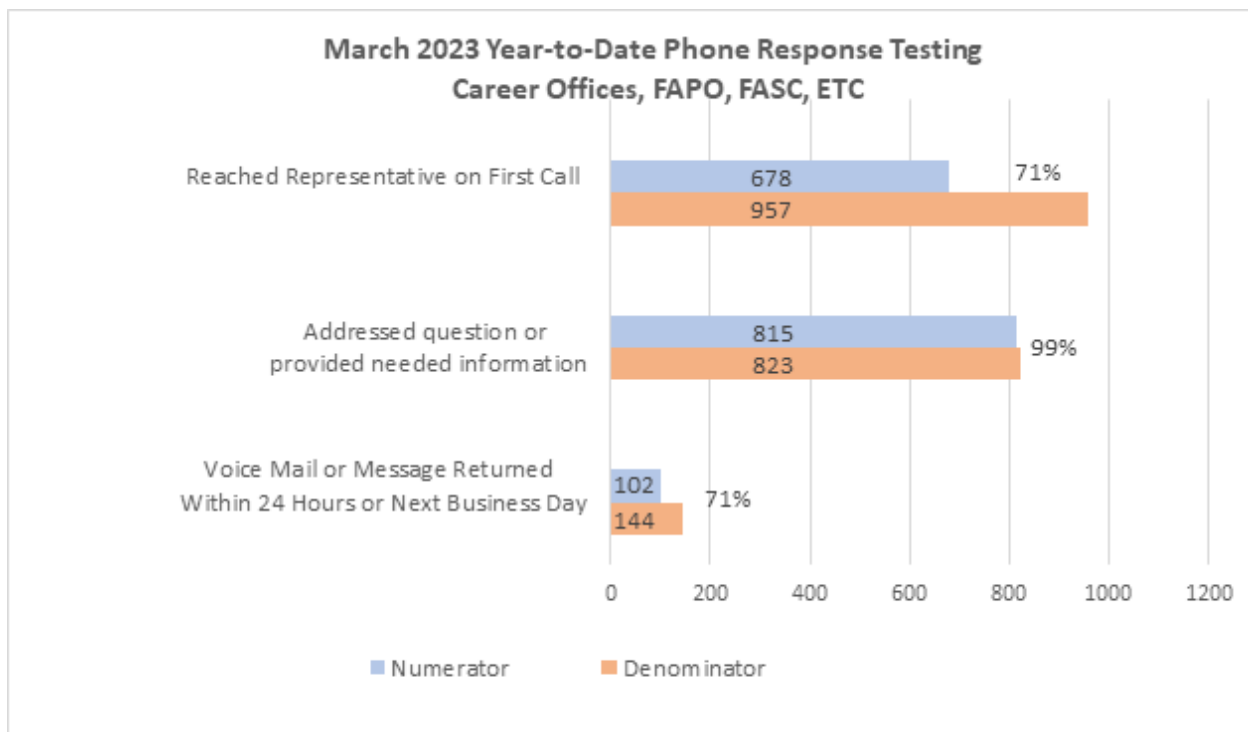
The Committee received information regarding a system-level review performance/production and expenditures and a contractor-level review of performance/production and expenditures.

Customer Experience and Satisfaction

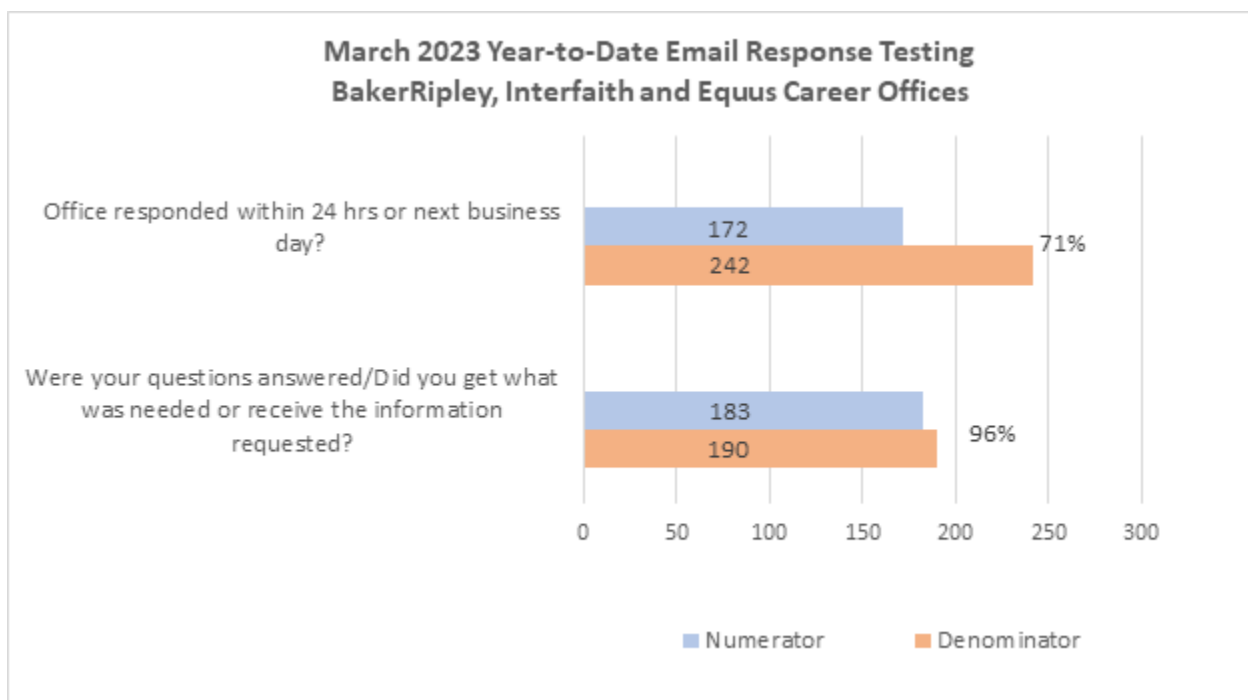
The Committee received information regarding the staff's testing of our system's customer experience for employers and individuals through phone and email contacts, as well as customer satisfaction.

Voice mail responses within 24 hours in March 2023 decreased slightly to 71% from 72% in February but increased from 70% in January. One provider had phone

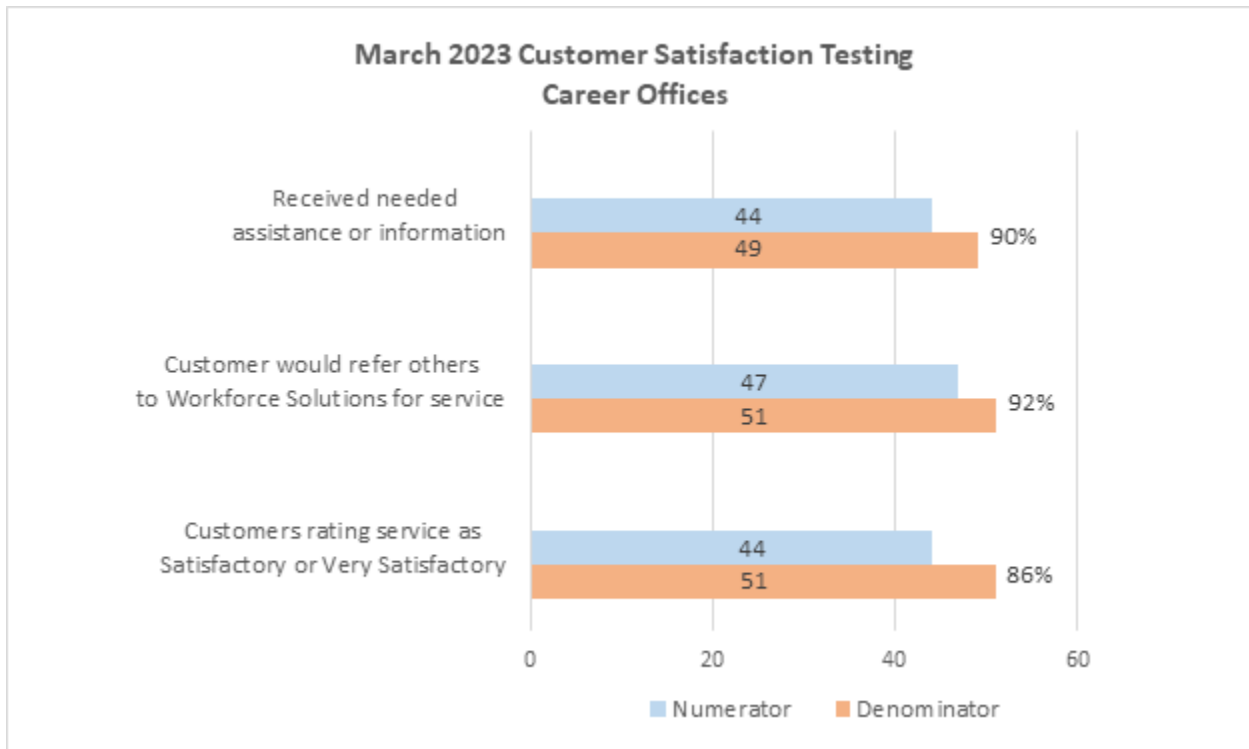
system issues that they were unaware of, which impacted their responsiveness. Results are shown below.



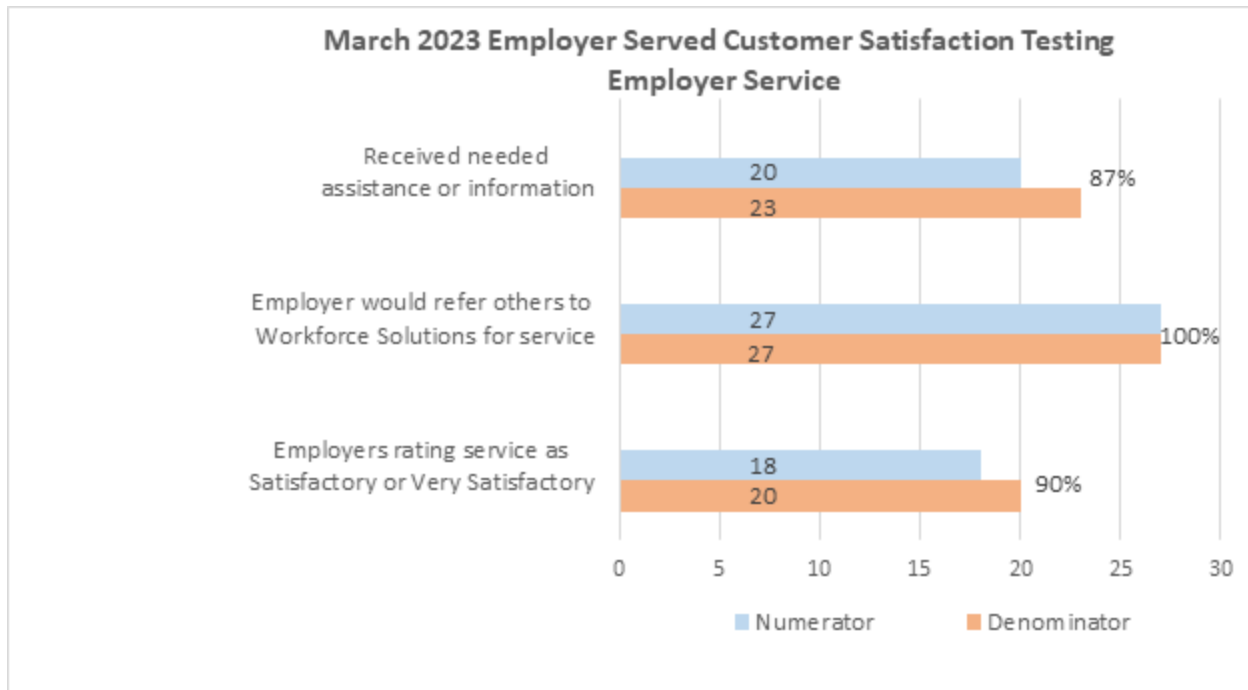
Staff tested the responsiveness of the career offices to emails sent to the career office email address found on Wrksolutions.com. The responses were good, but improvement is needed to ensure a customer receives an email response within 24 hours. Results are shown below.



Customer satisfaction is a relatively new area of monitoring. From a list of 133 customers receiving a service through a career office in March 2023, staff spoke with 51 customers. Results are shown below.



Staff called 57 employers who interacted with Employer Service in the last three months and were able to talk with 20 employers. Results are shown below.



Technical Program Compliance

Staff issued the final reports for the 2022 program year for Equus, Interfaith of the Woodlands, and BakerRipley's career office operations, and Interfaith of the Woodlands' operation of the Financial Aid Support Center. Each provider has addressed all findings noted during the reviews.

Staff also issued a final report for the 2022 program year for the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans, an adult education service provider. There were no significant findings noted during the review.

Draft reports for the 2022 program year are pending for Adult Education providers: Brazosport College, Chinese Community Center, Lone Star College, and San Jacinto College. Staff will have the final reports for all adult education service providers ready for the May 2023 committee meeting.

Financial Systems and Issues

BakerRipley's Adult Education and Financial Aid Payment Office financial monitoring identified no findings. Financial monitoring for Interfaith of the Woodlands' Career Offices and Financial Aid Support Center had no significant findings identified.

Financial monitoring for adult education providers identified the following disallowed costs, which have all been reimbursed to the Workforce Board:

- Adult Education Center -- \$3,707.00
- Alliance for Multicultural Community Services -- \$4,268.82
- Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans -- \$4,831.00

- Lone Star College -- \$1,688

Update on Adaptive Construction Solutions (ACS):

Staff have offered ACS ongoing technical support and placed them on a mandatory financial management plan. Staff recently issued a final correspondence to ACS regarding their financial monitoring for 2022, which outlined 1) significant questions and disallowed costs and 2) a question of a conflict of interest. That correspondence took the position that ACS had a total of \$967,007.05 in disallowed costs related to documentation and internal controls required by OMB Uniform Guidance standards. On March 14, 2023, ACS submitted a dispute letter to H-GAC's Executive Director, Chuck Wemple, regarding the disallowed costs finding which is currently under review and the amount of disallowed costs could change as a result of that review.

Mr. Wemple provided an update on the review of ACS' formal dispute of the disallowed cost determination. Mr. Wemple and H-GAC Chief Financial Officer, Nancy Haussler, met with ACS leadership on March 23, 2023 to discuss the process for addressing the dispute. That process will involve a careful review of all back up documentation used in calculating the disallowed costs with an independent review involving the H-GAC's internal audit team, H-GAC's finance team, and H-GAC's external auditor. Mr. Wemple noted that the review should be concluded by the end of April 2023, and in the meantime, we are moving forward on a negotiating a contract amendment with ACS, and ACS's requests for cost reimbursements are being reviewed carefully with increased scrutiny.

Chair Jackson continued his report, with the assistance of Board staff, as follows:

Corrective Action and Technical Assistance Plans

In April 2022, Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) and Houston Community College (HCC) were placed on corrective action plans to address data integrity and accuracy. HCC continues to work with Region 6 to improve.

On March 13, 2023, HCDE was notified via correspondence of continued programmatic and operational concerns after ten months of being on a corrective action plan. Additionally, it was made aware of novel issues concerning staff professional development data entry and programmatic processes related to Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS). Staff offered recommendations for immediate process changes to be implemented by March 31, 2023. Staff met with the HCDE Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Education and Enrichment to discuss the ongoing issues in person. The HCDE Superintendent verbally committed to provide the deliverables, enhance our working relationship, and focus on improvement.

In October 2022, Equus began their contract to oversee the Financial Aid Support Center. From October to December 31, 2022, the previous contractor, Interfaith of the Woodlands, provided Equus with technical assistance and support to assist with the transition. After a series of site visits, Board staff identified areas of concern and improvements needed by the Support Center management. On February 2, 2023, a meeting was held with Lisa Boyd, Regional Vice President of Equus, to address concerns regarding data reporting, data management, system failures, staffing issues, and the unwelcoming culture and climate. Board staff and H-GAC's Executive Director Chuck Wemple set directives and expectations for the Support Center. Ms. Boyd was receptive and responsive regarding the support center's administrative staff's performance issues.

In the following weeks, additional staffing, technology, and technical support were provided to the Support Center by Board staff. Unfortunately, the performance of the administrative staff and the support center culture has not improved. During a March 21, 2023, meeting, Board staff advised Ms. Boyd of the ongoing issues and a failure to improve. In the follow-up meeting set with Ms. Boyd, Board staff will discuss continuing issues with the Support Center and share the next steps.

We received notice from the Texas Workforce Commission of successfully completing the Choices technical assistance plan issued for workforce boards with Choices monthly participation below 50%. In October 2022, our region met the year-to-date participation requirement, and we continue to exceed the 50% target.

Dr. Henderson expressed frustration with the Support Center contractor's performance and called for improvement.

Mr. Karr asked if staff examined the Savage report on employers and staff's internal survey to see how we can advance our employer engagement efforts. Ms. Stipeche indicated that staff will be doing so.

In response to a question, Chair Jackson clarified that the disallowed costs in dispute with ACS related to the first year of their contract from 2021-2022.

Chair Jackson concluded his report and no action was taken.

d. By-laws Committee Report

Committee Chair Michael Webster provided the following By-laws Committee report. The By-laws Committee convened on March 1, 2023, to deliberate additional amendments to the by-laws, as well as the interrelation between the by-laws,

consortium, and partnership agreements established between the H-GAC Board and the Workforce Board.

During the meeting, H-GAC provided its attorneys to pertinent information and address inquiries related to the development and amendment of such documents.

Following extensive discussions, the Committee identified certain matters that require attention, such as the requirement that the H-GAC Board approve Board contracts, which extend beyond the scope of the By-laws Committee and are addressed in the existing partnership agreement between the Workforce Board and H-GAC. Charles Wemple, Executive Director of H-GAC, recommended initiating a constructive dialogue involving the H-GAC Board officers, members of the By-laws Committee, other relevant Board Committee chairs, and the Workforce Board officers.

The first of these supplementary meetings took place on March 21, 2023. During the meeting, the parties discussed developing a proposed memorandum of understanding that could serve as an addendum to the current agreement. This potential memorandum of understanding would aim to address concerns pertaining to contracts, enhance communication, and foster mutual understanding between the Board and the H-GAC Board. The further discussion of this initiative is underway, with the next meeting scheduled for April 18, 2023.

Furthermore, considering emerging changes to the by-laws since the Committee's initial assembly in November 2022, Chair Webster has requested a follow-up meeting to conclude the amendment drafting process. The next meeting of the By-laws Committee is scheduled for April 2023, with the goal of finalizing the draft by-laws for comprehensive review and approval by the entire Board during the June Board meeting.

Chair Webster concluded his report and no action was taken.

TAKE ACTION

a. Renew G&A Payroll Processing Contract.

Trudy Ray, manager of grants and contracts, presented a request to increase funding for G&A Payroll, the Board's payroll contractor. In fiscal year 2020, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, through its operating affiliate, Workforce Solutions, contracted with G&A Partners (G&A) to serve as the employer of record for processing the payroll, filing taxes, and providing other functions usual and customary for payroll processing for Workforce Solutions summer jobs, recovery temporary jobs, and part-time work experience jobs.

Staff notes that G&A continues to do a good job serving as the employer of record for payrolling services for subsidized and temporary workers. Staff expects G&A to continue:

- Employing eligible individuals designated by Workforce Solutions,
- Paying wages and providing fringe benefits and insurance for these individuals, and
- Reporting timely on individuals' wages, work, and experience.

Staff recommends a budget increase of \$3,000,000.00 to the G&A contract, from \$9,000,000.00 to \$12,000,000.00 to serve 4,000 individuals at an average cost of \$3,000 per individual.

After some discussion of the proposed contract, a motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved as presented, but the vote was not unanimous.

While the item carried, the Board's questions and final vote demonstrated concerns regarding the item's presentation and lack of clarity. Staff agreed to provide additional information with respect to the item including the cost increase at the next Board meeting.

RECEIVE INFORMATION

a. Performance and Production.

Philip Garcia, manager of data analytics and accountability, presented Performance and Production measures October 2022 through January 2023. Mr. Garcia stated that we are working with service providers to identify areas in need of improvement in order to increase performance. We are reviewing five production measures that are not currently being met and identifying opportunities for improvement. We are also working with service providers to identify areas that are being missed as well as additional data that may need to be entered.

b. Expenditures

AJ Dean, manager of finance, reviewed the Financial Status Report representing expenses for the two months ending in February 2023. He reported that we are 13% expended overall and 17% through the year. Our year-to-date revenue is just under \$58 million. Our largest category of expenditures is financial aid early education at just over \$39 million.

c. Communications

Michelle Castrow, senior manager of employer and community engagement, presented an update on increased social media activity as well as continuing increases in earned media coverage. Our social media channels currently have just over 22,000 followers collectively. As of December 31, 2022, our cumulative earned-media value since the onset of the pandemic now exceeds \$40 million.

LOOK AT THE ECONOMY

Board staff Ron Borski presented a look at annual benchmark revisions as a result of reconciling reported jobs data with payroll tax records for 2022. These revisions show an increase of 146,000 jobs over the year or about 4.6%. These revised numbers reflect that the pace of job growth is gradually declining towards pre-pandemic levels.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Henderson congratulated Ms. Stipeche on the creation of an outstanding Early Education and Strategic Education Partnerships Division and noted that the Education Committee would be meeting soon. There was no other business to be brought before the Board.

Dr. Webster announced that Houston Community College will be hosting the Skills USA Post-Secondary competition for community colleges from across the state to compete in skills in key indicators and invited others to attend.

The Honorable Missouri City Council Member Riley thanked Mr. Wemple and his staff and the Missouri City Workforce Solutions' Office for supporting workshops for seniors at the Landmark Center at 10 a.m. every second and fourth Tuesday.

ADJOURN

Chair Guthrie adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:45 a.m.

Communications: Media Outreach

August 2023 Update

This report provides an update on Workforce Solutions’ media outreach efforts for June and July 2023. Topics for this period included community, education and employer partnerships and hiring events.

Social Media

Our social media channels currently have 23,311 followers collectively. The table below shows the breakdowns and year-over-year changes.

Followers	June 2023	June 2022	June 2021	One Year Change	Two Year Change
Facebook	10,641	9,697	8,572	9.7%	24.1%
Instagram	3,643	2,686	2,418	35.6%	50.7%
Twitter	1,774	1,746	1,663	1.6%	6.7%
LinkedIn	7,253	4,764	4,051	52.2%	79%

You can find us on social media at:

- <https://www.facebook.com/advancemycareer/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/workforcesolutions/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/advancemycareer>
- <https://twitter.com/GulfCoastWFS>
- <https://www.youtube.com/c/WorkforceSolutionsgulfcoast>

Earned Media Value

As of July 1, 2023, our cumulative earned-media value since the onset of the pandemic now exceeds \$48 million. Below is year-over-year comparison of April monthly values from 2021 to 2023.

Media Month	Items	Views	Value
June 2023	28	1,737,909	\$1,398,436
June 2022	20	2,848,794	\$389,517
June 2021	31	6,604,603	\$728,157

Media Partnerships

As a reminder, our partnerships include:

- KXLN Univision 45 – Interview bi-weekly on Monday during 11:30 a.m. newscast that is simulcast to Facebook Live
- KTRK ABC 13 – Weekly Who’s Hiring program each Thursday’s at 10 a.m., live stream as well as broadcast news features
- KRIV Fox 26 – Interview semi-monthly Friday at 6:15 a.m. on morning TV news

The following table contains highlights of Workforce Solutions in the media since June 1, 2023.

Date	Outlet	Story	Link
06/01/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Non-profit careers	https://abc13.co/3P2Uuwy
06/01/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Harris County Courts Fresh Start	https://youtu.be/N12QYsPnsX8
06/05/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Fresh Start	https://youtu.be/hYU2ucHUDb4
06/08/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Student Conservation Association	https://abc13.co/3MYyOPz
06/09/2023	KRIV Fox 26	Education industry job opportunities	https://youtu.be/fRzOYnPiB_8
06/12/2023	KXLN Univision 45	What to do if a job offer is rescinded	https://youtu.be/8ZAReQIXOj4
06/19/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Digital literacy for job search	https://youtu.be/gmXO7A3V5Sw
06/22/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Home health jobs	https://abc13.co/3piZrXO
06/23/2023	KRIV Fox 26	Benefits of using time off	https://youtu.be/KH45PHWgpz8
06/26/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Mentorship	https://youtu.be/HnIJ5Xkgizs
06/29/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Covenant House	https://abc13.co/3pF1ICm
06/29/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Older Workers Returning to Jobs	https://abc13.co/3rmi1Px
07/03/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Benefits of using time off	https://youtu.be/uyuE98zvBiw
07/06/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Veterans Services	https://abc13.co/3JHsSJV
07/07/2023	KRIV Fox 26	Transition Services for Veterans	https://youtu.be/KNG6UNuExic

Date	Outlet	Story	Link
07/13/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who's Hiring: HCC AI-Robotics	https://bit.ly/3JWNsWV
07/17/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Employer Insights	https://youtu.be/pZasKUNVcdU
07/17/2023	KPRC NBC 2	High Cost of Child Care	https://www.click2houston.com/news/local/2023/07/17/its-a-crisis-child-care-programs-facing-significant-backlog/
07/20/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who's Hiring: Galveston College	https://bit.ly/3Dq8o58
07/24/2023	KXLN Univision 45	National Intern Day	https://youtu.be/q5wYCr93Rpw
07/24/2023	Houston Business Journal	June Jobs Report	https://www.bizjournals.com/houston/news/2023/07/24/june-2023-houston-job-report-workforce-solutions.html
07/24/2023	KRIV Fox 26	June Jobs Report	https://youtu.be/DNIK8kfGu9Y
07/25/2023	KIAH CW 39	June Jobs Report	https://cw39.com/news/local/houston-june-jobs-report-highlights-hits-and-misses/
07/27/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Aviation Basics (Teamsters apprenticeship readiness)	https://abc13.co/43PXDDI
07/27/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Alvin New Beginnings Job Fair	https://abc13.co/43Om2ti
07/27/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who's Hiring: San Jac College	https://abc13.co/3Y9S5CU
07/31/2023	KXLN Univision 45	SMART Goals	

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Labor Market Information

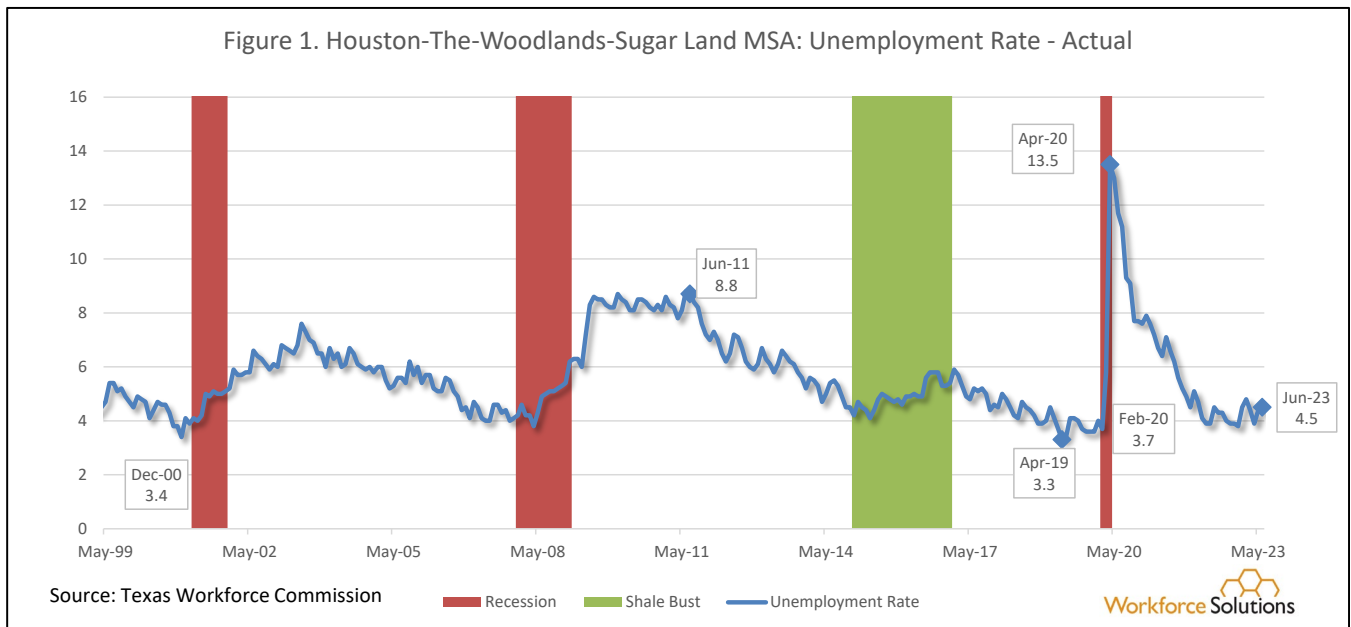
June 2023 data was released July 21, 2023.

Unemployment Rates

The rate of unemployment in The Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA rose one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.5 percent in June, see figure 1. The rate of unemployment rises in the month of June during most years as the academic year winds down and individuals enter the labor market as seen with an increase of 11,951 in the labor force over the month while the number of employed only increased by 2,291. The local rate of unemployment was higher than the state and national rates. The rate of unemployment for all three areas were the same as they were a year earlier.

Unemployment Rate (Actual)

	JUNE 2023	MAY 2023	JUNE 2022
Civilian Labor Force	3,599,372	3,587,421	3,516,926
Total Employed	3,438,459	3,428,799	3,358,966
Unemployed	160,913	158,622	157,960
Unemployment Rate	4.5%	4.4%	4.5%
Texas	4.2%	4.1%	4.2%
U.S.	3.8%	3.4%	3.8%



June data is scheduled to be released August 18, 2023.

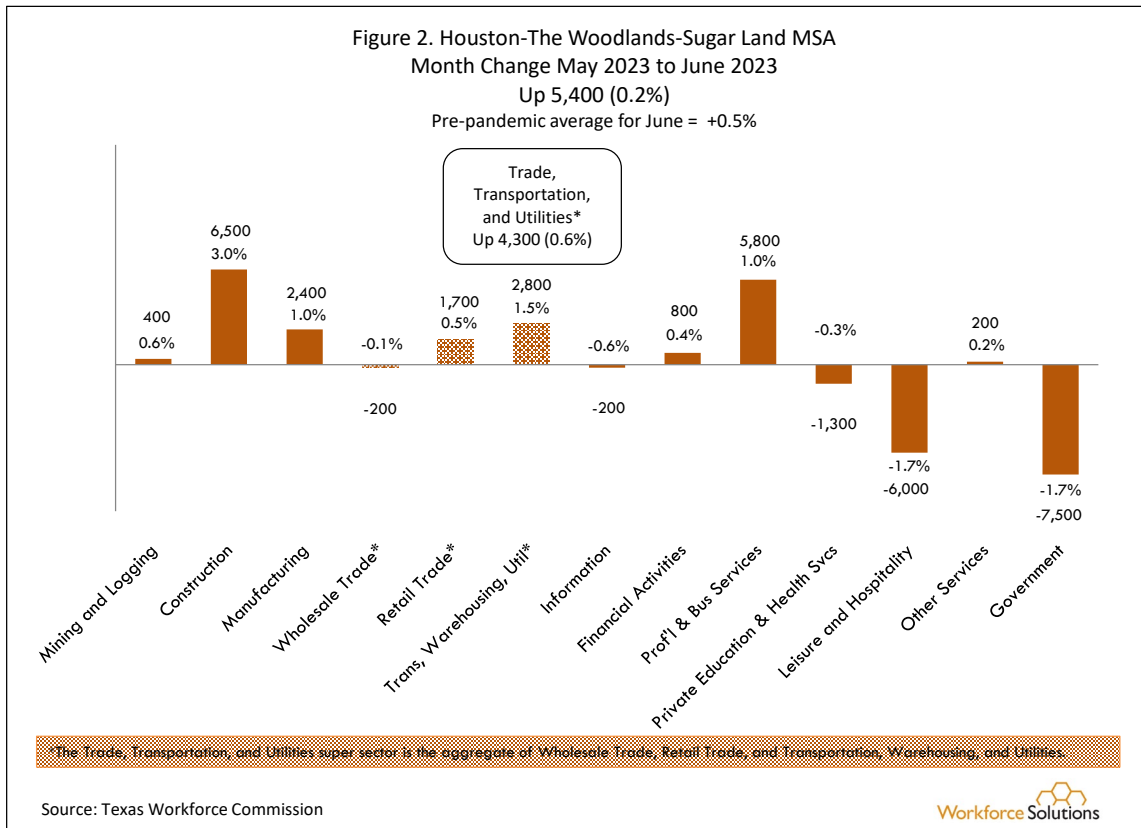
Nonagricultural Employment

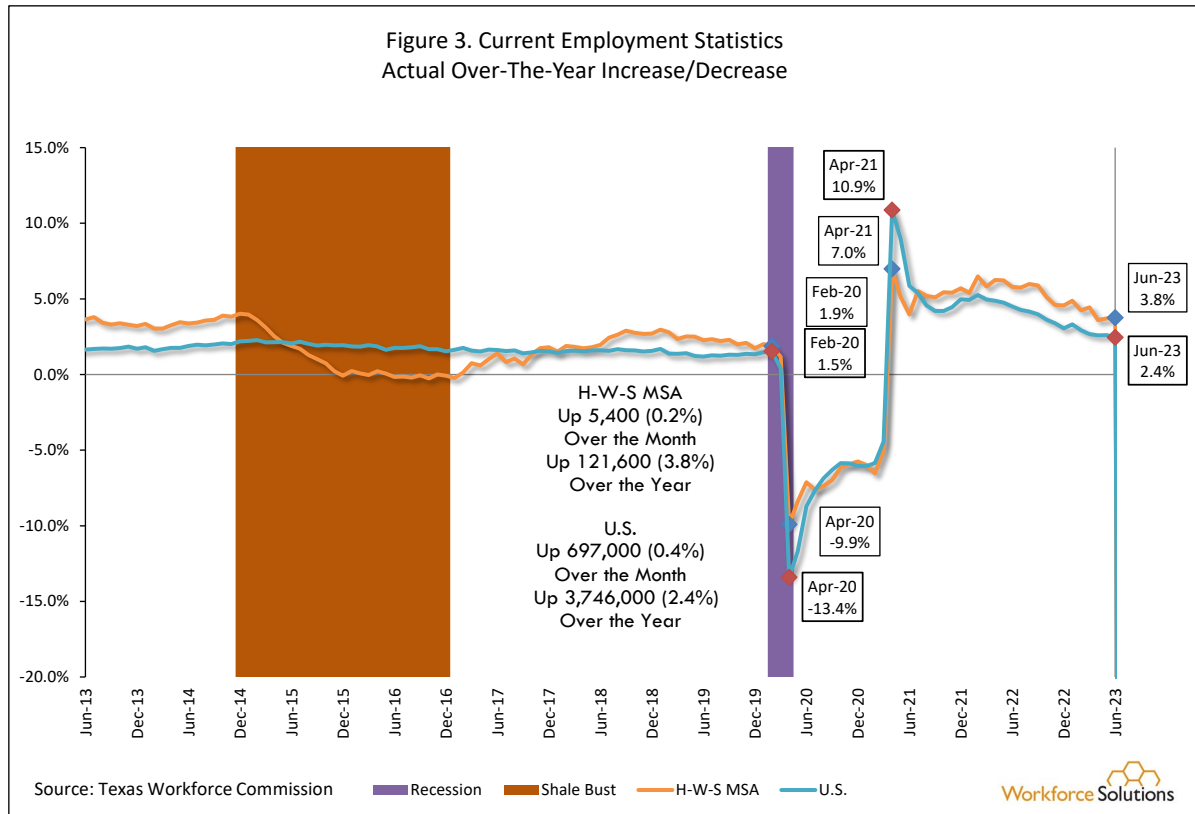
Over the Month

Total Nonfarm Employment in the H-W-S MSA was up 5,400 jobs over the month in June. The 0.2 percent increase was much weaker than the pre-pandemic average increase of 0.5 percent for the month of June. The primary drivers of the growth were in Construction, Professional and Business Services, and Trade, Transportation and Utilities. The largest June increase was in Construction, up 6,500 jobs or 3.0 percent. The increase followed two consecutive losses that totaled 8,600 jobs. Job gains were across all sub-sectors of construction. Professional and Business Services reported the second largest increase adding 5,800 jobs over the month, up 1.0 percent. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities was up 4,300 jobs or 0.6 percent. Wholesale Trade and Retail Trade had a weak month in comparison to past trends, but Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities had a strong increase helping offset them, up 2,800 jobs or 1.5 percent compared to the historical pre-pandemic average increase of 0.6 percent. Lastly, Manufacturing reported its largest over-the-month increase since June 2018 adding 2,400 jobs, up 1.0 percent. Job gains in Manufacturing were found in both durable and non-durable goods manufacturing.

Two areas had a particularly weak month, especially Leisure and Hospitality where if the estimate holds true, restaurants took a major hit.

- Leisure and Hospitality lost 6,000 jobs, down 1.7 percent where restaurants took the brunt of the decline. This would be the first loss on record for the month of June if the estimate holds true. Typically, employment levels are approaching their annual highs in June due to tourism and increased recreational activities.
- Other Services added a mere 200 jobs, up 0.2 percent, when on average it has added some 3,600 jobs in June, up 3.9 percent. Where the weakness falls is unknown since details within Other Services are not published by the survey.



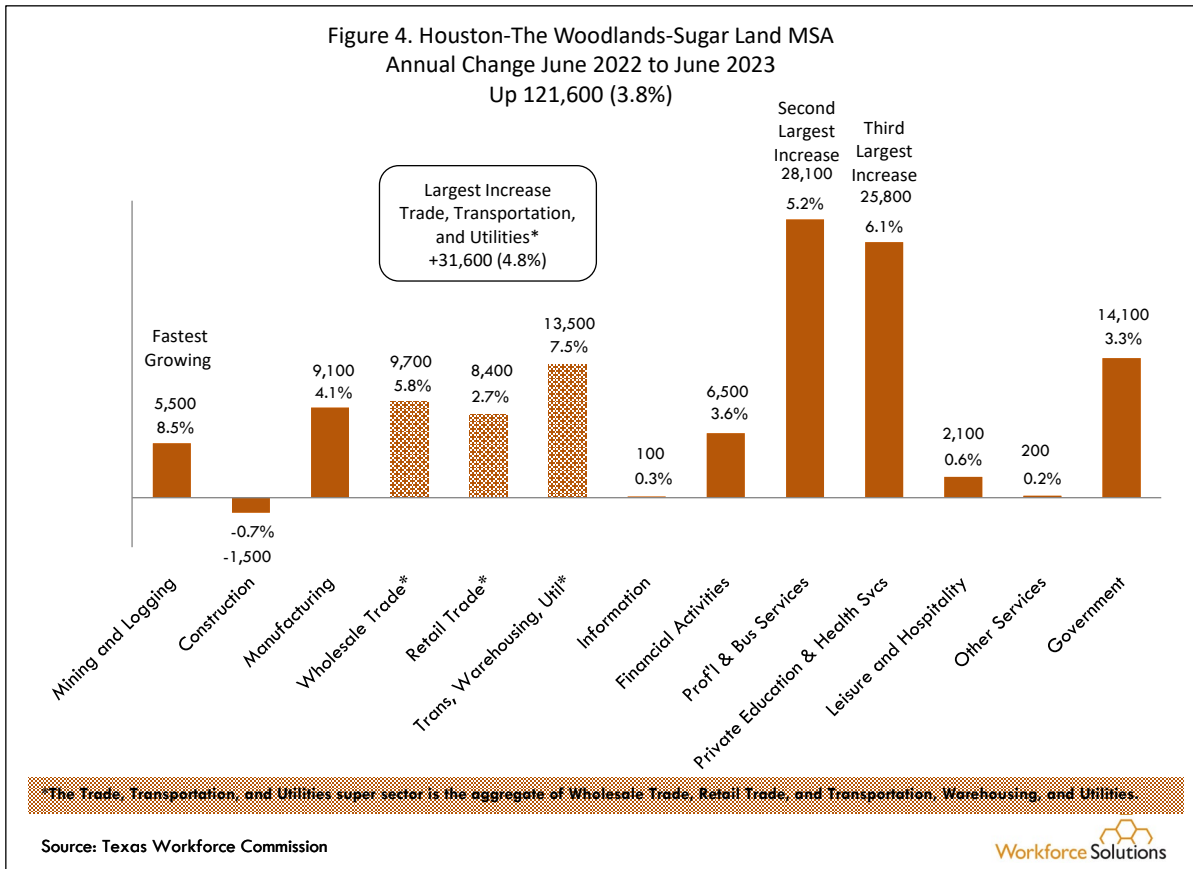


Over the Year

Total Nonfarm Employment in the H-W-S MSA was up 121,600 jobs over the year in June with the pace of job growth at 3.8 percent. The increase in the Houston MSA continues to be stronger than the nation’s increase of 2.4 percent, see figure 3 above.

All but one industry super sectors were reporting over-the-year increases, see figure 4. The top three contributors to the increase were Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, up 31,600 jobs or 4.8 percent, Professional and Business Services, up 28,100 jobs or 5.2 percent, and Private Education and Health Services, up 25,800 jobs or 6.1 percent. Other large contributors to the increase were Government, up 14,100 jobs or 3.3 percent, and Manufacturing, up 9,100 jobs or 4.1 percent. Fastest growth continues to be in Mining and Logging, up 5,500 jobs or 8.5 percent. Other Services was able to hold onto growth despite a weak month, up 200 jobs or 0.2 percent. The only industry sector reporting a loss of jobs when compared to a year earlier was Construction, down 1,500 jobs or 0.7 percent. For a complete list of current, month-ago, and year-ago employment estimates see pages 6 & 7.

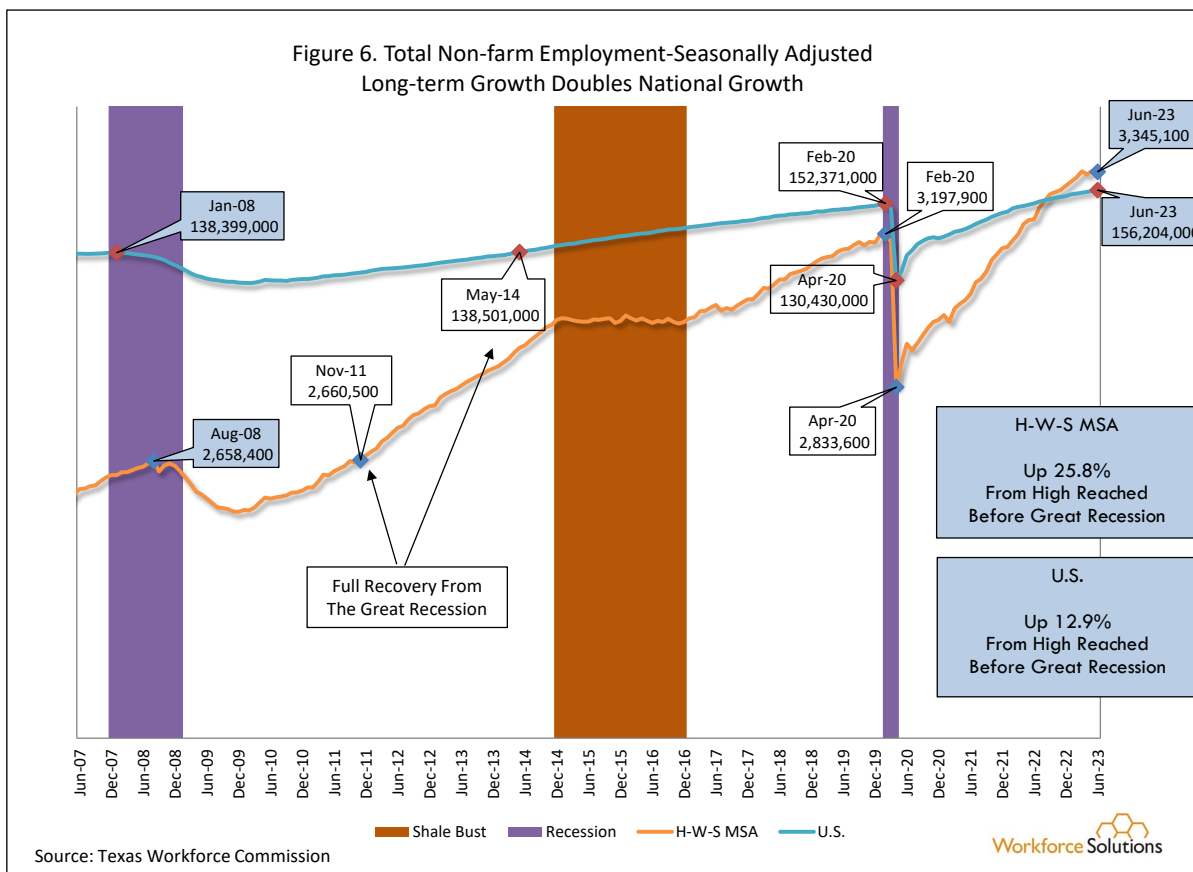
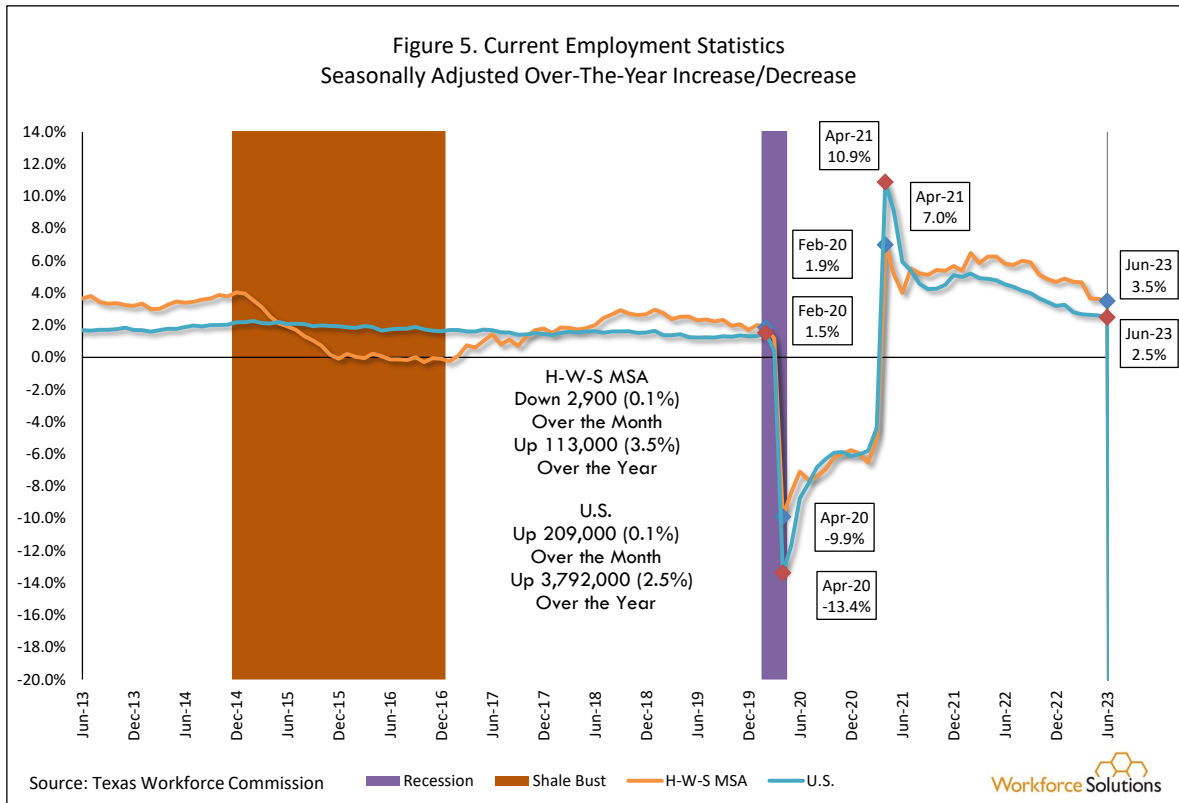
In terms of recovery from the pandemic, four industry super sectors were operating at payroll levels below what they were just prior to the pandemic in February 2020: Mining and Logging, down 8,200 jobs or 10.5 percent, Construction, down 15,200 jobs or 6.4 percent, Manufacturing, down 1,700 jobs or 0.7 percent, and Other Services, down 100 jobs or 0.08 percent.



Total Nonfarm Employment – Seasonally Adjusted

Seasonally adjusted estimates for the H-W-S MSA and U.S. seen in figures 5 and 6 provide an additional view of growth trends removing the erratic month-to-month seasonal patterns. On a seasonally adjusted basis, Total Nonfarm Employment reported a loss for the second time in recent months, down 2,900 jobs or 0.1 percent. The pace of job growth fell for the third consecutive month to 3.5 percent. Total Nonfarm Employment at the national level added 209,000 jobs in June, up 0.1 percent, with the pace of growth at 2.5 percent.

Looking at growth over a more long-term basis, Houston has been among the fastest-growing cities in the U.S. and as a result long-term job growth has historically outpaced that of the nation. Payrolls in the H-W-S MSA are currently up 25.8 percent above their peak prior to The Great Recession while payrolls at the national level are only up 12.9 percent.



NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA	JUN 2023	MAY 2022	JUN 2022	Month Change		Year Change	
				Net	Percent	Net	Percent
Total Nonfarm	3,360,800	3,355,400	3,239,200	5,400	0.2%	121,600	3.8%
.Total Private	2,917,400	2,904,500	2,809,900	12,900	0.4%	107,500	3.8%
.Goods Producing	525,200	515,900	512,100	9,300	1.8%	13,100	2.6%
..Mining, Logging and Construction	292,400	285,500	288,400	6,900	2.4%	4,000	1.4%
...Mining and Logging	70,200	69,800	64,700	400	0.6%	5,500	8.5%
....Oil and Gas Extraction	29,800	29,600	28,700	200	0.7%	1,100	3.8%
....Support Activities for Mining	38,500	38,300	34,500	200	0.5%	4,000	11.6%
...Construction	222,200	215,700	223,700	6,500	3.0%	-1,500	-0.7%
....Construction of Buildings	56,900	55,000	55,000	1,900	3.5%	1,900	3.5%
....Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	54,800	53,800	53,200	1,000	1.9%	1,600	3.0%
....Specialty Trade Contractors	110,500	106,900	115,500	3,600	3.4%	-5,000	-4.3%
..Manufacturing	232,800	230,400	223,700	2,400	1.0%	9,100	4.1%
...Durable Goods	142,900	141,500	136,900	1,400	1.0%	6,000	4.4%
....Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	49,900	49,200	46,900	700	1.4%	3,000	6.4%
....Machinery Manufacturing	42,400	41,800	40,200	600	1.4%	2,200	5.5%
....Agriculture, Construction, and Mining Machinery Manufacturing	22,300	21,900	20,600	400	1.8%	1,700	8.3%
....Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	14,500	14,200	13,700	300	2.1%	800	5.8%
...Non-Durable Goods	89,900	88,900	86,800	1,000	1.1%	3,100	3.6%
....Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	8,000	7,900	7,800	100	1.3%	200	2.6%
....Chemical Manufacturing	42,800	42,200	41,000	600	1.4%	1,800	4.4%
.Service-Providing	2,835,600	2,839,500	2,727,100	-3,900	-0.1%	108,500	4.0%
.Private Service Providing	2,392,200	2,388,600	2,297,800	3,600	0.2%	94,400	4.1%
..Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	692,900	688,600	661,300	4,300	0.6%	31,600	4.8%
...Wholesale Trade	177,500	177,700	167,800	-200	-0.1%	9,700	5.8%
....Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	109,600	110,400	103,300	-800	-0.7%	6,300	6.1%
....Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	17,600	17,600	17,000	0	0.0%	600	3.5%
....Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	54,500	53,900	53,000	600	1.1%	1,500	2.8%
...Retail Trade	321,000	319,300	312,600	1,700	0.5%	8,400	2.7%
....Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	44,200	43,900	43,300	300	0.7%	900	2.1%
....Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	24,600	24,800	24,800	-200	-0.8%	-200	-0.8%
....Food and Beverage Retailers	74,000	73,600	71,200	400	0.5%	2,800	3.9%
....General Merchandise Retailers	62,300	61,600	60,800	700	1.1%	1,500	2.5%
....Department Stores	20,000	19,800	19,800	200	1.0%	200	1.0%
....Warehouse Clubs, Supercenters, and Other General Merchandise Retailers	42,300	41,800	41,000	500	1.2%	1,300	3.2%
....Health and Personal Care Retailers	20,600	20,600	20,900	0	0.0%	-300	-1.4%
....Clothing, Clothing Accessories, Shoe, and Jewelry	25,100	25,100	25,200	0	0.0%	-100	-0.4%
...Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	194,400	191,600	180,900	2,800	1.5%	13,500	7.5%
....Utilities	20,400	20,200	19,600	200	1.0%	800	4.1%
....Air Transportation	20,500	20,400	19,900	100	0.5%	600	3.0%
....Truck Transportation	30,900	31,000	30,300	-100	-0.3%	600	2.0%
....Pipeline Transportation	13,000	12,900	12,100	100	0.8%	900	7.4%
..Information	33,100	33,300	33,000	-200	-0.6%	100	0.3%
....Telecommunications	11,800	11,800	11,600	0	0.0%	200	1.7%
..Financial Activities	184,700	183,900	178,200	800	0.4%	6,500	3.6%
...Finance and Insurance	114,900	114,600	113,500	300	0.3%	1,400	1.2%
....Credit Intermediation and Related Activities including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank	45,800	45,600	46,100	200	0.4%	-300	-0.7%
....Depository Credit Intermediation including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank	29,600	29,500	29,400	100	0.3%	200	0.7%
....Financial Investments and Related Activities including Financial Vehicles	23,100	22,900	22,500	200	0.9%	600	2.7%
....Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	46,000	46,100	44,900	-100	-0.2%	1,100	2.4%
....Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	69,800	69,300	64,700	500	0.7%	5,100	7.9%

NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT				Month Change		Year Change	
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA	JUN 2023	MAY 2022	JUN 2022	Net	Percent	Net	Percent
..Professional and Business Services	565,200	559,400	537,100	5,800	1.0%	28,100	5.2%
...Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	276,100	274,100	256,500	2,000	0.7%	19,600	7.6%
.....Legal Services	33,000	32,200	31,300	800	2.5%	1,700	5.4%
.....Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services	28,700	28,500	27,600	200	0.7%	1,100	4.0%
.....Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	77,200	77,500	68,000	-300	-0.4%	9,200	13.5%
.....Computer Systems Design and Related Services	44,000	43,800	40,800	200	0.5%	3,200	7.8%
...Management of Companies and Enterprises	48,400	46,700	44,600	1,700	3.6%	3,800	8.5%
...Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	240,700	238,600	236,000	2,100	0.9%	4,700	2.0%
.....Administrative and Support Services	226,700	225,000	223,300	1,700	0.8%	3,400	1.5%
.....Employment Services	85,700	86,600	89,800	-900	-1.0%	-4,100	-4.6%
.....Services to Buildings and Dwellings	57,000	56,600	55,100	400	0.7%	1,900	3.4%
..Private Education and Health Services	446,200	447,500	420,400	-1,300	-0.3%	25,800	6.1%
...Private Educational Services	70,600	72,800	67,000	-2,200	-3.0%	3,600	5.4%
...Health Care and Social Assistance	375,600	374,700	353,400	900	0.2%	22,200	6.3%
.....Ambulatory Health Care Services	189,800	188,700	177,900	1,100	0.6%	11,900	6.7%
.....Hospitals	94,800	94,700	88,400	100	0.1%	6,400	7.2%
..Leisure and Hospitality	351,100	357,100	349,000	-6,000	-1.7%	2,100	0.6%
...Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	40,800	41,200	40,900	-400	-1.0%	-100	-0.2%
...Accommodation and Food Services	310,300	315,900	308,100	-5,600	-1.8%	2,200	0.7%
.....Accommodation	27,300	27,300	26,900	0	0.0%	400	1.5%
.....Food Services and Drinking Places	283,000	288,600	281,200	-5,600	-1.9%	1,800	0.6%
..Other Services	119,000	118,800	118,800	200	0.2%	200	0.2%
..Government	443,400	450,900	429,300	-7,500	-1.7%	14,100	3.3%
...Federal Government	33,300	33,300	31,700	0	0.0%	1,600	5.0%
...State Government	95,000	95,500	90,600	-500	-0.5%	4,400	4.9%
.....State Government Educational Services	53,600	54,200	50,600	-600	-1.1%	3,000	5.9%
...Local Government	315,100	322,100	307,000	-7,000	-2.2%	8,100	2.6%
.....Local Government Educational Services	218,300	224,500	210,900	-6,200	-2.8%	7,400	3.5%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	JUN 2023	MAY 2022	JUN 2022				
H-W-S MSA	4.5	4.4	4.5				
Texas (Actual)	4.2	4.1	4.2				
U.S.	3.8	3.4	3.8				

Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA: Includes Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller Counties. All Data is Subject to Revision.

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, BLS, Texas Workforce Commission, Institute for Supply Management, Baker Hughes, and The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.