



Workforce Readiness Taskforce Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2024

Open Meeting

1. Welcome & Attendance (Education & Industry Consortium Members)

Discussion

2. Presentation of Local Labor Market Information
3. Master Credentials List: Review of Credentials Scheduled for Removal in 2025-2026
4. Solicitation of Input for CareerSource Research Coast's WIOA Local and Regional Workforce Plan

Sector Updates

5. Open to the Floor

Adjournment

Consortium Members Present:

Bill Wilcox

Consortium Members Participating by Teleconference:

Karen Giovengo Aliessa Seitz Christi Shields
Lana Barros

Consortium Members Excused:

Kristine Burr Eric Swiechowski Taylor Hoskins
Kelly Johnson Bill Solomon Linda Fitzpatrick

Workforce Readiness Taskforce Members Present:

Stephanie Etter Anita Fischer

Administrative Staff Present/Teleconference:

Christina Coble Jennifer Eimann Martin Rivera

Call to Order:

Christina Coble, Business Services Manager, called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Agenda Item 2 - Presentation of Local Labor Market Information (LMI):

Christina Coble, Business Services Manager, presented a report on the local workforce development board's labor market information for Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River Counties. As part of the work being done by staff on the four-year plan and the regional planning area, the LMI assists in determining future workforce training needs, identifying labor availability, ascertaining prevailing wage rates, and exploring potential markets.

Ms. Coble stated the following LMI information should be highlighted:

Population and Job Growth: Between 2018 and 2023, the population increased by 10% (63,412), and jobs increased by 10.6% (54,000).

Ms. Coble noted that job increases in our region outpaced the national growth rate of 3.9% by 6.7%. Thus, the LWDB 20 is tracking ahead of the national job growth rate.

As the number of jobs increased, the labor force participation rate increased from 51.9% to 52.5% between 2018 and 2023.

Ms. Coble noted the report projections through 2028 reflect a continued increase in job growth through 2025, leveling off between 2026-2028.

In addition, it appears that our region's labor force will begin to decrease in 2024. Possible reasons are commuting patterns, older workers retiring, and seasonal employment.

The report indicates that 301,569 people are projected to retire soon in our region, which is considerably higher than the national average. Couple that with the projected number of millennials in our area who are expected to take the roles of those retiring, and we show less than the national average. This may challenge our region in terms of finding a skilled workforce to replace retiring workers.

Educational Attainment: 19.1% of the LWDB 20 residents possess a bachelor's degree, 2.1% below the national average, and 10.7% hold an associate's degree, 1.8% above the national average.

Growing Industries: The top growing industries in our region are healthcare, construction, administrative and support, and transportation and warehousing. The consortium members represent these industries, and we must continue working together to ensure continued opportunities and provide a talent pipeline in our region.

Agenda Item 3 - Master Credentials List: Review of Credentials Scheduled for Removal in 2025-2026:

Christina Coble, Business Services Manager, explained that the Master Credentials List is a comprehensive list of state-approved degree and non-degree credentials of value that prepare Floridians for in-demand occupations.

Ms. Coble stated that Christi Shields, Director, Treasure Coast Technical College, would further discuss the master credentials list and the potential implications of certifications slated for deletion in 2025-2026, particularly for healthcare and food service industries.

Ms. Shields stated that the Master Credentials List application is open year-round for Florida school districts, Florida College System institutions, and local workforce development boards to submit credentials for consideration and remove those no longer eligible.

Ms. Shields stated that two certifications, nursing assistant and safe serve safe, are up for deletion in 2025-2026 from the master credential list.

After further discussion, the Workforce Readiness Task Force proposed involving industry partners in assessing how these changes could impact credentialing requirements for hiring purposes. The discussion also revolved around the impending September 30, 2024, deadline for credential applications and the potential addition of new certifications aligned with employer needs.

Ms. Shields stated that these certifications are not slated to be removed until 2025-2026, so there is time for the consortium members/industry partners to discuss further how their removal from the Master Credentials List could impact credentialing requirements for hiring purposes.

Ms. Coble offered to send out the complete Master Credentials List so that task force members would have time to review it. Then, at the September meeting, a further discussion on how the industry credentials students earn align with the workforce they will enter and how to use this state credential attainment and employer demand data to align the region's education system with workforce demand.

Lana Barros, Director of Innovation & Choice, Martin County School District, added that the Workforce Readiness Task Force's work is important in ensuring that the programs and certifications offered in our high schools appear on the master credential list and align with what our employers want and need.

Agenda Item 4 - Solicitation of Input for CareerSource Research Coast's WIOA Local and Regional Workforce Plan:

Christina Coble, Business Services Manager, stated that we had just received instructions from the state regarding the four-year plan. Tracey McMorris, Vice President of Operations/COO, has taken the lead in that process and has identified Shelly Batton, Colleen Gill, and Christina Coble to work with on all data collection.

Ms. Coble explained that staff looks at Labor Market Information (LMI) in the region to assist with making an informed decision about essential elements such as demand for occupations and industries, compensation trends, and workforce demographics to determine the direction of the next four years' four-year plan.

Ms. Coble asked the task force what CareerSource Research Coast (CSRC) could do better over the next four years to market our services and increase our engagement with employers, enhancing the collaborative and creative efforts between CSRC and area employers.

Response provided by the task force:

- Partner with high school to provide resources for employment after graduation/on-campus hiring events
- Possible internships during the summer for high school graduates to allow employers time to build skill sets
- More in-person targeted engagement with employers regarding available services
- Survey to identify the workforce development needs of businesses
- Develop resources to address identified workforce development needs

Bill Wilcox, President, Phoenix Metals, inquired how information is provided to employers moving into our region.

Anita Fischer, Director, Workforce Readiness at the Economic Development Council (EDC) of St. Lucie County, stated that whether an employer is opening or expanding a business, the EDC's job is to bring together all the partner organizations in an effort to provide the resources needed to the employer.

Ms. Fischer stated that the EDC is working to streamline the process to make it easier for employers to locate the specific information they need and make it more accessible. In response to Ms. Coble's previous question, bringing CSRC in at the beginning of the process as a collaborator to service the employer's needs can increase employer engagement at the onset of the process.

In addition, businesses get concerned about their ability to find skilled labor when there are low unemployment rates, as our region does. So, we need to demonstrate that LWDB has the required services and programs to train and develop the labor force.



Agenda Item 5 - Updates:

Christina Coble, Business Services Manager, gave an update on the Summer of Success (SOS) program. Ms. Coble thanked the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners (SLCBOCC) for funding the program every year. The number of applicants we got this year is amazing.

The program starts on June 10, 2024, with forty participants. Next week, they will complete the soft skills training through Florida Ready to Work in a classroom setting and then move into a four-week paid internship at \$15 an hour starting on June 17, 2024.

Anita Fischer, Director, Workforce Readiness at the Economic Development Council (EDC) of St. Lucie County, stated that Project Lift is collecting used business clothes from June 1st through June 30th. There are six or seven drop-off spots throughout St. Lucie County.

In addition, on July 9, 2024, the HR Business Council is holding its very first Lunch and Learn in partnership with St. Lucie County EDC, the schools, and Project Lift. The keynote speaker is Wes Hudgens, Lead Project Manager and Economic Developer, Florida Power and Light (FPL). Mr. Hudgens will discuss building Florida's talent pipeline.

Stephany Etter, Dean of the School of Continuing and Adult Education, stated that Indian River State College (IRSC) will no longer offer the Commercial Driving program through Sage Commercial Driving School. Instead, IRSC started its own program to accommodate more students. It will be a four-week (plus the test time) program starting June 24, 2024.

Adjournment:

With no further items to discuss, Christina Coble moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 a.m.

BOARD STAFF CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify these minutes reflect the proceedings of the Workforce Readiness Taskforce.

Christina Coble
Board Staff

Date