

State Apprenticeship Advisory Council (SAAC) Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time)
Orange Technical College
Orlando, Florida

Meeting was called to order by chairperson-designee, Dr. Kevin O'Farrell, Chancellor, Division of Career and Adult Education, Florida Department of Education (FDOE). The Council Members and attendees were welcomed, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and roll call was taken. Present at the meeting were Dr. O'Farrell, Kirk Barras, David McCraw, Lee Middleton, Karen Nichols, Steve Cona III, Marcelo Dossantos, Natasha Sherwood, Robert Tidwell, Kathryn Starkey, Dr. Eric Kennedy, and Kathryn Wheeler. A quorum was present.

Dr. O'Farrell delivered opening remarks to the Council. The following new Council members were introduced:

1. Karen Nichols, of Kissimmee, is the Training Director for the Central Florida Mechanical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee. Nichols is the Secretary of the Central Florida Association of Apprenticeship Administrators, and a member of the Florida Apprenticeship Conference.
2. Robert Tidwell, of Apopka, is an Instructor for Orange County Public Schools, and a Coordinator and Assistant Director for the Florida Electrical Apprenticeship and Training. He is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps. Tidwell is a member of the Florida Association of Electrical Contractors and the Classroom Teachers Association.

Steven Lindas, FDOE Apprenticeship Training Representative, read the proclamation issued by Governor DeSantis observing November 14-20, 2022 as Apprenticeship Awareness and Appreciation Week.

Kathryn Wheeler, State Apprenticeship Director, Division of Career and Adult Education, FDOE, spoke on the top industries based on the number of registered apprentices and gave an overview showing how Apprenticeship is a part of a career pathway. Florida currently has 283 active apprenticeship programs and 53 active preapprenticeship programs. Thirteen new apprenticeship programs and five new preapprenticeship programs have been registered since the last SAAC meeting. Director Wheeler recognized the great work by the Apprenticeship Training Representatives throughout the state, and Leisa Rasmussen's outreach and recruitment efforts. Veterans, women, minorities, and persons with disabilities have been targeted to build a more diverse pool of apprentices. Apprenticeship Accelerator events have been held for key economic sectors such as manufacturing, transportation, and healthcare. FDOE has partnered with the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and CareerSource Florida in the Apprentice Florida campaign to encourage businesses to establish apprenticeships. This campaign was established under the State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant, awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), to expand registered apprenticeship, create a fortified talent pipeline in targeted sectors, and drive economic development across Florida. The approved Apprentice Florida Communications Plan runs through April 30, 2023. The FDOE received an Apprenticeship State Expansion (USDOL) grant of \$3 Million for the period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022, to expand the number of apprentices served; Building State Capacity to Expand Apprenticeship through Innovation Grant (USDOL) of \$450,000 for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023, to expand the national Registered Apprenticeship system; and Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant (State) which is recurring funding support for the creation of new and expansion of existing apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs.

Kathleen Taylor, Bureau Chief, Standards Benchmarks and Frameworks, Division of Career and Adult Education, FDOE, gave the Legislative update. The Legislative Budget Request was reviewed. She discussed the areas regarding Registered Apprenticeships Cloud-Based solution; Preapprenticeship Registration and Case Management solution; Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant – Teacher Apprenticeship Expansion; Apprenticeship Office Staff positions; and the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

Bill Kraus, Deputy Regional Director, USDOL gave an update on emerging occupations in apprenticeship and the changes the Registered Apprenticeship System has experienced in recent years. Mr. Kraus reiterated that Apprenticeship is a model of choice. The Apprenticeship Act is 85 years old this year and many changes have occurred over this time. He

highlighted many of the similarities that military training has with registered apprenticeship (i.e., related instruction on-the-job training, scheduled pay raises, and credentials), and how apprenticeship provides opportunities for veterans in the private sector. Mr. Kraus talked about the recent nationwide Cybersecurity Sprint, which included an event at the White House with intermediaries; the Transportation Accelerator that FDOE held for truck driving with Florida Rock and Tank; and emphasized the importance of these industries for national security. Mr. Kraus explained that with the growth of Apprenticeship, USDOL has over 1,200 occupations and receives new occupation requests every day. Two years ago, it was unimaginable that today we would have a teacher apprenticeship program. Traditional occupations in construction along with healthcare and technology are exploding. Technology and cybersecurity are important to all industries. USDOL is rolling out Standards Builder as an electronic way for sponsors to start a program. He stated that “Technology is changing the way we work. Many occupations are remote now. We have changed the way we do things, supervision has changes, and the way we teach and learn has changed. So, we need to make sure we are ready to adapt.” There are some sectors that haven’t been looked at in the past, such as Education. USDOL developing occupations in Agriculture now, as it is the number one industry in many states, including Florida and New York. Mr. Kraus extended an invitation to the Tupelo, Mississippi Agriculture Accelerator. Mr. Kraus thanked the Florida Director, Bureau Chief and Apprenticeship Training Representatives for their work making a difference to the public by helping individuals get into the middle class, meeting the needs of the industry, and preparing society.

Dr. Brittany Ross, Director, Research & Evaluation, Division of Career & Technical Education, FDOE, spoke on the new Apprenticeship Statutory Language and Accountability Measures. She reviewed House Bill 1507 – New Apprenticeship Requirements to collect data, adopt rules to administer standards and policies, amend the annual apprenticeship report with additional expenditure data, outcomes of activities to promote apprenticeship, retention and completion and wage progression of apprentices, and requirement of the FDOE to notify partners of Florida’s career planning resources, such as Apprentice Florida. Dr. Ross went over the 2021-22 Annual Apprenticeship Report, reviewed current data sources for enrollment and completion. Currently there are 15,479 active apprentices during the 2021-22 program year across 275 programs with 3,600 participating employers and 99 occupations. 1,173 apprentices completed their program on time. The total number of completers was 1,917 earning an average wage of \$25.25/hour or \$49,629 a year. Key terms were reviewed including RAPIDS, Related Training & Instruction (RTI), On-the-Job-Training (OJT), Apprenticeship Year, Cohorts, Retention Rates, Data Source, and Wage Progression. Implications and guidance were also covered.

Edgar Padilla, Ernst & Young (EY), presented a Preliminary Report on Florida’s Apprenticeship System, which included a project overview including findings, strategic considerations, and the next steps. Key points included the following:

- Florida had approximately 4,400 new registered apprentices in 2021, a 58% increase in the six years prior to the pandemic.
- Last year, approximately 300 additional employers were added, totaling over 3,600 active employers today.
- Over 1,900 apprentices completed their program, an increase of 42 from the previous year.
- The average salaries of recent completers are over \$49,000.
- Twenty-seven new registered apprenticeship programs were added.

Mr. Padilla’s project overview covered background research, research and design, and benchmarking. For stakeholder engagement , there were 14 focus groups with eight to 15 attendees in each meeting; 25 interviews with leadership, Apprenticeship Navigators and Apprenticeship Training Representatives (ATRs). He thanked the stakeholders (ATRs, Apprenticeship Navigators, all FDOE staff and CareerSource Florida staff), as they were essential in the development of themes. Mr. Padilla went over the Strategic Framework final report including the engagement theme, technical theme, and organizational theme.

Engagement findings and opportunities included the following:

- Growth of Apprentice Florida is central to the strategy;
- Information and value for sponsors/employers, trainees;
- Myth-busting among employers and sponsors;
- Customizing engagement toolkits for all audiences; and,

- How best to leverage Subject Matter Experts (SME) of FDOE & CareerSource Florida staff.

Technical findings and opportunities included the following:

- Customer relationship management system;
- Mock Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) and standards building in a customer relationship management (CRM) system;
- Streamline inquiry and registration process (RAPIDS);
- Increase content and toolkits on Apprentice Florida; and,
- Awareness and adoption of new RTI opportunities.

Organizational findings and opportunities included the following:

- Streamline collaboration between ATRs and Apprenticeship Navigators;
- Increase inter-agency collaboration on RAP strategy;
- Increased coordination with USDOL and RAPIDS; and,
- Clearly define roles of all RAP stakeholders.

Strategic considerations include:

- What is the primary goal for apprenticeships, and how can that goal serve to shape strategy?
- How can the policy, operational, and fiscal requirement of key stakeholder groups be assessed to identify opportunities for efficiency?
- How can messaging, co-developed with all RAP stakeholders, be utilized to create statewide momentum, uniformity, and proxies?

Mr. Padilla went over the next steps, which include convening; organizing renewed priorities, goals and areas of responsibility; and continuing focus on technology and process.

Brenda Chrisman from CareerSource Central Florida spoke on the CareerSource Florida network across the state of Florida. Ms. Chrisman reviewed Florida's bold vision for workforce and explained how the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors commits millions of dollars in funding to provide local workforce development boards with the tools and resource they need to assist with Registered Apprenticeships. Ms. Chrisman reviewed the next steps to attract, grow and sharpen talent by immediate and intermediate hiring needs, as well as long-term talent development, and shared the Apprentice Florida website tools.

Charlie Feehrer, Grant Manager, Pathways to Career Opportunity Grant (PCOG), Division of Career & Technical Education, FDOE, gave an overview of the PCOG over the years including:

- In 2020-21 over \$10 million was awarded. Unused funds from the 2019-20 grant year were used to fund additional projects that otherwise would not have received funding. Occupations included Construction Trades; Automotive Mechanic; Surgical Technician; IT Security Analyst; Pharmacy Technician; Registered Nurse Resident and Machinist/CNC Operator.
- In 2021-22 \$9.7 million was awarded. Occupations included Construction Trades; Emergency Medical Technician (EMT); Nursing Assistant; Culinary Arts; Motorboat Mechanic; Diesel Systems Technician; and Software Developers. In 2022-23 over \$16 million was awarded and awardees are in the process of receiving their funds. Fifty proposals were funded. Occupations included Project Manager Supervisor; Paramedic; Logistician; Mental Health/Substance Abuse Social Worker; Millwrights; Aircraft Mechanics; Solar Thermal/Photovoltaic Installers; and Class A/B License Certification (CDL Training).

Mr. Feehrer explained that annual reports are required, and the completed report and data elements are posted to the FDOE website.

Chancellor O'Farrell opened the floor up for public comments. The following attendees gave public comment:

- Jason Lietz of Academy of Construction Technology commented on Ernst & Young and WIOA.
- Bryan Kamm of Space Coast Consortium Apprenticeship Program commented on Globally Competitive Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeships.
- Yasmine Clarke of The Bee 2 Bee Network commented on IT Apprenticeships.
- Allison Lewis of the Emerging Technology Apprenticeship Program commented on Cyber security in the IT/OT spaces and vacancies they are filling, training, and retaining.
- Megan Oates of the Central Florida Educators Child Care Apprenticeship Program commented on Apprenticeship Week and Resources for programs.
- Daniel Van Sickle of the Electrical Training Alliance of Jacksonville commented on the Pathways to Career Opportunity Grant.

SAAC member closing comments.

Chancellor O'Farrell adjourned the meeting.