

**SA: Ready to Work Advisory Board
Employer Engagement Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
ESC Region 20 Redbud Conference Room
1314 Hines St., San Antonio TX 78208
Monday, September 11, 2023
1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jennifer Cantu
Joseph Garcia
Yvette Gomez
Jarvis Moore
Ben Peavy
Stephanie Talley
Councilmember Pelaez

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Paul Garza
Jordan Hooten

STAFF PRESENT:

Amy Contreras, Assistant to the Director, Workforce Development Office
Mary Mills-Nguyen, Advisory Board Staff Liaison
Michael Ramsey, Workforce Development Office Executive Director
Ana Salazar, Workforce Manager, Workforce Development Office
Cynthia Trevino, Senior Manager Analyst, Workforce Development Office

A. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Jennifer Cantu called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. after a quorum was established.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Cantu asked members to review the Employer Engagement Subcommittee Minutes of July 10, 2023. The subcommittee voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

D. INDIVIDUAL ITEMS

1. Ready to Work Program Update

Mr. Ramsey introduced WDO's new Marketing Manager, Ryan Loyd, to the group. He then gave an update on Ready to Work programmatic data. He highlighted that August 2023 saw the highest

number of applications to the program since its inception. He also briefed the Subcommittee on the Mayor's industry convenings that have happened to date, in healthcare and construction. Ms. Salazar then summarized developments in a number of complementary employer engagement strategies, including Talent Pipeline Management, the Social Finance Pay It Forward internship program, and a new hiring program with Joint Base San Antonio.

Ms. Cantu asked for more information on the forthcoming partnership with Green Light. Mr. Ramsey clarified that it is a tool similar to WorkInTexas and Indeed, that will allow Ready to Work participants to upload information that is relevant to their job search, like resumes and credentials.

Ms. Talley asked if Green Light will be easy for employers to use. Mr. Ramsey responded that training will be provided to employers to show them how to upload job postings into the platform, and that the platform will allow employers to see and engage directly with training completers suited for their open jobs.

2. Presentation on ESC20 Education Collaborative

Ms. Cantu introduced Meredith Perry from Education Service Center Region 20, who gave the Subcommittee members an overview of the work of the Bexar County Education Pipeline Collaborative to date, and how they are tracking the ongoing teacher shortage.

Mr. Ramsey asked if there is any work being done locally to create a pipeline from early childhood education professionals to grade school teachers. Ms. Perry responded that she is not currently aware of such an initiative, as the ISDs are mainly focusing on upskilling paraprofessionals to fill those teaching jobs.

Ms. Perry spoke on the potential for expanding teacher apprenticeship programs, and several members spoke to similar programs and methods to support teachers and their families.

3. SA WORX Update

Mr. Mammen from SA WORX presented recent Ready to Work occupational data and presented six occupations for consideration for the target occupation list.

Ms. Cantu asked Mr. Peavy and Mr. Garcia to provide commentary on a few IT positions that were flagged to watch for future consideration for removal. Mr. Peavy noted that the decrease in demand for Computer Network Support Specialists is currently not that large, and that the Computer Hardware Engineer occupation is becoming less relevant as most companies are utilizing cloud technology.

Mr. Garcia noted that there is still an industry need for IT support specialist occupations, especially among software and app development companies. However, he did note that many companies recruit primarily outside of San Antonio because of the quick turnaround needed on some projects. He recommended working with local companies to forecast staffing needs ahead of time and to help tailor specific trainings to those companies' needs. He stressed that what constitutes an "entry level" position varies a lot depending on the company and project.

Mr. Mammen then presented the list of new occupations currently up for consideration: Medical Health Services Manager, Natural Science Manager, Community Healthcare Worker, Weatherization Installer, Veterinary Technician, and Childcare Worker.

He then provided an update on recent TPM collaboratives, occupational profiles being developed for marketing purposes, and plans for a learning summit for employers to learn how and when to plug into the Ready to Work talent pipeline.

4. Briefing and Possible Action on Recommendation of New Occupations

The Subcommittee members discussed the occupations up for consideration. They agreed that after the presentation received during the last Subcommittee meeting from TPKR Scientifics, that the Medical Health Services Manager and Natural Science Manager occupations will be recommended to the Advisory Board during their next meeting.

The members acknowledged that demand for Community Healthcare Workers is increasing, especially in the field of mental health services, but they requested that SA WORX do a larger review of this occupation to see if there are connected occupations with higher wages.

The Subcommittee members expressed concern that Weatherization Installer is still an emerging occupation and may not have enough demand yet to justify adding it as a target occupation. Regarding Veterinary Technicians, they worried whether or not there is a clear pathway to higher pay for technicians with a starting wage below \$15 an hour. The Subcommittee requested that SA WORX do more research into these occupations.

The Subcommittee members agreed that more research and work needs to be done into establishing secure career pathways for childcare workers to upskill into higher-paid positions before it can be approved as a target occupation.

After discussion, Ms. Cantu summarized that the Medical Health Services Manager and Natural Science Manager occupations would be recommended as new occupations at the next Advisory Board meeting, and the other occupations would require additional discussion before a decision could be made.

D. STAFF MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Salazar explained that WDO is hoping to host more employer roundtable events in the future, and encouraged the Subcommittee members to share their ideas on topics they would like to see covered in future roundtable events.

F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

No future agenda items.

G. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

APPROVED: