



Workforce Development Board (WDB)

MEETING

June 11, 2025



TO: The Honorable Judge Tim O'Hare
The Honorable Mattie Parker
The Honorable Jim Ross
Tyrone Taylor, WDB Chair
Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County
Board of Directors and Interested Parties

FROM: Robert Sturns, Executive Director

DATE: June 4, 2025

SUBJECT: **June 11, 2025 WDB Board Meeting**

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) will be held at **9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at Lena Pope Amon Carter Center, 3200 Sanguinet St., Fort Worth, TX 76107.** Networking will begin at **8:45 a.m.**

The agenda and preparation materials are attached for your review.

Please contact me at (817) 413-4000 if you have questions or if I can be of assistance.

Enclosures

cc: Gyna Bivens
Chandler Merritt
Dr. Barbara Odom-Wesley
Rick Barnes



Mission & Vision Statement

Our Mission

The mission of Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County (WSTC) is to ensure the successful delivery of innovative workforce solutions and create economic, educational and developmental opportunities that fully engage all employers and career seekers.

Our Vision:

A well-trained, productive, equitable and fully employed workforce that supports the needs of local employers, promotes regional prosperity and improves quality of life.



Workforce Development Board (WDB) Meeting Agenda
9:00 a.m. June 11, 2025

Lena Pope Amon Carter Center - 3200 Sanguinet St, Fort Worth, TX 76107

9:00	I.	Call to Order	Tyrone Taylor
9:02	II.	Public Comments	Tyrone Taylor
9:05	III.	Special Introductions and Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board, Staff and Partner Recognition 	Tyrone Taylor
9:15	IV.	Approval of Consent Agenda Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Minutes of the April 9, 2025 WDB Meeting (p. 1) • Accept Committee Reports: Workforce Delivery Systems (p. 7) • Accept the Financial Report (p. 10) • Accept Report on Recent and Upcoming Solicitations for Grant Applications (SGA) (p.12) • Accept the Update on the Performance Report & Analysis (p.13) • Accept the Layoff Report (p. 14) <small>All consent agenda items are considered to be routine by the Board and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of items unless a Board Member so requests, in which event, the item will be removed from the general order of business and considered in its normal sequence.</small>	Tyrone Taylor
9:20	V.	Briefing Item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Update (p.17)..... 	Nicole Allen
9:50	VI.	Report from the Chair	Tyrone Taylor
10:00	VII.	Executive Director’s Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative Updates • Communications & Events Report (p.18) 	Robert Sturns
10:10	VIII.	Adjourn	Tyrone Taylor



A proud partner of the American Job Center network

Workforce Development Board Meeting

9:00 a.m. April 9, 2024

Lena Pope Amon Carter Center – 3200 Sanguinet St., Fort Worth, TX 76107

MINUTES

WDB Members Present: Lillie Biggins, Mike Doyle, Mike Gerro, Joan Grigsby, Jon Gustafson, Jessica Heer, Andrew Johnsen, Deb Jones, Antoinette Karriem, Jennifer Limas, Dr. Daniel Lufkin, Jerletha McDonald, Rosa Navejar, Dr. Di Ann Sanchez, Leslie Scott, Tyrone Taylor, Raymond Todd, Gracie Vega

WDB Members Absent: Kimberly Baker-Jones, Dr. Marcelo Cavazos, Mike Coffey, Felicia Davis, Leo Del Calvo, Mary Farris, Jana Harris, Dr. Marie Holliday, Jeff Postell, Robert Teran, Estrus Tucker

Staff Present: Nicole Allen, Morgan Armstrong, Tiffany Clayton, Jack Cummings, Tracey Cummings, Lacey Douglas, Brenda Harrist, Mervil Johnson, Valerie Kelton, Colton McDonald, Jauneen Maldonado, Melissa Mata-Valadez, Jann Miles, Jill Navarrete, Renee Parker, Tabitha Smith-Moore, James Stokes, Robert Sturns, Mark Tristan, and Limous Walker

Legal Counsel Present: Carvan Adkins, Bessie Bronstein

I. Call to Order

Tyrone Taylor, Board Chair, called the Workforce Development Board (WDB) Meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. There was a quorum of members present.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

III. Special Recognitions and Introductions

Mr. Taylor thanked everyone for their attendance followed by officially welcoming Robert Sturns to his new role as Executive Director of Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County. Mr. Taylor stated Mr. Sturns' leadership in economic development combined with his vision for workforce innovation will be invaluable in building a skilled workforce in Tarrant County. Mr. Taylor commented his bio was included in the board packet for reference and Mr. Sturns would deliver additional remarks during the Executive Director's Report.

Mr. Taylor continued by introducing Jessica Heer, a new member of the Workforce Development Board and the Executive Vice President of the Fort Worth Economic Development Partnership. He stated Ms. Heer replaced Bruce Payne and is the Economic

Development Representative on the Board with her bio also included in the board packet. Ms. Heer expressed her appreciation to the Board, and she looked forward to serving.

IV. Approval of Consent Agenda Items (WDB)

It was moved by Leslie Scott and seconded by Dr. Di Ann Sanchez to approve the Consent Agenda Items for the WDB which included the following:

- **Approve the Minutes of the February 12, 2025 Joint WDB/WGB Meeting**
- **Accept the Committee Reports: Workforce Improvement**
- **Accept the Financial Report**
- **Accept Report on Recent Solicitations for Grant Applications (SGA)**
- **Accept the Performance Report & Analysis**
- **Accept the Layoff Report**

The motions carried unanimously.

V. Executive Session

Mr. Taylor advised the audience that the members of the WDB as well as legal counsel would go into Executive Session in accordance with Section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code. The Board may deliberate the purchase and exchange, lease, or value of real property during Executive Session.

Mr. Taylor asked all members of the audience and staff to leave the room and once they finished, the audience would be called back. Mr. Taylor called the Executive Session to order at 9:07 a.m. and ended at 9:22 a.m.

VI. Action Item

The WDB Action Item included the following:

Authorize the Executive Director to award, negotiate and execute a lease for a facility to house the Arlington Workforce Center, in accordance with the direction provided by the WDB.

It was moved by Rosa Navejar and seconded by Dr. Di Ann Sanchez to approve the Action Item for the WDB. Dr. Daniel Lufkin abstained.

The motion carried unanimously.

VII. Briefing Items

Mr. Taylor introduced Jill Navarrete, Deputy Executive Director, to present the first briefing item, the Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County System Overview, along with members of the staff. Ms. Navarrete stated the goal was to provide the Board with an overview of how the funding flows down, how the organization is held accountable as well as structured to provide services.

Ms. Navarrete highlighted system impacts which included serving 46,927 job seekers in the last fiscal year. Of these, 817 ex-offenders and 286 unhoused citizens were placed in jobs. Additionally, 3,854 students received services from the Adult Education and Literacy program. Savings of \$78 million were achieved through expeditious placement services. Ms. Navarrete commented 1 of every 8 employers in Tarrant County received services from our system with

an investment of \$2.8 million allocated to skills training for high demand occupations. Child Care fund investments totaled over \$92 million to over 500 child care providers which allowed an average of 8,534 children's families the ability to work or attend school.

Ms. Navarrete noted the Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) program is funded at \$300,000 per year. The total investment over 20 years of funding at this level is \$6 million but has generated over \$84 million in Child Support payments.

Next, Ms. Navarrete presented how funding flows down to the Board and the primary subsystems from the Federal to State (Texas Workforce Commission) and then allocated to boards across Texas. She stated staff at our board procure contractors through a competitive process that provide services in the field to the following: Workforce Center Systems, Child Care System and Education System.

Ms. Navarrete detailed how the organization is held accountable including annual monitoring by the Texas Workforce Commission on rule regulation compliance, internal monitoring by the Board Quality and Monitoring Unit as well as assessments on Cyber Security measures. Additional performance requirements for Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth and Adult Education are measured. Ms. Navarrete cited enrollment targets, placement, and timing for employment at acceptable wage levels, training plus credentials earned, and education services as categories assessed.

Ms. Navarrete summarized work requirements to be met relating to Business Services, Child Care and individuals receiving public benefits (such as RESEA and SNAP). She stated the importance of tracking the number of job seekers receiving services and their participation as well as the number of children in the child care program. Ms. Navarrete invited staff to briefly discuss the funding subcategories.

Brenda Harrist, Programs Oversight Director, covered the Workforce Center System. Ms. Harrist explained that the job seeker services provided to support entry into employment including job referrals, workshops, career and paid internships, plus vocational training. In addition to five workforce centers in Tarrant County, Ms. Harrist included the importance of the Neighborhood Initiative Strategy designed to bring services to specific areas in the county experiencing higher than average poverty rates. Available locations include the Northside Community Center and the Martin Luther King Center. She also stated beginning in February 2025, the William McDonald YMCA initiated workforce services to customers.

Ms. Harrist reviewed how job seekers' personal and professional readiness determines their individual success in securing and maintaining employment. She emphasized that potential employees face barriers to basic requirements necessary for gaining employment due to homelessness, lack of transportation, past incarceration, and educational deficits. We provide support to reduce these barriers. Partnerships with local community-based organizations such as Goodwill North Central Texas, Pathfinders, and The Women's Center assist with specialized services to enhance job readiness and improve employment outcomes. Ms. Harrist introduced a video highlighting customer experience stories demonstrating the support provided by the workforce centers regarding re-employment, education and paid internship opportunities that led to permanent employment.

Jauneen Maldonado, Adult Education and Literacy Director covered services provided by the Adult Education and Literacy Consortium. She explained the consortium includes 6 providers through the Arlington Public Library, Fort Worth ISD, Tarrant County College, Goodwill Industries, Tarrant Literacy Coalition, and LinkEd. There are six programs within Adult Vocational Academies. Additionally, The Women's Center, Catholic Charities and Vocational Rehab Services are non-funded providers.

Ms. Maldonado stated the AEL program provides high school equivalency, English as a second language, Internationally Trained Professional services for those with a credential from their home country, and workplace literacy. She expressed these services led to credential training with the goal of employment. Students are accommodated and met at their level of education when they enter the program. She stated the program is extended to the employers as well providing adult education services on site and tailored to the immediate needs of the employer which has been a successful model in upskilling employees that leads to greater opportunities.

In addition, Ms. Maldonado remarked AEL has integrated into the Neighborhood Initiative Strategy Program by holding classes at workforce centers thanks to partnerships with Tarrant County College and our workforce contractor, C2. She explained students are assigned career counselors who can address barriers a student may encounter with the goal of obtaining the credentials necessary to gain employment. Ms. Maldonado invited the Board to watch a video recounting one student's experience gaining her GED through our partnership with Goodwill.

Nicole Allen, Child Care Director, opened her remarks on the Child Care System subcategory by underlining the importance of the child care component as it supports the job seeker by providing the opportunity for them to go to work or to school. Ms. Allen explained Child Care is the largest budget within Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County, highlighted the nature of the expense for families, and the support our system provides for both job workers and job seekers.

Ms. Allen commented on the partnership with the Board's child care contractor, CCMS, LLC. She stated the Child Care Unit staff and contractor, with approximately 100 employees, adhere daily to the rules and regulations set by TWC at the state and local level as well as federal guidelines. Ms. Allen continued by detailing over 500 child care facilities are in the system through a provider agreement and there is an option to support our families through the program. Ms. Allen also highlighted the Texas Rising Star program, which is the quality rating improvement system for the state of Texas with those providers achieving accreditation after a full assessment ensuring their support of quality early learning education. Ms. Allen noted there are approximately 7,500 children currently in our system.

Ms. Allen stated the goal of the child care team is to ensure the continued support of the child care provider and child care workforce which provides quality early learning to children and assists with the workforce development of the childhood educator. She specified self-sustainability and providing supplemental programs as support to child care center workers is essential. Ms. Allen mentioned one partnership with Camp Fire First Texas' Early Educator Apprenticeship Program, which assists with higher learning and professional support for child care workers. She noted a self-sufficiency wage in Tarrant County is \$77,000 with a child care worker making an average of \$34,000 per year.

Ms. Allen concluded if we do not have a strong pipeline of teachers and a considerable number of job seekers eager to join the child care workforce with appropriate wage incentives, it will be difficult to support working families or the child care business owner.

Ms. Navarrete addressed Business Services and the four teams that collaborate on projects within the unit. Board Level Business Services, Board Communication, Events and Outreach, Workforce Center Business Services and Workforce Center Labor Exchange Services work in coordination to provide business services and connections to all programs across the system. Ms. Navarrete commented that Renee Parker, Business Services Associate Director, is the current board contact.

Ms. Navarrete presented several activities the teams facilitate and asked Lacey Douglas, Communications and Events Director, to introduce a video about recent Neighborhood Strategies job fairs at the centers. Ms. Douglas stated the latest and largest of the three hiring events was held in March at the McDonald YMCA. Ms. Navarrete concluded by introducing the Directors of each department and thanking the Board for their ongoing support and guidance. Mr. Taylor thanked Ms. Navarrete for the comprehensive overview of the system and understanding our impact on Tarrant County.

Mr. Taylor introduced Carvan Adkins, legal counsel, to give a brief overview of Board Responsibilities. Mr. Adkins stated the importance the Board has within the system. The legislature created the system with the need for local leadership to decide where to allocate funds. Mr. Adkins continued the Board serves as a unit of local government and are public officials. He stated there are rules and regulations to adhere to, including board meetings which must have a quorum, and comply with the Open Meetings and the Public Information Acts. Mr. Adkins commented on penalties associated with being a public official and gave examples of Conflict of Interest rules and confidential information shared in the Executive Session that could impact negotiating positions having associated criminal penalties.

Mr. Adkins reminded the Board that their point of contact regarding topics of discussion or issues is the Executive Director and the statutory role of hiring the Executive Director, creating a plan, and approving the final budget. Additionally, he provided the Board is a policy making board providing direction and oversight at a prominent level for the staff to implement following the Hour Glass Model of Community to Board, Board to Executive Director, and Executive Director to Staff.

Mr. Adkins introduced Bessie Bronstein, Associate Attorney, to further review Conflicts of Interest. Ms. Bronstein gave an example of the process of requesting an affidavit and recusal should a board member have a financial interest in business before the board and that legal counsel should be contacted if a board member has any questions. Ms. Bronstein explained that the Board is governed by the Open Meetings Act. She stated agendas must be posted and only items on the agenda can be discussed. Additionally, the Board must keep minutes. Outside deliberations including but not limited to discussions, texts, group chats, social media platforms, and outside events on board meeting business is prohibited and could result in criminal penalties.

Ms. Bronstein reminded the Board the meetings are posted, and the public can attend and contribute a public comment. Additionally, no action or voting can take place in the Executive Session. She stated that as a government entity and should operate under the assumption that what you create regarding board business will be a public record and could be turned over if requested. If a board member receives a request, legal counsel and Ms. Douglas, the Board's Public Information Officer, should be contacted to assist in facilitating the release of the information. Ms. Bronstein closed by reminding board members to retain all records regarding board discussions.

VIII. Report from the Chair

In consideration of time, Mr. Taylor deferred comments regarding the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) conference to Mr. Sturns to review in his Executive Director's Report.

IX. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Sturns opened by thanking the Board Chair and members for their trust in his ability to move the organization forward and advance the workforce in Tarrant County. Mr. Sturns stated continuing to build relationships with the board and collaborating with members is a priority. Mr. Sturns commented on how impressed he is with the staff and the implementation and scope of work performed by the organization.

He remarked that in his brief time here, he has met with Directors over each of the business services outlined in the workforce system overview to understand the work being done and build relationships with the board. Additionally, he and several members of the board attended the NAWB Forum 2025 in late March. Mr. Sturns thanked Ms. Navarrete for stepping into the role of Interim Executive Director and her support during the transition.

Mr. Sturns reported the Texas Association of Workforce Board (TAWB) held their Q1 meeting with Rosa Navejar, Vice-Chair and Steven Gonzalez (former Business Services Director) attending. Ms. Navejar shared that TAWB has not had a President or Executive Director leading the association over the last few years. A committee will be appointed to research the direction of the organization going forward.

Mr. Sturns commented on national updates with an emphasis on funding. He stated bills moving through both the federal and state level could impact the budget. He also noted if there are reductions in funding, budget scenarios have been prepared to address issues.

Mr. Sturns introduced Ms. Douglas to provide an update on the recent Arlington Job Fair. Ms. Douglas stated the latest and largest of the three job fairs was held in March at the McDonald YMCA. It was presented in partnership with Rush Creek Church, Arlington ISD, the City of Arlington, and the Arlington Chamber of Commerce. She summarized that approximately 70 employers attended the event with over 2000 job openings. The number of job seekers totaled 849 and the number of interviews either conducted or scheduled totaled over 400 with 20 firm offers.

In closing, Mr. Sturns informed the board he is looking at operational and organizational efficiencies. He commented small adjustments around board meetings will be implemented and he will propose plans to go forward in the future with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

X. Adjourn

There being no further business, the WDB Meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Date: June 11, 2025

- Action Item
- Briefing Item
- Committee Report

Submitted by: Mike Doyle, Committee Chair

Prepared by: Tracey Cummings, HR/EO Unit Director

Action Requested:

Accept the Workforce Delivery Systems Committee Report.

Discussion:

The Delivery Systems Committee met in person on May 15, 2025, The Committee approved the minutes from the January 30, 2025, meeting.

Mike Doyle, Committee Chair, congratulated and wished Doug Arnold, Quality and Monitoring Director, well on his upcoming retirement. He also asked staff to pass on his good wishes to Jann Miles, Planning Director, on her upcoming retirement.

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Performance Report & Performance Systems Update

Doug Arnold updated the Committee about the lack of current performance data from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

The briefing offered a high-level view of the concerns, issues and challenges facing local Boards about the performance data. Mr. Arnold noted that since the implementation of the new performance reporting system, local Boards and Contractors are relying on TWC to provide the data for performance results.

Mr. Arnold explained that during a recent conference call with TWC, Boards were told a performance report would be distributed the last week of April. On May 9, 2025, on a conference call with TWC, boards were told the performance reports should be distributed the week of May 23, 2025. There is a conference call with TWC on May 16, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. to continue the performance discussion.

Staff will continue to keep the Committee Updated on Performance as it evolves.

It was noted that TWC has sent out a letter that holds the Board harmless for corrective actions that are implemented based on potentially inaccurate data stemming from all system transitions.

Monitoring Close-out Report FY 24

Doug Arnold, Quality and Monitoring Director briefed the Committee on the FY 24 Texas Workforce Commission Annual Review. The review was resolved with no outstanding issues or concerns and no further Board Action is needed.

Mr. Arnold also updated the committee on the internal monitoring reviews for FY 25. All programs, except for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) were meeting the standards set forth by TWC. Staff were not submitting penalties within the 4-day period for non-cooperative participants. The contractor has submitted the corrective action plan, and it has been accepted by the Board's Program Unit. Included in the plan is that there are challenges with the new case management system because the staff are required to manually enter penalties. The state has been informed about the issue.

National Updates

Jill Navarrete, Deputy Executive Director, briefed the Committee on National Workforce System updates.

The President's Skinny Budget released on May 2, 2025:

The budget proposes a 34.9% cut to DOL discretionary funding.

Redirects Adult Education funding to apprenticeship focused programs.

Alternatively, the Adult Education WORKS Act with bipartisan support was introduced April 17, 2025, in both the house and senate that expands Adult Education and increases funding.

Make America Skilled Again (MASA) gives states more flexibility with the required 10% on apprenticeships. Details will come out soon.

These are just recommendations by the Administration, Congress will draft funding legislation.

Two Executive Orders related to Workforce:

Integrate and realign workforce development programs, Expand Registered Apprenticeships and Advance AI education for Youth.

WIOA funds for July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, were already authorized by Congress. We are looking for the DOL notice to states of their allocations which are usually released in May. The state indicated they are going with the estimates received in December of last year.

The US House Appropriations Committee Meets May 15, 2025, for a hearing on the Department of Labor Budget Request FY 2026.

It was noted that delayed payments to the head start program were released.

Briefing from Collaborative Group & Delivery Systems Updates

AEL (Adult Education & Literacy)

Jauneen Maldonado, AEL Director provided a briefing on the AEL Consortium report and update.

The AEL program ends the first year under the new contract on June 30, 2025. As of April 2025, 83% of the total served target of 4,551 participants has been served. Ms. Maldonado noted that they are on track to meet all targets except for the training numbers, by June 30, 2025, which is the end of the program year. AEL offers both in-person and remote classes as well as hybrid to meet the needs of their students.

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has been working on a replacement project for the data reporting system Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS), for the last two years. The name of the new system is Reporting for Industry Skills and Education (RISE). The completion date for the new system has been tentatively pushed out to November 2025. RISE is supposed to allow for more case management data entry, enhanced reports to support consortiums with multiple providers and allow students to access their own data.

Currently there are problems with the TEAMS (current) database. It does not allow for accurate collection or support services, training services, and/or other case management elements that require us to track separately. We are currently receiving inaccurate report numbers due to problems with the current system. Staff are hopeful the new reporting system will be able to get more accurate and on-time data to help with managing our co-enrolled students between Title I and Title II.

Child Care Systems Updates

Nicole Allen, Child Care Director briefed the Committee on the rollout and implementation of the Texas Childcare Connection (TX3C) case management system. She noted that she believes TX3C will eventually enhance operational efficiency; however, since implementing the system in January 2025, there have been a range of challenges that have required immediate attention.

For example, difficulties in processing provider payments, missing data, reporting challenges, case management and data entry struggles and parent attendance tracking. Board Staff priorities and to resolve payment issues with expedited processes, conduct data integrity checks, engage in ongoing training sessions for staff to improve proficiency in the new system. The Board also gathers feedback from the team regularly to understand their needs and concerns, ensuring we can respond as quickly as possible.

Workforce Delivery Systems Updates

Brenda Harrist, Workforce Programs Oversight Director updated the Committee on the new case management system and the Workforce Programs.

Ms. Harrist informed the Committee that the new case management system was implemented by TWC on April 15, 2024. The Case Management System spans across several programs including Choices, TANF, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, Reemployment Service and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs.

Ms. Harrist also provided an enhanced explanation of the SNAP error rate and how it tied to the new case management system. She also included an overview of the additional case management system issues. For example, Lack of adequate reports, System outages, Dropdown features not working properly just to name a few.

She noted that additional programs monitored received no findings. She also noted that The Tarrant County Workforce Development Board area is ranked #2 in the state for the highest WIOA enrollments, aided by co-enrollments from other programs.

Communications Update

Lacey Douglas, Communication and Events Director updated the Committee on the activities of Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County. She reviewed press releases such as the Teacher Externship Grant and the announcement of Robert Sturns as the new Executive Director. Ms. Douglas also provided a Neighborhood Strategies Outreach Update and Job Fair Updates. She also discussed Media Activity since the January 2025 Delivery Systems Meeting.

Upcoming Events:

June 11, 2025, Workforce Development Board Meeting (WDB)
August 27, 2025, Joint WDB and Workforce Governing Board Meeting (WGB)
August 22, 2025, Budget Workshop
August 21, 2025 - The Workforce Delivery Systems Committee Meeting

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Date: June 11, 2025

Action Item

Submitted by: Mark Tristan, Senior Director of Finance

Briefing Item

Committee Report.

Prepared by: Mark Tristan, Senior Director of Finance

Action Requested:

Accept the Financial Report

Discussion:

The Board is requested to accept the financial report for April 2025. For the first seven months of the fiscal year which began October 1st, 2024, the report shows 53.10% of the budget expended. Expenditures for the first seven months should track at approximately 58.33%, which suggests that most system-wide expenditures for personnel and operations are progressing at acceptable levels.

Budget figures include the nearly \$13.1M increase in funds approved via FY25 Budget Revision #1, which the Board approved on February 12th. Facilities expenditures include cash payments for May lease obligations that were actually paid in April, thus the higher expenditure rate.

Child care expenditures are spending effectively. Staff monitors expenditure trends on an ongoing basis.

Actual training expenditures through April 30 are reflecting an expenditure rate of 25.80% of the Individual Training Accounts (ITA) budget. However, over \$809K in additional training costs have also been obligated, therefore, 51% of the budget has already been committed for training during FY25.

Most Direct Client activities, such as Work Experience and Support Services are spending at appropriate levels to begin the year. As the year progresses, the workforce center operator will monitor and analyze all client activities to ensure that those in higher demand are appropriately funded. The contractor has the flexibility to move budgeted funds from one client activity to another as needed to support customer demand.

Fiscal Impact:

Reflection of expenditures for the Tarrant County Workforce Development Area for October 1, 2024 through April 30, 2025.

**Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County
Fiscal Year 2025
For the Seventh Month Ending April 30, 2025**

	BUDGET	YTD EXPENDITURES	%
BOARD:			
Personnel	7,289,598	4,275,380	58.65%
Operations (System-Wide)	2,877,384	1,463,932	50.88%
WORKFORCE CENTER OPERATOR:			
Personnel	9,209,574	4,288,395	46.56%
Operations	1,146,971	598,807	52.21%
FACILITIES	2,371,455	1,465,824	61.81%
CONTRACTED SERVICES	27,619,743	10,581,628	38.31%
DIRECT CHILD CARE	77,865,001	45,935,189	58.99%
INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS (ITA):	3,122,616	805,486	25.80%
WORK EXPERIENCE	1,770,776	919,581	51.93%
SUPPORT SERVICES	1,995,114	1,489,778	74.67%
	<u>\$ 135,268,233</u>	<u>\$ 71,824,000</u>	<u>53.10%</u>

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Date: June 11, 2025

- Action Item
- Briefing Item
- Committee Report

Submitted by: Jann Miles, Planning Director

Prepared by: Kay L. Gollihugh, Capacity Bldg. & Training Mgr.

Action Requested:

Accept Report on Recent and Upcoming Solicitations for Grant Applications (SGA)

Discussion:

The following grants have been submitted and those we anticipate for this spring. Spring Submissions:

Family, Opportunity, Resilience, Grit, Engagement – Fatherhood (FORGE Fatherhood)
Status: Anticipated Release May 2025

Grantor: US Health and Human Services Agency

Amount: \$1,250,000 Max ceiling

Purpose: To provide a broad array of services to promote or sustain healthy marriage and relationships, strengthen positive father-child engagement, and improve employment and economic stability opportunities for adult fathers (ages 18 and older).

Board Lead: Mervil Johnson

Contract Dates: Estimated October 2025 to September 2030

Submission Date: Estimated July 2025

Texas Talent Connection Grant **Status:** Submitted April 2025

Amount: \$350,000

Purpose: Year 2 of Neighborhood Initiative Strategy

Board Lead: Benda Harrist

Contract Dates: Sept 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026

Notification of Awards: Mid-June 2025

As this is year 2 submission for a grant we received last year, we are very hopeful of continued funding as we have met all our performance targets for last year. This funding continues to support staffing at two neighborhood initiative sites located in southeast and northside communities in Fort Worth. We have seen a continued rise in the numbers of both employers and job seekers participating in our job fairs held in the neighborhood. This new funding request will continue support for workforce staffing and services at our partner site locations.

Healthcare Internship fund-WIOA Statewide **Status:** Awarded.
Contract expected early Summer

Amount: \$100,000.

Purpose: To provide twenty internships in the Health Care Industry.

Board Lead: Renee Parker, Business Services Associate Director

Original Application Submission: 10/28/24

Fiscal Impact:

These funds will be part of the Board's funding if awarded.

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Date: June 11, 2025

Action Item Submitted by: Doug Arnold, Quality and Monitoring Director
 Briefing Item
 Committee Report Prepared by: Doug Arnold, Quality and Monitoring Director

Action Requested:

Accept the Update on the Performance Report & Analysis

Discussion:

This update is to provide the Board with a high-level view of the concerns, issues and challenges facing local Boards regarding performance data. We recently briefed you about the Texas Workforce Commission's implementation of a new performance reporting system. Since the implementation, local Boards and Contractors are relying on the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to provide the data that generates the performance results.

During a recent Workforce Conference call with TWC, Boards were told a performance report would be distributed in the last week of April 2025. As of the date of this communication it has not been distributed.

On May 9th during the Workforce Conference call with the Texas Workforce Commission, Boards were told the performance results should be distributed the week of May 23, 2025.

Local Boards did receive a performance report after August 2024 providing year-end results which was shared with the Board at the April 9th WDB Meeting; however, TWC later said that the data results were not correct.

We are monitoring the situation and will keep the WDB informed of any updated performance data we receive.

Fiscal Impact

None

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Date: June 11, 2025

Action Item Submitted by: Robert Sturns, Executive Director
 Briefing Item
 Committee Report Prepared by: Limous Walker, Rapid Response/TAA Associate Director

Action Requested:

Accept the Layoff Report

Discussion:

As many brick and mortar retail chains continue their struggle to return to profitability, we would like to take a moment to look back and clarify why layoff activities were necessary. Let us first look at Big Lots, which closed four stores in October 2024 and six stores in February 2025, due to declining sales, mounting debt and a shift in consumer spending habits. Party City closed all nine of its locations in Tarrant County due to significant financial challenges and increased competition. Joann Fabrics and Crafts closed all of its stores in April and May 2025, due to declining sales, increasing competition and heavy debt. Forever 21, which filed for bankruptcy twice in a six-year period, closed all four of its Tarrant County locations in May of 2025, due to rising costs, increased competition and a challenging economic environment. All workers from these companies impacted by layoff activities were provided Outplacement Rapid Response Information packets.

Catholic Charities has laid off 33 workers out of 169 scheduled for separation. All 33 were provided Information packets. Of the remaining workers, some voluntarily left the company and others moved to different departments. Those remaining will be laid off in increments as clients are closed out and/or funding is expended. They will also be provided with information packets.

Medstar Mobile Healthcare is scheduled to lay off 565 full time employees and 24 temporary employees on July 1, 2025. Company management was briefed on Rapid Response services, but they advised that services would not be needed because all employees except five full time employees and four temporary employees have been placed with the City of Fort Worth. Medstar said that any remaining employees would also be placed.

FedEx Supply Chain Logistic & Electronics has elected to have Workforce Solutions provide Rapid Response Services for 305 workers in their South Fort Worth facility. Six one-hour Rapid Response sessions per day were scheduled for June 3rd and 4th and two one-hour make up sessions were scheduled for June 5th for workers scheduled for lay off between July 6 and October 25, 2025. Additional sessions will be provided, if necessary.

A representative from LX Pantos America contacted Workforce Solutions on March 20, 2025, regarding Rapid Response services, but desired Information packets. Packets for 131 employees scheduled to be laid off on April 4, 2025, were delivered March 27, 2025.

Allied Aviation Fueling of Dallas, Inc has lost its contract for the provision of services at DFW International Airport. Management was briefed on Outplacement Rapid Response services but elected to receive Rapid Response Information packets. 362 workers were scheduled to be laid off March 31, 2025.

Dennis Uniform laid off 139 employees on October 19, 2024 due to severe financial distress; however, Workforce Solutions was unable to provide Rapid Response services because notification occurred on the day employees were laid off.

Fiscal Impact:

None

TARRANT COUNTY FY25 LAYOFFS
October 1, 2024 – present

COMPANY NAME	LOCATION	WARN DATE	NUMBER AFFECTED	LAYOFFS	CLOSURES
<i>Smurfit Westrock</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>5/14/25</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>X</i>	
<i>FedEx</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>5/07/25</i>	<i>305</i>	<i>X</i>	
<i>MedStar Mobile Healthcare</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>4/14/25</i>	<i>565</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Catholic Charities</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>4/01/25</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>X</i>	
<i>Joann Fabrics & Crafts</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>4/07/25</i>	<i>18</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Joann Fabrics & Crafts</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>4/07/25</i>	<i>28</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Joann Fabrics & Crafts</i>	<i>Grapevine</i>	<i>4/07/25</i>	<i>23</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Joann Fabrics & Crafts</i>	<i>Hurst</i>	<i>4/07/25</i>	<i>15</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>LX Pantos</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>3/18/25</i>	<i>130</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Dairy Queen</i>	<i>N Richland Hills</i>	<i>3/17/25</i>	<i>12</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Allied Aviation</i>	<i>Grapevine</i>	<i>3/03/25</i>	<i>362</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (West I-20)</i>	<i>Arlington</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>15</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (Pipeline Rd)</i>	<i>Hurst</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>13</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (State Hwy 121)</i>	<i>Eules</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>8</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (Lake Worth Blvd)</i>	<i>Lake Worth</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>13</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (Sherry Lane)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>14</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (SW Loop 820)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>7</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (US287)</i>	<i>Mansfield</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>14</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (N Burlison Blvd)</i>	<i>Burlison</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>12</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Party City (Denton Hwy)</i>	<i>Watauga</i>	<i>2/10/25</i>	<i>17</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Lake Worth Blvd)</i>	<i>Lake Worth</i>	<i>1/28/25</i>	<i>15</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (McCart Ave)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>1/28/25</i>	<i>25</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Rufe Snow)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>1/28/25</i>	<i>25</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Central Drive)</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>1/28/25</i>	<i>20</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (S Cooper)</i>	<i>Arlington</i>	<i>1/28/25</i>	<i>17</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Keller Parkway)</i>	<i>Keller</i>	<i>1/28/25</i>	<i>16</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>American Freight (Southwest)</i>	<i>Arlington</i>	<i>11/14/24</i>	<i>5</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>American Freight (Town Square)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>11/14/24</i>	<i>5</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Haltom's Jewelers (Camp Bowie)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>11/14/24</i>	<i>10</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Haltom's Jewelers (Main St)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>11/14/24</i>	<i>10</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Haltom's Jewelers (Hwy 114)</i>	<i>Grapevine</i>	<i>11/14/24</i>	<i>10</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Radius Aerospace</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>11/05/24</i>	<i>65</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Seaquest Aquarkum</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>10/31/24</i>	<i>26</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Sodexo</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>10/29/24</i>	<i>75</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Dennis Uniform</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>10/24/24</i>	<i>139</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Overton Rigde_)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>10/10/24</i>	<i>15</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Eastchase Pkwy)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>10/10/24</i>	<i>17</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Walnit Creek Drive)</i>	<i>Mansfield</i>	<i>10/10/24</i>	<i>14</i>		<i>X</i>
<i>Big Lots (Green Oaks Rd)</i>	<i>Fort Worth</i>	<i>10/10/24</i>	<i>8</i>		<i>X</i>
Total Companies: 39	Cities Impacted: 12		Total Affected: 2,136	Total: 3	Total: 34

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Date: June 11, 2025

Action Item

Submitted by: Nicole Allen, Child Care Director

Briefing Item

Committee Report

Prepared by: Nicole Allen, Child Care Director

Action Requested:

Receive a Child Care Program Briefing

Background:

This month the Workforce Development Board will hear from:

- Nicole Allen – Child Care Director

Mrs. Allen will update the board on Workforce Solutions' Child Care Program by providing an overview of program management, waitlist growth, and impacts on the community and collaborations.

Additional items will be available in this month's handouts packet.

Fiscal Impact:

None

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMMUNICATION

Date: June 11, 2025

- Action Item Submitted by: Lacey Douglas, Communications & Events Director
 Briefing Item
 Committee Report Prepared by: Lacey Douglas, Communications & Events Director
-

Action Requested:

Provide a Communications Update

Discussion:

To brief the Workforce Development Board on the outreach and event activities of WSTC since the last meeting and share upcoming events, they need to be aware of.

Top 500 Most Influential People in Fort Worth

Fort Worth Magazine has released the Top 500 Most Influential People in Fort Worth. There are many ties back to Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County. Including our own Executive Director, Robert Sturns as well as many of our WGB and WDB members, partners and community leaders listed. Congratulations to former Congresswoman, Kay Granger who was named Person of the Year for 2025. **Make sure to check out page the following pages:**

- Robert Sturns: page 46
- WSTC Ad: page 47 – copy is shared in the back of this communication
- WGB Chair, Tarrant County Judge Tim O'Hare: page 60
- WGB Member, Fort Worth Mayor Mattie Parker: page 60
- WGB Member, Arlington Mayor Jim Ross: page 60
- WDB Member, Estrus Tucker: page 101
- WDB Member (and Board Vice-Chair), Rosa Navejar: page 112



Tim O'Hare
County Judge
Tarrant County

Tim O'Hare was elected Tarrant County Judge in 2022. During his first two years as Tarrant County's chief political officer, he led in reducing Tarrant County's operating budget by more than \$58 million. Previously, 25 years in legal practice and in building a real estate investment company. Deacon at First Baptist Grapevine. Formerly, mayor of Farmers Branch. Bachelor's, University of Texas; J.D., SMU.



Mattie Parker
Mayor
City of Fort Worth

Mattie Parker is expected to win a third term as mayor in 2025. She has been a leading voice for economic development, promoting Fort Worth's competitiveness in the global economy through corporate relocations and support for entrepreneurs. Parker also publicly criticized the Fort Worth school district, joining calls that ultimately led to the superintendent's resignation. A former chief of staff to Mayor Betsy Price. Bachelor's, University of Texas; law, Texas A&M.



Jim Ross
Mayor
City of Arlington

Jim Ross was elected mayor of Arlington in 2021, where he previously served as a police officer and member of the city's first SWAT unit. He later began a law career focused on environmental exposure cases and opened Jim Ross Law Group in 2009. Ross serves on the boards of the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation, Texas Municipal League, and National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation. He is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and a graduate of Texas A&M School of Law.



Rosa Navejar
President
The Rios Group

Rosa Navejar has expanded her Fort Worth-based firm, The Rios Group, with new offices in Dallas, Houston, Austin, and San Antonio. The firm earned the city of Dallas' 2019 4E Award for Excellence and was named a 2018 Small Business of the Year by the city of Austin. Navejar is a past chair of the Fort Worth Chamber and serves on the boards of Texas Wesleyan, HSC Foundation, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Texas 2036.



Estrus Tucker
Co-Founder
DEI Consultants

Estrus Tucker's DEI Consultants specializes in cultivating diversity, equity, and inclusion for corporations, nonprofits, and government organizations. Tucker was the principal consultant for Fort Worth's Race and Culture Task Force and Arlington's Unity Council Racial Equity Plan Initiative. He serves as faculty and coach for the Institute for Health Improvement's National Equity Initiatives. Bachelor's in psychology, UTA.



Robert Sturns
Executive Director
Workforce Solutions
for Tarrant County

Robert Sturns is a seasoned leader with over 30 years of experience in public and private sectors. In March 2025, he became executive director of WSTC, overseeing \$122 million annually in workforce training and child care funds. He focuses on locally driven, market-based development efforts. Previously, he led Fort Worth's Economic Development department, driving \$6.4 billion in investment. He holds an MBA from TCU and a B.A. from Stephen F. Austin. Retired captain, U.S. Army Reserves.

Job Fair Wrap Up April – May 2025:

- **Arlington Area Job Fair – April 2, 2025**
 - 72 Employers attended
 - 2,197 job openings were available
 - 849 Job Seekers were in attendance
 - Of that number 38 identified as Veteran or spouse of a Veteran
 - 211 Interviews have been scheduled or conducted
 - 11 Firm offers have been made
- **Continuing the Climb Job and Resource Fair - May 28, 2025**
 - 52 Employers/Resource Agencies attended
 - 356 job openings were available
 - 569 Job Seekers were in attendance
 - Of that number 41 identified as Veteran or spouse of a Veteran
 - 601 Interviews have been scheduled or conducted
 - 28 Firm offers have been made
 - Court in the Community Numbers:
 - 17 people were seen
 - 58 cases were processed (i.e. closed)

Media Activity since the last Board Meeting in April, (copies of the articles can be found at the back of this communication)

- **Texas lawmakers look to expand child care pilot program beyond Tarrant County (includes interview with Board Member Felicia Davis)**
- **Documenters: Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County welcomes new director, touts job placement numbers**
- **Fort Worth Report: 'A city where you can make an impact': Fort Worth leaders break down why Cowtown is booming (includes quotes from Renee Parker, Business Services Interim Director)**

Neighborhood Strategies Initiative Taken on the Road

The National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) held its annual conference May 5-7, 2025. Workforce Solutions was proud to present on our Neighborhood Strategies Initiative. Heidi Nielsen, Deputy Director – Operations & Partnerships and Efen Cigarroa, Special Programs Manager from our contractor staff, presented to the crowd. The presentation was very well received and they have since fielded many follow up questions of others around the state who are interested in duplicating our efforts.



WSTC WORKS: E-Newsletter

We shared the first edition of our new WSTC WORKS: E-Newsletter with our distribution list on Wednesday, May 21st. This newsletter includes the latest workforce impact, labor market information and event updates. If you did not receive a copy you can see the latest edition as well as sign up for future releases by visiting: <https://workforcesolutions.net/about-us/newsletters/>.

LABOR MARKET DATA



Texas Employment Forecast

The Texas Employment Forecast from the Dallas Federal Reserve (as of May 16, 2025) indicates jobs will increase 1.7 percent in 2025, with an 80 percent confidence band of 1.1 to 2.3 percent. This forecast is based on an average of four models that include projected U.S. gross domestic product, oil futures prices and the Texas and U.S. leading indexes. This forecast utilizes Texas employment data that have been adjusted to include anticipated downward revisions by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The forecast implies 245,400 jobs will be added in Texas this year, and employment in December 2025 will be 14.4 million.

In the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metro area, a comparison of February and March 2024 to 2025 shows an increase in the civilian labor force and unemployment decreasing from the same time last year.

METRO AREA CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE				TARRANT COUNTY CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE			
FEBRUARY		MARCH		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
4,448,740	4,539,393	4,448,740	4,534,838	1,882,489	1,909,254	1,885,465	1,908,212

UNEMPLOYED				UNEMPLOYED			
FEBRUARY		MARCH		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
101,973	105,167	170,557	171,440	48,689	49,479	46,061	45,779

PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE				PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE			
FEBRUARY		MARCH		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
4.1	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.1	4.1	2.9	2.8

WORKFORCE WIN: EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

Autonomous mobility leader Moze is actively driving workforce development in Tarrant County through its strategic partnership with Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County (WSTC). Beyond collaboration, Moze actively participates in WSTC job fairs, notably hiring their Director of Operations at the Hiring Red, White & You! Job Fair in November 2024. This engagement underscores Moze's commitment to both community integration and strategic talent acquisition as the company expands.

Marking a significant step in Arlington's emergence as a smart transportation hub, Texas-based Moze has relocated its U.S. headquarters from Dallas to a new 87,000 sq ft manufacturing and assembly plant in Arlington, Texas. This move, supported by incentives from the Arlington Economic Development Corporation, will create over 100 high-paying jobs, prioritizing local Arlington residents.

Shawn Talkratoko, CEO, Moze participated in WSTC's Connecting Education with Industry event in October 2024. His involvement, alongside their active participation in job fairs, highlights Moze's dedication to cultivating a local talent pipeline crucial for regional technological competitiveness.

Specializing in autonomous, electric, multi-passenger vehicles, Moze addresses first-mile and last-mile transportation needs. Their 12-passenger shuttles, built with 3D printing and featuring advanced sensors for 360° awareness, operate at speeds up to 45 mph in controlled environments like campuses and entertainment districts.



Learn More about our Employer Services

2025 National Adult Education Honors Society Induction Ceremony

The Tarrant County Adult Education and Literacy Consortium held its 4th Annual National Adult Education Honor Society Induction Ceremony on Thursday, May 22nd at the Arlington Council Chambers. The instructors spoke about each of the 11 students inducted and why they were nominated. Students were selected based on three criteria: Dependability, Cooperative Attitude and Work Ethic. The nominated students demonstrated outstanding leadership and a strong commitment to inspiring their peers, contributing significantly to both their own success and that of their classmates. The Tarrant County Consortium High School Equivalency Graduation is being held on June 2, 2025. Congratulations to all our 2025 Graduates!



Best Places for Working Parents

We are excited to announce we have been recognized (again) as one of the Best Places for Working Parents in Tarrant County. WSTC is proud to be one of many Tarrant County businesses that are leading the way in family-friendly policies!

The Best Place for Working Parents designation recognizes businesses that are committed to supporting working parents through their family-friendly policies and practices.



Calendar Items Board Members should be aware of:

- Please mark your calendars for the next Joint Board Meeting as well as the Budget Workshop:
 - **2025 Budget Workshop:** August 22, 2025 – 9:00 a.m. – Via Zoom (more details to come)
 - **Joint WDB / WGB Meeting:** August 27, 2025 - 9:00 a.m. – Lena Pope Amon Carter Center. We will be approving the budget among other items, so this is a very important meeting.

Fiscal Impact

None

We're here for Tarrant County!



Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County (WSTC), under the direction of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), is one of 28 local workforce development boards located throughout the state. WSTC's primary goal is to meet the needs of Tarrant County employers and workers through locally designed market-driven workforce development initiatives and services. All employers, workers and job seekers are eligible to take advantage of these services.

Workforce Governing Board Members

★Judge Tim O'Hare, WGB Chair, Tarrant County

★Mayor Mattie Parker, Fort Worth

★Mayor Jim Ross, Arlington

Workforce Development Board Members

Kimberly Baker-Jones, UAW Local 276
 Lillie Biggins, YMCA of Metropolitan Fort Worth
 Dr. Marcelo Cavazos, Education Consultant
 Mike Coffey, Imperative Information Group
 Felicia Davis, Ready, Set, Jump Learning Center LLC
 Leo Del Calvo, FSI Apparel Inc.
 Mike Doyle, Cornerstone Assistance Network
 Mary Farris, Health and Human Services Commission
 Mike Gerro, Frost Bank
 Joan Grigsby, Tarrant County Coalition
 Jon Gustafson, Lockheed Martin Corporation
 Jana Harris, American Carton Company
 Jessica Heer, Fort Worth Economic Development Partnership
 Dr. Marie Holliday, Sundance Square Dentist
 Andrew Johnsen, Columbia Strategic Consulting Group, LLC
 Debra Jones, Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 Antoinette Karriem, Live! by Loews
 Jennifer Limas, Girls Inc. of Tarrant County
 Dr. Daniel Lufkin, Tarrant County College South Campus

Jerletha McDonald, Arlington DFW Child Care Providers Association
 Jeff Postell, Post L Group, LLC
 Dr. Di Ann Sanchez, DAS HR Consulting, LLC
 Leslie Scott, Mother Parker's Tea & Coffee
 Robert Teran, Tarrant County Central Labor Council AFL-CIO
 ★Rosa Navejar, WDB Vice-Chair, The Rios Group, Inc
 Gracie Vega, Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center
 Tyrone Taylor, WDB Chair, Six Flags
 Raymond L. Todd, Texas Workforce Commission
 ★Estrus Tucker, Como Alumni and Community Club Inc

★ Workforce Solutions congratulates our honorees in The 500!

Congratulations & Welcome to our new Executive Director, ★ROBERT STURNS



A proud partner of the American Job Center network
 817-413-4000 • www.workforcesolutions.net
 Follow us on Social Media

Texas lawmakers look to expand child care pilot program beyond Tarrant County

by [Jacob Sanchez](#) April 17, 2025 2:17 pm



Children look at a red ribbon during a celebration marking the opening of the Child Care Studio at Riverside on Nov. 12, 2024, in Fort Worth. (Camilo Diaz | Fort Worth Report)

Felicia Davis knew exactly why she kept losing staff at her [child care center](#).

Davis, the owner of Ready Set Jump Learning Center in east Fort Worth, just could not offer a salary high enough to keep employees.

A grant from a Child Care Associates pilot program changed the trend. She raised staff wages and maintained costs for her families.

Now, that program could expand beyond Tarrant County. State Sen. Kelly Hancock, R-North Richland Hills, and Rep. Ben Bumgarner, R-Flower Mound, recently filed bills calling for the establishment of a program allowing the workforce development boards in Tarrant County and 13 other North Texas counties to award grants to offset some costs for child care providers, according to a news release.

“The grant helped me retain quality teachers by offering competitive wages, so they can support their families while doing the work they love,” Davis said in a statement. “Now, I have stability for my team — and for the children in our care — and am able to staff more classrooms.”

[Senate Bill 2979](#) and [House Bill 5529](#) would create the Child Care Innovation Pilot. It is based on Child Care Associates’ [Prime Early Learning Pilot](#), an endeavor that has [allowed providers](#) to offset rising utility costs and increase educator pay to \$18 an hour.

The proposed program would expand the availability of high-demand seats; increase compensation; stabilize tuition costs; and support program quality and [child outcomes](#). An estimated 52 child care programs would benefit during the program’s first cycle, officials said.

In Tarrant County, the Prime Early Learning Pilot used \$25 million in [federal pandemic relief funding](#) to offset costs and compensation to 19 child care providers serving low-income families. Child Care Associates, a Fort Worth-based early childhood education nonprofit, worked with Rice University’s Texas Policy Lab to operate the pilot.

So far, the Tarrant County pilot program has seen a 14% increase in overall program enrollment; 33% reduction in tuition costs for families; and a 17% improvement in early childhood educator retention rates, according to a news release.

Supporting the entire child care ecosystem is a key way to increase the number of providers, Kara Waddell, president and CEO of Child Care Associates, said in a statement.

“That’s why we created a grant model that directs funding to where programs need it most: offsetting fixed operational costs, supporting staff wages, and providing incentives for key services and high enrollment,” Waddell said.

Other lawmakers filed bills with similar goals. The difference? [House Bill 5086](#) and [Senate Bill 3007](#) would allow the Texas Workforce Commission to pick up to six local workforce development board regions to operate pilots over a four-year period.

The Tarrant County program was created by the [Blue Ribbon Action Committee on Child Care](#), which the Tarrant County government and the cities of Fort Worth and Arlington formed in 2022 to find a path toward sustainability for providers and affordability for families.

Alfreda Norman, co-chair of the committee and former vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, described child care as the breaking point for why most nonworking parents do not participate in the labor force.

“Ensuring that the child care options needed most by working families exist in every community across Texas is critical to our state’s long-term economic success,” Norman said in a statement.

Documenters: Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County welcomes new director, touts job placement numbers

by [Scott Nishimura](#) and [Documenters](#) April 19, 2025 12:00 pm



More than 1,000 people came to a job fair hosted by Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County at Globe Life Field in Arlington on Nov. 9, 2023. (Seth Bodine | Fort Worth Report)

The Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County board authorized its staff to negotiate a lease for a new Arlington Workforce Center that could remain in the current location at the University of Texas at Arlington, or move to another one. The current lease comes up for renewal this year, Lacey Douglas, Workforce spokeswoman, said in an interview after the board's April 9 meeting.

The board also welcomed Robert Sturns, its new executive director, to his first board meeting.

Workforce Solutions Board and Committee Meeting

Documenter name: Tekisha Hobbs

Agency: Fort Worth Boards and Commissions

Date: April 9, 2025

[See more about this meeting at Documenters.org](#)

Notes

New board members

The board introduced Robert Sturns, the new executive director of Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County and the city of Fort Worth's former economic development director.

The board also introduced its newest director, Jessica Heer, executive vice president of the [Fort Worth Economic Development Partnership](#). Heer will serve as the board's economic development member.

New Arlington Workforce Center

A motion was made, seconded and approved to enter into a closed executive session to deliberate the leasing of a facility that will house the Arlington Workforce Center.

Resumption of open session

A motion was made, seconded and approved to lease a facility that will house the Arlington Workforce Commission.

WSTC System Overview

Jill Navarrete, [Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County](#) assistant director, provided an overview of workforce development systems.

- 46,827 job seekers were served by WSTC in 2024.
- Over 1,100 low-income job seekers were placed in jobs, increasing their annual wages by \$3,687.
- 818 ex-offenders were placed in jobs.
- 286 homeless citizens were placed in jobs.
- 3,854 students received adult education and literacy services.

Brenda Harris, the board's program oversight director, works on the job seekers side of the house. WSTC offers an extensive array of services designed to support job seekers at various stages of their employment journey. Services include: Job referrals, job readiness workshops, career assessments, paid internships, vocational training and support services.

"We try to meet people where they are and give them what they need to become self-sufficient and to get them on a career path," Harris said.

Workforce Solutions staff gave an overview of the agency's Neighborhood Initiative Strategy. This strategy was designed to address specific needs in certain areas of Tarrant County that are experiencing higher-than-normal levels of poverty. All of the targeted areas were located in Fort Worth.

The initiative began in February 2024. Workforce Solutions staff set up shop at [Northside Community Center](#), twice weekly. Additionally, staff began conducting by appointment-only visits at the [MLK Center](#) in Stop Six. At the beginning of 2025, WSTC services were further expanded at the [William McDonald YMCA](#) one day a week. The board is partnering with three organizations to deliver intensive and highly specialized services tailored to adults. Services include: disability support, mentoring programs and work experience education programs. Social workers are onsite at three WSTC locations.

A series of testimonial videos were played, highlighting success stories from the various WSTC programs. Nicole Allen, WSTC [child care director](#), presented an update on the child care system. This system supports the job seeker by caring for their kids which allows them to get to their places of employment or education. This system comprises the largest portion of WSTC's budget. WSTC's partner in providing child care is [Child Care Management Services, LLC](#).

The system serves over 500 Tarrant County child care centers through provider agreements. Much of this work is done through the quality rating system for child care providers, [Texas Rising Star](#). This organization ensures providers are equipped to handle the care of children and that they are getting the quality education that they need.

There are currently over 7,500 children in care. Scholarships are also offered to offset the cost of child care.

Board roles and responsibilities

Carvan Adkins, WSTC legal counsel, provided the board with an overview of their roles and responsibilities.

Adkins covered the following topics:

- [Texas Open Meetings Act \(TOMA\)](#)
- Conflict of interests
- Quorum types
- Closed sessions
- Board member communication including: social media, text messages ... etc.
- Document and other information retention policies
- Criminal penalties for violations

Executive director's report

Arlington Job Fair, held April 2, 2025, was the second largest event of the year. This event had 72 employers who were looking for candidates, 849 job seekers and over 2,000 job openings. Additionally, over 400 on-site interviews were conducted, resulting in 20 firm job offers.

'A city where you can make an impact': Fort Worth leaders break down why Cowtown is booming
by [Eric E. Garcia](#) May 13, 2025 5:10 pm



Robert Allen, president and CEO of the Fort Worth Economic Development Partnership, left, and Steve Montgomery, president and CEO of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, center, talk with Robert Sturns, executive director of Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County, right, during an economic impact discussion series at the Kimbell Art Museum. (Eric E. Garcia | Fort Worth Report)

As one of the nation's fastest-growing cities, Fort Worth is attracting new businesses and residents through its proximity in the middle of the country, bolstered by its civic pride, Western heritage, tourism, higher education institutions, transportation and technology hubs, and — of course — lots of wide open spaces.

"It's an incredible time to be in Fort Worth, Texas," Steve Montgomery, president and CEO of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, said during the organization's State of Economic Impact: Work, Play, Stay series of panel discussions May 13 at the Kimbell Art Museum's Renzo Piano Pavilion.

The Fort Worth chamber, Montgomery said, helps expand prosperity and enable companies that call the city home to not only stay here but prosper and grow.

“Retention and expansion are the core of our mission,” he said.

Fort Worth, he said, is a special place with people interested in getting to know their neighbors and developing personal and business relationships.

“We’re just cresting 1 million folks and we still have that authenticity that makes Fort Worth special,” Montgomery said.

Fort Worth’s strong aviation and aerospace industries are among the main catalysts for city growth since Dallas Fort Worth International Airport and Perot Field Fort Worth Alliance Airport are nationally known transportation hubs for both passengers and freight.

DFW Airport announced two weeks ago that it [will expand its new Terminal F](#) from a 15-gate, \$1.6 billion facility to become a 31-gate, \$4 billion passenger hub. The new vision for Terminal F will supplement the airport’s \$12 billion capital plan to rebuild and modernize facilities and infrastructure.

“There’s a lot going on at DFW,” said Ken Buchanan, the airport’s executive vice president for revenue management and customer experience.

Buchanan said new air routes to Hong Kong and Taiwan will have impacts of \$400 million each since those services connect to the world’s largest financial markets.

“The good news is that we have both of those flights coming here,” he said in a presentation.

Manufacturing, health care, energy and transportation are also key industries aiding in growth.

Robert Allen, president and CEO of the Fort Worth Economic Development Partnership, said the organization is tasked with recruiting businesses to relocate to the city.

“We want to bring business to Fort Worth,” he said. “We want to help it, help businesses work through the process. So we’ve got to go find it.”

Growth potential in the nation’s 11th largest city seems limitless, Montgomery said.

“As the mayor (Mattie Parker) likes to say, roughly 350 square miles, half of which is not yet developed,” he said. “So we’ve got contiguous acreage close to transit, close to rail, close to air cargo and transportation, close to (the) business district.”

People, culture set Cowtown apart in impact

There are countless examples of successful businesses throughout the city, Allen said, citing defense contractors Bell Textron Inc. and Lockheed Martin Corp. and their work to provide aircraft for military defense.

The difference that brings companies to Fort Worth and makes them successful, he said, are the countless “doers” who make an impact.

“You can go to a city, you can set up a shiny new building, right, and go to work and do what you want to do. But at the end of the day, are you truly positively moving the needle forward in that community? Are you making an impact?” Allen said. “Fort Worth is a city where you can still make an impact. That’s our single greatest proposition, second only to our people.”

Montgomery said Fort Worth is a pro-business city, tackling challenges such as homelessness, for which the chamber [created a toolbox for local businesses](#).

That's one of the reasons why North Texas is No. 1 for corporate relocations, in addition to the easy access that business executives have to national and global travel through DFW.

Culture is also important to Fort Worth and its economic future, according to an arts institution leader who addressed the audience.

Jacques Marquis, president and CEO of the Van Cliburn Foundation, said the globally recognized Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, to be held May 21 to June 7 at TCU, "is a diamond here in Fort Worth."

The competition, which awards cash prizes and career management packages every four years, is recognized as one of the top two piano competitions in the world.

"We bring the eyes of the world to Fort Worth," he said during a presentation.

The Van Cliburn, he said, brings a direct economic impact of \$15 million to \$20 million to Fort Worth.

Transit, workforce development could bring further growth

Holly Schroeder, vice president of external affairs for DrinkPak, a leading manufacturer of premium alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, said her company expanded its operations in North Texas, because "we knew we wanted to be in the center of the country."

The company is spending \$200 million to [open a new location](#) in the Fort Worth area. The facility is at Carter Park East in south Fort Worth and will employ 400 people.

About half of the company's products stay in Texas, she said.

Higher education plays a role in workforce development to retain businesses, Renee Parker, interim business services director at Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County, said.

Fort Worth received a \$1.2 million skills development fund grant, the largest in the state, she said. The grant supported 600 people.

Tarrant County College "is at the front line of that," she said.

In his presentation, Richard Andreski, president and CEO of Trinity Metro, said the transit agency's infrastructure investments "are producing results."

The TEXRail passenger train has been successful with a booming transit-oriented development in downtown Grapevine. Businesses close to the station are seeing a big impact in customer sales, he added.

The agency's [Blue Line route will debut June 8](#) to transport tourists and others around downtown Fort Worth. More investments are needed to bolster the city's transit routes, he said.

"We're just beginning to scratch the surface," Andreski said.