



**WR-MINUTES**  
**October 9, 2025, at 11:00 AM**  
**Zoom**

**Members Present:** Sean Moore (Committee Chair), Senior Project Manager, Workforce SW WA; Karin LaValla (Vice Chair), Business Services Consultant, WorkSource; Ryan D Reese, President/1<sup>st</sup> District Representative of the WSCFF, IAFF Local 452/Washington State Council of Firefighters; Michelle Thor, VP Outreach & Social Responsibility, Columbia Credit Union; Emily Robertson, Regional Labor Economist, Employment Security Department

**Guests:**

**Members Absent:** Chase Kleinschmidt, Director of Operations, Silicon Forest Electronics

**Clark College:** Nicole Rogers-Marcum, Director of Instructional Finance & Operational Support, Clark College; Theo Koupelis, Dean of WPTE & STEM, Clark College; Scot Headley, Dean of Business & Health Sciences, Clark College; Kathrena Halsinger, Interim Dean of SOFA, Clark College; Elizabeth Flores, Advisory Coordinator, Clark College; Liz Bigback, Fiscal Analyst 3, Clark College; Terri Kaufman, Assistant Registrar, Clark College; Kevin Thomas, Director, Workforce Education Services (W.E.S), Clark College; Kate Jacky, Associate Director of Financial Aid, Clark College

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The meeting began at 11:01 AM, and a quorum was met

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The committee will meet next on February 26, 2025, and April 9, 2025.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes from the previous meeting on April 17, 2025, were approved.

**Work Plan**

The committee reviewed the annual work plan. No modifications were made.

**Bylaws**

The committee reviewed the bylaws. No modifications were made.

**Ethics Training**

All current members have completed the ethics training; therefore, no training was conducted.

### **Membership Recruitment**

Scot emphasized the need for new committee members and greater engagement.

- Scot suggested inviting Ken Torre (BUS/BASAM Chair).
- Michelle recommended someone from the Chamber of Commerce.
- Theo asked what areas of expertise are missing from the current membership.
- Sean proposed outreach to local tech start-ups, small businesses, or staffing agencies such as Temp2Perm, and will share leads with Theo.
- Scot also suggested a former Clark student as a potential member.

### **College Updates**

Theo reported increased enrollment across all age groups.

### **WPTE & STEM**

Theo shared the following WPTE & STEM updates:

- Welding program added a weekend cohort due to high demand; additional space and faculty are needed.
- Automotive program enrollment continues to grow.

DMA program is undergoing a full curriculum redesign to align with industry needs.

- Advanced Manufacturing reported strong enrollment with minimal advertising.
- Mechatronics is addressing challenges with new clean energy grant funding for equipment and curriculum development.
- A new Construction Management degree is pending approval, aligning with anticipated infrastructure projects.
- The Biology department is exploring a biotech pathway.

### **Business Management**

Scot noted increased enrollment in the Bachelor of Applied Management (BASAM) program, designed for students with technical degrees seeking advancement into supervisory and leadership roles.

### **Allied Health**

Scot shared that the college received a state grant to help PeaceHealth's entry-level employees transition into skilled technical roles. This is the final year of funding due to legislative evaluation of the program's outcomes.

### **Worker Retraining Application**

Elizabeth requested preliminary committee feedback to inform next year's Worker Retraining application.

Nicole explained that the application process begins in February and invited early input to help

align funding priorities with student and labor market needs. We are seeking initial recommendations and feedback from the committee.

**Nicole** welcomed a discussion on the next steps to help inform the building of our application and budget for worker retraining for the following year.

## Student Trends

**Elizabeth** presented the student trends data provided by Cheyanne Pfeifer.

**Sean** noted that the nursing workforce appears balanced for the first time in several years, though leadership and management skills remain in high demand. Sean asked for a pathway or courses that students receive in management.

**Scot** asked how people qualify for these categories and who qualifies them. Scot asked Nicole how this process works, since we see worker retraining students who receive resources; most of them fall into the dislocated worker retraining category. Scot asked Nicole about what qualifies them.

**Nicole** clarified that student affairs manages eligibility, while instruction oversees budgeting and planning.

**Theo** raised questions about where dislocated workers originate from and whether funds align with current labor trends.

**Emily** confirmed that retraining funds cannot be used for occupations in decline and emphasized the importance of labor market data in application review.

**Kevin** noted that most retraining referrals come through Employment Security Department outreach sessions, and WES staff will review internal data to identify enrollment trends.

**Nicole** will walk through the Worker Retraining budget again at the next meeting.

**Kate** shared that the State Board of Technical and Community Colleges provides guidelines that determine what a dislocated worker is, such as stopgap employment, displaced homemakers, etc.

**Kevin** shared the following: One form of student support through WRT is Training Completion Aid (TCA) funding, Coding Description Examples of Documentation.

- Training Completion Aid Guidelines:

- *The goal of Training Completion Aid (TCA) is to increase the completion and success rates of Page 16 Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges 2023-24 CTC WORKER RETRAINING PROGRAM GUIDELINES // March 2023 Worker Retraining (WRT) program students by providing them with some living expense resources while they are in training. Studies conducted by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCCTC) have revealed a 20 percent increase in student retention for students who received TCA over those who did not receive aid. These funds are to be used to increase program completion for those enrolled students whose unemployment benefit eligibility will be exhausted before their training program is completed. TCA funds are not intended for use in payment of tuition or direct expenses; however, students may choose to use them for that purpose.*

**Theo** raised questions about where dislocated workers originate from and whether funds align with current labor trends.

**Nicole** stated that the college does not invest Worker Retraining funding in programs where jobs are in decline.

**Emily** confirmed that retraining funds cannot be used for occupations in decline and emphasized the importance of labor market data in application review.

**Kevin** noted that most retraining referrals come through Employment Security Department outreach sessions, and WES staff will review internal data to identify enrollment trends.

WES offers info sessions every other week at the Employment Security Department and shared that the college receives prospective student referrals from there.

**Kevin** noted that he will have Cheyenne take a closer look at our internal tracker to try to determine where these trends have been coming from for the past year and update the group.

**Scot** asked Nicole if the college could use the money for direct support to students.

**Nicole** confirmed that both financial aid and direct support services are available to students.

The funding is broken up into two pieces:

1. **Financial Aid:** This portion is *only* for direct student aid and cannot be used for instructional costs (like adding sections or other instructional supports).
2. **Operational Support:** This separate amount covers positions that support students through both Instruction and Student Affairs, in addition to other direct support services. There is also money specifically dedicated to direct student support.

### **Economic Data**

**Emily** shared that the updated Occupations-in-Demand list for 2025 is delayed but expected soon.

**Emily** reviewed the existing dataset, highlighting regional wage data and job growth projections.

Committee members explored specific occupations, including addiction counseling and information security analysis.

**Emily** highlighted the data on average annual job openings, noting that there are two designations. The first reflects openings created by occupational growth alone, while the final columns show the total projected average annual openings, which include both growth and turnover.

**Kevin** explained that he had shared a breakdown of the different eligibility criteria for Worker Retraining. He noted that Clark College typically receives students under only a few of these eligibility codes, while other categories exist but are not commonly represented among the college's students.

**Sean** asked about tracking layoffs by occupation. Emily explained that ESD tracks unemployment insurance claims by industry rather than by specific job titles, but these serve as a proxy for layoff trends.

The committee agreed that this data would be valuable to inform future planning and funding priorities.

Worker Retraining  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
October 9, 2025

Prepared by Elizabeth Flores