#  Wednesday, April 30, 2025

 MATT SNIADECKI: Real quick, if you wouldn’t mind pressing the front button on your microphones, you should see a green ring glowing. Yeah, down here.

 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: In the notch.

 UNIDENTIFIED: [Inaudible].

 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: [Inaudible].

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: That’s artificial intelligence [inaudible].

 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you, sir.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Chairman Bryan Daniel.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Here.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Dr. Jay Killgo. Mario Lozoya.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Here.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Vanessa Malo.

 VANESSA MALO: Here.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Scott Norman. Robert Uhl.

 ROBERT UHL: Here.

 MATT SNIADECKI: We have a quorum present.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Let’s move then to, uh, checking to see if we have any public comment. I don’t have any opening remarks. Commissioner Esparza is joining us today. Commissioner Esparza, do you have any opening remarks you’d like to make?

 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: Very quickly, just want to thank everybody. Chairman, thank you for having me here today, uh, when all the exceptional work that this board is doing all across the state, uh, this is kind of synonymous when I say hello to folks from around and across the state, uh, we’re very quickly talking about grants and, uh, the buzzword is, is, skill development and JET, uh. We get to see where it comes from and then put names to faces when we go get to visit them, uh, doing presentations and, and visits for where this training is taking place, and, again, thank you for listening to employers as we represent employers. Thank you for listening to employers to find out exactly what their industry needs, uh. It’s a, it’s a quick turn when it comes, when we do that, uh. They're the ones, you know, producing, you know, getting business done. We appreciate the continuing, uh, keeping, keeping their pulse on, on radar, so, chairman, thank you.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Greatly appreciate it. Thanks for coming down. Anybody else opening comment? All right. Mr. Trobman, is there any public comment?

 MR. TROBMAN: No.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you very much. Let’s move then—we’re going to be on Agenda Item 3 at this point. Uh, program update and then some data on fiscal year ’25 operations. Matt and Lori, I’ll turn it over to you.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Perfect, thank you, chairman. I’ll direct everyone to tab 2 in your binder. This is just a quick FY25 data presentation. Uh, looking at slide two, there’s a breakdown of the funding we had for this year based on the 65/35 split that the board recommended last year. Uh, we were operating with a little, uh, more than 14 and a half million dollars, so that equated to 5.109 million for institutes of higher education, and then the 9.48 million for school districts and open-enrollment charter schools. Coincidentally, we had the exact same number of applications this year as we did last year, exactly 194, but we’ll begin by looking at institutes of higher education. We had 31 total applications, seven of those were disqualified which left us with 24 responsive and of the 24 responsive 17 of those met the 60 percent threshold. That was also voted and recommended on by the board. With those 17 that actually is our full allotment of awards, so that will total the 5.109 million and that’s 16 full awards and leaves one partial award for just a little over a quarter of a million dollars. Uh, that was 12 urban districts, five rural districts, and that will, uh, benefit 1600 students in that first year or the grant year for that, uh, award. On that next slide, uh, slide five you’ll see an IHE breakdown. I will note these are all responsive applications that we received. Uh, nothing too out of the ordinary. We did see, uh, significantly less welding applications for IHEs as you can see. There was only one, uh, with a few more scattered, uh, throughout the health care occupations or industries. Any questions about IHE applications?

 MARIO LOZOYA: Yes, uh, can you, any information you can share regarding the disqualified?

 MATT SNIADECKI: Yeah, and we will touch on that later. I will say that they were down significantly this year from last year. We had 25 less disqualifications and I know that was something that the board specifically asked us to look at so we’ll dive into that a little deeper later.

 MARIO LOZOYA: OK. Thank you.

 MATT SNIADECKI: OK. So for school district and charter school numbers, you’ll see we had 163 total applications, 32 of those were disqualified leaving us with 131 responsive and of the 131, 105 met the minimum 60 percent threshold. Uh, and just in comparison, uh, we had 91 responsive IS school district applications last year. So that number was also up significantly. Then on the next page, of those 37, uh, I'm sorry, 37 total awards for school districts out of the 105 equaling the 9.4 million dollars. It was a little rare this year. We were actually able to award all of those in their full capacity and it left us with just a very small remainder of a little over $1,000. Those benefited 30 rural districts, seven urban districts, and just under 5,000 students for that grant year. Uh, I know one other thing we had spoken about last year was, uh, the number surrounding applicants who met the minimum but wouldn’t be awarded, so that’s kind of the data there at the bottom. Sixty-eight applications met the minimum threshold and those totaled just under $17,000,000, so those folks had really strong applications but unfortunately, we had exhausted the funding by that time.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Could I make a point here? Uh, and just, for, for, to notice here that in the IHE, 12 urban and five rural, right, heavy on the urban, whereas in the ISD it’s heavy on the rural. It’s a reverse, right? And I think that goes with the comments we’ve made in the years past in that there’s less community colleges in, in rural areas, right? So we have to depend on the school district to provide the pipeline, and kind of I think this information here it kind of tells that story, right?

 ROBERT UHL: To your point, last year we were discussing whether to adjust the split at 60/40 [inaudible].

 MARIO LOZOYA: Perfect, exactly, great.

 ROBERT UHL: One other quick follow-up question, the 1,028, is it that none of the 68 applications that met the threshold wanted that small portion, or is that—

 MATT SNIADECKI: So, yeah, I think the next, uh, application was for 330,000, so I don’t even think we would offer them the $1,000. Uh, I'm not entirely sure it also falls below the 40,000 for a minimum award, so, uh, I think unless it meets that minimum they can’t necessarily, unless it shifted to the other side to benefit [inaudible]. Uh, on the next slide you’ll see the charter school, school district occupation breakdown. Uh, I will also note you do see 48 welding occupations, or applications. However, there were much fewer awards for welding occupations.

 MARIO LOZOYA: They didn’t meet the 60.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Yeah, yep. Uh, or even, even strong applications but we had exhausted funding by that time [inaudible]. Uh, and you’ll note, uh, automotive service technicians, mechanics, that occupation was up significantly, and then health care occupations, obviously, 16 registered nurses, 14 licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses. And then, on the next slide, just a quick program overview. I know we had talked about average award or average, uh, request in the past, so for school districts, all responsive, that amount was up about $6,000 this year, 248,000 compared to 242 in the past. Uh, the average award request was 256, so just up a little bit from there. Ninety-nine applicants had, I'm sorry, 99 applicants had not received an award over the past three years. The only reason that’s significant is because, uh, it still includes FY22, and in FY22 we allowed more than one, uh, award per applicant. So next year we won’t, we will no longer be including that in that data so that will be interesting to see how that impacts, uh, impacts awards. And then of those 11 potential first-time awardees which we love to see that.

 ROBERT UHL: You’ll be tracking success rates for groups that are getting first-time award or how successful was the program after we awarded something, programs shut down, they exponentially increased in size.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Yeah, absolutely. So there are quarterly reporting requirements with our contract team and the grantee, and it manages and monitors, basically, everything you talked about. How many students are trained, uh, have they gotten equipment delivered and set up, so kind of just keeps track of the timeline.

 ROBERT UHL: And how long, er, is that, is that data reported?

 MATT SNIADECKI: We only track it during the grant period, which is typically 12 to 15 months.

 ROBERT UHL: Is that something we could look at getting extended at—I’d be curious to know how successful—we could track how successful these programs are across two, three, four, five years, say.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Got you.

 ROBERT UHL: This was a particularly successful award, this started a new program, and that program is now off on its own running, or we awarded the grant here, this program—

 UNIDENTIFIED: So, I’ll jump in, uh, and it is something that we have considered. I think one of the, the reasons we’ve held off on doing that is we want to ensure that we are reimbursing the schools or colleges, uh, as timely as possible because this is functioning as a reimbursement, uh. If we, the further we extend out reporting requirements, uh, there has to be some impetus for them to continue to report and so usually that means withholding the final amount of the payment, right? Uh, so, uh, we’ve talked about voluntary reporting, uh, as well as uh, we worked very closely with the Texas Education Agency, uh, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board so we have been looking at whether there are ways to leverage the data sharing that’s done between the Tri-Agency initiative to, to better understand the outcomes and, uh, longitudinal data associated with these students.

 ROBERT UHL: Yes. [Inaudible] a voluntary basis [inaudible].

 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you for that.

 ROBERT UHL: [Inaudible].

 MATT SNIADECKI: And just one more note about that, that’s typically what we always try to emphasize, that the number of students they're indicating in their application is just during that grant period or essentially two semesters, but we understand that the benefit is far greater than that. Obviously, the equipment is not going to be used for one year and retired but obviously over five, a decade, five years or a decade, that number is significantly higher. Uh, same slide, still on program overview, but for IHEs, so the average request all responsive as 300,000 up $50,000, a significant amount from FY24 and I will remind, uh, the board there was a recommendation to increase the top end or the maximum award, so it didn’t necessarily seem, uh, to be indicative in the school district applications but certainly in the higher education applications with an average award request of 305, uh, and obviously, much smaller pool of applicants on the IHE side but six, uh, have not received an award over the past three years, so some new blood coming back into the program. Uh, and then the next slide, the bar chart, is just a breakdown by Workforce Board about where all responsive applications came from. So you can see North Central, Coastal Bend, East Texas had significant amount of applications this year, but that just breaks down where from the state these applications are coming from.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Somebody’s really active down there at North Central.

 UNIDENTIFIED: [Inaudible].

 MATT SNIADECKI: OK. And, uh, no questions about the program overview? OK, that takes us to slide 11. This is where we can talk a little bit about disqualifications. Uh, that’s something we’re thrilled about. I know last year was a little bit of a problem number so to see that come down and I think we can do more work even this upcoming year to shrink it even further. Uh, and then just a quick breakdown, obviously, there are individual reasons these are just kind of categorized but you can see here a breakdown of the different reasons for disqualifications from this fiscal year. I will note these are all infractions so some of these applicants may have had multiple infractions so if you see the 50 infractions, only 39 were disqualified. Uh, so in total there were three eligibility disqualifications. That just means the individual or entity who applied was not an eligible entity, so either an individual or a university may have applied. Uh, they would be disqualified as they are not eligible. Uh, application disqualifications, that was something wrong with their actual application submission. It wasn’t signed. It was missing pages. There’s not a ton of leniency or leeway with those. Budget disqualifications, either not submitting a budget or not including their match dollar amount, and then SOC disqualifications. Because we are looking at data, uh, tied to one specific SOC code, we can’t accept multiple SOC codes. Some applications didn’t include an SOC code so we can’t really grade or evaluate that. Uh, and then some letter of agreement disqualifications. This one was a little higher in previous, than previous years and it was mostly, uh, our school district partners partnering with an ineligible entity. So it’s very clear that has to be a public community, state, or technical college, and there were several partnering with, uh, state career schools or universities and unfortunately, those partnerships aren’t allowed. So, again, that number was smaller. We’re excited about that but again, I think we can do more, uh, in marketing or with our RFA documents to shrink that 39 a little bit further. Uh, and I know this was a hot topic last year so I'm happy to answer any questions we may have for this data.

 MARIO LOZOYA: I don’t know if I have a question but it’s interesting that the SOC code, it didn’t make sense. I'm thinking maybe like IT is very general but there’s so many different kinds of, of, uh, trades right under IT, right, and maybe that might [inaudible] and there’s probably other industries like that but it’s interesting to see that, that, uh, that item there, but I'm glad you guys caught it. But also, thank you for breaking it down the way you guys did. It helps us understand that. Uh, maybe I do have a question is, is, does, is this information shared to the Tri-Agency, let’s say, Commissioner Morath and his accountability system? He’s maybe, has targeted, uh, uh, certifications, right, and does that, do they match their, their gap or their demand to, to what’s happening with JET? Am I being clear with what I'm asking?

 LORI KNIGHT: So, [inaudible], OK. So, part of the requirement for JET, is that the SOC included in the application aligns to high-demand occupations, uh, and right now, TEA is also aligning all of their programs of study—

 MARIO LOZOYA: Who defines high-demand? Does the Workforce Commission or TEA, or together, the Tri-Agency define it?

 UNIDENTIFIED: The, well, I think we are actually going to talk a little bit about the occupation list. That’s a, man, you were like setting this up perfectly to go into the next section. You asked about disqualifications. We talk about disqualifications, and we’re going to be talking about how the occupations are selected.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Yes.

 UNIDENTIFIED: Uh, but, but, if you’ll recall, uh, our local Workforce Development Boards, uh, have targeted occupations lists, and, uh, a lot of different factors go into that, uh, including the occupation being in high demand. Uh, and then I will also note, uh, that, you know, as part of the work that we’re doing on Tri-Agency, uh, JET is a program, I think, that is brought up frequently as a place where there is a lot of mutual interest in ensuring the success of this program.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Well, that’s good because, uh, I think it can be very relevant to the entire Tri-Agency [inaudible].

 UNIDENTIFIED: For sure.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Thank you. OK.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Before we move on, I did a little bit of a deeper dive specifically between FY25 and FY24 to see if there were any repeat offenders for the disqualifieds. Uh, and I didn’t necessarily find, uh, a common theme but I did find some points that I thought would be interested. So last year, uh, we actually had two disqualifieds this year who were awarded last year so that’s really interesting and then several others who either didn’t apply or were disqualified again this year, and so looking at those reasons there were several who continued to use incorrect RFA documents so either submitting, uh, a letter of agreement or budget workbook from the previous RFA and unfortunately, we can't accept that. Uh, and then there were several others who didn’t apply, and again several others who were funded last year but disqualified this year. So there wasn’t really any commonality that I could find between this year and last year. Even, even folks who had multiple disqualifications, I would find that they had an older award in FY17 or 18 so I really tried to just look at recent years that the RFA documents were essentially the same, uh, but again, there were several repeat offenders but again, most of the reasoning just came back to not using the correct documents.

 ROBERT UHL: Did you say how many were disqualified last year, did not apply again this year?

 MATT SNIADECKI: Uh, [inaudible]—

 ROBERT UHL: [Inaudible] last year. We don’t want to be dissuading people from applying or submitting, losing a market share, right? Not interested in applying.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Eighteen of the—excuse me, 54 did not apply this year.

 ROBERT UHL: Were disqualified last year and didn’t apply this year.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Yeah, and some of those, uh, and some of the no applications, they may have been first-time applicants. I want to say that was maybe three or four of those, uh, but others, yeah, had not, er, disqualified last year and did not submit an application this year.

 UNIDENTIFIED: Matt, I don’t know the answer to this so were any of those that were disqualified last year, they didn’t apply because they were never eligible to apply like they were a university who was not an eligible applicant so naturally they learned, oh, we’re not an eligible applicant, we’re not going to apply.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Yeah, on the IHE side, I didn’t include those. I think there was only one of those for, uh, school districts, uh, and, yeah, that was an ESC but yeah.

 ROBERT UHL: That’s a good question. Obviously don’t want to be discouraging people from continuing to apply [inaudible] ineligible the first time [inaudible].

 MATT SNIADECKI: And we’ll make sure to emphasize during our marketing campaigns that there’s no penalty if you were disqualified last year or even awarded last year, you can still apply the following fiscal year.

 VANESSA MALO: Is there—if I could just ask, is there any opportunity to elaborate a little bit about the outreach, expansion of outreach perhaps maybe to some of those rural areas where the IHEs, uh, and then additionally per the lessons learned of those who have been disqualified? Are there any changes that we’ll be doing just to ensure they have a little bit more insight and guidance perhaps using correct document, those kinds of things?

 MATT SNIADECKI: Uh, so we always have a lesson learned with—it does take a village to run this grant so a lot of different departments, and we have a sit-down of all the lessons learned. We typically do that after we present this—the recommendations to the commission so a little bit later, uh, after the second week of May. We’ll get together and go over how we can improve the RFA documents or make something clearer or if there’s a common disqualifier, you look back, ’24 had some sort of budget disqualification so that would be the first place I would look to see where we could improve either language or instructions, just making sure that’s as clear as possible. And then as far as marketing goes, we always open it up to the Workforce Boards, uh, so that would be 28 individual webinars with the boards. Not all of them, uh, reach out or invite us to host one, and then we always host one with all of the ESC CTE directors, uh, so that’s statewide. Uh, and then we really rely and lean on those folks to kind of help pass along the message, whether it’s either changes in the RFA or, uh, any recommendations that are going to change the RFA process from this board, um. I’m trying to think if there’s anything else that we—

 LORI KNIGHT: We created a toolkit that has several resources where folks can utilize those to answer questions that they might have or, uh, get some recommendations, use a flow chart to help them ensure like all of the required parts of their application are complete before they submit, uh, and again, we communicate at the ESC level to then filter down the information at the district or campus level, uh, and lots of communication too with our regional outreach teams who make themselves available to applicants, you know, need someone to review. It is a strong foundation already that exists.

 MARIO LOZOYA: And is that toolkit on the website?

 LORI KNIGHT: I’m sorry.

 MARIO LOZOYA: That toolkit?

 LORI KNIGHT: It is.

 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, it is.

 MARIO LOZOYA: It’s on the website [inaudible].

 UNIDENTIFIED: And one other piece I’ll add to that, we are fortunate to have an amazing communications team here at TWC. Uh, we work very closely and then obviously you all are invited to these check presentations. In terms of outreach, that’s also another thing that we’re doing to increase awareness of the program, uh, especially as it relates to, uh, you know, some of the, um, school districts or even the colleges, you know, when they can see, oh, this other school got this thing, what do I have to do in order to do that too, and so that also stimulates interest in the program.

 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

 MATT SNIADECKI: OK, all right, Mario, you’re up next. Occupation list overview. And I’ll actually pass it off to Lori Knight. She’s going to cover these next two slides.

 LORI KNIGHT: All right. So last year we had a little bit of discussion, uh, and the same questions about how is an occupation selected for this preapproved list that’s attached to the RFA, uh, and we did explain that there are three separate lists included in that one combined list. And so the advisory committee asked for kind of a deep dive in it so we’re just going to walk, walk through that. So, uh, the occupation list overview again, it’s informed by three separate lists, our high-demand list, our targeted occupations list, and the CTE occupations demand list. So if you notice on, uh, slide 13 where it says the list includes those first, uh, couple of bullets, uh, occupations that are currently in high demand, uh, including those that lead to economic self-sufficiency or advancement, and occupations that have a significant impact on the state or state, regional or local economy. Those two bullets, those two items, uh, align to the WIOA definition of high-demand or in-demand occupations, and the reason why I want to point those out is because those crit—that criteria is inherent in all three lists so that’s kind of the baseline of where they all start. Uh, for the in-demand list the methodology—what’s unique about the in-demand list is then, uh, we, that boards can apply local wisdom that’s provided by businesses, economic development, uh, community organizations in order to kind of build up more occupations in their list that they deem locally to be in high demand, uh, and they can use also any, uh, TWC online tool to build those lists or any external, uh, resources as long as they’re looking in a timeframe for their projections in a 10-year timeframe. So that’s the first step. Uh, then we use our targeted occupation list so that’s—the definition there is on slide 14, uh, and again, so it’s item A, right? A targeted occupation aligns back to our WIOA definition of in demand but if, uh, also, sorry, items 2 and 3, there is—it has to have a dedicated training component. That’s what’s unique about the targeted occupations so it’s in demand based on WIOA, it has a dedicated training component, and it provides a wage that the recipient of, you know, completion of the program or a credential, uh, could earn a self-sufficiency wage. Uh, and then any occupation that’s again on that high-demand list is included within the targeted occupations.

 ROBERT UHL: We have information on what a dedicated training component is? Is that a formal requirement or does it involve some other more informal [inaudible]?

 LORI KNIGHT: Good question, so I believe we lean on our—what’s called our, uh, eligible training provider list, our ETPL, so it includes, uh, community, junior or technical colleges, it [inaudible] career schools, uh, certified or authorized licensing, uh, agencies for training or credentialing. Uh, slide 15, uh, is notes on the targeted occupation list. First three bullets again harken back to the WIOA definitions so we can hop down really to the bottom three we want to look at. Again, it’s connection to that self-sufficiency wage, has a training component but then on that last one, uh, you know, regions can consider whether occupations are connected to training programs that lead to a recognized, uh, industry postsecondary [inaudible] so that’s where we go back to making sure the IBCs are in alignment. Our final list is the career and tech education, they call them downloads as it’s a list that we work—that we—I say we but it’s the labor market information team built, uh, in tandem with our TEA partners, uh, and that essentially is a list of demand occupations available within CTE training, uh, that align with a recognized TEA cluster. Uh, it’s one of their 14 Texas clusters, and a TEA-recognized state CTE program of study. Right now they have roughly 56 programs of study. I know their programs of study are going to be in review so that number may be different moving forward, uh, but that essentially creates that career tech list, and slide 17 shows when that list is built, like the information that the list contains is provided here which is pretty general what you would see on an in-demand list but the methodology, what’s unique again is for the CTE careers, they’re looking at first those top 20 in-demand occupations in the region but then filtering them down to make sure that the occupation pays above the state median wage, and also that it aligns to a program of study and career cluster. So what we do is we combine all three lists, break it down by region, all 28 regions of the state, then we remove any duplicates. We also go through and will remove occupations where the, uh, education requirement is not attainable by a student completing, completing, a, you know, high school CTE program so master’s degree and above [inaudible]. Uh, and then we filter out for—

 UNIDENTIFIED: [Inaudible].

 LORI KNIGHT: Oh, uh, occupations that are supported primarily by private employment in the state so we take out those that are private sect—or public sector occupations, and then once those are removed, that is essentially the approved preapproved SOC list but applicants are also directed in the RFA that should they want to choose an SOC outside of that list, they have the ability to do so if they work with their Workforce Board to have them sign a high-demand board confirmation document, and that’s where someone at the board reviews this as the, and confirms for us and evaluators that it is an occupation that is [inaudible].

 UNIDENTIFIED: And so a little additional context. The way that the application process used to work is for every occupation, you had to have that form completed. By creating a preapproved list you only need the form if you’re going outside of the list. So this was intended to not have as many disqualifications as we used to have simply for not completing the form or completing the wrong form or having an ineligible person sign the form or all the other reasons that, you know, you could, uh, because like I think someone told me the first year, uh, boards, school boards were signing the form instead of the local Workforce Development Board because in ISDs you have a different meaning for boards, uh, so this was really intended to try and eliminate some of the paperwork for the applicants, uh, and then they only need that if it’s outside of the list.

 LORI KNIGHT: Historically, one of our, our biggest infractions for disqualifications was that high-demand board confirmation form, and so that was our approach to when we did our lessons learned, how can we help alleviate some of that, uh, and it’s actually helped a lot.

 ROBERT UHL: Would it be possible to see one of those lists? [Inaudible]. I think one of the things I want to be cautious about is looking forward, right? We’ve had a lot of benefits, the state of Texas, lots of big businesses moving in, lots of continued growth and emerging areas, cybersecurity, software development, things like that. I don’t see a lot of those occupations reflected on the list, not that there’s anything wrong with that. I think it’s great that the list is fantastic. These are traditional jobs that are needed, nursing, technical programs, welding, [inaudible], but I also want to make sure we’re looking to the future, making sure that the next generation of jobs are included in this grant program if we can, and so I wonder if we could put—see how that list operates and maybe think about that change at this level, at the policy level, something that, uh, we need to change to sort of get those jobs [inaudible]. I don’t know again, to conclude the point, if those are jobs that are already on the list and available and just nobody applied for them or for whatever reason they weren’t chosen for [inaudible]. I think there are a handful of those occupations on the list and maybe they just weren’t as popular in this cycle but we can absolutely share that [inaudible].

 UNIDENTIFIED: I think one of the other challenges that schools face, uh, and again, this is even at the college level is having, uh, a qualified instructor lined up to teach whatever that course is so especially with an emerging occupation, you may not necessarily have quick access to, you know, oh, I’ve got a teacher, an instructor identified for this CTE program. Uh, hopefully that’s something, you know, we’ll gain some ground, uh, as, as some of these additional occupations come on board but I think it was just last year we saw semiconductor technician was one of the occupations that was funded for the first time, not because it was ineligible before but just because we saw an application for it, right? And I also want to go back to, you know, when Lori was talking about the, uh, process for defining these occupations that go on the list, uh, I don’t want to skip over the idea of local wisdom, uh, so a local Workforce Development Board, they know what businesses are moving into their community, and so they have the ability to add occupations based on—maybe there aren’t a lot of postings for semiconductor technicians in Taylor, Texas yet. Uh, I actually should know that and I don’t. I apologize but, uh, you know, maybe they’re not there yet because they’re still building the facility but they know they’re coming so that is a place where you would expect to see a board adding occupations related to that activity.

 MARIO LOZOYA: If I can share something, and I know it’s out of the control of this body but when I ask about definitions and the like, it’s I have some experience with economic development and sometimes the EDC, the corporation, is under a type B or type A tax code restriction, and so when you have, uh, uh, a foreign direct investor or some company that wants to grow in your community and they say we’re going to grow this kind of company so, this kind of work, so all of a sudden local is a high demand, right, but it’s not on the list, right? So then the EDC [inaudible] will decide it’s—am I within the tax code to, to incentivize this, uh, work growth or not, you know? So the work that we do here, the work that we do in conjunction with Tri-Agency does affect economic development to your point, and the language is important. The economic developers now have the, I guess, the gateway to incentivize that semiconductor or that company that’s growing in there, right? So my point it goes beyond the Tri-Agency. It’s also the EDC to help grow the, the local economy so again it’s not within the privy here, right, but the language would be then relevant.

 ROBERT UHL: Both of those are spot-on, exactly what I’m working toward. The ultimate point is we want to make sure this program is set up to help attract more business, make sure that those businesses can work with the local schools, the local job pool to make sure that they’re getting the talent that meets—

 MARIO LOZOYA: What Mary is saying is now the work—the local Workforce Board has the ability to not—oh, you’re new here, it’s not here, let me fix that through this document, right? So the local Workforce Board has the ability to support that.

 UNIDENTIFIED: And whether that’s done through modifying our targeted occupation list or in the case of an application, you know, that a school district or community college wants them to support, they just fill out a form and say, yes, we know this is coming, and so that’s all that’s necessary.

 ROBERT UHL: I think we’re all speaking the same language. We want to make sure those—even if they’re not being applied for yet, that’s fine, that’s up to the local—we want to trust the local wisdom. We want to make sure that when individual or local boards or businesses decide, hey, we need a lot of, uh, new workers in the tech space, semiconductor, whatever it is, this program is the entrance to get that [inaudible].

 LORI KNIGHT: I’ll just add in. I apologize if this is a little like too much about like how the sausage is made but, uh, as far as the targeted occupation list, the Workforce Boards have the flexibility to update whenever they want their list. And so Matt and I will normally wait until the very last minute where we know we’ve got to get this document finalized and then we’ll pool those targeted occupation lists at that point and then do the combinations, whittle them down like as close as we can to the deadline so that we know we’re getting the most updated list from each board.

 ROBERT UHL: Moving at the speed of business.

 UNIDENTIFIED: OK.

 MATT SNIADECKI: That wraps it up, the lists, an overview. Then the next is a quick legislative update from the 89th Regular Session. There are a couple bills that I wanted to preview for you that may have impact on [inaudible].

 MICHAEL BRITT: Good afternoon, everybody. I am Michael Britt. I’m director of governmental relations here at TWC. The 89th Legislative Session is barreling toward the finish line with about 32, 33 days from the end on June 2nd. Thankfully or not thankfully depending on the fate of the bill you may or may not be interested in, uh, we in fact are about two weeks out, two and a half weeks out from our first legislative deadlines. May 12th is the deadline for the House to pass House bills so, uh, as I talk about these next bills, that’s where we are as far as their life. Uh, of course the budget bill is in conference committee and the conference committee is working on providing appropriations for all state agencies including the JET program so we are fully funded there, uh, but some bills we’re looking at as far as JET is, uh, House Bill 322 by Representative Guillen. Uh, I think there’s on a slide that you all are looking at, and that bill allows for grants awarded, awarded under the JET program to pay for the cost for acquisition, implementation, and ongoing maintenance of technology solutions, uh. House Bill 322 passed the House yesterday so it is on its way to the Senate for their consideration. Uh, we also have House Bill 30, er, excuse me, Senate Bill 1728 which is a companion to House Bill 3882, uh, Senate Bill 1728 by Senator Perry as the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, juv—juvenile boards and juvenile probation departments as eligible grantees under the JET program, and Senate Bill 1728 has already passed out of the Senate and has also been passed out of committee over on the House side. It hasn’t been taken up by the full House but you would expect to see that here over the next couple of weeks. Uh, one honorable mention bill that may or may not be on your radar that I did want to mention, uh, was House Bill 5476 by Representative Terry Wilson. That bill would require some coordination among the Tri-Agency partners on grant programs including the JET program. However, that bill for the moment at least has stalled out. It was scheduled for hearing a couple of weeks ago and got pulled from the, uh, from the hearing agenda but that’s one of those things that may find life on something moving later in the session so that’s something we’ll keep an eye, you know, keeping an eye out for but at the moment is not moving. And that’s my update.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Can we ask a question on your—

 MICHAEL BRITT: Yes, do we have time?

 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

 MICHEAL BRITT: Yes.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Yes, so related to Senate Bill 1728, does that come with a fiscal note? Does that increase funding?

 MICHAEL BRITT: It does not increase funding for the program so there’s no—I don’t believe there wasn’t a fiscal note cost on the bill. It’s just more entities now can take from the same, the same JET appropriation.

 UNIDENTIFIED: So the same pie.

 MICHAEL BRITT: More pieces.

 UNIDENTIFIED: More people that might want a slice.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Right, and I guess I’ll just ask the question. Is this—is the Workforce Commission supporting this or it just got in the process?

 UNIDENTIFIED: We cannot take a position on any pending legislation.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Yeah, well, I’m not liking it is what I’m saying but OK.

 ROBERT UHL: And as a quick follow up to that, it looked like the latest budget proposal is about the same level of funding.

 MICHAEL BRITT: Correct.

 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

 MICHAEL BRITT: All right, thank you.

 MATT SNIADECKI: That concludes our data presentation.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, let’s move to Agenda Item number four, this is discussion and consideration and possible action regarding grants to public junior colleges, public technical institutes, public state colleges, and open-enrollment charter schools.

 UNIDENTIFIED: And that is under tab 3, the IHE master list. Just a couple of changes to note here. Only one welding occupation application [inaudible] number nine. [Inaudible] pretty healthy mix amongst IHE applicants but we do anticipate funding 17 boards, 16 [inaudible] 857,000, and then one partial for the 251,500. Are you comfortable just doing a motion to roll this together? If there’s no question, [inaudible] look at tab number 4. This list is a little bit larger but [inaudible] school district [inaudible]. Uh, one thing to note, uh, you’ll see grants one through nine, uh, all health care occupations, registered nurse, LVN, nursing assistants, and then 10 and 11 are also occupations in that field so it was interesting to see 1 through 11 being kind of dominated there by health care occupations. Then there at the very back we anticipate funding about 37 awards. All of those will be full and that will leave us with a small balance of $1,026. Then just in comparison, I did note earlier we did raise the top end of the award so this year would be a total of 54 awards in comparison to last year which was [inaudible].

 ROBERT UHL: Not sure [inaudible] I noticed that the [inaudible] ISDs [inaudible] tend to have much higher scores [inaudible] thought of why that might be?

 UNIDENTIFIED: [Inaudible].

 MATT SNIADECKI: Yeah, the methodology.

 ROBERT UHL: The rubrics.

 MATT SNIADECKI: It’s a little different. We’re looking at different sets of data so for school districts [inaudible] sorry, for school districts [inaudible] reports, and those are—

 LORI KNIGHT: [Inaudible] their annual performance reports.

 MATT SNIADECKI: [Inaudible] so we pull data from those reports to grade their program size, their application, and then we use the SOC code they applied for so we’ll get data for the specific occupations in the application evaluation. We can look more into average score. We’ll also notice the scores this year because they are out of 1,000 points so they are listed as the full focal points [inaudible] in their application score so, uh, for instance, number one, 808, that would be an eight-point setup.

 MARIO LOZOYA: OK, so we’re looking for a motion to approve the awardings. I motion to approve both the IHE and the ISD recommended awardees lists.

 ROBERT UHL: I’ll second the motion.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It’s been moved and seconded, and this will be forwarded [inaudible]. Anybody opposed to the motion? Hearing no opposition, the motion carries. We move then to Agenda Item 5, discussion, consideration and possible action on program funding and parameters for the fiscal year ’26 JET grants to public junior colleges, public state colleges, open-enrollment charter schools.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Funding will be located behind tab 6 but behind tab 5 is just an application summary. This kind of paints a picture and as you can see this year and last year, 194 applications each and then this broke down to requested amount, [inaudible] amounts, [inaudible]. Next you have the 25-26 [inaudible] program parameters. The first one is funding allocation. Last year the board recommended splitting it 65-35 in the favor of open-enrollment charter schools and school districts. I think staff would recommend keeping those values the same. We feel like that’s the sweet spot and maybe a few more years or at least more than one year of data to evaluate if that’s what needs to be recommended.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Yeah, I agree since we just made the change back last year, right? We probably need some time to even look at it. UH, I think, I think the staff and the board and the entire commission has done a good job getting to where we are already, you know, so I, I would motion to accept the staff’s recommendation to maintain the current numbers as is.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Second. It’s been moved and seconded. Any objections? Hearing no objection, so moved. All right, that’s on funding allocations and then on the minimum and maximum grant amount.

 MATT SNIADECKI: We recommend keeping with the same as this past year.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: This will be the second year for that as well, right?

 MATT SNIADECKI: Yeah, exactly.

 ROBERT UHL: I’ll move to—all right, Keep them the same, yeah.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, second?

 MARIO LOZOYA: Second.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It’s been moved and seconded. Any objection? Hearing no objection, so moved.

 MATT SNIADECKI: Next is number of applications. This is for all applicants. Staff would recommend keeping it the same at one application per eligible applicant.

 ROBERT UHL: Move to keep that the same.

 MARIO LOZOYA: Second.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It’s been moved and seconded. Is there any objection? Hearing no objection, so moved.

 MATT SNIADECKI: And then lastly, we have minimum score threshold. I know we altered this a little bit last year, uh, 60 total points available, and we feel again that that’s, that’s a sweet spot especially if you just look at the number of qualified applicants on both sides. We funded all the IHE and then had quite a few more quality applications on the school district side so we feel like 60 percent is, ah, is fine.

 VANESSA MALO: I motion to move this forward [inaudible].

 ROBERT UHL: I’ll second, yes.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It’s been moved and seconded. Any objections to the motion? The motion carries. All right, that moves us then to Agenda Item 6, [inaudible].

 UNIDENTIFIED: You know what, chairman? Can I add one—

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Please.

 UNIDENTIFIED: One thing on that item. I think it’s important that we know that as it relates to, uh, those parameters that you’re recommending for FY 2026, uh, should there be legislative action affecting the program and potentially the eligible applicants for the program, we would envision reconvening the advisory board to make additional recommendations to the commission.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Discussion and possible action for future board meetings. Pending that, when is our next meeting?

 MATT SNIADECKI: It wouldn’t be until next year [inaudible] the next round of awardees.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, so depending on what happens, let’s say—

 MARIO LOZOYA: Unless there’s a—

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah, we may have to come back in the fall. Actually would be this summer.

 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, it would, it would, it would be pretty soon honestly. If there are going to be changes with the idea that we would need time to be able to—as it relates to eligible applicants, take that into consideration for a future RFA.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Anything else to come before us today?

 MATT SNIADECKI: [Inaudible]. Chairman, you don’t have this but the board members do. This is just an upcoming list of all of our JET check presentations from the last fiscal year. I know [inaudible] overlap them. [inaudible] San Antonio and Amarillo both at 10:00 a.m., May 15th, 11:00 a.m. would be at [inaudible]. Hopefully to see Robert Uhl at that event, and then so, ah, June 11th in Houston, and June 12th in Orange, and those are just the ones we have confirmed. I’m sure we have a few more coming down the pipeline to get a few more folks [inaudible].

 MARIO LOZOYA: I’m going to make the best of it. I’m on my way back from Arizona during that time, but I’ll make it a point to try to make that. I love the Alamo Colleges.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Anything else? Is there a motion to adjourn?

 MARIO LOZOYA: I motion to adjourn.

 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It’s been moved and seconded to adjourn. Hearing no objection, we’re adjourned.

 UNIDENTIFIED: All right. Good job, [inaudible].