

# Board Oversight Capacity—BCY 2024

TWC Rule §802.67. Commission Evaluation of Board Oversight Capacity

## Panhandle Score Card

**The Texas Workforce Commission’s annual evaluation of each Board’s oversight capacity. Boards are assigned a rating of Meets Standards or Below Standards for each of the following six categories.**

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### **Develop, maintain, and upgrade comprehensive fiscal management systems**

**Meets**

- √ Does the Board have fiscal management systems in place that include appropriate fiscal controls?
- √ \* Does the Board, during its regularly scheduled meetings, include a quarterly review of the financial status of the Board and its service providers for all funding sources it administers?
- √ Have single audits been free of material weaknesses?

### **Hire, train, and retain qualified staff to carry out the Board’s oversight activities**

**Meets**

- √ Has the Board been certified?
- √ \* Has the Board hired or retained qualified staff (Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, Program Director, Contract Management Staff, Monitoring staff) to oversee contractors?

### **Select and oversee local contractors to improve the delivery of workforce services**

**Meets**

- √ Does the Board have an effective formal procurement process, and has the Board been following this process?
- √ Does the Board have a certified monitoring function in place to oversee contractors?
- √ The Board has no disallowed costs exceeding one percent of allocation (non-self-reported).
- √ The Board has no disallowed costs exceeding one percent which resulted in repaying funds.

### **Oversee and improve the operations of Workforce Solutions Offices in the Board’s service area**

**Meets**

- √ Does the Board have certified Workforce Solutions Offices?

- √ \* Can the Board provide documentation demonstrating that it has policies in place to address service improvement, such as the initiation of performance improvement or service improvement plans when performance issues are identified with a local contractor?
- √ \* Has the Board applied its service improvement policy when necessary?

### **Manage the contractors' performance across multiple Board programs**

- \*\* Did the Board meet target on at least 80 percent of its contracted performance measures?
- \*\* Is the Board within 35 percent of target on all contracted performance measures?
- \*\* \* Does the Board hold performance oversight meetings, do performance reviews, or, during its regularly scheduled meetings, include a review of its status on contracted performance measures at least four times throughout the year?

### **Identify and resolve long-standing or severe Board oversight problems and workforce service provider performance issues**

**Meets**

- \*\* The Board did not miss target on the same performance measure two years in a row.
- √ The Board does not have any unresolved material weaknesses discovered through a single audit.
- √ The Board has not been placed on an Intent to Sanction or a Sanction.

√ = Meets Standard

X = Below Standard

\* = Board Attestation

\*\* = Due to performance data tracking updates made during this Board Oversight Capacity review cycle, these criteria will not be rated for BCY 2024.

# Panhandle Community Impact Statement

A written statement from each Board summarizing its impact on and relationship with the local community and economy. Specify how the Board's efforts demonstrate and contribute to an effective workforce system by engaging employers, helping workers find jobs, and ensuring good fiscal stewardship.

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## OVERSIGHT

The Panhandle Workforce Development Board (PWDB) continued its oversight of the Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) system with its focus on assisting job seekers in finding self-sustaining, stable employment, as well as helping employers in finding qualified workers and services.

## BUSINESS SERVICES

**Employer Support** - The BSU provided tailored consulting services to over **1,500 employers** across 26 counties, addressing workforce needs through job postings, recruitment assistance, labor market information, and customized workforce solutions.

**Job Fairs and Hiring Events** - In FY2024, Workforce Solutions Panhandle hosted **136 events**, serving over **12,500 job seekers** and connecting them with local employers, leading to **2,468 reported hires**.

**Teacher Externships** - Workforce Solutions Panhandle collaborated with education partners to place **54 teachers** in externships, impacting nearly **6,750 students** and enhancing curriculum relevance through real-world industry insights.

**Skills Development Fund** - Skills Development Fund: In partnership with Plains Dairy, Workforce Solutions Panhandle trained **166 employees**, resulting in a remarkable **30% increase in productivity**.

## JOB SEEKER SERVICES

**Mobile Office Unit** - The Mobile Office Unit provided services across the Texas Panhandle, including on-site support to communities devastated by wildfires, providing access to computers & reliable internet as well as comprehensive services to aid recovery efforts.

**Employment Services** – Workforce Solutions Panhandle’s ES staff played a vital role in enhancing employability for job seekers through career counseling, workshops, job referrals, etc., providing almost **50,000 services** both in-person and virtually.

**Veteran Services** - Workforce Solutions Panhandle continues the commitment to providing **specialized support to over 500 veterans** and qualified spouses of veterans transitioning to civilian employment.

**Choices and SNAP Employment & Training** - These programs have successfully supported a total of **654 individuals**, with **230 finding employment** across both programs. Additionally, participants received crucial support services and training opportunities, highlighting the programs' effectiveness in promoting workforce readiness and job placement.

### **Noncustodial Parent Program**

The NCP program has significantly benefited non-custodial parents (NCPs) at Workforce Solutions Panhandle. Out of **63 NCP customers**, **23 have found full-time employment**, resulting in a **36.5% success** rate in securing jobs.

### **TRAINING SERVICES**

**Adult & Dislocated Worker** - The Adult & Dislocated Worker programs **enrolled 250 individuals** from 341 applications, highlighting strong interest in in-demand careers, such as healthcare and transportation. With **25.8% of participants from rural areas**, they play a vital role in promoting economic stability and meeting local job market needs in the Texas Panhandle.

**Young Adult** - The Young Adult Training program served **85 participants** in FY2024, with **58 in training** and **28 in workforce-paid internships**. It offers diverse training opportunities in industries like healthcare and community services, helping young adults gain the skills needed to succeed in today’s job market.

**TANF Summer Work Experience** - This program provided **33 youth** from rural communities with paid work opportunities in **7 school districts**, helping them develop essential skills and a strong work ethic. Collectively, they worked over **6,700** hours and

**earned \$75,564**, supporting their financial needs while preparing them for future employment.

**Summer Earn & Learn** - The SEAL program provided 39 students with disabilities, aged 14-22, with essential work readiness training and paid work experience, achieving an impressive **placement rate of 84.62%**. Over the summer, they worked over **5,500 hours** and collectively earned **\$65,499.76**, while also fostering community connections and offering employers a risk-free way to meet staffing needs with qualified candidates.

**Middle Skills** - The Middle Skills Employment Supplies Pilot Program & the Upskilling & Training Grant have been vital in advancing workforce development in the Texas Panhandle. The Middle Skills program funded **38 participants**, providing essential tools, uniforms, and supplies for occupations requiring education beyond high school but less than a four-year degree, with a total expenditure of **\$22,275.18**, ensuring individuals are ready to start employment in critical roles.

**SkillUp Panhandle (Metrix Learning)** - SkillUp Panhandle empowers Texas Panhandle residents with over 7,000 flexible online courses and 300+ skills tracks, enhancing job prospects and workforce readiness. With **217 participants**, the platform offers industry-recognized certifications, skill assessments, and job search tools, driving local economic growth.

**Skills Gap** - The Upskilling and Training to Address Skills Gap Grant provided essential resources for Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth pursuing credentials in high-demand fields like healthcare and transportation. Exceeding targets, the program enrolled and completed assessments for **24 participants** with an expenditure of **\$67,483.00**, strengthening individual career growth and the local economy by developing a skilled workforce.

## **CHILD CARE**

**Client Services** - Client Services currently supports **1,783 families** and **2,643 children**, partnering with **102 child care providers**.

**Provider Services** - Workforce Solutions Panhandle is currently working with child care providers in our area, **71% of which are Texas Rising Star certified** — supporting these efforts across the Panhandle. Notably, **54% of the children served are**

**enrolled in Texas Rising Star programs, and \$195,000 has been spent on scholarships** for 99 provider staff, with 35% of these being new students.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**Robust Social Media Presence** - Workforce Solutions Panhandle has built a **following of 16,446** across various platforms, achieving a **cumulative reach of 247,084** in 2024. Social media efforts focus on disseminating job opportunities, engaging communities, and providing vital resources through tailored content.

**GovDelivery Platform** - This communication tool has expanded Workforce Solutions Panhandle's outreach capabilities, allowing efficient dissemination of critical information to 25,640 subscribers, including job seekers and employers. In 2024, Workforce Solutions Panhandle sent **144 bulletins**, achieving a **37.9%** unique open rate.

**Brand Recognition & Media Coverage** - Workforce Solutions Panhandle gained significant media attention, with over **36 news stories** highlighting initiatives like job fairs, disaster assistance, and job training programs. This exposure has strengthened Workforce Solutions Panhandle's role in connecting job seekers with opportunities.

**Education Outreach Specialist (EOS)** - The EOS provides in-school services to over 5,800 students in the Texas Panhandle, focusing on labor market trends and employability skills. Using virtual reality tools, the program offers hands-on experiences in high-demand industries. In FY2024, EOS delivered **2,555 VR experiences** and **3,346 attended workshops**, empowering students to make informed career decisions.

## **SUCCESS STORIES**

**Workforce Solutions Panhandle Successes** - Staff from all departments at Workforce Solutions Panhandle have shared **25 Success Stories of overcoming adversity** on our website. These narratives celebrate our customers' achievements and illustrate the transformative impact of the services provided by Workforce Solutions Panhandle for job seekers seeking support.

## **EMPLOYER SERVICES**

Through our Business Services Unit (BSU) and Employment Services (ES) group, Workforce Solutions Panhandle offers a comprehensive range of employment-related services to employers across the 26 counties of the Panhandle Workforce Development Area (WDA). We aim to support the local economy, drive workforce development, and help businesses find and keep skilled talent. Here's how we serve employers throughout our region:

### **Job Posting and Recruitment Assistance**

Employers receive help posting open positions on statewide and local job boards, gaining access to a large pool of job seekers, including specialized talent pools.

### **Candidate Screening and Referral**

Pre-screening services match candidates based on job-specific criteria, referring qualified individuals to streamline hiring and improve retention.

### **Onsite Hiring Events and Job Fairs**

Organizes and hosts job fairs and recruitment events, both onsite and at community locations, with options tailored to meet employer-specific hiring needs.

### **Labor Market Information**

Provides access to current Labor Market Information specific to the Panhandle region, covering wage trends, workforce demographics, and industry insights, enabling informed workforce planning.

### **Employee Training and Skills Development**

Connects employers with training resources and upskilling programs to develop their workforce, offering information on training grants for skills enhancement and retraining.

### **Work-Based Learning Programs**

Supports apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities, with options for partial wage reimbursement for employers participating in OJT programs.

### **Incentive and Tax Credit Assistance**

Guides employers through available tax credits, like the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), and other hiring incentives, providing application support for maximum benefit.

### **Layoff Aversion and Rapid Response Services**

Offers resources to help avert layoffs through retraining programs and provides Rapid Response services for businesses facing layoffs, closures, or workforce changes.

### **Veteran Hiring Services**

Specialized support for hiring veterans, including access to veterans' talent pools and guidance on tax incentives and veteran-friendly recognition programs.

### **Interview Facilities**

Offices provide interview facilities equipped with essential amenities, allowing employers to conduct interviews in a convenient, professional setting.

### **Employee Retention Strategies**

Advises employers on retention strategies, sharing best practices for creating a positive workplace culture, improving satisfaction, and reducing turnover.

### **Compliance Assistance**

Helps employers navigate labor laws and regulations to ensure a legal and safe work environment.

### **Workforce Development Partnerships**

Collaborates with educational institutions, industry associations, and community organizations to build strategic partnerships that strengthen workforce development in the region.

### **WORK IN TEXAS.COM**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle staff use WorkInTexas.com to connect employers with qualified candidates in the Panhandle WDA. They post and customize job listings, ensuring targeted outreach to relevant demographics. The platform's candidate search and matching features streamline the hiring process by identifying potential candidates for employers. Monitoring tools and communication features enhance interactions, making WorkInTexas.com a vital resource for workforce development and local businesses.

### **Employers**



|                                               |               |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Total Services to Employers</b>            | <b>19,920</b> |
| <b>New Employers Registered in FY24</b>       | 132           |
| <b>Unduplicated Employers Served</b>          | 1,573         |
| <b>Subsidized/Unpaid Employment Agreement</b> | 112           |
| <b>Rapid Response</b>                         | 6             |

### **Employer Job Postings**

|                               |              |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Job Orders Placed</b>      | <b>5,245</b> |
| <b>Employers Posting Jobs</b> | 572          |
| <b>Job Openings</b>           | 9,763        |
| <b>Job Referrals</b>          | 19,720       |
| <b>Applications Submitted</b> | 15,160       |

### **JOB FAIRS, HIRING EVENTS & CAREER FAIRS**

During FY2024, the BSU hosted a substantial number of job fairs and hiring events, totaling 118 in number. The locations of these events were strategically distributed throughout the Texas Panhandle area, catering to a diverse range of job seekers and employers. The events encompassed both large-scale job fairs and more intimate hiring events, aiming to provide comprehensive employment opportunities and support to the local workforce.

| <b>Number of Events</b>       |  | <b>136</b> |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>Employers Served</b>       |  | 1,034      |
| <b>Rural Employers Served</b> |  | 387        |
| <b>Job Seekers Served</b>     |  | 12,559     |
| <b>Reported Hires</b>         |  | 2,468      |

## **LARGE SCALE JOB FAIRS**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle organizes large-scale job fairs for multiple employers, including the semiannual Amarillo Job Fair and the Hiring Red, White & You! Veterans Job Fair.

| <b>Number of Events</b>     |  | <b>21</b> |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Employers Served</b>     |  | 764       |
| <b>Job Postings Entered</b> |  | 1,622     |
| <b># Job Openings</b>       |  | 5,813     |
| <b>Job Seekers Served</b>   |  | 4,725     |
| <b>Reported Hires</b>       |  | 1,441     |

## **HIRING EVENTS**

These smaller, single-employer events facilitate one-on-one interactions between employers and candidates.

| <b>Number of Events/Employers Served</b> 94 |       |
|---------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Job Postings Entered</b>                 | 866   |
| <b># Job Openings</b>                       | 2,518 |
| <b>Job Seekers Served</b>                   | 2,028 |
| <b>Reported Hires</b>                       | 882   |

## **CAREER FAIRS**

Career fairs are crucial for linking students' exploration in post-secondary and career planning during middle and high school with their future career goals. In 2024, key events included the EPIC High School Career Fair and the AmTech Career Fair.

| <b>Number of Events</b> 3 |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| <b>Employers Served</b>   | 123   |
| <b>Students Served</b>    | 5,005 |

## **TEXAS PANHANDLE CAREER SIGNING DAY**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle is proud to support Texas Panhandle Career Signing Days, an initiative that connects local high school students with in-demand careers. By partnering with schools, employers, and community organizations, we equip students with the resources to explore diverse career paths and gain hands-on experience, while also addressing the skills gap and fostering a strong workforce for the region.

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Number of Events</b> | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Schools Served</b>   | 17        |
| <b>Students Served</b>  | 205       |

## TEACHER EXTERNSHIPS

In partnership with Region 16 Education Service Center (ESC) and Panhandle Community Partnership, Workforce Solutions Panhandle offered teacher externships in the summer of 2024. These externships allowed teachers to gain firsthand experience in local workplaces, helping them understand current industry trends and skills needed in their subjects. This initiative enhances the educational landscape in the Texas Panhandle, enabling teachers to create more relevant lesson plans and provide students with learning opportunities that align with real-world skills and career pathways. In FY2024, the program successfully:

- Placed 54 teachers in externships, with a notable 70.4% from rural areas, allowing them to gain firsthand experience in relevant industries.
- Engaged 34 employers, with participation from 16 school districts and 30 schools, of which 44.1% were rural.
- Set to impact 6,749 students, giving them first-hand knowledge of the skills and expectations of employers in their own communities
- Issued \$54,000 in stipends, underscoring the commitment to supporting educators while investing in the future workforce of the Texas Panhandle.

|                                          |           |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Successfully Completed Externship</b> | <b>54</b> |
| <b>Rural Teachers</b>                    | 70.4%     |

|                                              |             |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Lesson Plans Submitted</b>                | 100%        |
| <b>Participating School Districts</b>        | 16          |
| <b>Participating Schools</b>                 | 30          |
| <b>Employers Recruited to Host an Extern</b> | 34          |
| <b>Rural Employers</b>                       | 44.1%       |
| <b>Students that will Benefit</b>            | 6,749       |
| <b>Stipends Issued</b>                       | \$54,000.00 |

## **SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND**

### **Plains Dairy**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle partnered with Plains Dairy on a Skills Development Fund (SDF) project to provide targeted training for the company's employees. Through this collaboration, Workforce Solutions Panhandle helped Plains Dairy identify key skills gaps and worked with local training providers to develop customized programs aimed at enhancing the technical and operational skills of their workforce. The project focused on upskilling employees in areas such as equipment maintenance, quality control, and production processes, resulting in improved productivity and efficiency at Plains Dairy. The project has been highly successful and is scheduled to be completed by November 30th, 2024.

Leadership at Plains Dairy has reported high satisfaction with the SDF program, noting a substantial decrease in employee turnover and workplace injuries. The training for supervisors and managers has resulted in a significant reduction in leadership turnover.

| Grant Award                            |  | \$154,985 |
|----------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| # Employees Trained                    |  | 166       |
| % Target Met (127)                     |  | 130.7%    |
| Business Technical Trainings Completed |  | 501       |
| % Target Met (538)                     |  | 93.1%     |
| General Technical Trainings Completed  |  | 902       |
| % Target Met (950)                     |  | 94.9%     |
| Non-Technical Trainings Completed      |  | 388       |
| % Target Met (376)                     |  | 103.2%    |
| Increase in Productivity               |  | 30%       |

## RAPID RESPONSE & LAYOFF AVERSION SERVICES

Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) offers Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion services through its Business Services Unit (BSU), supporting Texas Panhandle employers during economic challenges to stabilize the local economy.

In 2024, Workforce Solutions Panhandle's Business Services Unit provided Rapid Response services to vital support to companies like **Northwest Texas Healthcare System, Panhandle Community Services, and Camping World**. These services extended to businesses impacted by natural disasters, reinforcing Workforce Solutions Panhandle's commitment to local resilience and recovery.

## LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS & INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

In 2024, the Business Services Unit (BSU) at Workforce Solutions Panhandle played an active role in promoting economic development across the Texas Panhandle by partnering with regional organizations to strengthen workforce growth and stability.

- **Support for Economic Development Corporations (EDCs):** The BSU supplied crucial data and reports to EDCs, supporting efforts to attract new businesses, expand the economy, and create job opportunities in the area.
- **Engagement with Professional Associations:** BSU staff presented workforce insights and best practices at events hosted by the Panhandle Human Resources Association, Amarillo EDC's "Build Your Talent Toolbox" program, the Dalhart EDC Workforce Consortium
- **Support for Area Colleges:** Collaborated with Amarillo College, Frank Phillips College, Clarendon College, and other area institutions to align curriculum with in-demand skills, address local labor market needs, and increase enrollment in high-demand occupational programs.
- **Labor Market Information:** The BSU made sure employers and community organizations had access to accurate, up-to-date labor market information to:
  - Build a skilled workforce that can drive business growth.
  - Support career pathways and skill development initiatives.
  - Respond to changing workforce needs as the economy evolves.
  - Use workforce training and education resources effectively.

Collaborating with colleges, universities, and employers, the BSU enhances regional workforce alignment with the evolving needs of the local economy, strengthening the Texas Panhandle's workforce ecosystem.

## **CAREER PATHWAYS MAPPING**

In partnership with the Panhandle Community Partnership, Workforce Solutions Panhandle’s Business Services team developed an interactive career pathways website to visualize Target Occupations across the Panhandle Workforce Development Area. The tool highlights wage expectations, educational requirements, and Labor Market Information.

Designed for community colleges, K-12 schools, and four-year institutions, these pathways maps guide students in choosing sustainable career opportunities that lead to in-demand credentials and livable wages. Explore the website at [Panhandle Community Partnership](#).

**JOB SEEKER SERVICES**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle is dedicated to assisting job seekers in the Panhandle region by offering a comprehensive range of services tailored to meet the diverse needs of individuals seeking employment. The organization provides a variety of essential services aimed at enhancing the employability and career prospects of job seekers.

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS PANHANDLE OFFICES**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle operates three (3) brick-and-mortar offices strategically located in Amarillo, Borger, and Hereford. These physical offices serve as crucial hubs for delivering employment and workforce development services to individuals and businesses. Workforce Solutions Panhandle 's offices are strategically positioned to serve a diverse range of job seekers and employers throughout the Panhandle region. Each office is tailored to the unique needs and industries of its respective community, ensuring that workforce services are accessible and relevant to the local population.

|                                  |               |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Office Visit Total</b>        | <b>22,575</b> |
| <b>Amarillo Office</b>           | 15,065        |
| <b>Amarillo Virtual Services</b> | 2,089         |



|                                  |       |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Borger Office</b>             | 2,397 |
| <b>Borger Virtual Services</b>   | 1,080 |
| <b>Hereford Office</b>           | 1,328 |
| <b>Hereford Virtual Services</b> | 616   |

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) is committed to connecting job seekers with employers in the Texas Panhandle. Our Employment Services department offers a range of programs and services designed to enhance the skills and employability of individuals in our region.

### Our Services Include:

- **Career Counseling:** Personalized guidance to help individuals identify career goals and develop effective job search strategies.
- **Resume and Cover Letter Writing:** Assistance in creating professional resumes and cover letters that highlight skills and experience.
- **Interview Preparation:** Training and practice sessions to improve interview skills and build confidence.
- **Job Search Workshops:** Workshops on job search techniques, including online job searching, networking, and resume writing.
- **Skill Development:** Access to training programs and workshops to acquire new skills or upgrade existing ones.
- **Job Placement Services:** Direct connections with employers and assistance with job applications and interviews.

- **Follow-up and Support:** Ongoing support to help individuals maintain employment and achieve career goals.

Workforce Solutions Panhandle 's Employment Services have significantly impacted the Texas Panhandle community, with nearly **19,000 office visits**, including over 15,000 in Amarillo, highlighting strong community engagement. The services have reached over **7,100** individuals, providing essential employment support. With almost **20,000 job referrals** leading to over **1,400 hires**, WSP effectively connects job seekers with opportunities, contributing to lower unemployment rates. Additionally, more than **6,000 new registrations on WorkInTexas.com** show proactive efforts by individuals to engage with the job market.

## **VIRTUAL ASSISTANCE EXPANSION**

Virtual assistance has expanded Workforce Solutions Panhandle's reach to rural communities, facilitating thousands of interactions. This flexibility allows individuals to conveniently access resources, removing barriers to seeking help.

Overall, Workforce Solutions Panhandle's Employment Services equip job seekers with essential tools to enhance employability, significantly boosting the economic vitality of the Texas Panhandle. By fostering a skilled workforce, Workforce Solutions Panhandle helps individuals achieve their career goals, strengthening the community as a whole.

| <b>Office Visit Totals</b>       |  | <b>18,790</b> |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------|
| <b>Amarillo Office</b>           |  | 15,065        |
| <b>Borger Office</b>             |  | 2,397         |
| <b>Hereford Office</b>           |  | 1,328         |
| <b>Unique Customers Served</b>   |  | 7,172         |
| <b>Total Job Seeker Services</b> |  | 49,381        |

|                                          |        |
|------------------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Total Job Referrals</b>               | 19,720 |
| <b>Hires/Went to Work</b>                | 1,456  |
| <b>RESEA Orientations</b>                | 732    |
| <b>New WorkInTexas.com Registrations</b> | 6,141  |

### **Job Seeker Virtual Assistance**

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Amarillo</b> | <b>2,089</b> |
| <b>Borger</b>   | 1,080        |
| <b>Hereford</b> | 616          |

### **WORKSHOPS**

In FY2024, Workforce Solutions Panhandle's Employment Services (ES) staff played a crucial role in assisting 291 job seekers through a variety of in-person workshops tailored to meet specific needs. These workshops, which are free and conducted in person by the ES staff, have proven to be valuable resources for individuals seeking employment. Covering a broad range of essential topics, the workshops are thoughtfully designed to enhance job seekers' skills and employment prospects.

### **VETERAN SERVICES**

Recognizing the unique challenges veterans face when transitioning into civilian careers, Workforce Solutions Panhandle provides targeted support, including job placement assistance, skills translation, and access to resources tailored to veterans' military experience. In FY2024, a total of 504 veterans and eligible individuals received 6,028 individual services, which included:

- 22 veterans within 180 days of discharge, receiving 165 services
- 458 eligible veterans, receiving 5,532 services
- 24 other eligible persons, receiving 331 services

In 2024, 5.3% of customers were Priority of Service Veterans. 5,532 services were provided to Priority of Service Veterans & Qualified Spouses, 6.1% of total services. Of the veterans assisted, 221 served fewer than 180 days in the military, 24 were the qualified spouse of a veteran, and 458 were eligible veterans.

|                                          |            |
|------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Unique Veterans Served</b>            | <b>504</b> |
| <b>Total Services</b>                    | 6,028      |
| <b>Total Job Referrals</b>               | 2,976      |
| <b>Hires/Went to Work</b>                | 86         |
| <b>RESEA Orientations</b>                | 29         |
| <b>New WorkInTexas.com Registrations</b> | 188        |

## MOBILE WORKFORCE OFFICE

The Mobile Workforce Development Office serves as a moving extension of Workforce Solutions Panhandle 's Workforce Centers. It travels to rural areas within the PWDA, including Pampa, Dimmitt, Dumas, Childress, Perryton, and Tulia, to provide essential services to job seekers. These services include:

- Work registration on WorkInTexas.com
- Assistance with online job applications

- Support with résumé writing
- Information on available training services
- Assistance with accessing Child Care services
- Information about the Adult Education & Literacy Programs

| <b>Mobile Offices Trips</b>                |  | <b>120</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>College/University Campus Trips</b>     |  | 19         |
| <b>Employers Served</b>                    |  | 11         |
| <b># Times TDJC Utilized Mobile Office</b> |  | 47         |
| <b>Job Seekers Served</b>                  |  | 475        |
| <b>In-Person</b>                           |  | 239        |
| <b>Virtual</b>                             |  | 236        |
| <b>RESEA Customers Served</b>              |  | 164        |

## **WILDFIRE RESPONSE**

In the aftermath of the Texas Panhandle wildfires during Q1 of 2024, Workforce Solutions Panhandle didn't just participate in resource fairs – it brought its services directly to those in need. The BSU deployed its Mobile Workforce Office to Stinnett, setting up a convenient location for residents impacted by the fires to access critical resources.

**On-Site Assistance:** The Mobile Workforce Office provided a one-stop shop for residents seeking employment support. Workforce staff were present to offer a comprehensive range of services, including:

- **Access to computers and reliable internet connectivity** – a crucial step in today's job search process.

- **All traditional BSU workforce services** – job search guidance, skills development programs, and information on potential financial assistance for job training.

The deployment of the Mobile Workforce Office exemplifies Workforce Solutions Panhandle's commitment to providing accessible and responsive services. By taking its services directly to wildfire-stricken communities, the Mobile Workforce Office plays a vital role in expediting recovery efforts and empowering residents to get back on their feet.

## **EMPLOYERS UTILIZING THE MOBILE WORKFORCE OFFICE**

### **JBS - Cactus & Caviness Beef Packers (Hereford)**

Recruiters from JBS and Caviness Beef Packers used the Mobile Office to enhance summer recruitment for young adults. Collaboration focused on creating tailored hiring plans to meet each employer's specific needs.

### **Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)**

TDCJ area recruiter Maxey Nuss utilized the Mobile Office 47 times in FY2024 to recruit correctional officers and essential staff for units in Pampa, Dumas, Childress, and Tulia. These efforts resulted in meetings with over 120 job seekers and led to 35 hires from 252 job postings.

### **Amarillo VA Healthcare System**

From October 2023 to September 2024, the Amarillo VA Healthcare System shadowed the Mobile Office to observe its operations. This collaboration aimed to enhance workforce services for veterans by understanding how the Mobile Office assists job seekers, allowing the VA to improve its support for veterans seeking employment.

### **Area Colleges & Universities**

The Mobile Office actively supports college students in rural areas, recognizing their educational needs. It visited several campuses, including Clarendon College, Amarillo College, and Frank Phillips College, making 19 trips to engage with students and faculty, providing personalized support to help them during their education.

## **OUTREACH**

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) has established a strong online presence, with 16,446 followers and a cumulative reach of 247,084 in 2024, significantly impacting the local community. This extensive reach allows WSP to effectively disseminate vital information about job opportunities, resources, and career guidance, enhancing community engagement and strengthening the local workforce.

**Facebook**, Workforce Solutions Panhandle’s main page caters to all 26 Panhandle counties, offering valuable information and updates. Additionally, 12 localized pages target specific cities and job seekers, tailoring content to their unique needs.

**Instagram & X (Twitter)** are also important platforms, especially for reaching youth and young adult job seekers.

**LinkedIn** is used for professional networking, connecting with employers, industry leaders, and job seekers.

**Social Media**

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| Total Followers | 16,446  |
| Page Reach      | 247,084 |

**Facebook**

| Pages                         | Total Follows | Page Reach |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Workforce Solutions Panhandle | 7,514         | 236,086    |
| Amarillo Job Pop              | 2,119         | 1,825      |

|                                        |       |     |
|----------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| <b>Borger Job Pop</b>                  | 1,248 | 867 |
| <b>Pampa Job Pop</b>                   | 1,114 | 749 |
| <b>Dumas Job Pop</b>                   | 1,003 | 893 |
| <b>Hereford Job Pop</b>                | 792   | 577 |
| <b>Dalhart Job Pop</b>                 | 783   | 664 |
| <b>Youth Connections</b>               | 357   | 204 |
| <b>Childress Mobile Workforce Unit</b> | 47    | 98  |
| <b>Perryton Mobile Workforce Unit</b>  | 42    | 101 |
| <b>Tulia Mobile Workforce Unit</b>     | 34    | 90  |
| <b>Dimmitt Mobile Workforce Unit</b>   | 15    | 67  |

## Instagram

|                                      |            |              |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Workforce Solutions Panhandle</b> | <b>554</b> | <b>4,560</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------|

## X (Twitter)

|                                      |            |                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| <b>Workforce Solutions Panhandle</b> | <b>816</b> | <b>Unavailable</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|



LinkedIn

|                                  |     |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Workforce Solutions<br>Panhandle | 565 | 569 |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|

GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

Workforce Solutions Panhandle’s Google Business Profile plays a crucial role in supporting the Texas Panhandle community in several ways.

**Increased Accessibility:** The profile provides easy access to information about services, job fairs, and events, helping job seekers and businesses connect effortlessly.

**Visibility for Resources:** By appearing in local search results, Workforce Solutions Panhandle ensures that community members are aware of available workforce resources, training programs, and support services.

**Promoting Local Employment:** By highlighting available job resources and training programs, Workforce Solutions Panhandle helps individuals improve their employability, ultimately contributing to economic growth and stability in the region.

Google Search Results

|                                          |  |        |
|------------------------------------------|--|--------|
| Business Profile Interactions - Amarillo |  | 18,994 |
| Calls                                    |  | 7,638  |
| Directions                               |  | 4,340  |
| Website Clicks                           |  | 7,016  |
| Business Profile Interactions - Borger   |  | 2,312  |

|                                                 |       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Calls</b>                                    | 1,122 |
| <b>Directions</b>                               | 534   |
| <b>Website Clicks</b>                           | 656   |
| <b>Business Profile Interactions - Hereford</b> | 868   |
| <b>Calls</b>                                    | 270   |
| <b>Directions</b>                               | 494   |
| <b>Website Clicks</b>                           | 104   |

## GOVDELIVERY

In an era of rapid information dissemination, effective communication is paramount for government agencies like Workforce Solutions Panhandle. The utilization of GovDelivery has revolutionized how Business Services staff outreach both employers and job seekers, streamlining the process and enhancing the reach of critical information.

The implementation of GovDelivery has significantly augmented the outreach capabilities of Business Services staff at Workforce Solutions Panhandle. By leveraging this platform, they can efficiently deliver vital information to employers, job seekers, the press, and other stakeholders. This streamlined communication process ensures that crucial updates and resources are readily accessible, contributing to a more informed and connected community. GovDelivery has become an indispensable tool in enhancing the agency's mission to serve the workforce needs of the Texas Panhandle region.

|                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Total<br/>Subscribers</b> | 25,640 |
|------------------------------|--------|

|                    |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| <b>Employers</b>   | 2,711  |
| <b>Job Seekers</b> | 16,158 |

## Bulletins

A bulletin, in the GovDelivery context, is a concise and targeted message that serves as a vital tool for conveying information to a specific audience. These messages are designed to be clear, informative, and relevant to the recipients. They are a means of directly connecting with subscribers and conveying timely updates. Examples of bulletin topics sent by Workforce Solutions Panhandle in 2024:

- Monthly Texas Panhandle Labor Market Update for Employers
- Workforce Solutions Panhandle Job Fairs and Hiring Event Information
- Matters of Public Interest to the Press
- Employer and Job Seeker Newsletters
- Child Care Customer Updates

|                                   |         |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Bulletins Sent</b>             | 144     |
| <b>Total Recipients</b>           | 281,924 |
| <b>Total Delivered</b>            | 266,694 |
| <b>Unique Email Opens</b>         | 101,073 |
| <b>Unique Email Open Rate (%)</b> | 37.9%   |

## GovDelivery Engagement by Month

| Month          | Unique Recipients | Engagement Rate |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| September 2024 | 21,151            | 58.54%          |
| August 2024    | 17,950            | 57.25%          |
| July 2024      | 16,553            | 57.54%          |
| June 2024      | 16,203            | 56.95%          |
| May 2024       | 18,622            | 56.53%          |
| April 2024     | 18,614            | 57.39%          |
| March 2024     | 16,987            | 48.39%          |
| February 2024  | 13,390            | 43.09%          |
| January 2024   | 11,953            | 51.22%          |
| December 2023  | 12,147            | 56.83%          |
| November 2023  | 12,243            | 56.46%          |
| October 2023   | 11,759            | 51.87%          |

## BRANDING/NEWS MEDIA

Beginning in October 2024, Workforce Solutions Panhandle has garnered noteworthy recognition through extensive media coverage, amassing a total of more than 36 news stories across various mediums, including television, newspapers, and online platforms.

These stories have spotlighted a range of impactful initiatives undertaken by WSP, underscoring significant contributions to the community.

Among the highlighted news stories are:

- Job Fairs & Hiring Events
- Natural Disaster Assistance for employers and affected citizens
- Rapid Response information for job seekers
- Job Training and equipment grants to local employers and educational institutions
- Labor Market Information

## **SEPTEMBER 2024**

Sep 19 2024 - HomeGoods in Amarillo now hiring ahead of grand opening - [Link](#)

Sep 19 2024 - HomeGoods en Amarillo está contratando antes de su gran apertura - [Link](#)

Sep 15 2024 - HomeGoods to host job fair in Amarillo - [Link](#)

Sep 15 2024 - HomeGoods to host job fair in Amarillo - [Link](#)

Sep 3 2024 - Amarillo EDC partners with Texas Workforce Commission for workforce funding event - [Link](#)

## **AUGUST 2024**

Aug 8 2024 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle launches 'SkillUp Panhandle' campaign - [Link](#)

Aug 8 2024 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle launches campaign to boost career success - [Link](#)

Aug 8 2024 - VIDEO: Workforce Solutions Panhandle launches 'SkillUp Panhandle' campaign - [Link](#)

Aug 6 2024 - United Family to host hiring event for new Market Street location - [Link](#)

Aug 5 2024 - United Family to host hiring event for new Market Street location - [Link](#)

Aug 5 2024 - United to hold 3-day hiring event for new Market Street location in Amarillo - [Link](#)

Aug 1 2024 - Child care desert; Amarillo works to address early child care needs - [Link](#)

## **JULY 2024**

Jul 12 2024 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle to host job fair for Amazon drivers - [Link](#)

## **JUNE 2024**

Jun 17 2024 - International Aerospace Coatings, Workforce Solutions work together to boost Amarillo economy - [Link](#)

Jun 3, 2024 - Amarillo employers looking for seasonal workers for the summer - [Link](#)

## **MAY 2024**

May 28, 2024 - Amarillo experiencing job growth, declining unemployment rates in 2024 - [Link](#)

May 12, 2024 - Canyon Independent School District celebrates Career Signing Day - [Link](#)

## **APRIL 2024**

Apr 8, 2024 - VIDEO: Workforce Solutions Panhandle spring job fair returns Tuesday - [Link](#)

Apr 8, 2024 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle spring job fair returns Tuesday - [Link](#)

Apr 1, 2024 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle, Education Credit Union continue to grow 'Career Signing Day' Program - [Link](#)

Apr 1, 2024 - First Texas Panhandle Career Signing Day to recognize 2 AISD students for career pursuits - [Link](#)

## **FEBRUARY 2024**

Feb 5, 2024 - Amarillo Buc-ee's closer to opening as jobs are posted - [Link](#)

Feb 3, 2024 - Buc-ee's now hiring in Amarillo - [Link](#)

Feb 1, 2024 - Buc-ee's location in Amarillo now hiring - [Link](#)

Feb 1, 2024 - Amarillo Buc-ee's hiring managers, here's how to apply, how much it pays - [Link](#)

## **JANUARY 2024**

Jan 22, 2024 - Top 3 fastest growing industries projected to drive employment in the Panhandle - [Link](#)

Jan 8, 2024 - Amarillo's unemployment rate dropped to 2.5%, lowest it's been since May 2023 - [Link](#)

## **DECEMBER 2023**

Dec 26, 2023 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle stepping up to train healthcare professionals in the Panhandle - [Link](#)

Dec 22, 2023 - Unemployment rate continues to drop here in the Panhandle - [Link](#)

## **NOVEMBER 2023**

Nov 17, 2023 - Texas reports new record high civilian labor force, job growth while unemployment remains above national average - [Link](#)

Nov 6, 2023 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle details job fair for veterans, qualifying spouses and general public - [Link](#)

Nov 3, 2023 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle organiza este martes su feria anual de trabajo "Hiring Red, White and You" - [Link](#)

Nov 3, 2023 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle to host 12th annual 'Hiring Red, White and You' job fair Tuesday - [Link](#)

## **OCTOBER 2023**

Oct 20, 2023 - Texas Workforce Commission announces record job creation - [Link](#)

Oct 6, 2023 - Workforce Solutions Panhandle to host Amarillo Job Fair Tuesday - [Link](#)

This commitment to empowering the local workforce has been showcased through appearances on local radio and television shows, where staff have played a pivotal role in promoting Workforce Solutions Panhandle and fostering connectivity between job seekers and potential employers.

## **VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES**

The partnership between Workforce Solutions Panhandle and the Texas Workforce Solutions - Vocational Rehabilitation Program provides streamlined, comprehensive support for individuals with disabilities across the Texas Panhandle. By consolidating resources, these programs offer a cohesive approach to training, employment, and career development, creating accessible pathways to meaningful employment.

## **CHOICES & SNAP EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

The Choices Program helps TANF applicants and recipients transition from welfare to work through job searches, readiness classes, and support services like childcare and transportation. Workforce Solutions Panhandle Career Specialists provide personalized support to meet individual needs.



Similarly, the SNAP Employment and Training program connects recipients to work-based activities and educational services, with specialists creating tailored plans to address barriers to employment. Together, these programs enhance job security and economic stability in the Texas Panhandle, fostering a more self-sufficient community.

|                     | <b>Choices</b> | <b>SNAP E&amp;T</b> |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Total served        | 279            | 375                 |
| Employed            | 72             | 158                 |
| Support Services    | 36             | 205                 |
| Short-Term Training | 3              | 5                   |
| Work Experience     | 1              | 10                  |
| Paid Internships    | 6              | 0                   |

### **NONCUSTODIAL PARENT CHOICES PROGRAM (NCP)**

The Texas Workforce Commission's NCP Choices program significantly benefits the Texas Panhandle community by helping non-custodial parents achieve financial stability. By assisting parents in securing better jobs, the program promotes individual economic growth and fosters family stability through regular child support payments, ultimately strengthening the local economy.

At Workforce Solutions Panhandle, the NCP program has positively impacted 63 non-custodial parents, with 23 securing full-time employment, resulting in a 36.5% employment success rate. This initiative not only aids parents in finding jobs but also lays the groundwork for financial stability, benefiting their children and enhancing the overall well-being of families in the region. By focusing on job placement and support, the NCP Choices program contributes to stronger economic and social outcomes in the Texas Panhandle.

|                            |       |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Total NCP Customers Served | 63    |
| Establishment Cases        | 25    |
| Enforcement Cases          | 38    |
| Successfully Completed     | 12    |
| Obtained Employment        | 23    |
| % Obtained Employment      | 36.5% |

## **TRAINING SERVICES**

The Workforce Solutions Panhandle's Training Services aim to enhance workforce development by providing individuals with access to training and employment services. It helps job seekers gain the skills needed for in-demand occupations through funding for training programs, career counseling, and support services. Training Services also emphasizes collaboration among various workforce agencies and encourages partnerships with local businesses to ensure that training aligns with industry needs, ultimately promoting economic growth and individual career advancement.

## **ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKERS**

Training Services Adult & Dislocated Worker programs offered at Workforce Solutions Panhandle are crucial for supporting individuals in our community, equipping them with the skills needed for in-demand careers in the region. Out of 341 applications, Training Services enrolled 250 individuals in Adult & Dislocated Worker programs, reflecting a strong enrollment rate of 73.31%. This indicates a high level of interest and successful onboarding into the programs.

|                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Applications                       | 341    |
| Total Enrolled                     | 250    |
| Adult                              | 205    |
| Adult Statewide Grants             | 30     |
| Dislocated Worker                  | 9      |
| Dislocated Worker Statewide Grants | 6      |
| Enrollment Rate                    | 73.31% |

Training was provided across various occupations, with a significant focus on healthcare (191 participants) and transportation (79 participants). This variety helps address local job market needs, ensuring that training aligns with available employment opportunities.

With 25.8% of participants coming from rural areas, Training Services programs help bridge the gap for those in less accessible regions, promoting economic stability and opportunity.

|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Healthcare Practitioners         | 191 |
| Transportation & Material Moving | 79  |
| Protective Service               | 13  |
| Management                       | 9   |
| Business & Financial             | 2   |
| Computer & Mathematical          | 2   |
| Production                       | 2   |

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Architecture & Engineering         | 1            |
| Installation, Maintenance & Repair | 1            |
| Office & Administration Support    | 1            |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>301</b>   |
| <b>Total Rural Percentage</b>      | <b>25.8%</b> |

## YOUNG ADULT TRAINING SERVICES

Young Adults, age 24 and younger, who are experiencing difficulties are eligible for workforce benefits based on individual circumstances. Training Services can assist motivated Young Adults who are authorized to work in the United States, registered with Selective Service (if required), and are experiencing challenges to workforce success.

The Young Adult Training program offered a diverse range of training opportunities for young adults in FY2024, with 86 participants, 58 of which are currently engaged in or having completed training while 28 participated in workforce-paid internships. These programs encompass a wide spectrum of skills and industries, equipping Young Adults with the tools they need for successful career paths. These training initiatives are designed to empower participants with the knowledge and expertise necessary to excel in today's competitive job market, fostering a brighter future for our young workforce.

|                                         |           |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|
| Customers in Training                   | 58        |
| Customers in Workforce-Paid Internships | 28        |
| <b>Total Served</b>                     | <b>85</b> |

## **TANF SUMMER WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM**

The PWDA's Summer Work Experience program serves youth from rural communities in the Texas Panhandle. Participants worked for the local school districts where they live and were given work assignments that provided them an opportunity to learn skills and work habits that will benefit them throughout their working careers. Students qualify for this summer program based on family income. A total of 33 participants were placed at seven (7) rural school districts. Students collectively worked over 6,700 hours and earned at total of \$75,564 in wages. This not only supports the participants' financial needs but also fosters a strong work ethic and essential job skills that will benefit them in future employment.

By empowering youth and enhancing their employability, the TANF Summer Work Experience Program contributes to the economic vitality and resilience of the Texas Panhandle, helping to build a stronger, more skilled workforce for the future.

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Participants                   | 33          |
| Successfully Completed 4 weeks | 93.94%      |
| Rural Participants             | 96.97%      |
| Worksite Schools               | 7           |
| Hours Worked                   | 6,772.68    |
| Wages Paid                     | \$75,564.00 |

## **SUMMER EARN & LEARN (SEAL)**

The Summer Earn & Learn (SEAL) program is a statewide initiative that provides students with disabilities, aged 14-22, with work readiness training and paid work experience. Over five weeks, participants work with local employers, gaining valuable

skills and insights for their transitions to postsecondary education and employment. Some may even be offered full-time positions upon completion.

Out of 48 referrals, 39 participants were placed at worksites, achieving a placement rate of 84.62%. They completed work readiness training at a rate of 62.5%, working a total of 5,582 hours and earning \$65,499.76. This not only supports their financial independence but also enhances their employability. With 36 participating worksites, the program strengthens community connections and prepares students for successful futures, fostering greater opportunities and economic stability in the region.

|                                             |             |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Referrals                             | 48          |
| Number of Participants Placed at a Worksite | 39          |
| Completed Work Readiness                    | 62.5%       |
| Successfully Completed Placement            | 84.62%      |
| Participating Worksites                     | 36          |
| Hours Worked                                | 5582.12     |
| Wages Paid                                  | \$65,499.76 |

This program, a partnership between the Texas Workforce Commission, WSRCA, and Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services, also benefits employers. With a growing demand for a skilled labor force, including students with disabilities can enhance recruitment strategies. SEAL offers a risk-free way to meet short-term staffing needs, with wages and workers' compensation covered for participants, reasonable accommodations provided, and additional training as needed. Employers also receive site visits to ensure satisfaction with participants.

**THE MIDDLE SKILLS EMPLOYMENT SUPPLIES PILOT PROGRAM**, supported by Workforce Solutions Panhandle, provided funding for 38 participants to acquire necessary tools, uniforms, and supplies for middle skills occupations—those requiring

education beyond high school but less than a four-year degree. This initiative expended \$22,275.18, ensuring individuals were equipped to begin employment in vital roles.

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Participants enrolled in Project | 38          |
| Total Funds Expended             | \$22,275.18 |

**SKILLUP PANHANDLE (METRIX LEARNING)** benefits the community by providing Texas Panhandle residents with valuable skills, enhancing the local workforce and driving economic growth. With over 7,000 courses available 24/7, individuals can learn flexibly, improving their job prospects through more than 300 skills tracks and badges.

Engaging 217 participants in general and certification courses, the platform promotes continuous learning and prepares users for the job market with industry-recognized certifications. Skill assessments and job search tools help identify areas for improvement and connect users with local employment opportunities, enhancing workforce readiness and contributing to the region's economic vitality.

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Total Participants     | 217 |
| General Metrix Courses | 212 |
| Certification Courses  | 5   |

**THE UPSKILLING AND TRAINING TO ADDRESS SKILLS GAP GRANT** offered essential resources to Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth seeking industry-recognized credentials in high-demand fields like healthcare and transportation. The program exceeded its targets, with 24 participants enrolled and completing their assessments, expending a total of \$67,483.00. Together, these programs not only support individual career advancement but also strengthen the local economy by preparing a skilled workforce ready to meet the demands of in-need industries.

| <b>Performance Measures</b> | <b>Target</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Assessments Provided        | 23            | 24           |
| Enrolled Participants       | 23            | 24           |
| Participant Completion      | 23            | 23           |
| Total Amount Expended       | \$67,483.00   | \$67,483.00  |

## **11. EDUCATION OUTREACH SPECIALIST**

The Education Outreach Specialist (EOS) provides in-school services to school districts in the region. There is a wide range of services that an EOS can provide. Each district can personalize their services to fit the needs and demands of their students. The EOS provided engaging and interactive presentations/workshops to over 5,800 6th-12th grade students in classroom settings on the following topics:

- Labor market and high-demand jobs
- Employability skills
- Work-based learning, and
- Postsecondary pathways

Students are empowered to make well-informed postsecondary decisions using resources and other existing tools provided by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

Virtual Reality career exploration headsets have become a popular tool, enriching this initiative by utilizing today's technology to help students get hands-on experience in high-demand industries, including manufacturing/construction, health sciences and information technology.

As of FY2024, the EOS has contracted with fifteen school districts in the Texas Panhandle, delivering 2,555 VR experience, 3,346 participating in workshops,



significantly impacting the local workforce by preparing over 5,800 students for future careers.

|                                          |       |
|------------------------------------------|-------|
| Students Served                          | 5,886 |
| Virtual Reality (VR) Career Explorations | 2,555 |
| Career Exploration Workshops             | 3,346 |

**CHILD CARE SERVICES**

**CHILD CARE CLIENT SERVICES**

Child care is vital for working parents, often making the difference between keeping a job and losing one. Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Services (CCS) assists low to moderate-income families by helping cover child care costs while parents work, attend school, or participate in training programs to become more self-sufficient. In 2024, CCS served 2,422 families, with an average of 2,349 children receiving care daily. Additionally, 1,996 of these children were in certified Texas Rising Star Centers, highlighting the program’s commitment to quality. CCS also supports child care providers through quality improvement initiatives.

The goals of the Child Care Services program include expanding accessible child care options for families and providing a reliable source of information and financial assistance. The program focuses on supporting the holistic development of children and helping providers enhance the quality of care they offer. Ultimately, CCS aims to strengthen the child care industry and serve as a valuable community resource for all child care needs, benefiting both families and the community as a whole.

|                                         |       |
|-----------------------------------------|-------|
| Average number of children served daily | 2,349 |
| Families served in 2024                 | 2,422 |

|                                                                 |       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Children Served in a certified Texas Rising Star Center in 2024 | 1,996 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|

## CHILD CARE PROVIDER SERVICES

Workforce Solutions Panhandle is currently assisting 1,783 families and providing services for 2,643 children. PRPC has agreements with 102 Child Care Providers to provide services to WSP customers throughout the Panhandle of which 71% are Texas Rising Star certified. Approximately 54% of the children served through WSP are enrolled in a Texas Rising Star certified program.

|                                                        |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Total Providers                                        | 102       |
| TRS certified                                          | 71%       |
| Provider staff that received Scholarships              | 99        |
| New students                                           | 35%       |
| Amount expended on Scholarships for teachers/directors | \$195,000 |

**Child Care Quality Improvement** - Workforce Solutions Panhandle's Child Care Services program aims to enhance child care quality in the Panhandle Workforce Development Area (PWDA). This report highlights key areas of support and funding allocation.

**Indoor/Outdoor Learning Materials** – Child Care providers received \$309,105 to acquire indoor and outdoor learning materials. This included the Early Learning Programs onboarding to Texas Rising Star, Programs working on TRS Recertification and programs that expanded classrooms and or child care spots. These resources include educational materials, social emotional supports, and outdoor play equipment. The aim was to create engaging learning environments for children, fostering creativity and development.

**Curriculum** - A budget of \$147,460 was allocated to provide child care providers with curriculum resources. These resources included cloud access, print materials and assessment tools aligned with early learning standards. This supports structured and educationally rich programs that prepare children for school.

**National Association for the Education of Young Children Week of the Young Child Kick-off** – Many child care programs and local organizations came to Workforce Solutions Panhandle and provided fun activities for children and families along with helping to bring awareness about the importance of high-quality early learning, and the critical role early childhood educators play in a child’s development and learning.

**Professional Development** – A budget of 51,269 was allocated to the professional development of early learning program staff. Professional development consisted of trainings in infant and toddler curriculum, lesson planning for centers and home providers, teacher child interactions, classroom management and program management.

**Scholarship Recipients Certification and Degree Awards** - Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Services along with Amarillo College recognized individuals that participated in the Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Services Scholarship Program to attain Provider or Administrator certifications or an Associate Degree in Early Child Development.

**Wage Supplement** – ECE STARS – A wage supplement program was developed with the first awards in August of 2024 with three awardees meeting program requirements awards were \$2000 each. This activity is to help staff retention in the Early Learning Programs.

**Texas Rising Star Program Bonuses** - Providers were incentivized to participate in the TRS Program through financial bonuses totaling \$146,000, distributed as follows:

- **Initial TRS Bonuses (\$116,000):** Recognizing providers who achieve TRS certification, encouraging adherence to quality standards.
- **Annual Monitoring Visit Bonuses (\$30,000):** Rewarding providers who consistently meet program standards, promoting year-round commitment to quality care.

Workforce Solutions Panhandle 's Child Care Services program is committed to enhancing child care quality. By providing materials, curriculum resources, professional development, wage supplements, community engagement and TRS incentives, it promotes the growth and development of children in the region's child care facilities.

### **Amarillo College Child Care Quality Scholarships**

The Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Quality Scholarship Initiative played a pivotal role in empowering students pursuing child development/early childhood education majors at Amarillo College. Amarillo College has been a crucial partner in delivering this scholarship opportunity, offering flexible learning options such as evening and online classes. Furthermore, the courses taken within this program contribute towards fulfilling the annual Child Care Regulation and TRS training hour requirements, enhancing the educational and professional development of scholarship recipients.

The initiative's impact on Amarillo College students can be summarized as follows:

**Financial Allocation:** An approximate total of \$142,000.00 has been dedicated to scholarships for child development/early childhood education majors at Amarillo College. This financial commitment underscores the Initiative's dedication to supporting students in these vital fields of study.

**Scholarship Recipients:** On average, 30 students receive scholarships each semester. This consistent support ensures that a substantial number of individuals can pursue their educational aspirations without undue financial burden.

**New Recipients:** A noteworthy total of 46 new scholarship recipients have been welcomed into the program for the Fall II 2024 semester. This expansion reflects the Initiative's commitment to broadening access to quality education and professional development opportunities.

**Total Impact:** In total, 71 individuals have benefited from the Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Quality Scholarship Initiative. This impressive number highlights the significant and far-reaching impact of the Initiative, not only on the lives of individual students but also on the community and the field of child development/early childhood education as a whole.

The Workforce Solutions Panhandle Child Care Quality Scholarship Initiative has proven to be a valuable resource for Amarillo College students pursuing child development/early childhood education majors. Through substantial financial support, consistent scholarship awards, and the inclusion of new recipients, the Initiative has demonstrated its commitment to enhancing educational opportunities in this critical field.

## **SUCCESS STORIES**

Workforce Solutions Panhandle (WSP) success stories play a crucial role in showcasing the positive impact of its services on the local community. By highlighting the journeys of job seekers, training program graduates, and employers who collaborate with Workforce Solutions Panhandle, these stories demonstrate the transformative effects of workforce initiatives.

These narratives go beyond simple event listings; they reveal real-life changes that individuals experience as they gain employment, improve their skills, and contribute to their families' well-being. Each success story serves as concrete evidence of how Workforce Solutions Panhandle's programs foster economic stability and growth in the Texas Panhandle.

The transformations highlighted in these stories not only uplift the individuals involved but also strengthen the community as a whole. When job seekers secure employment, they enhance their financial independence, which contributes to the local economy. Additionally, graduates from training programs become skilled workers, filling vital roles in local businesses, thereby driving community development.

Workforce Solutions Panhandle 's success stories illustrate the interconnectedness of individual achievement and community progress, reinforcing the value of investing in workforce development. To explore these inspiring stories, visit <https://wspanhandle.com/success-stories/>.