

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Quarterly Full Board Meeting

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

November 5, 2026
10:00 am- 1:30 pm

Arkansas Municipal League
Livestreamed by [Arkansas Citizens Access Network]



AGENDA

FULL BOARD QUARTERLY MEETING

November 5, 2026

10:00 am

Call to Order…….. ……..……Col. (Ret.) Thomas Anderson Jr., Chairman
Roll Call……..……..……..Board Staff

Agenda Item 1: Approval of Minutes- *Action*

Minutes of September 9, 2026 Board Meeting.…….Thomas Anderson Jr., Chairman

Agenda Item 2: Administrative Remarks- *Informational* *(10:05-10:25)*

Chairperson Remarks…… Thomas Anderson Jr., Chairman

State Workforce Agency Director Remarks……,,,

Agenda Item 3: Governors' Workforce Initiatives- *Informational* *(10:25-10:30)*

Workforce Cabinet & Workforce Strategy Updates……..……Mike Rogers, Chief Workforce Officer
Office of Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Agenda Item 4: Subcommittee Reports- *Informational* *(10:30-10:45)*

- Transition, Implementation, and Modernization Committee- Candice Lawrence, Chairperson

Agenda Item 5: WIOA PY '25 Annual Performance Outcomes – *Informational* *(10:45-11:30)*

- **Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation** — Joseph Baxter, Commissioner
  Vocational Rehabilitation- Services for the Blind — Nathan Winter, Interim Director
- **Title II –Adult Education & Family Literacy** — Dr. Trenia Miles, Director
- **Title I – WIOA Youth, Adult & Dislocated Worker Programs** — Eddie Thomas, Director
- **Title III – Wagner Peyser/Employment Services**

Agenda Item 6: Governor Sanders 10:33 Reentry Program – *Informational* *(11:30-12:15)*

J. Cody Arnold, Attorney III- Office of Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Janet Camp, Director of Judicial Services- Restore Hope
Andrew Ruh, Deputy Director- Arkansas Department of Corrections
Sharon Cantrell, Executive Director of Business and Industry Center- UA Pulaski Technical College
Michael Tippin, Workforce Administrator- Arkansas Department of Commerce- Division of Workforce Connections- Office of Employment & Training

Agenda Item 7: Employer Insights: Childcare & the Workforce – *Informational* *(12:15-12:45)*

(Working Lunch)

Bryan Day, Executive Director
Port of Little Rock

Case Study: Understanding Childcare as a Workforce Issue

Agenda Item 8: Board Open Discussion: Arkansas' Workforce – *Informational* *(12:45-1:15)*

Public Opportunity to Address the Board

Announcements

Adjournment *(1:30)*

Resources:

- USDOL WIOA Waiver Website
- TEN No. 05-26 Framework for Effective Pre-Apprenticeships
- America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age
- American Manufacturing Apprenticeship Incentive Fund

Arkansas Policies/Issuances- *Recently Published*

PY26-08 Youth Program Element Coordination
PY26-07 Reallocation of Recaptured Local Funds
PY26-06 Training and Supportive Services Funding Flexibility
PY 26-05 Affiliate Site Network In lieu of Comprehensive Center
PY 26-04 Annual Report Narrative

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Agenda Item 1: Action

Approval of Minutes from September 9, 2026 Meeting

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

Arkansas Workforce Development Board
Minutes

September 9, 2026

Little Rock Workforce Center

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened at the Little Rock Workforce Center beginning at 10:03 am. Chairman Thomas Anderson called the meeting to order and asked staff to conduct the roll call. The following members announced their presence: Mike Rogers, proxy for Governor Sarah Sanders, Commissioner Joseph Baxter, Mr. Len Blaylock, Mayor Ray Bowman, Ms. Karen Breashears, Mr. Aaron Chastain, Dr. Teri Cox-Meadows, Mr. Miles Crawford, Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. Randy Henderson, Ms. Rebecca Ives, Ms. Candice Lawrence, Mr. Brian Marsh, Dr. Trenia Miles, Fred Lewis, proxy for Mr. Clint O'Neal, Ms. Latanyua Robinson, Mr. Barry Sellers, Mr. Kelley Sharp, Mr. Timothy Thorne, Mr. Cody Waits, Dr. Ken Warden, and Mr. Nathan Winter.

Mr. William French and Mr. George Nunnally could not attend. A quorum was established.

Agenda Item 1-ACTION-Approval of Minutes: Chairman Anderson asked whether any corrections or revisions needed to be made to the May 21, 2026, minutes. Mr. Kelley Sharp stated that a correction needed to be made to the Board Open Discussion, specifically the seconding of the voice vote.

A motion was made by Judge Brandon Ellison and seconded by Ms. Karen Breashears to approve the May 21, 2026, minutes with the noted correction. The motion carried unanimously, with none opposed.

After review of the May 21, 2026, recording, the meeting record accurately reflects the action taken by the Board; therefore, no correction was needed.

Agenda Item 2-INFORMATIONAL-Administrative Remarks:

Chairperson Remarks: Chairman Anderson announced the establishment of a new ad hoc committee in addition to the three existing standing committees: the Executive Committee, Program & Performance Evaluation Committee, and Strategic Planning Committee. The new committee, the "Waiver Transition and Implementation/Modernization Committee," will focus on the specific actions needed to fully implement the WIOA Combined State Plan and approved waivers. The committee will meet regularly and work closely with state staff in an oversight and guidance capacity to support timeline goals and expected outcomes.
The committee will also support a smooth transition from the 10 local board structure to the consolidated state board structure, with emphasis on preventing gaps in services for active WIOA participants and maintaining compliance and transparency throughout the process. Committee members are Miles Crawford, Candice Lawrence, and Latanyua Robinson.

State Workforce Agency Director Remarks: Executive Director Cody Waits thanked the Arkansas Workforce Connections team for their hard work with the State Plan and the successful approval of waivers by the Department of Labor. Work is in progress for WIOA Title IV with their efforts to combine ARS & DSB into one organization

State Board Staff Remarks: Director Eddie Thomas spoke about the conditional approval of the State Plan. The United States Department of Labor provided conditional approval of the State Plan, contingent on receiving the necessary corrections to Title IV and SNAP E&T. The WIOA team met with local workforce development boards from May through September to gather input on the new system and the new structure. Feedback was received from the Chief Elected Officials to ensure that the local voice and input were preserved. Establishing Regional Business Councils is one way the local voice and input will be preserved. The WIOA Partners Executive Committee continues to meet monthly to discuss alignment, performance, and business engagement. Director Eddie Thomas provided program updates for Restore Hope, the 10:33 Initiative, and the Annual Partners Conference. The Annual Partners Conference will be held from August 31, 2027, to September 2, 2027.

Agenda Item 3-INFORMATIONAL-Governor's Workforce Initiatives: Chief Workforce Officer Mike Rogers provided updates on LAUNCH and related programs. Launch for Students is now live for approximately 250,000 students in grades 5-12, as well as their parents/guardians, counselors, teachers, and ADE staff. To date, 18,938 students have completed interest assessments, and 8,021 have created student success plans. New Launch for Employers features are expected to go live mid-September, including the ability for employers to indicate military hiring preferences and initiatives.

Arkansas was 1 of 10 states to receive awards in the U.S. DOE CTO Challenge. The work will focus on course-level skills publishing, employer skills validation, stackable career pathways, verified credential issuance, and skills data governance. The initial geographic focus is Southern Arkansas's "Golden Triangle," including advanced manufacturing, critical minerals, and healthcare.

RAISE US is a newly launched nonprofit that was formed to help Americans transition to an AI economy. Arkansas, Connecticut, Maryland, and Utah are the initial pilot states. RAISE US has expressed interest in funding additional capacity and infrastructure development for the LAUNCH platform. The Walmart Foundation awarded $2.5 million for LAUNCH for Jobseekers enhancements, a significant increase from its typical annual grant of $750,000. ACOM, SAS, and ADE also partnered on a submission for the National Science Foundation's AI Ready America grant, which would establish an AI hub in every state to strengthen AI readiness. Launch is included as the delivery vehicle for AI readiness resources in Arkansas, and Robert McGough was identified as the principal investigator.

Agenda Item 4-INFORMATIONAL WIOA Combined State Plan PY 2026-2027 Modification & Waiver Requests: Director Eddie Thomas reviewed the WIOA Waiver Implementation Timeline. The goals are to: implement all approved waivers statewide by July 1, 2027, or sooner; transition service delivery without gaps for jobseekers or employers; maintain adequate service-delivery coverage statewide; retain regional expertise by recruiting qualified existing local board staff into AWC case management roles; and close out each local area with obligations liquidated and residual funds recaptured. Policies and instruments to be established include state definitions replacing local board definitions, including "requires additional assistance"; supportive-services, referral, and ITA-limitation policies; state board procedures for budget approval and oversight; MOU and infrastructure funding agreement negotiation practices; a one-stop center certification process; and a stakeholder convening model for local workforce and industry groups.

Through October 31, 2026, Arkansas Workforce Connections has been in a planning phase with Chairman Anderson to create a Transition and Implementation Committee of the state board. The committee will work with state staff to map the timelines and activities needed to implement all waivers by July 1, 2027, or sooner. From October 2026 to December 2026, state policies will be reviewed for proposed revisions in anticipation of approval. Once approval is received by USDOL, revisions will go to the state board for review and approval, including terms previously defined by local boards. Legislation is being drafted to ensure state statutes do not conflict with implementation of the waiver as it relates to the designation and duties of the state workforce development board.

The next session of the Arkansas General Assembly begins in January 2027, with March 31, 2027, targeted for completion of the legislation.. In parallel, Arkansas Workforce Connections staff will seek approval to hire additional staff needed for statewide service delivery coverage. The Arkansas Workforce Connections monitoring unit will conduct in-depth closeout monitoring of each local workforce development area, including a programmatic sample of expenditures and reconciliation of financial reports. By June 30, 2027, Arkansas Workforce Connections plans to hire and train additional local staff and recruit qualified existing local board staff for regional case management roles. Effective July 1, 2027, the consolidated service delivery model will take effect statewide, with the Arkansas Workforce Development Board assuming functions previously held by local workforce development boards. By August 31, 2027, subaward closeout will be initiated, with a 45-day period for local workforce development areas to liquidate outstanding obligations. Remaining funds will be recaptured upon completion of the closeout process.

Director Eddie Thomas concluded by providing a summary of the proposed state board committees that will be created based on the restructuring. The committees will be charged with carrying out the functions of the state and local boards.

Agenda Item 5-ACTION-WIOA Waivers Interim Program Policies: Office of Employment and Training's Assistant Directors Angela Cook and Marcia Moore and Policy Manager Stephanie Blair discussed four of the seven recently approved waivers. The team explained that although some waivers would still require legislative action to fully implement, the group being presented were more programmatic and could be implemented immediately and used by the local workforce development boards, even before the transition. State staff drafted proposed corresponding policies for the board's review, consideration and approval.

The first waiver addressed reallocation of funds across local workforce areas. It provides flexibility to redistribute unspent or unobligated funds across local workforce areas. The waiver provides flexibility to redistribute unspent or unobligated funds while allowing Arkansas to continue using a formula-funding methodology for the ten local workforce development areas. The waiver also allows the state to shift resources where they are most needed to address uneven demand and funding imbalances affecting responsiveness to employer and jobseeker needs.

The second waiver addressed WIOA training and supportive service dollars, or "last-dollar flexibility." It allows WIOA Title I programs to fund training and supportive services without first verifying whether participants can obtain other grant assistance. The waiver is intended to reduce enrollment delays, administrative burdens, barriers for low-income participants, and complexity in funding provisions.

The third waiver addressed the use of a network of affiliate workforce centers in place of required comprehensive centers. It allows Arkansas to use virtual and remote services and a robust network of affiliate sites strategically co-located with partners, reducing infrastructure costs while maximizing reach. It also reduces the financial and administrative burden on partners associated with supporting at least one comprehensive center in each of the ten workforce development areas.

The fourth waiver addressed the 14 Youth Program Elements. It provides increased flexibility to deliver the services most needed and allows Arkansas to place greater focus on work-based learning.

Chairman Anderson entertained a motion to approve the four interim Waiver Program Policies as presented. **A motion was made by Ms. Becky Ives and seconded by Dr. Teri Cox-Meadows to approve. The motion carried unanimously, with none opposed.**

Agenda Item 6-INFORMATIONAL-Employer Insights & Board Development Training:

Dr. KC Capers served as guest presenter from Riceland Foods. He provided an overview of the company's mission and updates on the current workforce at his company and strategies that the organization has deployed to maintain a strong workforce and strong business practices despite recent changes. Dr. Capers presented on leadership and workforce development. He emphasized that leadership titles do not always come with sufficient leadership development and that skills must be intentionally cultivated. He noted that developing better people strengthens organizational culture and performance and stressed that leadership is based on influence, not simply authority. He distinguished training, which can satisfy a requirement, from development, which produces growth, and encouraged organizations to place people in roles where they can be most effective.

Dr. Capers also discussed managing change, challenges, and crises, emphasizing that each requires a different response and skill set. He reviewed the ADKAR change management model: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement. He encouraged leaders to pursue continuous improvement, adopt a growth mindset, develop successors, and focus on significance and the legacy they leave through their leadership. Additional themes included the role of organizational culture in retention, identifying barriers to change, and developing the appropriate mindset, skill set, and tool set. He also highlighted emotional, relational, conversational, and situational intelligence as important leadership capabilities.

Agenda Item 7-Informational- Expanding Apprenticeship in Arkansas: Director Cody Waits provided an update on the American Manufacturing Apprenticeship Incentive Fund. The U.S. Department of Labor selected Arkansas to administer the fund nationally. The portal opened January 28, 2026, as part of a six-month pilot to gauge interest. The program provides $3,500 per apprentice through individual or group program sponsors, with employer caps in place and at least 90% of the funds directed to the employer. Approximately 120 occupations were initially approved under the manufacturing incentive fund, with an updated number expected. Mr. Darren Hale and Mr. Kenneth Gray from the Office of Skills Development process applications and support award administration and performance reporting. At present, 240 applications have been submitted, and 120 have been approved, representing 42 out of 50 states taking part in this Incentive Fund. Approximately 5,000 apprentices were included in the application process, with about 3,000 approved, and $10.4 million in funds has been obligated. The period of performance runs July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2029. At the current run rate, the fund is fully obligated around September 2027, roughly 22 months early.

Agenda Item 8-ACTION-Arkansas In Demand Occupations: Mr. Gary Do, Systems and Strategic Initiatives Manager, and Ms. Susan Price, Workforce Economics & Labor Statistics Manager, reviewed the new Demand Occupation Tool. Arkansas has implemented a new, data-driven approach that evaluates occupations by assigning a one-to-five-star rating based on four key performance areas: Demand, Growth, Earnings, and Retention. Each occupation's score is calculated using a weighted system that reflects what matters most in today's labor market.

State WIOA policy defines an in-demand industry sector or occupation as one of the following:

- An industry sector that has a substantial current or potential impact, including through jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement, on the state, regional, or local economy, and that contributes to the growth or stability of other supporting businesses or the growth of other industry sectors; or
- An occupation that currently has or is projected to have several positions, including positions that lead to economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement, in an industry sector so as to have a significant impact on the state, regional, or local economy, as appropriate.

The determination of whether an industry sector or occupation is in demand is made by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board or the Local Workforce Development Board, as appropriate, using state and regional business and labor market projections, including the use of labor market information. Federal regulation assigns the establishment of ETPL criteria, information requirements, and procedures to the Governor or her designee, in consultation with the State Workforce Development Board.

To implement the new rating tool for use in conjunction with the WIOA eligible training provider list, two options of the Arkansas In Demand Occupation Tool were presented to the board.

- Option 1: Three Stars or Higher, or Two Stars with a Demand Score of 60 or Higher: An occupation is in demand if it has an overall rating of three (3) stars or higher, or an overall rating of two (2) stars with a Demand Score of 60 or higher. Under this threshold, 289 occupations qualify statewide. Area totals range from 312 in Central to 409 in Northwest. Of the 870 ETPL programs, 785 meet the criteria, and 85 do not. The programs that do not meet the criteria are concentrated rather than broadly distributed. Healthcare and human services account for 49 of the 85. Phlebotomy programs account for 23, and emergency medical technician programs for 10. The remainder are scattered across public safety, agriculture, and advanced manufacturing.
- Option 2: Three Stars or Higher: An occupation is in demand if it has an overall rating of three (3) stars or higher, with no allowance for two-star occupations carrying a high Demand Score. Under this threshold, 240 occupations qualify statewide. Of the 870 ETPL programs, 678 meet the criteria, and 192 do not. The 107 programs affected under Option 2 but not under Option 1 are concentrated in healthcare and human services (73) and education (17). Nursing assistant programs account for 43 of them, medical assistant programs for 16, and preschool teacher programs for 15. Each of these occupations carries a two-star rating with a Demand Score above 60 statewide.

The Board was asked to consider the two methodologies presented and to determine which methodology will be used in identifying in-demand occupations for ETPL eligibility. Board members considered Option 1 and 2 as presented, with a discussion of a possible Option 3 for consideration as a future agenda item.

Chairman Anderson entertained a motion to approve Option 1 or Option 2 of the new Demand Occupation Tool. The Board selected Option 1. A motion was made by Ms. Candice Lawrence and seconded by Ms. Becky Ives. The motion carried, and NATF abstained from the vote.

Public Opportunity to Address the Board: Ms. Karen Breashears informed the board that participants from 27 states and 2 countries attended their Tuesday night Apprenticeship class. NATF has partnered with ASU and selected 200 apprentices for co-enrollment. The 200 apprentices selected will earn 6 to 9 college credit hours per semester. Once they have completed their courses, they have the opportunity to take 6 additional online courses to obtain an associate degree or Technical Certificate Degree. All 200 apprentices were eligible for the Arkansas Workforce Challenge Grant. Starting October 1st, the apprenticeship program will open

enrollment from 200 apprentices to 2700 apprentices on a first-come, first-served basis. Beginning, Spring 2027, enrolled apprentices will have the option to complete courses towards Apprenticeship or co-enrollment.

Announcements: None

Adjournment: Chairman Anderson entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Ms. Karen Breashears and seconded by Mr. Kelley Sharp. The motion was carried unanimously with none opposed, and the meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Agenda Item 2: Informational

Administrative Remarks

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

U.S. Department of Labor

Employment and Training Administration
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

October 27, 2026

The Honorable Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor of Arkansas
500 Woodlane Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Governor Sanders:

Thank you for your waiver request submission to the U.S. Department of Labor regarding certain statutory and regulatory provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The waiver requests were received on August 17, 2026. This letter provides the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) official response to your request and memorializes that Arkansas will meet the outcomes and implement the measures identified in its plan to ensure accountability agreed to by Arkansas and ETA. This letter also provides ETA's official response to the state board membership waiver ETA conditionally approved on August 26, 2026. This action is taken under the Secretary of Labor's authority to waive certain requirements of WIOA Title I, Subtitles A, B, and E, and Sections 8–10 of the Wagner-Peyser Act in WIOA Section 189(i).

Requested Waiver: Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

ETA Response: ETA approves, for Program Years (PYs) 2026 and 2027, which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend each of those PY fund allotments, the State's request to waive the requirement that the State expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds on OSY. ETA reviewed this waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of the State to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. The State may eliminate the OSY expenditure requirement for Governor's reserve funds.

In addition, ETA approves, for PYs 2026 and 2027, which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend each of those PY fund allotments, the State's request to waive the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local youth formula funds on OSY. The State may lower the local youth funds expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).

ETA Response: ETA approves, for PYs 2026 and 2027, the State's request to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only OSY, ages 16–24. In addition to these OSY, the State may use ITAs for ISY. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of Arkansas to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the State workforce development board membership requirements at WIOA Section 101(b)(1) and (c) and the corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 679.110(b)-(c).

ETA Response: ETA conditionally approved the State's request for this waiver on August 26, 2026. The State requested a waiver to substitute the WIOA state workforce development board membership requirements with alternate requirements. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request, supporting documentation, and the additional board roster information submitted in response to the August 26, 2026, conditional approval. Based on this review, ETA has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the State's ability to implement its strategy for improving the workforce development system and that the State has satisfied the conditions contained in ETA's August 26, 2026, approval letter. Accordingly, ETA approves this waiver through June 30, 2028.

Please note, in implementing this waiver, Arkansas must ensure that at least one representative from a State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency remains a member of the State workforce development board throughout the waiver approval period. The VR regulations at 34 CFR 361.13(c)(1) specify certain functions that are the sole responsibility of the VR agency, including participation as a partner in the workforce development system. This would include the VR program's participation on the state board pursuant to 20 CFR 679.110(b)(3)(iii)(A)(1)(iii) and 20 CFR 679.120(a). The VR program director does not have the authority to delegate this authority to another entity or individual (34 CFR 361.13(c)(2)) and the Secretary's waiver authority does not extend to statutes or regulations outside of Title I and Wagner-Peyser. Such representation may be provided by either the General Vocational Rehabilitation Program or the Vocational Rehabilitation Program for the Blind. Any future board composition changes must preserve at least one such VR representative. ETA otherwise approves the board membership structure received on September 23, 2026.

The State is reminded that WIOA Title I waivers may not be used for any discriminatory purposes. All activities and waiver plan provisions must comply with Section 188 of WIOA, the implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 38, and all applicable federal nondiscrimination laws.

The State must report its waiver outcomes and implementation of the approved waivers in the WIOA Annual Report. ETA will use this information to assess continued waiver approval and to identify promising practices that may be adopted more widely. ETA is available to provide technical assistance to you in support of the States's goals. If you have questions, feel free to contact my office at (202) 693-2772.

Sincerely,



Marek Laco
Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosures

cc: Cody R. Waits, Executive Director, Arkansas Department of Commerce
M. Frank Stluka, Acting Dallas Regional Administrator, ETA
Monica Moguel, Federal Project Officer, ETA

WAIVER REQUEST- RENEWALS Pages 224-229

Arkansas PY 2026-PY 2027 Waiver Requests

1) Statutory or Regulatory Requirement for which Waiver is Requested and Intended Goals.

Waiver #1: The State of Arkansas is seeking a waiver renewal from the WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR Part 681.410, which require not less than 75 percent of funds allotted to states under Section 127(b)(1)(C), reserved under Section 128(a), and available for statewide activities under subsection (b), and not less than 75 percent of funds available to local areas under subsection (c), shall be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for Out-of-School Youth (OSY).

Arkansas is requesting to:

• Lower the minimum OSY expenditure requirement to 50 percent for formula funding at both the state and local levels; and

• Eliminate the minimum OSY expenditure requirement for WIOA Statewide Activities funding when providing direct services to youth.

Arkansas has continuously met the 75% OSY requirement, and although Arkansas recognizes the importance of serving the OSY population, we have also determined that a shift in being able engage more in-school youth (ISY) earlier on may help yield better results in Arkansas' overall

workforce strategies. We believe that early intervention will reduce the likelihood of youth becoming disconnected or disengaged from the labor force.

Currently, the 75% OSY requirement limits the ability of the State and local areas to:

• Effectively support Governor Sanders work-based learning initiatives

• Partner with state programs such as Arkansas' Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) and several CTE programs, including those who offer pre-apprenticeships that lead to registered apprenticeship programs directly after the completion of a secondary education program.

• Provide valuable services to Arkansas' young adults who are at risk of becoming opportunity youth.

Creating a system where unified services are available to at-risk young adults through State initiatives and programs are projected to strengthen long-term positive outcomes for this population.

Waiver #2: The State of Arkansas is seeking a waiver renewal from the WIOA Section 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).

This requirement impedes the ability of Arkansas to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. The approval of this waiver will not impede the State's efforts to prioritize OSY, including outreach to the OSY population.

Arkansas is requesting to:

• waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 16–24. In addition to these OSY, the State requests to use ITAs for ISY, ages 16–21.

This waiver request is in response to Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders' Executive Order (EO) 23-16, which created the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and the position of the Chief Workforce Officer (CWO) to advise the Governor on issues regarding workforce development and career

education in Arkansas and to undertake the following duties:

• Coordinate, integrate, and optimize services, funding, and resources to maximize desired outcomes and improve operational efficiencies.

• Ensure a talent-driven education and workforce system that addresses the current and future needs of Arkansas employers and individuals.

• Prepare and implement a data-driven workforce strategic plan using high-quality data and subject matter expertise.

Skill Gaps and Labor Force Participation: Arkansas is challenged by a noticeable skills gap, where employers struggle to find candidates with the necessary skills, especially in fast-growing industries. Additionally, labor force participation rates lagged behind national averages, pointing to untapped potential in the state's workforce.

Educational Alignment with Industry Needs: There is a growing recognition that educational pathways need better alignment with industry requirements to ensure that students and job seekers are prepared for successful careers.

(2) Actions Undertaken to Remove State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers.

There are currently no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the requested waiver. Current State of Arkansas laws, regulations, and policies follow federal law, regulations, and guidance.

(3) Goals of Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Granted.

These waiver requests aligns with Arkansas' goals outlined in the State Plan.

Specifically, strategic goals:

Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community -based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.

Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.

Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the State's Talent Development System.

Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps

(4) Waiver Alignment with Policy Priorities.

(A) **supporting employer engagement;**

(B) **connecting education and training strategies;**

(C) **supporting work-based learning;**

(D) **improving job and career results, and**

(E) **other guidance issued by the Department**.

WIOA places an emphasis on pre-employment education and training as well as access to a continuum of work-based learning opportunities. Further, as stated in TEN 31-16, Registered Apprentices is a valuable work-based training opportunity and a proven model of job preparation that combines paid on-the-job training and related instruction to progressively increase workers' skill level and wages. The approval of these waivers will provide more flexibility to utilize funding to support these strategies in high schools, connecting students to the training and education they need and providing employers with an expanded talent pipeline of available workforce. Additionally, while students who are defined as "in-school" theoretically already have supports available, many students are close to disengaging from the education system and the utilization of this waiver will allow local boards to connect with those students prior to dropping out, connecting them to different education and training strategies that will increase their likelihood of success and improving job and career results.

Expected Levels of Performance

WIOA Title I Youth-

Education and Employment Rate (Q2) 68.9%, Education and Employment Rate (Q4) 69.3%, Median Earnings $3,950.00, Credential Rate 52.2%, Measurable Skills Gains 65.9%

(5) Individuals affected by the waiver and Impact of Waiver on Services for Disadvantaged Populations or Individuals with Multiple Barriers to Employment.

These waivers will provide the flexibility to serve more youth and young adults in work-based learning, including apprenticeship, regardless of school status. It will facilitate the provision of the necessary funding and the ease of current regulations essential to designing programs that

will aid youth and young adults in the preparation for long-term participation in Arkansas' labor force. Economic growth in Arkansas and its high-growth industries will be sustained with the infusion of skilled workers ready to fill current job openings and adequately trained for future

openings. Additionally, this waiver supports Governor Sanders overall workforce vision and ensures all Arkansas students have opportunities for meaningful work-based learning experiences. Arkansas' students and eligible youth population, as well as Arkansas' employers who need immediate assistance to fill open positions and train their future workforce, will benefit from these waivers.

(6) Processes to be Used.

(A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;

(B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;

(C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;

(D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.

(E) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.

State staff will monitor the implementation and outcomes of this waiver through monthly tracking of youth expenditures, utilization of reporting from the statewide data management system, and through programmatic and fiscal monitoring. All LWDBs, business, and organized labor will be provided the opportunity to comment on the waiver request through the public comment period of the PY26-27 WIOA Combined State Plan modification. The state assures all data collected and reported, including waiver outcomes, will be included in the WIOA Annual Report as required. The implementation timeline will begin in the same quarter that USDOL approves the plan and waiver.

(7) The most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

The State is requesting renewal of the two previously approved waivers detailed above to enhance access, flexibility, service alignment, and effectiveness in serving youth participants.

While only three local workforce development boards have leveraged the approved waivers in the current plan period, the state board, under the proposed service delivery model, will prioritize the utilization of the the waivers if approved for renewal. The outcomes for initial usage indicate that more ISY participants were able to be served and provided with work experience in those three areas.

(8) A description of the state's strategic goal(s):

Arkansas's primary goal for this waiver is to prioritize the youth program services that are most responsive to labor market needs in order to enable the workforce system to deploy resources more strategically. Occupational skills training and work-based learning models are proven to be more effective amongst youth who receive this category of service.

A discussion of how the waiver complements Department of Labor priorities (i.e. expansion of apprenticeship, improved employer engagement, etc.):

Approval of this waiver aligns with the following DOL strategic pillars from America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age:

• Industry-Driven Strategies. This waiver will allow the state to prioritize services that most directly connect youth to in-demand occupations. Waiving this requirement will allow Arkansas to strategically emphasize program elements that support industry-driven strategies such as work-based learning opportunities, occupational skills training aligned with high-demand sectors, internships and apprenticeships, and career exploration linked to sector partnerships. This flexibility will allow the state to focus resources on services that lead directly to employment in industries critical to Arkansas's economic growth.

• Worker Mobility. This waiver will enable the state to design service delivery strategies that more effectively support youth in achieving long-term economic mobility. The state will be able to emphasize services that support career pathway development, including occupational skills training, industry-recognized credential attainment, career coaching and navigation, and paid work experiences that connect youth to long-term employment opportunities. This approach strengthens the system's ability to help youth transition into high-quality employment and build sustainable careers.

• Integrated Systems. This waiver will ensure that existing community and partner resources are leveraged to support a broad range of services without requiring the state to independently administer or secure every program element. This approach supports coordinated service delivery across agencies rather than duplicated across programs.

• Accountability. This waiver will not hamper the state's responsibility to meet expected performance measures for the youth program. The state will remain fully accountable for achieving performance outcomes under WIOA and will continue to monitor service delivery to ensure youth participants receive the services necessary to achieve successful employment and education outcomes. This waiver will allow the state to focus resources on services that most directly contribute to measurable performance outcomes while maintaining oversight through the existing monitoring framework.

• Flexibility and Innovation. This waiver will enable the state to design innovative service strategies tailored to the needs of youth participants and employers. This flexibility will support the development of new program models that incorporate employer-led training programs, sector-based youth initiatives, innovative work-based learning models, and partnerships with

community organizations. By removing rigid program design requirements, this waiver will enable the workforce system to pilot new approaches that improve youth engagement and employment outcomes.

Arkansas Additional Information
Received October 7, 2026

Waiver - 75% Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds on OSY

Specific projected programmatic outcomes from the renewal of this waiver

- **Increase the total number of ISY served annually by 15%;** contributed to the alignment of the WIOA/Perkins combined plan and dual enrollments in the WIOA and secondary education realm. The primary focus will remain on OSY, however early intervention may result in a long-term reduction in those needing to be served through the OSY program
- **Achieve a 60% transition rate** of ISY **entering** post-secondary **education**, advanced training, apprenticeship training, **or employment** after exit.
- **Increase participation in youth work-based learning experiences by 10% annually.**

Number of at-risk ISY the State was able to serve and the waiver's impact on Youth performance

Over a period of five years, Arkansas served 764 ISY.

- PY2020 153
- PY2021 176
- PY2022 159
- PY2024 154
- PY2025 122

While the numbers remained relatively flat during waiver and non-waiver periods, excluding PY 25, Arkansas was able to provide job training for vulnerable populations who would have been otherwise subjected to further disparities due to the lack of WIOA services. Barriers including basic skills deficiency, low-income, justice-involved, and disabilities were all addressed. This resulted in the stabilization of 764 families. Arkansas' youth performance remained steady with passing rates in all measures including credential attainment, placement in education or employment, median earnings and measurable skills gains.

The renewal of this waiver will yield even higher outcomes, under a new consolidated workforce board model with consistent policies, service strategies, and alignment with education partners.

Waiver – Individual training accounts for In School Youth

Specific projected programmatic outcomes from the renewal of this waiver

- **Increase the total number of ISY receiving ITAs annually by 15%**
- **Ensure 100% of ITA-funded ISY participants enroll in training aligned with Arkansas in-demand occupations,** utilizing the newly state workforce board adopted demand occupation rating tool
- **Achieve a 60% transition rate** of ISY **entering** post-secondary **education** due to the access of occupational skills training prior to high school graduation and exposure of career pathways and training providers; expanding CTE's reach and number of students able to be served through braided funding.
- **Increase credential attainment rate and MSGs 5% above federal negotiated targets**
- **Increase the number of youth earning industry-recognized credentials by 15%.**

WIOA Waiver Implementation Timeline

Consolidating local board functions under the Arkansas Workforce Development Board

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS | Arkansas Department of Commerce

PREPARED FOR
Arkansas Legislative Council
Contingent on U.S. Department of Labor approval
Issued August 20, 2026

JULY 1, 2027
Statewide go-live
Full implementation of all approved waivers, or sooner

9 MILESTONES
Across four workstreams
Policy, training, legislation, monitoring and closeout

~10 MONTHS
Preparation runway
From planning underway now to go-live readiness

AUG 31, 2027
Closeout complete
45-day liquidation period, then funds recaptured

IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE

KEY: UNDERWAY | PLANNED | LEGISLATIVE / EXTERNAL GATE | GO-LIVE & CLOSEOUT

NOW
Aug 2026

GOVERNANCE UNDERWAY — AWDB chairman | AWC state staff

Transition and implementation committee stood up

Arkansas Workforce Connections is in planning phases with the chairman of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board to seat a transition and implementation committee of the state board. The committee will work with state staff to map the timelines and activities needed to implement all waivers by July 1, 2027 or sooner.

OCT 31
2026

POLICY PLANNED — AWC policy unit | AWDB

State policy revisions adopted by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board

State policies are under review now for proposed revision in anticipation of approval. Once the Department of Labor acts, revisions go to the state board for review and approval. Scope includes terms previously defined by local boards.

DEC 31
2026

TRAINING PLANNED — AWC | AWDB members

State board members trained on assumed local board duties

Training outlines the added responsibilities the state board assumes acting in the capacity of local workforce development boards. Topics may include budget approval, convening local workforce system stakeholders, promising service delivery strategies for both jobseekers and employers, oversight responsibilities, MOU and IFA negotiations, and center certification.

JAN
2027

LEGISLATIVE GATE — AWC | General Assembly

Legislative session convenes; proposed legislation available

Legislation is being drafted now to confirm that no state statute would challenge implementation of the waiver as it concerns the designation and duties of the state workforce development board. The next session of the Arkansas General Assembly begins in January 2027, and the proposal is available for consideration upon commencement.

MAR 31
2027

LEGISLATIVE GATE — General Assembly | AWC

Statutory conformity secured and staffing authority approved

Target completion for the legislation, which may include an emergency clause to take effect immediately. In parallel, Arkansas Workforce Connections will seek approval to hire the additional staff required for adequate service delivery coverage in all local areas statewide.

MAR 31
2027

MONITORING **PLANNED, CONCURRENT** — AWC monitoring unit

Closeout monitoring engagements resolved for every local area

Running simultaneously with the tracks above, the AWC monitoring unit conducts in-depth closeout monitoring of every local workforce development area. Each engagement covers, at minimum, a programmatic review of all active participant case files and all work experience work sites, a financial review of a sample of expenditures, and reconciliation of financial reports.

JUN 30
2027

STAFFING **PLANNED** — AWC human resources | regional teams

Local staff hired and trained for a no-gap transition

Assuming the milestones above are met, Arkansas Workforce Connections hires and trains additional local staff to ensure adequate coverage and a seamless transition with no gap in service delivery. AWC aims to recruit a portion of existing local board staff who are well qualified to provide case management services in their respective regions.

JUL 1
2027

GO-LIVE **GO-LIVE** — Statewide | AWDB and AWC

Statewide implementation of all approved waivers

The consolidated service delivery model takes effect statewide, with the Arkansas Workforce Development Board carrying the functions previously held by local workforce development boards.

AUG 31
2027

CLOSEOUT **CLOSEOUT** — AWC grants management

Subaward closeout completed and residual funds recaptured

Subaward closeout is initiated with a 45-day period for local workforce development areas to liquidate outstanding obligations. On completion of the closeout process, all remaining funds are recaptured.

GOALS, SUPPORTING POLICIES AND OPEN DEPENDENCIES

Goals the waiver is intended to achieve

- Implement all approved waivers statewide by July 1, 2027 or sooner.
- Transition service delivery with no gap in coverage for jobseekers or employers.
- Maintain adequate service delivery coverage in every local area statewide.
- Retain regional expertise by recruiting qualified existing local board staff into AWC case management roles.
- Close out every local area cleanly, with obligations liquidated and residual funds recaptured.

Policies and instruments to be established

- State definitions replacing local board definitions, including “requires additional assistance.”
- Supportive services, referral and ITA limitation policies.
- State board procedures for budget approval and oversight.
- MOU and infrastructure funding agreement negotiation practice.
- One-stop center certification process.
- Stakeholder convening model for local workforce systems.

Dependencies and items still to be supplied

- DOL approval is the gate: policy adoption begins only once approval is received.
- Enactment during the session that convenes January 2027, possibly with an emergency clause.
- Approval of additional AWC staff positions.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Agenda Item 3: Informational

Governors' Workforce Initiatives

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Agenda Item 4: Informational

Subcommittee Reports

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Agenda Item 5: Informational

WIOA PY '25 Annual Performance Outcomes

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS



PY 25

WIOA

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Arkansas Workforce Development Board Meeting

November 5, 2026

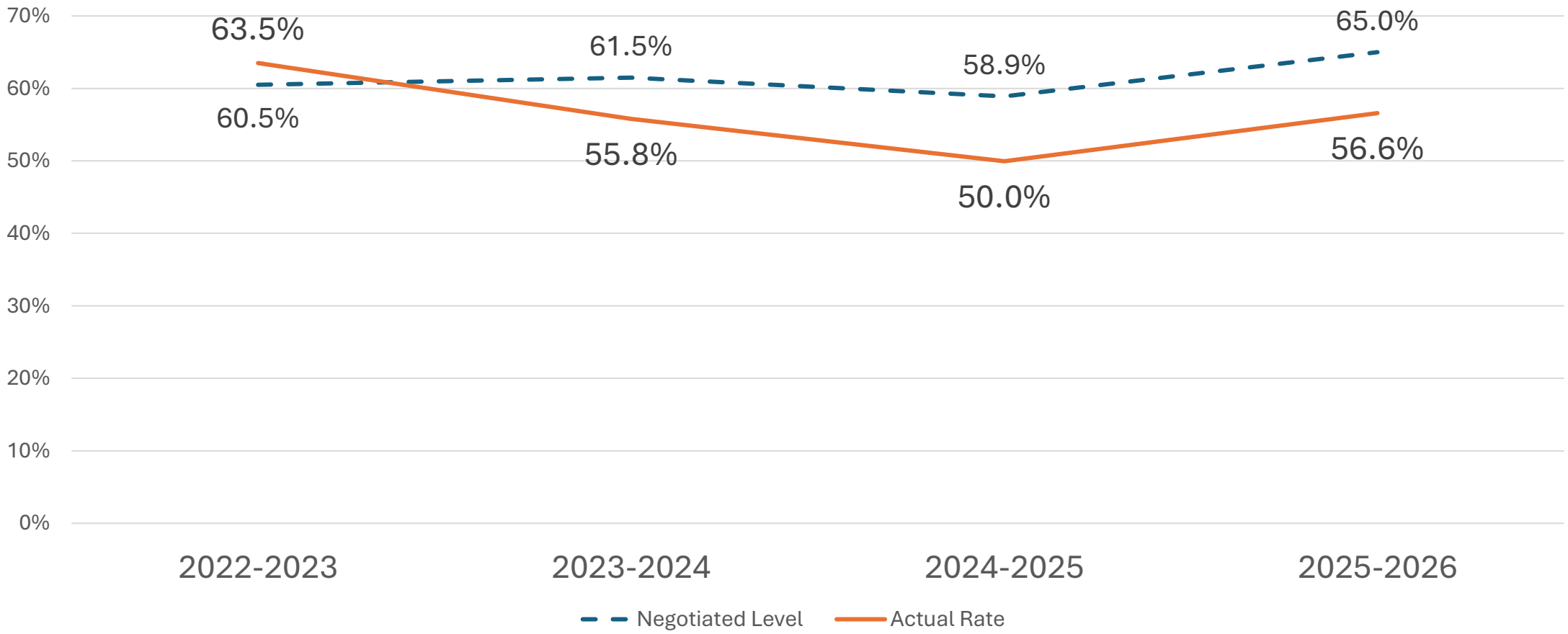
Joe Baxter, ARS Commissioner
&
Nathan Winter, DSB Director

Title IV VR: ARS and DSB Combined

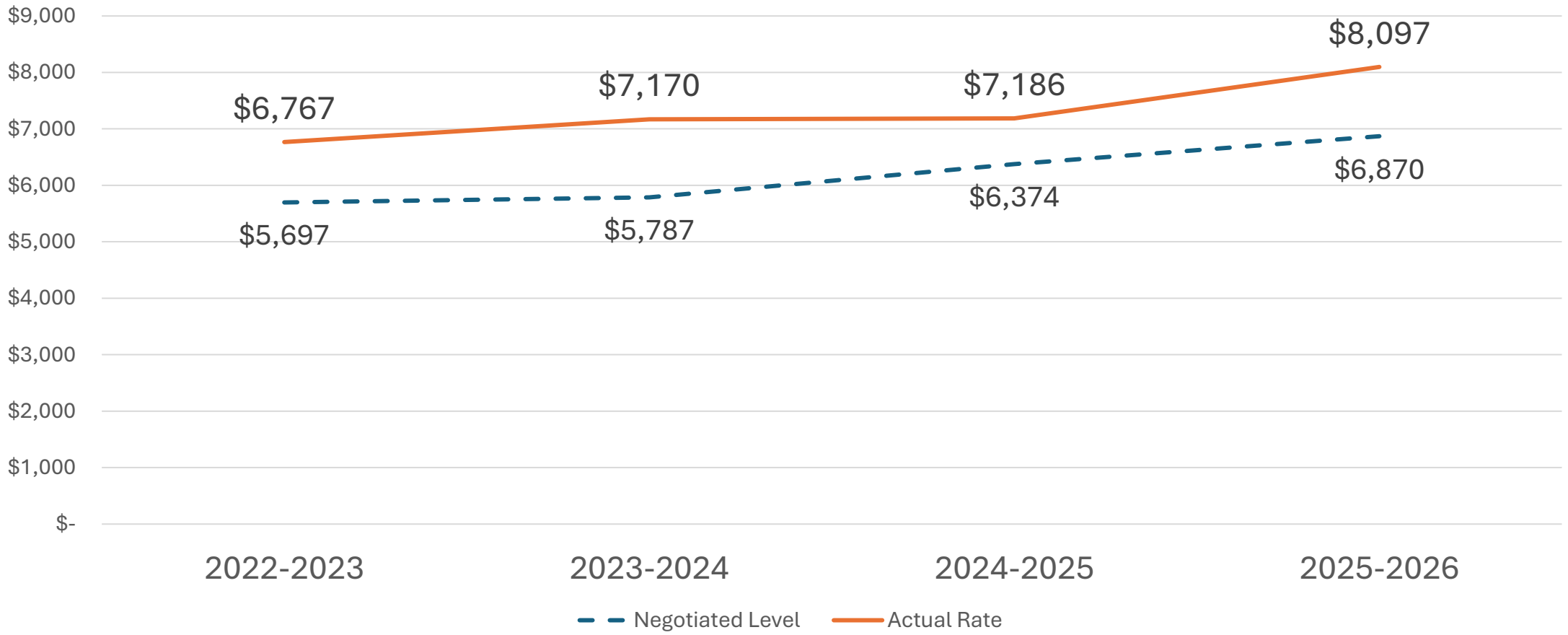
Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation	Total Individuals Served	Total Participants	Total Participants Exited
Total Statewide	13,782	14,917	3,386

2025 Performance				
Title IV VR Performance Indicators	Participants in Cohort	Participants Achieving Outcome	Negotiated	Actual
2nd Qtr. Employment	1,827	1,034	65.00%	56.60%
4th Qtr. Employment	1,393	742	65.00%	53.30%
2nd Qtr. Median Earnings	5,381	5,381	$6,870.00	$8,096.86
Credential Attainment	594	237	37.50%	39.90%
Measurable Skills Gain	4,296	3,358	59.00%	78.20%

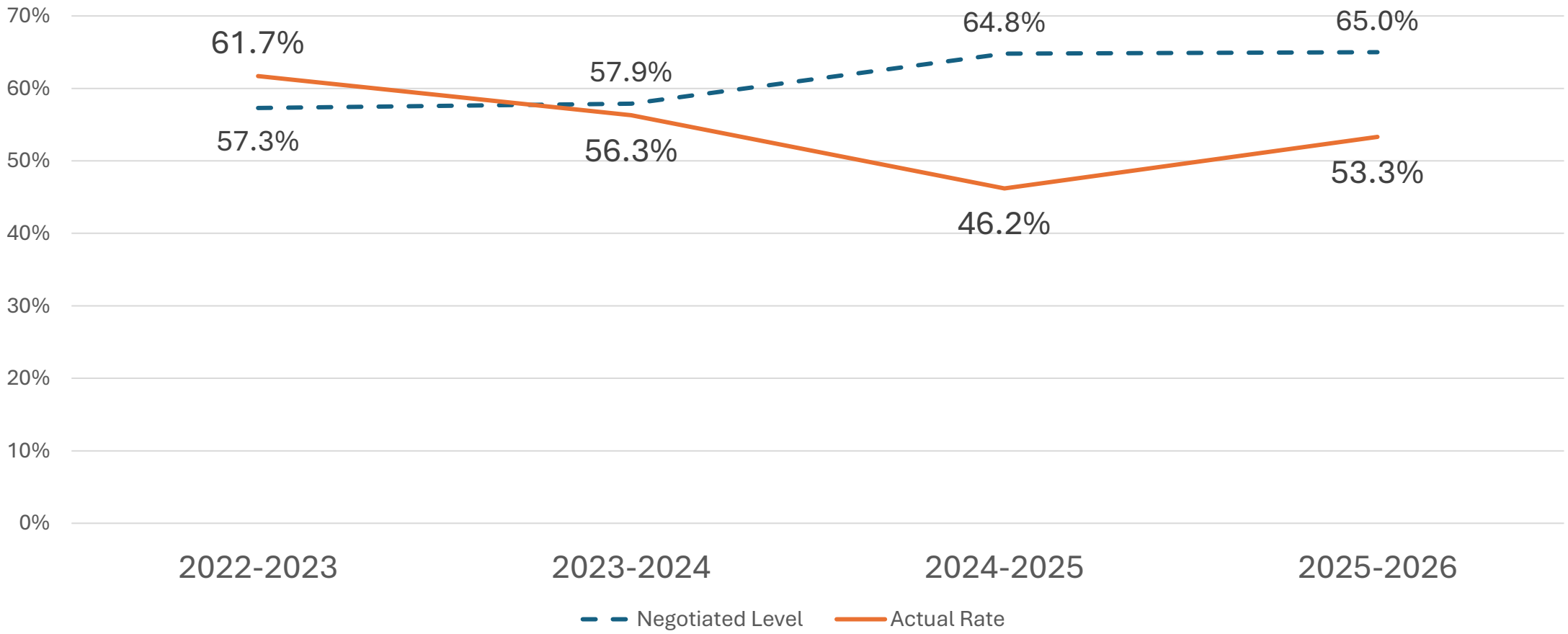
Title IV VR: 2nd Qtr. Employment



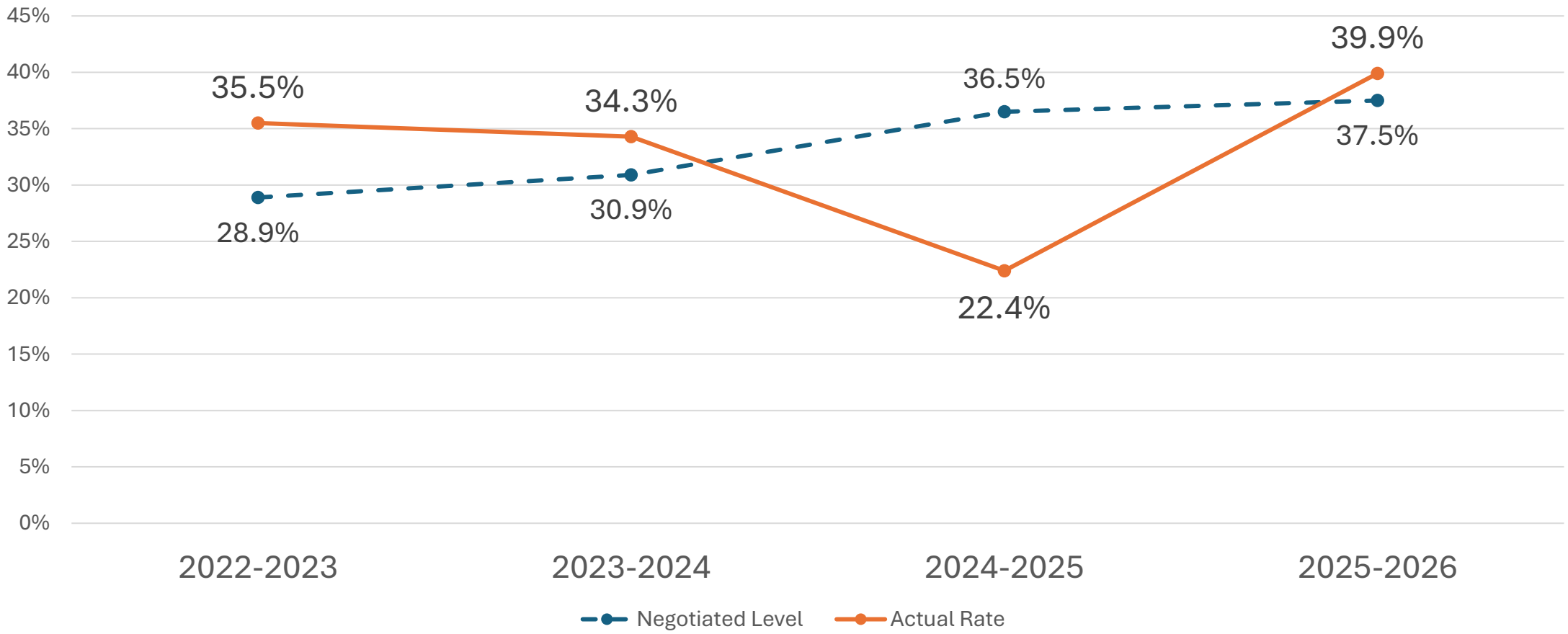
Title IV VR: 2nd Qtr. Median Earnings



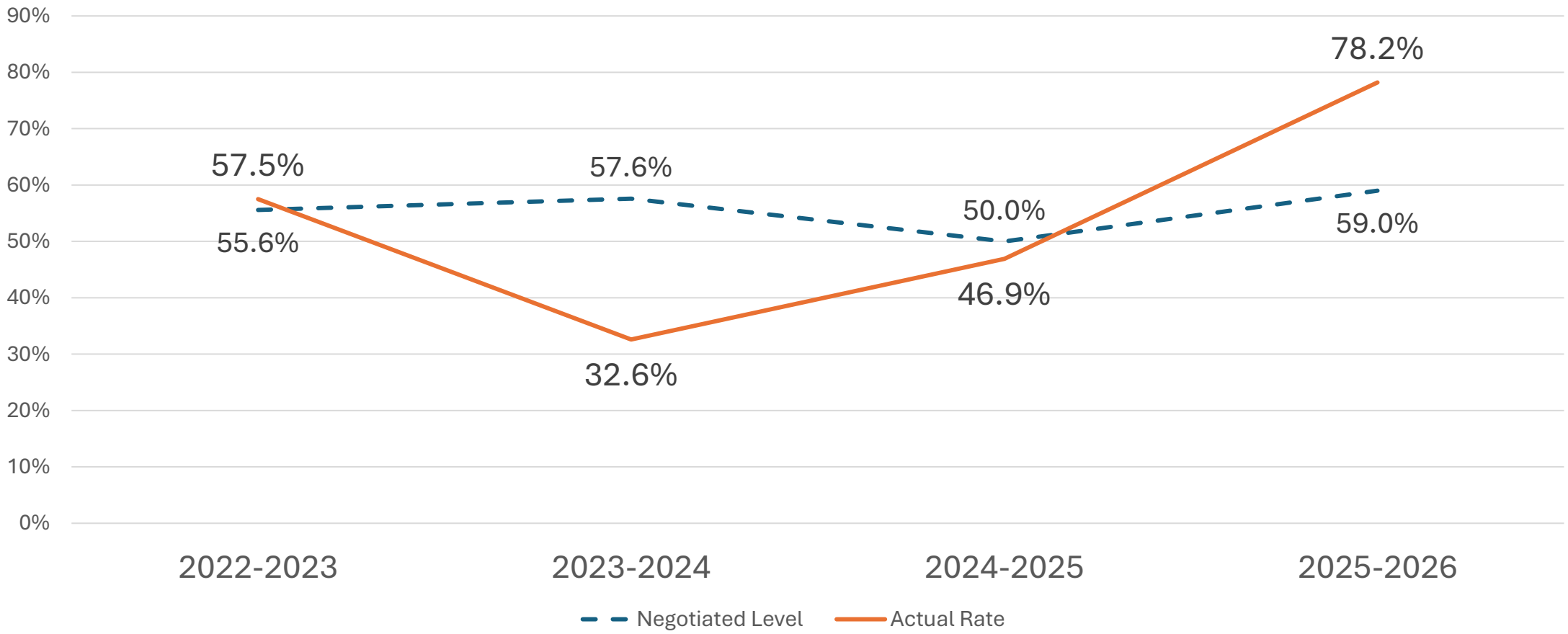
Title IV VR: 4th Qtr. Employment



Title IV VR: Credential Attainment



Title IV VR: Measurable Skills Gain



What's New in VR in Arkansas

1. Combining of the VR Agencies

Plan to Combine ARS and DSB into one Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
October 2027

2. Order of Selection

DSB is currently on OOS with all categories closed
ARS is in process of getting on OOS
Expected by the end of the calendar year

3. Regional VR Budgets

Both agencies have moved to allocating and tracking funds at the regional level for more local control and better data accuracy.

Title IV VR: ARS and DSB Combined

Questions?

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Arkansas Workforce Development Board Meeting

November 5, 2026

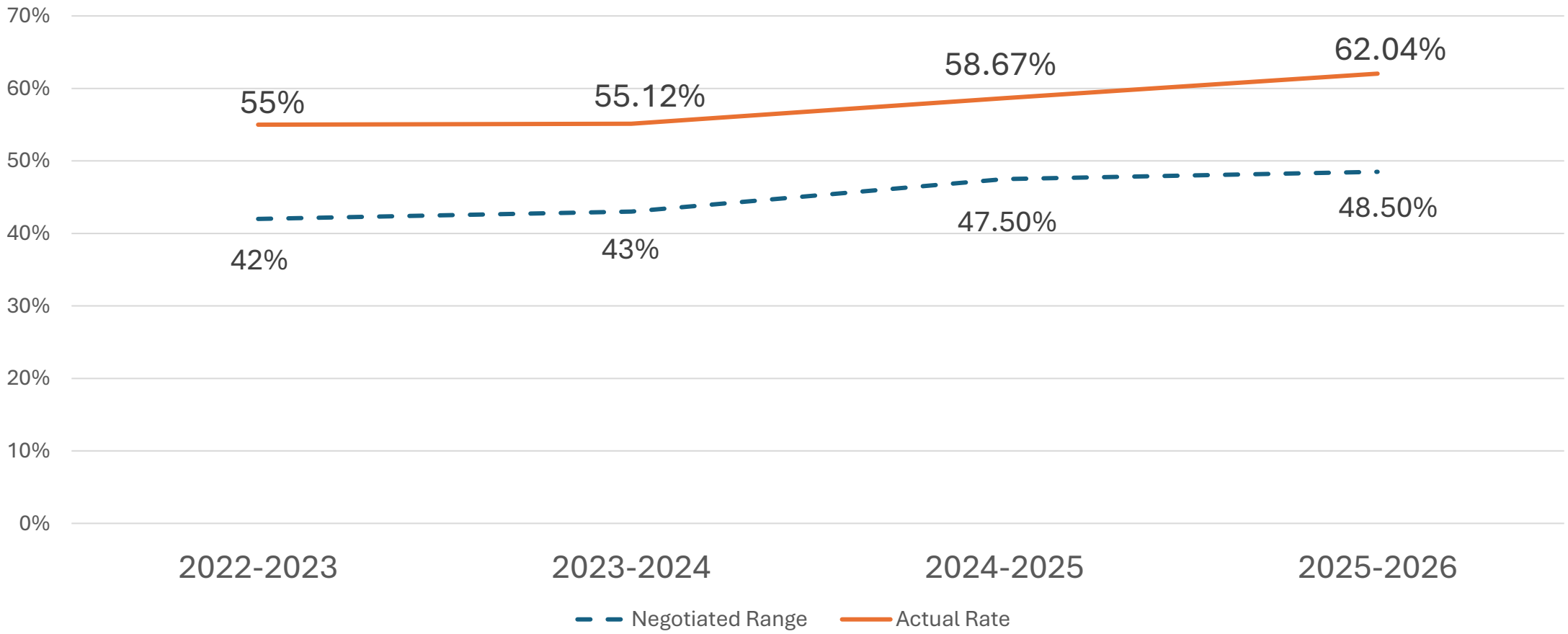
Trenia Miles, Ed.D., Director,
Office of Adult Education

Title II Adult Education

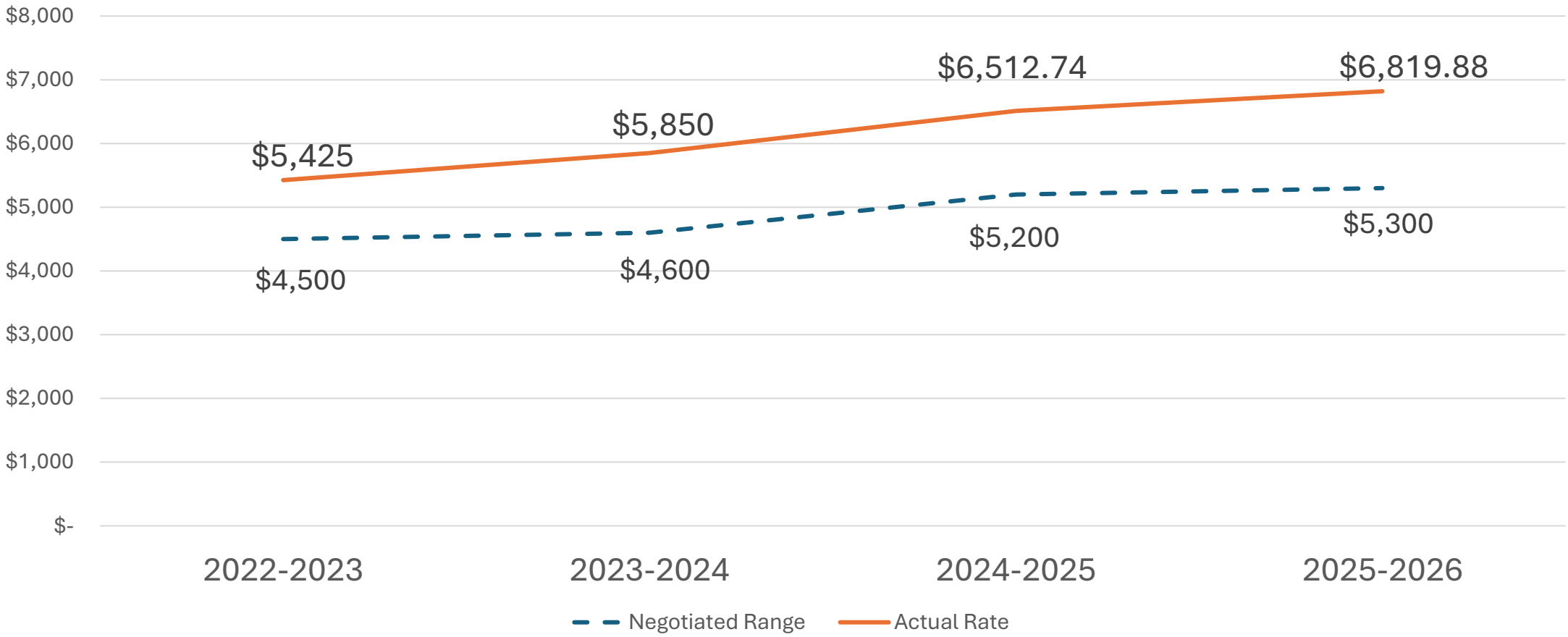
Title II Adult Education	Total Individuals Served	Total Participants	Total Participants Exited
Total Statewide	18,789	10,514	9,182

2024-2025 Performance				
Title II Adult Education Performance Indicators	Number of Participants in Cohort	Number of Participants Achieving Outcome	Target	Actual
2nd Qtr. Employment	8,673	5,381	48.50%	62.04%
4th Qtr. Employment	8,494	5,287	49.00%	62.24%
2nd Qtr. Median Earnings	5,381	5,381	$5,300.00	$6,819.88
Credential Attainment	1,636	1,217	42.00%	74.38%
Measurable Skills Gain	10,514	6,779	60.00%	64.47%

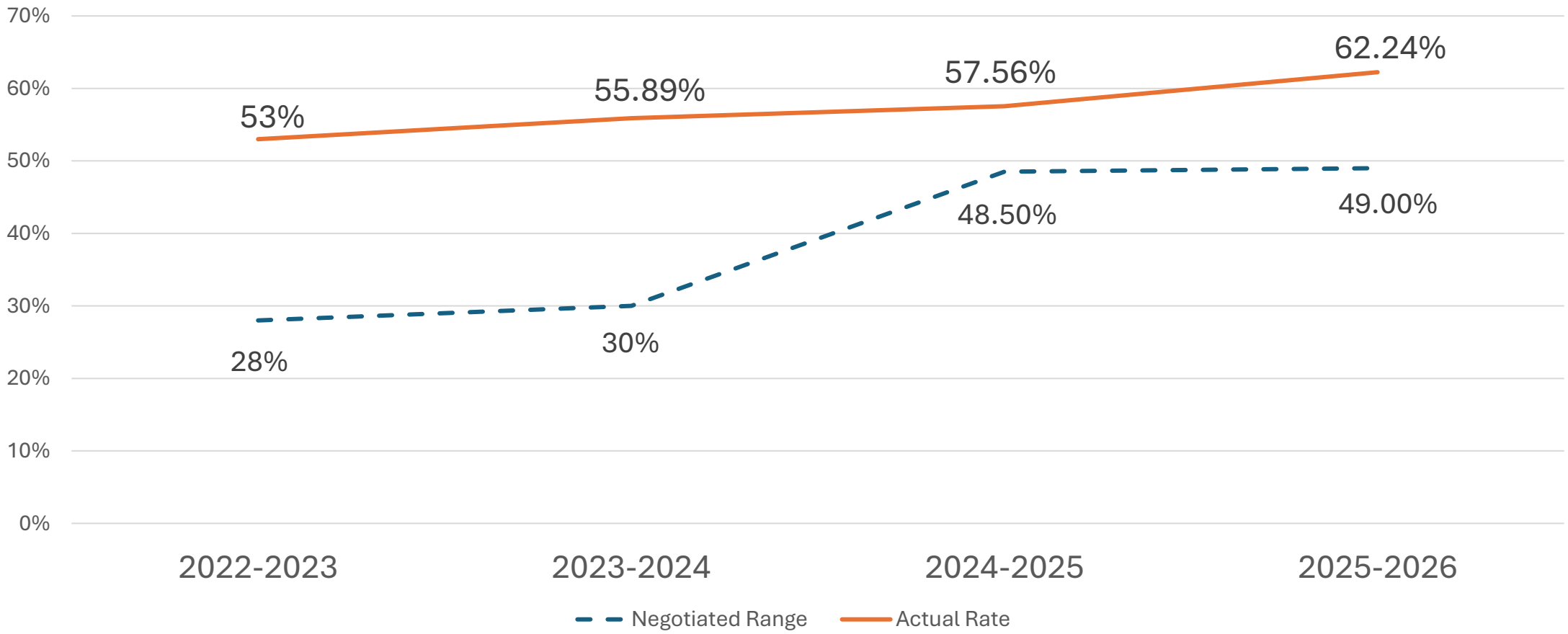
Title II Adult Ed: 2nd Qtr. Employment



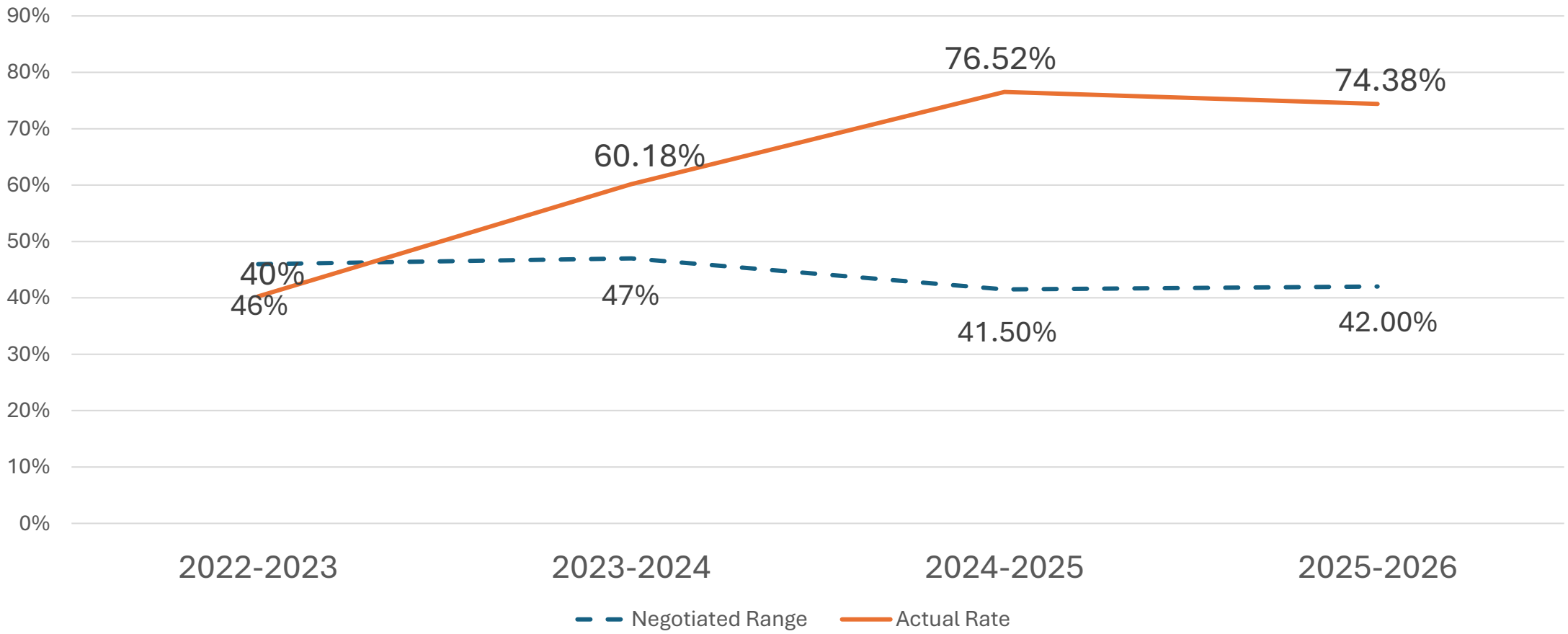
Title II Adult Ed: 2nd Qtr. Median Earnings



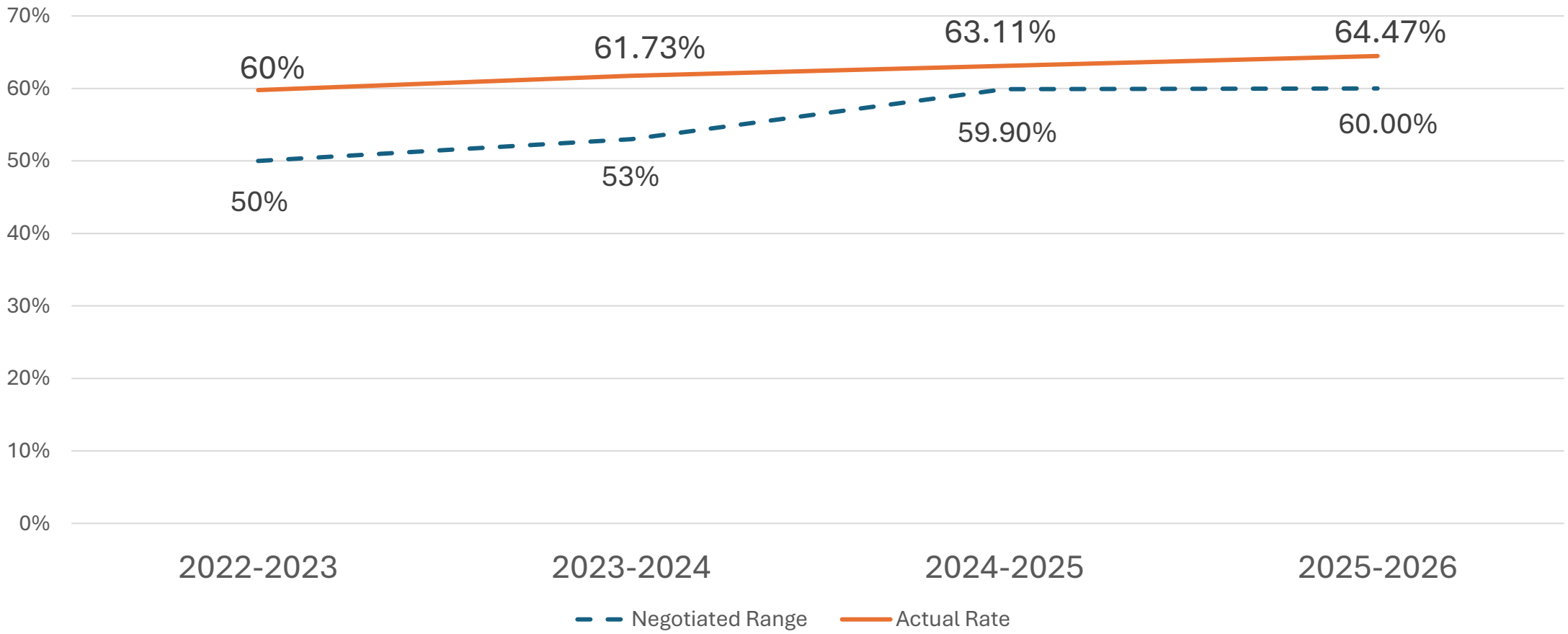
Title II Adult Ed: 4th Qtr. Employment



Title II Adult Ed: Credential Attainment



Title II Adult Ed: Measurable Skills Gain



2025-2026
Adult Education National Performance Quartile Comparison

Performance Outcomes 2025-2026 - Quartile Rank

	Grantee	ABE MSG	Grantee	ESL MSG	Grantee	Overall MSG	Grantee	2nd Qtr Employ	Grantee	4th Qtr Employ	Grantee	Median Earnings	Grantee	Credential Rate
1	Puerto Rico	86.52%	Dist of Columbia	85.83%	Indiana	76.46%	Montana	62.61%	Indiana	74.16%	Nebraska	$12,766.45	Wyoming	85.04%
2	Indiana	80.27%	Delaware	71.88%	Puerto Rico	75.66%	North Dakota	62.16%	Pennsylvania	63.24%	Dist of Columbia	$10,400.00	Kentucky	81.00%
3	Tennessee	75.98%	New Jersey	70.61%	Wyoming	72.24%	**Arkansas**	**62.04%**	**Arkansas**	**62.24%**	South Dakota	$10,221.09	**Arkansas**	**74.38%**
4	Wyoming	74.35%	Indiana	65.03%	Mississippi	71.56%	Wyoming	61.75%	Montana	61.04%	New Hampshire	$9,360.00	Kansas	73.17%
5	Nebraska	72.51%	New York	62.84%	Dist of Columbia	71.50%	South Dakota	58.91%	Wyoming	60.41%	Minnesota	$9,280.50	Maine	71.89%
6	Mississippi	72.23%	Nebraska	60.55%	Delaware	68.15%	Indiana	57.79%	North Dakota	56.53%	Massachusetts	$9,016.81	Nebraska	69.89%
7	Wisconsin	72.15%	Missouri	60.06%	Tennessee	67.89%	Mississippi	56.22%	Mississippi	56.49%	Indiana	$8,948.00	Montana	66.76%
8	Dist of Columbia	69.75%	West Virginia	59.81%	New Jersey	67.19%	Nebraska	55.36%	Nebraska	56.39%	Nevada	$8,847.50	Wisconsin	65.25%
9	Kentucky	68.47%	Guam	58.33%	Nebraska	65.74%	Alabama	54.54%	South Dakota	54.83%	Iowa	$8,815.47	West Virginia	63.97%
10	Missouri	67.63%	Puerto Rico	57.11%	Montana	65.17%	Delaware	53.66%	Alabama	54.00%	Maryland	$8,417.00	Indiana	62.59%
11	Kansas	66.94%	New Mexico	55.86%	Kentucky	64.72%	Ohio	51.98%	West Virginia	52.68%	North Dakota	$8,333.00	Mississippi	58.55%
12	Montana	66.90%	**Arkansas**	**55.85%**	Missouri	64.59%	West Virginia	51.79%	New York	51.86%	Delaware	$8,320.00	Dist of Columbia	56.05%
13	**Arkansas**	**66.89%**	South Carolina	55.61%	**Arkansas**	**64.47%**	Maine	50.37%	Delaware	51.40%	Maine	$8,221.48	Alabama	55.88%
14	Rhode Island	65.47%	Arizona	55.54%	Wisconsin	62.99%	New Jersey	49.68%	New Jersey	49.49%	Pennsylvania	$8,105.87	Delaware	54.32%
15	Alabama	64.99%	Wyoming	54.23%	New Mexico	61.55%	Michigan	49.47%	Kansas	49.20%	Illinois	$8,073.00	New Mexico	53.31%
16	New Mexico	64.51%	Kentucky	54.18%	Alabama	61.39%	Kansas	49.13%	Ohio	48.37%	Ohio	$7,848.00	South Dakota	52.22%
17	Washington	63.77%	Nevada	53.90%	West Virginia	61.14%	Iowa	46.19%	Tennessee	47.37%	Rhode Island	$7,802.40	Missouri	52.03%
18	Delaware	63.27%	Kansas	53.21%	Guam	60.41%	Dist of Columbia	46.09%	Iowa	46.56%	Arizona	$7,761.69	Vermont	48.64%
19	Maine	62.17%	Maryland	52.71%	New York	60.14%	Missouri	45.82%	Michigan	45.94%	Virginia	$7,733.78	South Carolina	47.49%
20	Arizona	62.08%	Oklahoma	52.63%	Kansas	60.09%	Arizona	45.58%	Arizona	44.68%	Oregon	$7,718.40	Tennessee	46.80%
21	Nevada	61.66%	Wisconsin	52.06%	Arizona	58.34%	New York	44.98%	New Mexico	44.38%	New Jersey	$7,702.50	Nevada	46.00%
22	New Jersey	61.43%	Iowa	51.93%	South Carolina	57.48%	Rhode Island	43.46%	Dist of Columbia	43.82%	Kansas	$7,676.98	Texas	45.36%
23	West Virginia	61.23%	Mississippi	50.86%	Nevada	56.04%	Kentucky	43.44%	Maine	43.38%	Alabama	$7,373.84	Minnesota	45.35%
24	Virginia	60.74%	Ohio	49.78%	Oklahoma	55.84%	Pennsylvania	43.27%	Missouri	43.08%	Wisconsin	$7,323.00	Georgia	45.09%

4th Quartile
3rd Quartile
2nd Quartile
1st Quartile

The box represents the banding. ± 5% from the median.

National Performance Comparison GED®

	Jurisdiction	Takers	Completers	Passers	Pass Rate %
1	Jurisdiction 79	17	9	8	89%
2	Montana	168	107	95	89%
3	**Arkansas**	**4,770**	**3,558**	**3,025**	**85%**
4	North Dakota	1,341	716	596	83%
5	Kansas	2,824	1,793	1,473	82%
6	Utah	3,886	2,602	2,126	82%
7	Tennessee	763	449	366	82%
8	Idaho	3,723	2,403	1,932	80%
9	Louisiana	470	248	198	80%
10	Oregon	9,084	5,335	4,256	80%
11	South Dakota	1,318	742	591	80%
12	Minnesota	4,546	2,598	2,059	79%
13	Vermont	397	192	152	79%
14	Colorado	6,427	3,732	2,946	79%
15	Missouri	1,417	906	713	79%

★ Arkansas ranks 3rd among 51 GED® testing jurisdictions. ★

Post-Secondary Credentials

Total Enrollment in Postsecondary Education or Training – 2,250

By Type (PY2025-26)	Total
Certified Nursing Assistant	464
Commercial Driver's License	160
CMA	109
Phlebotomy	106
Amatrol (SACA) Certification	87
Pharmacy Technician	83
Personal Care Assistant	77
Welding T/S/M/W	50
Navien NPE Condensing Water Heater/Tracpipe	26
Pre-Operator Training Certification	23
META24	19
Apprenticeship/Pre - Certificate of Completion	18
Paraprofessional	18
Total (with all other credentials)	**1,945**

Non-Reportable Certificates

By Type (PY2025-2026)	Total
OSHA 10 - All Types	475
CPR/First Aid Certification	277
Basic Life Support Certification	267
HIPAA Training	197
Forklift Operator Certification	101
Blood Pressure Measurement	92
NCRC - All Levels	85
CDL Endorsement – HAZMAT	42
Basic Computer Skills	32
All Other Types (ServSafe, Internet Basics, etc.,)	66
Total	**1,634**

Level I Certificates

2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
1,294	2,155	3,368

Academics + Content Area:

- Employability Skills
- Financial Literacy
- Digital Literacy Skills
- Career Exploration

Career Clusters

- Credentials
  - Advanced Manufacturing
  - Construction
  - Education
  - Healthcare & Human Services
  - Supply Chain & Transportation

Level II Certificates

2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2025
526	1,505	2,289

Questions?

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Arkansas Workforce Development Board Meeting

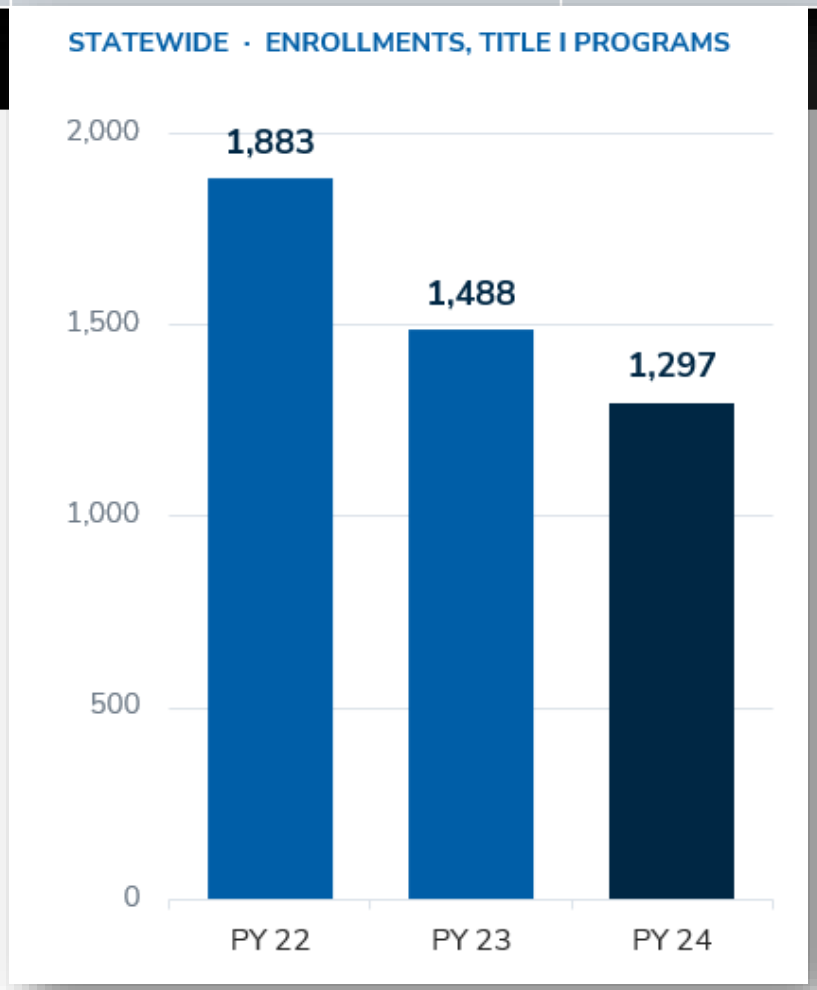
November 5, 2026

Eddie Thomas, Director
AWC, Office of Employment and Training

WIOA Title I
WIOA Title III

WIOA Title I & III - PY 25

TOTALS	Youth	Dislocated Worker	Adult
WIOA Title I **1,211**	452	123	636
WIOA Title III **24,456**			



ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

The USDOL WIOA Performance- 90% Rule Thresholds

According to joint federal regulations (20 CFR § 677.190 / TEGL 11-19), a **Performance Failure** occurs if a state or local program falls into any of these categories:

Overall State Program Score (< 90%): The average of all individual indicator scores for a *single core program* (e.g., Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth).

Overall State Indicator Score (< 90%): The average score for a *single primary indicator* (e.g., Median Earnings) across all core programs.

Individual Indicator Floor: While the overall averages must be at least 90%, no *individual* program indicator score can drop below **50%** without automatically triggering a failure.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

Performance Scoring Matrix

Actual performance outcomes are calculated after the close of the program year using a **Statistical Adjustment Model (SAM)** to account for local economic shifts and participant demographics. Final performance is interpreted as follows:

OVERALL INDICATORS AND SCORES

Performance Status	Final Score vs. Adjusted Target	Consequences / Actions Required
Exceeds	> 100%	Met and surpassed federal benchmarks.
Meets (Success)	**90% to 100%**	Program successfully met goals. Satisfactory status maintained.
Fails (Failure)	**< 90%**	Triggers technical assistance and corrective action.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS

PY2025 Overall State Indicator & Program Score

(Projected)

Primary Indicator/ Core Program	Title I Adult	Title I Dislocated Worker	Title I Youth	Title III Wagner-Peyser	Title II Adult Education	Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation	Overall State Indicator Score
Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter after Exit	86.0%	104.8%	92.6%	96.6%			**95.0%**
Employment Rate – 4th Quarter after Exit	93.4%	97.1%	91.6%	96.2%			**94.6%**
Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter after Exit	102.8%	105.9%	120.7%	108.4%			**109.4%**
Credential Attainment Rate	110.3%	112.8%	98.5%				**107.2%**
Measurable Skill Gains	110.1%	117.7%	106.4%				**111.4%**
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Overall State Program Score	**100.5%**	**107.7%**	**102.0%**	**100.4%**			

Calculation - Overall State Indicator and Program Scores

WIOA Title I Youth Program

Title I Youth Program		Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited
Total Statewide		**452**	314

PY 2025 Performance					
Title I Youth Program Performance Indicators	Number of Participants in Cohort	Number of Participants Achieving Outcome	Target	**Actual**	50%
2nd Qtr. Employment	310	220	76.6%	**71.0%**	**Y**
4th Qtr. Employment	285	201	77.0%	**70.5%**	**Y**
2nd Qtr. Median Earnings			$3,950	**$4,766**	**Y**
Credential Attainment	133	76	58.0%	**57.1%**	**Y**
Measurable Skill Gains	194	136	65.9%	**70.1%**	**Y**

Title I Dislocated Worker Program

Title I Dislocated Worker Program	Total Individuals	Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited
Total Statewide		**123**	87

PY 2025 Performance					
Title I Dislocated Worker Program Performance Indicators	Number of Participants in Cohort	Number of Participants Achieving Outcome	Target	**Actual**	50%
2nd Qtr. Employment	69	60	83.0%	**87.0%**	Y
4th Qtr. Employment	67	54	83.0%	**80.6%**	Y
2nd Qtr. Median Earnings			$9,200	**$9,743**	Y
Credential Attainment	52	44	75.0%	**84.6%**	Y
Measurable Skill Gains	91	81	75.6%	**89.0%**	Y

WIOA Title I Adult Program

Title I Adult Program		Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited
Total Statewide		**636**	420

PY 2025 Performance					
Title I Adult Program Performance Indicators	Number of Participants in Cohort	Number of Participants Achieving Outcome	Target	**Actual**	50%
2nd Qtr. Employment	442	308	81.0%	**69.7%**	Y
4th Qtr. Employment	450	332	79.0%	**73.8%**	Y
2nd Qtr. Median Earnings			$7,750	**$7,969**	Y
Credential Attainment	313	252	73.0%	**80.5%**	Y
Measurable Skill Gains	366	297	73.7%	**81.1%**	Y

Title III Wagner/Peyser Program

Title III Wagner/Peyser Program		Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited
Total Statewide		**24,456**	31,989

PY 2025 Performance					
Title III Wagner/Peyser Program Performance Indicators	Number of Participants in Cohort	Number of Participants Achieving Outcome	Target	**Actual**	50%
2nd Qtr. Employment	53,606	36,647	70.8%	**68.4%**	Y
4th Qtr. Employment	56,309	37,992	70.1%	**67.5%**	Y
2nd Qtr. Median Earnings			$6,905	**$7,482**	Y

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS



Ashley- Registered Nurse

Northwest AR

Barriers: Low-income mother of seven. SNAP recipient, underemployed; lost job as CNA while pursuing educational goals.

Services: Tuition Assistance, Supportive Services: Utility Assistance, Transportation Assistance (tires, car insurance)



Tatyanna- OTR Truck Driver

Southwest AR

Barriers: Underemployed, Low-income, former Uber Driver

Services: Information on In-Demand Careers & LMI, Individualized Employment Plan, Career Exploration, Tuition Assistance, Transportation Assistance



Jarred- Welder

Western AR

Barriers: Homeless, transitioning out of foster care, low skill levels, low-income.

Services: Career Exploration, Job Search Assistance, Tuition Assistance, Basic Skills Tutoring



ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

ARKANSAS
WORKFORCE
CONNECTIONS

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Agenda Item 6: Informational

Governor Sanders 10:33 Reentry Program

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

10:33 Reentry



Governor Sarah Sander's Office

Cody Arnold | Attorney



Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Governor Announces the Launch of the 10:33 Initiative



"The 10:33 Initiative isn't another government welfare program; it's a groundbreaking project carefully curated to give Arkansans a hand up, not a handout. By leveraging the power of technology and connecting Arkansans in need with faith-based and community partners willing to help, this initiative will strengthen families and transform lives."

-Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

ONE SYSTEM. ONE CARE PLAN.

Government agencies, professional services, and neighbors — all working together to help people move along a pathway out of crisis and onto careers.

NO WRONG DOOR

WHAT IS 10:33?

State Government | Local Service Providers | Businesses | The Faith Community

This community-led initiative helps people move out of crisis and onto careers so asking for help means **entering a community, not navigating a maze.** For individuals released from incarceration, 10:33 Reentry builds stability and long term success



CROSS-SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

An aligned vision for how to work together to remove longstanding barriers.



TECHNOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIP

Relational, coordinated support through a secure case management system.



RESULTS

Shared measurements track meaningful outcomes, not just outputs.

This collective impact model has moved

1,238

PARTICIPANTS FROM CRISIS TO CAREER IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

RESTORE HOPE

Restore Hope

Janet Camp | Director of Judicial Services



RH The Restore Hope Model

Restore Hope is a nonprofit founded in Arkansas with a mission to **reduce incarceration and the need for foster care** through a community-driven approach. It brings together courts, state agencies, nonprofits, churches, and community partners to make better use of existing resources, strengthen collaboration, and coordinate services. Restore Hope uses real-time data to measure outcomes and guide improvements across systems.

Referral: RH receives a participant referral → **Assessment: Primary Provider assesses the participant's needs and goals** → **Action Plan: Primary Provider develops an individualized action plan to address needs and goals** → **Care Team: A care team is assembled to connect the participant with resources and support services to carry out the plan** → **Ongoing Support: The Primary Provider regularly updates the assessment and action plan to track progress**

Collective Impact

Collective Impact recognizes that lasting change is made possible when systems evolve together.

Population-level outcomes emerge when government, nonprofits, and local partners act in coordinated response, not in operational silos.

Engage the Alliance

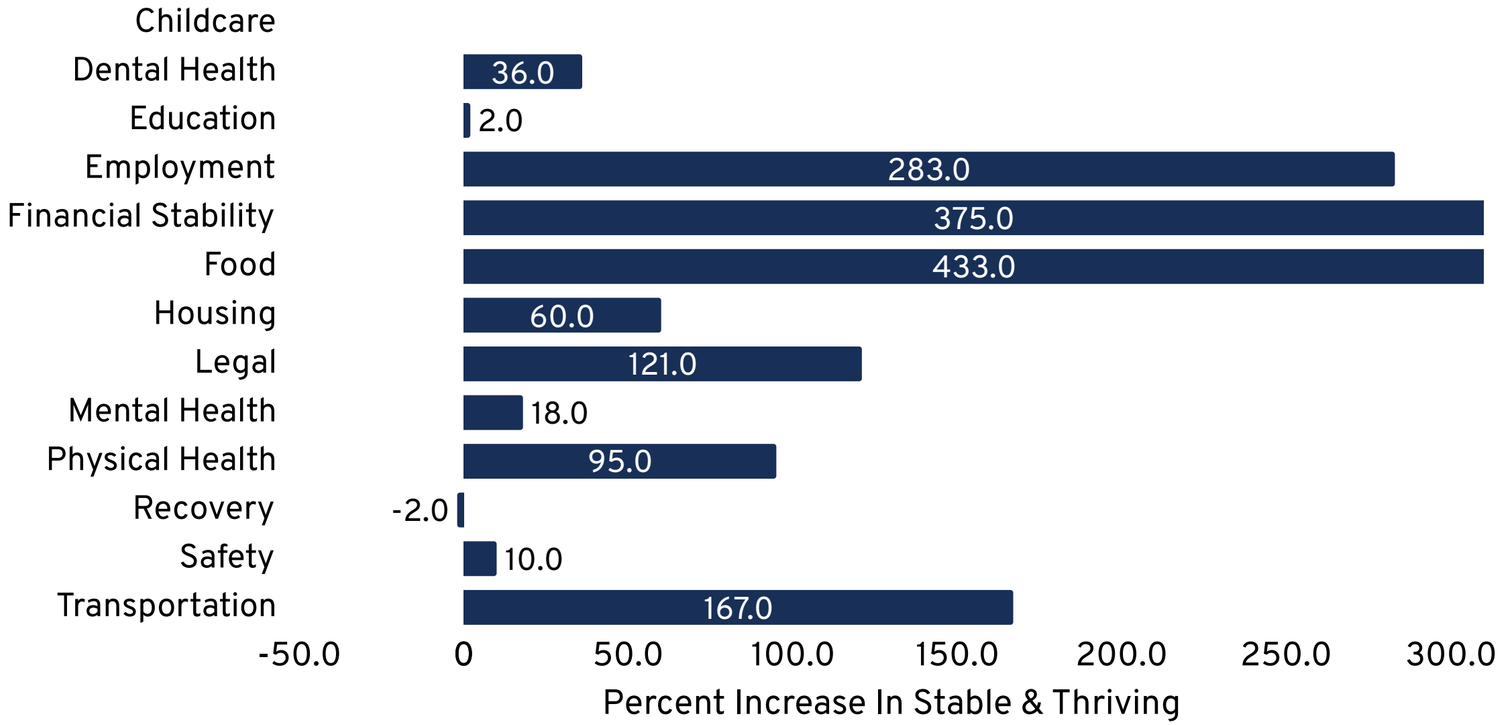
A county-level coalition of courts, churches, nonprofits, state agencies, and community partners working together to strengthen families and communities.

Alliances are local by design. The people at the table know their county, its resources, and the individuals they serve.

The Restore Hope Model

HopeHub

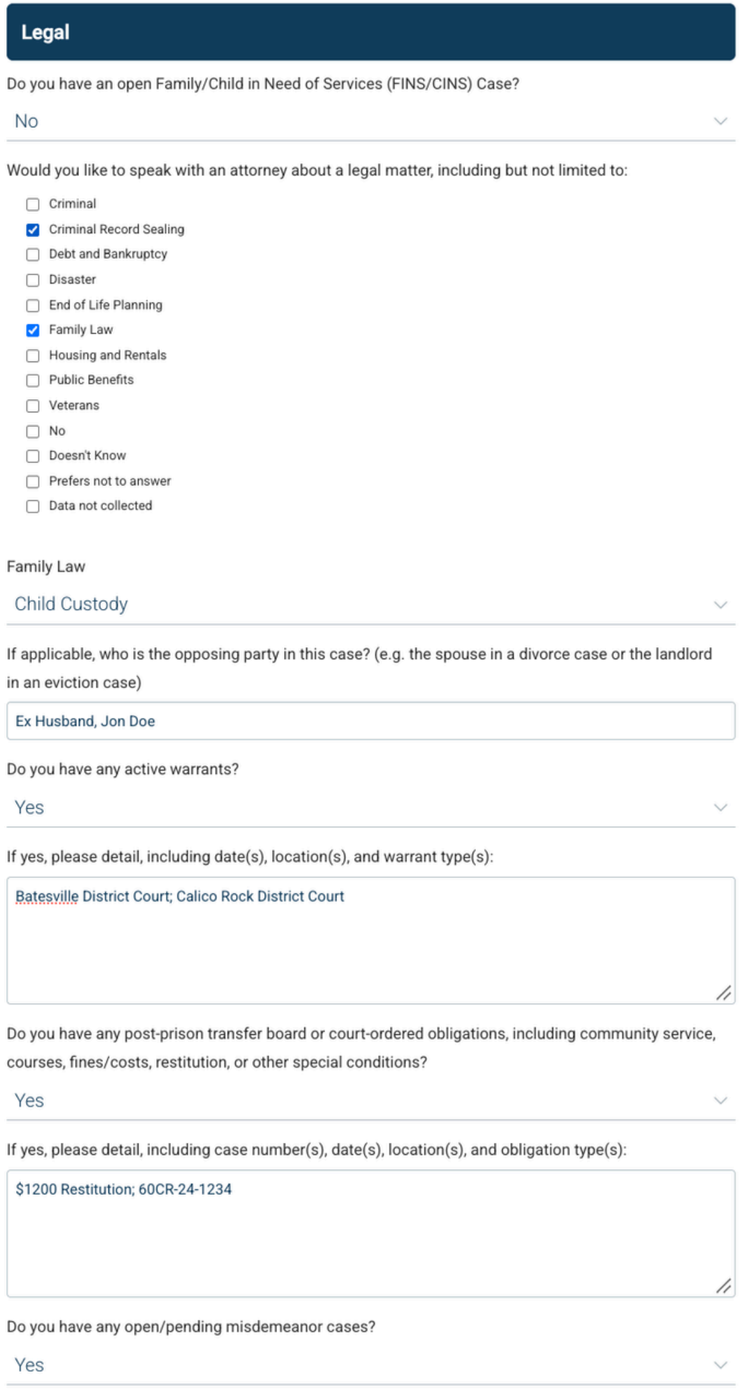
A collaborative case-management platform that connects all partners through one shared record, assessment, and action plan. HopeHub provides real-time visibility into participant progress, providing measurable outcome data in real-time to drive data-informed decision making.



Each participant has a Case Manager, known as the "Primary Provider," who maintains regular contact, updates assessments, and develops an action plan to connect with needed resources and services.

HopeHub - Assessment

- Participants are assessed prior to release and monthly thereafter across **thirteen social determinants of health.**
- Each area is rated on a **five-point scale**: in crisis, at risk, situation stabilizing, stable, or thriving.
- The initial assessment establishes a baseline and guides an individualized **action plan,** while ongoing assessments track progress toward stability.
- The primary provider builds **a care team** of local providers matched to each participant's needs, coordinating support before and after release.



Legal

Do you have an open Family/Child in Need of Services (FINS/CINS) Case?

No

Would you like to speak with an attorney about a legal matter, including but not limited to:

- [ ] Criminal
- [x] Criminal Record Sealing
- [ ] Debt and Bankruptcy
- [ ] Disaster
- [ ] End of Life Planning
- [x] Family Law
- [ ] Housing and Rentals
- [ ] Public Benefits
- [ ] Veterans
- [ ] No
- [ ] Doesn't Know
- [ ] Prefers not to answer
- [ ] Data not collected

Family Law

Child Custody

If applicable, who is the opposing party in this case? (e.g. the spouse in a divorce case or the landlord in an eviction case)

Ex Husband, Jon Doe

Do you have any active warrants?

Yes

If yes, please detail, including date(s), location(s), and warrant type(s):

Batesville District Court; Calico Rock District Court

Do you have any post-prison transfer board or court-ordered obligations, including community service, courses, fines/costs, restitution, or other special conditions?

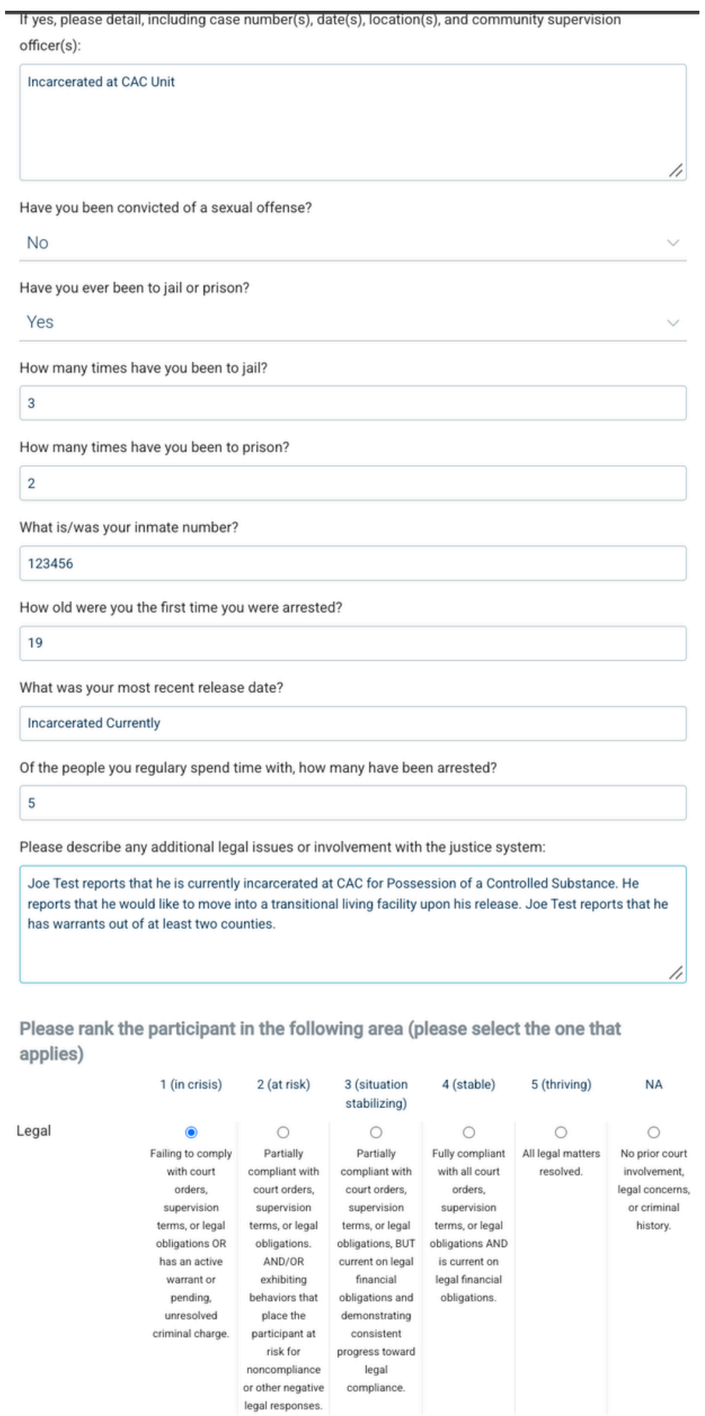
Yes

If yes, please detail, including case number(s), date(s), location(s), and obligation type(s):

$1200 Restitution; 60CR-24-1234

Do you have any open/pending misdemeanor cases?

Yes



If yes, please detail, including case number(s), date(s), location(s), and community supervision officer(s):

Incarcerated at CAC Unit

Have you been convicted of a sexual offense?

No

Have you ever been to jail or prison?

Yes

How many times have you been to jail?

3

How many times have you been to prison?

2

What is/was your inmate number?

123456

How old were you the first time you were arrested?

19

What was your most recent release date?

Incarcerated Currently

Of the people you regulary spend time with, how many have been arrested?

5

Please describe any additional legal issues or involvement with the justice system:

Joe Test reports that he is currently incarcerated at CAC for Possession of a Controlled Substance. He reports that he would like to move into a transitional living facility upon his release. Joe Test reports that he has warrants out of at least two counties.

Please rank the participant in the following area (please select the one that applies)

	1 (in crisis)	2 (at risk)	3 (situation stabilizing)	4 (stable)	5 (thriving)	NA
Legal	◉ Failing to comply with court orders, supervision terms, or legal obligations OR has an active warrant or pending, unresolved criminal charge.	○ Partially compliant with court orders, supervision terms, or legal obligations. AND/OR exhibiting behaviors that place the participant at risk for noncompliance or other negative legal responses.	○ Partially compliant with court orders, supervision terms, or legal obligations, BUT current on legal financial obligations and demonstrating consistent progress toward legal compliance.	○ Fully compliant with all court orders, supervision terms, or legal obligations AND is current on legal financial obligations.	○ All legal matters resolved.	○ No prior court involvement, legal concerns, or criminal history.

PRE-RELEASE PLANNING AND CONTINUED COMMUNITY SUPPORT

10:33 Reentry begins supporting individuals while they are incarcerated and continues after release, helping them prepare for reentry, build stability, and address barriers to a successful return to the community. Through planning and connections to community-based services, the program supports lasting progress and reduces the likelihood of returning to incarceration.

Participants receive targeted support before and after release in the following key areas:

Financial Stability



Assisting with financial planning and access to economic resources.

Dental Health



Providing preventive and restorative dental care.

Employment



Providing job training, employment assistance, and career development opportunities.

Food Security



Ensuring access to nutritious food and meal assistance programs.

Legal



Helping individuals navigate the justice system and resolve legal matters.

Childcare



Providing resources to support parents and guardians.

Housing



Connecting individuals with safe, stable, and affordable housing options.

Recovery



Offering substance use treatment and support for sustained sobriety.

Physical Health



Ensuring access to medical care for overall well-being.

Transportation



Removing barriers to reliable transportation for access to essential services.

Education



Supporting access to GED programs, vocational training, and higher education resources.

Safety



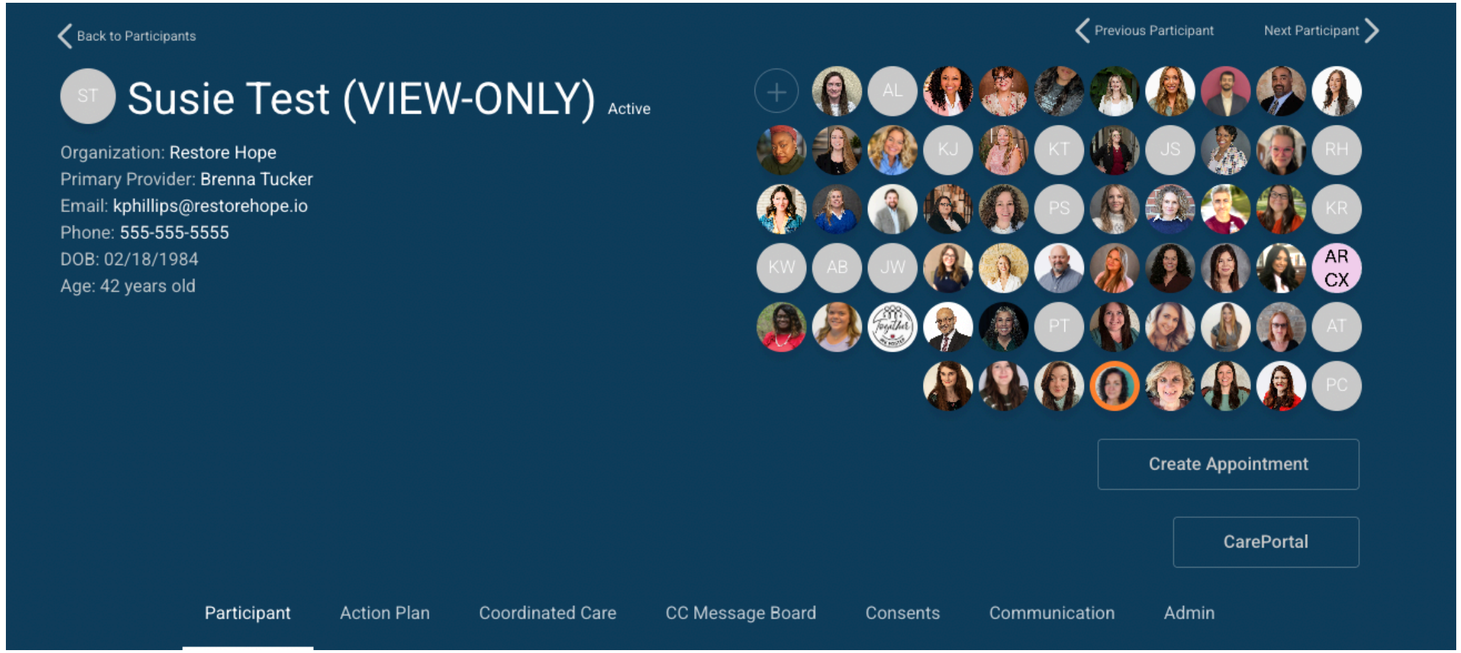
Promoting personal and community safety through intervention and resources.

Mental Health



Connecting individuals with counseling, therapy, and mental health resources.

HOPEHUB - CARE TEAMS



CARE TEAM

A coordinated group of professionals and community partners who work alongside each participant to support pre-release planning and life after release to:

- Identify needs
- Connect participants with resources
- Provide ongoing guidance to support stability and successful reentry

17
Average Active Care Team Members

9
Organizations Represented on Each Participant Care Team (avg)

19
Average Total Care Team Members (All-Inclusive)



From Referral to Post-release

1

Onboard

Restore Hope receives the list of individuals from the Department of Corrections, creates their HopeHub profiles, completes all necessary consent forms, and establishes the initial care team to support their reentry.

2

Legal Resolution

Restore Hope helps address outstanding legal issues by reviewing driver's license suspensions, warrants, child support obligations, and child and adult maltreatment registry information; coordinating with courts; informing them of individuals' incarceration status; and requesting virtual court appearances when available.

3

Pre-Release Assessment

Once a parole plan is approved, Restore Hope works with the receiving county to assign a case manager who conducts a pre-release assessment of 13 social determinants of health and develops an action plan with the participant before release.

4

Post-Release Assessment & Care Team Development

Once the participant is released, the receiving case manager meets with them to connect them with services and resources that address needs identified in the action plan, adding those service providers to the care team.

5

Ongoing Case Management

The case manager meets with the participant at least monthly to update the assessment and connect them with additional resources and service providers, with the overall goal of moving the person from **crisis to career.**

10:33 Reentry Program – Early Outcomes

LEGAL RESOLUTION

84 of 97	78%
At Intake - Participants Without A Valid Driver's License	At Release - Percentage of Legal Barriers Resolved

AT CURRENT - % CHANGE TO STABLE/THRIVING FROM INTAKE

480%	325%
Increase In Food Stability	Increase In Financial Stability

$1,783.89

At Intake - Average Outstanding Fine/Fee Balance Per Participant

115

At Intake - Number of Outstanding Warrant and/or Pending Criminal Cases

91.7%

Pre-release assessment and planning is associated with higher active status; 91.7% with an assessment versus 60.0% without an assessment.

97 Male Participants Across Cohort 1-10

80.3% Actively Engaged In Case Management Post-Release

19 Average Care Team Members

Department of Corrections

Andrew Ruh | Deputy Director



SELECTION AND ELIGIBILITY

Participants are screened for public safety, release timing, and training readiness

How each cohort is selected

1. **Identify**
   The Division of Correction identifies candidates early, often at intake, and starts gathering each diploma or GED.
2. **Screen**
   Each candidate is checked against every eligibility requirement, including High School diploma or equivalency.
3. **Apply for the scholarship**
   For 2.0, Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarship applications, with a diploma or GED, are due 30-45 days before the proposed start date.
4. **Share the roster**
   Restore Hope, Workforce Connections, UA-PTC, and DHS receive the list so their work starts before day one.
5. **Transfer and Onboard**
   Participants move to CACCC in Little Rock; HopeHub profiles, consent forms, records checks, and enrollment follow.

Eligibility requirements

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Conviction for a target offense: a nonviolent, nonsexual offense eligible for community correction
- No prior violent or sexual felony conviction, and no felony detainer for one
- No violent or sexual misconduct while incarcerated
- No documented mental health concern indicating a risk of violence

RELEASE TIMING

- Scheduled to parole within the targeted release date

TRAINING READINESS

- High school diploma or GED, required for UA-PTC and the scholarship application

TRANSPORTATION AND THE ROLE OF CORRECTIONS

Corrections transports participants to Little Rock, and its two divisions divide the work at release



Sending facility
Participants are identified and screened.

Transport
Corrections transports each participant to Little Rock.

CACCC, Little Rock
Participants live, train, and meet partners on site.

UA-PTC graduation
Staff escort graduates to the ceremony.

Release
Participants parole to an approved residence.

What each division does

Treatment and programming staff from both divisions now report through one supervision structure.

SELECTION AND CUSTODY

Division of Correction

- Makes the final eligibility decision and selects each cohort
- Provides transport and security, including in the classroom
- Hosts UA-PTC on site with classroom space and technology
- Obtains birth certificates, Social Security cards, and state IDs
- Develops reintegration plans with the Post-Prison Transfer Board and Community Correction

RELEASE AND SUPERVISION

Division of Community Correction

- Partners on each reintegration plan
- Assigns a supervision officer, who joins the HopeHub support team at release
- Provides supervision and case management in the community
- Connects participants to treatment, housing, and, with Workforce Connections, jobs

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
PULASKI TECH

UA Pulaski Technical College

Sharon Cantrell | Executive Director of
Business and Industry Center



UA PULASKI TECH

Training Built for Results

130
hours of instruction per participant

97
graduates against a goal of 100

97%
graduation / completion rate

8 wks
per cohort: 4 hrs/day, 4 days/wk

On site at CACCC (Central Arkansas Community Corrections Center)
December 2025 – November 2026
Final cohort of 20 graduates November 20; certificates awarded by UA-PTC



"Their past does not define their future."
Eli Adams, UA-PTC instructor: from participant to mentor

UA PULASKI TECH

Industry-Recognized Credentials

ACT NCRC: Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, Workplace Documents



15

15% of participants
Skills for 99% of jobs
Engineering, advanced technology

32

33% of participants
Skills for 90% of jobs
Managerial, logistics

28

29% of participants
Skills for 65% of jobs
Manufacturing, admin, engineering tech, electrician

22

23% of participants
Skills for 17–35% of jobs
Machine operator, assembler

100%
earned OSHA 10 certification

College credit pathway
UA-PTC may award Technical Math credit for Bronze in Workplace Documents plus Gold in Applied Math and Graphic Literacy

Arkansas JobLink
All participants registered

UA PULASKI TECH

Future Fit's Production Operator / Assembler

96 HOURS

1	Instructor led online modules.
2	Demonstrate and validate hands-on competencies using the Amatrol Skill Boss trainer.
3	Technical skills
3	Durable skills



UA PULASKI TECH

Skills

Safety – Lockout/Tagout	Blueprint Reading and Measurement
Industrial Mathematics Fundamentals	Introduction to Production Processes/Assembly
Basic Measurements	Tolerance
Quality Overview	Ergonomics
Hand and Power Tool Safety	Pneumatics
Maintenance Awareness	Machine Operations
Troubleshooting	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

WORKPLACE ESSENTIALS INCLUDING:

- Workplace Etiquette
- Resume Writing
- Mock Interviews
- Financial Literacy
- Professional Communications
- Team Building
- College Enrollment Assistance for For-Credit Classes
- Admissions, Entrance Exam, Financial Aid, Advising
- And More

UA PULASKI TECH

Cost of the Instructional Program

An MOU was created with OSD

$372,000
for funding the instructional piece of the program

$83,895
two Amatrol Skill Boss trainers.

$2,881.05
per participant.

$288,105
for 100 participants.

MOU Total
$372,000

Department of Commerce

Mike Tippin | Workforce Development Project Consultant, Outreach & Partnerships



Service Delivery

1. **Intake and Enrollment**
   - Overview of services available through the Arkansas Workforce Center network
   - Application and eligibility process, program activities, and expectations
   - Individualized employment plan, including career goals and barriers to employment
2. **Career Coaching and Career Readiness Training**
   - Ongoing check-ins and weekly counseling sessions to evaluate progress and map out a plan to employment after release
   - Durable and essential skills: applications, interview preparation, communication, interpersonal relationships, problem-solving
3. **Job Search Assistance and Placement**
   - Navigator/Case Manager makes direct contact with employers.
4. **Supportive and Follow-Up Services**
   - Regular follow up with participants and status updates entered into Hope Notes.



Every participant
meets with AWC and leaves with an individualized employment plan before release

WIOA at a Glance

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is a federally funded program that offers job seekers training, education, and career services to find and keep employment, and helps employers find skilled workers for local labor needs.

FOR JOB SEEKERS

Training and Education
Training, education, and career assessments for in-demand jobs

Job Search Assistance
Job leads, labor market information, résumé critiques, and career counseling

Supportive Services
Help with needs such as childcare and transportation to enable participation

Youth Programs
Training and employment services that prepare young adults for careers

FOR EMPLOYERS

Skilled Workforce
Referrals of qualified, trained job seekers who match business needs

Work-Based Learning
Tailored work-based learning strategies to build a skilled workforce

Employer Outreach and Engagement

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Arkansas Industry Connect

Office of Employment and Training: Regional Outreach Coordinators

EARLY IN THE PILOT

- Contacted second-chance employers and other businesses to seek support and evaluate current vacancies
- Prioritized manufacturing due to the Future Fit curriculum focus
- Conducted outreach across the state for participants returning to different regions

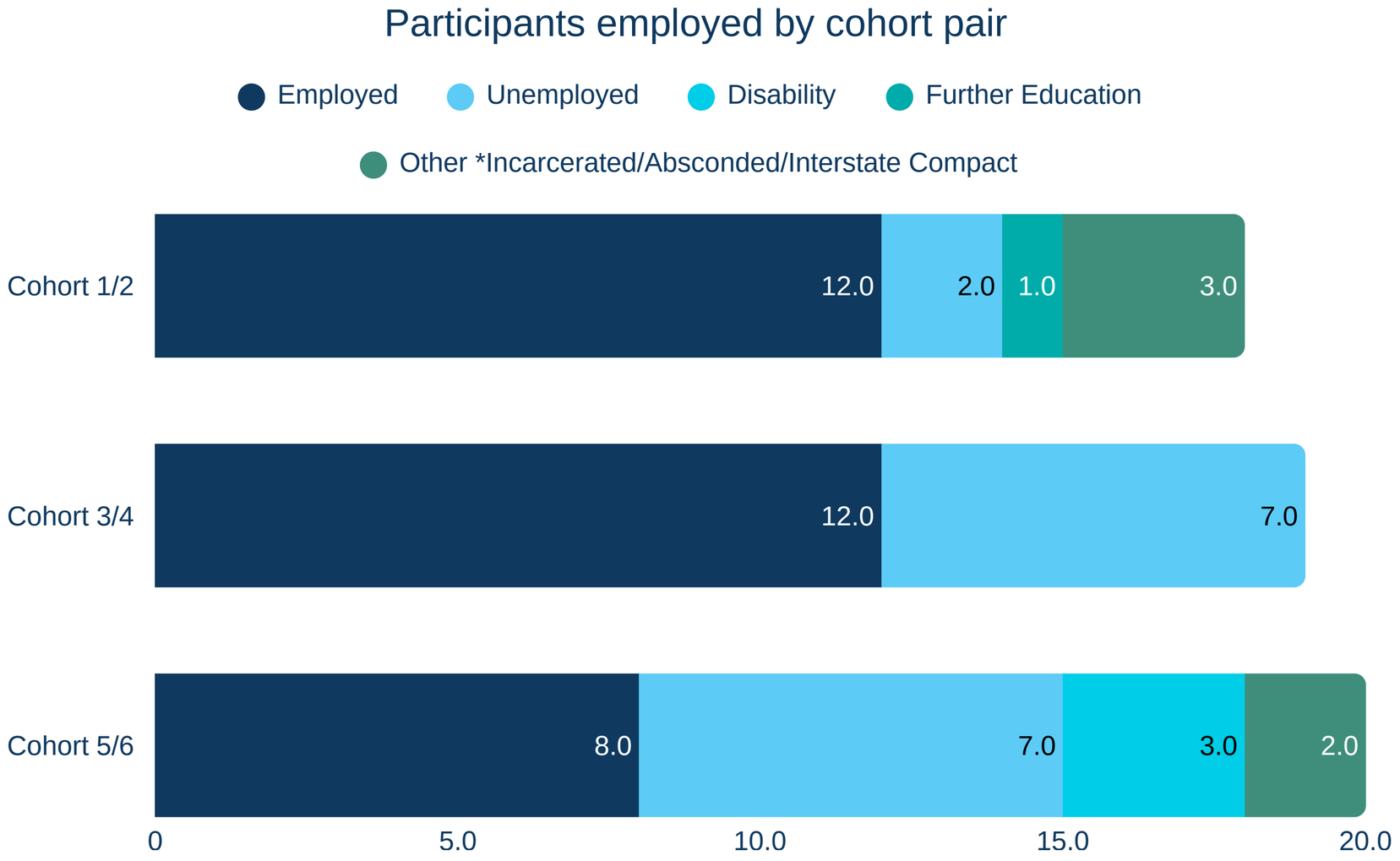
ONGOING EFFORTS

- Awareness of incentive programs: Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Federal Bonding Program
- Job placement referrals
- Discussions with industry associations, including the Poultry Federation and trucking association
- Outreach to employers with workforce challenges and demands
- Specialized job fairs for 10:33 participants



Mobile Workforce Center

Employment Outcomes



66.7%

of all cohorts are employed

Cohorts 7 & 8

Graduated September 11th, 2026

Barriers and Employer Placements

COMMON REASONS FOR NON-PLACEMENT

- Disabled, or at retirement age and eligible for other benefits
- Ongoing treatment or recovery needs
- Need additional job readiness skills or more training
- Lack of transportation
- Transitional home "blackout periods"
- No contact with workforce center staff or partners
- Recidivated (low percentage)

$13–$30 per hour wage range

EMPLOYER PLACEMENTS (PARTIAL LIST)

- **Bad Boy Mowers**
- **Fortex**
- **Newterra**
- **Sullivan Construction**
- **Sinco Fabrication**
- **Arkansas Box Factory**

Department of Corrections

Andrew Ruh | Deputy Director



FUTURE PLANS | 10:33 REENTRY 2.0 (PROPOSED)

10:33 2.0 runs about five months: CBT first, then Career Climb, with an employer track before release

Identify and transfer	Phase 1: Cognitive core	Phase 2: Career Climb	Release
3 weeks before	Weeks 1-6	Weeks 7-19	Week 20+
		Employer track: Weeks 14-19	

PHASE 1 | WEEKS 1-6

Cognitive core

30 group sessions of cognitive behavioral therapy

- Thinking for a Change, the National Institute of Corrections' CBT program
- Builds self-reflection, social skills, and problem solving
- Job training starts in Week 7; T4C ends in Week 8
- Peer recovery and legal resolution begin

PHASE 2 | WEEKS 7-19

Career Climb

192 hours of UA-PTC coursework

- Future Fit's three courses: WorkKeys and math, OSHA 10, and Production Operator/Assembler
- Adds Workplace Essentials (62 hours): employer speakers, company tours, mock interviews, and college advising
- UA-PTC graduation in Week 19, then release

PHASE 2 | WEEKS 14-19

Employer track

7 employer interview days at CACCC, plus jobsite interviews

- Week 14: jobs matched to each participant's release county
- Up to three employer site tours, with DOC transport
- DOC staff escort participants to jobsite interviews when required
- Aim: a confirmed job offer for every participant at release

FUTURE PLANS | PRE-RELEASE PLANNING

In 2.0, release planning starts at identification and ends with a job start date before graduation

Planning checkpoints

Before Week 1	Eligibility verified, release county recorded, transfer to CACCC, and onboarding; vital documents begin
Weeks 2-4	Legal resolution opens on warrants, fines and fees, and license holds; child maltreatment registry review
Week 9	NCRC and OSHA 10 earned; Arkansas JobLink enrollment; child support records returned
Weeks 10-15	Workforce Connections one-on-ones; Week 14 site tour and job matching by release county; mock interviews
Week 13	Medicaid applications open, 45 days before release
Weeks 16-19	Employer interviews at CACCC and at jobsites; state ID or license issued; offers, drug screens, and background checks; SNAP and WIOA
Week 17	All reintegration plans approved, two weeks before graduation
Weeks 19-20	Financial literacy and graduation; release, with work starting the first week home

Designed so each graduate leaves with:

- An approved reintegration plan
- A state ID or driver's license, birth certificate, and Social Security card
- Medicaid and SNAP applications filed
- OSHA 10, NCRC, and Production Operator/Assembler credentials
- A job offer and a start date
- A supervision officer and a HopeHub support team

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

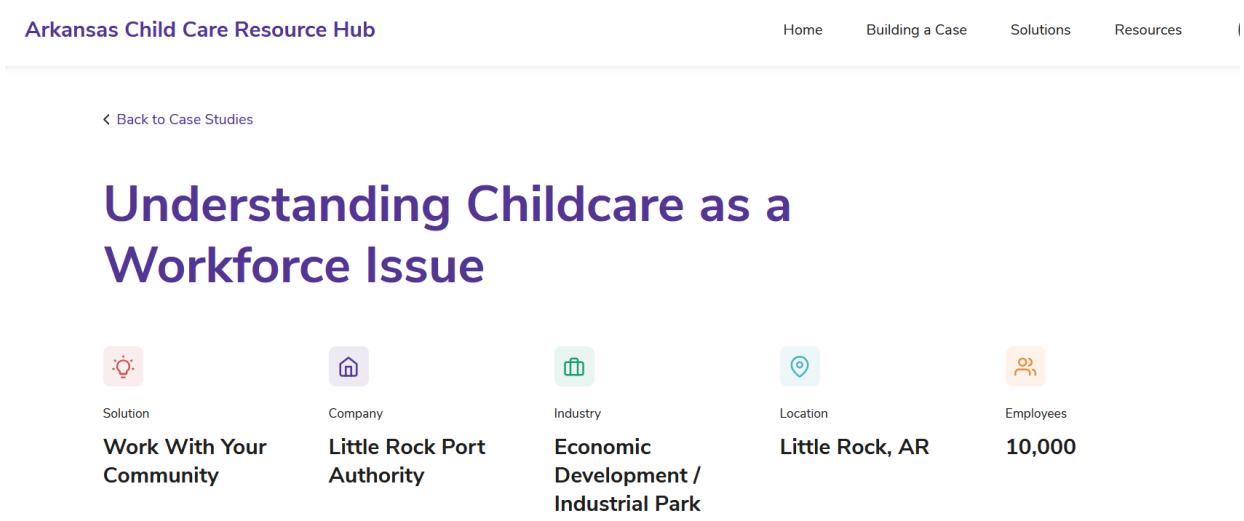
Agenda Item 7: Informational

Employer Insights: Childcare & the Workforce

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS

Reference: https://business.excelby8.net/case-studies/5/



Background

With more than 50 companies employing more than 10,000 people in manufacturing, transportation and warehousing jobs, the Port of Little Rock depends on employees who can show up for hands-on, in-person work. But Port leaders recognized that childcare challenges may be affecting employees' ability to work the schedules required by local employers.

Implementation

To better understand the issue, the Port partnered with Excel by Eight on a mixed-methods workforce assessment conducted between September 2025 and March 2026. The assessment included data walks, employee surveys, and focus groups with participating employees of Port and Port-adjacent employers.

The findings showed that childcare strain is already affecting the workforce. Nearly a third of employees reported missing work, arriving late, or leaving early often or very often because of childcare challenges. More than 40% said available childcare hours did not align with their work schedules, and more than half reported reducing hours or turning down shifts, projects, or promotions.

For executive director Bryan Day, the issue is directly tied to the Port's role as an economic driver.

"Childcare is not just a personal issue for families; it is a business and economic development issue that directly impacts manufacturers' bottom lines," Day said.

The Solution

While a specific solution has not yet been implemented, the assessment gives the Port and nearby employers a clearer starting point for working with community partners to explore options that increase childcare supply, support employees, and strengthen the regional workforce.

"Childcare is not just a personal issue for families; it is a business and economic development issue that directly impacts manufacturers' bottom lines."

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Agenda Item 8: Informational

Board Open Discussion

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS