

**WDD Statewide Initiative Review and Staff Recommendations
Executive Summary**

During the June 13, 2023, Commission meeting, a work session was proposed to address statewide initiatives. In response to this proposal, WDD Staff completed reviews for forty-three (43) statewide initiatives. Evaluation criteria and baseline results are summarized below.

Due to the time available to prepare for the work session, the analysis consists primarily of program demand, expenditures, numbers served and known workforce priorities. Staff will continue to look for ways to enhance and improve existing WDD initiatives, focusing on initiative objectives and RFA development, performance measures and analysis, and the introduction of new initiatives.

To evaluate each statewide initiative, WDD staff analyzed historical expenditure and performance data and answered the following questions and related secondary questions:

1. Is this initiative required by statute?
2. Does the initiative mission still address the relevant issue?
3. Do program activities effectively meet the needs of the target population? If not, what changes could be made to improve services provided?
4. Does TWC provide grant funds for similar initiatives?
5. Are there other organizations or agencies providing same or similar workforce programs?
6. In consideration of initiative interest, do applicants vary with each procurement? Do Grantees vary from year to year? Are enrollment targets routinely met?
7. What are the negative consequences associated with eliminating this initiative?
8. Use Grantee achievements, feedback, pre- and post-surveys, success stories, and participant assessments to demonstrate initiative return on investment.
9. Is this initiative still considered to be high priority and high value based on the current needs of the Texas Workforce?

Staff recommendations break down as follows:

Staff Recommendation	Count†
Continue the Initiative without Changes	12
Further Analysis Required	9
Revise the Initiative	3
Amend Initiative Budget	2
Discontinue the Initiative	4
New Initiative – To Be Evaluated	5
Required by Legal Statute	9

† College Credit for Heroes has been included in two categories: Amend the Initiative Budget and Required by Legal Statute.

CONTINUE THE INITIATIVE AS IS (12)

77032 HSE Virtual Providers
77030 IET in Corrections

77016 Math Assistance Call Center
74058 Building and Construction Trades
74068 Careers Pathways Mobile Application
74048 High Demand Job Training
74055 Texas Industries Partnerships
75025 Jobs Y'all!
75027 Texas Internship Initiative
74057 Military Family Support (Military Base Support)
74017 Veterans Network
79024 Apprenticeship Texas Chapter 133

FURTHER ANALYSIS REQUIRED (9)

74005 Texas Science and Engineering Fair
74006 Governor's Science Champions Academy
75011 Governor's Summer Merit Program
75016 Youth Robotics
75024 Camp Code
75030 Esports (**Pilot-Future year funding not yet identified*)

WDD Staff continues to evaluate the merits of consolidating current youth initiatives and adding new initiatives to create one large youth initiative. This combined initiative is envisioned to exist under one common RFA, under which funding, eligibility, periods of performance, performance measures and reporting will be made uniform, with objectives encompassing the following youth programs: Camp Code, Esports, Governor's Science Champions Academy, Governor's Summer Merit Program, Texas Science and Engineering Fair, Youth Robotics, and new youth programs as they are developed and approved. Further research is being conducted to determine funding allowability and logistics in general.

74008 Governor's Small Business Initiative – Staff recommends discussion with grantee to determine amount of funding required and necessary deliverable revisions.

75028 Entrepreneurship Bootcamps – Staff recognizes the value of this initiative, especially as more and more Texans are exploring entrepreneurial endeavors. In light of this, staff recommends further analysis to research ways to successfully implement the program and establish appropriate performance targets.

74010 Veterans Workforce Outreach – Align performance targets with funding availability to ensure quality services are provided to this population. Additional data will be necessary to measure program effectiveness.

REVISE THE INITIATIVE (3)

74046 Externship for Teachers – Staff recommends expanding this initiative to include AEL providers and Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) as approved by the Commission earlier this year.

75006 Foster Youth Transition Centers – The Foster Youth Transition Center initiative grants are awarded to eighteen entities annually. Staff recommends further analysis to ensure program addresses the common barriers today's foster youth experience as they transition into adulthood. Visions for the

program involve greater employer engagement with foster youth participants to ensure stronger work connections at transition.

77027 Pre-Apprenticeship Bridge – Consider a joint strategy with the Texas Apprenticeship division to develop DOL, TWC and AEL quality pre-apprenticeship models across Board service areas.

AMEND INITIATIVE BUDGET (2)

74034 College Credit for Heroes - Historical expenditure data reflects that demand for this initiative supports a budget of \$700,000, which is lower than current budget of 1,400,000. Any approved budget change would be reflected in the FY25 budget.

74062 We Hire Vets Campaign – The 2024 operating budget for this initiative was amended to \$2,000 to align with historical expenditures.

DISCONTINUE THE INITIATIVE (4)

75029 Virtual Reality Career Exploration Pilot – This was a one-time initiative, and the purchases were successfully made. This is not a reoccurring distribution to Workforce Development Boards.

74067 IT Registered Apprenticeship – This is a Commission Initiative funded with WIOA Statewide and Apprenticeship Expansion funding. Currently, there are no Apprenticeship Expansion funds available, and the IT industry needs may be addressed with other existing funds.

77028 AEL Employer Engagement – Because services can be provided by AEL grantees under core AEL funding (5 year cycles), it is recommended to terminate the initiative due to the short timeline from start-up to grant end date. AEL collaborates with OEI informally and those partnerships could be expanded to serve the AEL eligible population this project serves and reach more employers and incumbent workers.

77031 Family Math Literacy – This initiative concludes in October 2023 with no plans to renew.

NEW INITIATIVES – TO BE EVALUATED (5)

*Note: *Pilot-Future year funding not yet identified*

- *79030 Critical Occupations Apprenticeship (New Initiative for FY23)
- *79031 Healthcare Registered Apprenticeship (New Initiative for FY23)
- *74070 ST_ Training in Demand (New Initiative for FY23)
- *74080 Employment Supplies (New Initiative for FY23)
- * 74081 Rapid Incumbent Worker Training Pilot (New Initiative for FY23)

INITIATIVES REQUIRED BY STATUTE (9)

- 74034 College Credit for Heroes
- 74056 Innovation Academy – PTECH
- 77001 Statewide Professional Development Center
- 77002 Learning Management System

77004 Community-Based Professional Development
77009 Distance Education PDC
77013 Career Pathways PDC
79016 Accelerate Texas
79029 Credential Library