

Chapter Two

FLORIDA CASE STUDY

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Section I. Background Information and Issues

Florida has long been a highly innovative state in developing and implementing workforce development policy. The state has 24 workforce investment areas, which are referred to as Regional Workforce Boards (RWBs). See Appendix A, Figure 1 for a map of Florida's areas. The local boards are responsible for planning and operating all workforce development programs in the local areas, which in Florida extend beyond the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I programs for adults, youth, and dislocated workers. Local Florida boards are also responsible for federally funded programs such as employment and training for welfare recipients, labor exchange services provided by the Employment Service, Welfare-to-Work services, and Food Stamp Employment and Training. Although Employment Service employees are state merit staff employees, they report to the head of the One-Stop Career Centers and receive direct supervision from Employment Service managers according to federal requirements at 20 CFR 652.216. See Appendix B for the One-Stop Career Center presence and lead state agency for Florida's workforce development programs.

State legislation and leadership, especially in 1996 and 2000, have been the principal catalysts to progress in workforce development in Florida. Particularly noteworthy is that the state legislature decided to vest responsibility for WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Veterans' Employment and Training, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Welfare-to-Work, and Job Corps recruitment directly under the local workforce development boards. Workforce initiatives have been strongly driven by the leadership of elected officials in the legislature, consensus among workforce professionals, economic development organizations, and business leaders. See Appendix A, Figure 2 for an organizational chart of Florida's workforce development system.

In 1996, the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) awarded Florida a federal One-Stop early implementation grant. The majority of those funds were used to issue planning and implementation grants to local boards through a competitive process to develop their local systems. Florida received its last allocation of the three-year grant in

July 1999. Receiving funding to support the early implementation of One-Stop Career Centers helped local boards innovate in their planning process.

The chief policy organization for workforce development in Florida is Workforce Florida, Inc. (WFI), a quasi-public nonprofit organization, which serves as the state Workforce Investment Board. WFI was created by the Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 from the Workforce Division of Enterprise Florida, Inc. and the State WAGES (Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency) Board, which was responsible for workforce development activities for TANF recipients. The act consolidated policy authority over all workforce related programs under WFI, and reduced the 2000 administrative budget for workforce programs by \$1.4 million.

WFI has three statutorily established councils that focus on key segments of the workforce:

- First Jobs/First Wages Council promotes successful entry into the workforce through education and job experience; this council also deals with youth and adults entering the workforce for the first time;
- Better Jobs/Better Wages Council assists families making the transition from welfare to work and former welfare recipients working in low-wage jobs with little mobility to attain better positions; and
- High Skills/High Wages Council is involved in education and training efforts intended to place workers in high paying, high skill jobs and to attract and expand employers that hire these types of workers.

Since July 1999, Florida law has required that each local board maintain a business-led High Skills/High Wages Committee. This committee focuses on making the workforce system more responsive to business needs. Local High Skills/High Wages Committees recommend policy actions to the state board and legislature and facilitate collaboration among businesses, economic development representatives, and training providers.² The Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 requires that each local High Skills/High Wages Committee contains at least five private-sector business representatives appointed by local chambers of commerce in consultation with the primary county economic development organization in the region; a representative of each primary county economic development organization within the region; the local board chair; the presidents of all community colleges within the region; those district school superintendents who conduct postsecondary educational programs within the region; and two representatives from nonpublic postsecondary educational institutions that are authorized to provide Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). The business representatives on the committee need not be members of the local board and are required to represent local industries of primary importance to the local economy.³

Constraints to progress in workforce development include institutional inertia, some local political conflict, limited funds, state level reorganization, and a number of

federal restrictions on the use of WIA and Wagner-Peyser Act funds. Federal restrictions of particular concern to the state include the fact that Wagner-Peyser Act employees are required to be part of the state merit plan and limits on how often and how much WIA money can be moved across programs and geographical areas.⁴ In addition, the state would like the federal government to permit local boards to establish escrow scholarship accounts for ITAs, as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services allows for the major federal welfare program.

Florida has a strong tradition of state and local collaboration, although there has been some tension over control issues. For example, several local boards are strongly resisting the state board's efforts to "brand" the One-Stop Career Centers.

WFI states on its website that it "supports and promotes economic growth through workforce development." WFI staff characterizes current state and local policy as focusing on economic development and serving businesses first. By enhancing economic development, the state is confident that it will make jobs available and raise the skills of the workforce. For TANF recipients in particular, who receive employment and training services exclusively through the One-Stop delivery system, there is a strong "work first," labor market attachment focus. The state promotes incumbent worker training, but not to the exclusion of the unemployed.⁵ Florida uses state-level WIA dollars and general funds to competitively fund employers for incumbent worker training.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) is the state agency that administers the WIA program in Florida. AWI was created in 2000 by the legislature to consolidate administration of workforce programs, and it operates under a performance contract with WFI. Previously, most workforce development programs were administered by the Department of Labor and Employment Security (DLES), and a few of the programs administered by DLES were not transferred to AWI, e.g., vocational rehabilitation was transferred to the Department of Education, and regulation of farm labor and trade unions was transferred to the Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

In terms of the focus between the workforce and business, the state plan addresses both constituencies. The state's vision is "Florida will develop a globally competitive workforce," and the mission states that "Florida will develop the state business climate by designing and implementing strategies that help Floridians enter, remain in, and advance in the workplace, becoming more highly skilled and successful, benefiting businesses and the entire state."⁶ The state plan also presents a number of goals that reflect a dual focus on workforce and business:

- Provide to every citizen universal and user-friendly access to the state's workforce development programs and services;
- Foster and encourage participation of small, rural, and urban inner city business in development of workforce services to meet their needs for skilled workers;
- Educate individuals about the state's labor market conditions;

- Coordinate and consolidate workforce resources to ensure maximum performance and accountability of resources, and provide a single point of access to accurate and timely information to all citizens; and
- Through collaborative partnerships with workforce partners and stakeholders, design workforce strategies and programs that meet the needs of Florida's diverse regions.⁷

AWI staff indicated that employers are the centerpiece of the system, but, in early implementation, focus remained on the flow of job seeker services. Now there is a growing awareness that the system needs to refocus again on business because economic development is an important focus of state policy. For example, the team that analyzes and disseminates labor market information for the state recently initiated a series of focus group sessions with business leaders to try to better orient their product for business.

Florida has embraced the core principles in WIA, and, in some instances, the state has carried the principles enunciated in WIA farther than the federal statute requires. For example, Florida initiated legislation and policies on workforce development consolidation prior to federal statute (see Appendix C for a brief timeline of state legislation and policy changes); in addition, the state has (unsuccessfully) asked for permission to have Wagner-Peyser Act funded employees hired by local workforce boards rather than under the authority of a state merit staffing system.⁸ The state has also carried the concept of consolidation farther than required by WIA by giving local boards authority over a number of workforce development programs.

Section II. Leadership and Governance

A. Leadership

The legislature has played a major leadership role in Florida. In 2000, the Florida legislature consolidated the funding streams of TANF, WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Welfare-to-Work, Veterans' Employment and Training Services, and Job Corps outreach in Senate Bill 2050. In the same year, the state placed all Employment Service employees under the day-to-day supervision of local boards. The state legislature also provided strong leadership in establishing many performance standards beyond those required by the federal government for workforce development programs. Finally, the legislature enacted other important initiatives: it established a WIA-funded \$2 million incumbent worker program, set a 50 percent individual training account (ITA) expenditure target, and specified additional required members for state and local boards (such as union representatives).

In 2000, Governor Jeb Bush selected a key player in creating Florida's welfare reform and workforce legislation to serve as the charter chair of WFI. Prior to becoming WFI's chair, this individual had created a Senate Select Committee to evaluate opportunities for reform. The committee, after holding ten meetings across the state and

listening to presentations from over 100 individuals and organizations, identified the following eight key concerns:

1. The workforce system and the state's economic development strategy are disconnected;
2. Too few workers have technical skills to meet employer needs;
3. Entry level workers lack necessary literacy levels and work readiness skills to meet the needs of Florida's employers;
4. Families transitioning from welfare to work have joined the state's working poor;
5. Employers must have access to training programs that enhance the skills of their current workforce;
6. Small businesses, which have traditionally offered job opportunities for first time wage earners, have limited resources to devote to human resource programs;
7. Administrative entities and responsibilities overlap; and
8. Workforce programs and services are fragmented.⁹

At the inaugural meeting of WFI, the chair challenged the newly created state board to develop strategies to train at least 3,000 Floridians for better paying jobs within six months.¹⁰ Specifically, the chair charged each of the WFI's three workforce councils to meet a particular challenge in partnership with their partner committees at the local level. The chair urged the High Skills/High Wages Council to rapidly train 1,000 information technology professionals to attain industry certification such as those offered by Microsoft, Oracle, and Cisco Systems. Similarly, the chair challenged the Better Jobs/Better Wages Council to rapidly train 1,000 employed former cash assistance recipients to facilitate career advancement to allow them to be self-sufficient. Finally, the chair charged the First Jobs/ First Wages Council to identify opportunities to place 1,000 Florida youth in unsubsidized after-school programs. Each council exceeded their targets.¹¹

Council members reported that the challenge provided a catalyst for action and cooperation between the state council and local committees. The initial chair of the High Skills/High Wages Council praised the opportunity to focus jointly on workforce and economic development issues, "This represents a great example of our ability to strengthen the critical linkage between workforce and economic development efforts to grow our state's economy."¹²

Although the principal source of innovation in Florida has been the legislative branch, the governor's office has been very cooperative and supportive of the state board during WIA implementation. Support from the governor's office continued when the

party in the statehouse shifted from Democrat to Republican. There has been no great change since initial implementation in the level of interest the governor's office has shown.

Key administrators at AWI, the agency that serves as the administrative/fiscal entity under contract with WFI, have provided extensive leadership in the arena of workforce development. In addition, key administrators from other state agencies, such as the Department for Children and Families, which is responsible for the TANF program except for workforce development, have provided leadership through membership on the state board and through partnership agreements.

WFI, the state Workforce Investment Board, has provided extensive leadership, particularly in policy development. For example, the state board was instrumental in deciding to apply for early WIA implementation status. The legislature granted the board overall statutory authority over workforce policy, planning, and accountability.

Economic development organizations have also helped to promote WIA implementation by serving on state and local boards and serving on High Skills/High Wages Council and the corresponding local committees. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Florida Chamber of Commerce mobilized Florida's business community to focus attention on viable economic development strategies, including workforce development. The Chamber's 1989 Cornerstone Report served as an early catalyst for reforming Florida's economic development and workforce systems. In November 2001, WFI and the Florida chamber partnered to host a new Cornerstone Summit to address the major challenges facing Florida in preparing youth with the education, skills, and training necessary to succeed in the workforce.¹³ WFI and the chamber also partnered to host focus groups around the state to bring together education, workforce, economic development, and business partners to develop strategies and initiatives to align state policy, recommend legislation, and build consensus on youth issues.¹⁴ Though relations between WFI and economic development organizations are collaborative and have led to new initiatives, economic development organizations have not been as important in providing policy leadership at the state level as the legislature, WFI, and AWI.

B. Intergovernmental Relations

Since implementation of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the state has enjoyed increased authority over accountability and performance for local boards, but decreased authority over the process, methods, and providers of services. Local boards have statutory authority over TANF employment and training and most other workforce related programs, along with the related funding. State officials note a continued trend towards greater decentralization, but with strict accountability for outcomes and financial consequences.

First Coast Workforce Development Board

First Coast Workforce Development Board (Region 8) is the regional workforce development board (RWB) for Duval, Baker, Clay, Putnam, Nassau, and St. Johns counties of Florida, which includes the city of Jacksonville. The board is a nonprofit organization. A consortium of three partners jointly runs One-Stop Career Centers with significant input from RWB staff. The consortium competitively selects a contractor to hire key staff. Key characteristics of this RWB stem from the Florida legislature's statute enacted in FY 2000 to consolidate the funding streams of TANF, WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Food Stamps Employment and Training, Veterans' Services, and Job Corps at the local level. Because the regional workforce development board controls these multiple funding streams, its One-Stop Career Centers are able to provide services to individuals eligible under different funding streams more easily and with fewer coordination and duplication of effort problems.

Another key feature of First Coast Workforce Development Board is its organization model. The board has adopted the Carver Governance Policy Model (<http://www.carvergovernance.com>) and has structured itself so that the board focuses exclusively on broad policy decisions. Aside from setting general parameters for its staff, the board relies upon its 33 person staff to make all day-to-day managerial decisions about how to manage the One-Stop Career Centers.

The board's policy focus sets it apart from many other regional boards, both within and outside of Florida. First Coast Workforce Development unequivocally sees business as its primary customer. The board believes that only by enhancing economic development opportunities and enticing employers to invest in the workforce can individuals' employment opportunities improve. The regional workforce investment board focuses on its business customers by providing three tiers of services to employers and by helping facilitate incumbent worker training that meets the needs of businesses. The board believes that incumbent worker training enhances economic development by offering valuable training services to business and advances the earnings potential of some workers while opening up more entry level positions as trained workers advance; consequently, the board would like to move toward providing training only to incumbent workers. The board's close and collaborative ties to local and regional economic development entities have helped further its goals to focus on business and to upgrade worker skills.

Finally, the board funds a contractor to gather detailed labor market information every year. The board disseminates this information to job seekers and employers through its website. Based on this labor market information, the board targets many of its training efforts to meet the employment needs of high demand, high wage industries within the region.

The U.S. DOL regional office serves as the federal management arm for WIA grant administration. Its functions include both monitoring and technical assistance. The regional office monitors the grantees to assure compliance with grant provisions for administration and fiscal matters. The regional office deals first with the states, but they also work with local programs to make sure that laws and regulations are properly administered at the local level. The regional office provides technical assistance at state conferences and workshops, often at the request of the states. In particular, the regional office offered technical assistance on the role of local boards during the early days of WIA implementation.¹⁵

One source of concern is that several substantive statewide waiver requests to U.S. DOL were denied. In particular, the state has tried several times to obtain permission to devolve Wagner-Peyser Act funds, activities, and hiring to local boards, and the state has also asked the federal government for permission to reallocate funds more often than is currently permitted by the U.S. DOL.¹⁶

CLM Workforce Connection

The regional workforce development board for Citrus, Levy, and Marion counties of Florida (Region 10), is referred to as the CLM Workforce Connection or CLM. This region consists of three largely rural counties in the central part of the state, with Ocala the largest city. Some of CLM's distinguishing features stem from the Florida legislature's consolidation of major workforce development funding streams.

The One-Stop Career Centers in Region 10 are operated by a nonprofit corporation established to run the centers. One-Stop Career Centers in Region 10 are tailored to serve different types of customers. For example, there are "full service" centers that serve universal job seekers, welfare clients, and displaced workers at the site of the former unemployment insurance office. The board also maintains a new One-Stop Career Center with the look of a temporary employee agency targeted at "professionals" in a strip mall and only offers core services on-site. This center has evening and weekend hours to better meet the needs of employed workers searching for a better job. Other One-Stop Career Centers are located in a mall kiosk, at an affordable housing site, at a county government building, and at a community college.

Collaboration is a major focus of CLM. Every board member, person on the staff, business owner, and service provider we interviewed mentioned the board's dedication to fostering collaboration among the board, the community college, and vocational educational facility, economic development corporations, and the juvenile justice system.

CLM partners with the local school boards in two innovative programs. In one of these programs, the board financed two alternative educational options for youth who chose to leave the traditional educational path so they could earn a high school degree. The board also provides 34 mini-computer labs for career planning in local high schools that both WIA-eligible and non-eligible youth access.

CLM also partners with a community development corporation (CDC) to run a training program with Dollar General, a national retail chain. The CDC staffs the Dollar General exclusively with welfare employment and training customers who are trained on-site for several months before graduating from the program.

The regional workforce investment board has also collaborated with private temporary staffing agencies that originally were very antagonistic to the workforce investment system. At least once a week an employee of a local temporary staffing agency interviews and hires WIA clients on-site at a One Stop Career Center.

Finally, to ensure the level of service the One-Stop Career Centers provide is consistently high, the regional workforce investment board instituted a "mystery shopper" practice. Periodically, non-WIA customers enter One-Stop Career Centers, pretend to need WIA services, and document the quality of the help they receive.

C. Governance and Decentralization

Florida has increasingly decentralized authority for developing its workforce system. For example, the state has requested a waiver to allow Wagner-Peyser Act funded services to be provided by local staff rather than by state merit staff. State board members believe that the relationship between state and local control of workforce policy direction is balanced, but that there is some tension over control. For example, the state retains authority over the chartering of local boards; distributing most funds other than WIA formula pass-through dollars; and setting minimum standards for One-Stop Career Centers, eligible training providers, and programs. Local boards have significant flexibility within those parameters, including oversight of local governance structure, selection of providers, local accountability, and contracting processes. Although not generally an important issue, tensions sometimes arose when local desires conflicted with state policies. One example, described below, is that local boards have resisted state efforts to “brand” One Stop Career Centers with a common name throughout the state.

The state WIB was initially grandfathered in 1999, but new appointments were made in 2000. Members of the legislature may make an unlimited number of nominations to the governor for membership. The terms of these “new” appointees technically expired as of June 2002, but under state law the incumbents retain authority until replaced by new appointments. Reappointments and new appointments will be made imminently. State law requires that the state board includes at least one member who represents the licensed nonpublic postsecondary educational institutions authorized as ITA providers. One member must be from the staffing service industry. Private sector representatives must constitute a majority of board membership, but those representatives of business appointed to the board may not provide workforce services, and at least half of the business appointments must represent small businesses. Finally, five organized labor representatives are required. The governor considers minority, gender, and geographical representation when appointing representatives to the board. The full state board meets four times per year.

Many local boards were initially grandfathered in 1999, but some changes were made because they were required to conform to 2000 state legislation changes. The local boards are being monitored to assure compliance.

Organized labor has often served as the “loyal opposition” or counterpoint on many issues. For example, organized labor has historically objected to “privatization” and decentralizing the employment of Wagner-Peyser Act employees. However, organized labor has provided valuable links to apprenticeship programs, particularly at the local level.

Educators have contributed to state and local boards through membership on the state and local boards and by serving as staff to local boards, administrative/fiscal agents, One-Stop Career Center operators, and partners in special initiatives such as Operation Paycheck (described below).¹⁷ Florida’s educational system does not perfectly geographically align with its local workforce system; however, Florida’s 10 state

universities, 28 community colleges, and 67 school districts, as well as private universities and private postsecondary institutions do collaborate with the 24 local boards and with One-Stop Career Centers.

Governors have supported local empowerment and flexibility for workforce development programs. Even with a change from the Chiles (democrat) to Bush (republican) administration in the late 1990s, the administrative preference for local flexibility and power has not noticeably changed. The governor has allocated incentive bonuses to influence local board policies and initiatives. The state board uses both long term and short term incentive payments to local Workforce Investment Boards, using WIA, TANF, and Wagner-Peyser Act funds.

State boards have documented a significant performance gain over three years in both long term (e.g., WIA standards) and their short term measures (discussed later in this report).

Section III. Workforce System Planning

A. State Strategic Planning

Major contributors to the state five-year strategic plan included the WIA design committee of WFI (the state WIB); the 24 local boards; other state agencies, particularly the Department of Education and the Department of Children and Families; and legislative staff. Public workshops also provided important input.

The WIA planning process varies for Title I youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs. Most planning is channeled through WFI's three standing councils that focus on high skills/high wages (mainly adult and displaced workers), better jobs/better wages (mainly low-income adults and TANF recipients), and first jobs/first wages (mainly youth). WFI also prepares an additional, more comprehensive annual "workforce strategic plan" as required by state legislation. That plan incorporates WIA elements, but it also encompasses all programs under WFI's authority and addresses policy, planning, accountability, and responsibility issues, with a strong emphasis on economic development strategies.

The state submitted a unified plan in the sense that it covers all WIA Title I programs, Wagner-Peyser Act programs, the related U.S. DOL special programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Job Corps, Veterans' Employment and Training programs, etc. It does not include the WIA Title II programs for adult education, vocational rehabilitation, or TANF. Separate plans for Perkins (vocational education), vocational rehabilitation, and TANF are still prepared and submitted respectively to the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, but they are coordinated with the AWI and WFI for compatibility with the five-year WIA plan. Currently, there is no plan to unify further in a way that would require more complex, formal multi-agency sign off at the state level

and sequential review by multiple federal agencies. WFI does not see any advantage to further unification and anticipates it would involve many delays and disadvantages.

State board members believe that a more formally “unified” plan would end up being little more than the “big staple” approach due to the differing instructions from the approving federal agencies. However, staff at AWI believes that there might be advantages to putting TANF in the unified plan. Furthermore, AWI staff believes that the joint efforts necessary to create and modify plans lead to collaboration and communication in itself and encourages feedback from local boards.

The state plan has been modified three times so far, and a fourth modification has been prepared and is pending federal approval. Most of the changes have been required by changes in state law (e.g., changes in board membership requirements and state law for ITAs) or in the state board policies (e.g., de-obligation/re-obligation, employed worker training). The state board has also used the modification process to request waivers, such as exemption from the state merit staffing requirement for providing Wagner-Peysner Act services.

The state plan identifies responses to potential business cycle downturns, generally in the section dealing with rapid response. The currently pending modification describes some steps and special services provided in response to the 9/11 events and the general downturn in economic activities, notably featuring Operation Paycheck .

Operation Paycheck

In response to the events of September 11, 2001, Governor Jeb Bush announced Operation Paycheck, a new program to quickly retrain Floridians who lost their jobs in industries affected by the economic downturn. In Florida, these industries included tourism related jobs in restaurants and hotels, air transportation, and healthcare. WFI, AWI, the Department of Education, and the Division of Community Colleges partnered to create this innovative program. The program aimed to quickly augment the existing skills of dislocated workers so they could find jobs in expanding sectors of the economy. Individuals applied for Operation Paycheck training through the One-Stop delivery system.

After one year, local boards had authorized 8,811 customers to receive training under Operation Paycheck. Approximately 70 percent of Operation Paycheck trainees enrolled in high tech training. Over 41 percent of Operation Paycheck participants enrolled in courses at private training entities, 26.9 percent enrolled at community colleges, 20.3 percent enrolled at school district vocational/technical centers, and 11.6 percent enrolled in public universities. Florida suspended new enrollments to the popular Operation Paycheck program on July 15, 2002 due to funding constraints. Local board members reported that the popularity of the Operation Paycheck program helped expose more Floridians to the One-Stop delivery system.

(Sources: Partners’ Report, Workforce Florida, Inc. Fall 2002 and www.operationpaycheck.com)

Under WIA, there has been a greater interest in seeing an expansion of incumbent worker training. WFI, the state board, is encouraging local RWBs to broaden services to employed workers using local WIA adult funds, patterned after the highly successful and popular state-administered Incumbent Worker Training Program, which is funded with state-level 15 percent set-aside funds.

B. Local Planning

Local boards and staff are encouraged to review and comment on the state plan, and most do. AWI staff writes the plan with guidance from WFI. After AWI prepares the plan, it goes to WFI for approval. Local representatives extensively participated in developing the initial five-year plan and strategies for early WIA implementation in 1999. Less feedback has been provided on the modifications, despite invitations for comments, primarily because most of the modifications were based on changed state law. Local boards are currently revising their own plans to ensure that they support the state plan.

Local youth councils have participated in and influenced state strategic planning, but the state board has noted wide variations in the levels of activity and responsiveness among the 24 local youth councils. The state First Work/First Wages Council, which serves as the state youth council, helped provide issues and reactions to the first strategic plan in particular.

C. Summary Analysis

The strategic plan is viewed more as a guiding document than a compliance driven exercise, but it does satisfy federal paper expectations. For example, the waivers being requested in modification four were the product of extensive policy deliberations and have direct and significant impact on local resources and service delivery. The strategic plan also reflects the state's views on the de-obligation/reallocation of funds and the proposed decentralization of Wagner-Peyser Act staff. As the administrative/fiscal WIA agency, AWI pays close attention to the strategic plan, revises it when needed, and tries to keep it current. AWI staff describes the plan as a "living document." Because the plan leaves many decisions to the local boards, its flexibility and latitude strengthen the power of local boards. Planning under WIA differs significantly from planning that occurred under JTPA because the plans developed under JTPA were more "cookie cutter" plans than true strategic planning exercises.

State board members believe that the strategic plan is mainly directed at an audience of federal compliance reviewers, and state/local workforce professionals — definitely not the general public. For that reason, WFI also produces a separate annual report to the legislature that attempts to provide a more digestible, non-technical description of workforce structures, services, and outcomes.

Section IV. System Administration: Structure and Funding

A. Overview

Across Florida, local boards have administrative authority over WIA Title I programs, Welfare-to-Work formula funds, welfare transition programs (workforce development funds in the TANF program), Food Stamp Employment and Training, Job Corps recruitment, and Wagner-Peyser Act funded activities. All of these services are provided through the One-Stop delivery system. AWI administers each of these programs.

The state does not require additional One-Stop delivery system partners beyond those laid out in WIA and the TANF/FSET services integrated under state law. However, since the passage of the Workforce Florida Act in 1996, legislation has strongly encouraged co-location and many One-Stop delivery system partners have been co-located since the early implementation of One-Stop Career Centers in Florida. The WFA required the WAGES (TANF employment and training) program, Florida's Welfare-to-Work initiative, and the Food Stamp Employment and Training program to participate in the state's One-Stop Career Centers. Furthermore, the state legislation prohibited these and the other mandatory One-Stop delivery system partners under WIA from operating independently from One-Stop Career Centers unless they were approved to do so by the local board. The WIA 2000 legislation re-designated the WAGES program as the welfare transition program and merged it with the One-Stop delivery system, and continued to require the Food Stamp Employment and Training program and other mandatory One-Stop delivery system partners to be approved by the local boards to operate independently.

Whether or not the partners are co-located at One-Stop Career Centers varies by local board and by One-Stop Career Center site. In one of the areas we visited, staff from the Department of Children and Families were present at the One-Stop Career Center. In the other region we visited, the local board had been unable to resolve cost-sharing issues with the Department of Children and Families, so Department of Children and Families staff was not present at the One-Stop Career Centers. Similarly, Vocational Rehabilitation had not maintained even a minimal connection to the One-Stop Career Center in one of the areas we visited. The local boards do have administrative authority for all of the required programs. The local boards have a variety of agreements with providers at the local level, which include contracts, memoranda of understanding (MOUs), and non-financial agreements.

TANF recipients who are not exempt from work requirements are required by the Department of Children and Families to report to the One-Stop Career Centers. The department's system interfaces with the One-Stop Career Center's computer system, and the center sends the letter to the client regarding reporting to the center for job assistance services. At the One-Stop Career Centers we visited, TANF recipients meet with WIA career consultants in cubicle offices at the back of the One-Stop Career Center beyond the computer labs and core-service resource areas. TANF recipients immediately receive

intensive, not core services, and although there is a strong "work first" orientation toward TANF clients in particular, One-Stop Career Center staff stress that career consultants do consider training options for TANF recipients.

Although each of the One-Stop Career Centers we visited in Florida differed somewhat in layout and provision of services, in general a job seeker who walks into the center off the street first gets greeted and counted at the front desk and then proceeds to the resource room to receive core services. They may be asked to provide their Social Security number and are registered in the Online Data Entry and Display System, which tracks Wagner-Peyser Act program recipients, if they are receiving core services. Front line staff provides new visitors to the One-Stop Career Center with a packet of information that summarizes available services, including training, education, and job fair information, and describes how to access those services. Staff helps identify individual job seekers who need additional assistance and, if they feel this is appropriate, refer them to an intensive services team. The intensive services team normally administers the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), the career scope interest inventory, and a transferable skills inventory or other tests. If clients need more services, they are counseled individually.

Individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) who are identified through the profiling process as being at risk of exhausting their benefits are required to report to the One-Stop Career Center for an orientation and eligibility review group session. Every day approximately 25 UI claimants report to one of the One-Stop Career Centers we visited to fulfill their referral to services requirement and to learn what reemployment services are provided through the center. One-Stop Career Center staff was hesitant to refer to this process as "profiling" and stressed that interactions with unemployed individuals focus more on exposing clients to available services than trying to "catch" individuals.

Several of the One-Stop Career Center directors with whom we spoke acknowledged that clients are not typically registered for WIA until they are receiving intensive services. However, clients are registered with the Employment Service, which provides the traditional core services. Moreover, staff assesses client commitment to training and getting a job before registering that individual in the WIA program because the centers do not want uncommitted individuals to be "liabilities" in terms of performance standards. Several center directors indicated that in practice the divide between core assisted and intensive services is often blurred.

B. Memoranda of Understanding and Partnership Building

At the state level, AWI develops and then negotiates an MOU with each local board regarding the workforce program services delivered by AWI staff in the One-Stop delivery system. AWI, the lead state agency, rather than WFI, the state WIB, facilitates the development of MOUs. The MOUs are negotiated separately, but the basic format is the same between AWI and each local board.

At the local level, each local board develops its own MOUs by negotiating with various local partners. Local board members embrace this role and believe that they best know their area's needs and conditions. Local boards believe they need the flexibility to negotiate MOUs that help them obtain their goals, and WFI members recognize the validity of this claim.

Both WFI members and AWI officials believe that MOUs are effective vehicles for assuring commitment to the workforce system at both the state and local level. However, local boards have found achieving collaboration with certain One-Stop Career Center partners particularly challenging. Veterans' employment and training programs and vocational rehabilitation are prohibited by statute from being totally seamless partners in the One-Stop delivery system. Local One-Stop Career Centers have also found it difficult to reach agreements on how to share program and administrative costs. To overcome obstacles to partnering, local boards have initiated round table discussions, open communications, conferences, and workshops. Monthly partner meetings help provide a forum for discussion and are fairly common. One-Stop Career Center managers also try to foster a sense of membership among staff by providing common training and signaling uniformity through common signs, etc.

In some regions, staffing agencies (temporary help firms) provide in-kind resources for workforce development at the One-Stop Career Centers. In these locations, staffing agencies "work the floor" of the One-Stop Career Center, and One-Stop Career Center operators view them as valuable resources because of their links to employers. The staffing agencies, in turn, benefit by using the One-Stop Career Centers as a source of labor for them to hire. This amicable relationship developed over time; initially staffing agencies were hostile to One-Stop Career Centers as a potential state-funded competitor. Local boards fostered collaboration through close communication with the staffing agencies.

Staffing issues and cost sharing issues have proven to be the most difficult problems to date. According to members of the lead state agency, restrictive grant regulations, based on outdated statutory language, do not allow veterans and vocational rehabilitation partners adequate funding to pay their fair share of the cost of operating One-Stop Career Centers.

The Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 and WFI policy prioritize achieving true integration over part-time co-location or even full-time co-location. In some ways, this focus on full integration has drawn attention to the more intractable differences between partners as program leaders have wrestled with resolving rather than glossing over differences. Whereas in other states where partners more typically interact sporadically, during set hours on certain days of the week, One-Stop Career Center staff in Florida are forced to "live together" in a way that forces staff and administrators to more frankly confront philosophical and procedural differences. As a result, at least in the initial phases of One-Stop Career Center operation, more tension may have arisen than in less integrated states. Over time, however, some programs, such as WIA and the

Employment Service, have integrated to a level that would not have occurred without strong state leadership and policy focus.

C. Education and Youth

Community and technical colleges were considered part of the state's workforce development system prior to WIA. Technical colleges have always been a source of short term, skills-based curricula for individuals in approved training programs. Community colleges have also been used for training, and in some cases they have served as the organization through which workforce programs were administered. WIA has made even clearer the need for all training institutions to provide curricula that align with the needs of business and the workforce. As discussed in more depth below, the requirement for the use of ITAs has not significantly affected the role of community colleges in Florida.

Universities, community colleges, and district school boards have membership on the local workforce boards and have become more aware of the potential role they can play in the employment and training arena and workforce development. The requirement for an eligible provider list (discussed below) has not significantly affected the role of community colleges and other educational institutions. Because Florida already required these institutions to report outcome data through the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), the data reporting requirements under WIA did not pose a major hurdle for Florida educational institutions.¹⁸

WIA may have slightly shifted the focus of community colleges and other educational institutions. The emphasis on economic development and demand occupations, and performance requirements that are necessary to remain on the eligible training provider list reinforce the need for education and training programs to be responsive to industry and employer needs. Many have been very responsive to the short term training needs of area employers. For example, the Florida Community College at Jacksonville recently built an advanced technology center to provide area employees with facilities for pre-service and in-service employee training. The facility was designed to meet the training needs of emerging-economy career fields identified by the Jacksonville Economic Development Commission. The community college uses the facility to provide customized training or to accommodate employer training using company trainers, curriculum, and/or equipment. Proprietary schools may have had more trouble with the provider list requirement than the community colleges because it takes six months to determine provider eligibility and get on the list. Because the Department of Education's institutions are already licensed, community colleges did not face the same wait as proprietary schools.

Early in the formation of the One-Stop Career Centers, a number of Florida's community colleges sought to become One-Stop Career Center operators. In 1996, One-Stop Career Centers in 10 of Florida's 24 local boards were operated by the community colleges. Today, only three community colleges serve as One-Stop Career Center operators. The shift to private sector involvement in the operation of One-Stop Career

Centers has been attributed, at least in part, to a report issued by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, the investigative arm of the Florida legislature.¹⁹ The report suggested that real and perceived conflicts of interest arise when community colleges serve as both the operators of and primary vendors for the One-Stop Career Centers.²⁰

In many instances, community and technical colleges are the entities that provide intensive and training services to eligible individuals who are receiving services from the One-Stop delivery system. Recently, community and technical colleges designed courses to meet short term training needs caused by a downturn in the Florida tourism and service economy after 9/11. The community and technical colleges were integral partners in implementing the program, Operation Paycheck. In Jacksonville, one innovative program for training construction workers has emerged through a collaboration between the workforce board and the community college. In response to a severe construction worker shortage in the late 1990s, the workforce board secured a grant from the state to develop an innovative alternative apprenticeship program. The program is competency based and provides a living stipend throughout the training process. The local board provides ITAs through WIA for youth under the age of 22 years that cover child care expenses, transportation costs, and a \$4 per hour stipend. Graduates from the program enter high wage jobs that local employers need to fill. Community college leaders believe that the incentives provided through the ITAs are crucial for encouraging individuals to enter high demand positions.

Adult and continuing education are linked to the workforce system at the state and local level. Many individuals receive training provided through the adult and continuing education systems as part of the individual reemployment plan and service strategy they develop along with One-Stop Career Center staff. AWI staff indicated that adult and continuing education programs are crucial in preparing individuals for work and for the requirements of subsequent training programs.

All local areas have established youth councils. Florida legislation requires the creation of a First Jobs/First Wages Council at the state level and First Jobs/First Wages Committees at the local level. Some committees evolved from the school-to-work initiative, while others were newly created. The representation of K-12 and postsecondary educators varies among areas, depending on the relationship between the One-Stop Career Center and the local schools. K-12 education is usually involved in dropout prevention programs and other programs for “at-risk” youth in this age group. The Job Corps program in Florida is very active in identifying at-risk youth and enrolling them in appropriate Job Corps programs.

In the regions we visited, the First Jobs/First Wages Committees had implemented a number of programs targeted at youth. Overall, Florida provides more workforce development services to youth aged 14 to 18 (17,420) than youth aged 19 to 21 (2,808), but older youth can also be served with adult funds. Statewide, 14,756 of the 17,420 youth aged 14 to 18 who participated in a workforce development program received tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion;

13,154 participated in paid and unpaid work experiences, 9,323 engaged in summer employment opportunities, 1,625 received adult mentoring, and 1,446 participated in comprehensive guidance and counseling. In both local areas we visited, most youth served participated in tutoring and study skills training and paid and unpaid work experiences. In one region, the First Jobs/First Wages Council focused on dropout prevention and pregnancy prevention. In the other region, the workforce board funded remedial labs in local high schools to try to help stem the dropout rate. These resources were initially only available for WIA-eligible youth, but eventually the council was able to broaden use of these resources so youth ineligible for WIA could access services because the schools provided in-kind staff resources. In addition, the board funded two alternative schools to help at-risk youth attain their high school degree.

Finally, in addition to offering education and training opportunities to WIA eligible adults and youth, Florida encourages its own workforce development professionals to pursue training through its Workforce Training Institute (described below).

Workforce Training Institute

The Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 authorized Workforce Florida, Inc. to create a Workforce Training Institute to offer a “comprehensive program of workforce training courses designed to meet the unique needs of . . . professionals integral to the workforce system.” The law also specifies that the training institute should offer Internet-based training modules. In 2000, Workforce Florida, Inc. awarded LearningLink, a division of the Brevard Workforce Development Board, a one-time \$200,000 grant to establish a Florida Workforce Training Institute. The grant stipulated that the Institute must be self-sustaining within one year. LearningLink had been serving as a training provider since 1995 when it received funds under the National One-Stop Learning Lab grant award from U.S. DOL.

LearningLink recently changed its name to Dynamic Works, but it continues to offer on-line learning opportunities to workforce professionals both within and outside of Florida. The mission of Dynamic Works is, “to provide training ‘just in time,’ using cutting edge technology and resources to meet the learning needs of workforce professionals.” Dynamic Works offers some training modules specific to Florida. For example, under contract with AWI, the Workforce Training Institute offers a course to upgrade basic Internet and Windows skills to help workforce professionals prepare for the introduction of the One-Stop Management Information System. Dynamic Works also offers courses that lead to three tiers of Florida Professional Certification: Florida Certified Workforce Professional I (FCWP-I) covers basic workforce professional skills, Certified Workforce Professional II (FCWP-II) includes programmatic competencies, and Certified Workforce Professional III (FCWP-III) encompasses administrative expertise. As workforce professionals complete modules leading up to certification and pass computer based competency tests, they receive certificates of completion.

(Sources: Workforce Innovation Act of 2000, Title XXXI, Chapter 445.008 (1), Partners’ Report, Workforce Florida, Inc. December 8, 2000, and www.dynamicinstitute.com)

D. State and Local Workforce Investment Board Funding Issues

WFI maintains authority over several streams of workforce funding including WIA and TANF funding for welfare transition services. Florida's total WIA allocation for PY 2000 was \$30,028,772. The additional workforce development funds that the 2000 legislation placed under WFI, including Wagner-Peyser Act, TANF employment and training, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Veterans' Employment and Training, and Food Stamp Employment and Training, total \$220,233,235. In 18 of Florida's 24 regions, TANF allocations for employment and training exceed total WIA allocations. For example, in the two areas we visited, total WIA allocations were \$8,595,088 and \$2,115,644, while TANF employment and training allocations were \$10,128,331 and \$5,710,416 respectively. Local board leaders believe that controlling both TANF and WIA funding allows them to provide more substantial and seamlessly delivered services. Florida receives federal TANF funds as a block grant, and the legislature allocates to WFI a portion of these funds for welfare transition programs and services.

Neither federal mandate nor state law establishes a formula for distributing TANF employment and training funds among the 24 regions; WFI determines the methodology for distributing TANF funds. The Workforce Innovation Act of 2000, section 445.006(4), states, ". . .the strategic plan. . .must include criteria for allocating resources to local workforce boards." Prior to passage of the Workforce Innovation Act of 2000, no ongoing formula was used to determine TANF employment and training dollars to local boards. Rather, for fiscal years 1997-98, 1998-99, and 1999-2000, the WAGES Board (whose duties were assumed by WFI under the 2000 legislation) allocated funds on "a needs based process." This process incorporated estimates of local caseloads and considered special challenges faced by the local boards and relied upon negotiation between local boards and the state WAGES Board.

The Workforce Executive Committee of the WFI worked with AWI, the Department of Children and Families, and regional boards to draft a recommended process and formula for distributing the TANF employment and training funds allocated by the legislature. The workgroup considered available relevant data including caseload, caseload decline, rate of expenditure, unemployment rate, and recent Census numbers. The workgroup then developed a position paper and presented recommendations to WFI. Officials at WFI indicated that regions that were failing to expend their Welfare-to-Work allocations were penalized in TANF employment and training allocations.

These efforts culminated in a new TANF funding formula for FY 2001-02, which will be applied to future fiscal years with allocations adjusted as needed based on annual legislative appropriations. Under the formula, each region receives a base distribution and a supplemental distribution. The base distribution totals \$100 million of the \$153.7 million appropriated for FY 2001-02 by the Florida legislature. The base is calculated on each region's relative share of funds in the prior year. The remaining \$53.7 million will be distributed to each region using 50 percent of the Food Stamp Employment and Training percentage and 50 percent of the TANF caseload percentage.

Although the State of Florida strives to maximize resources, AWI does not believe the state workforce system has sufficient resources to accomplish its mission. As evidence, they note that all eligible individuals are not being reached. Similarly, state board members believe that local workforce boards lack sufficient resources to accomplish their missions. State board members would like to adjust the formulas for distribution of youth funds to reflect more current demographic information. Board members note that the Census data used to determine the youth allocation can be a decade or more old, and reliance on it penalizes high growth states such as Florida. Board members note that, in some regions, training funds have been limited by the universal service provision of WIA. Officials at AWI note that it is a strain to provide enough training. In addition, Pell Grant issues need to be resolved to allow for effective spending for training. The problem concerning Pell Grants is mainly a sequencing concern: WIA says that Pell Grants must be used first, while Pell regulations say that WIA funds must be used first. The state board has currently told local boards to use both Pell and WIA at the same time to circumvent the inconsistency.

Wagner-Peyser Act funds cover unassisted core services as well as staff-assisted services because it is the most flexible of the available funding streams. As technology rapidly changes, meeting the cost of being up to date has created further fiscal pressures. The desire to make One-Stop Career Centers look modern has also led to higher costs, which have placed further strain on financing training.

Florida has developed a new de-obligation/reallocation policy to give the state more flexibility to shift funds to meet needs across the state. In particular, Florida now de-obligates funds twice per year from areas that are under-spending to ensure that funds are available where they are needed and being spent. Florida recently de-obligated Welfare-to-Work funds from regions that were under-spending and reallocated these funds to regions that had spent all of their Welfare-to-Work training dollars. As noted above, the state policy is not always consistent with federal policy, and the state has sought a waiver to institutionalize the process.

Many Florida businesses, workers, and communities were adversely affected by the events of 9/11. The challenge that faced Florida's workforce system was to provide supportive services to affected business owners and workers. Florida employed six main strategies to respond to the events of 9/11 and to serve as a model for the state's response to other economic events:

- Identify Florida's industries, companies, and workforce regions that are most likely to feel the impact;
- Assist local boards in significantly affected areas in responding to economic events;
- Conduct targeted marketing campaigns for workforce services available in significantly affected areas;

- Identify additional federal and state resources to provide workforce services in affected communities;
- Provide locally led reemployment and emergency assistance teams to service affected business and workers; and
- Assist former TANF recipients who have been laid off and remain eligible for welfare transition services.

Florida's WIA allocation methods have had unanticipated effects. As of July 1, 2002, the state board only was assured of one quarter's funding in July and did not know what the allocation for the remaining three quarters would be. This occurred because U.S. DOL was operating under a continuing resolution. According to state board members, the allocation of only 25 percent of anticipated annual funding for PY 2002 funds made it extremely difficult to operate under current obligation policies or to successfully budget for the upcoming year.

Section V. One-Stop Career Center Organization and Operations

A. Overview

Local workforce boards designate the operators of local One-Stop Career Centers; these centers must meet basic minimum requirements set by the state board. Florida has not developed a model One-Stop Career Center design. There is considerable local flexibility in this regard. WFI holds the local boards accountable, but WFI sets goals and grants local areas flexibility on how to meet the goals; when local areas fail to achieve their goals, the state board intervenes. For example, when one local board consistently performed poorly, the state had the director of another local program take a leave of absence and straighten out the wayward board.

Whether or not One-Stop Career Centers should be branded statewide is a contentious issue in Florida. The state board recently pursued the possibility of branding and hired a consultant. Local boards argue that it might have been possible to establish a state brand when the One-Stop Career Centers first opened, but they assert that they have invested heavily in establishing their own brand identity. In the face of heated opposition from local boards, the state board has backed off for now in its efforts to brand local One-Stop Career Centers, but the issue is likely to resurface as a source of local/state friction.

The Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 requires the state board to incorporate a workforce marketing plan into its strategic plan. The workforce marketing plan must outline how the state will educate individuals inside and outside the state about the employment market and employment conditions within the state. This marketing plan must include strategies to: (1) distribute information to secondary and postsecondary education institutions about the diversity of business in the state, specific clusters of businesses or business sectors in the state, and occupations by industry which are in demand by employers in the state; (2) distribute information about and promote use of the

Internet-based job matching and labor market information system; and (3) coordinate with Enterprise Florida, Inc., to ensure that workforce marketing efforts complement the economic development marketing efforts of the state.

In Florida there are a range of designations for One-Stop Career Centers, including full service centers, business services centers, more professionally tailored partial service One-Stop Career Centers in retail districts, and kiosks in malls, public housing complexes, and community colleges. These One-Stop Career Center models in Florida are derived from a combination of federal requirements, local innovations, best practices, and adaptations of models from other local areas. Florida does not require that multiple “full service” One-Stop Career Centers serve each local workforce region, although nearly all of Florida’s 67 counties have at least one full-service One-Stop Career Center. The state board monitors local boards’ five-year workforce investment plans as part of state compliance monitoring visits.

The state board does not generally approve local boards to provide services directly. To date, only two local boards have been approved as direct service providers. This occurred because the service providers terminated their contracts midway through the program year. Both regions are in rural areas where there are few service providers available. Neither region will provide services during the upcoming program year.

One of the most innovative features of One-Stop Career Center design and operation in Florida is the large number of co-located services operated under local board control. In particular, by combining the funding sources of WIA and TANF training as well as Wagner-Peyser Act funds for labor exchange, Food Stamp Employment and Training, and Veterans’ Employment and Training, and giving control of those combined funds to the local One-Stop Career Centers, many local centers have achieved a high level of service integration.

B. Employer and Business Engagement

The Florida state board encourages business engagement with the workforce system as envisioned in WIA. The state has included substantial business representation on both the state and local boards. Additionally, employers who utilize the public employment system are surveyed through the customer satisfaction survey to determine if the workforce system is meeting their needs. AWI also conducted a special employers survey to determine the level of familiarity that employers have with the workforce system. This survey sought to find out who knew about the One-Stop delivery system, and who was or was not using the system and why. The state also promotes programs that train incumbent workers for upgraded positions with their current employer (see nearby box). In the near future, performance reporting on employer services will be available through the One-Stop Management Information System (OSMIS).

Employers and the business sector are actively engaged in the state board and make important contributions to the workforce system and policy and funding decision making. These members are selected for their leadership and standing in the community,

and they bring these qualities to the table. In many areas, the boards' committees are the driving forces on the board and in the community. They can be critical for support of legislation and other issues of importance to the workforce community.

Incumbent Worker Training Program

The business focus of Florida's workforce development system is exemplified in the state funded Incumbent Worker Training Program. Florida businesses can apply for grant funding to fund customized continuing education and training for employees. Funds can be used to provide direct training costs, instructors' wages, curriculum development, and resource materials associated with training but cannot be used to pay for trainees' wages or training equipment. WFI administers the program, which is designed to "effectively retain and keep businesses competitive through upgrade skills training for existing full-time employees."

The Florida legislature created the incumbent worker training program in 1999 and funded the initiative at \$633,243. The Florida Chamber of Commerce strongly supported the program. In response to high demand from employers, WFI supplemented funding by \$1 million. In the first year of the program, 46 projects in 22 counties received grants of \$974,000 that were used to train approximately 3,500 workers and create over 600 new jobs. The Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 increased annual funding to \$2 million dollars.

Florida businesses applying for an incumbent worker training grant must meet several requirements. The business must have been operating in Florida for at least one year, have at least one full-time employee, demonstrate financial viability, and be current on all state tax obligations. The law established that funding priority be extended to businesses with 25 or fewer employees, businesses located in a distressed rural area, urban inner-city area, or Enterprise Zone, businesses in qualified target industries, businesses whose grant proposals represent a significant layoff avoidance strategy, and businesses whose grant proposals would significantly upgrade employee skills.

Through the Incumbent Worker Training Program, Florida has funded customized training for over 14,000 employees working at over 240 businesses throughout the state. The program is structured to maximize employer flexibility to best meet a business's training objectives. The program allows businesses to use public, private, or its own in-house training provider (it is not necessary that the training provider be on the statewide training provider list). Funds are transmitted through grant agreements negotiated between the business and WFI. Approved training expenses are reimbursed each month.

(Sources: Workforce Innovation Act of 2000, Title XXXI, Chapter 445.003 (3a-3h); www.workforceflorida.com/wages/wfi/employers/iwt/html; Workforce Florida Strategic Plan, 2002-2005)

Florida has been aggressive in providing employer services. Three specific employer programs that have benefited the business sector and the Florida economy include the Quick Response Training program (see box below), which is funded by state general revenue for high wage, new hire training needs; the state Incumbent Worker Training program; and RWB employed worker training activities. Although the Private Industry Councils under JTPA also had business involvement, the spirit of the Workforce

Innovation Act of 2000 and WIA establish the priority emphasis and are reminders of the importance of integrating economic development and workforce development.

Quick Response Training Program

The Quick Response Training Program, established in 1993, provides grant funding for customized training for new or expanding businesses in Florida. Florida uses the customer driven program to attract new industries to the state. Since 1993, the Quick Response Training program has provided more than 57,000 new jobs through over 200 projects. Annually, businesses typically request three times as much funding as the legislature appropriates each year for the program. The program is performance based; to receive reimbursement for training funds a company must first create a new job and hire and train a new employee. The program is designed to be flexible and customer-driven; training can be provided through various educational providers or on-site at the business's plant. Acceptable instructors include professional educators, industry professionals, or company in-house staff. The Quick Response Training program tells businesses who apply for funding whether they qualify within three to five days.

Florida businesses must meet several program requirements to receive funding: businesses must produce an exportable good or service; must create new, full-time, high-quality jobs; and must need customized, entry-level skills training not otherwise available at the local level. Funding priority is given to certain businesses, including businesses:

- Creating high skill/high wage jobs;
- In qualified targeted industries;
- Providing jobs located in a distressed urban inner city area or rural area;
- Providing jobs located in an Enterprise Zone or Brownfield Area;
- Whose grant proposals display the greatest potential economic impact; and
- That contribute in-kind and cash matches.

Businesses can utilize Quick Response Training Funds to pay for instructors' or trainers' salaries, to develop curriculum, to provide textbooks and manuals, and/or to pay for materials and supplies.

(Source: www.floridajobs.org/PDG/quickquestions/fetpip/whatis.html)

One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state provide services to business, but the exact services and level of service varies among One-Stop Career Centers. Each center selects a targeted industry(ies) or business to serve and works with the appropriate business consultant to make sure its services will help businesses find employees with the skills they need. The business consultants are regional assets, employees of the regional board rather than an individual One-Stop Career Center. Efforts to market potential employees to businesses have been bolstered by state efforts to engage business by offering welfare credits and tax credits. Florida promotes the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and other programs that offer employer tax incentives and training opportunities as part of the One-Stop delivery system services available to business. Some local areas have dedicated business service centers that serve as a human resource office for local business, while others reach business through board membership, local chambers, and events such as job fairs to assist business in meeting their workforce

needs. The business services provided by one local area particularly focused on providing workforce services, Jacksonville, are described in the box below.

Business Services in Jacksonville Region

The First Coast Workforce Development Board and its staff take responsibility for marketing its services to businesses. The regional workforce board has hired business consultants to perform marketing outreach. The board is beginning to segment its business customers to better target its services. Its business level is the most basic level of service. Businesses do not need to pay for these services, which include listing any job in the One-Stop Career Center network for 30 days, helping with the wording of job announcements, and providing labor market information. The next level of service is the key account level, which board members described as the bread and butter accounts. For key account businesses, centers are responsible for screening candidates and actively sending potential employees to interviews with employers. Finally, the most intensive level of services is the premier account level, which is only granted to employers in an industry the board has targeted because it is a high demand/high wage industry. A specific business consultant serves each of these select businesses. Typically, at any given time ten or fewer employers receive key account or premier account services.

The board, rather than the One-Stop Career Center, manages business services and maintains a discrete business service center where most interactions with premier accounts take place. Occasionally, employers will reserve an interviewing room at the One-Stop Career Center site. According to one local One-Stop Career Center operator, small and medium sized businesses tend to turn to One-Stop Career Centers more frequently than do large firms.

While state direction is provided in the development and provision of business services in the One-Stop Career Centers, the ultimate design is always local. Each local area has its own plan for marketing and/or reaching its business community. Some local areas buy ads in the papers, while others buy airtime on local radio and television stations. Others rely on reputation, word of mouth, and referral from partners. Who pays for these services and how they are financed varies from region to region.

Wagner-Peyser Act funded staff is located in the One-Stop Career Centers and provide staff-assisted job referrals and other core services. The most typical point of contact between business and the One-Stop Career Centers is in the acceptance of job orders and the referral of qualified job applicants. Employer surveys reveal that only a small percentage of businesses use the One-Stop delivery system. However, the employer customer satisfaction results indicate that the majority of the employers that use the One-Stop delivery system are pleased with the services provided.

WFI has focused its efforts to diversify and upgrade the state's economy by responding to the workforce needs of the state's targeted industry sectors. These sectors have been identified by the state's economic development partnership, Enterprise Florida, Inc. The High Skills/High Wages Council was charged to implement specific training demonstration projects on information technology, initially and thereafter, for targeted industries in general, with excellent results. Many workers who have participated in

these statewide training initiatives have earned industry-recognized and validated certifications; further contributing to the overall skills of the Florida workforce. For example, last year through the Florida Plastics Learning Consortium, over 33 companies and 300+ workers received training and industry-recognized certifications in plastics extrusion molding. This training was accomplished statewide and enabled through satellite-based modalities. The Florida pilot program received a national award with high accolades from the plastics industry. The Better Jobs/Better Wages Council also has used its career advancement and retention training initiatives to enable persons in welfare transition or the working/needily poor to attain credentials and skills to progress up career ladders.

Florida measures the satisfaction of individual firms and the business community by administering customer satisfaction surveys more detailed than those required by AWI and soliciting other feedback from business. According to WFI members, WIA has fostered business engagement with public workforce services. WIA provides opportunities such as incumbent worker training, which business could not utilize under previous workforce programs (JTPA).

C. Operational Issues

In Florida, labor exchange activities are completely integrated in the One-Stop Career Centers. In most instances, WIA core services are provided with Wagner-Peyser Act funds. The Employment Service workers who provide these services work for AWI, the state agency responsible for administration of WIA. The local boards sometimes supplement the AWI staff with staff of a private contractor to perform labor exchange services in the One-Stop Career Centers.

One-Stop Career Centers view the influx of private labor exchange services, particularly Internet-based providers, as additional resources to offer to participants. The state board has not negotiated a formal partnership with Monster.com or with America's Job Bank. According to board members, many of the job listings downloaded from America's Job Bank are outdated, so Florida is no longer using that resource very much.

Unemployment Insurance staff is not present at the One-Stop Career Centers. Like many other states, Florida uses telephone claim centers for unemployed individuals to file new and continuing claims. AWI staff at the One-Stop Career Centers conducts employment eligibility reviews, meant to identify claimants who will likely exhaust their UI resources and may benefit from services. The role of the One-Stop Career Center for UI claimants is to provide job search assistance and training if appropriate. AWI staff believes that the introduction of UI claim centers has improved accessibility to applicants for filing claims because claims can now be filed by phone or online. The majority of reemployment services are accessed through One-Stop Career Centers. Less directly, the move to claims centers has allowed Wagner-Peyser Act staff to serve participants who want to find jobs rather than police individuals who do not. As a result, morale has improved, and the employment service system has received a "new life" of sorts.

One-Stop Career Center staff can identify UI claimants using self-directed core services. These participants are registered into the Online Data Entry and Display System and can be tracked. If UI claimants go on to receive WIA funded services, they are entered into the State Management Information System. A new system which combines registration for these and other workforce programs was being developed when field research for this report was completed.

D. One-Stop Career Center Contracting and Cost Sharing

Most One-Stop Career Center operator contracts are multiple-year contracts with an option to renew. All the contracts are performance based. The percentage of contingent funding varies, but is 15 percent or more in most regions. Local boards have used competitive contracting rather than grandfathering past operators. Turnover varies among regions, but where turnover exists it is usually associated with performance and/or cost concerns. The ease/difficulty of these transitions has varied significantly. Turnover was high initially, then settled down, and is on the rise again as certain operators are not meeting performance standards.

One-Stop Career Center operators contract extensively with third party entities, including nonprofit, faith-based, and community-based organizations. These contractors are typically national organizations, such as the YMCA or the Salvation Army. Local faith-based organizations have also won grants, but state board members worry that some of these organizations do not have the technical expertise or knowledge to meet all the requirements associated with receiving government aid.

U.S. DOL awarded a grant to WFI, AWI, and Broward County to connect faith-based and grassroots community organizations to the One-Stop delivery system.²¹ Florida received a state-level \$1,046,316 grant award. U.S. DOL also awarded a \$500,000 grant to the United Way of Brevard County located in Cocoa and a \$24,860 award to the Dominican American National Foundation of Miami.²² In addition, WFI and AWI “have established a new web-accessible Information Clearinghouse/Gateway designed to improve communications and collaboration among the workforce services community, Community-Based Organizations and Faith-Based Organizations.”²³ WFI staff designed the site, drawing upon input from the Florida Catholic Conference and the Florida Coalition for the Homeless. The gateway can be accessed through WFI’s website at www.workforceflorida.com. Governor Jeb Bush announced the new partnership between Florida’s workforce system and faith-based organizations, saying, “There is a tremendous energy and commitment in grassroots and faith-based organizations that allows them to be a driving force for improving our social fabric. We are going to enlist their help in a critical partnership between all levels of government and those grassroots and faith-based organizations who live in the hearts of their neighborhoods.”²⁴

Turnover and the subsequent transition of third-party contractors lead to some extra work for local boards, particularly the process of retraining staff. In addition, it is often difficult to maintain continuity in financial and reporting issues.

Administrative and service-related cost allocation at the One-Stop Career Centers is locally negotiated, but the state of Florida has recently contracted with a national firm to develop best practices and conduct cost allocation training. How costs are shared for operating the building and utilities for the One-Stop Career Centers varies by local board. Generally, costs are allocated according to direct labor charges or by the number of full time equivalent employees working for each program. Local boards generally allocate costs for workshops that potentially serve clients participating in programs under various funding streams differently, but many attempt to charge according to participation where this is feasible. Local boards decide how to allocate resources between core, intensive, and training services. Changes in cost sharing structures have definitely made service delivery and coordination more cumbersome than with pre-WIA structures because costs must now be allocated among three different WIA funding streams as well as the funding streams of other partners.

Section VI. Services and Participation

A. Individual Services

The most common services participants request are labor exchange services and training. The majority of participants served are from low-income families with children and other low-wage groups. In addition, WIA services are available for professional/managerial employees, though this varies by region. WFI has required each local board to delineate in its local Five-Year Workforce Investment Plan methods for upgrading the skills of existing workers in its region.

Local boards decide which means and tools One-Stop Career Center staff use for assessing client needs. There is an assessment component of OSMIS, but local boards decide which test to administer. One-Stop Career Centers provide staff-assisted counseling and referral to training as an integral part of the case management process. Local boards and One-Stop Career Center operators market One-Stop employment and training services using a variety of media advertising and through relationships with partner agencies and service providers.

For the past two years One-Stop Career Centers have targeted older workers as part of the Governor's "Profit with Experience" initiative. Local areas sometimes decide to target other specific groups. The groups targeted vary considerably, and they are identified in local five-year workforce investment plans.

The biggest barrier to enrollment in training services that AWI reported was a lack of training dollars and funding for support services.

B. Participation

In certain regions, WIA's sequencing of service provisions has led the local boards to make some individuals "jump through hoops" to get the services they need; this

problem has been more severe when training dollars were running short. At least initially, WIA's sequencing of services has encouraged more of a "work first" approach to service delivery in Florida, though local board members noted that recent guidance from U.S. DOL has seemed less "work first" focused than the boards' early interpretations of WIA.

Local boards and One-Stop Career Centers have, to a great extent, concentrated their efforts on higher level skills development and education. Where allowable, many One-Stop Career Centers provide services to employed workers to support job retention and advancement. All of the local boards provide supportive services, such as child care and transportation, to help individuals obtain or retain employment. However, the mix and decision to provide those services remains a local one. Some of these services are provided through TANF funding.

The economic slowdown has affected the demand for One-Stop Career Center services. In particular, One-Stop Career Centers have provided an increased amount of services to dislocated workers. Based on AWI's review of performance outcomes, the guiding principles and provisions of WIA have contributed to better employment outcomes.

Section VII. Market Mechanisms: Their Use and Effects

A. Labor Market Information

Florida's labor market information (LMI) system supports WIA through specialized products and services. These products include localized publications, including Florida Occupational Highlights by Workforce Region, Labor Market Reviews (Supply/Demand) by Workforce Region, and Business Labor Profiles by Workforce Region. In addition, Florida LMI has developed and deployed three Internet systems: a detailed customizable retrieval system of labor market information known as Florida Research and Electronic Database (FRED); a job seeker oriented system that displays current data and allows users to link occupations to potential employers, FRED Job Seeker; and a "frequently asked questions system" known as What People are Asking that is oriented to businesses/employers and job seekers. LMI is conducting business focus groups to help improve and design this product for business customers.

Florida LMI prepares and delivers customized presentations to local workforce boards at board meetings, committee meetings, and conferences/workshops throughout Florida. Florida LMI also conducts One-Stop Career Center labor market information training utilizing case studies on a regular basis. These sessions emphasize the application and integration of labor market information publications and Internet resources available to One-Stop Career Centers.

Florida LMI has assisted the local boards in identifying the optimal site location for One-Stop Career Centers. This service consisted of mapping existing customers, both businesses and job seekers, in order to determine whether the current offices were in the

most convenient locations based on the demand for services. Florida LMI has also initiated a survey program for local workforce boards that covers many aspects of survey research. Florida LMI can determine the necessary sample size, draw a statistically valid sample, and/or provide local boards with mailing lists. In addition, Florida LMI has started conducting vacancy surveys for local boards to determine the occupations that are “hard to fill” or have “high turnover.” These surveys assist the boards in determining what occupations are in demand by the business community and what occupations to target for training programs.

Florida LMI is also starting a new survey that will supplement its existing occupational data on compensation by adding benefit data. This information will enable job seekers and businesses/employers to have a more complete picture of total compensation packages in the local area. While several local boards and One-Stop Career Center staff members we interviewed believe that the state’s labor market information products do not meet their needs, staff at AWI are very excited about Florida’s labor market information efforts. Florida LMI staff believes that the dissatisfaction of some local boards results from a misunderstanding of what labor market information is and the types of data that can be produced.

B. Individual Training Accounts and Provider Certification

ITAs are required to be used for most training, regardless of the aptitude and qualifications of the participants. Local boards have the option of setting dollar limits on the amounts of ITAs, and the service providers used must appear on the State Eligible Training Provider list. In addition, local boards are required to train for high wages/high demand positions. In Florida, selection of a training provider is almost always a guided choice rather than a pure voucher.

ITAs have been used extensively in Florida. At least 50 percent of local service expenditures were provided through ITAs. Customized training and on-the-job-training are not counted in the denominator or numerator of this calculation. One problem with measuring the performance of providers for the ITAs is that performance is tracked by individual program rather than for the provider as a whole. Because there are often few participants in a particular program, it is difficult to obtain reliable information about the performance of the providers. Local board members also indicated that funding ITAs on a year to year basis makes it difficult to provide continuous service to clients. Local board members would like to be able to obligate funds for ITAs in upcoming years as a type of escrow account to ease this difficulty.

Retention Incentive Training Accounts (RITAs) are available so former welfare recipients can access up to \$5,000 to pay for additional training while they work. Board members acknowledged that recruiting working, low-income mothers can be difficult even with strong incentives for training since they are already overwhelmed with responsibilities.

As part of the provider certification process, providers are added to local lists under locally developed procedures. The state list is a compilation of the local lists. There are three criteria that providers must meet to be added to the state list: (1) the training must be for a high demand job, (2) the provider must be licensed, (3) the provider must provide follow-up data to FETPIP. This program is described in more detail in the following paragraph. An individual can access the eligible training provider list on the web at <http://ften.labormarketinfo.com/>. Information on WIA approved training providers and performance is available at this site. One of the key challenges in using these provider certification procedures has been that the performance data are not available soon enough to be useful.

The Florida Department of Education administers FETPIP. This automated system collects, maintains, and disseminates placement and follow-up information on individuals receiving education, training, or services from participating agencies and organizations. This process is known as "record linkage" because data on individuals is matched across organizations to paint a full picture of the individual's educational and workforce outcomes. Since FETPIP was established 1988, the program has helped to encourage program accountability in Florida. FETPIP collects information on the educational histories, placement and employment, military enlistments, and other measures of success of former participants in Florida's educational and workforce development programs. According to the WFI website, "FETPIP provides aggregated outcomes in an accurate, timely, and cost effective manner."²⁵

In Florida, the use of ITAs and minimum standards for service providers has not affected the mix of service providers in the state. Community and technical colleges have been included on the State Eligible Training Provider List, and because the community and technical colleges were already reporting data through FETPIP, the new reporting standards have not proved additionally burdensome or acted as a disincentive.

C. Performance Standards and Incentives

Florida has been a leader in going beyond the performance management required by federal programs. The state has developed its own measures and standards to fill in what it perceives to be deficiencies in the federal systems. Consequently, Florida has many more performance measures than most states.

As in many other areas, the legislature has been a major factor in the development of the performance management system. Legislation enacted in 1996 required the state to develop a three-tier performance management system to cover all job training, placement, career education, and other workforce programs: agency-specific measures for the bottom tier, program-specific measures for the second tier, and statewide performance measures for Tier 1. Tier 3 measures include process/output measures including those measures mandated by federal programs. Examples of Tier 3 measures include caseloads for specific programs and WIA performance measures for the state and local boards. Tier 2 measures are grouped according to program and/or targeted populations and provide measures uniquely relevant to the particular group. Examples include continued

education status for youth programs and reduction in public assistance dependency for TANF recipients and other low-income individuals. Tier 1 measures are broad economic measures universally applicable to almost all workforce-related programs, such as entered employment, job retention, and earnings. Tier 1 measures provide a system of measures for evaluating the success of workforce services. The enactment of WIA in 1998 added additional performance requirements for a number of workforce development programs.

Although the 1996 state legislation and the 1998 federal WIA legislation led to the establishment of a large number of performance measures, these measures did not provide performance feedback in a timely manner. Most importantly, it takes at least six months in Florida to obtain the UI wage record data that is used for many of the WIA measures. Consequently, the state has developed various short term reports using administrative data to monitor outcomes and performance while awaiting UI data. These measures, including the AWI monthly management report and particularly the “Red and Green Indicator Matrix,” are used extensively by state and local boards in an attempt to gauge “system” performance. (See example Red and Green Report at www.workforceflorida.com/wages/wf/news/rgr.html.)

The Red and Green Report was developed by the state with input from two working groups representing state and local agencies, regional boards, and other interested parties. The report derives its name from the fact that for each measure used, regions that score in the upper quarter are marked in green, and those in the bottom quarter are marked in red. Regions in the middle half are in white. The report enables the state officials and others to identify regions that are consistently high or low performers in that quarter. The report currently has 17 measures, and it captures performance for TANF participants (three measures), WIA adults (three), WIA dislocated workers (two), WIA youth (two), Wagner-Peyser Act (four), unemployment compensation (one), and customer satisfaction for participants and employers (three). Customer satisfaction is measured through employer and WIA participant surveys.

The addition of state-level performance standards under WIA has increased local boards’ awareness of their performance requirements; local boards often competitively compare their performance with that of other boards. The local boards are also knowledgeable of the requirement to meet or exceed standards.

WIA no longer requires local-level performance adjustments, and Florida does not employ regression models or adjustments to performance standards. Some adjustments are made based on local conditions, such as regional wage rates (adjusted to the Florida Price Level Index), but these are negotiated individually with the boards.

Negotiation between Florida and U.S. DOL on performance standards has been limited. Rather than negotiate, U.S. DOL has come to the state with standards that are essentially nonnegotiable. The state has established performance standards among its local boards each year between AWI and WFI leadership. Using baseline data and federal and state performance standards, AWI management staff meets annually with

WFI staff to discuss performance standards for the state. AWI staff then meets with local boards to negotiate local WIA standards. (Under JTPA, regression analysis was used to determine JTPA standards with little negotiation with local Private Industry Councils.)

Florida interprets the WIA statute as specifying that states should first negotiate standards with their local boards and use those negotiated standards as the basis for negotiation between the state and the federal government. This is contrary to what has occurred in Florida in the past (and other states as well), but the state is hopeful that implementing a “bottom up” negotiation of performance standards starting with the local boards will lead U.S. DOL to be more inclined to negotiate reasonable standards.²⁶

Florida uses incentive funds to enhance local programs and to increase services to participants. Incentive funds are distributed according to funding streams/programs earning incentive dollars. AWI, in coordination with WFI, has developed a formula for allocating incentive funds for TANF, WIA, and Wagner-Peyser Act programs. Under the formula for TANF funds, each local board receives a base allocation which represents the amount each local board would receive in the theoretical scenario where all performance was equal. In calculating this theoretical base allocation, one-half of the funds available for performance base incentives are distributed to the local boards based on their relative share of the statewide TANF cases served in the fiscal year. The remaining half is distributed to the local boards based on equal shares of the statewide allocation.

Of the funds set aside for incentives, half are awarded to local boards that meet or exceed their negotiated goal for a particular measure. Award amounts are determined according to base allocations, considering each measure separately, with each measure allocated an equal share of available funds. The remaining half of TANF incentive funds is awarded as a bonus to those regions whose performance is in the top quartile, and is distributed in equal amounts without regard to caseload or relative share of federal appropriation. The top quartile consists of the six boards with the highest performance on an individual measure. AWI staff believes that local boards and service providers are aware of incentive policies and the rewards they can accrue.

For WIA incentive funds, the base allocations per eligible local board consist of two parts: one-half of the performance funds are distributed to the local boards based on their relative share of the WIA Title I allocation, while the remaining half is distributed to the local boards based on equal shares of the federal allocation. The rest of the incentive calculation/distribution process is the same as the TANF funds process explained above. Similarly, the method for establishing the base allocation and final incentive distribution for Wagner-Peyser Act funds follows the formulas detailed earlier.

Section VIII. Information Technologies in the One-Stop Career Centers

Florida is not planning to use the U.S. DOL management information system. Instead, Florida is developing the web-based OSMIS. The new system will integrate all workforce programs, both financial and program data, including employer services, under

one application. OSMIS will be a single system for eligibility determination and workforce programs.

Currently, the degree to which One-Stop Career Centers capture and track information for persons using self-directed services varies by local area. It is possible to track when clients receive employment services; however, local One-Stop Career Centers do not track users of unassisted labor market information and job search software. Florida only uses swipe cards for TANF services. The state is piloting the use of electronic fund transfers for unemployment compensation. State law encourages the development of a joint electronic benefit transfer for TANF and unemployment compensation.

While Florida uses distance learning and video conferencing for staff training and other meetings, One-Stop Career Centers do not systematically offer customers distance learning, but do allow use of One-Stop Career Centers to access distance learning. However, the statewide eligible training provider list will soon have the University of Phoenix's distance programs. Similarly, there is little or no telecommuting for One-Stop Career Center services. However, many One-Stop Career Center services, including access to labor market information, are available on the web. As noted earlier, the Florida Plastics Learning Consortium project, funded through the Incumbent Worker Training program, utilized satellite-based training modalities to deliver skills upgrade training to workers in the plastics industry.

Individuals who are not computer literate are offered a variety of other media for receiving services. Many One-Stop Career Centers post job boards and provide other "low-tech" means for providing customer services. AWI staff also noted that using computers with assistance from One-Stop Career Center staff helps some customers gain valuable skills.

Kiosks are used in some communities to reach target areas and populations. WFI awarded state demonstration funds to the Florida Space Research Industry to develop an online training modality to upgrade skills in Florida's space industry. The primary mode of providing initial and continuing professional education to the workforce service delivery staff and policymakers is through online courses developed and offered by Dynamic Works Institute (formerly LearningLink) which has been designated and provided start-up funding to serve as the state's workforce training institute.

Section IX. Summary Observations and Reauthorization Issues of Special Concern

WFI members believe that WIA has definitely influenced states and localities to become more systemic and "big picture" oriented in their thinking about workforce development. Under WIA, they believe that anything that helps people get to work, stay at work, and succeed at work is part of "workforce." WIA has also helped strengthen economic development linkages. AWI staff believes that the 1996 Workforce Florida Act and WIA legislation have three themes that have led to a more systemic focus: (1) workforce reengineering, (2) welfare reform, and (3) economic development

reengineering. While Florida formed local boards in 1996 under the Workforce Florida Act, proposed changes to national workforce development legislation stimulated the legislature to consider changes to the Florida system. A critical mass of representatives in the Florida legislature saw the possibilities in linking economic development, workforce development, and welfare.

State board members believe that under WIA local boards have become catalysts for local strategic planning and economic development relating to workforce issues. The state board believes that Florida has had tremendous success in empowering the state and local boards in prioritizing services and funding.

State board members list several prominent examples of particularly innovative workforce development policy and service delivery: incumbent worker training, Operation Paycheck, linkages with economic development efforts, emphasis on skills upgrades, and requiring three "councils" on the state board and corresponding committees for each local board. AWI staff believes that the full integration of welfare/workforce development under one agency has helped provide seamless service. Also innovative was adding Food Stamp Employment and Training (by contract) and the Welfare-to-Work program. The full integration of the Employment Service and WIA has proven instrumental in coordinating workforce development.

Some workforce development professionals we interviewed in Florida are advocates of block grants to states. They would like to turn Perkins (vocational education) money to workforce training and would like to develop the relationship between Pell Grants and WIA so the two programs would not be in conflict.

Some partners have resisted forming a relationship with One-Stop Career Centers. Vocational rehabilitation and veterans' programs in particular have proven problematic in the One-Stop delivery system environment because they are required to serve specific populations and face funding restraints. State board members insist that veterans' services belong at the One-Stop Career Centers and could work effectively if funding silos did not create an artificial barrier. Board members are less sure if vocational rehabilitation will ever fit the workforce culture.

In Florida, state board members believe that it is sometimes difficult to meet statutory requirements for board membership. They report that at the state level attendance is low and the board may be too large, and indicated that official size and attendance may be inversely related (because members feel less of a personal stake, feel their contribution will not be missed, etc.) AWI staff believes that the board functions well despite its size because the executive committee membership is more limited, but mentioned that it is challenging to keep good private sector members at the table, particularly on large local boards.

State board members believe that currently the number of required performance measures burdens local workforce systems. They note that Florida has tried to standardize outcome measures, but that federal definitions and regulations have made this

impossible. State board members would like to see federal agencies establish common measures and definitions across programs.

State board members believe WIA can better serve the employer community by providing quality, eligible referrals to job openings, assisting in the recruitment of new workers, providing timely, relevant, and easy-to-access labor market information, and providing incumbent worker training so that workers can advance within organizations. According to board members, a key to meeting these objectives will be providing more information and services through unobtrusive electronic access to employers and job seekers. Board members would appreciate technical assistance on providing such services.

According to board members, the WIA program can better serve individuals with low skills and low income by providing ongoing opportunities for career advancement through skill upgrades, training, and referral to new and better employment opportunities.

Finally, board members note that the strengths of WIA include the power and authority vested in local boards. However, they also note that the benefits of *statewide* programs may be diminished by WIA's focus on decentralization and local discretion.

AWI staff believes that the main strength of WIA is the One-Stop Career Center concept. AWI staff also believes that local flexibility is a major strength of WIA. However, AWI staff believes that a major drawback of WIA is that providing statewide responses to statewide needs is difficult under the program. A weakness in Florida's system is the turnover of service providers, which affects customer service quality and consistency.

Despite these potential drawbacks, Florida has been highly innovative state in developing and implementing workforce policy, and has achieved a level of true integration in One-Stop Career Centers and focus on business customers.

Acronyms (all refer to Florida state and local entities unless otherwise indicated)

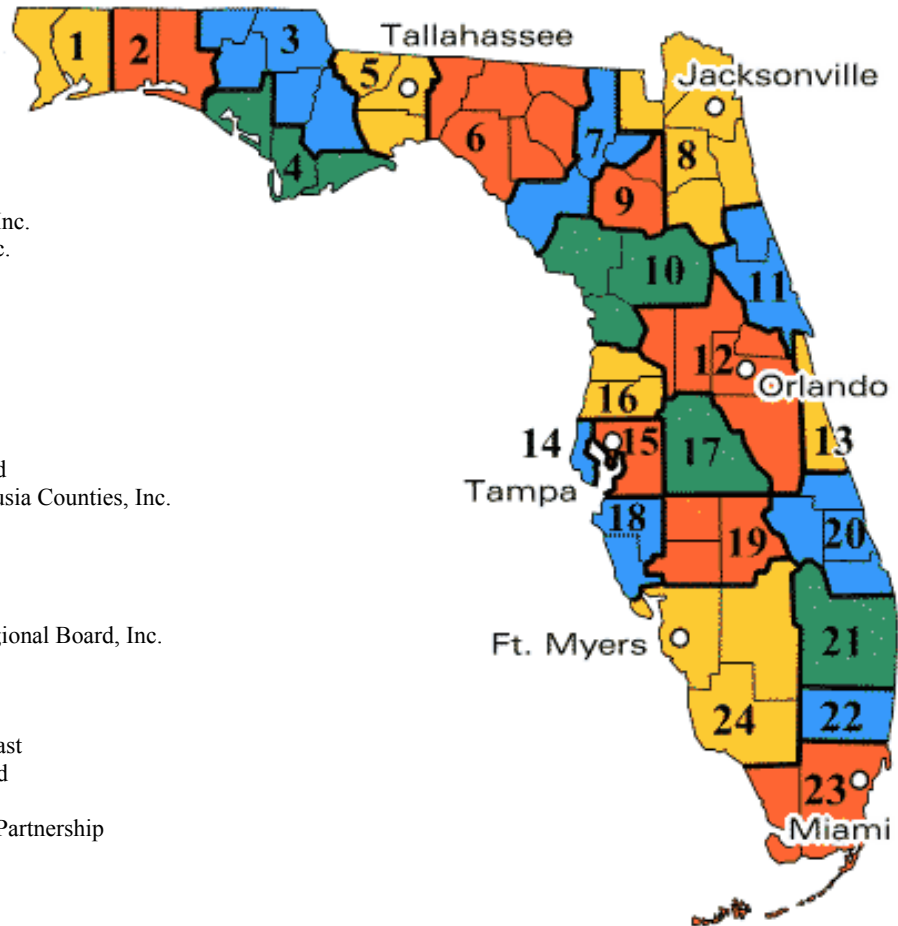
AWI	Agency for Workforce Innovation
CLM	Citrus, Levy, and Marion counties' regional workforce board
DLES	Department of Labor and Employment Security
EFI	Enterprise Florida, Inc.
FETPIP	Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program
OSMIS	One-Stop Management Information System
RWB	Regional Workforce Boards
WAGES	Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency
WFI	Workforce Florida, Inc.

APPENDIX A

Figure 1: Map of Florida's Workforce Development Regions

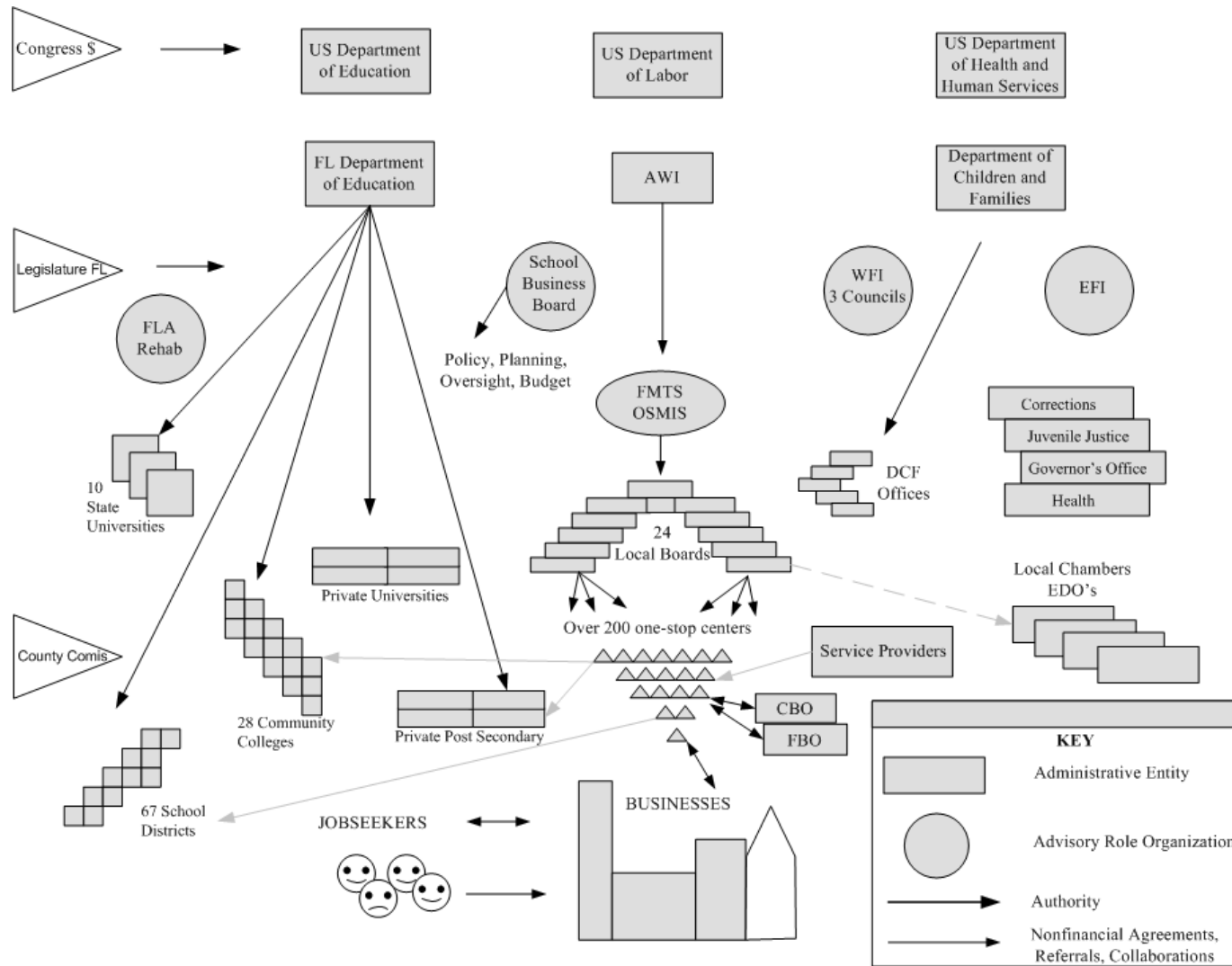
**FLORIDA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT REGIONS**

- 1 Escarosa Regional Workforce Development Board, Inc.
- 2 Okaloosa-Walton Jobs & Education Partnership, Inc.
- 3 Chipola Regional Workforce Planning Board
- 4 Gulf Coast Workforce Development Board
- 5 Big Bend Jobs and Education Council, Inc.
- 6 North Florida Workforce Development Board
- 7 Florida Crown Workforce Development Board
- 8 First Coast Workforce Development, Inc.
- 9 Alachua, Bradford Jobs & Education Partnership
- 10 Citrus Levy Marion Workforce Development Board
- 11 Workforce Development Board of Flagler and Volusia Counties, Inc.
- 12 Workforce Central Florida
- 13 Brevard Workforce Development Board, Inc.
- 14 Pinellas Workforce Development Board
- 15 Hillsborough County Workforce Board
- 16 Pasco-Hernando Jobs & Education Partnership Regional Board, Inc.
- 17 Polk County Workforce Development Board, Inc.
- 18 Suncoast Workforce Development Board, Inc.
- 19 Heartland Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
- 20 Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast
- 21 Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board
- 22 Broward Workforce Development Board
- 23 Miami-Dade & Monroe County Jobs & Education Partnership
- 24 Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board



APPENDIX A

Figure 2: Organizational Chart of Florida's Workforce Development System



APPENDIX B

Florida Workforce Development Program Matrix and Linkages

Program/Funding Stream	One-Stop Presence	Funding Sources	Lead State Agency	Local Administrative Entity	State Agreement Mechanism	Local Agreement Mechanism
WIA Title I Adults	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
WIA Title I Dislocated Workers	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
WIA Title I Youth (19-21)	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
WIA Title I Youth (14-18)	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
Wagner-Peyser ES	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
Job Corps	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
TANF Work Program	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP/TANF	LOP
TAA/NAFTA TAA	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
Veterans E&T	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP/VET	LOP
Food Stamp E&T	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP	LOP
WtW Formula	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	USP/WtW	LOP
Corrections	Access	State	DOC	Mixed	MOU	MOU
WIA Title II Adult Education	Access	Federal/ State	DOE	School district	NFA	MOU
Perkins Vocational Education	Access	Federal	DOE	School district, community college	NFA	MOU
WIA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation	Access	Federal	DOE	Mixed/DOE	NFA	MOU
Older Americans Title V	Co-located & Access	Federal	DOE	Mixed	NFA	MOU
Youth Opportunity Grants	Co-located	Federal	AWI	RWB	NFA	C
School-to-Career	Access	Federal/ State	DOE	School District	NFA	MOU

AWI – Agency for Workforce Innovation
 DOC – Department of Corrections
 DOE – Department of Education
 RWB – Regional Workforce Boards

USP – Unified State Plan
 NFA – Non-financial Interagency Agreement
 LOP – Local Operating Plan
 MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
 C – Contract

APPENDIX C

Brief Administrative Timeline of Florida's Workforce Development System

1984 – Florida establishes Florida's Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), which allows researchers to use UI and program data to track education and training program results.

1989 – Florida Chamber of Commerce issued a Cornerstone Report directed at reforming the way economic development was accomplished in Florida. The report called for establishing public/private partnerships to direct economic development toward higher value-added industries and services.

1992 – Florida Legislature created Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI), a public/private partnership between state, business, government, and education sectors dedicated to expanding Florida economic development.

1994 – The Florida Legislature established a workforce affiliate called the Jobs and Education Partnership responsible for evaluating and coordinating workforce development activities and three programs: Quick Response Training, Occupational Forecasting, and Performance Based Incentive Funding for postsecondary education.

1995 – The governor directed the Jobs and Education Partnership to take a leadership role in redesigning the state's workforce development system, particularly in anticipation of possible federal block grant legislation. In addition, 20 economic development leaders helped determine the appropriate geographic groupings of one or more counties for the workforce development system (without breaking up vocational education service delivery areas).

1996 –

- Governor approved 25 designated service delivery areas (there are now 24) and 24 Title III substate areas.
- Workforce Florida Act of 1996 required the chartering of the new Regional Workforce Investment Boards by July 1, 1996, abolished several preexisting state boards, established three tiers of outcome measures, and limited administrative expenditures to ten percent. Jobs and Education Partnership is designated as the State Job Training Coordinating Council.
- The legislature enacted WAGES (Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency) in October, a program to reduce welfare dependence for AFDC/TANF recipients, under a new state-level WAGES Board.
- Florida abolished the Department of Commerce and delegated economic development responsibility to EFI.

1999 – Florida opted for early implementation of WIA, primarily to take advantage of greater flexibility in the use of federal job training dollars, specifically including incumbent worker training.

2000 –

- The Florida legislature consolidated the funding streams of TANF, WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Welfare-to-Work, Veterans' Employment and Training Services, and Job Corps recruitment in Senate Bill 2050.
- The state placed all Employment Service employees under the local boards' control.
- Workforce Florida Inc. separated from EFI to serve as the policy arm of the workforce system.

Source of Information: Workforce Florida, Inc. State of Florida Strategic Five-Year Plan, pp. 7-9.

Notes

¹ Amy MacDonald Buck was affiliated with Johns Hopkins University when this case study was prepared. Ms. Buck is currently employed by the U.S. General Accounting Office.

² Workforce Florida Strategic Plan, 2002-2005, page 2-9.

³ Workforce Innovation Act of 2000. Title XXXI, Chapter 445.007 (7a – 7b).

⁴ The state of Florida wrote into its state plan that it will de-obligate funds twice annually, and wishes that federal regulations would permit this.

⁵ The Region 8 board, however, would like to focus all of its training on incumbent workers.

⁶ Workforce Florida Strategic Plan, 2002-2005.

⁷ Workforce Florida Strategic Plan, 2002-2005, page 3-1.

⁸ Federal law and regulations require Wagner-Peyser Act services to be delivered by state government employees and personnel acts may not be subrogated to local entities in accordance with 20 CFR 262.216.

⁹ Workforce Florida Strategic Plan, 2002-2005, page 1-2.

¹⁰ Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc. March 2001, page 4.

¹¹ Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc. March 2001, page 4.

¹² Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc. March 2001, page 5.

¹³ Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc. December 2001, page 1.

¹⁴ Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc. December 2001, page 1.

¹⁵ Interview with Regional Administrator for Region III (Atlanta).

¹⁶ U.S. DOL indicates that federal law waiver authority does not extend to Section 7(a) activities under the Wagner-Peyser Act.

¹⁷ Operation Paycheck was a state response to the loss of tourism related jobs after September 11. Anyone laid off after 9/11 who didn't have skills in demand was eligible for training in their school district or at their community college or voc tech institute. Use of state-level funds expedited credit and lowered fees at any of these institutions.

¹⁸ The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is administered by the Florida Department of Education. This automated system collects, maintains, and disseminates placement and follow-up information. Since its establishment in 1988, the scope of the program has expanded to include quarterly as well as annual information. The data collected concern the educational histories, placement and employment, military enlistments, and other measures of success of former participants in Florida's educational and workforce development programs. FETPIP's method of data collection replaces conventional survey-type techniques, and provides aggregated outcomes in an accurate, timely, and cost effective manner. See <http://www.floridajobs.org/pdg/quickquestions/fetpip/whatis.htm>.

¹⁹ Workforce Florida, Inc., Strategic Five Year Plan, Modification 4. page 81.

²⁰ Workforce Florida, Inc., Strategic Five Year Plan, Modification 4. page 81.

²¹Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc., Fall 2002, page 4.

²² Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc., Fall 2002, page 4.

²³ Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc., Fall 2002, page 4.

²⁴ Partners' Report, Workforce Florida, Inc., Fall 2002, page 4.

²⁵ <http://www.floridajobs.org/PDG/quickquestions/fetpip/whatis.htm>.

²⁶ The risk to the state, however, is that if the federal government fails to accept the local standards negotiated by the state with the RWBs, the state will be held to a higher standard than its components.