



Quarterly Report

Business & Education Council Meeting

May 20, 2026
12:00 pm

Employers in Attendance:

Kara Palmer-Smith (Early Learning Coalition), Adrian Wright (SBDC/Abelita LLC), Kim Anders (Prime), Trish Andrews (GDLS), Nicole Kessler (Kessler Constructio

Education Providers in Attendance:

Phyllis Watson (FAMU), BJ VanCamp (Lively Tech), Regina Browning (Leon County ACE), Calandra Stringer (TSC)

Members Absent:

Paula Deboles-Johnson (Leon County Government, Stephanie Thomas (Big Bend Cares), Luis Ramirez (CHP), Dana Dudley (BBMC/Pittman Law), Katie Harwood (Tallahassee Chamber), Jujuana Howard (Leon County Clerk of Courts), Tanyisha Thomas (Big Bend Transit), Matt Roberson (Leon County Schools), Richard Myhre (Wakulla County Schools), Michelle Gayle (Leon County Schools K-12), Shyam Mistry (Keiser University), Willie Jackson (Gadsden Technical College), Jackie Pons (Jefferson County Schools), Elijah Key (Gadsden County Schools), Steve Capenos (FSU HR), Shawn Woodin (Southern Scholarship Foundation), Cindy Bruton (Brynwood Health and Rehab), Selina Barden (Family Promise of the Big Bend),

Others in Attendance:

David Dunkle (North Florida College)

Staff: Trish Yahn, Khari Harrison, Cat Spence, Reenee Williams Walter

I. Welcome & Call to Order – Trish Yahn, staff liaison

Meeting called to order at 12:02 p.m. Each attendee introduced themselves, their role and title of their organization.

II. Labor Market Information – Trish Yahn

- Occupations with the highest demand/growth
- Occupations with the lowest demand/growth
- Unemployment rates by County in Florida (as of March 2026)

III. Rapid Response, OJT/IWT Grant Opportunities – Reenee Williams Walter

IV. Educator/Employer Discussion

Employers:

- **Nicole Kessler** *Would like to have LMI salary information provided. Trish Yahn will reach out and get a list and provide the information to her.*
- **Adriene Wright** *Schools have limitations but there really is a big need to teach basic work skills like showing up on time, coming to work when scheduled, and doing the work you are hired to do.*
- **Kara Palmer-Smith** *Shared information on Early Learning Coalitions childcare assistance programs – parents often cannot work if they don't have childcare*
- **Kim Anders** *There is a need to teach soldering skills. AMTC at TSC used to have this but they do not any longer. Dr. Calandra Stringer is passing the information along to Shelly Bell who manages the AMTC.*
- **Trish Andrews** *Need for people who are good at/want to do assembly work. Work is tedious but requires good dexterity, small motor skills and attention to detail*

Education

- **Phyllis Watson** *FAMU has applied for a grant to work with students with unique intellectual abilities. She would also like to be connected with CSCR staff who work with training providers (connection made)*
- **Calandra Stringer** *TSC is now offering two new Bachelor's programs in Management Analytics and Auditing/Compliance Management*
- **David Dunkle:** *North Florida College just approved a Bachelor's program in Elementary Education*

VI. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m. by Trish Yahn. Next meeting will be via Zoom on August 11, 2026 12:00-1:00 pm