



Workforce Boards Alignment Evaluation Phase 2

Interview Questions for Chief Local Elected Officials

January 17-19, 2023

The following information has been developed to help chief local elected officials prepare for their interviews with the EY consulting team. The purpose of the 45-minute interview is to gain their leadership perspective on the future of Florida's workforce system and the implementation of the Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act, which charges the state with reducing the number of local workforce boards. The consulting team will seek feedback through a series of interview questions, as noted below.

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) envisions a workforce development system that focuses on the needs of job seekers and businesses; and anticipates and responds to the needs of local and regional economies. WIOA requires that local workforce development boards and chief local elected officials design and govern the system regionally, align workforce policies and services with regional economies, and support service delivery strategies to address those needs.

The REACH Act charges the state with **reducing the number of local workforce development boards** to achieve three major objectives: 1.) Eliminate multiple layers of administrative entities **to improve coordination** of the workforce development system, 2.) **Establish consistent eligibility standards** across the state to improve the accountability of workforce-related programs, and 3.) Provide greater flexibility in allocating resources to **maximize the funds directed to training and business services**. CareerSource Florida is leading the Alignment Evaluation initiative in collaboration with the Governor's REACH Office.

Interview Questions

1. Would you **please introduce yourself and share your experience with the state and local workforce development system?**
2. The state of Florida is considered a leader in workforce development. Florida has 24 local workforce development boards that serve 24 local workforce development areas. Florida's workforce system focuses on continuous improvement while preparing for future economic growth. Florida businesses report a strong need for skilled talent to support their growth. Obtaining and retaining employment can be a strong vehicle for economic self-sufficiency for Floridians. **What are the current needs of businesses and job seekers in your local workforce development area?**
3. **What opportunities exist locally and regionally to improve workforce development efforts to meet the needs of those businesses and job**

seekers in your community? What actions would you like to see pursued by the state and local workforce development boards to achieve those improvements?

4. **What opportunities do you see for greater collaboration among workforce development partners and others to enhance services and resources for businesses, job seekers and workers in your community?** If you cannot think of any, are there any programs or practices from outside your local workforce development area you would like to see replicated locally?
5. WIOA asks that local workforce development areas cover common economic development areas, labor markets, and contain adequate training providers. The REACH Act asks that population and commuting patterns be considered when formulating new local workforce development areas. **What other data points should be prioritized for local workforce development board alignment and local workforce development area designation?**
6. How would you describe the **ideal future state of Florida's workforce development system** to prepare Florida's workforce and businesses for future economic growth?

REACH ACT

ALIGNMENT EVALUATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The following Guiding Principles serve as a beacon for CareerSource Florida and the extended implementation team to help guide the research and discovery process.

1

Prioritize implementation of the REACH (Reimagining Education and Career Help) Act and legislative directive to enhance alignment and accountability that follows federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) criteria.

2

Identify considerations that are responsive to the needs of job seekers and business customers while prioritizing access to services and maximizing available resources.

3

Commit to open and transparent process in every phase of work.

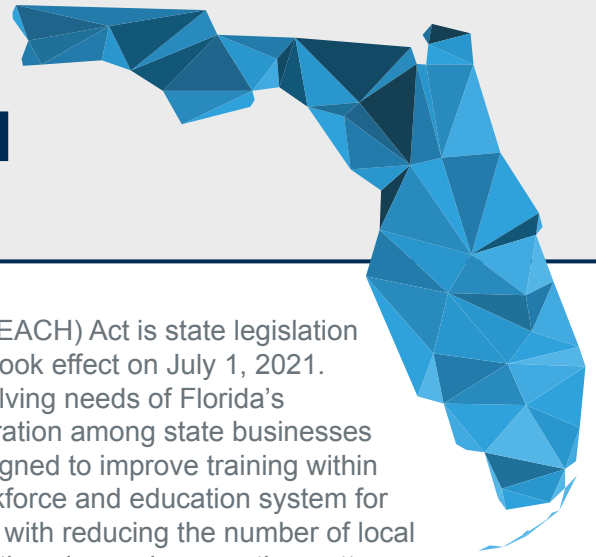
4

Engage in holistic listening to drive transformative solutions.

5

Communicate proactively to audiences and stakeholders throughout the journey.

REACH ACT ALIGNMENT EVALUATION



WHAT

The Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act is state legislation signed into law by Governor Ron DeSantis that took effect on July 1, 2021. The REACH Act was created to address the evolving needs of Florida's economy by increasing collaboration and cooperation among state businesses and education communities. The Act also is designed to improve training within and equity and access to a more integrated workforce and education system for all Floridians. The REACH Act charges the state with reducing the number of local workforce development boards based on population size and commuting patterns.

WHO

Under the REACH Act, this ecosystem for talent pipeline development includes CareerSource Florida, the state workforce development board; Florida's 24 local workforce development boards and the 100 career centers they oversee; the Department of Economic Opportunity; the Department of Education; the State College System; the State University System; and the Department of Children and Families. CareerSource Florida, in collaboration with the Governor's REACH Office, is leading the process to address implementation of the board reduction charge consistent with the law and through an inclusive process that engages all stakeholders.

WHEN

As part of the REACH Act alignment evaluation process, CareerSource Florida has contracted with EY (Ernst & Young LLP) to conduct research and discovery. This includes listening to stakeholders, analyzing data, and examining solutions implemented in other states. Initial observations from Phase One were reported to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors on June 9, 2022, with EY's [findings report](#) published on careersourceflorida.com in July. The second phase of this multi-phase initiative launched in September 2022. It includes a deeper analysis and more robust engagement with local stakeholders and customers across the state, including 150 online and in-person meetings/interviews. Alignment considerations that will affect the redesignation of local workforce development areas and the consolidation of local workforce development boards are anticipated to be provided to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors by early 2023.

WHY

The alignment evaluation process can help lead Florida's local workforce development boards in the response to the evolution in consumer preferences, workplace expectations, business needs, how people look for work, and even where and how they work. The goal is to deliver even more relevant services through system transformation and therefore improved outcomes for customers. The REACH Act emphasizes a customer-focused approach in exploring ways to better assist job seekers and businesses.

WHERE

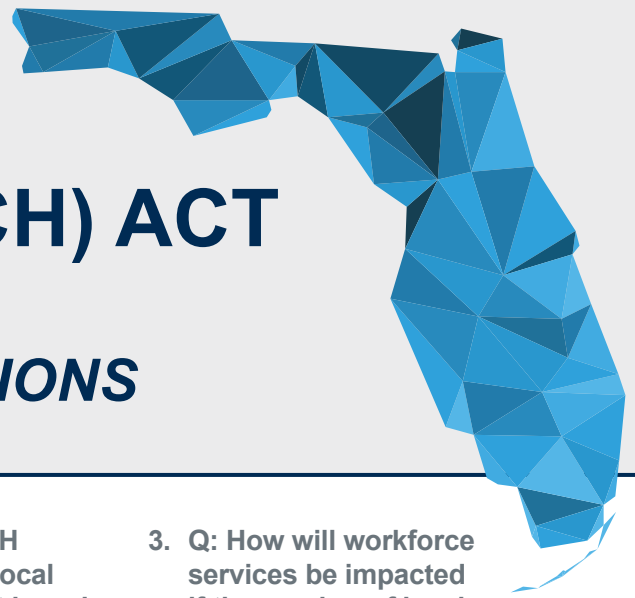
The alignment evaluation process encompasses all partners and processes across Florida, including CareerSource Florida, the 24 local workforce development boards, businesses and job seekers to ensure equity and access for all Floridians.

HOW

CareerSource Florida is committed to an open and transparent process of listening to stakeholders and finding transformative solutions for workforce development in Florida. Visit the REACH Act webpage on careersourceflorida.com for updates on the ongoing engagement process. Please complete the Alignment Feedback Form on the webpage to provide input or comments.

REIMAGINING EDUCATION AND CAREER HELP (REACH) ACT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



1. Q: What is the REACH Act?

A: The Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act is bipartisan, unanimously approved state legislation signed into law by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis on June 24, 2021. The REACH Act, which took effect July 1, 2021, was created to address the evolving needs of Florida's economy by increasing the level of collaboration and cooperation among state businesses and education communities while improving training within and equity and access to a more integrated workforce and education system for all Floridians. Among its requirements, the REACH Act charges the state with reducing the number of local workforce development boards "based on population size and commuting patterns."

The law takes an integrated, collaborative approach to strengthen partnerships and enhance access to education, training, and employment opportunities within and across key workforce, education and support services systems that are the backbone of Florida's comprehensive workforce development ecosystem.

Under the REACH Act, this ecosystem for talent pipeline development includes CareerSource Florida, the state workforce development board; Florida's 24 local workforce development boards and the 100 career centers they oversee; the Department of Economic Opportunity; the Department of Education; the State College System; the State University System; and the Department of Children and Families.

The landmark 118-page legislation sets expectations and challenges Florida to make a good talent pipeline development ecosystem even better through transformation focused on improvements to alignment of, access to, and equity in Florida's workforce and education systems leading to stronger outcomes.

2. Q: How does the REACH Act say the number of local workforce development boards will be determined?

A: Pages 44-45 of the REACH Act outline the following as considerations in the alignment of local workforce development boards:

(4) **WAIVERS.** —The department (state Department of Economic Opportunity) shall prepare a federal waiver for the Governor to submit to the United States Department of Labor that:

(a) Allows the state board (CareerSource Florida Board of Directors) to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of local workforce development boards or that reduces the number of local workforce development boards based on population and commuting patterns to:

1. Eliminate multiple layers of administrative entities to improve coordination of the workforce development system.
2. Establish consistent eligibility standards across the state to improve the accountability of workforce-related programs.
3. Provide greater flexibility in allocating resources to maximize the funds directed to training and business services.

(b) Allows the Governor to reallocate funds among local areas that have a demonstrated need for additional funding and programmatic outcomes that will maximize the use of the additional funds to serve low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, dislocated workers, and unemployment insurance claimants.

Read the full [REACH Act legislation](#).

3. Q: How will workforce services be impacted if the number of local workforce development boards is reduced?

A: The REACH Act aims to improve services for job seekers, workers, and businesses by increasing collaboration, coordination, and consistency. Ensuring every Florida community continues to receive quality employment and training services remain a top priority. The needs of customers will guide the alignment evaluation process that will affect any recommendations for the consolidation of local workforce development boards and the directly related redesignation of local workforce development areas.

4. Q: Who is leading the alignment process?

A: The statewide implementation of the REACH Act is being led by and coordinated through the Governor's REACH Office. CareerSource Florida is coordinating the evaluation of alignment considerations for local workforce development boards in collaboration with the Department of Economic Opportunity and the REACH Office, with input from state and local leaders in business, education, and workforce development, representatives of customer groups, and other stakeholders including local elected officials. In collaboration with the Governor's REACH Office, CareerSource Florida is coordinating a multi-phase, data-driven initiative with multiple opportunities for state and local stakeholder engagement and input to help shape the research, evaluation, and recommendations.

5. Q: What principles are guiding the alignment evaluation process?

A: CareerSource Florida, in collaboration with the Governor's REACH Office, identified the following guiding principles to serve as a guide in the alignment evaluation process:

- Prioritize implementation of the state Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act and legislative directive to enhance alignment and accountability that follows federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) criteria.
- Identify considerations that are responsive to the needs of job seekers and business customers while prioritizing access to services and maximizing available resources.
- Commit to an open and transparent process in every phase of work.
- Engage in holistic listening to drive transformative solutions.
- Communicate proactively to audiences and stakeholders throughout the journey.

6. Q: How can a new alignment of local workforce development boards improve outcomes for Floridians?

A: The redesignation process can help lead Florida's local workforce development boards in response to the evolution in consumer preferences, workplace expectations, business needs, how people look for work, and even where and how they work. The goal is to deliver even more relevant services through system transformation and therefore improved outcomes for customers. The REACH Act emphasizes a customer-focused approach in exploring ways to better assist job seekers and businesses.

7. Q: Is one option to maintain services as they currently exist?

A: The REACH Act specifically references reducing the number of local workforce development boards based on population and commuting patterns. Other relevant factors to achieve the act's desired goal may be considered.

8. Q: What is the process and timeline for evaluating alignment options for local workforce development boards?

A: As the Governor's principal workforce development policy organization, CareerSource Florida is conducting a research and discovery process that includes listening to local workforce development board leaders, elected officials, leaders in business and education, and other stakeholders. This work is being conducted in collaboration with the Governor's REACH Office. As part of the alignment evaluation process, CareerSource Florida has contracted with EY (Ernst & Young LLP) to conduct research and discovery. This includes listening to stakeholders, analyzing data, and examining solutions implemented in other states.

Initial observations from Phase One were reported to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors on June 9, 2022, with EY's findings report published on careersourceflorida.com in July. The second phase of this multi-phase initiative launched in September 2022. Phase Two includes a deeper analysis and more robust engagement with local stakeholders and customers across the state, including more than 150 online and in-person meetings/interviews.

Alignment considerations that will affect the redesignation of local workforce development areas and the consolidation of local workforce development boards are anticipated to be provided to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors by early 2023.

9. Q: How can I share my point of view on the alignment process?

A: In addition to the more than 150 by-invitation local engagement sessions for local workforce development board leaders, chief local elected officials, businesses, and other stakeholders occurring from September 2022-January 2023, you may share your feedback for consideration using the [Alignment Feedback Form](#).

10. Q: What data and potential approaches will be considered in alignment discussions?

A: CareerSource Florida is continuing this alignment evaluation work in response to the REACH Act with in-depth data analysis and stakeholder engagement. Numerous sources of public information available through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity were used to inform the research, discovery and findings of Phase One, which can be found in the [findings report](#). For Phase Two, the consulting firm EY will examine numerous factors identified as essential for realignment considerations by the

REACH Act, the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and CareerSource Florida.

11. Q: Has alignment taken place in other states? If so, what can we learn?

A: Yes. Alignment and changes in how services are delivered are being discussed nationally and are taking place in multiple states, including North Carolina, Iowa, and Tennessee. Consulting firm EY researched other states that have undertaken alignment actions, and those findings were included in their Phase One [findings report](#) this summer. Additional research is being conducted as part of Phase Two, and that report, which will include alignment options to address the REACH Act requirement for the reduction of local workforce development boards, will be shared on the CareerSource Florida website in January 2023.

12. Q: How can alignment benefit the 24 local workforce development boards, Florida counties, and the businesses and job seekers served by the state workforce system?

A: The objective of the REACH Act is to provide Florida job seekers and businesses with better aligned and more effective workforce and education systems while enhancing services, equity, and access for all by:

1. Eliminating multiple layers of administrative entities to improve coordination of the workforce development system.
2. Establishing consistent eligibility standards across the state to improve the accountability of workforce-related programs.
3. Providing greater flexibility in allocating resources to maximize the funds directed to training and business services.

13. Q: Where can I get more information?

A: This REACH Act webpage has up-to-date information about the REACH Act and the ongoing engagement process. Updates will be provided through every phase of the process. You can also submit questions or comments using the [Alignment Feedback Form](#).

CAREERSOURCE FLORIDA AT A GLANCE



Collaborate. Innovate. Lead.

WHO WE ARE: As the state's principal workforce policy organization, CareerSource Florida is a key contributor to efforts to develop and sustain a skilled workforce to meet the demands of Florida's growing economy. CareerSource Florida, the state policy and investment board, is joined in its important work by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, administrative entity for state workforce programs; 24 locally managed workforce development boards; and nearly 100 career centers — known collectively as the CareerSource Florida network. The current workforce system structure was set in 2000 through landmark, bipartisan state legislation, the Florida Workforce Innovation Act.

The Florida Legislature unanimously passed another landmark workforce and education systems bill, the Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act, that was signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis and took effect July 1, 2021. The REACH Act is a comprehensive blueprint for supporting the needs of the state's evolving economy through a more integrated, customer-focused and accountable workforce development ecosystem that spans Florida's education, workforce and public assistance programs. The law seeks to increase collaboration, improve training and enhance equity and access for all Floridians.

WHAT WE DO: CareerSource Florida works with partners in business and industry, education, economic development and community development to achieve our vision to make Florida the global leader for talent, and we fulfill our mission with honesty, accountability and transparency.

WHY IT MATTERS: Building and maintaining a skilled workforce is essential not only for Florida businesses, but also to ensuring Florida communities are vibrant and prosperous and their residents have access to good jobs and careers. As a recognized leader in Florida's talent ecosystem, the CareerSource Florida network is committed to addressing the talent needs of today and tomorrow. Last year, the network assisted nearly **86,500 job seekers**, including more than **4,100 veterans**, and provided services to more than **50,700 businesses**.

LEADERSHIP: CareerSource Florida is led by a board of directors appointed by the Governor, Florida Senate President and Florida House Speaker. The board is made up of leaders in business, government, education, labor, economic development and community development who provide policy direction for about \$245 million in annual workforce investment to address the employment and training needs of job seekers, workers and businesses.



STEPHANIE SMITH

*Chair, Board of Directors
Vice President, State & Regional
Affairs, TECO*



MICHELLE DENNARD

*President and CEO
CareerSource Florida*

FEDERAL PUBLICATIONS & GUIDANCE; STATE LAWS, RULES & POLICY

- Public Law 113-128 (WIOA)
- Public Law 104-193 (TANF Block Grants)
- Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, as amended
- USDOL Employment and Training Administration Final Rule 20 CFR Part 652 et al.
- FL Statutes Ch. 445
- FL Statutes Ch. 14.36 (REACH Act)

REACH ACT STATE PARTNERS



MISSION: The Florida Workforce System connects employers with qualified, skilled talent and Floridians with employment and career development opportunities to achieve economic prosperity.

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS:

Florida's local workforce development boards are the backbone of the CareerSource Florida network. These boards — directed by business and other community leaders — work locally and regionally to convene local talent supply stakeholders, develop data-driven strategies, leverage resources and deliver valuable services to meet workforce needs.

2022 – 2023 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

Working with its partners, CareerSource Florida is focused on the following board-approved priorities and initiatives:

- ▶ **REACH ACT IMPLEMENTATION** — The REACH Act compels statewide systems responsible for educating, training and helping Floridians in need connect to education, employment and supportive services to work together more intentionally and effectively, so that more Floridians may achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Specifically, CareerSource Florida is charged with development of and support for the Florida Credentials Review Committee of business, education and workforce leaders to define credentials of value that align with in-demand jobs and careers in industries that drive Florida's economy.

With a focus on improved accountability, the law also calls for the Governor's REACH Office to develop outcome-based criteria for assigning a letter grade to each local workforce development board and for CareerSource Florida to assign and make the letter grades public annually.

Additionally, in collaboration with the REACH Office, CareerSource Florida is exploring approaches to aligning Florida's 24 local workforce development boards, consistent with the consideration of any benefits that might come through reducing the number of local boards as specified in the REACH Act to:

- Eliminate multiple layers of administrative entities to improve coordination;
- Establish consistent eligibility standards across the state to improve accountability; and
- Provide greater flexibility in the allocation of resources to maximize funds for training and business services.

- ▶ **SUPPORTING AVIATION, AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE MANUFACTURING THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE SECTOR STRATEGY APPROACH** — 2022-23 WIOA Governor's Reserve Funds and investments by other strategic partners will amplify a comprehensive investment approach directed by the agencies identified in the REACH Act to cultivate short- and long-term sustainable talent pipeline and accelerate Florida's competitiveness in this legacy sector.

- ▶ **FLORIDA RURAL COMMUNITIES** — To provide additional support to Florida's rural counties, \$2 million has been awarded to 11 local workforce development boards that serve rural communities to expand access to job seeker services and strengthen local collaboration with education and community-based partners to help residents gain skills and access to in-demand jobs and careers.

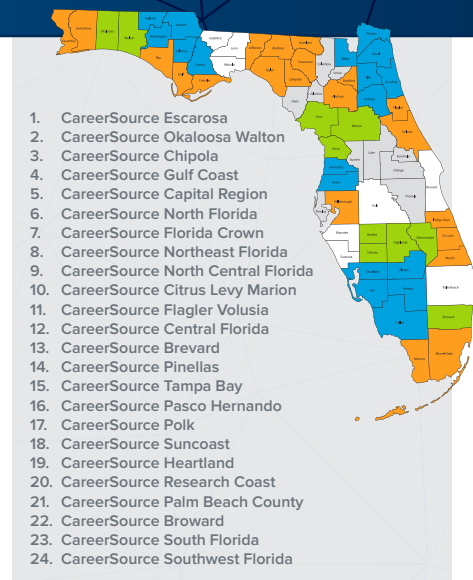
- ▶ **CAREER SUPPORT FOR SINGLE PREGNANT WOMEN** — Low-income single pregnant women seeking a pathway to prosperity may be assisted by new skill attainment through work-based learning and other training models. Helping mothers and mothers-to-be achieve successful employment provides opportunities for lasting positive impacts on these Floridians, their families and communities.

TRAINING GRANTS:

Quick Response Training and Incumbent Worker Training grants provide funds to new, expanding and existing businesses to train new hires and elevate the skills of existing employees.

- Since 1993, Quick Response Training has helped about **197,500** Floridians receive customized, skills-based training.
- The Incumbent Worker Training grant program has supported customized training for **nearly 3,000 Florida companies**, many of them small businesses.

Administered by CareerSource Florida, these nationally recognized grants are among the high-value tools available through the CareerSource Florida network to help strengthen business competitiveness and growth in the Sunshine State.



Want to know more? Visit careersourceflorida.com    

CareerSource Florida is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers on this document may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Florida Relay Service at 711. Disponible en Español.



A proud partner of the  American Job Center network