

State Apprenticeship Advisory Council (SAAC) Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2025, 9:00 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time)
Tallahassee State College

The meeting was called to order by chairperson Kevin O'Farrell, Chancellor, Division of Career and Adult Education, Florida Department of Education (FDOE). The council members and attendees were welcomed, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken. SAAC Members present at the meeting were: Kirk Barras, David McCraw, Lee Middleton, Karen Nichols, Steve Cona III, Marcello Dossantos, Natasha Sherwood, Robert Tidwell and the Honorable Kathryn Starkey. Ex-officio members present were Kathryn Wheeler and Chancellor Kevin O'Farrell. A quorum was present.

Chancellor O'Farrell gave the opening remarks to the SAAC.
The Council approved the February 14, 2024, and December 19, 2024, SAAC Meeting Minutes.

Chancellor O'Farrell introduced Director Wheeler.

Kathryn Wheeler, Director of Apprenticeship, gave the Director's Report. Director Wheeler highlighted some new occupations recently registered which include the following:

- Audio-Video Repairer (Low Voltage Integrator)
- Biomedical Equipment Technician
- Boilermaker Fitter
- Central Sterile Processing Technician
- Certified Dietary Manager
- Diagnostic Imaging Specialty (Intervention Radiology Technician)
- Fiber Optic Technician
- Ship Pilot
- Undercar Specialist

During the 2023-2024 program year, the Department served 329 registered apprenticeship programs and 68 registered preapprenticeship programs. During this time, the Department registered 32 new apprenticeship programs and 11 new preapprenticeship programs. There were 19,214 apprentices and 3,230 preapprentices trained. This equates to a total of 397 registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs training 22,444 enrollees.

This is a stark contrast from 2018-2019 at which time the Department registered 228 new apprenticeship programs and 31 new preapprenticeship programs. There were 12,014 apprentices trained. This equates to a total of 259 registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs training 12,014 enrollees.

An Apprenticeship overview shows apprentices trained in 57 apprenticeable occupations registered during the 2018-2019 program year, compared to apprentices trained in 129 occupations in 13 different career clusters during the 2023-2024 program year. Currently, there are 312 registered apprenticeship programs and 61 registered preapprenticeships in Florida.

The following are new programs and occupations registered in 2025:

- AMIkids Marine Technician Apprenticeship
 - Marine Service Technician
- Bond Community Health Center
 - Medical Assistant

- Demetria Lovett Enterprises, Inc., dba SkillMax Institute
 - Medical Coder
- Gulf Coast Electrical JATC Preapprenticeship Program
 - Electrician
- Hancock Environmental Seeding, Inc.
 - Operating Engineer
- Murphy Pipeline Contractors Apprenticeship Program, INJ
 - Construction Craft Laborer

The recent advancements in Florida’s apprenticeship system include the following:

- Rule 6A-23.004, F.A.C., Standards of Apprenticeship, was amended to allow for an apprentice-to-journeyworker ratio of 1:1 for construction occupations.
- All apprentice registrations (with the use of digital signatures), cancellations and completions, are now conducted electronically through the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS).
- Certificates of completion are now generated electronically through RAPIDS at the local level to allow timely receipt of the certificates.
- The Department is piloting an online portal for the registration of new apprenticeship programs, which is expected to expedite registration.
- In collaboration with CareerSource Florida, an “Apprenticeship Finder Map” is in development to aid Floridians in finding nearby registered apprenticeship programs and employers participating in those programs.

The current priorities include:

- Continued modernization of registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship program infrastructure to streamline efficiency of registered apprenticeship system operation, ensure accurate information on participating employers and ensure overall accuracy of data reporting.
- Program reviews.
- Updating of Florida’s Preapprenticeship System and associated data reporting.
- Registration of new apprenticeship/preapprenticeship programs and occupations.

Dr. John Nelzén, PhD, Grant Manager of Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant (PCOG) discussed the achievements, advances made, and unallowable and allowable expenses related to PCOG.

Dr. Brittany Ross, Director of Research & Evaluation, gave an overview of the 2023-24 Annual Apprenticeship Report, data limitations, data collection template, performance data, retention rates, preapprenticeship retention rates, completion rates, wage progression, implications and guidance, future developments. The Annual Report is posted at the following link: [Annual Apprenticeship Reports](#).

Tara Goodman, Vice Chancellor, discussed the 2025 Legislative session, how to find bills and provided links to locate bills for the Senate and House.

Erin Sampson, Program Analyst, CareerSource Florida, discussed Resources for Successful apprenticeships. CareerSource Florida’s role in expanding registered apprenticeships in Florida, their partners and network, support they provide, navigators, outreach and education, connecting employers to programs and funding registered apprenticeships. Ms. Sampson also discussed the new apprenticeship program finder map.

Chancellor O'Farrell opened the floor for public comment. The following attendees provided public comment:

- Sean Donnelly, Electrical Training Alliance of Central Florida, commented on the wage reports.
- Daisy Gray, Florida Deputy Sheriff's Association, commented on the completion rates of registered apprenticeship.
- Dr. Alexia Rolle, Miami-Dade College, commented on PCOG and the apprenticeship online platform.
- Layne Mikesell, Division of Blind Services, commented on the program reviews, monitoring and resources for registered apprenticeship.

Chancellor O'Farrell welcomed closing comments from SAAC members.

Chancellor O'Farrell thanked the council members, members of the public, Director Wheeler and the Apprenticeship Team.

Chancellor O'Farrell adjourned the meeting.