REACH ACT LETTER GRADES TOOLKIT

for CareerSource Florida Partners

OCTOBER 2022

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NEWS RELEASE TEMPLATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: **XX**
Phone: **XX**
Email: **XX**

CareerSource Florida Announces First Letter Grades for Local Workforce Development Boards

*CareerSource **<insert board>** to review data behind its grade of **<insert grade>** to strengthen services for job seekers, workers and businesses*

XX, FL (Oct. XX, 2022) — As part of the 2021 Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act, Florida's local workforce development boards have received letter grades to help identify areas in which they excel and areas that can be strengthened to improve outcomes for job seekers, workers and businesses. Using criteria set by the Governor's REACH Office in 2022 and data from the 2021-2022 fiscal year, **<insert board>** was assigned a **<insert grade>** as its baseline grade.

*"We are committed to delivering excellence in customer service and support for businesses and job seekers," said **<insert local board chief executive name and title>**. "We appreciate the recognition of our performance and look forward to using these evaluation metrics to make additional enhancements and updates so we can deliver even stronger outcomes for all of our customers."*

OR

*"We will use this letter grade to further identify the areas where we shine and where we can improve, to make even more progress toward our goal of enhancing outcomes for the people we serve," said **<insert local board chief executive name and title>**. "We look forward to using this baseline grade to boost us to greater results next year."*

Local workforce development boards were graded based on how well they meet federal accountability measures, how many job seekers served receive work-related training, how many participants earn more in the second quarter after receiving workforce services, how many employers are return customers for business services, and reduction in the number of participants on long-term public assistance.

The REACH Act seeks to enhance transparency and accountability in the workforce system through several measures, including assigning letter grades to the state's local workforce development boards.

"The goals of the REACH Act are consistent with the goals of CareerSource Florida: to ensure a seamless, integrated experience and access for all Floridians to programs, opportunities, and training that lead to economic prosperity and self-sufficiency," said Stephanie Smith, Chair of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors. "We embrace the spirit of transparency and accountability and will use this data to elevate service delivery throughout our workforce system."

Under the REACH Act, letter grades will be assigned annually. The next grades are planned for release in October 2023 .

For more information about letter grades, including metrics and methodology, visit **<insert link>**.

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<insert boilerplate>



LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD **LETTER GRADES**

WHAT

For the first time, Florida's local workforce development boards have been assigned letter grades. Of the 24 local workforce development boards, 13 boards received As, 10 boards received Bs, and one board received a C. No board received a D or F. Local workforce development boards will use these letter grades to further their goals of elevating Florida's workforce and upskilling Floridians to help achieve self-sufficiency, connecting Floridians to jobs through training and placement, and expanding accountability and transparency of these critical missions.

WHO

Under the 2021 Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act, the Governor's REACH Office developed the criteria for the letter grades in collaboration with stakeholders including leaders from CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Education and local workforce development boards. CareerSource Florida assigns the grades and makes them public annually. Local workforce development boards will review the data used by the REACH Office to determine the letter grades to help strengthen services for job seekers, workers and businesses.

WHEN

The grades were released Oct. 18, 2022. The criteria for these letter grades were set in 2022 and were determined retroactively, based upon data from the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Grades will be issued again in fall 2023 based on the current year's performance that will end June 30, 2023, and annually thereafter.

WHY

The 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 seeks to enhance transparency and accountability in the workforce system through several measures, including assigning letter grades to the state's local workforce development boards.

WHERE

Of the 24 local workforce development boards, 13 boards received an A, 10 received a B and one received a C. No board received a D or an F.

HOW

The REACH Office set the criteria used to calculate a score and assign a letter grade. Those criteria include:

- How well boards are meeting federal accountability measures.
- How many job seekers served receive work-related training.
- How many participants earn more in the second quarter after receiving workforce services.
- A reduction in the number of participants on long-term public assistance.
- How many employers are return customers for business services.

SAMPLE EMAIL

FOR INTERNAL STAFF AND EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

Subject Line	**OPTIONS:** **<Insert board name> earns an <insert grade>** **Baseline grade released for 2021-2022 year**
Preheader *(40 – 100 characters)*	**Data will guide policy, performance and service enhancements**
Image	**Local board logo as header**
Body	**Letter Grades Released** In response to 2021 legislation called the Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act, local workforce development boards are receiving letter grades for the first time. CareerSource Florida released the baseline grades to all 24 local boards on Oct. 18, and **<insert board name>** received a **<insert grade>**. These grades were determined retroactively, based upon data from the 2021–2022 fiscal year, using criteria established by the Governor's REACH Office. They now serve as a baseline for comparison in future years and as a guide as we consider future policy, performance and service enhancements. We constantly seek ways to provide innovative services and improve the customer experience for job seekers, workers and businesses. We welcome the opportunity to review the data spotlighted by the REACH Office, which includes: • How well boards are meeting federal accountability measures; • How many job seekers served receive work-related training; • How many participants earn more in the second quarter after receiving workforce services; • A reduction in the number of participants on long-term public assistance; • And how many employers are return customers for business services. To learn more about the metrics and methodology behind these letter grades, go to **<insert link>**.

SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

FOR LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS

About the grades:

- We are committed to delivering excellence in customer service and support for businesses and job seekers. We appreciate the recognition of our performance and look forward to using these evaluation metrics to make additional enhancements and updates so that we can deliver even stronger outcomes for our customers.

- We constantly seek ways to provide innovative services and improve the customer experience for job seekers, workers and businesses. We welcome the opportunity to review the data used by the REACH Office to determine grades and use it to strengthen our program offerings and outcomes.

- We will use this letter grade to further identify the areas in which we shine and where we need improvement. We look forward to using this baseline grade to evaluate and improve our performance this year to boost our results next year.

- We will use this baseline grade for informational purposes. It will serve as a guide as we consider future policy, performance and service enhancements.

Why letter grades are being assigned:

- The Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act, signed into law in 2021, seeks to enhance transparency and accountability in the workforce system through several measures, including assigning letter grades to the state's local workforce development boards.

- These letter grades were based on criteria newly established by the REACH Office within the Executive Office of the Governor. The REACH Office developed the criteria in collaboration with a stakeholder engagement group of experts that included leaders from CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Education and local workforce development boards.

- The REACH Act calls for the REACH Office to develop criteria for assigning a letter grade to each local workforce development board and for CareerSource Florida to make the letter grades public annually.

- The criteria for these letter grades were set in 2022. The first grades were determined retroactively, based upon data from the 2021–2022 fiscal year. These grades now serve as a baseline for comparison in future years and as a guide to show where local workforce development boards are excelling and can strengthen services for job seekers, workers and businesses. Letter grades will be assigned in 2023 for the 2022-2023 year.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are local workforce development boards being assigned letter grades?

Florida is committed to an accountable, consumer-first workforce system that provides Floridians with access to high-quality workforce services and training aligned with local market demand — ultimately leading to better jobs, self-sufficiency and economic prosperity. The Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act, signed into law in 2021, seeks to enhance transparency and accountability in the workforce system through several measures, including assigning letter grades to the state's local workforce development boards.

What is the REACH Act?

The Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act is bipartisan, unanimously approved state legislation signed into law by 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.

The landmark 118-page legislation 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.

How and when were the criteria to determine letter grades set?

The REACH Office within the Executive Office of the Governor developed the criteria in 2022 in collaboration with a stakeholder engagement group of experts that included leaders from CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Education and local workforce development boards.

These initial letter grades were calculated based on performance data for the program year 2021-2022 that ended on June 30.

What are the criteria used to determine these letter grades?

The REACH Office identified seven measures and an extra-credit measure used to calculate a score and assign a letter grade. Those measures include:

- How well boards are meeting federal accountability measures.
- How many job seekers served receive work-related training.
- How many participants earn more in the second quarter after receiving workforce services.
- A reduction in the number of participants on long-term public assistance.
- How many employers are return customers for business services.

How were local workforce development boards evaluated previously?

Various methodologies have been used in the past, focusing on qualitative outcomes for clients and aligning with federal Department of Labor (DOL) performance measures. The letter grade process required in the REACH Act provides a standard and outcome-based metric to help gauge positive results and drive enhanced performance across the state. They will continue to incorporate DOL performance measures.

When will letter grades be released?

As the REACH Act legislation requires, letter grades will be available annually. The grades are calculated and considered final after the program year has closed and the final program year performance report is submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor. Grades will be issued again in fall 2023 based on the current year's performance that will end June 30, 2023.

How can letter grades benefit the 24 local workforce development boards, Florida counties, and the businesses and job seekers they serve?

This year's baseline grades are informational and intended to be used as a guide for local workforce development boards in considering any policy, performance and service improvements. Letter grades are intended to further the local workforce development boards' goals of elevating and upskilling Floridians to help achieve self-sufficiency, connecting Floridians to jobs through training and placement, and expanding accountability and transparency of these critical outcomes.

Where can I get more information?

Learn more about letter grades at **careersourceflorida.com**.