

Item Title: Consideration of Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with Wake Technical Community College regarding the Wake Works Apprenticeship Program

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners approves a Memorandum of Understanding with Wake Technical Community College regarding funding and administration of the Wake Works Apprenticeship Programs.

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners approves all Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with other governmental entities. This MOU with Wake Tech outlines roles and responsibilities for a new program.

Background: The Board established a goal of increasing college affordability with the initiative being championed by Commissioner Matt Calabria. The County and Wake Tech have collaborated to increase the capacity of an apprenticeship program targeting jobs that are in high demand in the County. County and Wake Tech staff determined that county support to offer free tuition, fees and books/tools for apprenticeship programs would not only assist with affordability but address the shortage in supply of technical workers in the County.

Wake Tech has agreed to establish the infrastructure necessary to lessen the administrative burden associated with “Registered” Apprenticeships for qualifying Wake County businesses. The Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) articulates the roles of each entity including funding and administration. Wake Tech will implement the enhanced apprenticeship program for the 2020 fall semester.

Board Goal: This action directly supports Education Board Goal Initiative E 1.5: Explore options to make community college more affordable to new Wake County graduates.

Fiscal Impact: The MOU anticipates funding of up to \$500,000 in the Fiscal Year 2021 budget. Wake Tech intends to leverage Federal and state dollars available for apprenticeship programs such that county funds will be the last dollars used.

Additional Information:

Apprenticeships in the U.S are expanding beyond the skilled trades and manufacturing to new occupations such as information technology, healthcare and hospitality. Most job postings require not only education beyond high school but also work experience,

consequently work-based learning can help ensure future success in the workforce and of the various work-based learning options, apprenticeships offer the best opportunities for students to earn while they learn. The ability to learn as they earn is especially critical to students from lower-income families. Registered apprenticeships require 2000 plus hours of on-the-job training and 144 plus hours related classroom instruction. The average starting salary upon completion of a Registered Apprenticeship is \$50,000 and the impact over a career of increased earning potential is approximately \$300,000.

The occupations being targeted in Phase One of the Apprenticeship program are:

- Skilled trades: carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders;
- Technicians and maintenance professionals: automotive technicians, facility maintenance professionals, HVAC technicians, heavy equipment operators, manufacturing technicians, maintenance supervisors; and,
- Information technology infrastructure: cybersecurity specialists, computer and information analytics, computer support specialists, database/systems, networking professionals, software developers and programmers.

Phase Two occupations include frontline healthcare and hospitality: emergency medical technicians/paramedics, medical assistants, home health and nursing assistants, hospitality and biotech.

Attachments:

1. Memorandum of Understanding
2. January 13, 2020 Work Session Presentation