Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

Strategic Plan
2009-2012

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A Message From The Executive Director

Oklahoma has boasted a solid economic foundation that has shown positive job creation and low unemployment rates compared to the nation as a whole. This has provided opportunities for both employers and workers in the competitive labor market. While the economic downturns of the current economy have placed the nation under duress, Oklahoma has been somewhat limited in its exposure. Oklahoma's unemployment rate ranks exceptionally low compared to other states in the United States. During the cyclical swings of the economy, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) has always stood at the forefront of cultivating emerging industries, supporting existing businesses, and enhancing the skills development of the Oklahoma workforce.

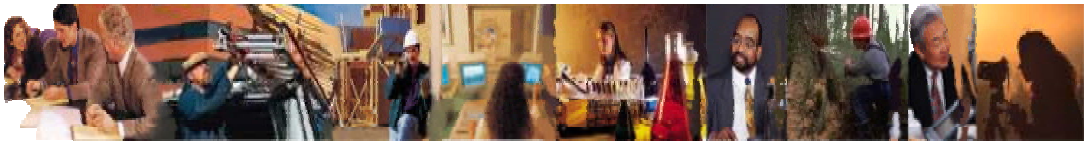
The challenge of strategically facing the demands of the labor market and economic cycles requires foresight and planning to provide a skilled workforce for today and the future. As we look toward the future, OESC is dedicated to leading a market-driven workforce system that meets the needs of employers and workers, and helps all Oklahomans achieve economic prosperity.

OESC and the 12 local workforce development boards play an integral role in success of the Oklahoma economy. By delivering integrated services at the local level to employers and job seekers, the workforce system addresses each community's unique needs for a skilled workforce and promising jobs.

OESC works diligently to accomplish its strategic goals, and at the same time, serves as a responsible steward of and federal dollars. Through improved efficiency and a commitment to the elimination of waste and abuse in all areas of our programs, OESC continues to improve results within necessary budget constraints.

OESC views the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan as a vehicle to further its vision to prepare the highly skilled workforce that Oklahoma employers need to compete successfully, in the global marketplace of the 21st century. We appreciate the input and support we have received from members of state leadership and look forward to working with them to best serve the needs of Oklahoma.

Jon Brock
Executive Director
Oklahoma Employment Security Commission



Introduction to the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

As Oklahoma celebrates its centennial and launches a new century, the State is positioned to compete in a vibrant, global economy. Oklahoma offers many advantages for business, individuals and communities. Modern technology, globalization and the diversity of our population require that businesses compete and employees acquire and use new skills and knowledge in order to maintain a competitive advantage. *Oklahoma's motto is translated as "Labor conquers all things*." Oklahoma's prosperity is enhanced by the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission's (OESC) efforts to provide economic stability and employment security.

Oklahoma's statewide, demand-driven workforce investment system must be able to continuously prepare the State's available and future workers for careers in the industries and sectors that are most vital to the Oklahoma's economic health and growth. OESC continues to support the growth of the economy though workforce system alignment, support of economic development efforts, assisting business growth by providing a skilled workforce, and helping job seekers build a bridge to economic self sufficiency through lifelong learning.

OESC enhances Oklahoma's economy by matching jobs and workers to increase the efficiency of local labor markets, referring workers to training opportunities to enhance and align their skills to meet local labor market needs, providing Unemployment Compensation to support unemployed workers and their communities, and gathering, analyzing and disseminating information about the labor force to improve local economic decisions.

Major trends and influences are emerging that will affect private sector, government sector and non-profit sector organizations. Predicting these trends will allow Oklahoma to anticipate and reflect the employment needs of industry clusters, assesses the quality and quantity of available workforce, and develops strategies to resolve gaps between supply and demand. Oklahoma's statewide, locally-based workforce investment system continuously prepares the State's available and future workers for careers in the industries and sectors that are most vital to the Oklahoma's economic health and growth.

In order to prepare available and future workers with the aptitudes and skills that business and industry require, the workforce, education, and economic development systems must develop stronger partnerships and more effective communication with business and industry. Oklahoma's workforce investment system and the partnerships that comprise it are based in and directed by local and regional communities.

Populations Served

In the drive towards a demand-driven workforce OESC creates and supports opportunities for workers, employers and communities. As a partner in the workforce and economic development for the State of Oklahoma, OESC serves in its efforts to enhance economic stability and employment security.

Acting on the needs of our customers drives the strategic and operational efforts of the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission. Broadly, customers fall into three groups – employers, workers, and communities.

1. Employers

The thriving Oklahoma business community has approximately 100,000 employing establishments that represent a broad array of industries from retail to aerospace. Oklahoma has a labor force of over 1.7 million individuals.

The service providing industries account for more than four out of every five jobs in Oklahoma. Government currently provides over one-fifth of Oklahoma's non-farm employment. This industry includes local, state and federal government employment. Establishments such as public schools and hospitals also fall under government.

The next largest group, trade, transportation and utilities, provides more than 18 percent of employment. This industry is made up of wholesale trade, retail trade, and transportation & utilities. Out of these three, retail trade is the largest, providing more than one of every 10 jobs in the state. Wholesale trade and transportation & utilities each contribute around one-third of what retail trade does.

Oklahoma's third largest industry is education and health services. This industry only includes privately-owned establishments; publicly-owned establishments that provide these services are included in government.

Right on the heels of education and health services is professional & business services. This industry is made up of three parts, professional, scientific & technical services, management of companies and enterprises, and administrative & support and waste management and remediation services, and provides more than 11 percent of Oklahoma's non-farm employment.

Leisure & hospitality accounts for nearly 9 percent of employment, followed by other services, financial activities, and information. For goods producing industries,

manufacturing provides the largest share of employment. Jobs in this industry are engaged in the mechanical, physical or chemical transformation of materials, substances or components into new products. Less than 5 percent of Oklahoma's employment comes from the construction industry. Work in this industry can include new construction, additions, alterations, or maintenance and repairs. Despite the relatively small percentage of jobs provided by natural resources & mining, this industry has been and will continue to be a major factor in Oklahoma's economy due to oil and gas production.

OESC's workforce centers help Oklahoma business locate qualified, skilled workers to fill job vacancies. OESC focuses on being demand-driven and designing services and processes that meet the current and future needs of business.

2. Workers

This broad customer group includes both current and future workers. There are over 1.7 million Oklahomans employed each year. A skilled workforce is fundamental to our economic growth and Oklahoma. Oklahoma is third in the region, and above the national average, for percent of population age 25 and over with a high school diploma at 84.34 percent. The particular measure includes those who have passed equivalency exams as well. For percent of population age 25 and over with a bachelor degree, Oklahoma ranked fifth in the region despite having more residents fall into this group than Arkansas, Kansas and New Mexico. The state also ranked fifth for percent of population age 25 and over with a graduate or professional degree compared to the rest of the region.

Out of the seven states in the region, Oklahoma ranks right in the middle of the group in terms of population at 3,579,212 residents. Texas is the largest regional state by far, and New Mexico ranks last for population. Between 2000 and 2006, Oklahoma's population grew by 3.73 percent, or 128,558 persons. This growth earned the state fifth place in the region for population change between 2000 and 2006. Again, Texas led the region. Louisiana was the only regional state to report a drop in population. Over the same period, the U.S. population growth rate was 6.40 percent.

OESC's local workforce centers serve many Oklahoma citizens by providing job search assistance, skills enhancement services, training services, many other services designed to help an individual find and retain employment. A major emphasis is placed on improving an individual's skill levels so they can find better paying jobs, which increases the state's per capita income levels.

3. Communities

Oklahoma has recently celebrated its first 100 years and our communities still demonstrate that pioneer spirit from the plains to the cities. Twelve Local Workforce Investment (LWIBs) boards serve both employers and workers in our communities. These Boards serve as a link to the local resources available to prepare the workforce that meets the needs of local businesses. OESC also provides primary services and supports to 35 comprehensive workforce centers in 27 labor market areas.

External Assessment of the Oklahoma Workforce

There are three significant factors that may directly impact the Oklahoma Workforce system in the future. First, economic factors, such as shifts in industries, fuel further modifications in a rapidly changing economy. Second, the demands on the federal budget may result in reduced federal funding. Third, WIA Reauthorization and rescissions could affect our efforts in meeting the Oklahoma workforce vision.

1. Economic Factors

Major trends and influences are emerging that will affect private sector, government sector and non-profit sector organizations. Predicting these trends will allow Oklahoma to anticipate and reflect the employment needs of industry clusters, assess the quality and quantity of available workforce, and develop strategies to resolve any gaps between supply and demand. Oklahoma's statewide, demand-driven workforce investment system continuously prepares the State's available and future workers for careers in the industries and sectors that are most vital to the Oklahoma's economic health and growth.

Oklahoma's economy, like that of the U.S. economy as a whole, is continuing its transition from one based mainly on the production of goods to one based more and more on knowledge and information. This emerging knowledge-based economy has increased demand for workers with more advanced skills than in the past. This transition to a more knowledge-based economy has called for some changes in the types of skills employers are now requiring or will require in the near future. These advanced technologies clearly call for workers with the knowledge and skills to use them effectively, efficiently, and creatively.

Job Growth in Oklahoma Now and in the Future

Oklahoma is expected to add close to 174,000 jobs between 2006 and 2016 across all industries. This translates into an increase of just over 10 percent over the period. Three broad industries are expected to account for more than half of the state job growth:

- Educational & health services
- Professional & business services
- Trade, transportation & utilities

The service-providing industries will provide nearly 87 percent of all job growth between 2006 and 2016. Natural resources & mining, construction, and manufacturing will combine to contribute the remaining growth for the period. Oklahoma continues to experience an unemployment rate that is lower than the national average, ending 2008 with an unemployment rate of 4.9%.

Our 2006-2016 employment projections report that in 2006, more than seven out of every 10 job openings did not require postsecondary education. These openings required only

work experience in a related field or on-the-job training. By 2016, the number is expected to fall just below the 70 percent mark. All activities necessary to do the jobs that require on-the-job training can be learned while working in the occupation.

A growing economy means new opportunities for employers to expand and for Oklahoma workers willing to continue skills development and lifelong learning. A flexible workforce system that is fully engaged in state and local economic development efforts, understands the needs of its customers and crafts solutions to meet those needs is essential to realizing the states' full economic growth potential.

Economy driven by industries demanding new skill sets from workers

We have become a "knowledge economy" a term that refers to the need for workers to have critical thinking skills and the ability to apply knowledge to a rapidly changing workplace. This is critical whether they work with their hands or the heads. Due to the rapid growth and innovation in technology and a move to a global economy "knowledge workers" are in high demand. For workers, this fundamental change will demand greater skills in order to seize the opportunities.

While the workers of the future may enter the workforce possessing the skills necessary, today's workers must enhance their skills to meet these new demands.

OESC is organized to support Oklahoma through its model focused on being demand-driven through integrated and responsive local services. This model shifts the paradigm of focusing on "work first" to "skills first". Increased customer needs and the demand for skilled worker prompts this shift. Customers have the ability 1) know their skills, 2) improve their skills, and 3) get the best job possible with those skills.

Changing Demographics affecting labor supply

The Oklahoma population reached 3.64 million in 2008. The population has increased 5.5 percent since 2000 and population estimates predict a slow and steady increase in our population growth.

As the Oklahoma population continues to grow, it is also

becoming more ethnically diverse. The Native American population represents 8%, African American population represents 7.8%, and Hispanic 6.9%.

Oklahoma is third only to California and Arizona in the size of its Native American population. Many of the American Indians living in the state (8 percent of population) are descended from 67 tribes who inhabited Indian Territory (what is now the state of Oklahoma). Tribal headquarters for 39 tribes are in Oklahoma. The city of Tulsa ranks 4th in the United States for total number of American Indian residents while Oklahoma City ranks sixth.

In 2007, the median age of Oklahoma Hispanics was 25.0 years while that of our non-Hispanic population was 37.2 years. Oklahoma, like many of the states around us is experiencing significant growth in the Hispanic population. The trend of lower educational attainment among this fast growing ethnic group must be reversed if we are to maximize our potential.

Currently 13.2% of our state population is age 65 or older compared to the 12.4% share in the nation. While our aging population is unlikely to cause a general, long-term worker shortage it is possible that we could see very tight labor markets in specific occupations. This is especially true in those occupations with both high barriers to entry coupled with increased demand from an aging population.

Overall, the economic factors affecting Oklahoma economy and labor force over the next five years could provide some strategic opportunities. First, the concept of industry clusters as a means of targeting the state's economic and workforce development efforts might give Oklahoma a unique advantage in competing for new and growing existing businesses that will drive our economy for years to come. Second, targeting training dollars to align with skills development within targeted industries might also accelerate our economic growth. Finally, the growth of an aging population still willing or financially needing to work will put demands on the system to support the training and job search for older Oklahomans.

In order to ensure Oklahoma's economic future by preparing the workforce we must preserve the progress and success we have achieved in integrating workforce services, providing local flexibility in the delivery of these services, and ensure that changes to federal programs allows us to move forward.

2. Demands on Federal Budget

Federal grants account for 100 percent of OESC's appropriations. Because federal funds provide all the agency's funds, increasing demands on the federal budget could reduce the funding available for workforce development service. In particular, military and homeland security budget demands will likely edge out discretionary items such as workforce development.

3. WIA Reauthorization and Recessions

The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), now under reauthorization, offers refinements that will improve Oklahoma's ability to more fully integrate programs into workforce centers. However, the level of workforce services may be hindered by recent reductions to the WIA budget.

Recently, a federal WIA rescission impacted every state and territory. While annual rescissions are not new to WIA programs, the recent rescission was more complex because there were three separate rescissions which spanned several program years. This was followed by a reduction to the Fiscal Year 2008 allocation amounts. Oklahoma received just over $23 million in total WIA funding (Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker). Oklahoma's 2008 rescission amount was over $10 million dollars. The rescission affected dollars that were unspent "carryover" funds.

OESC continues to look for more proactive approaches in delivering services as result of the rescission. Through our integration efforts, OESC staff and local WIA service provider staff have become integrated so programs are transparent to the customer. OESC has developed protocols and an integrated customer flow model that will aid in this model. There is also a shift to focus on short-term pre-vocational services to offer skills enhancement services to a greater number of customers as opposed to intensive occupational training. This is not only a result of declining funding but also of being demand-driven as employers prefer workers to enter their workforce with solid foundational and soft skills.

OESC Strategic Plan

The Okalahoma Employment Security Commission has a long term commitment to it's vision, mission and goals which guide our current and future actions. Our organization is organized around achieving our current goals and responding to future opportunities.

This section outlines the ***Vision, Mission, Values, Strategic Directions*** and ***Goals*** as well as the organizational structure of OESC.

Our Vision…

Oklahoma's prosperity is enhanced by OESC's efforts to provide economic stability and employment security.

Our Mission…

Enhance Oklahoma's economy by

- **matching jobs and workers** to increase the efficiency of local labor markets,
- **providing Unemployment Compensation** to support unemployed workers and their communities,
- **preparing a skilled workforce** to enhance and align their skills to meet local labor market needs,
- **gathering, analyzing and disseminating information** about the labor force to improve local economic decisions.

Our Core Values…

- ***Service***
  We continue helping everyone until their needs are satisfied by providing caring, quality service.
- ***Fairness***
  We ensure fairness by consistently treating everyone with objectivity and equality.
- ***Respect***
  We treat everyone with respect and dignity.
- ***Teamwork***
  All employees are valued and respected members of our team.
- ***Opportunity***
  Team members are given the opportunity to solve problems and grow and are recognized for their accomplishments.
- ***Excellence***
  The pursuit of excellence drives us to do the best we can in everything we do.
- ***Integrity***
  We act as if the world will soon learn of our actions.

Our Strategic Directions

1. **Improve customer satisfaction by establishing an efficient and effective organization.**
    - Align programs and services through re-engineering.
    - Establish an effective and efficient training system.
2. **Obtaining and effectively allocating resources to better serve our customers.**
    - Explore additional funding sources to enhance program and service delivery.
    - Ensure OESC staff salaries are competitive and equitably aligned.
    - Develop budget strategies for efficient use of system resources.
3. **Enhancing customer service by providing better technology.**
    - Develop comprehensive Information Technology (IT) strategies and applications that will help further our goals.
4. **Creating value through public awareness.**

Implement a comprehensive public awareness and communications plan.

Our Strategic Goals

The following section contains OESC's Strategic Goals and strategies designed to help the organization meet those goals. We recognize the importance of all the strategies if OESC is to fulfill its mission and have prioritized the list to arrive at a manageable number of strategies to achieve by 2011. The priority strategies are listed.

Goal 1: Demand-Driven products and services developed by seeking business input and using this information to design responsive products and services.

OESC recognizes the need to become more demand-driven. Historically, workforce development has focused on the supply-side of labor exchange, i.e., job seekers and the talent pool, with little if any focus on the business. By integrating a demand-driven philosophy into our service delivery, we can ensure that products and services meet the needs of business and job seeker preparation is more meaningful and responsive.

Key Strategies:

- *Collect, analyze, and use OESC Labor Market Information (LMI) and other data to make process improvements based on employer-related data.*
- *Provide the state's strongest pool of job seekers in one convenient place – Oklahoma Job Link.*

- *Develop a cohesive statewide strategy for training – including customized training and stronger ties with the postsecondary education system.*

- *Work with local Workforce Investment Boards to anticipate and meet the future needs of businesses.*

- *Change the culture of how the workforce system does business (including hiring and training staff) to a business approach rather than a social service approach.*

- *Support and promote the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development initiatives to recruit knowledge workers to Oklahoma to meet the workforce needs of today's and tomorrow's Oklahoma businesses.*

- *Reinforce linkages between OESC and economic development activities and entities.*

- *Work with other state agencies to improve how state agencies relate with business.*

- *Develop and share model products, protocols, and strategies with local areas to reinforce a demand-driven philosophy.*

- *Develop policies to encourage local areas to become demand-driven.*

Goal 2: Integrated Skill-Based workforce centers created by providing skills enhancement services that will allow customers to know their skills, improve their skills and get the best job possible with those skills.

As the need for skilled workers grows, it is imperative for OESC and other workforce development entities to prepare the workforce to meet the demands of business. By doing so, workers gain the skills to obtain and retain employment. Such a model promotes an environment of lifelong learning opportunities which enhances current business demands but also the builds future economic growth.

Key Strategies:

- *Provide access to trained workforce development staff to assist in career decision-making and skills enhancement services.*

- *To the extent possible, integrate planning, oversight and program service delivery systems at the state and local levels for workforce development programs to become more skill-based.*

- *Apply industry and occupational research to optimize services that create new jobs, match job seekers to current openings, and prepare workforce to meet future demand for labor.*

- *Develop and share model products, protocols, and strategies with local areas to reinforce a skill-focus philosophy.*

- *Develop policies to encourage local areas to become skill-based.*

- *Work cooperatively with secondary education entities to build alliances and promote lifelong learning opportunities.*

- *Use effective, efficient, and equitable tools to assess skills.*

- *Offer skills enhancement products through the workforce centers and online to allow customers to improve their skills.*

- *Integrate services and programs where possible to offer transparent access of services to customers.*

- *Offer and provide career guidance and exploration through the workforce centers and online to allow customers to know occupational and industry information.*

Goal 3: Access to services and information through the use of information technology and partnerships.

Given the projected decrease in federal funding, changing economic conditions, evolving customer preferences, OESC must find ways to optimize the efficient delivery of services.

Key Strategies:

- *Develop customer feedback mechanisms in order to identify and offer the highest level of quality services based on program outcome measures and customer satisfaction.*

- *Provide customers a choice in the means of accessing services by maintaining highly trained staff and comprehensive self-service automated systems.*

- *Expand access to services through continued enhancement of the OESC automated systems.*

- *Enhance automated systems to ensure efficient administration and ease of use for business, job and training seekers, and Unemployment Insurance claimants.*

Goal 4: Internal business processes improved and more efficient utilizing limited resources.

Competing priorities for funding at the federal levels as well as increasing overhead costs for staff demand that we identify ways to reduce our operating costs, allowing us to support and expand the delivery of needed services. We must find ways to enhance partnerships across programs to maximize the returns on our investments for the organization and increase our efficiency through process improvement.

Key Strategies:

- *Submit a semi-annual Performance Improvement Plan update to the Secretary of Commerce.*
- *Utilize process mapping to identify efficient, redundant, and non-required functions and processes. Implement Lean Government where appropriate based on these results.*
- *Provide re-employment services to Unemployment Insurance claimants to reduce their spell of unemployment and thereby reduce the Unemployment Insurance taxes businesses pay.*
- *Maintain a balanced unemployment insurance system that offers adequate benefits to qualified workers, a fair and reasonable tax rate and appropriate balances in the benefit trust fund.*
- *Take advantage of technology and partnerships where appropriate to allow OESC to do more with less.*
- *Follow a continuous improvement model.*
- *Collect any delinquent tax contributions and collect any penalty, interest or fees due and owing as a result of the delinquency.*

Goal 5: Effective OESC programs, services and information assets.

An environment in which an increasing demand for services coincides with increasing competition for the funds that support the services cannot be allowed to erode program integrity. We must continue to improve and implement processes that enforce the equitable and accurate collection of taxes, the accurate payment of benefits and the collection of reliable information to ensure payment accuracy. Additionally, our customers must be able to rely on our pledge that the personal information we require them to submit as a condition of doing business with us, will remain protected and confidential.

Key Strategies:

- *Revise disaster recovery plan as needed to ensure that all critical business functions of OESC are identified, and that each has a tested business continuity plan insuring appropriate continuation or reestablishment of operations during and after a crisis or disaster.*
- *Ensure that OESC employees and partner staff are trained and have the necessary knowledge to make sound decisions regarding the responsibilities and risks associated with their access to confidential information.*
- *Ensure customers are aware of OESC privacy and protection and confidential information policies.*

- *Improve OESC's information security by developing standard methods of protection and delivery of consistent information security related services as needed.*

- *Align local area OESC staff critical tasks with local area real-time performance metrics or federal program performance measures.*

- *Review performance area deficiencies and generate a process improvement plan to achieve future success.*

Goal 6: Public awareness of OESC programs and services is increased through proactive education and outreach strategies.

OESC is a dedicated partner of the workforce system and a proud partner of Workforce Oklahoma; however, it is vital that OESC has its own identify and brand. OESC must have proactive education and outreach strategies to maintain its viability in the future.

Key Strategies:

- *Raise brand awareness of OESC's attributes.*

- *Promote OESC through website(s), printed materials, and presentations.*

- *Develop standardized public awareness protocols for all media.*

- *Collect data from customers and partners to ensure public awareness campaign is effective.*

- *Secure OESC's identity in the workforce system.*

- *Communicate to all staff the importance and value of promoting OESC products and services.*

Internal Assessment

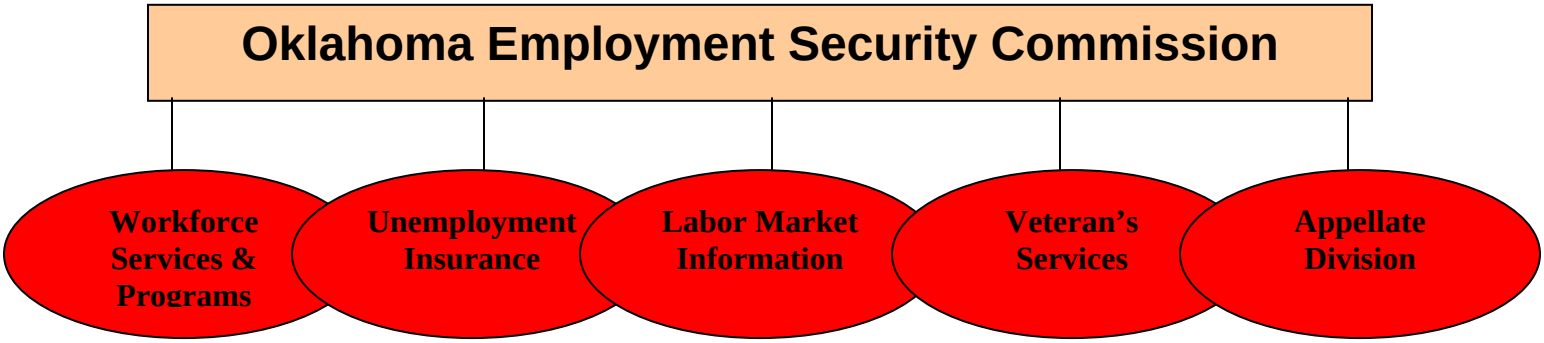
In assessing the internal factors that affect OESC's ability to build and oversee a market-driven workforce system, three organizational features become apparent: first, the agency's leadership and structure; second, the expertise of OESC's own workforce; and finally, the dedication to maximizing technology to improve efficiency and satisfy customer needs.

1. Leadership and Structure

The success of the Oklahoma workforce system depends on leaders with a clear vision, the ability and determination to remove barriers to reach that vision, and the ability to rally a diverse group of stakeholders. Under the leadership of five appointed Commissioners, proactive agency management, and the guidance of the Governor and the Oklahoma Legislature (through the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development – GCWED), OESC has a clear direction for workforce development.

The Commissioners each represent a constituency: employers, labor and the public. The Commission holds regular open meetings to carry out the business of the agency, adopts policies and rules for the programs that the agency oversees, and provides a positive forum to present updates and progress for agency operations. Commission meetings notes are shared with all agency staff through our Intranet in order to make them more accessible.

The Executive Director serves at the discretion of the Commission, implements policies and rules, and manages the daily operations of the agency. A management team comprised of a Deputy Director, Associate Director, and eleven division directors oversees the various aspects of the agency.



Organizational Structure

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission's organizational infrastructure provides support in all administrative areas. OESC has over 700 staff positions and has been serving customers since 1941. As a large public-sector agency, OESC is well-equipped to provide administrative support to its workforce programs across the state.

OESC is comprised of five main areas: **Workforce Programs and Services, Unemployment Insurance, Labor Market Information, Veteran's Service, Appellate Division.**

Workforce Programs and Services - The **Workforce Programs & Services** offered by OESC connects employers with skilled workers as well as access to training programs, and other job search assistance through our full-service workforce centers.

Unemployment Insurance - OESC's **Unemployment Insurance (UI)** division provides unemployment compensation to qualified individuals and collects state UI taxes from businesses.

Labor Market Information - The **Labor Market Information (LMI)** produced by OESC provides a broad selection of projected, historical and current information from various areas. This information is key to marketing and research as well as economic, educational and career planning.

Veteran's Services - OESC's **Veterans Services** division provides employment and re-integration services for current and former members of the U.S. military.

Appellate Division - OESC's **Appellate Division** assures that those impacted by the Commission's actions and determinations relating to Unemployment and Workforce activities receive a full, fair, and independent review of their claims.

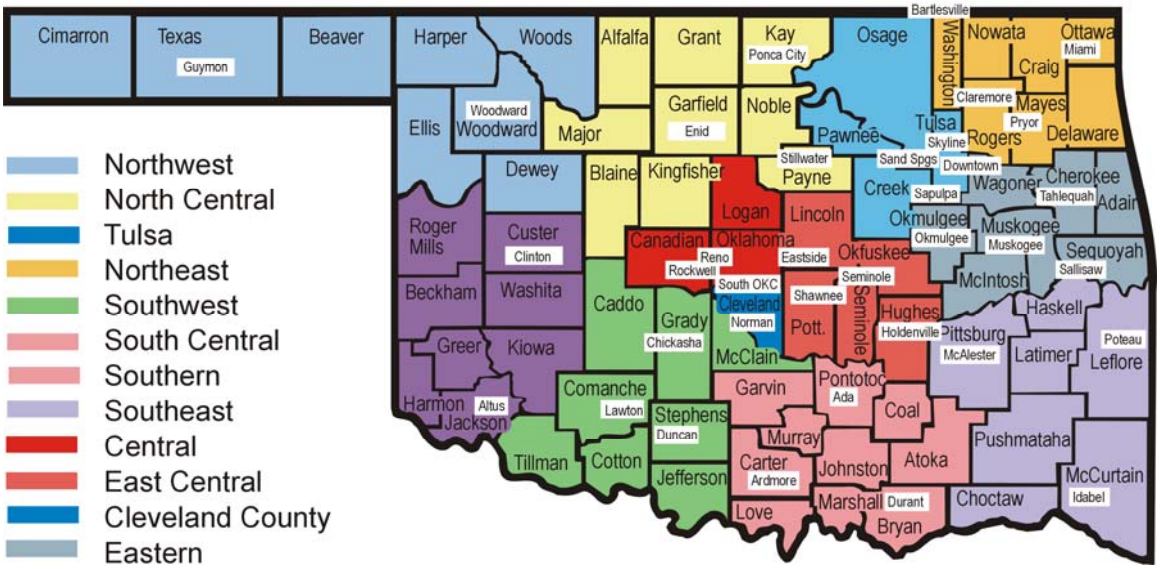
Strategically Located Full-Service Workforce Centers

There is at least one center in every major local labor market within Oklahoma. These centers provide an array of services to help both business and job-seeker.

Our extensive **employer services** include employee recruitment/referral, screening and application collection. The enhanced employer assistance available includes tax credit connections, on-site assistance, labor market information and occupational analysis.

Job seekers have access to state and national job listings as well as referral to training and other supportive services. Job seekers may also gain valuable skills enhancement services to increase their foundational and soft skills. Other services include extensive career decision-making tools, resume preparation, labor market information and job search tools.

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission Workforce Centers



Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
Workforce Centers Directory

Ada ..... 1628 E Beverly St, 74820
Phone (580) 332-1533 ..... FAX (580) 421-9265
Counties Served: Garvin, Pontotoc

Altus ..... 1115 N Spurgeon St, 73521
Phone (580) 482-3262 ..... FAX (580) 482-3284
Counties Served: Greer, Harmon, Jackson, Kiowa

Ardmore ..... 201 "A" St SW, 73401
Phone (580) 223-3291 ..... FAX (580) 226-2730
Counties Served: Carter, Love, Murray

Bartlesville ..... 6101 SE Nowata, 74006
Phone (918) 331-3400 ..... FAX (918) 331-0044
Counties Served: Nowata, Washington, Osage

Chickasha ..... 301 S 2nd St, 73018
Phone (405) 224-3310 ..... FAX (405) 222-1215
Counties Served: Grady, McClain, Caddo

Claremore ..... 1810 N Sioux Ave, 74018
Phone (918) 341-6633 ..... FAX (918) 341-7723
County Served: Rogers

Clinton ..... 1120 Frisco Ave, 73601
Phone (580) 323-1341 ..... FAX (580) 323-9176
Counties Served: Beckham, Custer, Roger Mills, Washita

Duncan ..... 1927 W Elk Ave, 73533
Phone (580) 255-8950 ..... FAX (580) 255-8959
Counties Served: Jefferson, Stephens

Durant ..... 4310 W Hwy 70, 74701
Phone (580) 924-1828 ..... FAX (580) 920-2464
Counties Served: Atoka, Bryan, Coal, Johnston, Marshall

Enid ..... 2613 N VanBuren, 73701
Phone (580) 234-6043 ..... FAX (580) 234-8405
Counties Served: Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kingfisher, Major

Guymon ..... 225 E HWY 54, 73942
Phone (580) 338-8521 ..... FAX (580) 468-1814
Counties Served: Beaver, Cimarron, Texas

Holdenville ..... 115 N Rodgers Dr, 74848
Phone (405) 379-5452 ..... FAX (405) 379-6355
Counties Served: Hughes, Okfuskee

Idabel ..... 2202 SE Washington St, 74745
Phone (580) 286-6667 ..... FAX (580) 286-7867
Counties Served: McCurtain, Choctaw, Pushmataha

Lawton ..... 711 SW 11th St, 73501
Phone (580) 357-3500 ..... FAX (580) 357-9629
Counties Served: Comanche, Cotton, Tillman

McAlester ..... 1201 E Watts Ave 74501
Phone (918) 423-6830 ..... FAX (918) 429-1175
Counties Served: Latimer, Pittsburg

Miami ..... 121 N Main, 74354
Phone (918) 542-5561 ..... FAX (918) 542-7505
Counties Served: Delaware, Ottawa

Muskogee ..... 717 S 32nd, 74401
Phone (918) 682-3364 ..... FAX (918) 682-4311
Counties Served: McIntosh, Muskogee, Sequoyah, Wagoner

VA Regional Office ..... 125 S Main, Ste 1A20, 74401
Phone (580) 326-6472 ..... FAX (580) 326-0958

Norman ..... 1141 E Main, 73071
Phone (405) 364-2505 ..... FAX (405) 364-2520
County Served: Cleveland

Oklahoma City
Counties Served: Logan, Oklahoma, Canadian

Eastside ..... 7401 NE 23rd, 73141
Phone (405) 713-1890 ..... FAX (405) 713-1898

Tinker Air Force Base
Family Support Center, Bldg. 1
72 MSS/DPF ..... D Ave Room 105B, 73145-9186
Phone (405) 734-2273 ..... FAX (405) 739-8464

Oklahoma City (Continued)
Counties Served: Logan, Oklahoma, Canadian

Rockwell Center ..... 12777 N Rockwell, 73142
Francis Tuttle Tech Center, Campus Center Bldg
Phone (405) 470-3200 ..... FAX (405) 470-3223

Redlands Community College ..... El REno
1300 S Country Club Rd - Student Center,
Rm SC-4A
Phone (405) 422-1249 ..... FAX (405) 422-1415

Southside ..... 4509 S I-35 Service Rd, 73129
Phone (405) 670-9100 ..... FAX (405) 670-9292

OKC VA Medical Center ..... 921 NE 13th, 73104
Rm 3A - 165
Ph (405) 270-0501 ext 5031 or 5735
FAX (405) 270-5131

West ..... 416 B Hudiburg Circle, 73107
Phone (405) 639-3640 ..... FAX (405) 427-1437

Okmulgee ..... 1801 E 4th St, 74447
Phone (918) 756-5791 ..... FAX (918) 756-0937
County Served: Okmulgee

Ponca City ..... 1201 W Grand Ave, 74601
Phone (580) 765-3372 ..... FAX (580) 765-6145
Counties Served: Kay, Noble, Osage

Poteau ..... 106 Rogers Ave, 74953
Phone (918) 647-3124 ..... FAX (918) 647-8939
Counties Served: LeFlore, Haskell

Pryor ..... 219 NE 1st St, 74361
Phone (918) 825-2582 ..... FAX (918) 825-6494
Counties Served: Craig, Mayes

Sallisaw ..... 1502 W Chickasaw St, 74955
Phone (918) 775-5541 ..... FAX (918) 775-6385
County Served: Sequoyah

Sand Springs ..... 401 E Broadway, Suite B1 St, 74063
Phone (918) 245-9544 ..... FAX (918) 245-9566
Counties Served: Osage, Tulsa

Sapulpa ..... 1700 S Main, 74066
Phone (918) 224-9430 ..... FAX (918) 227-2859
County Served: Creek

Seminole ..... 229 N 2nd St, 74868
Phone (405) 382-4670 ..... FAX (405) 382-0104
County Served: Seminole

Shawnee ..... 2 John C Burton Blvd, 74804
Phone (405) 275-7800 ..... FAX (405) 878-9742
Counties Served: Lincoln, Pottawatomie

Stillwater ..... 711 E Krayler Ave, 74075
Phone (405) 624-1450 ..... FAX (405) 372-0295
County Served: Payne

Tahlequah ..... 1755 S Muskogee, 74464
Phone (918) 456-8846 ..... FAX (918) 456-3256
County Served: Cherokee, Sequoyah, Adair

Stilwell ..... 219 W Oak, 74601
Phone (918) 696-6608 ..... FAX (918) 696-5983

Tulsa
County Served: Tulsa, Osage, Pawnee

Eastgate ..... 14002 E 21st St, 74134
Phone (918) 796-1200 ..... FAX (918) 796-1313

Skyline ..... 6128 E 38th Suite 405, 74135
Phone (918) 384-2300 ..... FAX (918) 384-2310

Woodward ..... 1117 11th St, 73801
Phone (580) 256-3308 ..... FAX (580) 254-3093
Counties Served: Dewey, Ellis, Harper, Woods, Woodward

Relationship between OESC and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs)

With business services, employee recruitment, and training incentives for job seekers, the Oklahoma workforce system continually adapts to the changing demands of our Oklahoma employers. Oklahoma workers turn to OESC for job placement assistance, training opportunities, and employment support services. The Oklahoma workforce system has emerged as a continuously evolving relationship among the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and the 12 local workforce boards – comprised predominantly of employers, service providers, and numerous other stakeholders in the workforce development arena in Oklahoma.

Each board has responsibility for service delivery within a specific area. The local boards have the flexibility to set policies such as where workforce centers are located, who is providing the services, and staff levels. OESC regulates the services provided and monitors the performance of each area. This model simplifies the process for the customers by providing a single point of contact in their communities for workforce-related services.

Integrated service delivery is key to the ongoing success of the Oklahoma workforce system model. Integration goes far beyond co-location; it provides the framework that allows workforce professionals to draw from a broad array of services to craft solutions for individual customers.

2. OESC Workforce

OESC staff provides expertise and direction for predicting business needs and preparing a ready workforce. OESC employs over 700 full-time and part-time employees across the state. The staff are diverse in background, experience and culture, with an average of over 13 years of service. 25% of OESC employees are minority, only 16 of the 114 State Agencies have a higher percentage of minorities. The average age of staff is 50, with an average of 10 years until reaching eligibility for retirement. In response OESC has a detailed succession plan with a focus on mentoring, advanced training and recruitment. Many employees have dedicated their careers to assisting both those seeking employment and businesses providing employment. Services provided range from business support to staffing assistance to skills training.

Staffs continually update their skills and information in order to provide "state of the art" information to local businesses, chambers of commerce, and community organizations. Staff promote workforce planning through state and local partnerships, analyzing the needs of current employers, forecasting the needs of future employees and preparing the workforce to meet those needs. OESC staff is committed to the vision and mission of the agency and demonstrate their commitment on a daily basis.

3. Maximizing Technology

OESC believes in the power of technology to improve the quality of services we deliver to Oklahomans. Our experience is that use of technology is central to program design. The use of technology enhances the efficiency of our programs.

Improving service to customers through technology:

OklahomaJobLink.com (OJL). The powerful, online job matching Web site matches employers of all sizes and industries with qualified job candidates. During Program Year 2007, 23,945 job orders were listed in OJL which represented 60,565 job openings. The site is free and provides tailored support for employers and job seekers. Integrated local workforce center staff use OJL and Oklahoma Service Link (OSL), which is the case management and reporting module to share data on the services provided to participants in OESC's various employment and training programs. All unemployment claimants are required to register with OJL, with most required to make a minimum of two work searches per week. OESC works diligently to enhance the OklahomaJobLink.com Web site, making it more and more effective for our customers. As a member of the America's Job Link Alliance consortium of states, OESC is able to take advantage of opportunities presented by other states through best practices and open dialogue. Recent enhancements include improvements to job posting information and occupational reports, "spidering" to external job banks, linkages with other web sites, including GrowOklahoma.com.

Unemployment Insurance Online. Filing for unemployment insurance is more streamlined than ever; having evolved from claimants waiting in line to file for benefits to Call Centers that allow Oklahomans to file unemployment claims and request payments over the telephone. Beginning in 2002, OESC initiated plans to provide comprehensive self-service capability for our UI program. Today, UI initial claims for benefits, payment requests, and work search logs can be processed online. By extending the ability for claimants to file on the Internet, OESC has increased the hours of availability to nearly 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Extended Unemployment Compensation. With the advent of the federal government approving Extended Unemployment Compensation (EUC), OESC has developed an online application to allow customers to file for their EUC benefits online. This process frees up call center activity and allows more and greater access for customers.

Unemployment Insurance Taxes. OESC is the process of designing a Web-based system to enhance the services OESC provides to Oklahoma employers. Employers will be able to create new tax accounts, file their tax reports, respond to separation requests, and report unemployment fraud online. Employers will be able to pay their quarterly tax payments online by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

Oklahoma Wage Network (OWN) - http://www.oesc.state.ok.us/lmi/resultpage.asp?pageid=own
The Oklahoma Wage Network provides dynamic access to wage and employment estimates for the State, Metropolitan Areas, Workforce Investments Areas, and Local Labor Market Areas. OWN is an interactive web service that allows the user to view a wide range of data, including employment estimates (where available). A data user can view more detailed information about an occupation by clicking on the occupation. Examples are the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code and definition, median wage history and ranges, and a breakdown of the top areas for that particular occupation in the state.

Local Employment Dynamics (LED) - http://www.oesc.state.ok.us/lmi/resultpage.asp?pageid=led
The Local Employment Dynamics program is an innovative state-federal partnership of the U.S. Census Bureau and the Oklahoma Employment Security Commissio to provide new demographic employment information called Quarterly Workforce Indicators. Local decision makers -employers, workers, transportation agencies, education and training institutions and economic development agencies - need current, local data to make decisions. The new Quarterly Workforce Indicators series provides just that.

Process improvement for efficiency accountability:

OESC is committed to efficient and effective service delivery through streamlined operations and accountability at all levels.

Tax Avoidance Scheme Detection Program. SUTA (State Unemployment Tax Act) dumping is an illegal tax-avoidance scheme used by some employers to lower their UI

tax rates. Because employer tax rates are experience-rated, or based on the number of UI claims filed by former employees, they can fluctuate depending on an employer's payroll history. Employers who engage in SUTA dumping attempt to manipulate this experience-rated tax by moving payrolls to a new company. OESC has made enhancements to the existing software to improve its overall usability and effectiveness

Unemployed Insurance/Fraud Control. OESC has implemented a very effective method to identify fraud by using a crossmatch with the National New Hire Dirrectoy. The "New Hire" crossmatch provides a checkpoint that compares the UI benefit claim files with a required reporting by businesses of new employees. It searches agency records to spot claimants who collect benefits after they are hired. The "New Hire" crossmatch is very effective because it can catch fraud in its infancy and prevent the thefts from growing. This prompt action keeps money in the UI fund that would otherwise have gone out as an overpayment. It also limits the overpayment debt of UI recipients

Unemployment Insurance Direct Deposit/Debit Cards. OESC has eliminated the Unemployment check printing process with the use of direct deposit and debit cards. This is major cost savings of close to $1 million dollars/per year by saving staff cost, printing, postage, materials, and other administrative costs. Other benefits include a very stable disaster recovery plan for benefit payments, savings in transaction costs, and the ability to consolidate organizationally.

New Hire Reporting. OESC is the designated state agency in Oklahoma that receives the new hire reports. The Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED) is the repository for Oklahoma's directory of new hires. Many states have selected their child support program as the designated state agency to receive the new hire reports. The Legislature determined that since employers are used to reporting quarterly wage data to OESC, it would be less burdensome for employers to report their new hire reports to OESC as well. OESC has enhanced the reporting requirements to ease the burden on employers and streamline the submission process.

Oklahoma Service Link (OSL). OSL is the staff component of Oklahoma Job Link. It allows staff to enter services, track customer progress, generate reports, and other activities to aid in their delivery of ervice to employers, training seekers, and job seekers. In Oklahoma's integrated service delivery model, OSL is a valuable tool that makes integration more streamlined and successful.

Document Imaging. By capturing images of customer correspondence, OESC improved data accuracy. Images now are accessible to all staff for immediate review. Select assignments can be routed to employees anywhere in the state for improved flexibility.

Challenges

OESC recognizes the challenge of preparing the Oklahoma workforce for the high-skill, high-demand jobs that employers in an expanding economy require. Training for current and future workers is limited by reduced funding and restrictive funding streams that hinder an integrated delivery system.

Training for current workers. For Oklahoma to remain competitive in the global economy, we must invest in the training of our current workforce. The challenge is to ensure that current workers have the training necessary to grow with their current employer and to obtain transferable skills should changes in the corporate structure or product line alter their employment status.

Most job-training funds are appropriated for specific groups of disadvantaged individuals, including workers who have lost their jobs. Members of the existing workforce usually do not qualify for government programs and thus must seek to upgrade their skills through an employer or on their own. However, to keep the cost of goods and services competitive, many employers have reduced on-the-job training or are looking for external sources to fund this training. Only small pockets of discretionary funds exist to provide some current worker training, and the demand far outweighs the limited funds.

The WIA rescission also factors into local decision-making as even less funding is available for occupational training. Many local areas refer to or deliver "short-term pre-vocational services" to customers. These services are less intensive than occupational training, require less funding, and require very little eligibility concerns. Such services as foundational skill enhancements, job seeking skills, and other less intensive services allow areas to impact a greater number of customers at less cost. Research has shown that many employers look for job seekers that have solid soft and foundational skills at time of hire so this fits into the demand-driven model.

Restrictive federal funding . The many demands on the federal budget discussed in the External Assessment could seriously limit the Oklahoma workforce system's funding. An additional challenge arises from the manner in which federal funds are distributed. Each federal program presently has a separate funding stream with built-in limitations on eligibility criteria, populations to be served, program goals, level of performance achieved, and reports generated.

OESC and the local workforce boards comply with the requirements attached to these funding streams. OESC has devised solutions for some of the limitations brought on by restrictive funding streams through federal waivers. OESC has also implemented several policies that allow local areas to work with these challenges. Such policies as dual enrollment of customers into multiple programs, incentive policies, and integration standards allow the local areas to remain compliant yet offer a high quality of service delivery to customers, which is not program driven-driven.

Opportunities

Expanding the Customer Base for OESC Services

The Oklahoma workforce system is an important asset to employers, with services ranging from business support to staffing assistance to skills training. Tremendous opportunities exist to attract an ever-expanding customer base by sharing information about the wealth of OESC services to both employers and workers. Through many outreach efforts, excellent strides have been made to promote services to employers and to overcome the perception that the workforce system is limited to serving entry-level workers and administering Unemployment Insurance. OESC and the local Workforce Investment Boards are both working to raise the profile of the Oklahoma workforce system and highlight its capabilities by connecting employers and workers of a broad array of industries and skill sets.

Business Service Teams have been developed at each local area, led by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, to engage employers in one-on-one meetings to learn about each business' unique workforce needs. Many OESC staff are members of local Business Service Teams.

In some areas, OESC has developed Employer Councils which is a cooperative educational effort of our agency and area human resource professionals. The Oklahoma City Employer Council is highly successful with an ever-growing employer participant rate.

Through Oklahoma Job Link (OJL), OESC's powerful online job-matching Web site, our agency continues to engage employers and job seekers, further elevating the awareness of the services available through the workforce system. OJL has been enhanced to engage Higher Education and Technology partners. Graduates of Oklahoma educational institutions are easily identified in the system and employers can notify educational institutions of their job postings through OJL.

Customers also turn to OESC for valuable labor market information, employment data, site-selection tools, and many other services available from OESC staff or online, all of which help customers make more informed choices in the ever-evolving labor market.

It is vital to reach out to Oklahoma workers who are interested in training to upgrade skills, need assistance with job-search activities, or who can benefit from other OESC services. Local workforce boards collaborate with local employers, sponsor job fairs, facilitate Rapid Response services for displaced workers, and provide additional outreach to increase awareness in their communities.

OESC recognizes many opportunities to further engage customers and expand the understanding of the value the workforce system brings to the businesses and workers of Oklahoma. The ability to seize outreach opportunities requires working with new

customers to demonstrate the value of the system, dedicating the necessary resources and providing staff with the tools necessary to expand our impact on the Oklahoma economy.

OESC is an important component of Oklahoma's Economic Development

OESC is committed to operating a demand-driven system serving employers and workers. That means connecting employers with workers who have the skills for the jobs they need to have completed. This focus compels us to organize and deliver our services in a way that both strengthens Oklahoma's existing businesses and encourages new businesses to locate in Oklahoma. A demand-driven workforce system requires strategic investments that leverage resources to increase the return on those investments.

OESC works with many partners to attract and/or retain business to Oklahoma. Working cooperatively with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Local Chambers of Commerce, and local Economic Development entities, OESC plays an important role in the economic development success of Oklahoma.

Integrated Services Delivered at the Local Level

The vision for the Oklahoma workforce system is to provide meaningful solutions to workforce issues faced by Oklahoma employers and workers, without being unduly constrained by restrictive funding streams or program requirements. It is a system dedicated to integrated, demand-driven, local delivery with maximum flexibility and strong accountability.

Local workforce centers have moved to an integrated customer flow service integration model. This model is organized by service rather than program. This model shifts the paradigm of focusing on "work first" to "skills first". Increased customer needs and the demand for skilled worker prompts this shift. Service integration unifies purposes, goals, metrics, and policies. It makes programs invisible to customers where customer flow is organized by service, not program. It also provides unified staffing of customer flow with leadership and supervision arranged by function.

In the integrated customer flow model, three functions are accomplished: 1) Welcome Function; 2) Skills Enhancement Function; and 3) Job Getting Function. Through this model, every customer has the right to know their skills, improve their skills, and get the best job possible based on those skills.

The Welcome Function is responsible for not only customer intake/registration but also an initial assessment of customer needs. This is a process that provides preliminary information about an individual's skill levels, aptitudes, interests and supportive service needs. The initial assessment determines or verifies employment/career goals and serves as an indicator for determining the next unit to which customers will be directed.

The Skill Enhancement Function is responsible for the development and assessment of skills necessary to maximize an individual's ability to obtain and retain employment. The Skill Development Function will provide an array of skills development services

related to foundational, soft, job keeping, job getting, and occupational skills. Depending on individual customer needs, this unit may offer comprehensive assessments of skills, skills enhancements, intensive counseling, career planning, Career Ready Certificate achievement, work experiences, etc.

The Job Getting Function assists job-ready customers with employment opportunities. Using Oklahoma Job Link, employers are connected with qualified job seekers

Organizationally, OESC is structured to support this model. At the state administrative level, OESC has integrated Employment Service and Workforce Investment programs into the Workforce Integrated Programs Division. This organizational change has shown OESC's commitment to service integration and aids in the delivery of technical guidance and issuances. OESC's Workforce Quality Division is charged with monitoring unemployment insurance, employment service, and workforce investment programs.

Going forward, OESC and its local board partners must do more with less in an environment of shrinking federal resources. One avenue will be to increase collaboration on a regional level so that we can best serve our employers and job seekers, where work in one area can draw workers from all surrounding areas and programs can efficiently serve a broader area.

Partnerships

OESC is committed to building value-added partnerships that will aid our agency achieve our mission. Partnerships bring a diversity of perspectives and each partnership brings with it something valuable. Through such proactive relationships with various entities, OESC believes it will become even effective and efficient in the future. The following represents some of OESC's partnerships.

Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) - The Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development brings together leaders from across a variety of private and public sector organizations to develop a strategy for accelerated economic growth and to provide direction to state administration. The Council's vision is for Oklahoma to have a competitive advantage through integrated workforce and economic development objectives. The Council will achieve this vision through its mission to advance a demand-driven workforce and economic development system. OESC's Executive Director sits on the GCWED and many OESC management staff work on GCWED committees and taskforces.

Workforce Solutions Staff Team (WSST) – Facilitated and led by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (ODOC), the Workforce Solutions Staff Team (WSST) consists of executives of various state agencies and local entities that come together to collaborate and find solutions to workforce issues. The goal is to leverage resources, eliminate duplication and barriers between agencies, and deliver comprehensive services to clients and businesses. In addition to ODOC and OESC, partners on the WSST include

the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE), Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education (ODCTE), Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE), Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitative Services (ODRS), Oklahoma Department of Human Services (ODHS), Oklahoma Office of Handicap Concerns, community colleges, and representation of Local Workforce Investment Boards.

America's Job Link Alliance (AJLA) - America's Job Link Alliance is a consortium of workforce agencies whose primary purpose is to maximize return on investment in workforce development information technology. Through collaboration on design, management, and improvement of information technology related to workforce data collection, reporting, and performance management, members reduce the expense and risk associated with systems implementation and maintenance. OESC along with other states form this consortium. AJLA develop Oklahoma Job Link, Oklahoma Service Link, and other electronic modules. OESC sits on the Steering Committee of AJLA and as well as participates in other committees. Through this partnership, OESC is able to take advantage of best practices, input, and shared vision of other states delivering similar services.

GrowOklahoma.com - Grow Oklahoma is an online resource sponsored by the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development. GrowOklahoma.com is a career management tool that can help customers explore potential careers, plan education, find a job, start a business, and provides a look at how Oklahomans live and play. GrowOklahoma.com grew out of the already developed OKCollegeStart.com website which was developed by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. GrowOklahoma.com is linked to Oklahoma Job Link and the ODCTE career management tool, Oklahoma Career Information System (OKCIS). Through these linkages, customers can enter one portal to access a multitude of online services.

Initiatives

OESC is committed to achieving its mission objectives. OESC has implemented several programmatic and process initiatives to achieve success. Many of the technology initiatives listed in this document will benefit customers as they access services and staff as they continue to deliver high quality service.

OESC is an active partner of the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development and as such, we support the initiatives that they have identified. The list below contains some examples of both GCWED and OESC initiatives.

Service Integration

Service integration allows OESC to pursue comprehensive integration to transform multiple public programs into a true "one-stop" workforce development system. Beyond just integrating programs for improved and expanded service delivery, through service integration, the entire design and delivery of workforce services is demand-driven and moves to a "skill-based" service paradigm.

Integration of two major federal programs: (1) Employment Service - which falls under state control; and (2) Workforce Investment Act Title 1 programs -- which are under local control has leads to a more responsive, seamless service delivery model.

Back to Basics

Back to Basics is an OESC initiative to improve the quality our labor exchange process, which connects jobs with workers and workers with jobs. This initiative guided the standardization of job orders and referrals which resulted in improved employment outcomes. Since the inception of the Back to Basics initiative, feedback from local employers indicates they are much more satisfied with the quality of job orders and referrals.

Oklahoma Job Link and Service Link Enhancements

As members of the AJLA consortium, OESC is able to take advantage of the best practices and shared vision of other states delivering similar services. OJL is the front-end on-line resource for both employers and job seekers, while OSL is the back-end resource for staff to perform case management, record services, and generate reports. Through continued enhancements to these modules, OESC will be able to offer an even higher quality of service. Future enhancements include Oklahoma FiscalLink and Oklahoma ReportLink.

Create a Business Support Team

OESC strongly supports a demand-driven system by focusing on outcomes and results that are directly linked to successful partnership with employers. A Business Support

Team will connect workers to good jobs and employers to productive workers as OESC works with new and expanding business.

Support the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) Model and Work Ready Communities Initiative

The Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) and many of its partner agencies have rolled out a system of assessment and certification designed to meet the needs of both employees and employers. The Career Readiness Certificate program uses ACT Workkeys, a nationally recognized assessment instrument to measure skills and provide a common language between educators, businesses, and community members. The CRC is a portable credential documenting that potential or incumbent employees possess certain fundamental skills required by employers here and across the country.

To aid employers, ACT's Job Profiling process, connects an ACT-trained facilitator to work collaboratively an employer to complete each job analysis. Job incumbents serve as the subject matter experts who define the tasks and skills needed to perform a specific job successfully. By matching the job profile information with individual scores on the WorkKeys assessments through a CRC, employers can make reliable decisions about hiring, training, and program development needs. OESC has two ACT certified profilers that work with other profilers to not only provide job profiles to employers but also to increase awareness of the CRC initiative.

The Work Ready Communities Initiative is a model that enables an Oklahoma community to showcase their CRC credentialed talent. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce and the Governor's Council for Workforce & Economic Development launched the Certified Work Ready Communities program which summarizes into one document the myriad qualifications of hundreds or thousands of workers, providing a single-source answer to questions about the adequacy of present and future workers to meet any demands that may be placed on them.

Oklahoma actually has the first two communities that achieved certification as Work Ready Communities – Chickasha and Pryor. OESC staff played an integral role in these efforts.

Reemployment Services

One of the principal aims of the profiling system is to provide Reemployment Services to certain claimants through an "early intervention" process. That is, claimants who are unlikely to return to their previous jobs or occupations will be identified and given assistance early in their claims series. This approach is expected to facilitate an early return to employment and savings to each state's unemployment fund.

OESC will expand its delivery of reemployment services to a greater number of claimants. Currently, each workforce center “pulls” a profiled list of claimants. These

claimants are brought into the center for "profiling orientation service" and then scheduled for a Job Search Workshop as a mandatory re-employment service. OESC will offer more intensive Welcome Integrated Function instead of the duplicative and less effective profiling orientation service.

This model change will allow more claimants to access re-employment services. If a claimant can move from dislocation and return to employment within a specified time frame will save the separating employer a cost as well as preserving the integrity of the UI trust fund.

Job Search Workshops

OESC offers an in-person job search workshop through the workforce centers. In order to provide even greater exposure to the skills and knowledge that a customer may acquire through the workshop, OESC will explore the ability to offer similar content online. Not only does this allow more customers to access this opportunity, it also allows OESC to save travel and staff cost by offering the intensive workshops in those areas where there is greater demand.

OESC will also review and revise the current curriculum based to align the content with current job search methods and strategies as well as being more demand-driven as input from employers will be sought and utilized.

The impact of expanding customer access to the workshops will help get transitioning workers back into the labor force more quickly. If those workers are also receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits, faster re-entry into the labor force will help keep employer taxes low and maintain the solvency of the UI Trust Fund.

Conclusion

Our Mission…
Enhance Oklahoma's economy by

- ***matching jobs and workers*** *to increase the efficiency of local labor markets,*
- ***providing Unemployment Compensation*** *to support unemployed workers and their communities,*
- ***preparing a skilled workforce*** *to enhance and align their skills to meet local labor market needs,*
- ***gathering, analyzing and disseminating information*** *about the labor force to improve local economic decisions.*

OESC is dedicated to promote and support a workforce system that offers employers, individuals and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity. OESC continues to seek out technological applications and administrative efficiencies that will allow us to devote an even larger percentage of our limited resources to services for Oklahoma employers and job seekers.

This strategic plan articulates an understanding of who we are, what we do, and the values by which we define ourselves. It articulates as well our ambitious aspiration, key goals we believe we must meet in order to achieve that aspiration, and an assessment of where OESC stands today as we rededicate ourselves to these objectives.

The plan does not reflect everything that OESC hopes to do over the next three years; nor does it represent an irrevocably fixed set of directives, since the planning process must be dynamic and adaptable. It will, however, serve as the framework according to which we will make difficult decisions, focus our resources, and thereby advance OESC's distinction as a leader in the Oklahoma workforce system.