

Meeting of the
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
2:00 pm November 12, 2025

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: LUCIA DICKINSON

Kyle Foster, RSC; Dan Mabery, NSU; Macey Scotten, RCC; Joel Dean, OSRHE; Amy Goddard, USAO; Whitney Alvis, RSC; Michele Hockersmith, SE; Jamie Henson, CASC; Joyce Burch, OU; Pete Selden, TCC; Cass Minx, OSRHE; John Claybon, OCCC

2. EMPLOYER TOUR OF PRATT AND WHITNEY FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION: LUCIA DICKINSON

Participants agreed that the Pratt & Whitney tour was highly informative and provided a valuable look at advanced industry operations in Oklahoma. Many were impressed by the company's strong culture and the opportunities it offers within the state. A major topic of discussion was how the company's hiring practices align with higher education. Attendees noted that Pratt & Whitney focuses heavily on partnerships with four-year universities, which makes it difficult to see how two-year colleges fit into their workforce pipeline, despite community colleges offering relevant training. Some participants suggested that contract labor roles within the company may provide an entry point for two-year graduates and emphasized the need for employers to better understand community college capabilities.

The group also discussed how to bring these insights back to students. They agreed that it is important for students to know that high-quality STEM and technical careers exist in Oklahoma and that employers value soft skills such as initiative, flexibility, and a positive attitude. Having Career Services staff on the tour was seen as especially beneficial since they are central to building employer relationships. Participants also noted that the event was well organized, with smooth registration. Additionally, Pratt & Whitney mentioned the visit at a recent aerospace forum, reinforcing the value they place on educational partnerships. Overall, attendees appreciated the company's interest in recruiting college-level talent and left with useful information to support students and strengthen industry connections.

3. EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES: CASS MINX

During the meeting, the presenter reviewed the 2024 Employment Outcomes Report, noting that institution-specific data will be shared afterward. The report is based on employment matches with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and Oklahoma Tax Commission to determine whether graduates are working in Oklahoma one and five years after earning their degrees. Around 66,000 records were analyzed, with unmatched records typically indicating employment outside the state. Overall, employment outcomes were similar to last year, with resident graduates showing strong retention at 91.5%. Nonresident retention dipped slightly but remains much higher than in earlier years.

The report highlighted that STEM and engineering graduates have high retention at the associate level but lower retention at higher degree levels, partly due to better-paying opportunities in neighboring states. Teaching showed strong retention for classroom-focused associate and bachelor's degrees, and nursing once again posted exceptionally high retention across all degree levels, with some categories reaching 100%. Median earnings continue to increase with educational attainment, reflecting national trends. Oklahoma's Promise students also showed excellent outcomes, with over 90% retained one year after graduation and nearly 90% after five years. An interactive dashboard with filters for institutions and programs is available online, and attendees were encouraged to request specific data as needed. The meeting concluded with time for questions.

Employment Outcomes Dashboard: [SAS® Visual Analytics](#)

4. LIGHTCAST/EIMPACT UPDATE: LUCIA DICKINSON

The meeting continued with an update on Lightcast and E-Impact. The presenter noted that Lightcast is gaining traction, with more individuals and institutions obtaining licenses and using the platform. Attendees were encouraged to work closely with their Lightcast license holders to ensure they are accessing and applying data for faculty, departments, and students. Monthly Lightcast trainings are available, and the next session—scheduled for November 21 at 10 a.m.—will focus on industry partnerships and how to identify major employers in each region. Participants were reminded to contact Cass or the presenter if they are unsure of their institution's license holder, as collaboration between EDC staff, Career Services, and Lightcast users is essential for effective industry engagement and student support.

The group then received an overview of E-Impact, a new tool purchased by the State Regents as part of the Lightcast contract. E-Impact is designed as a forward-facing resource for students, advisors, and counselors, helping them connect academic programs to aligned career paths. The demonstration highlighted how students will be able to select their degree level and field of study, view occupations tied to their program, and access live job postings refreshed daily. The tool also provides data on job demand, forecasts, and listings, ultimately streamlining the job search process and aligning postings more accurately with credentials. Institutions will be able to embed the dashboard on their websites, particularly on Career Services pages, and the Regents expect the tool to launch by December, with spring 2026 as the broader rollout timeline. Additional training and support will be offered as implementation progresses.

5. REGENTS BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP AWARDS/EVENT UPDATE: CASS MINX

The meeting continued with a discussion about the future of the Regents Business Partnership Awards. The presenter explained that the current \$500 award makes limited impact and often creates more work for institutions than it is worth, prompting the Chancellor to ask how the funds could be used more effectively. One proposal is to discontinue the ceremony and repurpose the funds into a Regents workforce scholarship awarded directly to students. Attendees discussed whether some form of employer recognition should remain, noting that press releases are valuable to

partners even without a formal event. Participants also suggested tying scholarships to programs connected to strong industry partnerships and awarding fewer, larger scholarships to increase impact. There was interest in keeping business partnership recognition optional while shifting the primary focus toward student support. The group also discussed using Lightcast data to identify key partnerships but noted that criteria for selecting students or partnerships would still need to be defined. Lucia then continued leading the discussion on how the restructured program could best support workforce needs.

6. SCHEDULING OF FY 2025 EDC MEETINGS

- a. January 14, 2026 (Regular Meeting via Zoom)
- b. March 2- 6th – TBD
- c. May 27, 2026 – annual training

7. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: JOEL DEAN

- **Northeast Legislative Tour:** December 5 at Rogers State Ballroom
- **Western Legislative Tour:** December 8 at Eischen's in Okarche
- **Southeast Legislative Tour:** December 11 at Pete's Place
- **Metro Legislative Tour:** December 15 at UCO

These tours allow institutions to meet with legislators locally and review the State Regents' legislative agenda and funding priorities, which are also available on the Regents' website. The agenda includes developing a statewide credential of value—similar to models in Texas—as an evolution of micro-credentialing efforts, as well as creating a scholarship program to support adult learners close to completing degrees. Additional priorities include securing resources to designate research institutions as “hubs of discovery” to attract federal and private funding, raising the Oklahoma's Promise income eligibility limit to \$100,000, and clarifying language related to last year's program expansions. The Regents are also requesting a long-term solution to rising property insurance costs and proposing concurrent enrollment legislation to align eligibility with high school requirements and improve reporting on outcomes and course availability.

The group was updated on interim studies, which were generally positive and did not raise significant concerns for higher education. Discussions focused on workforce outcomes, medical professional shortages, and the need for state-funded residency programs. The Regent staff will continue monitoring developments as bill-filing season begins, with a full legislative tracking update to be provided by January 15. Cass then addressed enhanced wage records, explaining that collecting occupation-level data from employers would significantly improve employment outcomes reporting by identifying the specific jobs graduates obtain. This would strengthen workforce pipeline planning and provide insight into high school graduates who do not enroll in college. The Regents are exploring whether this effort will require legislation or can be adopted through statewide collaboration. The meeting concluded with a reminder that presidents have received invitations to their respective legislative tours and that staff are welcome to attend to hear updates directly from the Chancellor and legislators.

8. EVENTS

- State Business Forum- Nov 17th (State Chamber)
- State of Economy – Nov 19th (Greater Oklahoma City Chamber)
- AACC's annual Workforce Development Institute 2026: Resilience -January 28 – 31st New Orleans, LA
- Higher Education Day- TENTATIVELY set for April 29th, 2026

9. OTHER BUSINESS

The group discussed micro-credentials and the credential of value initiative. Joel noted that the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is accepting applications for its first cohort to explore approval of non-credit workforce programs, including micro-credentials. Whitney confirmed this is being tracked and will be discussed in an upcoming meeting. Oklahoma remains one of the few states without a defined credential of value, which impacts employer recruitment. Credential of value metrics typically measure outcomes before and after earning the credential to ensure workforce relevance and quality of life improvements.

The importance of defining a credential of value was tied to workforce Pell eligibility, ensuring that programs entering the market provide meaningful outcomes. It was clarified that workforce Pell for non-credit programs will not add state-level approval requirements, though federal rules require programs to exist for a year to demonstrate outcomes. Establishing a credential of value will help protect students and support workforce development, with updates to come from the governor's office. July 2026 was noted as a key milestone for compliance with new requirements.

10. ADJOURNMENT