

WorkforceGPS

Transcript of Webinar

Effectiveness in Serving Employers Peer Learning Group Meeting

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LAURA CASERTANO: Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's "Effectiveness in Serving Employers Peer Learning Group Meeting." And I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Christina Eckenroth. She's a workforce analyst at the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Christina, take it away.

CHRISTINA ECKENROTH: Thanks, Laura. So, greetings, everyone, and thank you for joining us today to discuss the WIOA shared indicator Effectiveness in Serving Employers. And as you know, we're so fortunate to have such a diverse group joining us. And as Laura indicated, if you haven't already, please share where you are and which titles you represent. We'd love to hear from you.

Federal leadership from ETA, RSA, and OCTAE, are joining us for part of today's session, as are federal subject matter experts from all the titles. So we will hear from Assistant Secretary John Pallasch of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration; as well as Mark Schultz, who's the acting assistant secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; and Scott Stump, the assistant secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

We will also have presenters providing us some overview of information. Cesar Acevedo from ETA will present a data overview. And we'll hear from Wayne Gordon about upcoming evaluation activities. But most importantly we want to hear from you. So, we want to hear about any state specific approaches you have going on, your experiences and challenges with this indicator. So be ready to chime in with your thoughts during the discussion period through the chat.

With that I'd like to welcome remarks from our leadership, beginning with ETA Assistant Secretary John Pallasch. Assistant Secretary Pallasch?

JOHN PALLASCH: Thank you, Christina. And thanks to everybody on the phone. I'm told that we had 260 individuals registered for this. So, the excitement and the energy out there is good. That's positive to see. And I also want to welcome Mark and Scott. Since I started here at ETA, I've made a very concerted effort to make sure that Labor and Education are talking more about WIOA, more about the areas where we assist and help each other. So, I appreciate both of them joining today.

As you all know, the Effectiveness in Serving Employers is something that Education and Labor have been working through since the passage of WIOA. There was fits and starts in terms of exactly what the appropriate measure would be for Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As you all know, we piloted three different measures and asked the states to pick two of those measures. We now have two years' worth of full data on those measures.

And this is all part of kind of the continued technical assistance that Education and Labor want to provide to you all, the states and local partners, who are really doing the work on the ground, really working with the employers, engaging the employers. So, as Christina mentioned, the real outcome of this is going to be hearing from you, hearing your experiences.

I will give you a little bit of background on my experience, a little bit of background on where I'm coming from with this measure. And then I'll turn it over to Mark and Scott to kind of share their thoughts. I had the opportunity to be in Davos last week at the World Economic Forum. And one of the reasons that I was there was to engage with multinational corporations who are doing business here in the United States. So, employers like Nestle, Bayer, Microsoft, large multinational corporations. And we wanted to talk to them about a couple things. One of them was apprenticeships, and work-based training, and what that means to them.

But more germane for this conversation was just the idea of what is it that's holding you back, what is it that's holding you the employer back from continuing to grow and continuing to hire more Americans to work in your companies. And they said it was just that. It was just a talent pipeline. That's all that was holding them back. So, they might have hired 10 people last year. They could have hired 100. They might have hired 100 last year. They could have hired 1,000.

So, it really crystallized for me one of the debates that we used to have during my time back working at the state level in Kentucky is, who's the number one customer that we're serving under WIOA. And there's no real answer to this. But it's more an intellectual exercise to understand that it's not just the individual employees who we serve through WIOA, but it's also the individual employers. And this metric obviously gets to just that, what is the most effective way for us to serve them.

While in Kentucky we had adopted the two measures of the penetration rate and the repeat customer rate. And as we started to drill down on the penetration rate, we started to realize that our number was somewhat inflated. And it was inflated in the sense that we were engaging with and working with a number of employers, but we weren't absolutely certain that it was the right type of employers, the employers who were in a position to really benefit from the services that the workforce system could provide to them.

So, under the leadership of Michelle DeJohn, who I saw is on the phone today – welcome Michelle – Michelle undertook a process for procuring Dun & Bradstreet data for the state of Kentucky to use. And what that data allowed Michelle and her folks to do is really start to identify the employers who are most in need of our services, those who may be looking to expand, those who may be looking to contract, those who are in financial health, and those who are in not such a healthy financial state.

And that really – the objective there was to really make sure that when we were looking at penetration rate, that it wasn't simply a matter of engaging with any business, is just as good as engaging with any other business. It was really being more targeted in what we were after. So not necessarily just trying to drive up the penetration rate to higher and higher percentages, but make sure that we were engaging with the employers, like I said, who could benefit from our services most.

And that's usually important as we go forward and as we look to keep the economy going, continue to expand on the massive job growth that we've seen over the last few years. You all have seen the data. There are about seven million unfilled jobs out there and there's about six million people looking for jobs. So right off the bat we've got a gap of about a million people.

So, when we talk about Effectiveness in Serving Employers, it's really better understanding where they are, what their needs are, and being able to provide those services to them. So, as Christina mentioned in the beginning, once I stop talking, I really want to hear from the states. I want to hear what your experiences are.

I want to hear quite candidly what you think is working, what you don't think is working, if you've got some novel approach, if you've got a little bit of a twist on it as we did in Kentucky with the Dun & Bradstreet data, are there things that you at the state and local levels are looking at and tweaking to better serve that customer, the customer being the employer.

So, like I said, I appreciate everybody being here. I really look forward to kind of a robust conversation about where we want to go with this measure going forward. And that can better help Scott, Mark, and I, as we come to a consensus as to what the appropriate measures should be going forward. So, with that, I still stop talking, I will turn it over to my colleagues at the Department of Education. So, Mark, I'll turn it over to you.

MR. SCHULTZ: OK. Thank you, John. First, I just want to thank you for your ongoing commitment to continuing to keep us involved and engaged in the discussion, just like we're having today. But also, I really appreciate your inclusive vision for our workforce, that we talk about all individuals being a part of the workforce, that's inclusive of individuals with disabilities.

For VR programs, I think the importance of this measure really goes back to the real customer focus, that WIOA really strengthened and enhanced for us for VR programs, and says that employers are really a customer for us as well as individuals, because traditionally our focus was on individuals with disabilities. But having the – (inaudible) – involved is really important, having the successful outcome for our individuals with disabilities that we serve.

This measure, this indicator is really our opportunity I think for VR programs to show what strong efforts are underway out across the country. So, by using this Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator, the use of business resource specialists, progressive employment, project – (inaudible) – internships, apprenticeships, on the job training, are all activities that are inclusive of employers. And I think we can demonstrate by being a part of this data collection, that we're moving the overall numbers in terms of engaging employers for successful outcomes for all individuals, particularly individuals with disabilities in workforce systems.

So, I'm really interested in the experience and challenges that you're facing, VR programs are facing across the country, in terms of providing data. Particularly I want to say that I'm looking forward that we can highlight our success quantitatively by collecting, sharing, and reporting the data. But I really want to emphasize the sharing component. Because we're not going to know that if VR programs across the country are not sharing the data with our partners. That's a critical part of this. And we lose an opportunity to demonstrate the success of what we're doing if we're not doing that.

So again, I want to thank John for this opportunity. And I also want to thank Scott for his partnership. And I'll turn it over to Scott.

MR. STUMP: Thank you, Mark. Thank you, John. And I will bat in the third position, so do know that I'll be brief on this. But on behalf of Title II of WIOA, with the Adult Education and Family Literacy component, yeah, it's a pleasure to be in this conversation. And you know, I have spent the past nearly 20 years in the state of Colorado working in the state community college system, actively with our current tech programs, but then also our Adult Ed programs. And over those years saw the evolution into WIOA, and a shift in the target, especially in adult education, shifting from just getting to that GED or high school diploma, to really preparation for what comes next, which for the majority of our learners is employment.

And so, this measure of looking at the Effectiveness in Serving Employers, also for us becomes an additional outcome measure of saying how successful are we in getting those students placed, and retained, and advancing in their positions. I also think about the integrated education and that training that WIOA brought about in our space, and how we continue to grow the numbers of students and learners that are getting technical skills at the same time they're advancing their literature and numeracy skills, all for at the end of the day again to prepare them to be successful in that first job or in advanced job and occupation that they're moving towards.

Now I know when it comes to this measure in particular and all of the pilot work that's been going on, our focus has not been on the repeat customer business, or repeat business customers with the employee penetration rate, but our focus has really been on retention. Because that is the data set that we do want to be a partner in providing to the system, to enhance the overall picture of how is WIOA influencing and changing the relationship between employers, and workforce, and education system. And we want to continue in that role. But we know that there is – comes with that in some cases a burden.

And so what I'm looking for to hear today is how do we make sure that that burden is appropriately sized for the value that we're getting back out of the measure at the end of the day to help drive increased performance for our learners and our employers at the same time. So, I look forward to the conversation.

MS. ECKENROTH: Terrific. Thank you all for those wonderful remarks. If you have any comments about the vision or the remarks from the Assistant Secretaries, you can feel free to put that in the chat feature, and we'll take a look at that. So, while we're waiting for folks to provide some feedback, I'll do a quick reminder for those of you who may not be as enmeshed in the measure as others.

So, this is a reminder of the requirements to measure Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As you all know, the WIOA statute and regulations, and our joint guidance that was issued jointly between Labor and Education in August of 2017, this is the reminders. Some of you know them by heart. But anybody who would appreciate a cheat sheet, the specifics are listed here. And as a reminder, those measures for the retention with the same employer in second and fourth quarters, employer penetration rate, and repeat business customer during a three-year period.

OK. Anyone have any comments or questions above the vision for this measure or the work across partner programs? Feel free to type in the chat here. If not, we will continue to revisit those as we move through the presentation. So next we're going to talk about what you've been reporting.

So, for some data highlights, I'm going to turn it over to Cesar Acevedo from ETA. Cesar?

CESAR ACEVEDO: So, I'm just going to give a brief overview of what's been reported for Program Year '18. And at some point, where appropriate, we'll compare to what was reported in Program Year 2017. So just as a reminder, states required to report these data as statewide aggregates representing the work done on behalf of employers by all WIOA title programs. To date the Effectiveness in Serving Employer results have been submitted to the Department of Labor. We never really specified which department they needed to be reported to. But it's become clear that the common practice is to report them to Labor through our workforce integrated performance system.

So, this first slide is just a simple distribution of states reporting each pilot measure. Program Year 2018 is the second time these measures have been reported to us. With more complete reporting in 2018 compared to 2017, we can see that there's no clear favorites among the states. But we continue to monitor how that changes.

So, these three maps here provide further detail on which states are reporting which measures. The darker shading indicates that the measure was reported to the departments in Program Year 2018. The key takeaway here is to confirm what was reported by your states to the departments, and just make sure that aligns with your known state policy decisions at the state level. These should be especially useful if any WIOA partners have felt out of the loop at the state level on these indicators. Just making sure that everyone's on the same page and knows what they're reporting on.

So, these next few slides represent the national aggregates of state level information, as was reported on the WIOA statewide performance report, Form ETA 9169. One note about – (inaudible) – employers being a shared measure here, is that we don't expect all title programs to deliver all of these services. For example, some of the employer services listed on this slide are not allowed uses of Title II funds. However, we do expect that the role of every partner agency and the services they do deliver to employers are reflected.

Overall the data indicates that more establishments were provided services in 2018 compared to 2017. However, as we noted before, states continue to improve their overall reporting efforts, making it difficult for us to extract any true trends here in performance. One item that has caught the attention of our ETA's Office of Workforce Investment is the decline in incumbent worker training services. So, we're going to continue to look into that and understand where that change is coming from in the coming months.

These next tables are aggregates of the three pilot measures and the percentage point change in each. Again, these measures are in a state of transition, so any observations we should continue to make with care. For example, in Program Year 2017, the Retention with the Same Employer

measure reflected only two quarters of the – (inaudible) – data. Program Year 2018 results reflect a full four quarters. And we can see the huge changes in the denominator and numerator of the measure approximately doubled.

The issue with the Repeat Business Customer measure is similar. Program Year 2017 results were based on repeat customers within the past two years. And Program Year 2018 results were based on repeat customers within the last three years. Again, structural change evident in the large increases in the denominator in – (inaudible).

The Employment Penetration rates – Employer Penetration rates, excuse me, is the most stable at this point of the three pilot measures, exhibits a modest 0.3 percentage point increase from '17 to '18. Overall 8.3 percent doesn't sound that impressive at face value. But if we think of it in different terms. You say another way that this measure indicates nearly 1 in 10 U.S. business establishments were served by the workforce system in Program Year 2018.

These next three slides display the state level performance results of each pilot measure. We've also taken the liberty of putting in a line representing the national rates, which is not necessarily an average of all the state rates. These are – it's an aggregate rate of all the numerators and denominators, just as a point of reference for each of them. As we click through these, we can see that they are – that the results are quite varied across states, with the purpose again of sharing these visuals is for all the partner agencies to review them together and confirm what was reported in Program Year 2018.

So, our role here in the national office, we're going to continue to monitor these national and state level trends of each pilot measure as the data mature and provide technical assistance as needed. Hopefully in the next two years we can sort of get a sense of what a baseline looks for each pilot measure and begin to understand what each of them is saying about our efforts in serving employers through the workforce system. So, with that, that you for your time. I'll turn it back over to Christina so we can continue our conversation.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Cesar. So, we have a couple of comments that have come into the chat. And I'd like to take the opportunity to have those addressed. So, Mark, Assistant Secretary Schultz, there is a question here about the current method of reporting Employer Penetration. Sort of the comment is that it's structured to reflect the impact of the state's efforts to provide focused penetration with specific industries and sectors. If the overall penetration number is not a primary indicator of penetration rate success, does the current penetration rate measure reflect those services that are really focused on penetration efforts? Can you speak to that?

MARK SCHULTZ: So right now, the way it's structured, it's a measure against all employers in the state. And so, it's not specific to any targeted sector. Just as you have anything that's coming in that need assistance are looking at overall, and not coming in for any one targeted sector as well. So, it's an overall measure and there's not – it's not specific to an industry or a sector.

MS. ECKENROTH: Great. Thank you very much. And then Cesar, there is a comment for you about ways that we could be looking at the data. You'll notice that Adam from Texas has

suggested that we might be looking at some folks who are just really improving their reporting, and that those huge changes might be reflective of those kinds of improvements.

MR. ACEVEDO: Yeah. So, I think – I mean Adam brings up a good point. That is one approach we could take. I think what makes that difficult is the structural changes that I brought from how the measures were calculated in '17 and '18, that also that would be a play there. So, I think we can certainly account for improved reporting over time, but we do need these measures to stabilize.

MS. ECKENROTH: Terrific. Thank you. We have one more comment I'll talk about here from Kentucky, indicating that along with their Dun & Bradstreet business specific opportunities for layoff aversion and opportunities for growth, Kentucky has seen positive increases in the employer engagement by 15 percent with a common CRM amongst all of our partners. So, adding a little bit more context to Assistant Secretary Pallasch's remarks. So, thanks for that input.

MR. PALLASCH: Yeah. And just really quick, if I could focus on that because I think, you know, Kentucky is to be commended for what they're doing in terms of this common CRM. And Michelle, if I can put you on the spot to kind of talk a little bit about what it is, you're doing with the business service teams and the Salesforce system in Kentucky. Because as folks look at the Employment Penetration rate and the Repeat Business Customer rate, Kentucky stands out. And if you would, can you kind of talk to that one workforce vision that Kentucky is using in Salesforce to really make sure that you're capturing all of that penetration rate, all of that repeat customer data kind of under this idea of one workforce?

So, Michelle, if you're not dialed in, we won't be able to hear you. If you are dialed in, it's *6 to unmute your line. But if not, you can just answer us through the chat for a response there. Because you're dialed in at the number above in the audio access lobby, you can dial *6 to unmute your line to respond. Or just answer in that Q&A pod that you asked the question initially. OK. So that's fine, Michelle, you can just ask us in that Q&A pod to respond if you want.

MS. ECKENROTH: So while we're waiting for Michelle to respond, I think this is excellent opportunity for all of you to get your thinking hats on because we'll be talking about this very kind of thing in the next section, the unique things that you were doing in your states, or the tweaks or special approaches that you have, as well as maybe some unique indicators that you're utilizing that we're not maybe utilizing quite yet. We'll be having an opportunity to talk about that in the next section. So, is Michelle able to join us yet?

MS. STAHA : She says it's a long answer.

MS. ECKENROTH: Well if not, we're going to let Michelle jump in. I'll get started and then we'll have Michelle jump in along the way. This is a perfect opportunity because now we're at the discussion section. So many of you have already provided valuable feedback in the establishment of the pilot indicators at the beginning of WIOA implementation.

And as we've seen, you had a few years now of experience with reporting those pilot indicators. So at this point we would like to hear from you based on your experience piloting the options, if there are changes to the pilot indicators, alternative indicator suggestions, or really a whole host of other factors that we should be considering as we move forward to finalize this measure.

So, let's start with the changes. So please use the chat to share with us. And if someone will just let me know when Michelle is ready to talk, that's a great opportunity. So, we'll start with the changes. Now use our chat feature to tell us what about our current situation, our current scenario, just needs a little bit of tweaking. So, imagine you have an easy button for our current situation, if you can make adjustments or tweaks to the pilot measures, or maybe you're already doing it, what would you do to make it better?

OK. We're seeing some great things come in. So, some folks are saying for example, could you or should you even be aligning your employer outreach efforts to join the sector strategy efforts as a measure of effective and aligned measures. That's an opportunity. And I see that we do have Michelle available to expound on her Kentucky experience. I'm going to turn it over to Michelle. Oh, I was wrong. Sorry about that.

So, some of the other things that we have coming into the chat, people are asking, you know, if they could tweak some things, they'd just like a little bit more in depth information about their specific situation. So, a little bit more information is being requested from vocational rehabilitation specific services. There's some concern here about repeat business measures. Now are we creating a disincentive to serve the smallest employers who are just not going to hire very often, especially if they're a small family business. Now that is a concern we have heard previously. So, if some folks have a suggestion there, we'd love to hear it.

And we have some support for individuals who are thinking about aligning services. So, these are great. Thank you very much. Let's move on to –

MICHELLE DEJOHN: Michelle is here from Kentucky and I'm sorry – (inaudible) –

MS. ECKENROTH: Oh, Michelle No problem. Please, the floor is yours.

MS. DEJOHN: Thank you... First of all, John Pallasch, thank you for the kind remarks. And Kentucky, we've made some real advancements in our employer engagement rate through a common customer relationship management system and a Salesforce platform. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Reentry Specialist Program Administrators are also users of the common system. And we're expanding out to other partners of our business service team as well.

So, using the common criteria in collecting the specific Effectiveness in Serving Employer component and aligning our definition with partner definitions has helped us in our employer engagement rate. Is that what you're looking for, John?

MS. STAHA: Unfortunately, he had to go to another meeting. But I'm sure that what you described is probably what he was looking for. Yes.

MS. DEJOHN: OK.

MS. ECKENROTH: So, thanks, Michelle. It was certainly helpful for me and I'm sure for lots of other folks. So, if you have any comments or questions for Michelle, please put them in the chat and we'll be sure to get back to her. Thank you.

So, let's move on to suggestions for alternative indicators. I know a lot of folks have the wheels turning and have been thinking about this for the last two or plus years. So now it is time for the I wish they would just do something segment. So, does anyone have an alternative indicator that is working really well for your state or your program to reflect the system's Effectiveness in Serving Employers?

Now you know, states do have the option of reporting a state specific indicator to us, but so far only one state, Pennsylvania – so applause and thank you, Pennsylvania – has reported a state specific indicator. So, are there any others out there in the field? We suspect there's some great things going on. Anything that you would like to tell us about?

So, Michelle, while folks are thinking, there is a question here about – if we can unmute Michelle again – asking you to describe what the common customer relationship model is. Could you share that with us?

MS. DEJOHN: Sure. Am I being heard? Or was I muted –

MS. ECKENROTH: Yes, ma'am. You're ready.

MS. DEJOHN: Awesome. The common relationship model is, we have a state Kentucky skills network model where leadership from all of our partnering agencies partner together. And then we transfer that model down to each of our local workforce development areas where the local representation in each area is on the business service team.

And then we have continual communication through monthly meetings also with our Salesforce employer customer relationship management system. It's an excellent communication tool for us to communicate directly from the state level to get relevant information to the local workforce development areas. And then each of the teams have their own way to communicate amongst themselves about their initiatives and engagements with the system.

MS. ECKENROTH: Terrific. Thank you. And don't go quite yet, Michelle. There's one more question. Does the Salesforce platform produce your employer measures? Or do they input the services or just able to track the employer contact? Folks are eager for a little bit more info.

MS. DEJOHN: Sure. We designed the system using the WIOA Effectiveness in Serving Employers, based on those. So, they basically align their definition of their service with the specifics in the system. So – (inaudible) –

MS. ECKENROTH: OK. Thank you very much. So, Pennsylvania, you got called out, so a lot of folks are very interested in your measure. It's a job order placement rate. And I know that I'm cold calling on Eliza who is on the webinar from Pennsylvania. If you're on the line, Eliza, please *6. If not, put into the chat a little bit more detail.

So, while we're waiting for that, we have some other folks who are letting us know some other interesting things. We have from Virginia, collecting data from non-WIOA workforce partners, and collecting information on the – (inaudible) – business side. So that's an interesting thing. We have some other folks saying that an alternative indicator to consider is conducting an employer satisfaction survey of the services provided. That might be useful to work together and meet the needs of this industry.

OK. And we do have one technical question folks are asking. Hey, I can't see any of these questions. Well we are in a closed chat because we just have so many folks on and typing right now, that it would – it's pretty hard to keep track of. So, it is a closed chat. The benefit of that is too, when I ask you some questions a little bit later, if your answer is going to be maybe a thumbs down, nobody sees it but us. So, you're OK with that right now, although we will be putting out the transcript of the – transcripts later on. So, following up on that – well we're waiting for anyone from Pennsylvania want to give a little bit more information? Just like we did with Michelle, we'll jump on later if possible.

So now it is the catch all. Folks have been pretty good about actually putting this into the chat already. So, let's talk about anything else that we should be considering in regard to these indicators, you know, the many times you walked around your office thinking, gee, I wish that they have thought of X or Y or Z. Please pop that into the chat right now. It's your time. And while we're waiting for folks to do that, are we ready for – there were some questions for RSA. Are we ready to address those?

CHRIS POPE: Hey Christina. This is Chris Pope at RSA. And I can respond to one of the questions here that was about whether RSA and the VR program would issue further guidance related to VR specific services that may be, quote unquote, acceptable to be counted under the different type of employer service categories. A few months ago, with the assistance of our technical assistance provider at the WinTech, we did release a crosswalk for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers measure. It's posted on our website at rsa.ed.gov, along with the WinTech website, that tries to sort of explain what some of these terms may mean in vocational rehabilitation speak.

So, I'd encourage those on the webinar and in your organizations to check out that tool. And if you have any further questions, please let us know. But we think this does a pretty comprehensive job of explaining what some of these things could mean under the VR program. So, thanks for the question.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Chris. So, we have some other folks who want to chime in. There is a continuing concern that the pilot measures are great at getting at the – (inaudible) – of services, but really not at the value of the services to the business. And understanding that that's – (inaudible) – a commenter is saying that they're considering developing a weighted

measurement to show the depth of services provided, which might still not meet the mark, but it is a little bit closer to get at the effectiveness or value of the services provided by the workforce partners.

Another commenter says that they have a job posting – (inaudible) – rate that they have been testing out. We have a controversy with the survey suggestion. Folks are either team survey or team no survey. So that is a tough one that employers might find that too burdensome. And there are some folks thinking that we should consider that a lot of states work with employers across state lines. And so that might be impacting a penetration rate because those businesses may not be in the state. Good things to consider. Really thoughtful. Thank you, everybody.

And so, Pennsylvania is on the chat and will be providing a write up. We'll make sure that we revisit that before the end of our discussion. And while we're doing that, please continue to put stuff in the chat. This is terrific. We're going to talk now about everyone's favorite experiences and challenges. So, if you haven't already had the opportunity to mention this during the previous discussion, we're going to focus on the data specifically. So, we have heard some common challenges about a shared indicator such as collecting it across programs, ensuring it's reported accurately, and applying it in a useful way to move the system forward.

So, what should we know that's good or challenging about the experiences of collecting the data? And we've heard some great stuff already coming in. So, think about this as is this a thumbs up, is this a thumbs down, is this a mixed experience in your state, and could you tell us a little bit about why. And because it's a closed chat, it's totally OK to tell us that you're still investigating or you're not exactly quite sure yet of the root cause, if you aren't a total thumbs up but you don't know exactly what's going wrong.

So, while folks are putting that in, your experiences with collecting that data, we have some other things from the previous chat we're going to keep thinking about. Alternative measures, you know, for Title IV programs, it might be interesting to know the percentage of employers claiming individuals for the WOTC, or work opportunity tax credit. That's a good indicator to consider. Considering the size of employers for penetration. There's a comment about aligning that with a BLS employer size data.

Pennsylvania is going to talk a little bit about their active job order referral rate. So, the details on that is that it evaluates the number of active job orders that receive referrals within a given time frame. So, the focus is to evaluate what level of services are being provided to those employers who utilize our system. So, they've had in Pennsylvania some discussion about how to delve further into it and look at those who are not receiving referrals in order to evaluate improvements to the system. So, if those businesses are not getting a referral, why would that be.

OK. I'm seeing there are some good questions about it would be nice to get employer feedback on how they would define effectiveness in serving them from the state government.

KAREN STAHA: Hi, this is Karen Staha. And I will just say that when we were developing the definition of this indicator in partnership with our education colleagues, we did get a number of –

we had a number of town halls, and we had feedback, we had conversations with employers about the definition. What I recall is they said no survey, no customer satisfaction survey, because it doesn't go to them, it often goes to their HR person or something. So that was one point.

They wanted a quality person to fill the job such that they didn't have to keep filling the job. So that's where the idea of the retention measure came up, because employers were saying I don't want to have to keep filling a job. And so, they valued retention. Now we've heard from the job seeker perspective that you get employed, and if you find a better job, you want to go take that better job, not stay in the same job over a year. So, there's pros and cons to that. And those were the two that stuck out in my mind, two points. But we have talked to different employers. And that's why we ended up with three different measures because no one came up with that, if you will, the silver bullet that defined this measure succinctly and effectively to capture everything we wanted to know about it.

And I will mention the statute does provide for the opportunity that we could have one or more definitions of the measure, one or more parts to it. But we're looking at the data, we're looking at, you know, feedback that you give us now will be helpful. Thank you.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Karen. So, we have had some comments come in specifically about collecting data and acknowledging that sometimes it can be difficult depending on your service strategy model. There's some comments that it's tough to work with employers, and then after the fact ask them for their FEIN, which is easier to do if they're putting information in the online system, but a little bit more difficult if you have folks out in the field doing face to face engagement. So that's somewhat of a challenge in collecting your data.

And some other states are saying, you know, we're still at the spot where we want to make sure that we're all using common definitions and common data collection to get accurate measurements from partners, and ensuring that the data provided to the agency reporting on it is accurate and timely. And that's a challenge. And that's a perfect segue into the reporting data and applying data.

So, for reporting data, sort of the same question here. How about reporting? Are you getting it to us in a way that you feel confident is complete and accurate? So if you were doing a movie review on your own data reporting, would it be 100 percent fresh, meaning that it's excellent and it should be modeled by everybody, you've got this under control, and we should be unmuting your phone right now. 85 percent, meaning that you have some plot holes, but basically, it's a good process, it's a good thing of people really would probably benefit from seeing it. Or are you still in production, you know, you've got lots of potential, but you're still working on it.

But now I want to hear where you are and any questions you might have for the collective group or for us, ways to report data. We know from the data that Cesar provided an overview, he provided that we do have some states that are still in production mode and getting better as they move forward.

We're having some great conversations here. I'll share some of those with you, that there's a comment about utilizing a needs-based business outreach approach. More twist on it, to talk to employers about their needs – (inaudible) – services, and then using that to identify the need, and meet the need with the appropriate service. So, making sure there's a different mindset across all of the partners. There's a specific VR question. Are any VR programs tracking employer referral bonus systems through placements and helping those individuals place to make the referrals to get employer bonus? If you have a comment about that, let me know.

There's a question about return on investment. Is anybody working, states that have done work around return on investment for employers, so that that can be worked into this scenario? If you have any of those things, be sure to put that back into the chat. So, while folks think about their collecting data and their reporting data, we're going to jump into the obvious applying data, which I think is really where people are working at right now. You know, share with us a little bit about how you are applying the data statewide. Some states have already been doing that. Please feel free to continue that in the chat.

And you can keep using the movie review terms if you like. So, are you Oscar worthy, you review your data holistically across programs, you use it to measure progress, you set new goals, adjust policies and procedures based on that? Are you nominated? Meaning that if this were a movie, and Meryl Streep was probably going to win, but you're absolutely in the running. You mostly do all the Oscar worthy things, but you're just polishing up your processes. Or are you still waiting for your big break, you're one to watch, you know where you want to be, and you're moving toward it, and could use a little bit of feedback from other folks in ways in which they're using their – applying their data, so that you can hone your craft a bit.

There is one question that's coming up, asking if – about evaluations, if we're contracting to get an evaluation. I'm not going to steal Wayne's thunder, but be assured that Wayne will talk to that in a little bit. Some other comments people have about collecting and reporting data, is giving other visions – other divisions access to recording services in the same system, which can be very helpful in improving according in collecting and reporting data, also I would think in applying that data.

There's a lot of discussion going on at the AJC level. So, folks are discussing the performance measures with their managers and finding out how they're using that information. And sometimes as Assistant Pallasch said, maybe not understanding the business as a customer. And so, needing to have additional conversations with their staff about changing that mindset. And then also the age old problem of they do the work, we are servicing a business customer, but there are just so many hours in the day, and folks are not recording it all, or if they record it it's just not exactly the right way. So, we're still finding our feet there in some states.

Anything else for any of the items we talked about? You want to talk about collecting data, and reporting it, applying data, anything you want to share with us, or any questions you might have for your peers. There are questions about that retention measure. Folks are thinking about it and they're thinking about it thoughtfully. And they're asking how does the employer-quality-as-a-construct influence these indicators? Maybe we could learn something about what influences job seekers to stay with an employer, so the importance of making a good match. Great.

Please continue to put that information in the chat. We might not be able to get to everyone's comments, but we will be able to read them all and collect them. So, it's important that we get those recorded.

So, with that, I will respond to some folks' questions about what happens next. I'm going to turn it over to Wayne Gordon of ETA to talk a little bit about evaluation activities we have upcoming. Wayne?

WAYNE GORDON: Thanks, Christina. Timely enough, we received the approval on January 16th of this year, and will commence with this ESE pilot study, field work, the most important part immediately. A key goal for the study, and this addresses question 40, is to conduct a comparative assessment of the pilot and selected alternative measures, and develop a base of knowledge as a foundation for selecting an appropriate measure for indicator of performance, and implementation of a uniform definition of employer services at the federal level.

As you see in bullet one, this study will lay out a set of options and considerations for these indicators or this indicator for the Departments of Labor and Education, to help them make that decision. Second bullet, as I mentioned earlier, we'll be starting almost immediately in February through April time frame to do this field work, site visits, and surveys. The DOL has enlisted the Urban Institute to lead this study. And just yesterday we communicated to our regions and asked them to notify the states of this activity that's about to start. So, they'll be communicating that. We've also shared the information with our colleagues at OCTAE and RSA VR to do the same.

The three data collection activities include a state administrators or program directors survey. And that covers Titles I through IV. There'll be a qualitative business employer information collection form. And that will be with employers with substantial engagement with the public workforce investment system. And we're going to leverage support from one of our partners, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, in support of reaching out.

Finally, there'll be site visits with eight states. In four of those eight states there'll be two local areas visited in each. As mentioned on the slide there under the second bullet, while there will be an internal briefing in the fall of 2020, that's what's slated, that's internal for our DOL and Education partners. A final briefing will come out with the final report in late 2020 or early 2021. Members of my staff, Michelle Ennis is the project manager, and she's also assisted with this activity by Megan Lizik who hails from our Chief Evaluation Office. And that's what I have.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Wayne. So, we have – any questions you have about the evaluation or anything, you can feel free again to put that in the chat. And while we have Wayne with us, he can address those. We have some other questions that are coming into the chat. I think I'm going to pass it over to Cesar Acevedo to answer some of those.

MR. ACEVEDO: Sure. There's one specific question I think hopefully I didn't confuse folks on the call. It's come up a couple times here. It's on the Repeat Business Customer calculation. So when I said in 2017 that it was based on repeat business within the last two years, that means in

2017 since we were building up that measure, we were saying that the denominator should be any businesses that you served within the last two Program Years. So that would have been Program Years 2016 and 2017. And then in 2018 we built upon that again. And so, in 2018 it should be any businesses that you served within Program Years 2016, 2017, or 2018. From there the measure stabilizes and it continues to be repeat business within the last three years. So, for '19, it'll roll forward one Program Year, from 2017, 2018, and 2019. And then in 2020 it'll be 2018, 2019, and 2020. And I hope that clears it up for some folks.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Cesar.

MR. ACEVEDO: Sure.

MS. ECKENROTH: So, we have some folks, so please keep putting your comments or questions, especially if you have some evaluation questions into the chat. And with that I'll take a – I'm already going to answer some folks who are thinking ahead. So, there's – so in short, what does all this mean? Well there's no immediate change. So, there's no change for 2020 and 2021. Keep doing what you're doing.

And the departments will continue to work together to define the indicator. And we'll be using – and we'll continue to analyze the results we've reported for the last Program Years, information that we'll get from the evaluation report, feedback from events like this and other technical assistance events. So, it's important that even if we couldn't get to your comment today, that you do input it into the chat so that we can see what everybody is thinking.

So, there are some questions – anyone from RSA want to address any Vocational Rehab questions that have come in? I want to make sure I don't miss you.

MR. POPE: Hey, Christina. It's Chris Pope again. I saw a question here about when the data for Program Year '18 will be published on our respective websites. That work is underway. And we're looking forward to publishing those PY '18 national summaries and state level reports in the next several weeks here. So, states here will be releasing that jointly when ETA, RSA, and OCTAE get those up and online.

MS. ECKENROTH: Terrific. Thank you. So, any other comments or questions folks have? You know, some folks are putting in some thoughtful thoughts, inputs about recording, recording retention, using employer data as it's reported to their tax division. But that has some challenges. And so, folks are looking for – especially looking for solutions about self-employment, that a lot of folks they're serving are self-employed. And so that's somewhat of a challenge.

And some folks are saying, hey, we actually contract a version of business penetration rate for local boards. We haven't talked a whole lot about specific local boards. But if you do something on the local level that's a nice twist, you might want to share that here with us in the chat.

We have had a lot of questions or comments about return on investment, return on investment for employers. And there's some thoughts here about are services really saving them money by increasing their retention, and thereby reducing their training costs, and providing the employers

with candidates that are a good fit and are happy with the placement. So, it's another comment that aligns with the previous commenter about really needing to focus on the right – matching the right job seeker with the right employer and job.

We do have some available time, so this is the excellent time to please feel free to put anything that we haven't covered yet into the chat. If you thought you missed your opportunity, you certainly have not. So please feel free to put that in. And while we do that, if you're feeling a little under pressure, we're going to assure you that if you didn't have the opportunity or couldn't come up with what you exactly wanted to say today, all is not lost. We very much appreciate all of your time and the really robust participation.

But as I mentioned before, there's just such a wonderful response, we weren't able to get to all of the inputs, although we're still available for a little bit to take a look at any of those. But we are capturing them all and we will be reviewing them. So, if something comes to you later or you want to share more detail about something, really please do so.

In the near term you can send us your feedback on any of the topics we discussed today, especially if you have alternative indicator recommendations or other factors that we should be considering in the finalization of this measure. Those are going to be collected by Scott Wheeler. His information is here on the screen. And we're asking for any of those near-term feedback by February 12th. And with that, I will again open it up to my colleagues in RSA or in OCTAE. Does anybody have a question they would like to address? We don't want to leave anybody out.

MR. POPE OR SCHULTZ OR STUMP? : No question to address. But we just want to say thank you for all of the valuable input today.

MS. ECKENROTH: Great. Thank you so much. We appreciate your participation. Now I am seeing a couple questions we can take some time to clarify. Cesar, would you be able to answer this question for folks? Is Effectiveness in Serving Employers for PY 2020 and PY 2021 still in pilot? Or is this baseline?

MR. ACEVEDO: So, while we still have three pilot measures, I'd say we're still in the pilot phase. We would enter into sort of a baseline phase until we've decided on a measure. And that measure is going to be carried forward. And we'll negotiate performance and all that other good stuff. So right now, while you're still reporting two of three pilot measures, you're still in a pilot phase.

MS. ECKENROTH: That's right. So, don't panic. We'll go back here and say there's no change for '20 and '21.

MR. GORDON: Christina, this is Wayne Gordon. I have the information regarding the states that'll be visited. I recommended eight states recommended by the contractor that we have, again that was the Urban Institute, were Illinois, Kentucky, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. And they've identified alternate states as well, Alaska, California, Florida, Montana, North Dakota, and Ohio. So, as emails come out, check your spam

inbox for emails from the Urban Institute. It'll be employerservicesproject@urban.org. But as I said before, notification is going out through the proper regional channels to all the states.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Wayne. So, if you haven't gotten it yet, as Wayne indicated you'll be getting official notification soon. OK. Well we do have a few more minutes. And I want to give folks opportunity to ensure that they got what they wanted recorded in the chat. And I'll turn it over to the DOL. Any last comments or questions you would like to pose to the group?

MS. STAHA: This is Karen Staha. I've noticed a number of comments about the retention rate and some of the challenges you're facing when you are calculating that. And we will look at these comments, likely will not make any changes to the – during the pilot phase.

But certainly, this information and feedback is valuable as we go forward in our deliberations on the – whatever the final measure definition – whatever the final definition of the measure is. So, we appreciate the feedback on that pilot measure. If there's any on the others, please continue to give feedback to us. This is very important, so that we can – are better informed on the – as we make deliberations on the final definition, so.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thank you, Karen. And I'll also put a plug in for all of the questions or the things folks were looking for assistance with. This also will help us to target our technical assistance moving forward, and know what questions are out there still remaining or where additional information is needed. So again, we will be reading all of your chats. I'm going to turn it over to my friends in Education. Does anyone have any last comments from OCTAE or RSA before we turn it over to facilitators?

MR. POPE: We're all set here in RSA, Christina. Thanks.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Chris.

MR. GORDON: Hi, Christina. Wayne once again. I see a question regarding who in the state will be contacted. Again, we're relying on our regional channels to contact the states. It would be the administrators. And they'll be given a very good description as to who the information – I guess who would provide the best information and the best responses for this. So, the instructions will be out to the ETA regions.

MR. GORDON: To the ETA regions. But we did share the same information with our colleagues at OCTAE and RSA as well.

CHERYL KEENAN: And this is Cheryl Keenan here. And I just want to say that it's been a real interesting conversation. We had a great group here of participants. I see some adult education names in here. I think this is a real important measure for us as our programs have been trying to figure out how best to interact with the indicator. But the conversation today certainly gives us a really good start in thinking about something to the future. So, thanks.

MS. ECKENROTH: Thanks, Cheryl. So, with that, I think we're going to start wrapping up. But you know that we love evaluations. And so I will turn it over – I would like to hear from

you if you thought this was a useful use of your time, and if there's something that we could – types of technical assistance we could offer in the future.

So, we're going to wrap up a little bit early. But please feel free to continue to put your comments in the chat. As we've indicated, they're very useful for us in a variety of different ways. And we'd like to thank everyone for your robust participation today and for joining us in this conversation.

(END)