**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Department of Labor Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA)**

**Public Interest Session**

**Thursday, May 20, 2021**

*Transcript by*

*Noble Transcription Services*

*Menifee, CA*

GRACE MCCALL: And welcome to Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship. So without further ado, I would like to turn things over to our moderator for today, Kenia Huckabee. Take it away, Kenia.

KENIA HUCKABEE: Good morning everybody, and welcome to today's Public Interest Section on our Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship. As Berry (sp) mentioned, my name is Kenia Huckabee, and I wanted to leave here at the department helping to manage the reestablishment of the ACA. So we have an exciting agenda for you today. We have over a thousand participants registered. So I will keep my comments here at the outset very short.

As Berry said, go ahead and fill out the poll on this screen so that we can have an idea of who is in the room. And I will quickly kind of give us an agenda overview so that you can kind of know what to expect for today's session. Our PDAS, Suzi LeVine, is going to give us welcome and opening remarks. Our administrator for the Office of Apprenticeship will provide an APA overview.

And then we want to leave plenty of time at the end for Q&A to really hear from you guys on today's session. So John Ladd and Brent Parton will tag team that session. So without further ado, we will get into today's session. Go ahead and answer that call, Grace. I do not know if you can broadcast that really quickly. And as you are doing that, I will kick it over to Suzi.

SUZI LEVINE: Thank you so much, Kenia, for that warm welcome. Welcome, everybody. It is such a pleasure to have you joining us today. It is exciting to see your interest in the important work of the secretary's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship, or as we call it, the ACA, which we had over a thousand people register for this webinar. And you will hear also later where, if you have people who you know need to see this, will be able to also tune into it subsequently.

For those of you that may not know me, and that is probably most, I am Suzi LeVine and I am our principal deputy assistant secretary. And I am heading up the US Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration. And that is the part of the government that runs registered apprenticeships for our country. And I work closely with John Ladd, who we will hear from who heads up the Office of Apprenticeship, and Brent Parton, who is our senior advisor on the Work Force on Workforce Development. And their work is going to be essential to how we are able to double down and grow registered apprenticeship.

After President Biden issued his executive order on strengthening registered apprenticeship, the Department of Labor announced its intent to reconvene the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship. Secretary Walsh announced the reestablishment of the ACA, the beginning of May, just a few weeks after his confirmation in March, and after four years of this advisory body being dormant, it is coming back to life.

As many of you are already well aware, the call for ACA members nominations is now taking place. But we really just wanted to spend a few minutes with you today and opened up this webinar ahead of the June 3rd nomination close date so that we could provide an overview and answer any questions that you may have and really so that we can expand the people who are considering participating and diversify the advisory committee.

The nomination, the department reflecting our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, is really looking to attract the first community of individuals to serve. And for the first time ever, we are inviting youth apprentices, ages 16 to 24 to serve and share their real-life perspectives. For me and for my colleagues, expanding and diversifying apprenticeship is vital.

More diverse groups are more productive, more innovative and more effective and better reflect what we need for our nation, especially as we look ahead at how jobs are changing, how our industries are growing, and what we need to serve our workforce of the future. And as I have been sharing with the team, I am a real proponent of incorporating the voices of individuals with lived experiences.

And who better to do that than the practitioners in the space and apprentices themselves? Our overall vision for the ACA, given the urgency of this moment, especially coming out of the pandemic and the role that apprenticeship plays, really is looking at these big policy questions that we are going to need to answer.

And So the role that this committee will play is to provide the department with a strong set of high-level recommendations in a fairly short amount of time; which will be critically important in helping us think through the issues that ultimately allow us to better equip workers with the skills they need now, and to support employers with their talent development needs so that they are able to maintain a strong, growing and innovative workforce.

With the ACA, we want to reach new and different communities to help us achieve this great goal. But right now, we really want to hear from you. So I am going to stop there and hand it over to John and Brent for a brief overview. And then we are going to spend a significant amount of time getting into your questions. Thank you so very much again for tuning in today and for your interest. And we look forward to our engagement. Thank you so much.

JOHN LADD: Thank you, Suzi. Thank you so much for those opening remarks. That was really fabulous, and just an excellent framing of the work that is ahead of us with the committee, and the exciting work that those of you that are interested in serving on the committee will be involved in.

Again, hello, everyone. Thanks for joining us today. My name is John Ladd, the administrator for the Office of Apprenticeship. And it is just exciting to see so many of you joining us here today, such a great mix of participants. And we hope that today's session will be able to answer most of your questions. And we will certainly, as Suzi said, at the end, try to leave as much time as possible to answer your questions through this session.

So I am going to start going over the structure and the scope of the ACA itself, our plans, what the schedule looks like, and hopefully give you really all the information you need to decide whether this is something that you would like to participate on and that you understand the commitment that we are looking for.

To just quickly, an overview of the ACA; is a real rich history here of the ACA. It goes back to 1937 with the establishment of the National Apprenticeship Act. It is one of the longest standing federal advisory committees, and it has been a very active committee over the years. And as many of you know, the National Apprenticeship Act has been around since 1937. There is actual efforts in Congress to update the legislation, and the ACA is reflected in that legislation that is being considered by Congress at this time.

But it is a discretionary committee that is established by the Secretary of Labor. It is subject to FACA, the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which for those of you who are chosen to serve or have served on other federal advisory committees, know that FACA is the federal regulation that really requires openness and transparency around the, around any advisory committee. The idea being that these decisions, these deliberations, these recommendations, should be fully accessible to the public, and the public should be aware of what is happening and be able to provide comment and input into that process.

The charter for the ACA is typically renewed every two years. So we will be doing this process again every couple of years. So it is a chance to refresh the committee and make sure we have the right mix of people, the right focus. And So this is an exciting opportunity to really reset the ACA moving forward and to make sure that it reflects the administration's sorry, the priority of the Biden administration.

And as Suzi has mentioned, the ACA has been dormant since 2017. There was a separate advisory committee that was established related to apprenticeship, but that committee has since disbanded.

Just to have some awareness of the type of work that this Advisory Committee has been engaged on in the past. Again, as I mentioned, it has been a very active committee really since the beginning of its establishment back in the 30’s. But really, if you look back over the past decade, the ACA has provided some really important recommendations and policy proposals related to growing apprenticeship.

Suzi has mentioned we are in the midst of an apprenticeship renaissance. The ACA has been really invaluable in helping to to provide recommendations on how we can continue to expand and strengthen apprenticeship. We have undergone a lot of regulatory reform in the past decade. The ACA provided recommendations into that process.

There is specific aspects of apprenticeship that are important to the quality of apprenticeship, including ratio policy, and pre-apprenticeship definitions, and efforts to increase participation of women. These are all critical issues that are met face the apprenticeship system, many of which are still ongoing issues, and that we anticipate engaging with the committee on again.

But issues such as the pre-apprenticeship definition were really crucial in helping the department to craft guidance that has really framed our policy work in our technical assistance about around pre-apprenticeship ever since. So just an incredibly active, and engaged committee that has provided invaluable advice and recommendations to the department.

Not surprisingly, the current charter lays out a scope for the committee and areas for recommendations, many of which are probably not too surprising. These are key issues facing the national apprenticeship system. Suzi has touched on a couple of these already. But, you know, first and foremost is, again, how do we ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in apprenticeship?

We still have a huge equity gaps in the apprenticeship system. We have an opportunity today to address those in a real and meaningful way. And we want to make sure that we engage with a broad apprenticeship community on effective strategies to do that. As we move forward, as President Biden issued an executive order on strengthening apprenticeship, we want your input on how we do that.

How do we modernize a partnership moving forward? How do we strengthen the system? How do we make sure it is positioned to scale? How do we make sure it is equitable? There are many areas that we, again, want to rely on the stakeholder community for advice and input into those recommendations.

And of course, underlying all of that, is that apprenticeship as a demand driven system continues to expand in new industries and sectors. But how do we continue to support that growth? How do we sustainably scale apprenticeship? How do we maintain quality in apprenticeship while we expand into new industries? What flexibility might be needed by industries that have not traditionally used apprenticeship? So there are clear areas where we are soliciting input from this committee, and that is reflected in the committee's charter.

So we now want to cover the membership and structure of the committee itself. This is an area that we get a lot of questions on. Can you field a lot of questions on this issue? And So the committee itself is very similar to how the committee has been structured in the past. We are anticipating somewhere between 27 and 30 members of this, of the committee, in that the committee will have a balanced membership between employers and industry associations, between labor and joint labor management organizations, and members of the public.

And in this case, public is very broadly defined. This could be entities from the workforce system, from the education system, from community-based organizations, from the FEKEE [ph] community, from the advocacy community. Public here is really very broadly defined and could be considered to be any other group that does not fit into that employer and or labor and joint labor-management organization category. So it is a broad category, but we want to make sure that the broad ecosystem of the national apprenticeship system is represented on that committee.

Now, within that broad structure of balance, membership between three sectors, 27 to 30 members, there is a couple other unique membership elements that we want to highlight. First is that the chair of the ACA is appointed by the secretary from the public sector. Again, that is something that has been historic practice of this committee. So the chair is drawn from from the public sector.

I believe, as Suzi mentioned earlier, one of the new elements that we are adding to the committee this year, is we are really seeking a current apprentice or youth apprentice, age 18 to 24. We would really love to get that youth voice on the committee, you know, it would just be invaluable. I know many members of the ACA have been previously apprentices themselves. But in this case, we are really looking for that that current use apprentice that can bring the voice of young people and their experience to the table.

Another membership element is that we reserve a seat for the president of NASDAD, which is the Association of State Apprenticeship Agencies, for those of you who are not as familiar with the national partnership system, roughly half of the states have their own state apprenticeship agency. And given that they are at least half of the system, we want to make sure that their voice is heard on the committee as well. So the president of that group is invited to serve on the ACA.

And then lastly, because there is so much intersection between the work of apprenticeship with other federal agencies, commerce with business engagement, education with an educational alignment, all of the discussions today around infrastructure, both with transportation, health care, the care economy, we really want to make sure we have a broad set of federal partners engaged on the committee as ex-officio members. And So you see that the six federal agencies that will also be asked to serve as ex-officio members.

The next area we want to cover is our thoughts around how the work will be structured, and how it will engage with the committee. And our vision here is to ask that members of the committee identify particular subcommittees that they would like to work on, and the four subcommittees that we are focused on initially, again, reflecting the scope of the ACA itself and the priorities of the administration, will be, will have to establish a subcommittee on increasing diversity, equity and inclusion and registered partnerships.

There will be a separate subcommittee on apprenticeship modernization, which again could include issues like promoting competency-based approaches and apprenticeship, the idea of degreed apprenticeships, and college credit for apprenticeship, industry wide standards for apprenticeship. These are all areas that could be considered, as well as others that come forth from the committee.

The third committee will be around this disengagement and expansion into and across all industries and sectors. Again, apprenticeship has been well-established in the construction and manufacturing industries to a large extent. How do we promote that growth in technology, and clean energy, health care, childcare and others? So we will really be relying on the committee for their advice and recommendations, there.

And then lastly, there is just a tremendous amount of interest in both pre-apprenticeship as a pathway to to register apprenticeship, as well as youth apprenticeship, if folks are following the development and the progress of the reauthorization of the National Apprenticeship Act, you know there is a lot of discussion there around promoting both of those models. What additional policy guidance and or regulations may be needed to help support the implementation of quality pre-apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship programs?

Then lastly, we really want to take advantage of those ex-officio members, we will certainly encourage them to engage on the subcommittees but will also want to pull those ex-officio members together as an individual work group to help think about opportunities for collaboration, opportunities to work across the federal silos, how to leverage these various infrastructure investments that will be coming down the pike. So just a tremendous opportunity to coordinate across the federal family.

We also do envision that these subcommittees will likely meet in between the formal meetings of the ACA itself. We are going to cover that a little bit more here in a minute. But we will allow members of the ACA to identify a designee who can also help support the work of the subcommittees. So that is something to consider as you are thinking about participating on the ACA. We are certainly interested in having senior level representation on the committee.

We anticipate this will be a very visible and very active committee. So we do want to allow organizations to bring in their subject matter experts to have a designee that can support their principle on the work of the committee.

In terms of deliverables, again, this has been a very active committee, but Suzi has really challenged us to make sure that, just given how much is happening broadly in workforce development and apprenticeships specifically, a lot of activity, we really do want to try to get to some kind of an interim report very quickly.

So we are going to lay out a bit of a timeline here for you. But there is going to be a bit of a sprint here at the beginning to develop an interim report that can help provide some early input and guidance to the department around the need for the development or implementation, whether it is policies, legislation, regulations, ways to expand into new industries. You know, all of the areas of the various subcommittee work, all of those could feed into this interim report that can be provided to the department.

But then moving forward, we see moving to a more regular cadence where the committee would issue a biannual report due June 1st of every other year, to make sure that the national apprenticeship system continues to evolve, and innovate, and reflect the needs of the broad apprenticeship system.

So again, I want people to be aware that we are going to put folks to work here right away. We will have a bit of a sprint here at the beginning, but then the work will continue moving forward after that. So what that could look like, again, we, as Susie mentioned, the nomination period closes on June 3rd.

We will be identifying and selecting the membership later that month. And So the goal is to try to stand up the first meeting of the committee by late summer. And so that would be the first full meeting. And then pretty much every 90 days, every three months, we would meet again. Right now, we are planning for these meetings to be virtual, just given the Covid environment that we are still in, that that is the plan for this six-month sprint that we will do virtual meetings.

So we should plan on a meeting later this summer, again, late fall, and then probably again in winter and winter, either late ‘21, early ‘22. And what we envision here would be the convening of the committee, ratifying those subcommittees, defining the scope of the recommendations on a work plan in that first meeting; in between the first and second meeting, those subcommittees will meet. They will generate preliminary recommendations. Those recommendations would be reported out at the second meeting. The committee would provide their feedback on that, on those recommendations, and discuss an outline of a preliminary report.

And then, really by that third meeting, we are hoping to get to the point where we can review and approve that preliminary report, as well as approve, revise, and or reject the recommendations from the subcommittees. So it is an ambitious schedule. I know a lot of these issues will take time to flesh out and deliberate over. Again, we do not see the interim report as the final report. It is a way for us to get some early advice and recommendations from the committee. But then we do expect the committee to continue working on those issues, moving forward and further refine and elaborate on that.

So lastly, if you like what you have heard and you are interested in applying or nominating someone, the process is fairly simple. You simply need to provide a copy of your, or the nominee's resume, a cover letter, really laying out why you or the individual would be a valuable member of the committee. Those cover letters are really invaluable in making the case for the individual, to understand what they bring, what perspectives they bring to the conversation.

So again, those are really valuable data points for us in reviewing all of the nominations that do come in. For that youth apprentice, we really want to have a sponsor letter of support. Again, we want to make sure that this apprentice is in good standing with you as a sponsor, that they have the full support of their sponsor. And in this case, I mean, the sponsor of the registered partnership program, and that sponsor believes that they would make a good addition to the ACA itself.

And then, of course, please provide current contact information; we need to have the nominee's full name, title, business, address, business, phone number, fax number, if anyone is using faxes anymore email addresses. We need to be able to contact those individuals and have their most up to date information.

And all of that information gets sent to our email address. And I will share that here in a second. But all of this information is available on apprenticeship.gov. Everything we have presented here today and more, you can find on apprenticeship.gov; that is your go-to resource. And there is a dedicated page, and we have the charter on that page. We have information about applying, the email address that needs to be provided, where you need to send the information, and anything else that you might want to know about the advisory committee.

With that, I am going to bring in my colleague, Brent Parton, senior adviser for workforce development, and we are going to start taking your questions from the chat. But Brent, I'll turn it over to you, if you have any closing remarks, or additional comments you would like to make.

BRENT PARTON: Thank you, John. I will be brief, because a lot of great questions have come in. First, I just want to say, we issue a quick apology. I know some of you have mentioned the sound has been challenging on the call today. Just so you know, first off, we apologize for that difficulty. But number two, there will be a recording available of this session for those of you that had some challenges hearing today.

I will not say a ton to wrap what has already been an incredibly substantive moment. And I know there is some great questions that we want to get to, and I will start working our way through here in just a moment. But I just want to reiterate: it is a historic moment in the country right now for apprenticeships. The types of investments being called for by the Bush administration are truly transformative in terms of expanding the guarantees of registered apprenticeship to more Americans, more workers, and more industries across the country.

The ACA really will play a critical role in helping shape the vision, the policy directions, and the innovations within that system. So it is crucial that across these areas that John has mentioned already, areas of how do we diverse, bring greater diversity, equity and inclusion into the existing registered apprenticeship system, but also to leverage apprenticeship as a powerful tool for expanding diversity, equity, inclusion across our labor market, thinking about the modernization of the system.

We will need people with expertize and views and ideas around how to improve data quality, but also to how to improve connections to other systems, whether that is K-12 and CTE, community colleges, workforce development and, of course, the network of incredible community based organizations across the country. And of course, our land -- long standing partners in the labor movement who have really set the tradition example for registered apprenticeship from the beginning.

And finally, I will just say this: I think it is critically important as well, that will be thinking about this committee is an opportunity for really championing the greater, more diversified, larger system. What we want the registered apprenticeship system to look like more broadly. So we hope that out of all the people who are out there today who join this webinar, which has really just blown us away, but the level of interest that you all will help us build an ACA that is ready to take apprenticeship into an exciting new era.

With that, you have several questions that I want to ensure that we get to. Some of them have just been related specifically to the nomination process. John just walked through that in great detail. Please drop more questions in on that one if you have them. But how I would like to handle this is that I will flag a few of the ones that have popped up in the chat, and I will ask my colleagues over at the Office of Apprenticeship to offer their thoughts, their perspectives on these.

First and foremost, one question we had was whether there was any discussion or efforts around increasing the participation of people with disabilities into the registered apprenticeship systems. John or Kenia or others. If there is anything you'd like to share on that, could we offer a few comments?

MR. LADD: Sure. I am happy to take that one. Absolutely. I think that is going to be an area of focus again for that subcommittee on diversity, equity, and inclusion. That would absolutely include the participation of people with disabilities. So that is really intended as an inclusive group to look at access for all populations and all Americans. So absolutely.

MR. PARTON: Fantastic. We had another question about the ACA and subcommittees in general: do the subcommittees tend to own specific policy areas or regulatory matters, or to the subcommittees -- or many of the bigger picture DI regulatory matters managed by the, also managed by the committee as a whole? I think it is a question about will all ACA members, regardless of what committee they sit on, be able to weigh in on the critical issues subcommittees are being organized around?

MR. LADD: Yeah, that is a great question. So absolutely. All final deliberations happen at the full committee level. So even if subcommittees and individuals decide they really want to work in one of those subcommittees that we have identified, they absolutely will have an opportunity to provide input on any area under consideration by the ACA.

So you know, broadly, we do see the four subcommittees that we highlighted earlier as being the, at least that initial area of focus for the subcommittee work. But that is something that also could be revisited after we get past this first six-month sprint period.

MR. PARTON: And maybe staying on the theme of subcommittees, John, could you just say a little bit, just clarify that to be on a subcommittee you must be an ACA member, correct?

MR. LADD: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

MR. PARTON: Okay. Can we -- we had a couple questions to just about the distribution of the subcommittees. Just one final question on this topic: do we have information, or can we share anything about how equal representation will be distributed across these areas?

MR. LADD: Yeah, another good question, but yes, that would be the intent that the subcommittees would be balanced similar to to the full committee.

MR. PARTON: Wonderful. Shifting over, we had a couple of questions come in about youth apprenticeship. John, just or whoever, on the OA wants to take this, maybe just a two-part question. One: will diversity, equity, inclusion, be a focus with the issue of youth apprenticeship? And will youth apprentice members of the community be required to travel to meeting?

MR. LADD: Interesting question. So I think the equity work certainly cuts across, both, you know, adult registered apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, as well as pre-apprenticeship. So yes, that that equity task force can address those issues. Kenia, do you have an answer? I mean, right now we do not envision travel being required for members of the ACA. That may change over time as we get back to normal business. But yeah, that is what all -- [inaudible] -- sorry, so I would just say that we would always provide the option for people to participate virtually if they could not travel. Kenia, is there more you want to add to that?

MS. HUCKABEE: Yes, I was saying that is exactly what I was going to be virtual for now. And the plan, when it is safe would be to transition into in-person meetings. ACA members will serve without compensation, but the department would cover their travel costs to attend in-person meetings. But certainly, if there is a youth apprentice who maybe cannot travel, we could make accommodations for them to kind of join the meeting virtually. So we have done hybrid's in the past for that. So we could definitely accommodate that.

MR. LADD: Wonderful.

MR. PARTON: Thank you all so much. Here is a good one. If an organization is represented on the ACA, does that impact or disqualify them in any way from receiving grant funds from the US Department of Labor to support apprenticeship programs?

MR. LADD: Big question. I think, I mean, there is potential conflicts of interest there, but I think we could circle back on that one. But Kenia, will you know the answer to that one? I am hearing. No, it does not.

MS. HUCKABEE: Like I said, John, it will only be a case-by-case basis, we do provide a little bit of ethics education for the ACA members up front, but it depends on, kind of, who in the organization is serving, and, kind of, who is over the grant. So that would really be a case-by-case information, but we can take that back and perhaps submit something with the post resources after this to answer that. But that one will be kind of viewed on a case by case. So we would have to explore that a little bit further.

MR. PARTON: Wonderful. We had a couple of questions come in; I was wondering if maybe you could just offer a couple of comments on what what the vision is for industry representation on the ACA. How broad are we thinking about industry representation? We are looking at a kind of a blend of industry sectors. I do not know, John, you wanted to share this to me. Top line part of that.

MR. LADD: Yeah, absolutely. You know, we would love to have as diverse and as broad an industry representation as possible. So we have been focused on how to expand apprenticeship into new industries. So we really need to hear those voices of both industries that have traditionally used apprenticeship as well as those that have not. And we do have some real champions in in various industry spaces that their experience and background on this would just be invaluable in helping us continue to grow and expand apprenticeship.

MS. LEVINE: And I will expand on that a little bit to John, that hopefully folks recognize with the ex-officio participation of different agencies across the federal government, we are now, including transportation and energy, as examples of really trying to get that broader view of industries and whether it is helping the amplify and or support work that is happening newly in certain industries, or introducing it into new industries that have not been building out apprenticeship systems.

That is very much a part of our hope. And when you look at the goals that have been emphasized through the American Jobs Plan, as well as the president's fiscal year ‘22 budget, the goal of getting to two million apprentices is a strong one. But it is going to take all of us to get there, and it is going to mean diversifying both the individuals who are participating and who are becoming apprentices, as well as diversifying the industries that are utilizing apprenticeship.

MR. PARTON: Well, thank you for that, both of you, Suzi and John. Another question has come in around various types of organizations to be engaged with this, free apprenticeship leaders, as well as intermediaries that are working on apprenticeship. John, you wanted or Susie wanted to share our thoughts and hopes around that level of representation on the ACA.

MR. LADD: Sure. You know, the challenge is we would love to have every voice on the subcommittee, and we want folks to apply and, you know, there is no limit on who can participate, and so we are looking to create this as balanced and as diverse and as representative of committee as possible. So please, if you are interested in serving on the committee, you know, we really encourage you to submit a nomination.

You know, I would also say that this is not the only opportunity to engage with DOL. You know, we are hosting a series of listening sessions. We are always available to engage in dialog with with folks and to meet with folks, with folks from across the apprenticeship system. So we know that there is a lot of interest in this committee. We are going to work really hard to make sure we pull together the best committee possible and the most diverse and representative committee as possible. But what we do want to continue to be open for dialog and discussion across the National Apprenticeship System.

MR. PARTON: Thanks for that, John. We did have one question, actually, a couple questions come in, just to hear a little bit more about certain areas of focus for the subcommittees. Could you share a little bit about the vision of the modernization subcommittee, John, touching particularly on industry standards.

MR. LADD: Yes, I think this is an area that probably will need to be a lot more discussion with the committee on, kind of the initial areas to focus on, but we certainly want to think through about what are the opportunities to both strengthen and modernize apprenticeship. Where there is some pain points in the system that may be challenging for industries to engage on.

So it could be everything from how do we streamline the approval process so that programs can get approved more quickly? How do we reduce the paperwork and the requirements that may be necessary? How do we ensure high quality standards? How do we ensure consistency of standards across the system? A lot of interest from industry and competency-based models. How do we promote greater use of competency-based approaches?

So there is a whole range of issues, probably more than can be dealt with in a six-month timeframe. So I think this is probably a place that will need more discussion with the committee as to what are those initial areas of focus that that the committee wants to tackle.

MR. PARTON: Great. We have had a number of questions. In our remaining time, I want to make sure we get as much answered around the actual term of committee members and nominations themselves. Could we just reiterate what is the term of members of the ACA committee and are they able to sit on, will they be able to sit on multiple subcommittees?

MR. LADD: Kenia, do you want to take that one on the term?

MS. HUCKABEE: Yes, well, as John and Suzi others have mentioned, this is a discretionary committee, so the secretary would appoint members in two- or three-year terms. And yes, you can sit on multiple subcommittees if you choose to do so.

MR. PARTON: Might be involved with a number of these great issues. A quick word on nominations, a question that has come up a couple of times. One, can we just clarify nominations in terms of multiple letters of support of nominations? Is that something that is both -- we are open to receiving or encouraged? And then the second question around that is, should nominees be indicating what subcommittees they want to serve on in those nominations?

MS. HUCKABEE: I can take that one, John, so definitely you can submit letters of support, it is not required, you can nominate yourself or someone else, and the complete package is just a résumé and a cover letter kind of outlining why you want to be on this committee in a short justification. But you are welcome to submit letters of support. You can submit all of that together, which would probably be the easiest way.

But if people want to submit letters of support on your behalf, and they tag in the subject line who the nominee actually is, our team can can go through and make those connections. But submitting everything together would probably be best. So you can if you want to, but it is not necessary. And then, Brent, what was the second question?

MR. PARTON: I think you have got it in terms of letters, letters of support, is there any limit on how many could be received? And you mentioned already the subcommittee membership issue.

MS. HUCKABEE: Yeah, the subcommittee, like John says, some more thinking needs to be done around that with the actual committee. So I would not pressure yourself. But I mean, you are most certainly welcome to, kind of, communicate early interest if you choose to do so. But again, not necessarily.

MR. PARTON: Wonderful. And a couple more open questions on this and welcome anyone who wants to offer thoughts on this. But what are generally the experiences, perspectives or qualities that we are looking for from ACA member candidates?

MR. LADD: It is a great question. You know, I am just -- I do not want to preclude other folks experience that --

MS. LEVINE: John, can I come in here?

MR. LADD: Yeah, sure.

MS. LEVINE: Let us see. I think most importantly, an open mind and an open heart. A successful committee is one that has debate and discussion and brings diverse views. It is going to be critical that people come in with respect, and -- but really, there are not specific characteristics. In fact, we want, again, a very diverse set of individuals participating in this to get to some of the best solutions. But most importantly, people need to come in with an open mind, an open heart, the ability to listen, and the ability to be respectful. Those are really the core characteristics that we are looking for, for individuals participating in this.

MR. LADD: Thank you, Suzi. You did that well.

MR. PARTON: Well said. More, taking it to a little bit more of, you know, another partner strategic focus, or partnership area, I do not know -- we have seen multiple questions, come in around interest in engagement on the community colleges, or education in general. I do not know if, John, you want to offer any thoughts about hopes for nominations from these spaces to offer those perspectives.

JOHN LADD Yeah, absolutely an important part of the apprenticeship system. Absolutely, I would love to see nominations from, being a college president, people working on apprenticeship. There is a lot of great partnerships with community colleges that are happening across the country. So absolutely look forward to seeing those applications.

MS. LEVINE: And to complement that, one of the ex-officio participants is the Department of Education. So there also will be for sure representation from education in the education space on the committee via the Department of Education. But to reiterate what John said and to amplify that, we really do welcome nominations from the education sector.

MR. PARTON: Thank you, Suzi. To our technical work --

MS. LEVINE: So people tend to think about community colleges, that does not actually also preclude K-12 institutions as well. As we have been talking about the kind of ship much of this apprenticeship is also transpiring in that K-12 space as well. So that does not preclude, and we would also invite nominations from that space as well.

MR. PARTON: And I know we have even seen some questions in here about whether the committee would consider representation from four year institutions, we have seen some activity of four year institutions in the apprenticeship system in recent years. So it would be certainly open to nominations in that space.

Two more technical, but critically important questions about subcommittee membership. One, is there any upfront financial obligation for committee members, and two, are designees allowed for members if they are unable to attend a particular meeting? I do not know if, John or Kenia, you wanted to give the statement on these?

MR. LADD: Right. So on the designated question, yes, we will allow principals to have their designee represent them on the subcommittees as needed. In terms of expenses, Kenia, you are probably best to cover that. Again, you know, we will cover any travel related expenses, but there should not be any other expenses other than, obviously, your time that would be incurred.

MS. HUCKABEE: Yeah, much like, John, you are exactly right. For the subcommittee space, the plan is to use technology to convene those groups. So a platform like Teams, or WorkForce, so the delegates would not necessarily need to travel even if it was Covid safe and we had moved to an in-person format. For the principals, they would not necessarily have to travel to participate in subcommittee work because that work will likely be completely virtual. Whether the full committee meetings are virtual or in-person, those will probably remain in a virtual format over the two years.

MR. LADD: And just to clarify, the designee can only support the principle at that subcommittee level, the designee cannot stand in for the principle for full committee meetings or vote on behalf of the full committee member.

MR. PARTON: Thank you for that. Very helpful, both of you. Let me just watch the time here in just a couple of minutes left. But John, could you just share a little bit about the role the ACA plays vis-à-vis the policy development, on the Office of Apprenticeship as an advisory committee?

MR. LADD: Sure. So thanks for that question, because I think that is an important clarification. Again, the ACA is governed by FACA. And as such, the advice and recommendations we receive from the committee are again, incredibly valuable to the department. But are that. That they are recommendations and advice to the committee. Ultimately, the department has to make that final call and decision when it comes to policy.

But we have certainly relied heavily on that advice and recommendations in the past. I think another important distinction is, the advice and recommendations are separate from the implementation factor. Committees are not -- do not have the ability to support the department then in the implementation of the advice and recommendations. Again, we continue to work with groups in other contexts, but the committee itself cannot be.

And the analogy I use here is, you know, in some ways it is the advice and recommendations are seen as kind of being thrown over the wall and received by the department. And then the department makes their decision and takes steps to implement those regulate -- those advice and recommendations. So people on the committee should understand that that that implementation role is then reserved for the department. So I think that that is a useful clarification and moving forward to set expectations.

MS. LEVINE: And I will add another element to that. Just to clarify, FACA, as John was saying, is the Federal Advisory Committee Act. And it is very specific piece of legislation that governs advisory committees like this and how to make sure that there is maximum transparency and maximum public engagement.

MR. PARTON: Thank you for that Suzi. It is important to break down the acronyms. Well, we are, believe it or not, at times I want to say just a huge thank you and hand over, back over to Kenia to take us home. But many of the questions, we got to as many as we could today, we will work to to post as many as we can to some of the questions that we have been able to aggregate here. But I will hand back to you, Kenia.

MS. HUCKABEE: Thanks, Brent. And I just, for others, I just posted the link to the FACA Act just so that people can take advantage of that. So I think we, as Grace share in the beginning, today's session is being recorded. It takes us a few days here at the department to get transcriptions and things posted. But if there are questions that were not answered today, we will take those back and try to produce a Q&A perhaps and post that along with the recording. That will be up on our website, apprenticeship.gov later next week.

We are always available at the advisorycommitteeonapprenticeship.gov email address. If there are additional questions that you have that were not answered here today. But again, today's session was recorded. It will be posted. Reminders: June 3rd is the deadline for nominations. All of the instructions are on apprenticeships.gov. And again, if you have additional questions or you need immediacy feedback, please send us an email at advisorycommitteeonapprenticeship --no spaces -- @dol.gov. And Grace, I think that concludes today's session.

(END)