



MEMORANDUM

To: Strategic Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented By: Victoria Rodriguez, Director of Workforce Services

Date: January 23, 2026

Subject: Externship for Teachers Final Report by ATEAMS

Summary: The Alliance of Technology Education in Applied Math & Science (ATEAMS) is a collaborative network of educators and industry professionals dedicated to the success of the Externship for Teachers program. Partnering with Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) since 2015, ATEAMS strives to "Connect Education and Industry to Impact the Future Workforce." This mission directly supports the program's goal of bridging the gap between the classroom and the professional world. In 2025, ATEAMS hosted four 5-day professional development sessions for 96 educators, counselors and administrators, facilitating direct engagement with 26 different companies/organizations across the Alamo Region.

Strategic Goals: ATEAMS is the service provider for Externship for Teachers Goal 3: Partnership Managers: Strengthen and expand strategic partnerships among TWC, employers, educational institutions, and community-based organizations to deliver coordinated and innovative workforce development solutions.

Analysis: N/A

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: Continue to engage with ATEAMS in the Teacher Externship program for 2026.

Next Steps: The next step is to engage in strategic collaboration to plan and coordinate the 2026 Externship for Teachers program.



MEMORANDUM

To: Strategic Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented By: Victoria Rodriguez, Director of Workforce Services

Date: January 23, 2026

Subject: Alamo Colleges District Partnership and Workforce Pell

Summary: This partnership is designed to expand access to short-term, high-quality workforce training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials aligned with regional labor market demand. Through this collaboration, WSA will support outreach, coordination, and alignment with employer-driven career pathways, while Alamo Colleges will deliver eligible training programs that meet Workforce Pell requirements. The initiative strengthens workforce pipelines by reducing financial barriers for participants seeking rapid entry or advancement in high-demand occupations.

Strategic Goals: Through this collaboration, WSA will support outreach and alignment with employer-driven career pathways, while Alamo Colleges will deliver eligible training programs that meet Workforce Pell requirements. This coordination strengthens workforce pipelines by reducing financial barriers for participants seeking rapid entry or advancement in high-demand occupations. WSA demonstrates each Statewide Action Plan goal below.

Goal 1: Texas Talent Experts

Build a statewide network of Texas Talent Experts to support workforce development by identifying skill gaps, advising employers and jobseekers, and promoting talent recruitment and retention across Texas.

Goal 2: Service Optimizers

Enhance the efficiency, quality, and accessibility of workforce services delivered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), ensuring Texans experience seamless access to job training, unemployment benefits, and career support.

Goal 3: Partnership Managers

Strengthen and expand strategic partnerships among TWC, employers, educational institutions, and community-based organizations to deliver coordinated and innovative workforce development solutions.

Analysis: Workforce Solutions Alamo will closely monitor the implementation of Workforce Pell to ensure opportunities for braided funding, co-enrollment, and effective partner coordination are fully leveraged. The partnership between Workforce Solutions Alamo and



the Alamo Colleges District represents a strategic alignment between workforce development and higher education to expand access to short-term, credential-based training in high-demand occupations. This collaboration strengthens regional talent pipelines by reducing financial barriers for individuals seeking rapid entry into our advancement within the workforce. WSA’s role in outreach, coordination, and employer alignment complements Alamo Colleges’ delivery of eligible training programs, resulting in an integrated and outcomes-focused approach to workforce preparation.

Alternatives: The alternative to this partnership would be the absence of collaboration, which does not align with Workforce Solutions Alamo’s standards or strategic approach.

Fiscal Impact: The leveraging of the Workforce Pell has the potential to reduce education and training costs for WSA.

Recommendation: Once the Workforce Pell parameters are approved federally WSA should define and monitor key performance measures—such as enrollment, credential attainment, completion, and employment outcomes—to ensure accountability and alignment with workforce priorities. Strengthening employer engagement to ensure Workforce Pell programs align with target occupations and regional demand, along with coordinated outreach and participant navigation, will further support effective implementation and long-term workforce impact.

Next Steps: Monitor the implementation of Workforce Pell and establish a co-enrollment framework between the agencies to support coordination and track participant outcomes over time.



MEMORANDUM

To: Strategic Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented By: Victoria Rodriguez, Director of Workforce Services

Date: January 23, 2026

Subject: **Workforce One Update**

Summary: Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) deployed the Workforce One Mobile Unit to serve its 13-county region. One year ago, staff presented the Workforce One calendar, and since that time have completed a full year of events and initiatives. Staff would now like to provide the Board with an update on activities and outcomes from the past year.

Strategic Goals: The strategic goals of the Workforce One Mobile Unit are centered on expanding access to workforce services across WSA's 13-county region, particularly in areas with limited physical workforce center presence. The Mobile Unit aims to increase outreach to underserved populations, provide on-site employment services, career counseling, and training enrollment, and facilitate connections to education and credentialing opportunities. By bringing services directly to the community, the Mobile Unit supports WSA's mission to strengthen regional talent pipelines, improve employment outcomes, and ensure equitable access to workforce resources, while also fostering partnerships with local employers and community organizations to address regional workforce needs. Goal 2: Service Optimizers: Enhance the efficiency, quality, and accessibility of workforce services delivered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), ensuring Texans experience seamless access to job training, unemployment benefits, and career support. Goal 3: Partnership Managers: Strengthen and expand strategic partnerships among TWC, employers, educational institutions, and community-based organizations to deliver coordinated and innovative workforce development solutions.

Analysis: Workforce One Mobile Unit has demonstrated significant reach and impact across WSA's 13-county region. The unit participated in 57 events, traveling a total of 4,101 miles to bring workforce services directly to the community. Through these efforts, approximately 385 clients received on-site assistance, including career counseling, employment services, and connections to training and credentialing opportunities. These results highlight the Mobile Unit's effectiveness in expanding access to underserved populations, strengthening regional workforce pipelines, and supporting WSA's mission to connect individuals with meaningful



employment and education opportunities.

Alternatives: An alternative to the Mobile Unit would be to limit participation to select geographic areas; however, we have found that communities across the region have a strong need for mobile employment services, particularly in response to disasters and urgent workforce needs.

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: Staff recommend continuing with scheduling Workforce One reservations and updating the board with return on investment.

Next Steps: The mobile unit will be utilized January 28th, February 25th, March 11th, and May 13th.



MEMORANDUM

To: Strategic Committee
From: Adrian Lopez, CEO
Presented By: Dan Wallace, Community and Employer Partners Manager
Date: January 23, 2026
Subject: **Business Services Unit (BSU) Calendar**

Summary: The Business Services Unit (BSU) Calendar outlines planned employer engagement activities, outreach events, and partner coordination efforts for the upcoming program period. The calendar is intended to provide visibility into BSU priorities, ensure alignment with workforce system goals, and support strategic coordination with employers, education partners, and internal teams.

Strategic Goals: This agenda item aligns with the following Strategic Plan goals: Goal 1: Texas Talent Experts: The BSU Calendar supports proactive employer engagement to identify workforce needs, skill gaps, and talent demands across targeted industries. Goal 2: Service Optimizers: Planned scheduling and coordination of business services activities improves efficiency, reduces duplication, and enhances service delivery to employers. Goal 3: Partnership Managers: The calendar reflects intentional collaboration with employers, education partners, and community organizations to strengthen workforce partnerships.

Analysis: The BSU Calendar serves as a planning and communication tool that aligns employer outreach, hiring events, sector strategies, and partner engagements. Establishing a structured calendar allows staff and leadership to anticipate key activities, measure engagement outcomes, and ensure consistency with regional workforce priorities. Committee awareness supports transparency and strategic oversight.

Alternatives: The alternative would be to operate without a structured BSU scheduling process, which is not recommended due to reduced consistency, limited visibility into employer engagement activities, and misalignment with strategic priorities. The BSU Calendar provides a standardized framework for coordinated planning, accountability, and partner engagement.

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: Staff recommends the Strategic Committee receive and acknowledge the BSU Calendar to support awareness and alignment with workforce and employer engagement priorities.

Next Steps:

- Implements the BSU Calendar as outlined.
- Provide periodic updates to leadership and the Strategic Committee as needed.

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MEMORANDUM

To: Strategic Committee
From: Eric Vryn, Chief Process Officer
Date: January 23, 2026
Subject: **Alamo Region: Data Insights**

Purpose:

This memo provides an update on current labor market conditions, explains why recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas (Dallas Fed) vary, and highlights key trends in the Alamo Region. The objective is to provide the Committee with sufficient context to understand the broader “data story” while keeping our local realities in focus.

Executive Summary:

National and Texas labor markets have clearly cooled but have not entered a sharp downturn: unemployment is in the low 4-percent range, job growth has slowed, and underemployment has increased. *The Alamo Region is performing somewhat better than the state and national averages, with modest job growth led by health care and trade/transportation.* At the same time, we are seeing fewer placements despite continued employer postings. The apparent disconnect across BLS, TWC, Dallas Fed, and local experience reflects different methods, timing, and slices of the labor market rather than any single source being “wrong.”

Big Picture: U.S., Texas, Alamo Region

At the national level, the December 2025 jobs report shows an economy that has clearly cooled but has not fallen off a cliff. Employers added 50,000 jobs in December, and the unemployment rate held at 4.4 percent. Job growth in 2025 (about 584,000 jobs) was far weaker than in 2024 (slightly over 2.0M), and more people are working part time when they would prefer full time or drifting out of active job search altogether. The labor market is not “booming” or “crashing” – it is slower and more uneven than it was.

Texas fits this pattern. **Based on November 2025 TWC data**, the state unemployment rate is hovering in the low-4-percent range, and total employment remains slightly higher than a year ago. At the same time, the Dallas Fed’s Texas Employment Forecast suggests that, once all revisions are in, statewide job growth in 2025 may be close to zero.

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The Alamo Region looks somewhat better than the headlines. The San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area’s unemployment rate is roughly a couple of tenths below the state and national averages, and total nonfarm employment continues to grow modestly over the year, *led by health care and trade/transportation*. At the same time, our own data shows job postings softening from October peaks and placements declining across the quarter, especially in December.

<i>Area</i>	<i>Unemployment (latest)</i>	<i>Direction vs. 2024</i>	<i>Job Growth Story (2025)</i>
U.S.	~4.4%	Higher	Slow, still positive
Texas	Low 4% range	Slightly higher	Very weak / near zero (Fed view)
Alamo Region (MSA)	~4.0%	Slightly higher	Modest growth, sector-uneven

Note: U.S. unemployment reflects December 2025 BLS data; the Texas job-growth assessment reflects the Dallas Fed’s 2025 forecast; Alamo Region figures reflect November 2025 TWC MSA data.

The takeaway: the national and state data say, “slower and choppier,” while our region is still adding jobs – but it is becoming harder to connect job seekers to the opportunities that exist.

Why the Numbers Don’t Match

There is a growing gap between the economy people hear about and the economy they experience day to day. That gap shows up in the data as well.

Different questions, different answers.

BLS’s headline unemployment rate (U-3) answers a very narrow question: “**What share of the labor force is jobless and actively looking for work in the last four weeks?**” If someone wants a job but has stopped actively applying – because of childcare, transportation, repeated rejection, or burnout – they are no longer counted as unemployed. They move into “**not in the labor force,**” which can make the rate look better even when their situation has not improved.

At the same time, **BLS classifies someone as “employed” if they did at least one hour of paid work in the reference week.** That means a person piecing together a few gig shifts is counted the same way as someone in a stable full-time job. People who say “**I have a job, but not enough hours**” are underemployed, and that strain doesn’t move the U-3 unemployment rate very much. It shows up instead in broader measures and in the number of people working part time for economic reasons, which has increased over the past year.

Survey vs. admin vs. forecast.

- BLS national and TWC state/MSA data are built from surveys (household and employer) and are then modeled and seasonally adjusted. These are the “official” numbers.



- UI claims are administrative: they only capture people who are eligible for, and actually filing for, unemployment benefits. Many unemployed workers never appear there at all.
- Dallas Fed’s Texas Employment Forecast starts with the same BLS job counts but layers on additional indicators (GDP, leading indexes, oil prices) and anticipates the impact of upcoming benchmark revisions. This is why the Fed can say “**near-zero growth**” while TWC still shows positive gains: they are looking at different points in the revision cycle.

Data quirks in 2025.

The October 2025 federal government shutdown meant the main household survey was not collected that month. BLS had to skip October in the annual averages and then revise seasonal factors back several years. None of this makes the data unusable, but it does add noise and makes year-to-year comparisons trickier than usual.

It is important to understand that the data is not “lying”; each series is simply looking at a different slice of reality. When you put them together, they tell a consistent story of a labor market that is slowing, more precarious at the edges, but not in free-fall.

Alamo Region: Current Conditions and Sector Trends

The November 2025 release for the San Antonio–New Braunfels MSA shows:

- **Unemployment rate:** 4.0 percent (actual in November 2025), down from 4.2 percent in September 2025 but up from 3.8 percent a year earlier.
- **Comparison:** The MSA rate is below the Texas not-seasonally-adjusted rate of 4.2 percent and below the U.S. actual rate of 4.3 percent.
- **Labor force:** Civilian labor force increased by 26,890 over the year.
- **Employment growth:** Total non-farm employment rose by 12,100 jobs (1.0 percent) over the year.

Industry detail

Selected sector changes for San Antonio–New Braunfels MSA, November 2025:

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Monthly Change (Jobs)</i>	<i>Annual Change (Jobs)</i>	<i>Annual % Change</i>
<i>Total Nonfarm</i>	+3,100	+12,100	+1.0%
<i>Trade, Transportation & Utilities</i>	+4,700	+7,000	+3.3%
<i>Private Education & Health Services</i>	+900	+9,800	+5.4%
<i>Construction</i>	-300	+1,700	+2.4%
<i>Financial Activities</i>	+400	+300	+0.3%



<i>Professional & Business Services</i>	-200	-1,300	-0.8%
<i>Leisure & Hospitality</i>	-3,300	-2,600	-1.8%
<i>Information</i>	+100	-600	-3.0%

Key points for discussion:

- **Areas of growth.** Private Education & Health Services and Trade, Transportation & Utilities are driving most of the net employment gains, consistent with continued demand for healthcare and logistics roles.
- **Areas of concern.** Leisure & Hospitality and Professional & Business Services are down over the year, indicating softness in discretionary services and certain higher-skill office sectors.
- **Mixed public sector trend.** Government employment gained over the month but is down over the year, and Information is also posting annual declines.

Demand and Placement Indicators

WSA internal operational data through December 2025 add another layer:

- **Job postings.** Unique postings peaked in October 2025 (20,194), fell in November (15,795), and partially recovered in December (17,019). December remained about 16 percent below October but roughly 8 percent above November.
- **Top occupations.** In November, Registered Nurses accounted for 1,088 postings—far ahead of any other occupation—followed by retail sales, truck drivers, and customer service roles.
- **Placements.** Job placements declined steadily across the quarter. External placements fell from 1,288 in October to 652 in November and 536 in December. Internal placements declined from 472 (Oct) to 418 (Nov) and dropped to 192 (Dec).

Taken together, the regional picture is one of:

- **Moderate but positive employment growth**, led by healthcare and logistics.
- **Sector pockets that are flat or contracting**, especially in leisure, some professional services, and information.
- **Softening throughput in our own system**, with fewer placements despite continued employer demand, especially in healthcare and frontline service roles.

This divergence—employers still posting jobs while placements fall—suggests a growing importance of skills alignment, job quality, and support services rather than a simple “lack of jobs.”



Implications and How to Talk About the Variances

The following observations are intended to guide how we interpret and communicate these data.

1. Data sources answer different questions.

- BLS and TWC tell us “**What the surveys currently show**” for unemployment and payroll jobs.
- The Dallas Fed is explicitly trying to anticipate where those numbers will end up after revisions and in light of broader economic indicators.

2. Methodology and timing matter.

- Seasonal adjustment, the absence of October household data, and annual benchmark revisions all create short-term inconsistencies across releases. It is not unusual, in a transition year, for the state’s press releases and the regional Fed’s forecast to sound out of sync.

3. Local nuance is critical.

- **The Alamo Region’s unemployment rate is lower than the states, and our growth is concentrated in health care, logistics, and construction.** At the same time, local placements are trending down, and some service sectors are shrinking over the year. The headline unemployment rate alone does not capture these operational realities.

4. UI data show churn, not crisis.

- National weekly UI claims remain relatively low by historical standards, even as more people are jobless for longer and more workers are in part-time or gig roles they would prefer to replace. This supports a “cooling but not collapsing” narrative rather than a sudden downturn.

The most accurate and balanced message is that the labor market is cooler than in 2024, with more underemployment and uneven sector performance, but both **Texas and the Alamo Region remain comparatively resilient**. For WSA, the challenge is less about a lack of openings and more about aligning workers to the right jobs, supporting transitions in softer sectors, and preparing for potential revisions that may make 2025 growth look weaker on paper than it appears in current TWC releases.

Data timing and sources

Unless otherwise noted, U.S. figures reflect December 2025 BLS data; Texas and Alamo Region figures reflect November 2025 TWC/BLS program data; and WSA figures are based on internal operational data through December 2025. References to the Dallas Fed reflect the most recent published Texas Employment Forecast for calendar year 2025.

Fiscal Impact: None

Attachments: None.