

The Workforce and Registered Apprenticeship System: How Do We Connect the Two?



SETA Conference 2025
March 2025

Presenter



Alan Dodkowitz

Subject Matter Expert

Safal Partners

Welcome and Agenda

- Center of Excellence Overview
- Findings from the Field
- Aligning Workforce Boards and RA
- Case Studies
- Key Take-Aways
- Questions and Discussion



Center of Excellence Overview



- U.S. DOL initiative to increase systems alignment across apprenticeship, education, and workforce
- Led by Safal Partners; 5 national partners
- We provide no-cost services including:
 - Monthly webinars
 - Quarterly virtual office hours
 - Individual compliance assistance and services
 - Online resources (desk aids, guides, frameworks, etc.)



[Visit our website, request assistance](#)



Poll: Who is in the Room with Us Today?

- Private Industry Employers
- State Workforce Board Members / Staff
- Local Workforce Board members / Staff
- Partners of the American Job Center System (One-Stop)
- Registered Apprenticeship Providers
- Education (Secondary / Post Secondary / Proprietary, Etc.)
- Community Based Organizations
- Other

You May Fit More than 1 Category



Findings from the Field



Support at Top, Dropoff in Planning

RA Alignment Indicator

RA Alignment Indicator	# of State Plans Included	% of States	# of Territories
1. Apprenticeship acknowledged as workforce strategy	50	100%	6
2. Plans to apply for/utilize federal grants to expand apprenticeship	42	84%	4
3. Apprenticeship articulated specifically in strategies to meet State Plan vision	17	34%	3
4. State level apprenticeship work group or committee to SWDB	17	34%	1
5. Specialist expertise in AJCs	16	32%	1
6. State level Initiative (e.g., investment of additional resources, statute designed to incentivize or encourage establishment of apprenticeships)	15	30%	2
7. Specific objectives and goals for increased # of apprentices or apprenticeship programs	7	14%	0

2020 State WIOA Plan RA Leaders

While no state or territory had all seven indicators of RA alignment in their Unified or Combined Plan, *15 had four or more indicators.*

Six Indicators

Pennsylvania
Texas

Five Indicators

Arizona
Illinois
Iowa
Kentucky
Nevada
New Mexico
Oklahoma

Four Indicators

	US Territories
Alaska	American Samoa
Arkansas	District of Columbia
Connecticut	Guam
Florida	
Idaho	
Kansas	
Maine	
Missouri	
New York	
Wisconsin	

Low Utilization Due to Several Factors

Workforce Boards, Title I providers cited:



Other state and local priorities



Lack of Registered Apprenticeship Knowledge



Few/no strategic relationships with the RA System



Priority of meeting WIOA performance measures

Low Utilization Due to Several Factors

Workforce Boards, Title I providers cited:



View of WIOA as “last dollar in” for RA given administrative burden vs. fewer restrictions with non-WIOA \$\$



Lack of consistent, accessible, modularized training – i.e. Workforce System not a catalog on the RA Academy



Separate data systems



Local Workforce Development Boards don’t see themselves as “conveners” of local industry

Knowledge Gap: Connecting Systems

51%	46%	46%	43%
DO NOT UNDERSTAND			
the role of USDOL OA or an SAA	how registered apprenticeship correlates with key WIOA performance measures	the relationship between their state or local Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and the related instruction (RI) component of registered apprenticeship	how their state or territory's Unified or Combined WIOA plan or local workforce board WIOA plan relates to Apprenticeship
"Very Little" = 38.88%	"Very Little" = 35.87%	"Very Little" = 34.48%	"Very Little" = 34.01%
"None" = 12.38%	"None" = 10.09%	"None" = 11.21%	"None" = 9.41%

Knowledge Gap: How RA Works

45%	41%	40%	38%	35%
DO NOT UNDERSTAND				
the responsibilities of an Apprenticeship program sponsor	the supervision requirements for apprentices in registered apprenticeship programs	what registered apprenticeship programs exist in their local area	related instruction (RI) requirements of Apprenticeship programming	the difference between registered apprenticeship and other work and learn models
"Very Little" = 36.21% "None" = 8.82%	"Very Little" = 31.13% "None" = 10.15%	"Very Little" = 33.02% "None" = 7.4%	"Very Little" = 30.81% "None" = 7.66%	"Very Little" = 28.07% "None" = 7.28%

Knowledge Gap: Funding

44%

33%

DO NOT UNDERSTAND

what programs pay for the
components of registered
apprenticeship

how to use WIOA supportive
services to serve apprentices

"Very Little" = 36.73%
"None" = 6.99%

"Very Little" = 26%
"None" = 7.43%

Knowledge Gap: Communication

47%	42%	30%
DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW TO		
convene partners locally	communicate benefits of registered apprenticeship to employers	communicate the benefits of registered apprenticeship to job seekers
<i>"Very Little"</i> = 37.46% <i>"None"</i> = 9.18%	<i>"Very Little"</i> = 31% <i>"None"</i> = 11.09%	<i>"Very Little"</i> = 24.22% <i>"None"</i> = 6.08%

Creating Alignment in the Field



POLL:

Which engagement level best describes your experience with Registered Apprenticeship?

✓ Clear Leader

✓ Moderately Engaged

✓ Just Getting Started

Component #1:
Implementing Policy

Component #2:
Engaging Jobseekers

Component #3:
Supporting Sponsors/Jobseekers

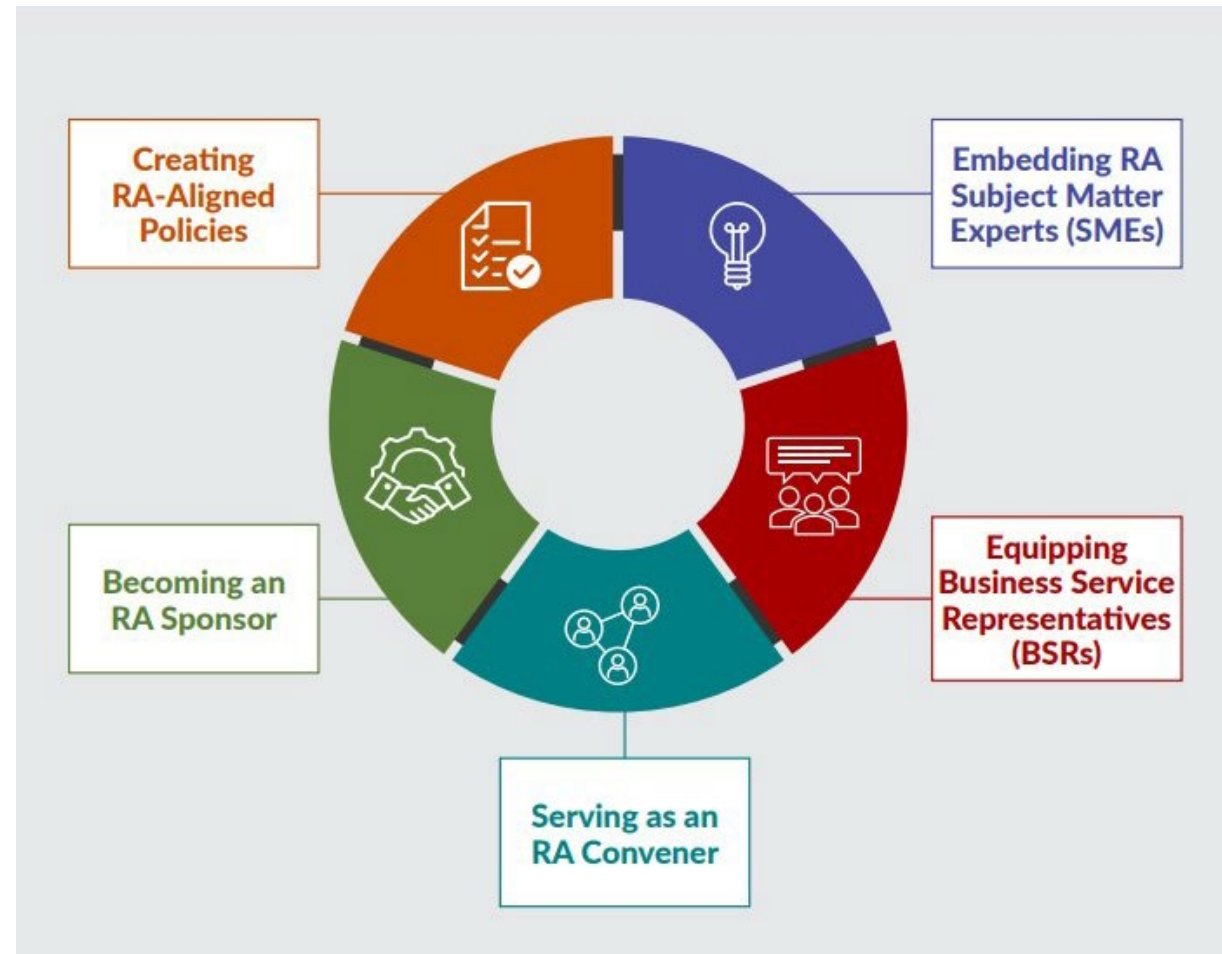
Component #4:
Building Registered Apprenticeship
Staffing, Partnerships

Component #5:
Serving as Registered Apprenticeship
Convener

Component #6:
Becoming a Registered
Apprenticeship Sponsor

New Tool

Key Components of Workforce System Alignment with Registered Apprenticeship



Component #1: Policy Framework



State and Local WDBs often have state and local policies and procedure frameworks that align and guide development of work to support RA program implementation.

- Criteria and policies for board membership ensure appropriate representation for RA
- Policies/procedures prioritize the use of RA as a service strategy for WIOA Title I and may provide funding to support RA programs
- Partnering program service providers have policies/procedures on clear WIOA/RA co-enrollment processes and training towards frontline case managers
- Funding-related policies ensure use of available funds supports RA expansion
- ETPL policy/procedures provide automatic inclusion of RA programs on ETPLs
- Business services policies/procedures include implementation of RA through OJT/IWT

Component #2: Embed RA SMEs



State/LWDBs embed RA expertise in the AJC frontline staff to actively help engage employers and create RA pipeline.

- State/LWDB have RA navigators/SMEs within AJCs or region
- Case managers purposefully screen and refer job seekers to RAPs
- Co-enrollment procedures are used by case managers and partners
- Apprentices are supported throughout the RA program
- Partners work with AJCs to engage job seekers in RAPs
- Outreach to job seekers showing benefits to RA
- Training for case managers on RA
- Wagner-Peyser staff share RA info to job seekers and employers

Component #3: Equipping BSRs



Business Services Representatives (BSRs) have the knowledge and expertise to assist employers with adopting RA programs and accessing funding.

BSRs...

- Regularly work with ATRs to promote RA programs
- Guide employers through the RA process
- Create outreach plan based on LMI with RA counterparts
- Interact with intermediaries to assist businesses with RA program development
- Provide collateral and education to partners
- Communicate with case managers about apprenticeship openings
- Assist businesses with leveraging WIOA and other funding

State/Local Rapid Response efforts include RA

Component #4: RA Convener



State/LWDBs engage stakeholders to expand RA, build talent pipelines, address workforce shortages, and increase employment and wages for workers.

- Engage with stakeholders to development and implement RA programs that can access funding and resources through workforce system
- Sector Strategy initiatives include RA as a strategy for building the talent pipeline
- Create and maintain a network (hub) of RA programs to accelerate employer participation and to provide technical assistance
- Collaborate on high-demand, industry specific RA programs including technical assistance and funding
- Collaborative RA efforts include mandatory partners as part of convening activities
- Create concise communication and outreach for RA programs

Component #5: RA Sponsorship



LWDB becomes a group RA sponsor increasing opportunities for job seekers to access careers in high-demand industries and for businesses to access funding supports for apprentices.

- LWDB becomes a RA program sponsor for in-demand occupation(s)
- Occupations are regularly added to RA programs based on LMI
- Ed system is engaged with LWDB to provide RI
- RA sponsorship is sustainable through braided funding
- LWDB creates clear path to build pipeline for employers
- LWDB provides admin support, training and assistance to employer joining the RA program
- LWDB ensures ability to support employers with WIOA funding

Case Studies



Case Study: Apprentice Florida



Apprentice Florida

(Levels 2, 3, 4, & 5):

- State funding for Apprenticeship Navigators
- Locals work regularly with Apprenticeship Training Representatives at state level
- Incorporated RA in state level WIOA plan

Key Alignment Factors:

State leadership and policy changes:

- State/Local hosting of Apprenticeship Accelerators
- Training components and success stories just for employers
- Tools like PowerPoint templates, flyers for outreach, and toolkits for business, education and local workforce boards

Case Study: Apprentice Florida



Link:

[Webinar of Demonstrated State Apprenticeship Leadership in 2020 Unified-Combined Plans Part Two Apprenticeship Expertise in AJCs](#)

In this engaging webinar from the Center of Excellence, Subject Matter Experts speak about state leadership in Apprenticeship noted in 2020 State Plans as programs demonstrating **strong leadership** in planning effective apprenticeship programs. Throughout the webinar, participants hear from voices from the field.

Case Study: Apprenticeship Idaho



IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



Idaho Division of
Vocational Rehabilitation



The Council
of State
Governments



Apprentice Idaho Partners (Levels 1, 2, & 3):

- Includes all stakeholders at state and local level
- National case study demonstrates in 6 years they had increases in apprentices and new RA programs

Key Alignment Factors:

- State leadership and policy changes
- Collaborative outreach and business engagement
- Building capacity to develop and support RA programs

Case Study: Apprenticeship Idaho



Link:

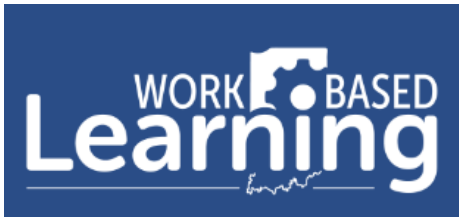
[Webinar of Demonstrated State Apprenticeship Leadership in 2020 Unified Combined Plans Part 1](#)

In this Center of Excellence webinar , Subject Matter Experts speak about state leadership in apprenticeship ...noted in 2020 plans for best practices in leadership in planning. Throughout the webinar, participants hear from voices from the field.

Examples



- **Howard County Community College:** State board and local economic development authority provides funding to the college to offer IT apprenticeships to local students.



- **Indiana Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeship** – Through efforts of the state, OWBLA aligned credits with CTE and community college partner, Ivy Tech, to build a pathway for apprentices to complete with an associate's degree.



- **College of the Canyons and South Bay WIB-** Local board received a \$12 million Federal grant and worked with the College of the Canyons to deliver services to over 5,000 apprentices and pre-apprentices.



Take-Aways

Create Connections with State, Local WDBs

- Most RA sponsors, participating employers have NO relationships with or awareness of WDBs – not accessing services, funding, or resources.

Educate Partners on WDBs:

- Sector strategies: priority occupations and key industries
- WIOA and non-WIOA funding
- Policies on OJT contracts, which WIOA and non-WIOA funding "buckets" and services they will apply to RA
- Funding levels, fiscal year cycle and how quickly they anticipate spending funds
- Supportive services offered and how that maps to your program's needs
- Candidate pool – IS and OS Youth Programs
- ETPL program registration process



Engage Chambers of Commerce

Chambers of Commerce can play a key role in building a stronger RA system by:

- Increasing industry awareness of RA
- Connecting RA sponsors, RTI providers, RA system staff to local businesses and employer groups
- Creating pathway for WDB jobseekers to member RA programs



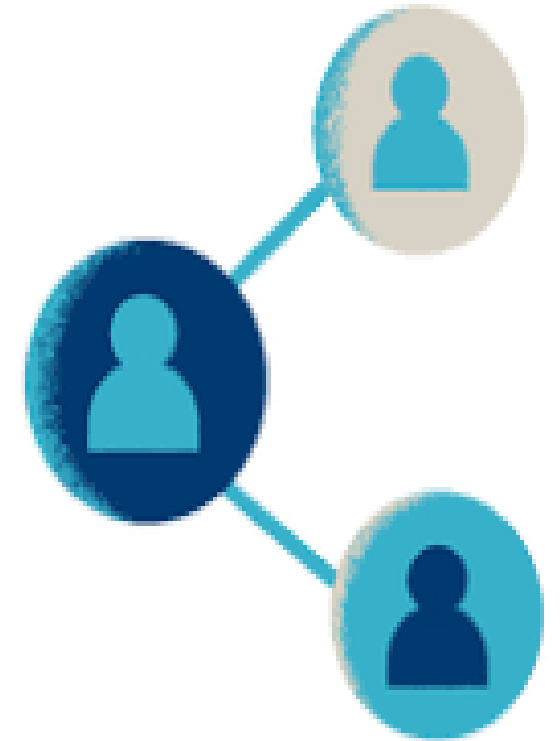
Partner with Secondary, Post-Secondary Ed

- Deepen connections with local high schools, community colleges, career and technical education providers, and four-year school to establish a stronger RA programs.
- At the high school level, work to develop programs for juniors or seniors eligible to apply for paid on-the-job training experience with an employer while receiving RTI at school.
- At the secondary level, build programs that embed industry credentials in RTI curriculum and oftentimes leads to the award of industry-recognized credentials.



Participate in Apprenticeship Networks

- Apprenticeship networks serve as a platform for organizations to come together, build awareness, and share best practices to expand professional advancement through apprenticeship programs. Safal has worked to identify two primary types of networks:
 - **Private-Sector Networks:** Based out of consortia of businesses, local chambers of commerce, and other business groups. They seek to build a network for businesses to connect and advance apprenticeship.
 - **Public-Sector Networks:** Based out of local workforce systems, they view the alignment of registered apprenticeship and workforce development as crucial. Also serve as conveners of those in the apprenticeship ecosystem, bringing together the workforce system, employers, RI providers, and other different partners.



Questions and Discussion



Become a Center Partner

- ✓ **Receive** no-cost expert TA, materials, and assistance
- ✓ **Network** with potential partners nationwide
- ✓ **Be** nationally recognized for your work

Scan for Partner Form



THANK YOU FOR JOINING US

Email us your questions at RA_COE@SafalPartners.com

For more information, visit: dolcoe.safalapps.com

