



CareerSource North Central Florida Region 26 Education & Industry Consortium

Wednesday, September 23, 2026 | 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual Meeting — link available via the CareerSource NCFL website

1. Call to Order & Welcome

- Roll call and introductions, including any new members.

2. Approval of Minutes

Review of Minutes — Q4 PY26 Meeting (May 29, 2026)

Brief recap for the record and a vote to approve. Update on items carried forward from last meeting:

- HCA partnership: HCA has requested apprenticeship paperwork from our ATR, Julie Nichols, on the Respiratory Therapy apprenticeship. A future meeting invitation for local HCA representatives was discussed but has not yet been formally arranged.
- ETPL submissions: Santa Fe got HVAC submitted and approved. Florida Gateway is waiting on teaching space to be approved before adding any further programs at this time.
- Digital Media A.S. labor-market data was sent to Dr. Ferns and to Adam Christopherson, the new AVP for Liberal Arts and Sciences at Santa Fe College.
- OJT and Work Experience: held several meetings with companies on OJT and Work Experience, including discussion of apprenticeship possibilities — particularly for non-traditional, in-demand sectors. Sent follow-up emails on OJT inquiries and referred several inquiries to our Youth Coordinator for Work Experience placements.

3. Regional Development Watch List

Informational update — current developments across the region and the job types they're generating.

- Alachua — U.S. Army Reserve Equipment Concentration Site (Gainesville): \$36M federal investment, 60 permanent skilled jobs, ~\$3M annual payroll. Job types: automotive & maintenance, commercial/industrial machinery repair (heavy diesel mechanic focus) — Santa Fe already launched a Heavy Diesel Mechanic Training Program (2025) tied to this. Note: these are dual-status "military technician" positions — federal civil-service jobs, but they require the employee to also be an active-duty member of the Army Reserve. Not open as standalone civilian hires; worth clarifying with Santa Fe how their training pipeline accounts for this before treating it as a general placement pathway.
- Alachua — F-300 AgFoodTech Innovation Park / Harvest Singularity (Newberry): \$66–132M in hydroponic greenhouses, 50–120 full-time jobs averaging \$91K/yr. Job types: controlled-environment ag technicians, precision ag/robotics & automation, food science, facility operations.
- Dixie — Circularity2 biochar facility (Cross City): investment undisclosed, up to 35 new jobs. Job types: kiln/pyrolysis plant operators, wood processing & milling, packaging and shipping, process/quality technicians.
- Gilchrist — Palms Medical Group (Trenton), 2026 Business of the Year: ongoing hiring across 13 sites in 7 counties. Job types: RN, MD/DO, PA, CMA/RMA, LPN, behavioral health, dental, plus administrative/patient support roles.
- Also flagged at the last meeting: a major Alachua County logistics/industrial group is planning a nine-figure investment in automation and robotics — details are still confidential, but it will raise demand for workers who can maintain and troubleshoot automated systems, beyond traditional material-handling roles. Sean may have an update.
- Bradford and Union counties: no major new developments to report this quarter — members from these counties are invited to share anything not yet on staff's radar.

4. Columbia County Career Cafés

Columbia County Economic Development and the school district's CTE program launched the first Career Café — small-group sessions connecting students directly with local employers, developed after site visits found companies unaware CTE programs existed.

- Discussion: could this format be replicated in Alachua, Bradford, Dixie, Gilchrist, or Union?

5. **LTOL Transition: Moving to the State/Regional Demand List Process**

- What's ending: Region 26 will no longer maintain its own Local Targeted Occupation List (LTOL).
- What's replacing it: the new process built around the state-derived Regional Demand Occupations List (2026–2027 list now in hand).
- What changes for members: how demand data will be pulled going forward, and whether program eligibility or planning decisions relied on the old local list.
- Open floor for questions.

6. **Structured Discussion: Priority Occupations by Sector**

Pulled from the 2026–2027 Regional Demand Occupations List for Workforce Development Area 26. Figures are regional annual openings and regional hourly wages unless marked (S) statewide-qualifying. Facilitator will call on 1–2 members per sector by name before opening to the group.

Healthcare / Life Sciences

Occupation	Regional Openings/yr	Entry–Mean Wage	Credential Level
Registered Nurses	508	\$34.27 – \$42.57	Level 6
Medical Assistants	149	\$17.01 – \$19.98	Level 4
Medical & Health Services Managers	113	\$39.58 – \$62.62	Level 6
Respiratory Therapists (S)	18	\$32.04 – \$37.39	Level 5

Respiratory Therapists is worth flagging directly against last meeting's HCA discussion — HCA is actively looking to formalize a registered apprenticeship for this role.

Manufacturing

Occupation	Regional Openings/yr	Entry–Mean Wage	Credential Level
First-Line Supervisors, Production & Operating Workers	59	\$21.81 – \$32.80	Level 3
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers & Weighers	39	\$16.95 – \$23.56	Level 4
Industrial Machinery Mechanics (S)	25	\$21.78 – \$30.04	Level 4
Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers (S)	23	\$18.89 – \$24.56	Level 4

Directly relevant to the Circularity2 (Dixie) and any future automation/robotics discussion in Section III.

AgTech

Occupation	Regional Openings/yr	Entry–Mean Wage	Credential Level
Farmers, Ranchers & Other Agricultural Managers	418	N/A – N/A	Level 6
Environmental Science & Protection Technicians	19	\$18.99 – \$25.63	Level 5
Biological Technicians	11	\$16.65 – \$24.35	Level 6

Food Science Technicians and Food Scientists don't yet show regional openings on this list (statewide-emerging only) — worth watching as F-300/Harvest Singularity ramps up.

Logistics

Occupation	Regional Openings/yr	Entry–Mean Wage	Credential Level
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	285	\$19.23 – \$25.54	Level 4
Production, Planning & Expediting Clerks	41	\$18.14 – \$25.50	Level 3
Logisticians (S)	25	\$19.69 – \$33.11	Level 6

Financial Services

Occupation	Regional Openings/yr	Entry–Mean Wage	Credential Level
Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	234	\$17.93 – \$24.75	Level 3
Accountants and Auditors	131	\$24.90 – \$39.13	Level 6
Financial Managers	63	\$32.93 – \$62.78	Level 6

Information Technology

Occupation	Regional Openings/yr	Entry–Mean Wage	Credential Level
Software Developers	89	\$40.57 – \$60.21	Level 6
Computer User Support Specialists	61	\$20.27 – \$26.55	Level 4
Computer Systems Analysts	47	\$31.23 – \$45.96	Level 6
Information Security Analysts (S)	24	\$33.93 – \$54.44	Level 6

Information Security Analysts ties directly to the cybersecurity pathways Santa Fe and Florida Gateway are both building out, per last meeting's update.

7. Next Steps & Adjournment