EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY CONSORTIUM QUARTERLY REPORT

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Report quarter: Q2

Date of meeting: 11/4/2026

Report prepared by: Terri Clark

Local workforce development board contact: Terri Clark **Date:** 11/4/2026

B. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organization	Industry or Education Organization	Contact Information
Laura Roberts	Manatee Technical College	Education	Robertsl@manateeschools.net
Christina Witt	CS Suncoast	Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)	cwitt@careersourcesc.com
Terri Clark	CS Suncoast/ TClark Workforce Solutions	Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)	tclark@careersourcesc.com
Kelli Kennedy	School District Manatee	Education	kkennedy@manateeschools.net
Ron Serpliss	State College of Florida	Education	serplisr@scf.edu

Mireya Evey	Credit Union 1	Industry	mireyaevay@creditunion1.com
Darby Lenoir	Suncoast Technical College	Education	dlenoir@sarasotacountyschools.edu
Jennifer Harmon	Centerstone	Industry	jennifer.harmon@centerstone.org

B. SUMMARY REPORT

1. **Summary analysis of the local labor market based on the industry representative needs and education offerings. (Provide summary)**

CareerSource Suncoast Education & Industry Consortium (EIC) held its second-quarter meeting virtually on November 4, 2026. Terri Clark and Christina Witt facilitated the discussion. The meeting focused on industry and education partner updates, employment and job outlook, CareerSource Suncoast events, and opportunities to strengthen career-connected learning and workforce pathways.

2. **Information on priority industry sectors and occupations for the local area. (Provide summary)**

Industry Partner Updates

- Manufacturing Month: SAMA coordinated approximately 12–14 regional manufacturing plant tours for students, with support from ROOTS Education and CareerSource Suncoast. ROOTS also visited Manatee Technical College and discussed apprenticeship opportunities with three classes.
- Healthcare: Jennifer Harmon reported continued challenges recruiting and retaining qualified psychiatric-care staff. Wage levels, difficult working conditions, and commute distance were identified as factors affecting recruitment and retention.
- Financial services: Mireya Eavey noted recruitment challenges for entry-level teller and relationship-banking positions. Candidates increasingly seek hybrid work; mergers and AI adoption are also affecting staffing. AI may create opportunities to retrain employees for transferable skills.
- Employer engagement: Manatee Technical College hosted a staff-skilling seminar with representatives from eight industries and program tours. Participants noted that terms such as work-based learning, paid internships, or work experience may help employers engage before introducing apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship Accelerator: CareerSource Suncoast hosted an event featuring apprenticeship information, employer/apprentice perspectives, ROOTS participation, and financial-literacy representation. Florida Commerce's pay-for-performance apprenticeship funding was discussed; the listed occupations were described as heavily focused on shipbuilding and defense, with limited alignment to some local robotics, semiconductor, and manufacturing-management occupations.

Education Partner Updates

- K–12: Several hundred students participated in manufacturing tours, and approximately 100 attended the construction rodeo at Suncoast Technical College. A maritime careers expo at Port Tampa Bay is planned for January, with a pilot bus of North County students. Construction pre-apprenticeship enrollment is underway.
- Technology Student Association: The Manatee West Coast Regional TSA competition is scheduled for December 5 at Bradenton River High School. More than 800 students registered; volunteers and in-person or remote judges are needed.
- Manatee Technical College: The October 12 campus-wide advisory committee breakfast recognized Bella Gina Med Spa, Palmetto Police Department, Polly Pack Incorporated, and Minuteman Press of Bradenton. Students participated in Habitat for Humanity service and employer tours. MTC's aviation facility is expected to begin airframe maintenance training in January, subject to facility completion. MTC was named Bradenton's Best Trade Technical School for 2026.
- Suncoast Technical College: Darby Larkin shared information about a new citizenship/lawful-presence documentation requirement affecting enrollment in CTE, degree, GED, ESOL, and dual-enrollment programs. STC has trained enrollment staff and prepared ESOL students for upcoming registration. Darby is transitioning from the committee; Danielle is expected to assume the role.
- State College of Florida: SCF and ROOTS applied for a Florida Semiconductor grant to develop short-term automation training that may lead to certification, employment, apprenticeship, and/or credit toward an Engineering Technology degree. SCF also completed its biennial articulation symposium and expects updated articulation agreements before the end of the semester.
- Career pathways and AI: Partners discussed using employer advisory councils to help career counselors understand AI-related occupational changes. The group emphasized microcredentials, stackable credentials, articulation, and multiple entry and exit points connecting short-term training with degrees.

Employment and Job Outlook: Committee members discussed current workforce trends impacting the region, including:

- Increased demand for internships and apprenticeship opportunities.

- Continued emphasis on strengthening employer and industry partnerships.
- Growing importance of career readiness and employability skills among students and job seekers.
- Ongoing efforts to align educational curriculum with evolving workforce and industry needs.

3. Information on the status of existing talent pipelines for in-demand occupations.

- Regional employers continue to report difficulty recruiting and retaining workers, with wages, commute costs, work-location preferences, and changing technology affecting talent needs.
- Career exposure through tours, career fairs, advisory councils, and work-based learning remains important to help students understand local opportunities and make informed career decisions.
- Partners supported stronger connections among K–12, technical education, higher education, and employers through articulation, short-term credentials, apprenticeships, and multiple pathways.
- AI's effect on occupations and career counseling was raised as an ongoing topic for collaboration between education and industry.

Next Meeting: Q3: Education & Industry Consortium Committee Meeting: Wednesday, February 10, 2027.