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Massachusetts Workforce Investments: Individual Workforce Training Programs

The following brief provides an analysis of state workforce investments from the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 to FY 2023 budget, with a focus on individual training programs. As MTF noted in our earlier introductory [brief](#), these programs primarily provide education and vocational training opportunities for individuals to create a strong foundation of basic skills. The brief highlights the six largest individual workforce training programs, which represent 90 percent of all funding in FY 2023.

Programs range from providing high school students opportunities to earn college credit to connecting unemployed individuals to training and employment opportunities. Our analysis of each program includes an overview of its purpose, the level of expenditure over the past five years, and what data are available for policymakers and the public to determine the effectiveness of the program. Finally, the brief highlights several themes that emerge when considering these programs individually and as part of the workforce system as a whole. These themes, which are related to program overlap, coordination, and performance assessment, have important policy implications for legislators and the administration.

Individual Workforce Training Programs

Since FY 2019, the state's annual operating budget has included a total of 11 line items supporting some form of an individual workforce training program. These line items primarily fall under three different secretariats, the Executive Office of Education (EOE), the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), and the Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED). The programs are administered by departments under those secretariats or by the Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp), a quasi-public agency.

These programs vary in the type of individual support they provide, with some focusing on education and skill development through job training programs and higher education courses, while others seek to make training more affordable for participants. In addition, several notable programs invest in creating a public-private partnership network to connect individuals with training and employment opportunities.

Policymakers have increased funding for these programs in recent years, as funding in FY 2023 (\$139.3 million) more than doubled the FY 2019 (\$62.7 million) amount. As the table below demonstrates, funding has increased across each secretariat and for nearly every individual workforce program. Six of these programs fall under EOE's budget and account for the largest increase (\$46.02 million) in funding in FY 2023 over FY 2019 levels. Increased funding for the Adult Basic Education program represents 58 percent (\$26.7 million) of all new education-related workforce spending. Additionally, EOLWD's workforce budget has increased by \$28.7 million in FY 2023 compared to FY 2019 levels. Increased funding for the Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth program accounts for 55 percent (\$15.7 million) of all new funding under EOLWD's workforce budget.

Individual Workforce Training Line Items by Administering Entity, FY 2019 – FY 2023

Program	FY19 GAA	FY20 GAA	FY21 GAA	FY22 GAA	FY23 GAA	FY 19-23 Change
Executive Office of Education	\$45.14	\$53.91	\$61.79	\$72.05	\$91.15	\$46.02
<i>Adult Basic Education</i>	\$33.35	\$41.05	\$46.39	\$50.00	\$60.00	\$26.65
<i>Early College Programs</i>	\$1.75	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$8.25
<i>Dual Enrollment Grant and Subsidies</i>	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$9.00	\$7.00
<i>School-to-Career Connecting Activities</i>	\$5.00	\$5.46	\$6.40	\$7.50	\$8.65	\$3.65
<i>YouthBuild Grants</i>	\$2.40	\$2.40	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$.60
<i>Bridges to Colleges</i>	\$.64	\$.50	\$.50	\$.55	\$.50	-\$.14
Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	\$16.85	\$22.10	\$27.06	\$35.56	\$45.54	\$28.69
<i>Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth</i>	\$12.79	\$16.07	\$20.00	\$24.00	\$28.48	\$15.69
<i>MassHire Career Centers</i>	\$4.06	\$3.96	\$5.00	\$9.50	\$15.00	\$10.94
<i>MassHire Department of Career Services</i>	\$.00	\$2.06	\$2.06	\$2.06	\$2.06	\$2.06
Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development	\$.70	\$2.51	\$2.55	\$2.50	\$2.60	\$1.90
<i>Urban Agenda Economic Development Grants</i>	\$.65	\$2.46	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.60	\$1.95
<i>Entrepreneur in Residence Pilot Program</i>	\$.05	\$.05	\$.05	\$.00	\$.00	-\$.05

\$ in millions

A Closer Look at the Largest Workforce Programs

As noted above, six programs make up 90 percent of FY 2023 funding for individual workforce training programs. Therefore, to understand how the state supports individual workforce needs, it is critical to understand these programs and how they relate to one another. These descriptions allow policymakers to have greater insight into what is being done to address basic skill development.

Adult Basic Education (\$60 million in the FY 2023 budget)

What is it?

The Adult Basic Education (ABE) line item provides funding for a competitive grant program administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This item is used to satisfy the state’s 25 percent state match requirement to secure full federal workforce funding; the current appropriation significantly exceeds the state match. In addition to the funding provided in the line item, the state receives federal dollars as part of the Title II WIOA program for Adult Education and Literacy programs. State funding is combined with federal resources to support a five-year grant cycle that goes to community-based organizations, school districts, and community colleges that apply for funding to support their English language learning and preparatory GED/High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) programs. Priority is given to applicants who service high percentages of parents with children who are school-aged and younger.

In the current award cycle (began in FY 2019), approximately 75 organizations received ABE funds with a majority of providers focusing their programs on English language learning services. These organizations also use funds to incorporate professional development services into their programs such as literacy workshops and digital literacy courses. Language in the line item requires that programs meet “satisfactory levels of performance as determined by the department” but no additional specific information is included.

How has the funding level changed since the FY 2019 Budget?

The ABE program received \$60 million in the FY 2023 budget, an increase of \$26.7 million (80 percent) over FY 2019 funding levels. This brings the total funding for the ABE program to more than double the investment in the Summer Jobs for At-Risk Youth (the next largest individual workforce program). These significant funding increases have resulted in 1,489 more individuals receiving career and training services between FY 2019 and FY 2022, the most recent available data¹. Additionally, the number of individuals who were employed after completing an ABE program increased by 383 between 2017 and 2020, according to the data sets analyzed in the FY 2019 and FY 2022 reports.

Are annual reports required by law and what efficacy data is publicly available?

No, there is no language requiring DESE to submit an annual report. While DESE does not provide an aggregate report, there is data published by the federal government. Data on each state's ABE program is collected at the federal level and published by the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education. On the NRS [website](#), reports on ABE programs in Massachusetts are available dating back to 2000 and provide substantial data such as the number of participants served, and the types of services provided. However, several key elements of data are not included in the federal report including the number of individuals on a waitlist for ABE program services, the types of jobs individuals secure after completion of the program, and the impact on wages.

Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth (\$28.4 million in the FY 2023 budget)

What is it?

Funding is used for the administration of CommCorp's YouthWorks program, though the line item resides under EOED.² The YouthWorks program was established in 1999 and is a year-round program for at-risk individuals ages 25 and younger to develop vocational skills through training courses, mentorship, and work-based learning³. Employers can apply for funding if they are within a region with a high population of youth living in poverty, several of which are Gateway Cities. Participants are required to earn at least the minimum wage and are employed for up to 30 hours per week over six or seven weeks. The program is a result of a partnership between regional workforce development boards, high schools, and community-based organizations.

The program is organized into three different models that target different age groups and address varying workforce goals. Each of the models uses the Signal Success curriculum created by CommCorp, in consultation with education and workforce development partners. In addition to the YouthWorks program, the Signal Success curriculum is also used in the School-to-Career Connecting Activities program, described later in this brief. The curriculum is meant to help students develop soft skills that are essential for the workplace. The curriculum focuses on key skills most sought by employers such as communication and collaboration. The three models are:

- Project-Based Learning (for individuals ages 14-15): This program focuses on younger participants and is centered on providing work experience with a team of peers to accomplish a task, such as the beautification of a local park. These participants receive a stipend that is equivalent to the state's minimum wage. The program includes elements of workforce readiness training, career chats, case management support, and mentorship for participating individuals.

¹ Data on the state's ABE programs can be found at the National Reporting System for Adult Education [website](#).

² For more information on the Commonwealth Corporation, see the Appendix in MTF's introductory workforce brief.

³ Language in the line item allows for the Commonwealth Corporation to determine youth-at-risk eligibility and is outlined in their YouthWorks Data Book.

- Subsidized Work Placements (for individuals aged 16 and older): This program introduces teenagers to basic professional experiences by partnering with employers such as Meals on Wheels and the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife. Participants are placed in roles that provide general work experience but not in a specific pathway.
- Sector-Aligned Project-Based Learning Services (for individuals aged 17 and older): This program targets older youth groups and builds on the other program models to continue professional development through career pathway training courses. These career pathway courses prepare individuals for certification or credentialing requirements for a specific position such as a Certified Nursing Assistant program or an entry-level Bank Teller program.

How has the funding level changed since the FY 2019 Budget?

The program received \$28.4 million in the FY 2023 budget, an increase of \$15.6 million (73 percent) over FY 2019 funding levels. Language in the line item does not specify the amount of money each program model receives. In addition, while the most recent report showed more than 4,000 youth participated in the program in 2017, there is a lack of data on recent participation. Unfortunately, the lag in reporting does not allow policymakers to assess whether recent large increases in funding have had a positive impact on current participation rates. Therefore, it is unclear how much additional funding is necessary to support long-term employment stability for participants.

Are annual reports required by law and what efficacy data is publicly available?

No, there is no language requiring CommCorp to publish a report on the program. CommCorp does not regularly publish a report on YouthWorks, as the most recent available data dates back to 2017. This data showed that 4,014 youth in over 31 cities and towns in 2017 had completed summer employment opportunities. Most job placements during that period were in the non-profit and public sectors, with a majority of the work placements in either direct child care or maintenance positions. However, the report does not include whether individuals who participated in the program are still employed and what their average earnings are following the completion of the program.

MassHire Career Centers (\$15 million in the FY 2023 budget)

What is it?

EOLWD receives funding to operate the state's 25 one-stop Career Centers, which are responsible for connecting job seekers, individuals receiving unemployment benefits, and underemployed workers with training and employment opportunities. Career Centers also service employers to address their workforce needs. These career centers are located across the 16 local MassHire Workforce Board regions, which each have individualized strategic plans based on labor market needs in the area. These plans are created by the workforce boards comprised of public and private sector leaders.

Services for individuals include job search assistance, career counseling, access to resume-building software, and more. Services for employers include providing access to qualified applicants, applicant pre-screening, planning job fairs, and more. Job seekers who are receiving unemployment benefits can have their work search requirements waived if they participate in services offered through the Career Centers.

How has the funding level changed since the FY 2019 Budget?

The FY 2023 budget appropriated \$15 million for the Career Centers, an increase of \$10.9 million (269 percent) over FY 2019 funding levels. The increase mostly occurred in FY 2023 to support the significant growth in individuals receiving unemployment benefits as a result of the pandemic. The recent funding

increases have been intended to increase state investment after years of flat funding and offset the lack of increase in federal funding in recent years⁴.

Although, this increase in funding has not necessarily led to more individuals being served. MassHire Career Centers found that 70,000 job seekers were served in the third quarter of FY 2023, a decrease of 24,000 job seekers served in the same quarter in FY 2019. This large drop in the number of job seekers served is likely a result of lower unemployment rates that followed the steep drop in labor participation rates in March 2020.

While the number of unemployed individuals seeking services has declined, the number of employers working directly with the Centers has increased. Career Centers serviced 18,093 employers in the third quarter of FY 2023, an increase of 6,587 employers during the same period in FY 2019. The increase in employers served is consistent with current labor market demands, where employers are relying on upskilling workers to address critical job shortages in key industries.

Are annual reports required by law and what efficacy data is publicly available?

Yes, the Department of Career Services must submit a report to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means. The report must include the following data points:

- The number of businesses participating in the placement of individuals.
- The number of individuals utilizing the program.
- Outreach initiatives the centers are engaged in to reach minority and economically disadvantaged populations.
- The success rate of individuals finding and maintaining employment utilizing the centers.

The required information is released by the department quarterly and data is available on a regional and statewide level. Below are notable data from the third quarter of FY 2023:

- 77,508 job seekers served.
- 68% entered employment (Fourth quarter rate).
- Median earnings 2nd quarter after exit: \$9,689.
- 18,093 employers served.

While the additional level of data provided in these regular quarterly reports is helpful, the reports lack information such as the industry in which individuals are obtaining employment and their retention rate. Additionally, it is unclear whether individuals are securing employment in the same workforce region where they were serviced. However, the consistent level of information and the timely manner in which it is released could be a starting template for other programs to use.

Early College⁵ (\$10 million in the FY 2023 budget)

What is it?

The line item funds the development and implementation of the Early College Initiative that was launched jointly by the boards of DESE and the Department of Higher Education (DHE) in 2017. The initiative's goal is to increase the number of traditionally underrepresented students in higher education and bridge

⁴ Information on federal funding for MassHire Career Centers is used from the Massachusetts Workforce Association FY 2023 funding [recommendation](#).

⁵ As detailed below, the state's Early College program receives significant funding from two separate line items. This brief covers each line item separately to correspond with the structure of the annual budget.

educational opportunity gaps. This is achieved by offering high school students different course pathways toward a specific post-secondary degree or general education. These pathways are determined by student interests and at times determined by regional MassHire blueprints. Most students take Early College courses in the 11th and 12th grades and can take condensed courses in the summer months.

Designated Early College programs provide high school students with the opportunity to experience and complete college-level courses while allowing students to gain exposure to different careers. Early College programs are required to offer a minimum of 12 college credits (equivalent to four college courses) to students before they graduate high school. By enrolling in these classes, students can reduce the time and expense of earning college credits and increase their chances of earning a degree. Recently, language in the line item allows funding to be expended for condensed courses during the summer months.

Currently, there are 50 partnerships between 58 high schools and 27 institutions of higher education, with nine new of these partnerships starting in Fall 2023. Partnerships can apply for the Early College designation to access state funding, but schools can offer Early College courses without having the designation. The designation process is a nine-month period where partnerships between high schools and a college or university submit a letter of intent and then are moved to the planning period four months later. Once a partnership is in the planning stages, they are eligible for funding through planning grants and work with DESE to determine appropriate funding. After this period, partnerships are eligible for implementation grants and incentive grants to expand the program.

How has the funding level changed since the FY 2019 Budget?

The FY 2023 budget allocated \$10 million, an increase of \$8.25 million (471 percent) over FY 2019 funding levels. The Early College initiative also receives about \$7.5 million from the Dual Enrollment Grant and Subsidies line item (see more details below). Dual Enrollment funding for Early College programs is dependent on the projected number of students that will enroll in pathway courses in the upcoming school year and is decided by the Early College Joint Committee⁶.

Funding for Early College programs through the Dual Enrollment line item supports credit reimbursement for higher education institutions while funding from the Early College line items mostly funds the administration of the program in high schools at the state level. This increase in funding enabled 39 more early college partnerships in the 2022-23 school year compared to the 2018-19 school year. These additional partnerships are expected to serve 7,800 students in the upcoming school year, an increase of 6,800 students that were served in the 2018-19 school year⁷.

The growth in early college is partially attributable to research, both in Massachusetts and around the country, that indicates significant benefits from the program for students from a variety of demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. When looking at students who were enrolled in Early College programs in 2019 – 2020, 41 percent enrolled and continued their postsecondary education compared to 24 percent of students who did not enroll in the program⁸. This is especially important to closing racial and economic gaps, as the Early College program predominantly serves underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students.

⁶ The Early College Joint Committee consists of members from the Boards of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Education, the Departments of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Secretary of Education.

⁷ This Early College participant projection is mentioned in a [press release](#) by the Healey administration in March 2023.

⁸ Data is used from the Massachusetts Alliance for Early College's [fact sheet](#) that was released in February 2023.

Are annual reports required by law and what efficacy data is publicly available?

Yes, in a separate line item under EOE's budget, EOE must submit a report on the implementation and expansion of the Early College initiative to the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees and the Joint Committee on Education. The report must include the following data points:

- The public schools and districts participating in the program.
- The higher education institutions participating in the program.
- The number of students participating in the program.
- An analysis of the availability and accessibility of the program.
- Recommendations to enhance student participation.

DESE's most recent update showed a total of 6,054 students enrolled in Early College programs in the 2022-23 school year, an increase of 5,559 compared to the 2018-19 school year. While significant increases in participation are encouraging, the update does not include metrics beyond enrollment in the program and enrollment in post-secondary education. Data that could be helpful to understand the program's effectiveness on long-term outcomes include the number of students that have obtained a degree and where they obtained employment. Given the recent program launch, this level of detail requires years of follow-up with participants and may not yet be possible. Nonetheless, there is timely data for policymakers to make informed funding decisions to continue expanding the program.

Dual Enrollment Grant and Subsidies (\$9 million in the FY 2023 budget)

What is it?

Funding from this line item supports the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership (CDEP) program, which was established in 1993 and is administered by DHE. The purpose of the program is to ease students' transition between high school and postsecondary education by helping them earn college credit at little to no cost. Students can take general courses and do not have to complete a course pathway like the Early College program. In recent years, the primary role of the Dual Enrollment program has been to fund partnerships between higher education institutions and high schools through the Early College program. Additionally, dual enrollment provides grants to public higher education institutions for non-early college-accredited programs that enable students to earn college credit.

To be eligible for funding through the CDEP program, public higher education institutions must develop a plan with guidelines determined by the department. These guidelines are included below:

- Offer a variety of college-level courses in multiple disciplines.
- Focus efforts on qualifying first-generation, low-income, and students interested in high-demand careers.
- Incorporate components related to college preparation, information on college admissions, application of dual enrollment credit, student support services, and financial aid awareness.
- Expand the program to as many qualified students as possible based on available funding.

How has the funding level changed since the FY 2019 Budget?

The FY 2023 budget allocated \$9 million, an increase of \$7 million (350 percent) over FY 2019 funding levels. The lion's share of this increase is to support early college partnerships by funding credit reimbursements for participating higher education institutions. Roughly 10 to 15 percent of funding from this line item is to support traditional dual enrollment programs.

Are annual reports required by law and what efficacy data is publicly available?

Yes, in FY 2023 DHE and DESE are required to report jointly on the performance of the Dual Enrollment program and provide the same metrics as the Early College program. In the years leading up to FY 2023, DHE was responsible for releasing reports, but these reports are not available on the DHE's Data Center [website](#). The DHE [website](#) does list a total of 15 community colleges, nine state universities, and the UMass system that offer a dual enrollment program and includes enrollment information from the 2018 school year, where 2,310 students participated in approved dual enrollment programs⁹. The most recent [report](#) available on Dual Enrollment was published by DESE and covers the period from 2008 to 2015. The report focuses on the cohort of students who graduated high school in 2013 and found that 1,349 students were enrolled in at least one course through the CDEP program.

Even though funding has quadrupled, data remains limited. Metrics such as the number of high schools partnered with higher education institutions, the number of students enrolled in post-secondary programs after completion of dual enrollment, and the average number of credits earned while in the program could help policymakers determine how much additional funding is needed to grow the program.

School-to-Career Connecting Activities (\$8.7 million in the FY 2023 budget)

What is it?

This line item funds the public-private partnership between DESE and employers organized through the 16 MassHire Workforce Boards. These activities include work-based learning, in-school and out-of-school career development services, and career exploration activities aligned with in-demand fields and occupations in their region. High school students are exposed to various career pathways through internship and capstone courses. These activities include paid internships, online workshops, virtual career panels, and career fairs.

The Connecting Activities (CA) staff are responsible for creating work experience opportunities and placing students in jobs with participating employers. Employers must commit to paying student salaries and providing on-the-job mentoring and instruction. During the summer months, the program works closely with the YouthWorks program run by CommCorp. To further maintain the partnership, teachers and educators participate in externships with a variety of employers experiencing skill gaps to develop a lesson plan that reflects current needs.

How has the funding level changed since the FY 2019 Budget?

The FY 2023 budget allocated \$8.7 million for the program, an increase of \$3.7 million (73 percent) over FY 2019 funding levels. While funding has increased, student enrollment and earned wages have decreased. This is likely due to the pandemic's disruption of regular in-person learning in schools.

Are annual reports required by law and what efficacy data is publicly available?

No, there is no reporting requirement language in the line item but DESE has regularly released annual reports on the program. However, the last [report](#) was made available in February 2022, where data from FY 2021 was included in the report. Below are notable performance metrics from the FY 2021 period:

- 7,294 students participated in the program, 4,983 less than FY 2019 participation figures.

⁹ The University of Massachusetts Amherst campus does not participate in the CDEP program.

- 2,271 employers hosted work-based learning experiences, 2,756 fewer employers than FY 2019 participation figures.
- Employer-paid wages decreased by more than \$5 million compared to FY 2019 figures.

Without updated participation and wage data, it is challenging for policymakers to determine if increased funding has resulted in a rebound in enrollment. The most recent information released by DESE accounts for a virtual model of the program, therefore comparing this to pre-pandemic data does not provide a complete analysis of the program’s performance.

Understanding the Workforce Training Fund Program

In addition to the programs highlighted above, each year the state dedicates a portion of employer taxes to workforce training (detailed below). Unlike workforce programs funded through line items, policymakers do not have discretion over this “pre-budget transfer” – the funds are set aside automatically. For this reason, funding levels for this workforce-related transfer are not included in the overall analysis. Nonetheless, funds are used for an individual workforce training program that focuses on the upskilling of incumbent workers.

Workforce Training Fund Program (\$24.5 million in FY 2023)

What is it?

The Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP) is supported by a pre-budget statutory tax transfer supported by employer contributions. Employers are responsible for making these contributions through a 0.056 percent surcharge of the amount paid on the unemployment insurance tax. The WTFP is a cost-sharing model between the state and employers, who need to make payments into the UI fund to be eligible. Grants are funded by the state and are matched by employers, depending on the training program they choose to apply for.

The program is open to all businesses that contribute to the Unemployment Insurance system but mainly provides grants to small and medium-sized businesses with limited resources for employee training. Employers benefit by having training costs partially offset by the state’s contribution and their employees receive training without taking time off. Training occurs in areas such as process improvement and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The program is administered by CommCorp which awards grants to employers to upskill employees and promote career advancement. Employers have the option of applying for the General Program or the Express Program. Descriptions of both of these programs are listed below:

- **General Program:** Employers can receive up to \$200,000 for a two-year grant period but must match grant funds dollar for dollar. Employers work with a training provider of their choice and receive a customized training plan.
- **Express Program:** This is the fastest path to funding and is designed to help businesses adapt to emerging needs. The program offers a maximum award amount of up to \$20,000 per year and allows employers to apply for additional training as needed without a waiting period between grants. Businesses with 100 employees or less are eligible for full reimbursement, up to \$3,000 per person per course.

What is the transfer history?

The FY 2023 transfer was \$24.5 million, a modest increase of \$500,000 (2 percent) over the FY 2019 amount¹⁰. Since this workforce investment is made through a pre-budget transfer, funding levels will mostly remain consistent. While this has provided financial stability, the program has not seen increases like other workforce programs supported through the budget. The transfer amount increase is due to an uptick in wages since FY 2019 since the employer contribution rate has remained the same. The increase in funds has resulted in higher participation rates in the express program in 2021 compared to 2019 (see more details below).

Are annual reports required by law and what efficacy data is publicly available?

Yes, there is language in the line item requiring an annual report to be submitted to the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development and the House and Senate Committee on Ways and Means. CommCorp has released regular annual reports for the past two years. The report must include the following data:

- The amount collected in each quarter and the total amount collected for the calendar year.
- The total number of employers that contributed to the fund and the total number of employees employed by that group of employers.
- The contribution rates.

The most recent annual report included data from 2021 and found that a total of 233,431 employers contributed to the fund. Below is a summary of the report's findings for both programs.

- General Program
 - 165 employers participated, a decrease of 24 from FY 2019.
 - 9,961 employees were enrolled, a decrease of 2,450 from FY 2019.
 - Awards totaled \$18.4 million, an increase of nearly \$1 million from FY 2019.
 - An average cost of \$1,847 per employee.
- Express Program
 - 1,173 employers participated, an increase of 772 from FY 2019.
 - 13,379 employees enrolled, an increase of 10,586 from FY 2019.
 - Awards totaled more than \$13.2 million, an increase of \$10.4 million from FY 2019.
 - An average cost of \$990 per employee.

The annual report includes several data points on the participation of the program including the sector and region in which the individuals are obtaining employment. However, additional information such as wage increases following training and career advancement could be helpful to further assess the program.

Summing Up

After providing an overview of notable individual workforce training programs, several themes emerge:

- Support has significantly increased over the past five fiscal years.
- Programs often overlap in policy goals and target populations.
- The lack of timely, consistent, and useful data makes informed resource decisions challenging.

Increased Fiscal Support

¹⁰ Funding levels are not included in MTF's overall analysis, as this is not an investment made through discretionary spending.

Policymakers have taken advantage of increased revenues to make significant investments in these workforce programs and respond to labor market needs. Investments in these programs in FY 2023 more than doubled FY 2019 support, as funding has increased by \$76.6 million (122.2 percent). The increase in state funding for individual skills training over the last four years is striking, but so too is the continued decentralization of programs that share similar policy goals.

Overlapping Goals

A number of the programs highlighted in this brief share similar goals, target populations, and approaches. This is especially evident in investments like Summer Jobs for At-Risk Youth and School-to-Career-Connecting Activities. Both of these programs target the youth population and offer career exploration opportunities and work-based experiences, while also incorporating basic skill development. In addition to the challenges with coordinating and efficiently managing similar programs with different rules and administered by different agencies, this overlap also creates challenges for eligible individuals and employers when determining which program is best suited for them to participate.

Lack of Data

The lack of timely and sufficient data is evident throughout the programs detailed in this brief. In many cases, programs either do not have a reporting requirement or do not regularly publish annual reports with program metrics. Even as funding has increased across workforce programs, the level of data collected is often not extensive and leads to incomplete conclusions about the program's efficacy. Without sufficient performance metrics, it is difficult for policymakers to make thoughtful decisions around future funding and program design. Federal reporting on ABE and state reporting on MassHire Career Centers demonstrate that strong data collections is possible, and these models could serve as a template for other workforce programs to adopt to better understand a program's impact.

Next Steps

The following brief will focus on state investments in sector-based workforce training programs. Sector-based programs focus on creating talent pipelines to specific sectors and occupations in high-demand fields. Similar to this brief, an overview of the largest sector-based programs will be provided by looking at what the program does, its funding history, and what data is available to determine its efficacy. Across those programs trends and themes will emerge as state investments in these programs have significantly grown over the past five years.

Appendix

Individual Workforce Training Programs Funding Levels FY 2019 – FY 2023

Program	Department	FY19 GAA	FY23 GAA	\$ Difference	CAGR
Adult Basic Education	Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education	\$33.35	\$60.00	\$26.65	12%
Summer Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth	Dept. of Career Services	\$12.79	\$28.48	\$15.69	17%
MassHire Career Centers	Dept. of Career Services	\$4.06	\$15.00	\$10.94	30%
Early College Programs	Dept. of Higher Education/Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education	\$1.75	\$10.00	\$8.25	42%
Dual Enrollment Grants and Subsidies	Dept. of Higher Education	\$2.00	\$9.00	\$7.00	35%
School-to-Career Connecting Activities	Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education	\$5.00	\$8.65	\$3.65	12%
YouthBuild Grants	Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education	\$2.40	\$3.00	\$.60	5%
Urban Agenda Economic Development Grants	Dept. of Economic Development	\$.65	\$2.60	\$1.95	32%
MassHire Department of Career Services	Dept. of Career Services	\$.00	\$2.06	\$2.06	0%
Bridges to College	Dept. of Higher Education	\$.64	\$.50	-\$0.14	-5%
Entrepreneur in Residence Pilot Program	Dept. of Economic Development	\$.05	\$.00	-\$0.05	-100%
Grand Total		\$62.68	\$139.29	\$76.61	7.27%

\$ in millions