

Region 8 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined Regional Plan

For the Period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024

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**REGION 8
COMBINED REGIONAL PLAN
2020-2024**

**Region 8
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OVERVIEW

Region 8 of northeast Louisiana submits its Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined Regional Plan for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024 in accordance with Section 106 of WIOA which provides for the identification of Workforce Development Regions. This document is submitted by Region 8 that consists of the following parishes: Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union and West Carroll; and was prepared in collaboration with Workforce Development Board-81, Workforce Development Board SDA-83, Inc. and its core partner agencies. Region 8 believes that collaboration and coordination of efforts in all areas is a key to success in ensuring that workforce needs of businesses and job seekers are met. Region 8 will collaborate to collect, analyze and use labor market information to make strategic decisions.

The Region 8 Combined Plan fully aligns with the Governor’s strategic vision and guidance for the state’s workforce development system. The process for gathering information from stakeholders included meetings of committee work groups, workforce board meetings, and partner meetings. In addition, the local boards made the plan available through electronic means and in open meetings to ensure transparency to the public.

Today's economic landscape and workforce, specifically with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, is constantly changing and the demands shift on a regular basis. One of the goals in releasing the plan, as was a goal of the State of Louisiana, is to provide a reliable guide focused on creating and sustaining good jobs while identifying strategies that support future-oriented education and training for Region 8 citizens. This vision has continued the mission with which Gov. Edwards charged the people of Louisiana. That shared mission of “Putting Louisiana First” and making it possible for all Louisiana citizens to be healthy and prosperous has guided the preparation and evolution of this plan and the State plan.

Louisiana's and Region 8’s economy is evolving. Parallel to our evolution are the changing requirements and demands of our state and nation, resulting in a shift in the business needs and skills demand to meet businesses' demands today and in the future.

Region 8, in alignment with the State, envisions a workforce system that will provide pathways for all Louisianans, including individuals who are receiving public assistance, the unemployed or underemployed, those who are deficient in basic skills, as well as persons with disabilities, including disabled veterans, and others who have significant barriers to employment. All will have access to education, training and supportive services needed to prepare for and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

Chapter 1: ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – REGION 8

Region 8 believes the submission of this combined plan meets the requirements described in Regional and Local Planning Guide August 2020, OWD Policy 4-14: Use of WIOA Funds for Statewide Employment and Training Activities, and OWD Policy 2-23: Integrated Service Delivery Policy w/attachment.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission’s Labor Market Information (LMI), Louisiana Occupational Information System (LOIS) Scorecard is the state’s Virtual Labor Market Information web portal. This interactive site provides users with access to the latest Louisiana labor force, wages, population, industry employment, training schools, training programs, Scorecard for completion rates, Youth Web Portal, projections, demographics, nonfarm employment, employer database, unemployment claimants, industry staffing patterns, licensed occupations, demand occupations, and career products.

ANALYSIS OF THE:

1. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF REGION 8

Analyses of economic conditions drive the required vision and goals for the State’s and Region 8’s workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.

a. TARGETED INDUSTRIES, HIGH-IMPACT INDUSTRY CLUSTERS, AND IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS

LARGEST ANNUAL OCCUPATIONAL OPENINGS BY DEGREE TYPE											
Bachelor's Degree	Star Rating	Annual Total Openings	2018 Annual Average Wage	Associate's Degree	Star Rating	Annual Total Openings	2018 Annual Average Wage	Post-Secondary Vocational	Star Rating	Annual Total Openings	2018 Annual Average Wage
General and Operations Managers	4	150	\$104,618	Registered Nurses	5	180	\$61,763	Nursing Assistants	2	280	\$20,386
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	5	140	\$44,925	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	4	160	\$35,309	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3	260	\$28,949
Accountants and Auditors	5	80	\$65,331	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	5	130	\$44,800	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	4	220	\$35,216
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	4	80	\$49,826	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	5	30	\$44,678	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	5	190	\$35,315
Management Analysts	5	50	\$62,882	Loan Officers	5	30	\$50,331	Customer Service Representatives	4	180	\$28,753
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	4	40	\$47,669	Computer Network Support Specialists	5	20	\$55,715	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	4	130	\$38,128
Financial Managers	5	30	\$100,682	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	4	20	\$44,200	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing,	4	130	\$57,846

LARGEST ANNUAL OCCUPATIONAL OPENINGS BY DEGREE TYPE											
								Except Technical and Scientific Products			
Sales Managers	5	20	\$115,428	Physical Therapist Assistants	5	20	\$56,508	Teacher Assistants	2	120	\$19,758
Construction Managers	5	20	\$101,977	Chemical Plant and System Operators	4	20	\$72,853	Cooks, Restaurant	2	100	\$21,714
Medical and Health Services Managers	5	20	\$99,379	Administrative Services Managers	4	10	\$81,070	Childcare Workers	2	100	\$19,493

Diagram 1: Occupations with the Most Projected Annual Openings by Education Level

Diagram 1 lists the occupations with the most projected annual openings by education level, along with their star rating from Louisiana Star Jobs. Many professional and technical services occupations make the list, as that industry continues rapid growth. Engineering, construction and health care occupations also top the lists as they represent an increased need for a highly skilled workforce.

The table below (Diagram 2) lists targeted industries and their associated high-impact industry clusters, as well as their associated in-demand occupations in Region 8. Regional Labor Market Area 8: Monroe anticipates 8 percent growth through 2026. Three (3) industries that anticipate the most growth are: Health Care and Social Assistance (13.2% increase), Accommodation and Food Services (12.6% projected increase), and Retail Trade (942 jobs).

TARGETED SECTORS OF REGION 8	
W/HIGH-IMPACT INDUSTRY CLUSTER	IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS
Health Care and Social Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulatory Health Care Services • Hospitals • Nursing and Residential Care Facilities • Social Assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Nurses • Licensed Practical Nurses • Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other
Accommodation and Food Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation • Food Services and Drinking Places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Service Managers • Chefs and Head Cooks • First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers • Light Truck and Delivery Services Drivers
Retail Trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers • Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores • Electronics and appliance Stores • Food and Beverage Stores • Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores • Gasoline Stations • General Merchandise Stores • Health and Personal Care stores • Miscellaneous Store Retailers • Motor Vehicle and Pars Dealer • Nonstore Retailers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Salesperson • First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers • Butchers and Meat Cutters • Pharmacy Technicians • Pharmacists • Parts Salespersons • Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics

TARGETED SECTORS OF REGION 8	
• Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores	

Diagram 2: Targeted industries and Their Associated High-Impact Industry Clusters w/Associated In-Demand Occupations

The majority of in-demand jobs in these industries are entry-level, require a minimum of a high school diploma and are lower wage occupations. However, for youth entering the Region 8 workforce, these jobs provide experience to begin building a work history, earning a standard living wage and are first steps in a career pathway.

b. INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS WITH FAVORABLE LOCATION QUOTIENTS

High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which Region 8 has high concentrations of employment compared to the State average. The sectors with the largest LQs in Region 8 include Manufacturing, Education and Health Services. The majority of the parishes (9 of 11) follow the State’s concentration of employment in the Natural Resources and Mining industry (average LQ of 5.37). Union Parish has a location quotient of 3.34 in Manufacturing and Ouachita Parish has a LQ in Education and Health Services of 1.35.

(Source: U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Last Modified January 02, 2020-December Employment Location Quotient)

c. INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS WITH FAVORABLE DEMAND PROJECTIONS BASED ON GROWTH

The Monroe region’s long term employment projections suggest that the annual average workforce demand to increase by 8.2 percent. Diagram 3 shows industry and occupational projections in the Monroe RLMA.

Industry Title	NAIC	2016 Average Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Employment Change Through 2026	Share of Total Growth Through 2026
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	22,772	25,789	3,017	31.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	72	9,113	10,261	1,148	12.1%
Retail Trade	44-45	14,806	15,748	942	9.9%
Administrative and Waste Services	56	5,174	6,099	925	9.8%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	81	9,218	9,988	770	8.1%
Educational Services	61	10,543	11,123	580	6.1%
Construction	23	4,656	5,090	434	4.6%
Government	90	8,217	8,457	240	2.5%
Finance and Insurance	52	4,609	4,823	214	2.3%
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	11	4,131	4,219	88	0.9%

Diagram 3: Industry and Occupational Projections in the Monroe RLMA

d. INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS WITH FAVORABLE DEMAND PROJECTIONS BASED ON REPLACEMENTS (EXITS + TRANSFERS)

The annual transfers are those number of jobs needed to fill those workers who are retiring. The chart below reflects both types of replacements, exits and transfers, combined to indicate the total annual openings these workers will leave behind. The chart includes the top twenty-five (25) occupations with the most openings after exits and transfers.

Occ. Code	Occupational Title	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Total Openings Due to Exits and Transfers
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	5,930	7,690	13,620
41-2011	Cashiers	350	340	690
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	250	320	570
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	300	230	530
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	230	240	470
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	170	180	350
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	120	210	330
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	120	190	310
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	150	140	290
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	140	140	280
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	140	140	280
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	140	120	260
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	70	130	200
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	70	100	170
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	40	130	170
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	70	100	170
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	90	70	160
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	70	90	160
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	90	70	160

Occ. Code	Occupational Title	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Total Openings Due to Exits and Transfers
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	50	100	150
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	60	90	150
29-1141	Registered Nurses	90	60	150
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	60	80	140
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	40	90	130
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	50	80	130
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	60	70	130
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	60	70	130
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	30	100	130

Diagram 4: Industries and Occupations with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Replacements (Exits + Transfers)

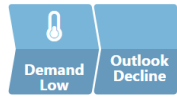
e. INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS CONSIDERED MATURE BUT STILL IMPORTANT TO THE ECONOMY

A mature industry is an industry that has passed both the emerging and growth phases of industry growth. At the beginning of the industry lifecycle, new products or services find use in the marketplace. Many businesses may spring up trying to profit from the new product demand. Over time, failures and consolidations will distill the business to the strongest as the industry continues to grow. This is the period where the surviving companies are considered to be mature. Eventually, growth will slow as new or innovative products or services replace this industry offering and begin a new industry lifecycle.

Earnings and sales grow slower in mature industries than during the growth and emerging industries phases. A mature industry may be at its peak or just past it, but not yet in the decline phase. While earnings may be stable, growth prospects are few and far between as the remaining companies consolidate market share and create barriers for new competitors to enter the sphere.

At the maturity stage, the majority of companies in the Manufacturing industry are well-established and the industry has reached its saturation point. These companies constantly attempt to moderate the intensity of competition to protect themselves, and to maintain profitability by shifting their business models. At this stage,

manufacturing companies have realized their maximum revenue, profits, and cash flows because customer demand is fairly high and consistent. These products have become more commonplace and popular among the general public, and their prices are fairly reasonable, as compared to new products.



f. INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS CONSIDERED EMERGING

Diagram 5 provides employment growth projections expected to experience the greatest growth by 2026. The highest growth occupation according to these projections will be Health Care and Social Assistance. The establishments in this sector perform activities such as: providing nursing care, personal care, assistants to other medical personnel, and receiving and giving information.

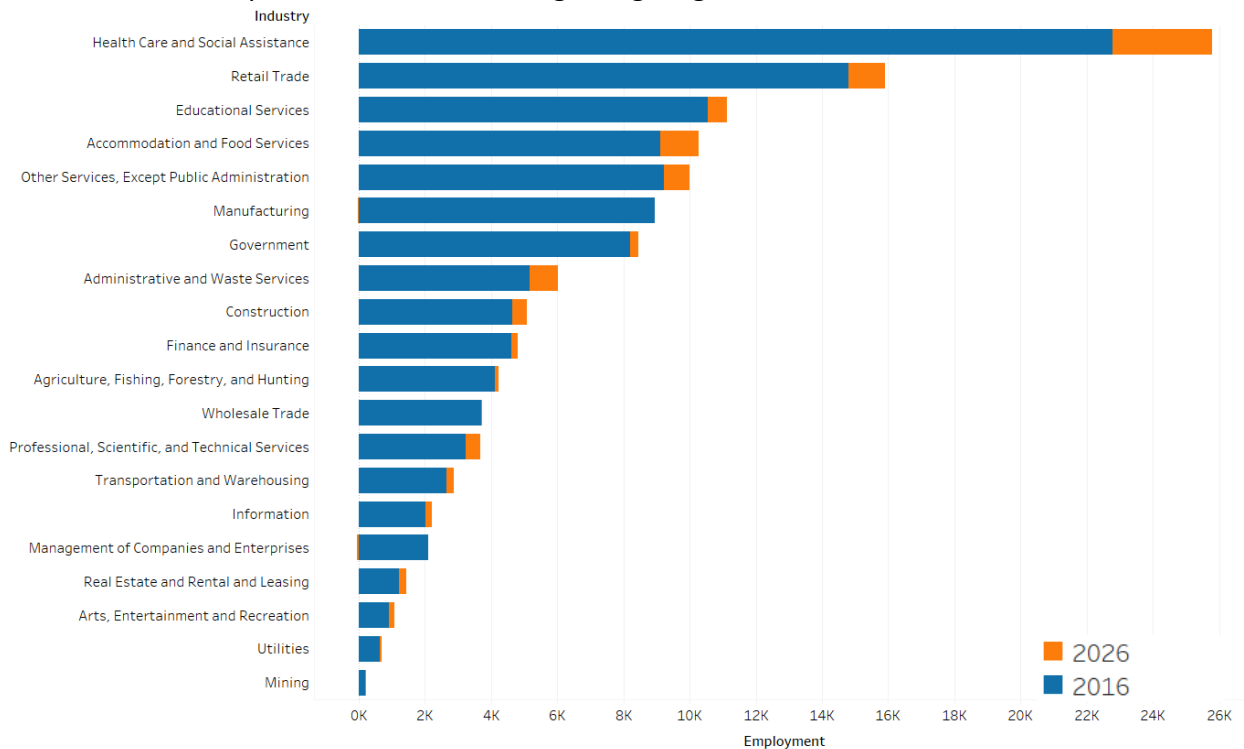


Diagram 5: Industries Considered Emerging in Region 8

INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS CONSIDERED EMERGING IN REGION 8	
INDUSTRY	IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS
Health Care and Social Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Care Aides • Registered Nurses • Licensed Practical Nurses • Office Clerks • Medical Assistants

INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS CONSIDERED EMERGING IN REGION 8	
Retail Trades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Sales Person • Cashiers • Stock Clerks and Order Fillers • Food Preparation Workers • Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers
Accommodation and Food Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooks, Fast Food • Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop • Bartenders • Light Truck or Delivery Drivers • Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria

Quick Facts

Fueled by the aging of the baby boomers, the Health Care and Social Assistance Industry is projected to grow by 3,017 between 2016 and 2026. This growth is broken down further into the Ambulatory Health Services, Hospitals, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities, and Social Assistance Industries. Nearly three quarters of the growth is attributable to hospital workers and emergency care professionals, 64.1 percent. The number of job vacancies in this sector also show strong demand for workers in the Education and Health Services sector.

g. SOURCES OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND DATA

The lists of occupations with the most projected annual openings by education level Diagram 1, along with their star rating from Louisiana Star Jobs, was sourced from Louisiana Workforce Commission’s (LWC) HiRE system by using Labor Market Information>Employment Projections. (http://www.laworks.net/LaborMarketInfo/LMI_employmentprojections.asp).

This information was provided by Monique Breaux, Economic Development Research Analyst, with Louisiana Workforce Commission’s Research & Statistics/Office of Occupational Information Services.

The targeted industries were also provided by LWC’s Research & Statistics/Office of Occupational Information Services. The high-impact industry clusters, as well as their associated in-demand occupations in Region 8, were gathered from HiRE’s Wages and Labor Data under the Industry data tab. Changing the area selection to 8th Regional Labor Market Area, each industry was selected, then that industry expanded to show the industry clusters in that targeted industry. Going back to Wages and Labor Data, LOIS was selected to access the Employment Projections for each industry. This selection was used to determine the in-demand occupations for each industry. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Last Modified January 02, 2020-December Employment Location Quotient was used to determine which industries have favorable location quotients.

Again, it was with the aid of LWC’s Research & Statistics/Office of Occupational Information Services that Diagram 3: Industry and Occupational Projections in the Monroe RLMA was made available.

Industries and Occupations with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Replacements (Exits + Transfers), Diagram 4, is a manipulation of the data in the *Monroe-Northeast-Regional Labor Market Area 8 Long Term Projections for All Occupations to 2026*. The annual total openings in the chart are the sum of the annual exits and the annual transfers. The chart was condensed to include only the top twenty-five (25) occupations.

LOIS provided the chart (Diagram 5) of Industries and Occupations Considered Emerging in Region 8 as a download from Labor Market Facts: Questions on Industries in Your Local Area>What industries are predicted to have the most future job openings in an area? To get the occupations considered emerging, the Employment Projections for each industry was accessed. This selection was used to determine the in-demand occupations for each industry.

2. EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS IN EXISTING AND EMERGING INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN REGION 8

The Monroe region has a focus on three industries – Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trade. The Health Care and Social Assistance industry – a backbone of the state’s economy – is the largest contributor to long term growth, accounting for 31.1 percent of total forecasted growth in Region 8 through 2026.

However, looking at job postings provides insight into real time employment needs. The most frequently requested occupation group over the past twelve (12) months (August 2019 – August 2020) is for Office and Administrative Support Occupations.

Occupation Group Description (O*Net)	Total Job Orders	Total Job Openings	Total Job Referrals
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	263	926	3,874
Production Occupations	255	777	3,285
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	78	697	600
Community and Social Services Occupations	109	623	565
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	221	604	2,379
Health care Practitioners and Technical Occupations	551	553	870
Health care Support Occupations	108	412	1,613
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	115	255	1,218
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	164	181	1,090

Sales and Related Occupations	120	142	1,438
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	124	125	673
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance Occup.	77	117	882
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	26	112	202
Construction and Extraction Occupations	76	111	615
Management Occupations	106	106	450
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	73	81	282
Personal Care and Service Occupations	30	69	339
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	47	47	99
Protective Service Occupations	45	46	262
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occ	42	42	379
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	14	16	14
Military Specific Occupations	1	10	24
Legal Occupations	9	9	29

Looking at long term occupational projections provides insight into the employment needs and provides an opportunity to ensure qualified candidates are being trained to meet employment demand. Occupations related to Health care Practitioners, Technicians and Support are projected to experience the greatest growth. Occupations in Farming, Fishing and Forestry as well as Production are declining.

Occupation	2016 Estimated Employment	2026 Projected Employment	2016-2026 Annual Avg. Percent Change
Home Health Aides	458	681	4.05%
Roustabouts, Oil and Gas	28	39	3.37%
Personal Care Aides	3,251	4,344	2.94%
Nurse Practitioners	138	179	2.64%
Physician Assistants	45	58	2.57%
Physical Therapist Assistants	113	145	2.52%
Occupational Therapy Assistants	46	59	2.52%
Web Developers	31	39	2.32%
Physical Therapists	255	319	2.26%
Computer Network Support Specialists	164	205	2.26%

Region 8 has chosen to pay close attention to an occupation that is emerging in the region. The occupations under the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Group of Computer and Mathematical Occupations (15-000).

SOC Code	SOC - Group and Occupational Title	Estimated Employment	Mean/Average	10th Percentile Entry	50th Percentile Median	90th Percentile Experienced	Mean/Average
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	723	34.51	18.42	32.20	55.10	71,790

15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	57	42.04	29.26	39.31	60.09	87,454
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	75	24.85	14.47	23.36	37.22	51,698
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	77	22.17	12.74	20.15	35.95	46,116
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	47	43.16	26.91	38.19	63.25	89,781
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	84	33.58	25.22	29.57	53.34	69,851
15-1251	Computer Programmers	62	34.47	25.82	31.61	51.49	71,706
15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	183	*	*	*	*	*
15-1257	Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	13	34.83	22.54	29.67	58.38	72,455
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	83	27.96	13.29	23.22	50.20	58,167

Computer and Information Systems Managers are found in the top twenty (20) occupations by annual wage paid in Region 8. Also, looking at job postings one of the most frequently requested occupation groups over the past twelve (12) months (August 2019 – August 2020) is for Computer and Mathematical Occupations.

Monroe Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA 8)	
Occupational Title	Annual Wage \$
Physicians, All Other and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	223,475
Chief Executives	196,894
Optometrists	171,663
Family Medicine Physicians	162,829
Dentists, General	161,730
Architectural and Engineering Managers	153,811
Civil Engineers	152,118
Pharmacists	127,484
Industrial Production Managers	124,048
Purchasing Managers	119,357
Marketing Managers	114,367
Computer and Information Systems Managers	104,306
Financial Managers	104,102
General and Operations Managers	100,261
Human Resources Managers	100,069
Sales Managers	99,344

Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	98,142
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	96,075
Environmental Engineers	95,670
Speech-Language Pathologists	94,265

In September of 2020 there were fifty-five (55) job openings listed on HiRE in Region 8 for Computer and Math Occupations.

3. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED TO MEET EMPLOYERS NEEDS IN REGION 8

Employers, more often than not, identify customer service, attendance, time management, punctuality, communication skills, and accountability as examples of essential skills needing to be improved. Applicant testing services are available to Region 8’s employers through the eleven (11) American Job Centers (AJCs), specifically the comprehensive centers located in Morehouse and Ouachita Parishes. Assessments help identify the interests, skills, and aptitudes of applicants early in the employment process. These tests can help close some of the skills gaps by helping employers better match applicants to open positions and/or identify opportunities for additional skill training. The Integrated Business Services Team is involved in employer outreach to gather information about skills and training needs of the employers in the region. Ongoing input from employers will drive future efforts to address the skill gap.

Degree Level	2016	2017	2018	Annual Projected Openings
Some Postsecondary, No Degree	8,802	9,232	11,876	62,410
Associate Degree	5,800	5,662	5,961	14,000
Baccalaureate Degree	18,973	18,725	19,532	23,490
Graduate or Professional Degree	6,997	7,150	8,080	5,880

Source: Annual Projected Openings from LWC’s Long Term Occupational Projections. LA Board of Regents Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Degree, Degree Level, Gender, Race, and Citizenship.

The preceding table shows the number of completers from Louisiana’s public postsecondary education programs by degree level. Academic years 2016 through 2018 are included. The academic years are labeled by the year in which they begin, so 2017 is the school year beginning in June 2017 and ending in May 2018. This is compared to the number of annual openings in the State from LWC’s long-term projections, which provides an approximation of what skill levels may show gaps in the future.

Below is further breakdown of degrees awarded by occupational category. The same comparison is drawn between 2017 graduates and annual projected job openings in the Monroe region through 2026.

Degree Category	2018 Completers	Annual Projected Openings
Health Professions	7,913	14,990
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Professions	7,425	12,710
Education	6,327	8,900

- a. **TARGETED CAREER PATHWAY CLUSTERS** Assisting job seekers with not just job placement, but identification of career pathways is a priority in Region 8. The plan is also to create regional career pathways for each customer-base across systems [adults, dislocated workers, Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants, long-term unemployed, adult education students, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)/SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) including services provided to Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD), vocational rehabilitation clients, veterans, older workers and individuals with additional barriers to employment including, the homeless, etc.] to align programs and resources that lead to employment outcomes, particularly for those with barriers to employment.

Louisiana Delta Community College is planning cooperatively through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 and WIOA-planning to provide workforce skills training and integrated work-based training to meet regional employer and economic development needs. Region 8 partners will continue to work with the workforce development boards and core partners to define and build pathways appropriate to the region. WIOA emphasizes services that lead to career pathways and stackable credentials. This includes registered apprenticeships and occupational training programs, and from basic education into post-secondary programs. The foundation for this approach to post-secondary credentials is the development of career clusters at the secondary school level, these are:

- Health Science
- Manufacturing
- Business Management & Administration

A career pathway approach is designed to prepare students to meet the demands of postsecondary education and the expectations of employers, in particular those representing in-demand occupations. Integral to this process is the opportunity for participants to acquire a “portable” and “recognized” credential that they have successfully demonstrated skill competencies on a core set of content that is complete with performance standards that are based on a specific set of work-related tasks in either a single occupational area, or a cluster of related occupational areas. Louisiana currently has multiple certifications that are “Industry Based” and “Locally Designed” and available state-wide.

Region 8 recognizes that strong relationships with employers are necessary to create pathways to gainful, long-term employment for participants. The career pathway model provides a combination of education, training, and other services that align with the skill needs of industries in the region. The model prepares adults for success by organizing education, training, and other services to support their particular needs including: counseling to accomplish goals; educational training and workforce preparation that is offered simultaneously, concurrently, and contextually within a

specific occupation or occupational cluster; allowance for attaining a recognized high school equivalency credential; and entrance or advancement within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

b. Skills In-Demand

<u>HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE</u>	
Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Job Opening Match Count
Interpersonal skills	3,499
Customer service	3,392
Time management	2,619
Organizational skills	2,385
Decision making	1,273

Source: Online advertised jobs data

<u>ACCOMMODATION and FOOD SERVICES</u>	
Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Job Opening Match Count
Customer service	104
Participate in the interview process	70
General maintenance	69
Restaurant management	60
Conflict management	60

Source: Online advertised jobs data

<u>RETAIL TRADE</u>	
Advertised Detailed Job Skill	Job Opening Match Count
Customer service	456
Clean parking lots	103
Greeting customers	39
Inventory control	38
Bookkeeping	37

Source: Online advertised jobs data

Diagram 6: In-Demand Industries with Employers' Requested Workplace Skills

Essential skills continue to be identified by Region 8's employers as a key barrier to individuals entering employment. Not only do employers want individuals with specific occupational skills (Diagram 6), they want individuals with the foundational workplace skills as well. Through conversations and visits with employers, feedback

showed that employers considered the following qualifications as essential to being hired:

- Reliability
- Personal Responsibility
- Attendance/punctuality
- Communication (active listening and learning, speaking)
- Critical thinking and judgement/decision making.

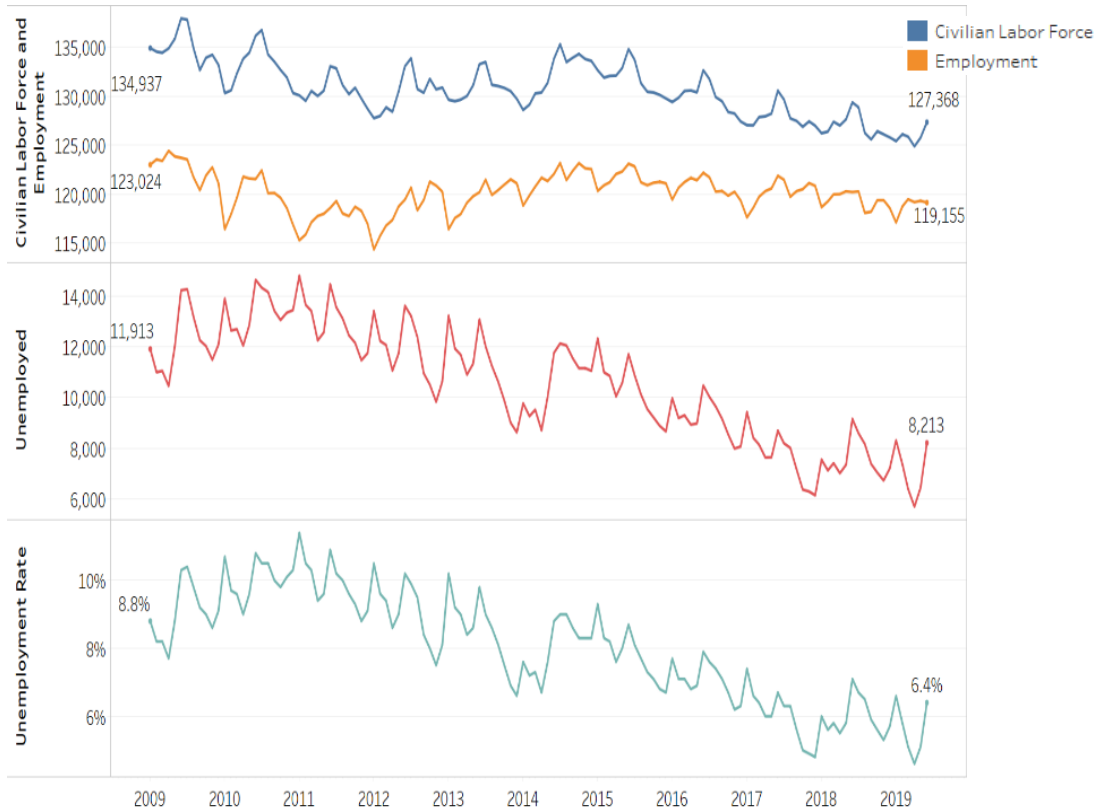
c. Existing Job Seeker Skills vs. Demands of Businesses

In Region 8, as in the rest of the State, the gap in skills between what a potential employee possesses and what an employer needs is a complex issue. We hear frequently that there are not enough of the right candidates for in-demand jobs. To meet the needs of employers for skilled workers, job seekers need training. This is the case for low-income adults, dislocated workers and youth as well.

4. WORKFORCE IN REGION 8

Civilian Labor Force Statistics
The Monroe RLMA was hit hard during the coronavirus pandemic with monthly unemployment rates exceeding 10 percent from April to May, 2020. The rate has decreased since then, with the preliminary September 2020 rate being 6.9 percent, compared to a September 2010 rate of 8.7 percent.
Through the period of January 2009 to June 2019, the labor force has decreased by 7,569 people, while the number of employed has decreased by 3,869.

Not Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Data January 2009 to June 2019



Labor Force Status	Percent
Population	4.5%
Labor Force Participation Rate	77.0%
Employed	96.1%
Unemployed	3.9%
Not in Labor Force	23.0%

Diagram 7: Labor Force Status of Veterans Aged 18 to 64
 Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2018 1-year estimates, Table C21005

Diagram 7 breaks out the labor force status of Louisiana’s veterans aged 18 to 64. Veterans in Louisiana have a fairly high labor force participation rate, with over 77 percent of those aged 18 to 64 part of the labor force. Veterans account for 4.5 percent of the state’s population.

Nonfarm Employment Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Total Nonfarm Employment January 2018 to June 2019



Above: During the period of January 2018 to June 2019, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment declined by 300 jobs during what was a very volatile period.

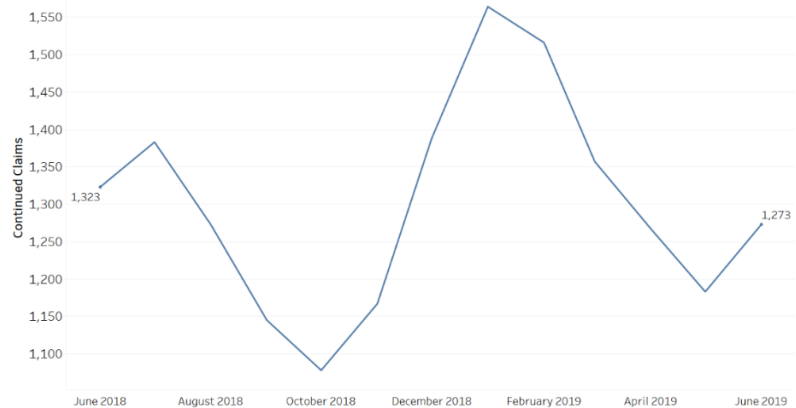
Below: Nonfarm employment in the Monroe MSA has grown steadily since reaching a low of 75,400 in December of 2010.

Seasonally Adjusted Total Nonfarm Employment January 2009 to June 2019



Unemployment Insurance Claims Data

Continued Claims for June 2018 to June 2019

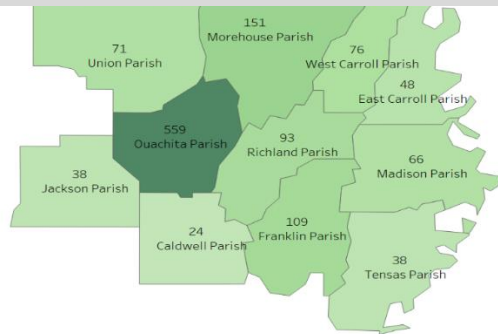


Above: Continued claims have decreased in the Monroe RLMA over the past year, declining from 1,323 in June 2018 to 1,273 in June 2019.

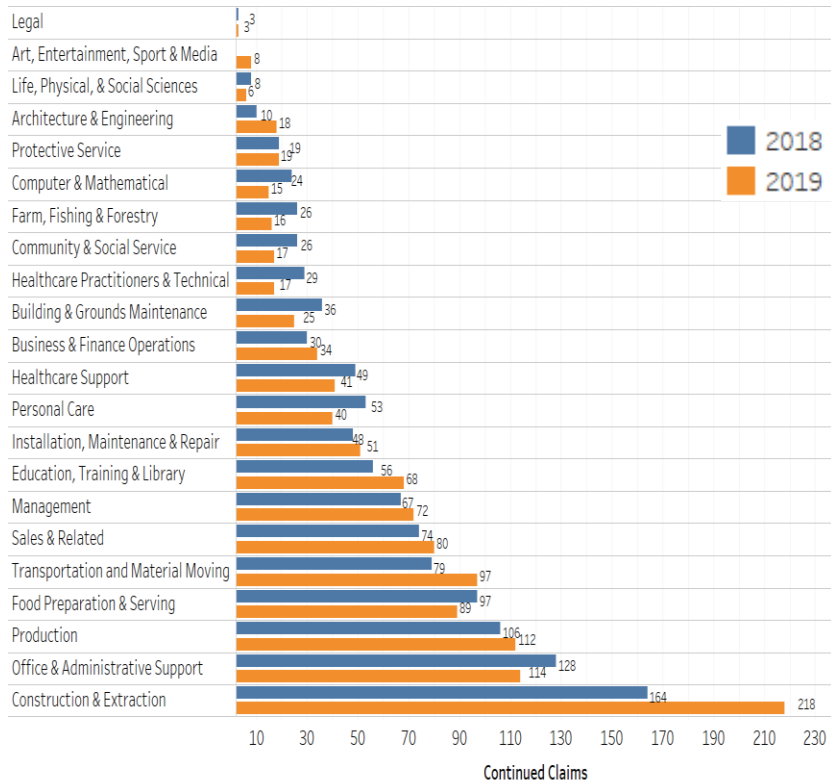
Below: Ouachita Parish had the most continued claims for the Monroe Region in June 2018 with 559 claims.

Both visuals display the continued claims for unemployment insurance filed for the week containing the 12th of the month.

Claims by Parish in June 2018



Continued Claims for June 2018 to June 2019



This chart shows the occupation clusters that contributed to Monroe’s continued claims for the week containing June 12 in 2018 and 2019. Construction and Extraction Occupations led the region with 218 continued claims.

Diagrams 8 and 9 highlight the educational achievements of Louisiana’s population. Diagram 8 looks at a younger cohort, ages 18 to 24, who may still be in postsecondary education. Their relative age likely accounts for the low percentage of Bachelor’s degree or higher completers, and the high percentage of “Some college or Associate’s degree” completers. Diagram 9 studies the population above age 24, which is more likely to have left the educational system. More than half of Louisiana’s adult population has completed some college coursework or graduated from a secondary institution.

Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce of Louisiana	
Population 18 to 24 years	Percent
Less than high school graduate	16.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	35.5%
Some college or Associate's degree	40.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	7.4%
Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2018 1-year estimates, Table S1501	

Diagram 8: Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce of Louisiana-18 to 24 years

Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce of Louisiana (Continued)	
Population 25 years and over	Percent
Less than high school graduate	14.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	34.3%
Some college, no degree	20.8%
Associate's degree	6.5%
Bachelor's degree	15.9%
Graduate or professional degree	8.4%
Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2018 1-year estimates, Table S1501	

Diagram 9: Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce of Louisiana-25 years and up

a. CHANGES IN DEMOGRAPHICS, LABOR SUPPLY AND OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

The population in Region 8 is slowly decreasing. The 2010 population of 8th Regional Labor Market Area, Monroe, LA was estimated at 309,026. The 2016 population of 8th Regional Labor Market Area, Monroe, LA was estimated at 306,706. This represents a -0.75% change from 2010.

Area Name	2010 Estimated Population	2016 Estimated Population	Estimated 2010-2016 Population Percent Change
8 th Regional Labor Market Area-Monroe	309,026	306,706	-0.75%

This demographic shift will continue into the future and will create continued downward pressure on labor supply for the entire region. The aging population is a key contributor to the expected strong demand for health care workers. Employers of Region 8 are also reporting that they are unprepared for the “brain drain” and skills void that will result when a significant proportion of talented, experienced older workers start retiring and leaving the workforce.

This diagram shows the number of job openings advertised online, as well as potential candidates in the workforce system in 8th Regional Labor Market Area, Monroe, LA on September 9, 2020.

Area Name	Job Openings	Candidates	Candidates per Job
8th Regional Labor Market Area-Monroe	2,923	56,088	19.19

b. SPECIAL POPULATIONS

WIOA established a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for Adult activities. Under this section, AJC staff, when using WIOA Adult funds to provide individualized career services, training services, or both, must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

The special (priority) populations under WIOA, and recognized in Region 8, include:

- Recipients of public assistance: SNAP, TANF, SSI, any other income-based assistance,
- Other low-income individuals who receive public assistance:
 - Family income does not exceed the poverty line or 70% of LLSIL,
 - Homeless,
 - Free or reduced school lunch,
 - Foster child,
 - Disabled,
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient, and
- Veterans and eligible spouses.

Disability Characteristic	Employed	Unemployed	Not in Labor Force
With a hearing difficulty	25.9%	8.5%	15.1%
With a vision difficulty	30.0%	29.9%	21.0%
With a cognitive difficulty	32.6%	51.2%	47.3%
With an ambulatory difficulty	30.5%	26.3%	56.7%
With a self-care difficulty	7.3%	5.7%	24.0%
With an independent living difficulty	14.5%	24.4%	46.4%
<i>Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2018 1-year estimates, Table B18120</i>			

Diagram 10: LA Disability Characteristics of the Workforce Aged 18 to 64 by Employment Status
 Diagram 10 highlights the rates at which various disability characteristics appear in the employed, unemployed, and not in the labor force populations. The majority of residents with disabilities, either unemployed or not in the labor force, face cognitive and/or ambulatory difficulties. Disability characteristics are not mutually exclusive, meaning one individual may have multiple difficulties, accounting for the high percentages.

In Louisiana, 6.5 percent of the employed population aged 18 to 64 lives with one or more disability. Residents with disabilities account for 15 percent of the unemployed and 31 percent of those not in the labor force.

B. REGION 8 SECTOR INITIATIVES

1. CONVENING OF EMPLOYERS, FOUNDATIONS, AND REGION 8 INSTITUTIONS

Region 8 has adopted the Next Generation Sector Partnerships model. The model is a partnership of companies from the same industry in a shared labor market region that works with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations to tackle common needs of the targeted industry. Sector partnerships primarily focus on the education and workforce training needs of an industry, but Next Gen partnerships also focus on other issues related to an industry's competitiveness. This ensures deeper, broader and longer-term industry engagement.



2. ESTABLISHED AND ACTIVE INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP IN REGION 8

Region 8's first attempt at sector partnership was in the Health care industry. Region 8's Workforce Development Boards first convened, in the summer of 2016, what has now grown into Northeast Louisiana Health Care Alliance. This has been a very successful partnership. The NELA Health care Alliance represents nearly forty (40) diverse health care organizations in northeast Louisiana. The alliance is made up of hospitals, long term care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, home health organizations and others who provide critically needed health care to community members. These health care organizations come together in an ongoing network to tackle the most pressing health care issues of Region 8 including workforce issues, networking opportunities, and pressing policy topics that warrant a collective action.

Health care companies in other regions of the country are working together to create "health care sector partnerships", and Region 8 must too if we are to continue to thrive. Sector partnerships are a way for multiple health care organizations to come together around important issues. They are a place to collectively address issues related to shared vitality; a single table at which to work with multiple public programs in education, workforce development and economic development; and an opportunity to help create solutions to shared pressing issues.

The launch meeting was professionally facilitated. Opportunities for industry stability and vitality in northeast Louisiana were defined for action. This was the beginning of an ongoing partnership of health care leaders in our region. Community partners such as workforce development, education, economic development, and others were there for the initial meeting in "listening" mode in order to better understand how they could help. Community partners are a critical piece to acting on the priorities defined by the Alliance.

Wins for the NELA Health care Alliance

- Region 8 Hospital Resource Guide
- Regional Acute Network Data-sharing Project – Live July 1, 2017
- Prompted the re-establishment of the Ambulance Advisory Committee and secured membership appointments for health care representations. Led to a new Ambulance Provider for parish 1.1.19
- Expanded working network and networking opportunities – both with health care and community partners and peer to peer networking.
- Hosted Legislative Luncheon August 10, 2017 directly resulting in 2 pieces proposed legislation with one passed SB478: Provides relative to LPN Licensure. (No longer a charge to look up LPN License.)
- Enhanced an existing Louisiana Delta Community College CNA education program to address customer service deficiencies defined by health care providers in the region. Industry Partners and support partners have also worked together to redesign C.N.A. curriculum to include a Behavioral Health course to address the lack of Behavioral Health Techs in the area.
- CNA training opportunities have expanded to non-traditional sites.
- The NELA Health care Alliance has hosted two no-cost Nursing Symposiums to address the need to up skill incumbent nurses.
- Submitted Alliance Support for a regional candidate for the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy to the Governor for appointment.
- Applied for and was awarded a Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation Collective Impact Grant of \$300,000, and a Living Well Foundation Grant award for \$44,000 for funding opportunities to support adjunct faculty to teach nursing clinicals at regional health care facilities.
- Hosted a seminar in partnership with Ochsner’s for regional security guard training for approximately 20 participants to address active shooter threats in the health care facility setting. (Acute Care Committee)
- Instrumental in the development and installation of two new in-demand occupational training programs identified by the Alliance as critical for the region: 1) Medical Assistants and 2) Behavioral Technicians.
- Awarded the 2019 International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Bronze Award for collaboration and partnership for the NELA Nursing Adjunct Faculty Project funded by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of Louisiana and Living Well Foundation.

3. OTHER SECTOR-BASED PARTNERSHIPS IN REGION 8

A partnership with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPOL) along with the Monroe Chamber has been launched.

4. OTHER PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN REGION 8

In 2015, IBM, CenturyLink and the State of Louisiana announced a public-private partnership that was to create high-value, high-tech jobs in the IT sector. As part of a ten (10)-year business transformation agreement between IBM and CenturyLink, IBM opened and staffed the new applications development innovation center in Region 8, creating at least four hundred (400) new roles for experienced professionals and drawing heavily on graduates from the state's colleges and universities. The State is providing \$4.5 million in funding over ten (10) years to expand key higher education programs in the IT sector, including the computer science program at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, the cyber engineering program at Louisiana Tech, and the data analytics program at Grambling State University. In addition, the State is providing \$12 million for construction of new office space for the use by IBM.

In the spring of 2017, Graphic Packaging International Inc. and DHL Supply Chain, North America made a combined \$274 million capital investment in the Manufacturing industry in northeast Louisiana and developed a 1.27 million-square-foot folding carton plant and logistics center in Monroe. A number of factors influenced the decision, including access to an experienced and skilled local workforce in Region 8 and the relationship with the State of Louisiana and local community. To secure the projects, Louisiana offered a competitive incentive package consisting of a performance-based, \$3 million Modernization Tax Credit for Graphic Packaging. For the public-private partnership capital investment, Graphic Packaging secured a local tax exemption agreement with the Ouachita Industrial Development Board as an alternative to the state's Industrial Tax Exemption Program. For its investment in the Monroe facility, DHL will receive an exemption of local property taxes.

In addition, Graphic Packaging will receive support from the state's FastStart® workforce training program, and the warehouse operator will be eligible to participate in the state's Enterprise Zone Program, along with either a sales tax rebate on capital equipment and materials purchased or a 1.5 percent tax credit on the company's total capital investment.

The project created over one hundred (100+) new direct jobs, and the warehouse operations resulted in more new indirect jobs. Because of the public-private partnership, Graphic Packaging will continue to employ more than eight hundred (800) people in its West Monroe mill and in the new combined folding carton plant.

Region 8 has five (5) community college campuses that support sector strategies. Louisiana Delta Community College (LDCC) is in constant contact with businesses to help them align curriculum and provide quality, affordable education and training to area

residents. In addition, these strategies are discussed at the partner meetings with the community college in attendance.

Partnerships with chambers of commerce and economic development agencies in Region 8 will prepare the region for future sector partnerships, especially as technology continues to change the nature of work and future jobs amid the coronavirus pandemic.

5. NEUTRAL CONVENER IN REGION 8

As described in the Next Generation Sector Partnership Tool Kit, the convener plays an essential role in keeping a sector partnership on track and moving forward to accomplish the goals of the businesses in the partnership. The convener is the backbone of the sector partnership, providing administrative, project management, and facilitation support to keep the partnership focused and productive.

In Region 8, any of the community partners can be considered neutral enough to be a convener of a sector partnership. The community partners are:

- Workforce Development Boards 81 and 83
- North Louisiana Economic Partnership
- University of Louisiana at Monroe and Louisiana Tech University
- Louisiana Delta Community College
- Monroe City School District
- Ouachita Parish School District
- Monroe Chamber of Commerce.

Again, from the Next Gen model, there is no single organization that is best positioned to convene a sector partnership. Successful sector partnerships can be convened by workforce development boards, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, industry associations, or community colleges. Whatever the arrangement, it's important that the convener has the following characteristics:

- Trusted
- Facilitative
- Process-oriented.

Chapter 2: STRATEGIES FOR SERVICE INTEGRATION – REGION 8

WIOA promotes alignment of workforce development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers. The workforce system supports strong regional economies and plays an active role in community and workforce development.

All customers in Region 8 will have access to services in both a self-serve option and/or a staff-assisted option. Access to some services may require determination of customer eligibility, which is provided at one of the eleven (11) local American Job Centers in Region 8. Integrated Service Delivery honors the journey of the individual. In particular, it highlights the assets and interests of the customer at every point of service delivery. Integration called out in the legislation requires partners to be flexible and adaptive as customer needs change. WIOA puts the job seeker in the driver's seat at Region 8's American Job Center locations and allows them the opportunity to understand all services and choose the option(s) that will work best for them. Customers are actively engaged in service determinations throughout the process, and service providers utilize the strengths that each customer brings to their employment journey. Customers are also frequently asked to review service experiences and inform how future customer experiences can be improved. Region 8 is in the forefront of the coordinated planning and service delivery strategies that makes the regional efforts successful.

A. Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

1. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN REGION 8

What follows is a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in Region 8. A strength of the region's workforce development activities is the many partnerships in place to help individuals with barriers to find employment that will lead to a self-sufficient wage.

Strengths

- Title I performance goals are the primary focus of the region.
- Increased online presence and access to automated services.
- Both Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) in Region 8 make Title I programs more employer driven.
- Louisiana Delta Community College is a high quality provider across the region. WDB 81 and 83 work collaboratively with the community college to help develop employer-driven programming to fill immediate and longer term employer needs.
- Information is shared across the region to reduce any overlap with employers.
- Region 8 continues to participate in the North Louisiana Work Ready Community. LWDB-81 became a certified ACT Work Ready Community in May 2019. LWDB-83 continues to progress toward becoming a Certified Community.
- The Northeast Louisiana Health Care Alliance continues to make strides in Region 8.
- Both WDBs in Region 8 utilize labor market information produced by Louisiana Workforce Commission to make sound workforce decisions.

- Both LWDAs within Region 8 are working to be more creative with program design and consistently share best practices.

Weaknesses

- Employer involvement is not always as strong as it should be to ensure regular feedback. Region 8 seeks more feedback from employers to know how efficient and effective our programs are.
- The majority of the clients seeking assistance are the hardest to serve. “Employability” or “soft skills” are often what job seekers need the most.
- LWDAs in Region 8 seek additional training opportunities for Youth activities.
- There is a mismatch between the available labor pool and employer demand. Many in-demand jobs require advanced training to meet workforce requirements.
- Transportation issues are a constant struggle. Many workers are not close to job opportunities and do not have access to public transportation or access to a vehicle.
- Funding for child care assistance is a consistent reason for many to decline job opportunities.
- There is a perception that many clients served are “unemployable”.
- The lack of a consistent marketing campaign has diminished the ability to develop lasting relationships with both job seekers and employer customers.

- 2. CAPACITY OF PARTNERS TO ADDRESS EDUCATION AND SKILL NEEDS IN REGION 8** Region 8 is tasked with establishing, implementing and sustaining a comprehensive, integrated workforce delivery system that expands economic development and workforce capacity. This is being done by increasing collaboration among all workforce partners to improve responsiveness and the coordinated delivery of services. Region 8 is very connected in helping to bring partners and programs together. The region is forming many new partnerships to meet the educational needs of our citizens. The LWDAs are members of the Regional Carl Perkins committee to help shape pathways opportunities.

The Region strives on providing short-term, demand-driven training. Region 8 aligns with the goal to support the Jump Start 2.0 program to better prepare students to work in high wage, high-growth industries. Region 8’s Adult Education partners are partnering with the LWDAs to provide more training opportunities. Louisiana Delta Community College is actively engaged in developing solutions. LDCC Center for Adult Development has made employment the primary goal for adult education rather than earning a credential alone.

As new firms locate in the region and as existing businesses work to remain competitive, the ability of the workforce system to identify business needs and to respond and deliver appropriate assessment, training, placement and retention strategies, is essential to maintaining workforce capacity. The WDBs of Region 8 provides direct leadership, support, services and resources to employers that: enhance specific skill development initiatives and programs; expand technical skills, workforce capacity, apprenticeship programs, customized work training; and foster technical career support.

Employer services include occupational and labor market information to inform economic forecasting, no-cost human resource services for recruiting, retaining, and hiring qualified employees. Region 8 convenes a Regional Integrated Business Service Team. The goal is to bring together a team to coordinate and streamline services to employers. The focus is to ensure employers can access workers within the American Job Center system. The team:

- engages the business community to identify industry-hiring trends and industry recognized credentials,
- supports industry-specific sector strategies designed to facilitate in-depth focus on particular industries with business partnerships in these areas,
- analyzes and disseminates labor market information to project job growth, wages, and training requirements,
- provides comprehensive analysis of Region 8's labor market,
- creates custom recruitment plans,
- posts job vacancies online,
- conducts targeted recruitment through email and Zoom contact,
- organizes job fairs and special employer events,
- provides interview scheduling services and facilities,
- provides On-the-Job training funds,
- facilitates employed worker trainings, and
- responds to WARN (Worker Adjustment Retraining Notification) notices, facilitating workshops on behalf of Louisiana Workforce Commission by providing information on rights, responsibilities, and resources for the workforce.

There is opportunity for stronger coordination and consistency between partner programs in Region 8, through the use of a common intake process, referral and co-enrollment strategy that will improve efficiencies across the board for all partners. This "any door" approach will enable any job seeker to enter the system with a consistent approach, which will result in seamless transition among partner programs and supportive services providers.

C. CAPACITY OF PARTNERS TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS IN REGION 8

The regional partners have continued to expand their capacity to address the needs of employers. Partners within both LWDAs in Region 8 collaborate to understand the skill needs of employers and implement appropriate responses. Partners work with employers to understand skill needs by using Business Services Teams (BST) to meet with employers on a regular basis to discuss employment needs.

The Integrated Business Service Team is designed to be a group of individuals who work with businesses to form a single point of contact that represents all of the participating partners. Business customers express the need for American Job Center services which includes candidate screening, validation of the job-seeker information, assessment, and quality applicants. Business customers also need employee commitment and loyalty, a single point of contact, and knowledge about AJC's products and services.

Region 8's goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers mirrors those of LWC.

- Foster the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to meet occupational demands as supported by regional labor market information.
- Increase the use of labor market and educational data and technology, in coordination with local data, to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions.
- Develop focused, regional workforce initiatives that blend partner resources to educate and train workers for jobs within the workforce region.
- Increase the alignment and efficacy of formula, discretionary and competitive workforce funding in efforts to support regional and local workforce initiatives.
- Promote meaningful, portable industry credentials supported throughout the workforce delivery system that align to workforce demand.
- Institute a system of accountability for the workforce development system that supports and promotes the evaluation of the effectiveness of both the region as well as the local workforce development boards.

D. TRAINING PROGRAMS PREPARING JOB SEEKERS FOR EMPLOYMENT IN REGION 8

Each local area has different strategies and areas of focus for best servicing the needs of its residents and employers. Region 8's Workforce Development Boards are working increasingly with our educational partners to develop career pathway programs to prepare individuals to be successful in secondary and post-secondary education or enter a specific occupation. Louisiana Delta Community College offers credentials in many different sectors. The coordination between Adult Education and Workforce partners is necessary to meet the needs of the job seekers within Region 8.

Region 8's Workforce Boards utilize work-based learning opportunities to prepare job seekers. Work-based learning opportunities include On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, Apprenticeships, and Youth Internships to provide the skills needed for job seekers to be successful in the workplace.

Training programs in the Region are evaluated through the Workforce Development Board. The Board reviews the quarterly WIOA performance accountability measures to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs. Based on the prior year's performance data, the area is meeting or exceeding the set goals. Individuals are getting and keeping jobs which supports economic growth in the Region.

E. COMMITMENT OF PROGRAM PARTNERS TO STRATEGIES IN REGION 8

Through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) development process, each program partner has committed to the integration of workforce development services. Region 8's partners are committed to implementing the strategies for LWDA-81 and 83. The major priority continues to be communication among partners including improving and expanding technological capabilities that facilitate service referrals; coordination of

services across partners for the entire workforce system; coordinated employer services; cross training provided to staffs; and performance reporting and management.

B. COORDINATION OF TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES Supportive services for individuals are coordinated with community agencies as well as partner agencies such as adult education, vocational rehabilitation, and Veterans programs.

In coordinating and collaborating with partners, WIOA resources will be used to provide supportive services when other funding is not available.

WIOA allows for the provision of supportive services to enable an individual to participate in career services and training services. Supportive services such as transportation, work gear, licensure tests, child care, dependent care, and housing, may be necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized and consistent with the provisions of the WIOA Title I-B.

Transportation issues are one of the most common barriers to individuals participating in activities as well as those seeking immediate employment. In all of the parishes in LWDA-83 there are no public transportation options available for training or work. Current practices include reimbursement of expenses toward transportation.

1. ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES IN REGION 8

WIOA requires regions and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with organizations that do and could in the future provide supportive services. Each of the two (2) Comprehensive One-Stop Centers in Region 8 offer an extensive array of services which include for job seekers the provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services such as child care and transportation.

- The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is committed to providing cash assistance and supportive services to needy families meeting specific financial criteria and to provide services necessary to accomplish the goals and purposes of Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601), as well as the goal set by participating in WIOA training activities.
- The Community Services Block Grant Unit, as a component of the LWC, Office of Workforce Development, will provide leadership and technical assistance to the local Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to support the collaboration and coordination of employment and training activities, as well as supportive services with the local and regional WDBs.
- Training provided by the State Monitor Advocate is tied to and follows outreach and provision of services to MSFWs. The SMA developed and assisted MET, Inc. and local WIOA providers in developing MOUs. Other services, such as training or supportive services, provide a pathway for MSFWs to transition to higher wage jobs and permanent year-round employment in non-agricultural work.
- Vocational Rehabilitation in providing supportive services likes eyeglasses, hearing aids, dentures, etc.

- It should be noted that Louisiana Community and Technical College System, as well as other public and private organizations in the state, have received millions of dollars in discretionary grants and will continue to apply to receive future discretionary grants to support workforce training services and strategies to impact the lives of targeted populations. The governor's vision is to improve coordination and collaboration in delivering services to eligible participants in an effort to improve upon the efficacy and effectiveness of service delivery, thereby increasing participation of the state's most vulnerable populations in need of workforce training and supportive services.

Supportive services could be identified by United Way of Northeast Louisiana 211 Program. The program offers resources for food assistance and other necessities. The program is offered throughout the entire Region 8 service area. Northeast Louisiana United Way's website, <http://www.unitedwaynela.org>, gives clients the ability to access supportive services within the region. American Job Center's clients are referred to entities or organizations that are not available at the Career Centers for supportive service.

Resource guides are available to serve individuals with barriers to employment. These resource guides provide a list of supportive services available in the community and are updated regularly.

2. POLICIES/PROCEDURES THAT PROMOTE COORDINATION OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES DELIVERY IN REGION 8

The two local workforce development areas in Region 8 each have supportive service policies in place that promote coordination among community providers. Transportation is more difficult to coordinate as LWDA-81 has access to a mass transit system and for LWDA-83, rural transportation organizations simply do not exist. The partners will work through the MOU process to identify better ways to promote coordination of supportive services. The MOU specifies that upon determining participants needing additional services offered by the American Job Center partners, a paper referral will be provided to the participant and an electronic copy will be emailed to the respective partner agency.

C. COORDINATION WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

It has been a goal in Region 8 to anticipate the ongoing need for creating contingency plans to support economic growth in targeted industry sectors, and developing improved relationships with local and state economic development entities with the goal of pre-empting shortfalls in a skilled workforce, that we are on track to do. Meeting this goal in Region 8 has the potential to strengthen the region's overall economic vitality by bolstering regional economic competitiveness by engaging economic development experts in workforce issues while aligning education, economic and workforce development planning.

1. ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED IN PLANNING IN REGION 8

Region 8 has several economic development agencies that assist in regional planning. Region 8 works closely with the Monroe Chamber of Commerce and Northeast Louisiana Economic Partnership. The chair of LWDB-81 is the President and CEO of the Monroe

Chamber and a representative of North Louisiana Economic Partnership (NLEP) sits on the Board of LWDA-81. Both LWDBs have economic development representation with Northeast Louisiana Economic Alliance (NELEA) represented on WDB-83. With the business members of the Workforce Development Boards appointed by the chambers of commerce in Region 8, needless to say the chambers of commerce are engaged in Region 8's planning efforts.

The local areas of Region 8 work with Louisiana Economic Development's Fast Start Program. LEDFast Start provides quick workforce solutions to businesses in LED's effort to attract new businesses to the region, or retain existing businesses. Solutions include recruitment and workforce training, working with the state's community and technical college system to develop curriculum approved by the employer(s) to produce short-term training to job candidates and helping trainees attain the skills necessary to fill jobs quickly.

2. ORGANIZATIONS DECLINING PLANNING IN REGION 8

No economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses that were invited to participate in Region 8 planning declined the invitation.

D. COORDINATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE COST ARRANGEMENTS

Region 8's local Workforce Boards have engaged the WIOA partners in negotiating discussion about their fair share of the workforce development system. Additionally, partners have identified cost contributions based on available funds and system use. The partners will work together toward continuous system improvements through shared costs, leveraging of resources, and a foundation of cooperation. The local boards have finalized MOUs for partners cost sharing.

Chapter 3: VISION, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES – REGION 8

Local Workforce Development Boards of Region 8 are increasing focus on alignment with economic, workforce, and education systems to coordinate system based on skill needs in regions, much as LWC is with the local boards. This entails aligning career and technical education and apprenticeship opportunities as well as other education programs and activities occurring at the local level in each region. Region 8, through its required Strategic Plans, is developing strategies and actions to promote the alignment of all programs with WIOA-funded programs. Additionally, they are including sector strategies and youth initiatives to promote integration of services across all programs. The strategy related to this goal is creating a new, integrated regional planning process across the economic, education, and workforce sectors.

Strategic planning elements provide a strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce. The strategy must include an analysis of economic conditions in Region 8, such as the existing and in-demand industry sectors and the knowledge and skills needed in these industry sectors.

It must also include data on the current workforce and labor market trends. This analysis must include the educational and skill levels of the workforce and specifically makes reference that individuals with barriers to employment must be included in the analysis. The strategy must further identify how the workforce development activities in the region will address the education and training needs of employers and the workforce, including a strategy for aligning the WIOA core programs and other resources in the region.

A charge for Region 8 is to provide a staff that has the knowledge and experience to carry out the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. Region 8's staff has the experience in case management, assessment, and counseling of clients to provide residents of this workforce area with an integrated service delivery for job seekers and employers. Region 8, acting under WIOA, brings together in strategic coordination, the core programs in skill development of employment and training services for adults, dislocated workers, youth and Wagner-Peyser employment services administered by LWC. Region 8 also coordinates with adult education and literacy programs and Vocational Rehabilitation state grant programs that assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment.

WIOA requires that workforce development programs be strategically aligned. WIOA ensures that employment and training services provided by the core programs are coordinated and complementary so that job seekers acquire skills and credentials that meet employers' of Region 8 needs. As partners transition to WIOA, they will utilize a customer-centered design – where the needs of businesses and workers drive workforce solutions; where AJCs provide excellent customer service to all job seekers and businesses; and where the workforce system supports strong regional economies (including across state lines) - to understand the customer's needs and desires, and have implemented policies and procedures for integrated services based on the

needs of their clients and within context of the local communities. Region 8 has altered its focus, from an organizational perspective, certifying we have the infrastructure and are aligning our priorities so that we have a strategic relationship with our employer customers

A. STRATEGIC VISION TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH

The development of this WIOA Combined Regional Plan is an ongoing effort by Region 8 to transcend the fragmentation of workforce programs. Overcoming silos and promoting program integration are easy goals to talk about but very difficult to achieve. Region 8 partners will work together to leverage resources, both federal and other, to achieve Governor Edward’s Strategic Vision.

To ensure the workforce development activities/services of Region 8 meet the needs of employers and support economic growth in the region WDBs 81 and 83 will enhance communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, economic development entities and service providers.

Region 8 will develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Region 8 anticipates the ongoing need for creating contingency plans to support economic growth in targeted industry sectors and developing improved relationships with local and state economic development entities with the goal to prevent shortfalls in a skilled workforce.

Region 8 shares the Governor’s vision of serving job seekers and businesses by “Putting More Louisianans to Work” to create an environment in which our businesses can grow and our people can flourish. Region 8’s strategic vision to create and expand the skilled workforce places priorities in the following areas:

1. Provide enriched and cohesive services to job seekers.
2. Enhance regional collaboration, coordination and partnerships.
3. Expand employer engagement strategies to be more responsive to the needs of business and industry.

B. GOALS FOR PREPARING AN EDUCATED AND SKILLED WORKFORCE

The Region 8 partners have considered the overall needs of Region 8, the challenges of businesses and job seekers and the existing capacity of the workforce development system to respond to these needs. We have adopted the following goals to guide our work together during the next few years:

- Collaboration
 - Build a talent development delivery system through systematic change, integration of resources, and continuous improvement.
 - Align workforce development resources to anchor the following industry sectors
 - Health care and Social Assistance
 - Accommodation and Food Services
 - Manufacturing

- Ensure the employment and training services provided by core programs identified in WIOA are coordinated so that job seekers acquire skills and credentials that meet employers' needs.
- Evaluate performance.
- Job Seekers
 - Educate and inform, disseminate organization, workforce, and career pathway information regularly to foster interest and collaboration.
 - Foster and advance universal access to workforce services in all parishes with a focus on populations with barriers.
 - Engage and connect youth with career pathways and employment training opportunities.
 - Promote quality employment and training services for Adult and Dislocated Workers.
 - Provide access to high quality training to help job seekers acquire industry recognized credentials for in demand jobs.
- Employers
 - Build relationships that promote success, engage business, industry, and the education community to ensure universal contribution and commitment to workforce initiatives and strategies that support regional economies.
 - Foster regional sector partnerships and alignment between the region's workforce development programs.
 - Reinforce connections with registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs as these are proven models that provide workers with career pathways and opportunities to earn while they learn.
 - Ensure the workforce and education systems meets the needs of economic development and employers.

Region 8's seven (7) broad goals for the workforce development system are:

- Establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential, and degree attainment
- Expand public-private investment in the region's pipeline of workers.
- Increase opportunities for all youth to participate in work-based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, internships and other similar experiences.
- Engage employers through sector partnerships to improve the connection and responsiveness of workforce programs to the demand side of the labor market.
- Strengthen data sharing across state agencies and workforce development partners to better understand education and employment outcomes and rely more effectively on data to improve and target our efforts.
- To be recognized by the business and industry community as a valuable resource for the provision of workforce information, data, assistance, and guidance.
- To make everyone aware of "who does what" in the community and "where to go" when specific services are needed.

WIOA provides a historic opportunity to align performance-related definitions, streamline performance indicators, integrate reporting, and ensure comparable data collection and reporting across all six of the core programs, while also implementing program-specific requirements related to data collection and reporting. Region 8 will make investments in employment, education, and training programs that ensure evidence-based, data-driven, and programmatic service delivery that is accountable to customers and taxpayers. Performance accountability and data reporting will be aligned to promote the workforce development system that creates a best-in-class regional system, responsive to business and industry.

With respect to the performance accountability measures required in WIOA and the implementing rule, the LWDAs in Region 8 individually negotiated and reached agreement with the State on local levels of performance for performance accountability measures. Negotiations will occur every other year for a two-year period and measures are in place. In addition, partners will actively engage in whatever process is implemented by the respective state agencies for negotiating and setting targets for these measures. The goals for the Title I programs are set through the use of a statistical adjustment model. These procedures are in place and the partners consult with their respective state agency contacts and meet to discuss the implications of the performance measures and required targets for service delivery and integration. The Core Partners work cooperatively to report performance outcomes across all programs to advance the goals of improving access and success for all customers. However, currently there is no universal or shared system for partners to communicate performance to customers.

C. REGIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIES

In order to –

1) Facilitate Engagement of Employers

We will use our Workforce Boards to create strategies for employer engagement and to lead engagement efforts for specific industries, particularly for the primary targeted sectors. We will work with the existing community college advisory committees to leverage the work of these committees to inform our planning and policies for career pathway development, and to help ensure that these advisory committees benefit from the perspectives of the workforce system.

Region 8 focuses on working with corporations that can offer multi-dimensional support, such as work experiences, internships, job shadowing, tutors, mentors, and provide consultation about the Youth program. WIOA contributes to economic growth and business expansion by ensuring the workforce system is job-driven and matches business customers with skilled individuals.

2) Support a System that Meets the Needs of Business

The Integrated Business Service Team is designed to be a group of individuals who work with businesses to form a single point of contact that represents all of the participating partners. Business customers say there is a need for AJC services that include candidate screening, validation of the job-seeker information, assessment, less paperwork, and applicants from the centers who are equal to or better than walk-in applicants. Business customers also need

employee commitment and loyalty, a single point of contact, and knowledge about AJCs' products and services.

Region 8's business service plan clearly identifies products and services and their attributes and features that appeal to potential customers. The flow of business services follows these steps: a) assist in the forecasting of skills and knowledge needed by businesses in Region 8, b) identify eligible training providers, c) work with educational entities to provide customized training based on business customer needs and expectations, d) prepare a pool of job ready applicants and begin training them, and e) conduct targeted recruitment.

3) Coordinate with Economic Development Strategies

Region 8 has several economic development agencies. Region 8 works closely with each one. NELEA works with employers in Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Madison, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas and West Carroll Parishes in Region 8. NLEP provides professional economic development services to the other parishes of northeast Louisiana, including Jackson, Morehouse, Ouachita, and Union. The organization also represents the interests of north Louisiana with a unified voice and as a single point of contact. It acts as a catalyst, a convener, and a connector in the region to ensure that north Louisiana's economic development potential is realized. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development the two employer-led Boards set the engagement direction through the different Workforce Board committee discussions. The board members participate with the local plan to address workforce needs and share best practices. The information is shared throughout the Board meetings and Economic Development Partnership meetings to ensure the strategies are being addressed and met. Employers are engaged during meetings with the NextGen Sector Partnership which includes Region 8 Healthcare Alliance. The discussions include identifying any new high wage sectors in the area.

Region 8 is also closely tied to other regional economic development agencies providing them with workforce intelligence when asked to do so to attract potential employers to the region.

4) Strengthen Linkages with Unemployment Insurance Programs

A service strategy designed by LWC is already in place for providing career services to Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants. The staff working in the centers are trained and knowledgeable in the provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation. The two words "and assistance" imply a more affirmative responsibility to assist claimants in the claims filing process. Staff will need to be fully trained on customer-centered service delivery practices. These services will be expanded so all customers experience a "common front door" for all partner programs and a triage/assessment process to measure academic and occupations skills that leads to seamless customer flow and access to the services needed.

Region 8 has developed, convened, and implemented sector partnerships; one in the health care sector and a second in manufacturing. Region 8 knows how fast the health care industry is changing. Every day there are pressing questions and issues related to patient care quality, costs of care, a qualified workforce, technology innovations, public awareness and wellness, among a myriad of other topics. Aware that no single organization could do this work well

alone, the LWDBs of Region 8 worked across health care organizations and with community partners to navigate the new demands. That's why the Northeast Louisiana Health care Alliance was launched.

5) Promote Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services

WDBs-81 and 83 will establish relationships with entities that provide guidance, support, and resources to encourage microenterprises, defined as a small business employing nine (9) people or fewer and having a fairly small balance sheet, and entrepreneurial opportunities, including the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at University of Louisiana at Monroe. If a WIOA participant is interested in their own business start-up, they are connected with the appropriate partner.

6) Implement Initiatives Designed to Meet Employers' Needs

A top priority for Region 8 is to ensure that the entire customer spectrum has accurate and available knowledge in order to make informed choices about career pathways for job seekers, and real-time, relevant access to labor market data for employers. Armed with quality data and sound interpretation, the WDBs and staffs of Region 8 are able to better navigate the workforce and economic environment in our region.

WIOA highlights sector partnerships as a key strategy for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers. Sector Partnerships are industry-driven and community supported by education, workforce development, economic development and community organization which are required to truly support a regional industry and to connect job seekers to jobs.

The WDBs of Region 8 were well positioned to serve as the convener for this work through a contract provided to the region by Louisiana Workforce Commission and funded by a National Dislocated Worker Grant. The development and implementation of Sector Partnership strategies began in March 2016 with the launch of our first industry partnership, Health Care, planned on August 3, 2016. The following is a brief overview of Region 8's Sector Partnership scope of work:

- Identify and engage key leadership within Region 8 – Board Members, Directors and Business service Team members (March – June 2016)
- Review and analysis of labor market data to determine valid demand industry sectors
- Full sector partnership and industry engagement for WDB staff (March – August 2016)
- Facilitation of Regional Meeting with key leadership from workforce development, education, economic development, and community organizations
- Identify Industry Champions for targeted sectors
- Health care Industry Sector launch (August 03, 2016)

Develop replicable process for Sector Partnership development in region to be implemented in additional sectors.

Region 8 will continue to focus on convening and collaborating with various organizations and workforce stakeholders. Region 8's Integrated Services Team is a key player in the combined employer engagement process. A strength of Region 8 is the implementation of work-based learning programs, including Youth Work Experiences and On-the-job Training programs.

Although these programs have their own unique rules, regulations, and targeted populations, they share a unity of helping local businesses access a viable talent pool through work-based learning, which in turn supports Region 8's participants in obtaining meaningful employment.

Region 8 actively uses On-the-Job Training opportunities as one of the cornerstones of its practical learning components. With a high rate of retention, the OJT program is one that both employers and job seekers actively inquire about.

Region 8 provides other business services and implements strategies that meet the workforce development needs of our local area employers. For example, Incumbent Worker Training provides both workers and employers with the opportunity to build and maintain a quality workforce and increase both participants' and companies' competitiveness. This type of work-based training and upskilling is designed to ensure that employees of a company can acquire the skills necessary to retain employment and advance within the company, or to acquire the skills necessary to avert a layoff. Incumbent worker training is designed to be responsive to the special requirements of an employer or a group of employers in partnership with other entities for the purpose of delivering training.

Transitional jobs are a type of work-experience considered an individualized career service. Transitional jobs are time-limited and wage-paid work experiences that are subsidized up to hundred (100) percent. These jobs are in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors and are only available for individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history, as determined by the regional AJC staff. Transitional jobs provide an individual with work experience that takes place within the context of an employee-employer relationship. Region 8 will use transitional jobs to establish a work history for the individual, demonstrate success in the workplace, and develop the skills that lead to entry and retention in unsubsidized employment.

D. REGIONAL STRATEGIES TO INCREASE APPRENTICESHIP AND WORK-BASED LEARNING

Closely tied to the solutions sought by businesses in Region 8 is the expanded use of work-based learning (Registered Apprenticeships, Youth Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, Customized Training, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training and others). This emphasis recognizes work-based learning as often the most effective mechanism for delivering Training and Education solutions in an environment that is directly shaped to and for the needs of the employer. This is beneficial because it's an earn-while-you-learn environment. Employers like this process because it is a plus for their business.

Work-based training models will utilize work-based learning to fill Region 8's business needs for skilled employees, thereby increasing employee earning potential and the business's bottom line. To ensure quality in work-based training, Region 8 will demonstrate evidence of the following criteria:

- Occupation training for in-demand jobs as defined by Occupational Forecasting Conference and approved by the State Board (Workforce Investment Council) accessible through (Star Jobs)
- Clear program goals
- Outreach implementation to program participants and employers regarding OJT opportunities; including leveraging various partners' relationships with employers
- Standardizing and streamlining forms, including contracts and training plan templates in Region 8
- Clear roles and responsibilities for trainers, worksite supervisors and support personnel
- Assessments to identify existing skills of individual learners
- Reasonable training length reflecting both the complexity of the job and skills of the trainee
- Specified methods of instruction
- Assurance that participants are job-ready prior to work-based training opportunities
- Established evaluation processes
- Clear expectations and feedback to assess progress toward achieving learning/skills acquisition goals.

Incorporating Registered Apprenticeship into service design and delivery is one way Region 8 will address the middle skill jobs that account for over half of Louisiana's labor market. One way to accomplish this is by having American Job Center staff involved and engaged in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

Region 8's BSTs are working throughout Region 8 to improve the capacity of the workforce system relative to incorporating Registered Apprenticeship in service design and delivery, as well as to support the emphasis on career pathways. The engagement of BST staff with the State apprenticeship staff has also been robust, and we expect that partnership to continue. LWC believes, as does Region 8, Registered Apprenticeship is a model that strikes "...the critical balance between serving individuals and employers in a manner that will produce strategies that in the long run are good for both."

The WIOA grant provides funds for employer incentives to assist with OJT and Related Technical Instruction (RTI) training costs. The Integrated Business Service Team will promote this benefit braiding funds with OJT contracts and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to increase the amount of WIOA funds utilized by employers with a Registered Apprenticeship model and encourage Registered Apprenticeship expansion across Region 8.

During National Apprenticeship Week in 2019, Region 8 held an event in Richland Parish, the two local workforce boards coordinated together. This event focused on informing employers of the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship and how WIOA funding can amplify programs. A key strategy in Region 8 is the expansion of the use of Registered Apprenticeship programs where employer and employee are equally committed to the program's success. Registered Apprenticeship programs have demonstrated that employers benefit from lower employee

turnover, increased employee productivity, improve employee problem-solving skills and enhance employee relations.

Region 8 continues working to develop new non-traditional programs in industries such as health care and advanced manufacturing. Region 8 continues to encourage new and currently existing programs to take advantage of registered apprenticeship under the new WIOA regulations. Provisions in WIOA clearly support the expansion and incorporation of registered apprenticeship as an evidence-based approach to workforce development.

E. INITIATIVES TO SHORTEN TIME FROM CREDENTIAL TO EMPLOYMENT

Region 8 partners realize the value and significance of shortening the time from credential to employment. A range of activities are in place region-wide. All work-based learning activities (OJT, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and transitional jobs) are geared toward moving workers into employment more quickly and effectively. Region 8's integrated and the local Business Service Teams listen to employers' needs and work to better understand their training needs.

LDCC has partnered with high schools to offer dual credit programs, which help students quickly complete their degree and enter the workforce, while saving money along the way. LDCC is also working with four year universities to ensure credits are recognized and accepted. Louisiana Delta Community College is exploring a range of non-credit programs in conjunction with businesses, which often facilitate industry-recognized credentials more quickly than traditional course timelines, especially when these are interim credentials that would normally be part of a longer college course or program. Workers retain the value from these interim steps in themselves and should more easily be able to later take additional credentials that can be stacked toward college degrees.

F. STEPS TO ALIGN AND INTEGRATE EDUCATION, WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), in partnership with DCFS, shares job seeker registration data to promote efficient use of public assistance resources. DCFS clients, who may benefit from WIOA staff services, are referred to Region 8's AJC offices for additional assistance.

Region 8's relationships with Adult Education promotes training opportunities for Title I WIOA participants. The integration of Title II Adult Education into the workforce system promotes the flow of communication of labor market needs and education and training opportunities between Adult Education and Workforce Development. These stakeholders use WIOA programs and internal data to maximize the efficiency of its shared programmatic efforts.

North Louisiana Economic Partnership, an Accredited Economic Development Organization, provides professional economic development services to North Louisiana. The organization also represents the interests of North Louisiana with a unified voice and as a single point of contact. It acts as a catalyst, a convener, and a connector in the region to ensure that North

Louisiana’s economic development potential is realized. Its vision is for North Louisiana to be a thriving region—a destination for high quality talent, innovative companies, and global investment.

Region 8 will expand information for employers and job seekers to access services to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways by:

1. Make Labor Market Information more accessible and easier to use doing orientations and one-on-one interviews with customers. Training will be made available to all job center staff and core partners via webinars and in person trainings.
2. Partners and employers in LWDA-83 receive a local workforce report on labor market information monthly, which includes data on jobs data, labor force statistics and real time labor market information.
3. Workforce and economic development professionals, as well as our education partners, will continue to work together to coordinate mutually beneficial activities. It is also vital that we continue to work together to attract employers from the targeted industries where current and future workforce development opportunities, such as On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training and Customized Training opportunities, are available. The Boards will continue to partner with the colleges and training providers to improve portable and stackable credentials. Workforce Board staff are active members of the Carl Perkins Adult Education consortium which meet to discuss career clusters and pathways in the region.

Region 8 will foster the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors through the following efforts:

1. Work with our economic development partners within Region 8 to identify existing partnerships and initiatives with employers in our key sectors.
2. Identify local employers willing to provide expertise to our sector initiatives.
3. Work with community partners to organize and or expand work within existing partnerships or create new partnerships.

And, as outlined in the State Plan:

4. Increase the use of labor market and educational data and technology, in coordination with local data, to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions.
5. Develop focused, regional workforce initiatives that blend partner resources (co-investment) to educate and train workers for jobs within the workforce region.
6. Increase the alignment and efficacy of formula, discretionary and competitive workforce funding in efforts to support regional and local workforce initiatives.
7. Promote meaningful, portable industry credentials supported throughout the workforce delivery system.
8. Fortify a system of accountability for the workforce development system that supports and promotes the evaluation of the effectiveness of state and local workforce development boards in meeting the workforce demands of business and workforce.

Region 8 will expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improve employment and earnings by:

1. Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors
2. Expanding information for employers and jobseekers to access services by improving the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development, and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

Region 8 will expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs by taking the following steps:

1. Expand and incentivize the utilization of evidenced-based workforce strategies that support targeted populations (e.g., the long-term unemployed, individual with disabilities, veterans, out-of-school youth) into sector-based career pathways leading to gainful employment.
2. Enhance and expand the delivery of integrated reentry and employment strategies to reduce recidivism among Region 8's returning citizens and meet the skill and workforce needs of business and industry.



Executive Summary

The workforce development system in Ouachita Parish is a network of services, programs, and resources whose primary purpose is to develop a skilled workforce to match employer needs. This network consists of many providers, all of whom are committed to working together for the good of Ouachita Parish.

The local plan covers the next four years, presents the WIOA-aligned goals, strategies, and activities of the workforce system in Ouachita Parish. This plan is based on current and projected needs of the workforce development system, with an increased emphasis on coordination and collaboration at all levels to ensure a seamless system for employers and job seekers, including those with disabilities. The local plan identifies the education, employment, and skill needs of the workforce. This plan includes an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of services provided to address identified needs.

Workforce Development Board (WDB) realizes Ouachita is an excellent place for businesses to prosper and for individuals to live and work. In order to maintain good paying jobs, a quality workforce and superior educational institutions, Ouachita WDB seeks to maximize the resources available in our area.

Ouachita Workforce will continue to connect employers to a skilled workforce and helps individuals develop the skills needed to thrive in the workplace. The board is committed to creating workforce development strategies that promote the economic well-being of both employers and workers in Ouachita Parish. Ouachita Workforce Development Board's vision to provide a system of universal access to all of our citizens where they can receive the services needed to obtain and retain employment in order to improve their standards of living, and to provide area employers with a well-educated and trained workforce to meet the needs of the twenty-first century.

While it is difficult to make long-term projections on how exactly COVID-19 will affect the demand on future job, some considerations will influence how Ouachita's WIOA Plan moves forward:

They are as follows:

- As occupations move to remote work, we must consider how to provide technical resources and training to individuals that allow them to successfully compete for jobs.
- As we receive real-time data and industry input on high-demand occupations, they must be prepared to adjust service delivery strategies to meet the changing need.
- As colleges and training providers navigate their own response to COVID, it will be difficult for us to predict the availability of training.
- As fewer customers require UI assistance, we will need to shift their priority back to customers seeking re-employment and training services.

We are confident that we have a proactive plan and agile infrastructure necessary to collectively address the needs of Ouachita Parish.

CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES – LOCAL COMPONENT

This chapter provides an overview of all the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). LWDAs must incorporate key documents into the plan that describe the one- stop delivery system and the services provided by the workforce partners.

A. Coordination of Planning Requirements: The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan and include the following statements in this chapter:

- *The Local Workforce Development Area 81 Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*
- *The Local Workforce Development Area 81 Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Louisiana Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23.1). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*

Ouachita Workforce Development Board has one comprehensive American Job Center located at 24 Accent Drive Ste. 151, Monroe, La. Services are provided to jobseekers and employers customers. Ouachita American Job Center has utilized an integrated service delivery model for several years. All partners are expected to further promote and refine integration practices in their service delivery model. The one-stop partners fully embrace integration, both in spirit and in practice. This means the partners do not simply deliver WIOA services at the AJC, but fully incorporate services wholly into the integrated service delivery model.

All the core partners, which includes adult, dislocated, youth, Vocational Rehab, and Wagner-Peyser services are provided through the comprehensive American Job Center. Partners have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that detail their services, which they provide. The signed MOUs and the Infrastructure Funding Agreement are dated July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023. Wagner-Peyser, dislocated workers and adult customers are co-enrolled; as well as the alignment/braiding of resources, to address the training and employment needs of system customers.

Integrated Service Delivery reduces duplicative and administrative activities that add value in favor of a positive customer experience (both employers and job seekers).

The services allow staff to provide customers higher value services including screening, assessment, skill development and skill certification related to the needs of local and regional economies and the resources of participating programs. Staff works in teams to meet the needs of customers, rather than to administer specific programs. The goal is for more people to get jobs, keep jobs, and earn better wages, and for businesses to find the talent they need to succeed and grow.

An outcome of functional teams is that staff at the American Job Center become experts in a variety of different programs and are aware of all resources available to all customers, further promoting the “no wrong door” approach for customers and better utilization of all funds available through the American Job Center and partners.

The components of Integration Service Delivery model include:

1. Co-enrollment of job seekers in WP and Adult/DW WIOA funds at minimum and braiding/directing resources to provide appropriate services, regardless of specific funding stream limitations.
2. Organizing staff and services around functions and skill sets rather than programs or agencies. Breaking down internal partner’s barriers to service provisions. Functional teams are based on industry sectors and the customer flow process.
3. Using a common set of outcome measures for all customers that drive increased performance and display enhanced successes for the American Job Center.
4. Providing a robust and adaptable menu of services that improve outcomes and actively engage employers, job seekers and partnering agencies.
5. A greater focus on skill development and certification based on labor market requirements promotion between employment and education as necessary for participants.
6. Investment and planning to promote staff professional growth and learning in cross-functional teams.
7. Using customer input (job seeker and business) for continuously improving services early and often in-service delivery models.

LWDB and local partners have agreed to work toward a functionally integrated environment at Ouachita American Job Center, and future affiliate sites. Customers benefit from triage, job Search, training and placement services in the AJC. The WIOA, in partnership with the One-Stop Operator and LWC, will lead the integrated service delivery model.

The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) used by WDB 81 partners contain the overall One-Stop operational budget. Workforce Development Board-81, AJC partners and the chief elected official, agrees to the shared cost of the AJC operating budget. LWDB and the partners use the

Local Funding Mechanism to allow the flexibility to fund the one stop delivery system through consensus.

B. Provide information regarding the use of technology in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:

- **How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).**

Technology plays an integral part in many aspects of the daily operation of Ouachita Workforce. Staff utilizes [Laworks.net](#) to foster the symbiotic relationship between employers and job seekers by providing a centralized location for job postings, resumes, and matching services. All staff uses the HIRE system to track case management, support services and youth activities. In addition, management uses reports from the Hire System to track real time performance issues.

The Board strives to achieve seamless delivery of services and universal access to individuals with disabilities and language barriers. We provide area employers with the most qualified labor force information. Workforce Solutions centers have expanded existing technology to enhance accessibility of services, resource rooms, and self-service options for job seekers with a wide range of visual, hearing, physical, cognitive, and other disabilities.

One-stop services are readily available and easily conveyed to all interested job seekers. The services provided to the public, such as workshops, are in simple to comprehend language, with assistive technology available if needed. One-on-One workshops are available if necessary.

- **How LWDB 81 will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means (§679.560(b)(5)(ii)).**

The Board remains committed to using available and emerging technology to assist customers, particularly those who may be located a distance from a center and with limited transportation. Priority is on maintaining up-to-date computer hardware and software available to the public. Currently, those wishing to apply for childcare services can do so from any computer through the Board's website. We market public events through the board's website and Facebook page to further expand the virtual presence of Ouachita Workforce. In addition, staff will soon undertake a project to record all workshops so they will be available to the public at any time through the utilization of the newly designed website.

C. Describe how LWDB 81 will support the strategies identified in the Combined State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

- **Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i));**

Ouachita Workforce Development Board has a good mix of diverse workforce programs that provide opportunities to individuals with barriers to get the necessary training and job search assistance to achieve success. Ouachita American Job Center staff triages job seekers to address individual needs. During career counseling, the best career and training options are explored with the jobseeker. The staff utilizes the labor market information to guide individuals in career and training options. Work-Based learning opportunities are explored with job seekers to determine the best employment fit. Expanding access also includes tracking electronic referrals with partner agencies to ensure the appropriate services are being provided. All of the core program partners participate actively in the design of the One Stop Center activities and are representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board. Board staff and program staff are experienced and focus on individuals with barriers for placements and career pathway methodologies to carry out the mission and vision of the State and the Ouachita Workforce Development Board.

Funding continues to be an issue. Partners have a difficult time financially supporting the infrastructure. The lack of databases among partners that interface with each other to provide needed data is lacking. Partners have agreed to meet face-to-face or virtually to discuss co-enrollments and exits until we create a more integrated database system. Co-enrollments will assist all partner agencies in leveraging resources and providing a more comprehensive menu of activities for job seekers, employers, and youth.

As a Work Ready Community (WRC), Ouachita Workforce is poised to assist business and industry to find qualified workers to fill vacates.

- **Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their GED and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credential and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;**

The Ouachita Workforce Board believes that many of the workforce system individuals will start with Adult Basic Education or English as a Second Language and build from there. The partnership with Adult Basic Education and Literacy is essential, along with the other core program partners, Adult Education and Literacy will participate in the customer flow that provides services to individuals. The design has all core partners' clients registering into the HIRE System and receiving any basic career services. The Adult Education and Literacy partner has agreed to the referral process and initial screening to identify potential services for all American Job Center jobseekers.

LWDB-81 continues to develop and refine innovative and effective models for obtaining industry recognized credentials, including integrated education and training approaches, such as, career pathways, industry or sector partnerships, including those pertaining to Registered Apprenticeship programs and opportunities. Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach that provides three components simultaneously, concurrently, and contextually: (1) adult education and literacy (2) workforce preparation activities, and (3) workforce training to scale up Integrated Education and Training (IET) services to help adults.

The IET will be a part of our career pathway with a single set of learning objectives for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement which may be any one of the approved WIOA training services.

Training services may include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment,
- On-the-job training (OJT)
- Registered Apprenticeship
- Workplace training combined with related instruction that may include cooperative education programs,
- Private sector training programs,
- Skill upgrading and retraining,
- Entrepreneurial training,
- Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above,
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training described above.

The Skills/Talent Development team will ensure participants are provided with Individualized Career and Training services that include information and opportunities for them to receive the skills necessary to obtain and retain employment. They provide one-on-one career counseling and coaching, which will begin with the development of the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) for adults and the Integrated Service Strategy (ISS) for youth. The IEP/ISS further defines skills-based education and training opportunities, basic skills and skills-enhancing products/services, guidance in selection of education programs and training providers, need for supportive services and other related wraparound services.

Integrated education and training services of sufficient quality and intensity will be designed based on the most rigorous research available. Successful applicants are required to provide the following services/activities:

- a minimum of two career pathway programs that provide the opportunity for students to earn college credit;
- basic skills services that are concurrently integrated and contextualized with the workforce training program of study and aligned with a single set of learning objectives and specific integrated activities;
- basic skills, workforce preparation activities, workforce training, and the attainment of industry-based and/or academic credentials;
- partnerships with business and industry as well as regional economic development partners in order to meet both current and future sector needs.

Delta Community College currently has Industry-recognized credentials in Nursing Assistant, Medical Assistant, Contact Tracer, Construction Laborers, Maintenance and repair workers, Customer Service Representatives, Bookkeeping Clerks, and Forklift operator that leads to in-demand occupations.

- **Using the insights and lessons learned from successful dual credit programs to scale up similar efforts in other sectors and regions;**

Our Adult Education partner currently offer traditional dual credit hours for students enrolled in Welding, Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy, and Education to Careers. Dual credits are offered for the juniors and seniors at the local high schools.

Students from Ouachita Parish and Monroe City Schools' systems visits Louisiana Delta Community College campus and learn about an academic program that aligns with their career goals. In the spring, interested students attend a parent information session that includes presentations by departments such as student support services, financial assistance, WIOA and admissions. This is part of an overall strategy to expose students to programs, getting them comfortable in a college setting, and introducing the myriad support services offered.

Monroe Chamber holds an annual Manufacturing Day, which allow students to tour area manufacturers to get an insight into the manufacturing industry. The day includes discussions about career tracks and pathways, education and training requirements, and next steps related to college and career after high school.

Louisiana Delta Community College (LDCC) has collaborated with high schools to offer dual credit programs, which help students quickly, complete their degree and enter the workforce, while saving money along the way. In some instances, students are able to graduate high school with associate degrees, beginning their professional careers in technical fields immediately after completing high school with a dual degree.

LDCC is also working with four-year universities to ensure credits are recognized and accepted. Louisiana Delta Community College is exploring a range of non-credit programs in conjunction with businesses, which often facilitate industry-recognized credentials more quickly than traditional course timelines, especially when these are interim credentials that would normally be part of a longer college course or program. Workers retain the value from these interim steps and should easily be able to take additional credentials that can be stacked toward college degrees.

We have found that dual credit leads to positive educational outcomes for students at all levels. Dual credit courses often are viewed as more rigorous than general high school courses. They may increase the relevance of schoolwork by enabling students to access courses related to their career goals and interests, like engineering, business or marketing. Participation in dual credit programs has increase the probability of degree completion and decreeing college attrition. . Numerous studies have shown that college students with prior dual credit were more likely to persist to a second year of college and eventually complete a degree.

- **Determining the most effective marketing methods and messages for informing college and university students about Prior Learning Assessments;**

Prior Learning Assessment discussion will be addressed within the quarterly partners and staff meetings. During the intake process job seekers are assessed through career counseling to address any prior education and experience. Job seekers inquiring about training opportunities will be given information about Prior Learning Assessment requirement. Prior Learning Assessment discussion will include the local colleges and universities which participate and the process to attain the services. Career Counselors will direct the job seeker to the individual college's website to download the appropriate Prior Learning Assessment application. The LWDB-81 will educate/training partners and front-line staff on the Prior Learning Assessment methods in the workforce area

- **Investigating how targeted marketing can identify segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations;**

LWDB 81 utilizes KNOE TV and local radios stations to produce a “once-a-week” spotlight labeled “Workforce Wednesdays”. This spotlight targets various populations with education information, hiring events held at the American Job Center or workshops readily available throughout the community. It airs Wednesday mornings and sends information to the community at high driving times.

Marketing to the mature worker's population will be a priority, as well as marketing to the underemployed. LWDB 81 hosts hiring events, at the American Job Center (AJC). We utilize the Monroe Chamber's e-newsletter to market services and programs so the business community is aware of all of the One-Stop offerings. LWDB uses Facebook and other social media platforms to promote events and educational opportunities. Lastly, calendars and flyers are produced on each specific event/training opportunity are distributed to jobseekers and employers.

- **Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (§ 679.560(b)(2)(ii));**

The LWDB 81 will continue to explore, develop, and expand career pathways with education partners that may include co-enrollment in core programs. The LWDB 81 will work to catalog existing pathways to determine what middle skilled jobs exist and target training resources for development or expansion.

Developing career pathways in the specific targeted sectors as identified in the regional plan will require stronger partnerships within the local community, such as Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, post-secondary education and local businesses.

- **Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).**

Emphasis placed on ensuring that access to training needed to enter high-demand jobs through the attainment of credentials and occupational skills training. LDCC provides more online/virtual training opportunities to obtain credentials needed to enter various career fields. The online offerings are beneficial as it provides access to those challenged by transportation, childcare, and other barriers. LWDB will continue to collaborate and evaluate these offerings to ensure that the appropriate classroom training, work experiences, and credentials are provided to fill the pipeline for employers and career pathways for workers to enable employers.

LWDB 81 works with core educational, workforce partners to develop pathways that uses recognized post-secondary, and industry credentials that are portable and stackable. We work to identify components of earn and learn models that provide short term credentials that lead to employment in family-sustaining jobs and combine them with work-based learning in our targeted industry sectors. As part of a pathway, we will work to identify additional credentialed training that can lead to advancement for the individual.

D. Provide information regarding the local coordination strategies with state (including the Combined State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities, including a description of:

- **Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I (§ 679.560(b)(6)).**

The MOU between: LWDB-81, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and the partners clarifies and defines the roles of each program, and specifies the ways each program contributes to the delivery of Career Services in the AJCC. In order to assist with ongoing coordination and communication, regular meetings are held between line staff and partners programs to discuss and coordinate service delivery on an ongoing basis, and to prevent unintended duplication of services.

The partners meet on a bi-weekly basis to coordinate services, eliminate duplication and improve program services for the adult, dislocated worker and youth employment and training activities under WIOA.

Some examples includes: The Adult Education partner manage the assessment process and provide high school equivalency training and testing to reduce duplication of services.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers Job Readiness Workshops with their Family Self-Sufficient Workshop at the center to help remove barriers to employment.

The core collaborates program (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation) work together to effectively serve job seekers and employers. Although each program has defined activities and responsibilities by law, they work to leverage services and reduce duplication.

WIOA 81 provides career planning and case management services to adults, dislocated workers and youth in the local area. WIOA provides tuition assistance for vocational classroom training for eligible individuals. In addition, earn and learn programs such as on-the-job and incumbent worker training are available. Employers are provided assistance with pre-employment screening

as well as skills assessment of potential candidates. Supportive services are available for eligible individuals to attend training.

- **Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how LWDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232 (§ 679.560(b)(12)).**

The United States Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical, and Adult education outlines the following goals under WIOA Title II:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency.
- Support the educational and skill achievement of parents and family members to participate in the educational development of their children and improve economic opportunities for families;
- Assist immigrants and English learners in improving their English and math proficiency and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- Assist incarcerated individuals in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote successful re-reentry into society.

The goals of LWDB 81 are delivery of service such as adult education and literacy activities. Section 203(2) of WIOA further adds three new activities to the definition of “adult education and literacy activities”: Integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training.

Adult Education coordinates with the One-Stop system to increase basic skills of adults and youth who need marketable skills for employment. Coordinating services through the One-Stop system ensures LWIB 81 that the adult education services provided aligns with the local plan. Along with the other Core Program Partners, Adult Education and Literacy in Ouachita Parish will participate in the customer flow that provides for serving to individuals.

The LWDB-81 will carry out the review of local applications/RFPs submitted under Title II and the Board will ensure that the review process was consistent with WIOA requirements.

The process is as follows:

- Prior to submission, the WDB will be notified of the review process.
- A LWDB-81 Proposal Review Training will be held via live webinar where LWDB members will be provided with an overview of the proposals, instructions on how to review proposals, and how to use the proposal review. LWDB-81 members will have an opportunity to ask questions during the webinar.
- Any LWDB members with potential conflicts of interest should recuse themselves from the review process.
- All applications deemed eligible will be sorted by their DA and packaged for hardcopy or electronic transmittal to the Board Chair.

- **Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services (§ 679.560(b)(11)).**

Wagner-Peyser will be co-located full-time in the comprehensive American Job Center and share in the facility costs. Along with the other Core Program Partners, Wagner-Peyser has agreed to the customer flow to serve clients in LWDB 81.

The design has all Core Program Partners clients registering in the LAWORKS database and receive orientation as well as receiving any basic career services. Wagner-Peyser has also agreed to the referral process and initial screening to identify potential services for all Center clients. Wagner-Peyser, along with partner staff, will continue to provide resource room coverage, and basic career service workshops open to all workforce system clients. Wagner-Peyser will coordinate with LWDB 81 to ensure employers served according to a customer model and that partners are not duplicating efforts.

In addition, Wagner-Peyser staff will assist with the intake process by assessing the client's needs, assisting with UI claims, and registering them in the HIRE system for the claimant to begin job searching. Staff will also provide Labor Market Information to educate clients on the current employment outlook and determine if further training will be necessary to enhance employment opportunities. Depending on the needs of the clients, they are directed to work-readiness workshops, referred to partner agencies, and/or supportive services.

- **Vocational rehabilitation service activities under WIOA Title IV (§ 679.560(b)(13)).**

Vocational Rehabilitation and other Core Program Partners share information specific to their target populations and discuss appropriate co-enrollment standards in order to leverage services to best serve clients.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) administers Vocational Rehabilitation Service activities under WIOA Title IV. Vocational Rehabilitation Services representatives are available at the career center. Services include career counseling and job placement assistance. Services are coordinated through the referral process. During quarterly partner meetings, cross training is conducted to inform partners and staff about the available vocational services resources. Brochures are displayed to inform the jobseekers about vocational services. Louisiana Rehabilitation Services' office is co-housed within the state office building. LWC maintains Workforce Development Board representation and participates in policy and program discussion. WIOA Title I maintains all assistive technology/equipment at the comprehensive one-stop center, with Vocational Rehabilitation staff providing guidance related to the type of equipment that would be suitable for the needs of those seeking services at the one-stop. Additional collaborative efforts were identified through the MOU negotiation process for 2020, and duplication of services is addressed as well.

- **Relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities (§ 679.560(b)(9)).**

Represented from secondary and post-secondary education programs are on the local board. Louisiana Delta Community College provides the funding for adult education. Staff of these entities are also actively engaged in WIOA activities, representing Carl Perkins V, Adult

Education, Continuing Education and Business Services. The Adult Education partner provides a variety of services, which are free to eligible clients. They provide the HISET and English as a Second Language classes in the local area. Secondary and post-secondary providers offer workplace skills training, career exploration services and basic skills instruction. LDCC participate as a provider of Title 1 services as well, serving youth in the local area. The Pathway programs in manufacturing, healthcare and hospitality provides learning along with industry recognized credentials lead into postsecondary and/or entry-level employment.

Educational institutions and economic development agencies are active in assisting with program design concepts. WIOA services aligns with other post-secondary opportunities in the local area and there is no duplication of services.

- **How the local Board will support the state strategies identified under § 676.105 and work with the entities carrying out core programs. In addition, other workforce development programs, including programs of study and career pathway programs. under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment and needs identified in regional or local level assessments including the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)).**

Core Program Partners, along with educational institutions and economic development representatives, assist in the creation and support of sector partnerships for the identified existing and emerging industries and occupations. The sector partnerships will incorporate career pathways into its responsibilities in terms of creating a flow of the career path options, analysis of the needs and expectations of business customers, analysis of the existing skills and knowledge of the talent pipeline, and work with education representatives to tap into existing training or create new credentialing or certification options.

Delta Community College represents the Carl Perkins V program in the local area. Delta Community College is an active member of the One-Stop partner group. Partners help job-seekers bridge the gap between adult education and post-secondary education. Perkins review and assist with existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations that LWDB 81 has identified regarding business development and the building of a talent pipeline to meet business needs and expectations.

CTE under Perkins provides students with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners. CTE program information is available for area residents at the one-stop center, including information concerning career pathways and industry stackable credentials. To best serve the client all partners coordinate services, which includes assistance with college tuition, help with obtaining a HiSET, textbook assistance, help with transportation or childcare or other assistance needed in order to succeed in a career pathway and obtain employment. Ultimately, aligning resources across all partners to eliminate duplication.

The Board will continue to align services in the one-stop center such as investments in workforce, education, and economic development through partnerships and collaboration with more entities representing each of these fields. This will ensure job seekers and workers receive the highest quality career services, education, training, and supportive services in order to obtain and retain in-demand employment.

- **Provide a copy of the local supportive service policies and describe how LWDB 81 will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(10)) and include information on the supportive services by each local program as appropriate.**

A copy of the most recent Supportive Service policy found in Attachment 1. This policy may be updated based on actual utilization and unmet needs expressed by system customers.

LWDB 81 will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area by assuring that each partner is aware of available resources and provide customer referrals to appropriate services. There is a priority, for which funds are used. For instance, childcare assistance is available through Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). WIOA may pay for childcare if funding is not available under DCFS.

(See Supportive Services Policy - Attachment 1)

The LWDB 81 depends on many local community-based organizations to assist with supportive services. A resource guide is available to help identify resources that may help a specific need of a participant. The United Way's 211.org is a very comprehensive resource that the front line staff also utilize to assist clients with locating various services. The Board has established a supportive services policy that provides transportation, childcare, and other services on a case-by-case basis if the assistance is required so the participant will be able to participate in education, training, or work-based activities. WIOA supportive services are the final resort if the participant is unable to receive assistance through their personal network or community-based service agencies.

E. Provide a description of how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

- **A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(6)).**

The needs of adult and dislocated job seekers are highly individualized based on their career objectives, educational attainment, barriers to employment, and transferrable skills. Job seekers require a range of services including basic academic remediation, work readiness skills training,

information about local employment, career planning, skills assessment, job search assistance, supportive services such as transportation or child/dependent care support, short or longer-term training, and/or formal education to achieve their goals.

LWDA-81 is focusing on developing programs specific to the long-term unemployed; providing workforce services to support small business growth and entrepreneurship; targeting training more specifically on the needs of large employers and industry clusters; and prioritizing partnerships to enhance services to special populations, such as individuals with disabilities.

LWC provided Ouachita Workforce Board a Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant (DDWG) due to COVID-19. LWDB-81 will provide disaster-relief and humanitarian assistance employment, as well as employment and training services. LWDB will use these funds to help minimize the employment and economic impact due to COVID-19 pandemic. These funds will provide employment, training and supportive services to eligible individuals. Examples of employment and training activities: Clean-up and recovery efforts including demolition, repair, renovation and reconstruction of damaged and destroyed structures, facilities and lands located in Ouachita Parish. Recovery jobs will include sanitation workers, laborer leaders, laborers, sanitation managers, social and human services assistants, community health and outreach workers, warehouse workers, frontline supervisors etc.

The DDWG Supportive services will include personal protective equipment, transportation assistance, work-attire, assistance with books, fees and other necessary items for participant enrolled in training.

WIOA 81 intends to enhance services to adults and dislocated workers overall to this population with particularly acute need through its work to broaden the network of referral partners, and focus on the development of sector-specific strategies and career pathways.

WIOA 81 uses the TABE assessment for individuals interested in training for their basics skills level. The Interest Inventory Assessment, are completed in laworks.net. Skills assessments identify appropriate occupation training.

The local area provides adults and dislocated workers with vocational/educational training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). LWDB 81 offers work-based learning which includes OJT and work experience. Training options focuses around the demand occupations in the local area. Individual training accounts focused on demand sectors. Within the local area, adult education offers programs in the key industry sectors providing a career pathway to post-secondary education or employment. We coordinate on a regional basis with our local community college and universities to meet the needs of job seekers.

LWDB is working along with LWC to implement the Registered Apprenticeship program. LWDB will administer the Registered Apprenticeship to improve the workforce system, as well as to support the emphasis on career pathways. LWDB 81 is in support with LWC that "...the critical balance between serving individuals and employers in a manner that will produce strategies that in the long run are good for both."

A description of how LWDB 81 will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)).

In the unfortunate event that a dislocation occurs in LWDA 81, WIOA team coordinates and supports the rapid response activities. LHRDI provide Rapid Response services to companies and workers impacted by business closures and/or layoff. These services include initial meetings with the employer, workshops for impacted workers and provision of job search and training services. Local area staff works in conjunctions with LHRDI Rapid Response coordinate to assist in the transit to training and reemployment.

LHRDI staff meet with the employer upon notice of the closure or layoff. WIOA services explained during this meeting to the employer. The employer supplies specific information on timelines for loss of employment and assistance in coordinating times and locations for workshops for the impacted workers. This same team provide workshops for individuals who are losing their job. Information on topics such as unemployment insurance benefits, job search assistance, availability of training funds and other community services to help them manage during their time of unemployment. The individuals that attend the workshop are encouraged to access services on-line and to come to the One-Stop for a more in-depth assessment of their employment and training needs.

All Rapid Responses, irrespective of the size of the dislocation event and whether it is a WARN or non-WARN situation, involve (1) an initial business consultation, which is employer focused, and (2) an information session, which is employee focused. LWC works collaboratively with local workforce system partners, the Division of Unemployment Insurance, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure effective, customer-centric Rapid Response provision.

F. Provide a description of how the local area will provide youth activities including:

- **A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (§ 679.560(b)(8)).**

Youth activities are coordinated with the Youth Committee of the Workforce Development Board. The Committee reviews and selects eligible providers for final approval by the Board and meets regularly during the program year to review and assess performance against negotiated goals.

Assessment, guidance and counseling, and work-based learning activities are at the forefront of LWDB 81 high-impact program priorities for Youth. Youth has access to occupational training in accordance with state and local policies.

LWDB 81 has moved toward an emphasis on serving older, out-of-school youth who can benefit from occupational training and/or exposure to employment through Work Based Learning opportunities. The spotlight on disconnected youth has highlighted the importance in connecting this group in particular to the workforce as early as possible.

LWDB 81 assesses the activities of the Youth Program. The Youth Program in the LWDA 81 has almost exclusively focused on out-of-school youth and it has been determined that the focus will remain on strengthening and increasing service delivery to out-of-school youth (16-24 years old) with barriers to employment. There will be an increase in outreach and utilization of more innovative and creative approaches to outreaching to disconnected youth.

Ouachita's Title I Youth Program collaborates closely with Adult Education and Department of Juvenile Justice and often co-enroll and leverage resources to service youth. LWDB 81 has partnered with Ouachita Parish Housing to pilot a program for youth who are aging out of foster care. LWDB 81 is currently work with ARCO, an agency that specialize in serving youth with disabilities. LWDB 81 will continue to recruit and engage partnerships to serve more youth with disabilities. There is a strong partnership with LRS through co-enrollments and leveraging of services. LWDB 81 and the Youth Committee realize that the youth are the future.

LWDB 81 is working in partnership with Delta Community College to capture out-of-school youth in need of a high school education. Primary objectives are for the out-of-school youth to complete requirements for a high school diploma or a HiSET certificate, be placed in an entry-level job leading to a career and/or pursuing a postsecondary education. Classes are three times per week for as long as it takes to complete the program targets.

Participants complete the 20 core competencies using JAG's National Out-of-School Curriculum Modules. The online modules provide an option to blend online and activity-based classroom delivery. Participants will receive credit toward graduation by enrolling in an accredited course. Graduates receive twelve months of follow-up. The follow up period will help with their needs, including: employer marketing, job development and placement, employer and graduate follow-up contact, etc. Eligible participants in the JAG Program shall be 16-22 years of age and must face at least two designated barriers to success that include economic, academic, personal, environmental, or work related barriers.

Ouachita Workforce Board has a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) to engage Out-of-School Youth (OSY) with the Ouachita Parish and Monroe City School Boards to provide opportunities and services for former students who become out of school youth. The School board will seek parental consent or the consent of the student (if the student is over the age of eighteen), to arrange a pre-counseling session between the student, the student's parents and Ouachita Workforce Board. When students exit either school systems, they receive a flyer providing WIOA services.

The HiSET program includes the elements that are critical to providing out-of-school youth and adults with the best opportunity to demonstrate their high school-level proficiency and their readiness for higher education or the workplace.

Ouachita Workforce is working with the Jump Start initiative. Jump Start is Louisiana's innovative career and technical education (CTE) program. Jump Start prepares students to lead productive adult lives capable of continuing their education after high school while earning certifications in high-wage career sectors. Students are required to attain industry-promulgated, industry-valued

credentials in order to graduate with a Career Diploma. Jumpstart 2.0 is an elective path for students pursuing a university-preparatory diploma.

Participants receive academic counseling for selecting and enrolling in a program of study at Delta Community College including degree programs and credited certifications. Participants attend workshops on career exploration, applying to college, labor market opportunities, financial aid and FAFSA. Programming is year-round with rolling admission allowing flexible enrollment for students ready to commit to their future

Outreach efforts for older out-of-school youth includes continued collaboration with partner government agencies, faith and community based organizations, community centers, juvenile justice agencies, and programs that support school drop-outs and juvenile delinquency. The Youth Program is introduced and available to older youth who come into the One-Stop Center.

- **A description of how local areas will meet the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth.**

In the previous years, LWD B81 has meet the minimum 75% of the program expenditures. We will continue to strive to meet the minimum requirement. Each month the Director reviews the expenditure reports to ensure they are in line with the budget. The LWDB 81 has chosen to use the majority of its Title I funds for out-of-school youth services ages 16 to 24, but reserves the right to use up to 10% on in-school youth for special projects approved by the Board. WIOA requires a minimum of 20% of the LWDA 81 Title I Youth funds, minus administrative costs, be on work-based learning:

- Concurrent Academic and Occupational Education
- Summer Jobs
- Work Experiences
- Pre-Apprenticeship Programs
- On-the-Job Training
- Internships and Job Shadowing

Program expenditures on the work based learning program element include wages as well as staffing costs, for the development and management of the work based learning experiences.

LWDB 81 20% priority spending includes:

- Youth wages including Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) tax.
- Staffing costs for time spent identifying potential work based learning opportunities.
- Staffing costs for time spent working with employers to develop the work based learning experience.
- Staffing costs for time spent working with employers to ensure a successful work based learning experience.

- Staffing costs for time spent evaluating the work based learning experience.
- Participant work based learning orientation sessions.
- Required academic education component directly related to the workforce experience.

LWIB 81 is focusing on serving older; out-of-school youth who can benefit from occupational training and/or exposure to employment through work based learning opportunities, as the spotlight on disconnected youth has highlighted the importance in connecting this group in particular to the workforce as early as possible.

G. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment¹ as outlined in the Combined State Plan:

- **Provide information on how priority will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low- income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) (§ 679.560(b)(21)).**

LWDB work to provide services in keeping with the Combined State Plan’s goal to provide employment to individuals with barriers to employment. The Board collaborates with local government and community organizations to identify resources to provide stabilized housing, childcare, domestic violence solutions, and transportation services. We will provide essential skills training to those individuals with barriers to employment.

LWDB 81 will ensure that participants under WIOA individualized career or training services shall constitute a minimum of 51% of adults served meet the priority target groups. This minimum threshold will ensure that the local one-stop is targeting adults in most need of services. Staff receive labor market information during staff training meetings with explanations.

LWDB 81 provide priority access to higher-intensity career services and training to public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, individuals who are deficient in basic skills, individuals with barriers to employment. AJC staff, when using WIOA Adult funds to provide individualized career services, training services, or both, must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority of services are implemented under WIOA, regardless of the amount of funds available provide services in the local area.

• Describe how the local workforce area will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:

¹ The term “individual with barrier to employment” means one or more of the following populations: displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, older individuals, ex-offenders, homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths, youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system, individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers, eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, single parents, including pregnant single women, long-term unemployed individuals, and such other groups as the Governor determines to have barriers to employment (WIOA Sec. 3(24)).

○ **Disaggregating data by race, gender and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.**

Data compiled at the end of every year, give the LWIB a snapshot of those served in the past year.

For example, PY '19 Adults enrolled,

- 42% were male, and 57% were female
- 46% received SNAP benefits
- 49% were low income
- African American/Black 88.16%
- American Indian/Alaskan Native 1.20%
- Asian .50%
- White 10.13%

By receiving this information, the Executive Board review policies to make certain there are no gaps in services. During information and recruitment sessions, every effort is made to ensure access is available to all who are interested.

LWDA-81 will continue to ensure that policies and programs in the local workforce area are accessible, regardless of racial, gender, or socioeconomic background. The One-Stop Operator will provide quarterly reports to partners of the local area which will provide a detailed breakdown of clients by, race/ethnicity, education level, age, gender, basic needs, and job search needs in order to identify gaps in access to workforce and educational services. Where gaps are identified, partners will work to plan and implement solutions.

○ **Developing equity goals in conjunction with the education system and prepare action plans to achieve them.**

In conjunction with the education system LWDB-81 equity goals are: 1. Develop a strong partnership to better connect Ouachita residents to self-sustaining jobs. 2. Fill gaps in workforce development resources and increase service with resources from the education system. 3. Enhance and expand the range of short-term, high-quality training programs offering skill development opportunities leading to industry recognized certifications that meet the needs of local employers.

LWDB will achieve these goals by organized and support business involvement around career pathway programs that are being driven by adult education and community colleges. Strengthen information sharing and coordination of services and resources. Coordinate resources and investments to better align with major parish wide and regional efforts targeted toward the educational and career development.

Continual improvement and monitoring of the equity goals will be the responsibility of the Board. LWDB 81 will focus on improving technology skills for all workers but especially for minorities who are behind the general population in IT skills acquisition.

- **Exposing more high school students, particularly young women and minorities, to careers in science, technology, and engineering and math fields.**

Job fairs have proven to be an effective marketing tool for career pathways. LWDA 81 will continue collaborating with local high schools, Delta Community College, providers, and employers to promote STEM-related careers. The Board will leverage real-time labor market data from Laworks.net to promote these occupations and their high-wage earnings as well as the cost-effective training programs locally available.

LWDB 81 will collaborate with local employers to review employment and skills data to ensure a true reflection of what is in demand. When applicable, LWDA 81 will promote STEM careers through high school extracurricular activities and after school programs that specifically serve minorities and women.

Industry experts and specialists who exhibit the skills and training necessary to teach STEM-related jobs and programs will only be leveraged. LWIA 81 is committed to ensuring diverse populations receive informed career paths and will work to provide continual access for opportunity.

- **Exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to a new career.**

LWDB 81 will work closely with its business service team to develop knowledge-sharing practices, which employers can adopt and implement. The BST will work to recruit new or recent retirees and senior workers from partner firms to serve as mentors for adult students in training for the same or similar occupations as well as support firms in developing mentoring efforts for newly hired workers.

Board members serve as mentors to the students by participating in activities and presenting leadership development. Our Workforce Specialist serves as a job coach to those adults who are place in work-based learning activities. The Specialist help customers navigate any barriers. The workforce specialist constantly contact partners who can assist with supportive services.

The Business Services Team will leverage improved employer and industry information to target particular training as well as insight on major barriers to employment and retention.

- **Providing training to workforce program staff on data-driven approaches to Address equity gaps.**

LWC has developed LMI training as part of the service integration plan. The local staff receives regular trainings on the labor equity gaps, customer demographics and program placement outcomes and how efforts can work to bridge the gaps. The One-Stop Operator's quarterly reports provides insight into which populations served and their outcomes, which will be beneficial to identifying gaps in equity.

- **Enduring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.**

LWDB 81 have one comprehensive One-Stop in Ouachita Parish. LWDB 81 understands the need for ensuring workforce services are strategically located across the region so that access to services are readily available, particularly for clients who have transportation barriers. LWDB 81 comprehensive One-Stop is co-located with all the mandated partners.

In PY2021, LWDB 81 is planning to open an affiliate One-Stop that will be more centrally located, more accessible through public transportation and thus able to better and more directly serve the area's residents and businesses.

Online services to jobseekers, including resume writing guide, unemployment filing, and WIOA application, and a calendar of events for upcoming workshops are available on the website. Partners of LWDB 81 are exploring options to enhance their website and social media in order to have a unified online presence.

H. Provide a description of training policies and activities in the local area, including:

- **How local areas will meet the annual Training Expenditure Requirement (OWD-4-14);**

The LWDB is following current guidance that mandates that 20% of adult and dislocated worker funds from Title I funding be to direct training. LWDB 81 is working to deploy new strategies including enhancing collaboration with the local community college, apprenticeship programs, and other initiatives to ensure that we meet this requirement by providing high value training services for eligible individuals. Workforce Development Board Director's reports expenditure data to the board on a regular basis. Program staff receive a notice if adjustments or modifications are required to meet annual goals.

Local emphasis is placed on collaborating more closely with employers in key industry sectors and working with the Monroe Chamber and other business groups. The collaboration will help support individual to make informed customer choice in the selection of funding occupational training. These activities may also result in the identification of training gaps, which addresses the class-sized projects. LWDB 81 also has invested in on-the-job training programs, which reimburses employers for wages during a new employee's training period.

- **How local areas will encourage the use of work-based learning strategies, including the local area goals for specific work-based learning activities and proposed outcomes related to these activities;**

Work-based learning strategies are essential for young people to acquire work experience, as well as for adults who have limited or outdated work experience. Ouachita Workforce Development Board is required to spend at least 20 % of their contract funding on work-based learning, and youth customers are being linked to work-based learning opportunities based on an employer needs and commitment, and interest among job seekers.

PY19 performance outcomes for work-based learning activities, including work experiences, internships, and on-the-job training, are detailed in this plan. On-the-job (OJT) training is marketed to employers with the understanding that a customized training plan will address their hiring needs; this approach has been successful and will continue. Job-ready candidates interview for placement, and matched with employers that seek specific skill-sets. LWDB 81 has developed strategies around specialized work-based training for priority populations, especially at a time when unemployment is significantly low.

LWDB’s strategies will be:

1. To engage and motivate students in learning by connecting classroom work to students’ personal and career interests
2. To reinforce and improve academic learning (as defined by the content of core academic classes)
3. To engage students in new modes of thought (e.g., higher-order critical thinking and Problem solving) or social learning and communities of practice
4. Develop students’ career/technical skills as a mean to learning
5. To advance students’ social and emotional development toward adulthood, including their identity formation and their sense of self-value
6. Expand students’ social networks and access to opportunities
7. Enhance students’ general workplace competencies, such as communication, teamwork and project planning
8. To enable career exploration through the scope of exposure at the worksite
9. Enhance students’ understanding of particular careers through depth of experience

WIOA work with the Ouachita Parish Sheriff’s Office to implement work-based learning for those currently incarcerated who released date is within six months. Trainings are held in the Ouachita Parish Correctional Center. We are in the process for the business service staff to visit the correctional facility to inform individuals to learn about their workforce needs and to build a relationship. Upon completing training, these individuals will be able to schedule a meeting with employers once released for a chance to be hired.

Our Workforce system places high value on not only preparing clients for the workforce through training and work based learning, but also through providing essential training to help ensure that clients are fully prepared to enter employment opportunities.

- **Provide a copy of the local Individual Training Account Policy and describe how training services outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter, and how LWDB 81 will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (§ 679.560(b)(18));**

LWDB 81 will primarily utilize Individual Training Accounts to assist job seekers with training; however, the LWDB 81 may elect to provide contracted training services for specific industry, sector partnerships, or career pathways per the supply and demand of the local area.

One such use, for example, could be an innovative transitional job-training program with demonstrated capacity to serve participants with multiple barriers to employment. Informed consumer choice ensure using the State’s eligible training provider list, which is available to all participants seeking training, as well as all stakeholders.

Prior to establishing an ITA, the Individual and Case Manager will navigate and leverage all available resources to make a determination that the individual is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources. Individual Training Accounts established with eligible training providers after a participant completes an extensive scholarship application process. The scholarship application process begins the individual’s employment plan. It requires that the individual plan for success in school and the career pathway as demonstrated by completing an extensive assessment process.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) issued pursuant to Ouachita Workforce Development policies, which describes all requirements including all training, are in demand occupations and provided by institutions on the Eligible Training Provider List. The ITA procedures ensure the trainee explores training provider options and state on their application why they have chosen the specific training provider. The local board use the state procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts.

(See ITA Policy - Attachment 2)

- **Provide a copy of the local training provider approval policy and procedures. Describe how LWDB 81 will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.**

LWDB 81 is following LWC OWD’s Policy 2-13.3: WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility to recommend providers for inclusion on the statewide eligible training provider list. The Board adopted LWC policy which ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers.

LWDB staff monitors outcomes of eligible providers by using reports from LWC. Service providers are to be of the highest quality. Contracting decisions is on meeting the needs of the job seekers and employers, as well as cost and quality of service considerations. Board staff will conduct oversight and monitoring of service providers at least annually. The Workforce Board receive the monitoring results.

(See Training Provider Policy - Attachment 3)

I. Describe if the local workforce board will authorize the transfer of WIOA Title IB workforce funds, including the maximum dollar amount and/or percentage that is authorized to be transferred on an annual basis:

- **To transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams.**

The flexibility of WIOA to transfer funds is beneficial and allows LWDB 81 to meet the needs of the community. LWDB will make decisions to transfer dislocated worker funds based on local needs.

Recently, LWDB 81 has seen more low-income individual, especially during the COVID-19. The Board may elect to transfer funds between these two funding streams as allowable. The staff will review utilization for adult and dislocated worker-training funds expenditures monthly. The Board will send a written request to LWC seeking to transfer 50% between dislocated and the adult funding streams.

- **To use funds for incumbent worker training as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).**

Local funds are used whenever a company meet the layoff aversion criteria for incumbent worker training. For example, the business services team may meet with an employer and learn that they have current employees who would benefit from the use of incumbent worker funds. Board policy allows up to 20% of adult and dislocated workers funds for incumbent worker activities.

- **To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).**

Transitional jobs are to demonstrate work habits and attitudes. Potential targets for opportunity would be job seekers who have significant barriers and limited to no work experience. LWDB 81 will engage partners in the development of strategies, frameworks, and models to ensure successful implementation of work-and-learn experiences. The Board recognizes that it has the ability to invest up to 10 % of adult and dislocated worker funding to transitional jobs.

- **To use funds for pay for performance contracts as outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3).**

LWDB 81 will utilize Pay for Performance contracts when there are an insufficient number of eligible training providers. The determination process will include a public comment period for interested providers of at least 30 days. The board will evaluate contracts to make sure contracts are achieving or exceeding expected goals.

A type of performance based contract that a local WDB can be entered with eligible service providers to serve targeted populations for Adult/Dislocated Worker Training Services² and Youth Activities.³

Limitations

- No more than 10% of the total Adult and Dislocated Worker annual allocation will be reserved for the implementation of WIOA Pay-for-Performance contract strategies for Adult and Dislocated Worker training services and 10% of the Youth annual allocation for youth activities.

Cost – plus a percentage contract is not authorized.

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION – LOCAL COMPONENT

The plan must include information on the actions LWDB 81 will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (WIOA Sec. 101(d)(6) and (§ 679.560(b)(17)).

A. Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by LWDB 81 for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)).

- **WIOA Performance Measures**

Performance accountability and data reporting will be aligned to promote the workforce development system that creates a best-in-class regional system, responsive to business and industry.

The goals for the Title I programs are set through the use of a statistical adjustment model. These procedures are in place and the partners consult with their respective state agency contacts and meet to discuss the implications of the performance measures and required targets for service delivery and integration. The Core Partners work cooperatively to report performance outcomes across all programs to advance the goals of improving access and success for all customers. However, currently there is no universal or shared system for partners to communicate performance to customers.

LWDB 81 is measured annually by performance benchmarks that monitor local and statewide outcomes associated with WIOA Programs and services. The Board annually meets or exceeds it-negotiated levels of performance and will strive to achieve designation as a high-performing board. The PY19 Performance Outcomes, as accepted by Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Performance levels for PY 20 has been negotiate as follow:

Annual Performance for PY 20			
WIOA INDICATORS	90% of Goal	Negotiated Level	81
ADULT			
Number Served (Participants)			
Number Exited (Participants)			
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit		75.6	
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit		75.0%	
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit		\$5,050	
Credential Attainment		70.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains		68.0%	
DISLOCATED WORKER			
Number Served (Participants)			
Number Exited (Participants)			
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit		79.0%	
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit		80.0%	
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit		\$8,500	
Credential Attainment		70.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains		75.0%	
YOUTH			
Number Served (Participants)			
Number Exited (Participants)			
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit		70.0%	
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit		59.5%	
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit			
Credential Attainment		76.0%	
Measurable Skill Gains		45.0%	
WAGNER-PEYSER			
Number Served (Participants)			
Number Exited (Participants)			
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit		60.0%	
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit		63.0%	
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit		\$4,600	

Below are the performance levels from PY 2019. LWIA 81 met or exceeded these levels

Annual Performance for PY19			
WIOA INDICATORS	90% of Goal	Negotiated Level	81
ADULT			
Number Served (Participants)			109
Number Exited (Participants)			89
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	58.1%	64.5%	81.6%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	58.0%	64.4%	86.9%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,410	\$4,900	\$5,248
Credential Attainment	57.9%	64.3%	74.5%
Measurable Skill Gains			70.1%
DISLOCATED WORKER			
Number Served (Participants)			22
Number Exited (Participants)			9
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	57.9%	64.3%	85.7%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	60.5%	67.2%	100.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,120	\$6,800	\$8,889
Credential Attainment	63.0%	70.0%	0.0%
Measurable Skill Gains			75.0%
YOUTH			
Number Served (Participants)			144
Number Exited (Participants)			74
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	60.3%	67.0%	73.1%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	60.3%	67.0%	71.4%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit			\$6,304
Credential Attainment	54.2%	60.2%	83.3%
Measurable Skill Gains			55.0%
WAGNER-PEYSER			
Number Served (Participants)			2,703
Number Exited (Participants)			2,349
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	54.9%	61.0%	57.9%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	56.4%	62.7%	62.4%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,230	\$4,700	\$3,738
<u>Number Served (Participants and Reportable Individuals): Individuals s</u>			
<u>Number Exited (Participants): Served Individuals who exited between</u>			
<u>04/01/2019 and 03/31/2020</u>			
<u>Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit: Rate of employment for</u>			
<u>exitors between 07/01/2018 and 06/30/2019</u>			
<u>Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit: Rate of employment for</u>			
<u>exitors between 07/01/2018 and 12/31/2018</u>			
<u>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit: Median earnings by exitors</u>			
<u>between 07/01/2018 and 06/30/2019</u>			
<u>Credential Attainment Rate: Rate of credentials attained by exitors</u>			
<u>between 07/01/2018 and 12/31/2018</u>			
<u>Measurable Skill Gains: Rate of measurable skill gains between</u>			
<u>07/01/2019 and 06/30/2020</u>			

- **Additional State Performance Measures**

LWDB 81 will comply with the new Measurable Skill Gains for Adults and Dislocated Workers and any additional state performance measures.

B. Provide a description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to LWDB 81 and program administrators as appropriate.

Each partner program evaluates the services and outcomes with board staff as part of the service integration process. After service delivery strategies are successful, they expand and replicate them for additional customers and cross-train staff on their implementation.

- **What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment?**

The role of the LWDB is to develop and promote policies, and recommends innovative workforce support for the development of an effective and cohesive workforce development system to maximize return on investment for all stakeholders.

The LWDB develops and maintains strategic and strong relationships with business organizations, the chamber of commerce, labor and trade associations, education providers, and others to build a cohesive regional workforce development system to meet the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers.

Some of the strategies that Ouachita WDB will expand on based on return on investment for employers and job seekers include:

- Monroe Chamber of Commerce, LWDB 81 along with post-secondary schools and K-12 in the area, held a Manufacturing Day for juniors and seniors in high school. This event was a success and will continue annually with some modifications due to COVID-19.
- LWDB 81 holds hiring events on a monthly basis in the American Job Center. Various employers in all sectors are included in these events. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the hiring events are held virtual.
- Monroe Chamber of Commerce and LWDB-81 hold an annual job fair with at least 45 employers with over 450 jobseekers in attendance.
- Local Workforce Area 81's partners provide workshops, post job openings, conduct employee screening and referral, workforce training, work-based training, tax credit information, business location advice, and various employer services.
- Other business services provided by Local Workforce Area 81 staff include free use of conference rooms for meetings and/or recruitment activities such as interviewing and taking applications/resumes.
- LWDB will expand on their marketing and outreach strategies. We promote Workforce Wednesday radio stations. This will include a list of job openings, upcoming events, supportive services and training services provided at the American Job Center.

- Transportation is more difficult to coordinate in rural Ouachita Parish. LWDB 81 will continue to collaborate with transportation providers.

- **What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment?**

One-Stop Partners review service delivery strategies at the meetings. Partners agree to discontinue or revamp strategies that is not working in order to address the needs of the customers entering the American Job Center. The One-Stop operator will report to the Board at each LWIB meeting. Currently, we do not have any service delivery strategies to eliminate.

- **What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment?**

Engagement with employers will include emerging data on the return-on-investment (ROI) for employers in actively skilling-up grading employees and working in partnership with local colleges, universities, and training programs. Employers have often treated expenditures on education and training as employee benefits, not as an integral part of profitability enhancement and increased productivity. The Board will actively explore research and best practices to share with local employers.

A new strategy LWDB 81 is working to implement is Essential Skill workshop within the American Job Center. The workshop will be a “pilot” program. The goal is to provide the job seeker a “National Career Readiness Certificate”. Topics will include appearance, communication, teamwork, problem solving and critical thinking, professionalism manners, punctuality and confidence/attitude.

LWDB 81 partnership with Delta Community College and their Reboot Your Career-training program will help address regional educational and training needs. The Reboot Your Career program support workers who may be unemployed due to COVID-19. Workers are re-trained for available jobs on high wage career pathways. Also, WDB 81 will expand IT and basic computer skills training for all customers, given the presence of IT activities.

- **Prioritizing program funding based on performance and return-on investment (ROI) analysis performed by the Board.**

The LWDB has a history in working with local secondary and post-secondary partners. Post-Secondary partnerships have been ongoing for years, especially around ways to adopt and create training programs to meet the needs of employers. Special emphasis is placed on apprenticeships

and other work-based learning programs. LDCC in each parish have proven to be invaluable partners when it comes to designing programs that meet the in-demand job needs of local employers.

As short-term training continues to become a key piece of WIOA services, the work with post-secondary training institutions will continue to grow, as programs must be efficient, highly structured and targeted to the needs of employers. The Regional Plan portion of this document describes partnerships.

○ **What return on investment and qualitative outcome data for various education and Training programs will be collected to identify barriers to enrollments?**

LWDB 81 will work to collect data that is more extensive on the industries and occupations that yields greatest success in job placement, data on wages at placement, and information on the specific occupational training programs that are resulting in placement into well-paying jobs. Louisiana Delta Community College (LDCC) in the area will collaborate with industry to ensure that educational training programs align with the needs of employers, and that students (especially area Youth) are aware of the in-demand sectors and industries in the region. The LWDB 81 intends to expand and sustain some efforts by identifying successes and challenges experienced by community college partners as well as industry partners.

Some key strategies that have shown promise, many with low investment and high ROI, which will be pursued include:

- Facilitating tours to manufacturing facilities for groups of students in high schools and expanding methods of introducing students to the opportunities and technical aspects of manufacturing. Typically, such tours have been exclusively for CTE students. LWDB 81 will explore strategies that expand tours to more employers, while supporting other methods of educating youth about the industry such as leveraging “how it’s made” videos into classrooms.
- Educating employers on the benefits of apprenticeship programs (whether formally registered or other apprenticeship-like training options that can be implemented).
- Promoting to employers a range of work-based learning and training methods in conjunction with education/training, which can incentivize workers and build career pathways.

○ **What are the most cost-effective approaches to taking down those barriers or helping residents overcome them?**

LWDB 81 will better align and integrate partners program and services to address educational and training needs. We will:

1. Address transportation and child care issues
2. Address basic skills deficiencies by obtaining additional tutoring services

3. Help the customer with finding the appropriate partner that provide food, shelter, healthcare and other basic needs

A need for improved access to transportation. Too many workers lack reliable transportation to get to good jobs that are available. This is a problem both for individuals but also with the public transportation infrastructure.

- A need for improved access to technology including the presence of major gaps in high-bandwidth internet access within the rural area of Ouachita Parish and lack computer skills for many workers.
- The access to technology barrier to workers in terms of applying for jobs (almost all job applications are now online) as well as for succeeding workplaces in which IT and computer skills are ever more required.

CHAPTER 6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES – LOCAL COMPONENT

This section includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Sec. 121 (c)(2)(iv)).

A. Fiscal Management

- **Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) (§ 679.560(b)(14)).**

The fiscal agent for Local Workforce Area 81, Ouachita Parish, as designated by the chief elected official is Ouachita Parish Police Jury, P.O. Box 3307, Monroe, Louisiana 71210, 318-327-1340.

- **Provide a copy of the local procurement policies and procedures and describe the competitive procurement process that will be used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (§ 679.560(b)(15)).**

LWDB develop and approved a Request for Proposal (RFP). A legal ad placed in the local newspapers, with instructions on where to obtain and submit the RFP. After the deadline of submitting an application/grant for funds has passed, a committee involving members for the WIOA and other community members are gathered and each submission is read and scored. A recommendation is made to the Executive Committee for a vote. A recommendation is given to the LWDB for a final vote. The community members consist of individuals who do not have an interest in receiving funds.

(See Procurement Policy - Attachment 4)

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

- **Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (§ 679.560(b)(5)(iii)).**

Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) are fulfilled through policies and procedures established by DOL and LWC. The one-stop complies with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The local Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer provides oversight for implementing, maintaining and monitoring WIOA Section 188 Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity Regulations.

The EO Coordinator provides EO training to staff. Staff training includes information about how to support the needs of customers and peers with disabilities. In overseeing the one-stop - center, the operator will be responsible for working with the EO Coordinator to ensure continued compliance with applicable laws relating to programmatic and physical accessibility. Accessible computers, adjustable desks, and TTY phone are available to all staff and customers. Additionally, information is provided to staff and customers on the process to file ADA grievances.

The American Job Center Accessibility Compliance Checklist (Facility Accessibility Survey) and Contractor/Service Provider (Self-Evaluation Tool) provided by the LWC Office of Equal Opportunity Monitoring and Compliance are completed by the Equal Opportunity Officer annually to ensure that clients with disabilities have uninhibited access to services and are appropriately accommodated to meet their needs. The survey and evaluation tool address and answer the questions on whether facilities are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals with disabilities.

They are used to determine if WIOA programs and services are accessible and whether there are policies and procedures in place that address areas such as accessible parking, doors and doorways, signage, request for reasonable accommodation and auxiliary aids, wheelchair accessibility, TTY services, EO Posters, sign language interpreter services, staff acknowledgement of EO/Non-discriminatory policies and procedures.

The availability of assistive technology and other resources for individuals with disabilities is assessed as part of the survey and evaluation tool, evaluating the availability of items such as large screen monitors, trackball mouse, scanning/reading software, enlarged keyboards, web page reading software, adjustable keyboard trays, alternative formatted materials (Large print, Braille). Inventory reviewed is part of the assessment to assure the availability of the required assistive technology and alternative sources at the American Job Center.

LWDB 81 partners have updated the Memorandum of Understanding, which also addresses all ADA and WIOA Section 188 requirements for the partners. The one-stop certification process will ensure that the center is accessible by all, offering adequate parking, necessary equipment for persons with disabilities, and adequately connecting English Language Learning individuals with appropriate translation services.

The EO Coordinator also does a review of EO Compliance by WIOA Service providers in the course of monitoring reviews each year. Providers must have proper EO signage in place, and their facilities must be accessible to individuals with disabilities following ADA guidelines. They must also be able to demonstrate how they are able to provide services to people with disabilities or those who need translation or interpretation services. The EO Coordinator also reviews the availability of assistive technology at the one stop center.

Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements (as applicable) which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop system, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities (§679.560(b)(13)). This may include cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

See Attached Cooperative Agreement

Every three years the AJC must be in compliance for re-certification standards. If the center is not in compliance, a Corrective Action plan is required and a follow-up monitoring visit. The Center must begin immediate corrective action to achieve compliance, depending on the nature of the finding. Per federal law, the local workforce board must appoint a local Equal Opportunity Officer who is responsible for ensuring local WIOA Section 188 compliance. Local Equal Opportunity Officers are responsible for informing senior staff of applicable federal regulations and ensuring all programs and activities are in compliance. Additionally, local Equal Opportunity Officers collect and resolve local grievances and complaints as needed. They also serve as liaisons with the state's Title I-B Equal Opportunity Officer and USDOL's Civil Rights Center to remain current on regulatory updates and guidance. They are then responsible for circulating new information.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

- **Describe the process used by LWDB 81, consistent with WIOA Sec. 108(d), to provide a 30day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations (§ 679.560(b)(19)).**

In accordance with Section 108 (d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on October 3, 2020 the local plan will be available for public comment for 30 days. Through a

Legal Notice with the News Star. The plan was emailed to members of the Local Workforce Development Board Area 81. This membership includes representatives of business, labor and education.

- **Provide a summary of the public comments received and how the CEO, partners and LWDB 81 addressed this information in the final plan.**

Prior to submission of the Local Plan, the WDB makes copies available to the public through the Parish's Public Notice process. All Ouachita Workforce Development Board members received a copy of the plan for comments.

Members of the Board and the public, including CEO, representatives of business and labor organizations were allowed to submit comments on the proposed local plan to the Board no later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date on which the proposed plan was made available.

Those wishing to make comment can do so in writing to Doretha Bennett, Executive Director of Workforce Development Board 81 at 24 Accent Drive Suite 151, Monroe, Louisiana 71202. LWDB members will receive comments via email. The replies to comments and questions will be on Ouachita Parish Police Jury website.

The Board adopted the plan on November 5, 2020.

There were no public comments. Partners advised the LWDB and Chief Elected Officials of their support of the plan. The Final Plan submitted to LWC for their review and approval.

Provide information regarding the regional and local plan modification procedures.

If modification to the plan is required by Louisiana Workforce Commission, LWDB will modify the plan following these procedures:

- The plan summary modification review from LWC will be forward to the LWDB for review.
- All applicable corrections from LWDB will be made to the plan.
- A Board meeting will be scheduled so the modified plan can be approved by LWDB.
- Once the modified plan is approved by the LWDB a publication Ad will be placed in newspaper and notice on website for public comments for 30-days. Any comments received we will follow the above answer about public comments.
- After the 30-days the modified plan will be finalized and submitted to LWC.

