

CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

This chapter provides an overview of all the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs). LWIAs must incorporate key documents into the plan that describe the one-stop delivery system and the services that are provided by the workforce partners. LWIAs are required to provide information and analysis regarding the challenges and opportunities that are associated with the local operating system and policies.

- A. Coordination of Planning Requirements: The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan. As part of this plan, the LWIA will complete a Service Integration Self-Assessment of its progress on service integration. A copy of the documentation associated with the self-assessment process will be submitted as an appendix to this plan. Additionally, this plan must include the following statements in this chapter:
1. *The Local Workforce Innovation Area 14 **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.*
 2. *The Local Workforce Innovation Area 14 **Service Integration Action Plan** provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Illinois Service Integration Policy (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 13). The Service Integration Action Plan, any subsequent modifications and the results of the Service Integration Self-Assessment are incorporated by reference into this plan.*

C. Describe how the use of technology and other alternative means of service delivery in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:

1. 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)).

Intake and case management systems continue to be state-based so the ability to integrate these processes are limited. Workshops are now virtually delivered providing access throughout the region. This change in the delivery structure has expanded the opportunity to share information Department of Corrections facilities in Western Illinois.

A website has been developed that will increase access to services by providing information on all available workforce services throughout the service area provided by partners located in the One Stop as well as those located off-site. All partners have access to a common referral form to ease the movement of customers between partners and allows partners to track outcomes for the customer and providers. The referral form allows certain basic customer information to be shared between partners lessening the amount of time it will take a customer to access additional partner programs and services. All partners to the MOU list the steps to access their programs and services.

2. How the local area is using multiple methods to provide orientations for customers, including but not limited to, virtual and asynchronous orientations.

In person orientations continue to be the primary way to deliver program orientations. Customer orientations may now be delivered virtually.

Adult Education programs provide orientations for all new students to include information on program services, WIOA partner services, Reading, Math, and English Language assessments, and completion of enrollment forms.

Some partners, due to lingering covid guidelines are not providing orientations for customers. They will resume partner orientations both in-person and virtual orientations.

3. How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system through the use of technology and other means, such as online meeting software and mobile workforce centers. (§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).

The WIB utilized General Revenue Funds awarded in PY23 to purchase items for rural counties to establish resource room services. This grant was also used to expand the resource room services by offering employment-related services via workshops and one-on-one services throughout the Galesburg area community.

D. Describe how the Local Board will support the strategies identified in the WIOA State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of the following (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

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

As the current partners continue to meet on a regular basis, an agenda item at the meetings will be to discuss if any of the current partner agencies are currently working with new partners or if any new agency/partner has been identified. If additional potential partners are identified, they will be invited to participate in the partner meetings. Only by all partners helping in identifying potentially new partners, will the area be able to expand services to all individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment.

The WIB will work to expand access to employment training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment. Specifically, the WIB Executive Committee will work with the One-Stop Operator to ensure core programs are referring customers as appropriate and that priority is given to eligible individuals with barriers to employment, such as those who are low income, basic skills deficient, and veterans. Referrals among One-Stop Partners which provide general information regarding partner programs, services, benefits, and resources will be facilitated by the One Stop Operator and will include other new partners as appropriate to assist in meeting the customer's needs and assessment.

Specific examples of expanding services include:

- Adult Education programs provide Integrated Education and Training programs (ICAPS) enabling adults to obtain high school equivalency and increased English language skills, while obtaining job skills and credentials in a locally in-demand occupation. Additional employment opportunities for adult learners include paid work experience with local employers for through the workforce development system for eligible students.
 - Two Rivers Regional Council and Western Illinois Regional Council use CSBG funds for short-term vocational training in high growth areas.
 - IDES offers RESEA workshops virtually on a weekly basis.
2. Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their State of Illinois High School Diploma and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credentials and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;

The upscaling of remote service options has also made GED and post-secondary training more accessible to individuals needing to improve basic and English language skills. Remote presentations via Zoom and other remote communication methods are now being used to keep Adults and language learners informed of employment options and advanced educational opportunities.

Spoon River College is dedicated to its Career and Technical Education and Adult Education programs working closely together to continue to build strong Integrated Education Programs. Students will be working to obtain their State of Illinois High School Diploma while sharpening basic and English language skills, as necessary.

The Regional Office of Education #33 and Smithfield are collaborating to serve adults who are English language learners to acquire relevant language skills and knowledge focusing on Smithfield job performance enhancement. This IET model class takes place in a Smithfield company training room.

The Adult Volunteer Literacy program oversees this class; adult students who participate are taught by a Smithfield trainer and volunteer tutors about Smithfield job related workforce skills such as communication skills between co-workers and supervisors, safety, hygiene, and employee handbook usage.

John Wood Community College's Adult Education program offers bridge classes in manufacturing and healthcare which allow adult learners to gain career information, industry knowledge and skills, and earn certifications or credentials in these high demand employment areas. This is done while improving basic reading, math, and English skills, and earning a high school equivalency. The program provides Integrated Education and Training programs that will enable students to earn credentials in Logistics, Truck Driver Training, and CNA while obtaining their State of Illinois High School Diploma. The college partners with workforce programs, employers, and other LWIA partners to provide support services for students in these programs.

Carl Sandburg College is working through collaborative efforts between the community colleges, K-12 providers, and community service agencies to establish pathways for career development and education. Working in conjunction with Adult Education providers under ICCB's Adult Education Strategic Plan, community colleges afford opportunities for career development and credit attainment. Through Bridge programs and ICAPS, students gain the knowledge required to simultaneously achieve a high school equivalency diploma and an industry credential.

3. How the core programs in the local area will leverage their business services to provide more holistic support to employers;

The Quincy Business Service Team meets regularly to coordinate and strategize successful business engagement. Employer visits are recorded in share point to assure current information is available to all members of the Team. Through the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant the Team has expanded to include Economic Development Entities and Chambers of Commerce. Business services Teams are being formed in Galesburg and Macomb. Information for all business services are posted on the WIB website for ease of access.

4. Increasing the awareness of the services the workforce development system offers to both individuals and employers in the local area;

WIOA Partners have supported a website providing job seekers with access to information on all programs, the ability to submit an inquiry via the website and increased social media. The WIB website contains similar information for business customers

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

John Wood Community College:

John Wood Community College recognizes that students may acquire knowledge and competencies through activities and experiences outside of John Wood's educational offerings. Because each student has their own life experiences, all assessments for academic Credit for Prior Learning are evaluated individually to ensure a student's specialties are compared to other students' experiences.

A student seeking these credits must be fully admitted to the program in which the credit is being sought. A minimum of twenty-five percent of a certificate and fifty percent of a degree must be earned at the College. Students with military credit for previous experience may exceed this policy. Students should be aware that transferability of credit awarded through these criteria is not guaranteed and is subject to review by other institutions of higher education.

Such types of credit may include:

1. Military training credit - credit for military service, both active and reserve, based on recommendations of the American Council on Education. Subject on a case-by-case review taking in to account current educational goals. Student must present a copy of DD 214 (Separation from Military Service) or Joint Services transcript or other proof deemed to be acceptable by the Registrar. Additional information located at www.jwcc.edu/military.
2. Standardized tests such as CLEP (College-Level Examination Program), DANTES (Defense Activity for Nontraditional Educational Support), AP (Advanced Placement), and IB (International Baccalaureate) - A per credit hour fee will be charged for each unit of credit awarded. Students taking the CLEP exams must pay the CLEP testing fee to the College Board and an administration fee to JWCC. Students should expect to spend approximately two hours at JWCC for registration and the exam. Arrangements for CLEP testing are made through the College Board website (www.collegeboard.com). For additional CLEP information contact the JWCC Admission Office.
3. College examinations such as institutional approved proficiency tests and performances. Credit by examination is not permitted for a course when a student already has acceptable college credit for a more advanced course in the same area.
4. Published guides and other nationally recognized credentials such as ACE (American Council on Education) approved coursework, state and federal licensure that align with college program curriculum, and industry recognized certifications.
5. Portfolio assessment by subject matter expert in conjunction with appropriate academic administrator that demonstrate course equivalency. Application for Assessment should be submitted a minimum of four weeks prior to the start of semester. This ensures sufficient time for a portfolio be reviewed by personnel, licensure to be reviewed, etc. Applications will normally be assessed within 20 working days with results communicated to the student.

Students seeking credit through proficiency examination or demonstration should first visit with their academic advisor. The student and advisor will work together to contact the appropriate faculty member or academic administrator to determine if such mechanism exists for the course requested. If so, the student will initiate the process with the advisor as outlined on college forms. How targeted marketing will be used to reach various 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, as well as younger jobseekers that do not yet have a plan for a post-high school career.

Other sources deemed appropriate by the Vice President of Instruction in conjunction with the Registrar.

Carl Sandburg College:

Carl Sandburg College has a Prior Learning Assessment process where methods of communication are laid out. Most effective communication methods include one-on-one communication with the prospective or current students. Carl Sandburg integrates Prior Learning Assessment messaging in recruitment and individual academic planning. PLA is discussed with students that are entering the college and will be communicated through program brochures.

Spoon River College:

Spoon River College students with a variety of experience may develop a portfolio of professional experiences in order to apply for course credit. This portfolio is a collection of samples of previous work which would document learning. This portfolio is then submitted for evaluation. This portfolio must indicate that the student has met all objectives of the course in order to receive credit. This determination will be made by the faculty member responsible for the course.

Approved credit through this process will be posted to the student's transcript after a minimum of fifteen (15) credit hours toward a degree have been earned at the college. Twenty-five percent of the required credits must be completed prior to awarding credit for prior learning to certificate seeking students. Spoon River College will continue to work towards determining the most effective marketing methods for informing students of these opportunities of prior learning assessments.

6. How targeted marketing will be used to reach various 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, as well as younger jobseekers that do not yet have a plan for a post-high school career;

Throughout the Local Workforce Area vocational systems, community colleges, economic development and workforce staff have worked together to offer opportunities for youth to experience the many career opportunities in a key business sectors such as manufacturing, TDL and health care. Publicity surrounding these events bring awareness not only to students but to parents.

Area vocational systems in partnership with Community colleges, U of I Extension, Economic development entities and other have offered Welcome to the Real World and Career Awareness events for junior high school students. Through a General Revenue Fund Grant, the WIB provided support for 8th grade Career Awareness Events throughout the 9 county region.

Adult Education programs market Bridge and ICAPS classes to enrolled students as well as underemployed workers without a high school diploma and English language learners. This provides the opportunity to receive job training concurrently with earning a State of Illinois High School diploma, improving English skills, and earning industry recognized credentials.

Carl Sandburg College uses digital advertisements to target specific segments of the labor market. By using vendors who can geofence and use behavioral traits to target individuals, Sandburg is able to advertise various programs. Each advertisement is program specific in order to clearly define markets. The College uses past demographic and economic data to identify both locations and segments.

John Wood Community Colleges uses digital and targeted marketing advertising in partnership with an outside vendor to market specific campaigns through identifiable demographics, behaviors, goals, call to action and labor force objectives.

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

Each member of the Workforce Innovation Board (WIB) brings an area of expertise and shares that knowledge with all members of the Board. This shared information provides an opportunity for the development of career pathways in both program design and work- based learning experiences. The WIB has promoted career pathways through sector presentations at its quarterly meetings. The WIB will continue to spearhead initiatives that bring together employers and training providers, working closely with the community colleges to secure support for short and long-term training programs along career pathways that meet the region's expressed goals.

Co-enrollment, though not a new concept, will be addressed in a different manner under WIOA. A customer of a partner agency will now be considered a common customer as each partner agency is more aware of customers being served by other partner agencies. Through WIOA, partner agencies will share information through the referral process and case management of co-enrolled customers. This will minimize the redundancy of a customer working with multiple agencies as well as leveraging the efficiencies created by a stronger alignment of system resources. A new shared assessment form is in the final development phase that will be available on the new partner website at www.westernillinoiswioapartners.org/.

John Wood Community College career pathways have been developed in multiple CTE programs. Being part of three Department of Labor TAACCCT grants helped develop many of those career pathways. One example is a program with Western High school. Students in their junior year begin our basic welding program. At the completion of their senior year, they have earned the Basic Welding certificate which ladders into the Industrial Welding certificate. Another example is Southeastern High School. Students in their Junior and senior years attend JWCC on Thursday to earn their Basic Welding certificate. Currently the college is in the process of doing similar programs with the CTE programs.

Carl Sandburg College began reworking curriculum in 2017 to first, and foremost, address industry needs, but to also develop curriculum with multiple entry and exit points that can be started during high school. The ICT curriculum has been approved by ICCB and became available beginning the Fall of 2019. Students may begin this curriculum during high school with courses from the Computer Support Associate Certificate. Currently Galesburg Area Vocational Center (GAVC) offers 12 of the 15 credit hours over the course of one academic year. This certificate builds through a total of 5 certificates which can be completed in 4 semesters. Welding, CNC I, CNC II, and Automotive are other programs that follow similar plans.

Adult Education Career Pathways Bridge classes introduces students to a variety of career pathways leading to sustainable employment or post-secondary training.

8. 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)).

John Wood Community College's Adult Education program offers bridge and ICAPS classes in manufacturing, logistics, and Healthcare that pave the way to transition into post-secondary and industry recognized credentials. The college dual credit coordinator works closely with CTE Administration and faculty to identify CTE dual credit opportunities. Students learn about PLA during the admission process. Students work with their advisor as well as the CTE staff and faculty to determine which PLA are relevant. JWCC Marketing department uses various forms of marketing to reach all segments of the labor force. We work closely with area high schools and vocational centers to develop career pathways, offering industry-recognized credentials such as MSSC certifications, AWS, OSHA and NIMS.

Spoon River College is dedicated to its Career and Technical Education and Adult Education programs working closely together to continue to build strong Integrated Education Programs. Students will be working to obtain their GED while sharpening basic skills and English fluency as necessary. Spoon River College students with a variety of experience may develop a portfolio of professional experiences in order to apply for course credit. This portfolio is a collection of samples of previous work which would document learning. This portfolio is then submitted for evaluation. This portfolio must indicate that the student has met all objectives of the course in order to receive credit. This determination will be made by the faculty member responsible for the course. Approved credit through this process will be posted to the student's transcript after a minimum of fifteen (15) credit hours toward a degree have been earned at the college. Twenty-five percent of the required credits must be completed prior to awarding credit for prior learning to certificate seeking students. Spoon River College will continue to work towards determining the most effective marketing methods for informing students of these opportunities of prior learning assessments.

Carl Sandburg College presents a career fair each year for high school students. The fair gives student the opportunity to learn about career opportunities at the College as well as opportunities in apprenticeship training. The dual credit coordinator and staff at Sandburg actively promote CTE opportunities to area students. They also work closely with high school personnel to enhance and increase the educational opportunities available for high school students. The Sandburg Marketing Department promotes educational opportunities to students. Included in these efforts are opportunities for certificates as well as longer term programs.

E. Describe how local strategies will be coordinated with state (including the Illinois' WIOA State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities, including a description of the following:

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

Workforce Offices of Western Illinois will provide Adult and Dislocated Worker services which will include job search assistance, referral to other appropriate agencies and services, comprehensive assessments and development of individual employment plans, career planning, job readiness training, occupational skills training, (up to a maximum of two years and in a growth occupation that allow workers to earn a self-sufficient wage), on-the-job training, internships, apprenticeship programs, support services during training and follow up services.

Anyone enrolled in Workforce Services must be a citizen of or authorized to work in the United States and registered with Selective Service, if male, over 18 years of age. Applications for workforce services must be signed by a parent or guardian for anyone under the age of 18. Eligibility for Adult services is based on family income. Priority for individualized career services and training service shall be given to Veterans or qualifying spouses and individuals who are recipients of public assistance, or other low-income individuals or Individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Dislocated workers are individuals who: have been laid off or terminated due to plant closure, mass layoff or are unemployed through no fault of their own. Self-employed individuals and displaced homemakers may also be eligible, including spouses of active military forced to quit a job due to re-stationing of military spouse. Temporary layoffs do not qualify; the job loss must be permanent. The program is designed to train/retrain dislocated workers and assist in their transition to new employment.

Services for youth include work experience, GED preparation, career technical education; financial literacy education; labor market and employment information about in – demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area; activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training; tutoring; study skills training; leadership development opportunities; adult mentoring; comprehensive guidance and counseling, supportive services such as transportation reimbursement or bus passes, childcare assistance, career exploration, and internships to prepare them for the world of work; and, on-the-job training. The program may also assist eligible students with dual credit courses.

Out-of-school youth must be aged 17-24, not attending any school, and meet one or more additional conditions, which could include: School dropout; within the age of compulsory attendance but has not attended for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter; holds a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent and is low-income and is basic skills deficient or an English language learner; subject to the juvenile or adult justice system; homeless, runaway, in foster care or aged out of the foster care system, eligible for assistance under Section 477, Social Security Act, or in out-of-home placement; pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; low income person who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

In-school youth must be aged 17-21, attending school, low income, which may include free & reduced lunch and/or food stamp recipients, and meet one or more additional conditions, which could include: Basic skills deficient; English language learner; an offender; homeless; runaway; in foster care or aged out of the foster care system; pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; individuals who require additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

Communication and service methods have been expanded to include the use of remote communication, training and the acquisition of digital signatures to enable eligibility determinations and the continued advancement of high school and post high school training.

2. Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must

include how the Local Board 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)).

John Wood Community College provides an Adult Education/GED class two afternoons each week in the One Stop. Workforce staff provide information on program services each month at new student orientation sessions throughout the district. IDES presents an eight-week Employment 101 training which focused on job search skills and career preparation. The One Stop calendar of workshops and events is provided to all students and program brochures for WIOA partner agencies are available in the classrooms. Staff participates in WIOA partner frontline staff training and service integration meetings to keep current on partner services in order to provide effective referrals for students. The One Stop calendar of workshops and events is provided to all students and program brochures for WIOA partner agencies are available in the classrooms. WIOA partners, CTE staff, and representatives from local social service agencies are members of the Area Planning Council.

ROE#33 Adult Education and literacy program periodically invites WIOA representatives to classrooms. Students are encouraged to apply for WIOA services, and the ROE#33 Transition Specialist collaborate with WIOA agent to help with the application process. Through monthly LWIA meetings and Area Planning Council meetings, ROE#33 Adult Education coordinator, Transition Specialist, CTE director and WIOA representatives meet to discuss support strategies and improving partnership.

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

Wagner-Peyser (WP) has been involved in multiple cross trainings with other partners in the workforce system. These will occur on a continuous basis. Additionally, WP staff work closely with other workforce partners to refer clients to needed services and to avoid duplication of services. Wagner-Peyser staff are currently coordinating with the Unemployment Insurance Program on the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) grant through the Department of Labor. The Unemployment Insurance Program profiles the clients monthly and provides the list to the Wagner-Peyser staff. Wagner-Peyser, in turn, sets up a meeting with these clients and provides them information and services to assist in their attempts to find gainful employment. Any barriers that arise during these assessments are discussed with the clients being referred to appropriate partner services and/or workshops. Wagner-Peyser staff also review job seeker resumes in Illinois Job Link, make appropriate job referrals and schedule interviews for job seekers with local employers who are attending our monthly hiring events. Wagner-Peyser staff also review the recent Illinois JobLink registrations and call the claimants to inform them of available partner services and assist them in further updates of their resume to enhance the possibility of success in obtaining employment before their Unemployment benefits are exhausted

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

The Illinois DHS-Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is the State's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation. In this process we work with all regional employers, all levels of education and all educational institutions within the Region, and independent living opportunities.

Transition services are available for all secondary students with disabilities. Services facilitate and support the movement of high school students into adult life activities, primarily and ultimately employment. DRS will link students with community services provided by other agencies. Transition is a process involving a partnership with individuals, school services, post school services and local communities that results in maximum levels of employment, integration and community participation.

As part of its continuum of coordinated transition services for youth with disabilities, DRS offers a wide range of services to students at local high schools through the Secondary Transition Experience Program (STEP). STEP is a training/placement program to help students with disabilities prepare for employment and community participation during and after high school. Students learn to become productive, self-sufficient adults through a variety of STEP experiences. These experiences include assisting students in development of desirable work habits and realistic career goals. Students participate in pre-vocational classroom learning. Some students begin with on campus work experiences. Most students participate in paid work experiences. Some of the students receive specialized job coach assistance. Throughout the year, some students participate in mock interviews with DRS staff and employers. Students are offered one-to-one interviews and receive individualized feedback on how they presented and responded to the interview situation. Students are also offered the opportunity to participate in guidance and career counseling and self-advocacy.

During the month of October, DRS works with individual employers to bring Disability Mentoring Day experiences to persons with disabilities. Participants can be secondary school students or adults. Participants are offered the opportunity to tour job sites, meet with employers, and get hands-on experiences in the world of work.

DRS offers on-the-job evaluation (OJE) and on-the-job training (OJT) in cooperation with employers throughout the Region. OJE is utilized to evaluate whether a customer can perform the work duties within a specific job title in which they have an interest. The length of the evaluation is dependent on the type of position and the abilities and strengths/weaknesses of the individual. OJT is utilized to train individuals who possess the ability to perform the work duties associated with a job they have chosen. Individuals are offered the opportunity to become acclimated to the job and to become proficient at their tasks. Timeframes vary depending on the individual job. DRS and employers work cooperatively to monitor training and evaluate performance.

Throughout the Region, DRS works with all academic institutions to offer training opportunities in certificate programs, two-year technical programs, and all levels of academic degrees. Technologies and a variety of supports are available to students with disabilities to attend and successfully complete programs.

Many persons with disabilities benefit from job placement assistance. DRS staff work with individuals to explore careers, especially those with promising growth opportunities in the Region. Pre-placement work with individuals includes resume development and interview skills. DRS engages with specialized community providers to purchase placement, job coaching and supported employment opportunities for some individuals. For all individuals, all necessary supports are available to guide the individual along a successful path to choose, get and keep employment of their choice.

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

John Wood Community College's Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) for the 21st Century Act ensures all students can benefit from high-quality CTE programs that prepare them for high-skill, high-wage employment. The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act provides federal support to state and local secondary and postsecondary education CTE programs that provide students the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to succeed in the today's competitive marketplace. We work with our advisory committees as well as conduct regular visits to our industry partners to identify the innovative CTE programs that provides education and skills required for the workforce. The advisory committees and these visits help identify barriers to employment that they have seen. We then implement changes to our programs and career service activities to reduce those barriers. Where appropriate, we incorporate work-based learning opportunities. We incorporate general skills that are necessary for success in the labor market, including the integration of academic knowledge and technical skills applied to the workplace, interpersonal, analytical and organizational skills, and personal qualities that enable individuals to interact effectively with others.

Transportation and other appropriate supportive services provide by Perkins Student Support Services are designed to help students in Career and Technology programs successfully complete an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree or a short-term Certificate in their chosen field of study by removing emergency barriers to success. Perkins Services are available to students who are academically or economically disadvantaged. This may include students who are:

- a. Disabled
- b. Displaced homemakers
- c. Single parents
- d. Students with limited English proficiency
- e. Nontraditional students-a gender-based designation

Support Services May Include:

- Textbook Loans
- Bus Passes
- Mileage Assistance
- Equipment Loans
- Provision of Required Supplies
- Tutoring
- Referral Services

JWCC has developed multiple career pathways across existing curriculum to incorporate dual

credit opportunities with secondary schools within the district. Examples are: CNA, Computer Aided Design, Welding, Manufacturing, Industrial Maintenance Technology, Agriculture and traditional AA programming such as Math, Science, Humanities, Literature, Diesel Mechanic, Truck Driver Training and Auto Technology.

To expose high school age women and minority to careers in science, technology, engineering, and math, we host two major High School outreach events each year. At these events, we include information about non-traditional career for all students. As examples we include women in welding, truck driving, and manufacturing and men in healthcare careers. Guest speakers are of individual in these non-traditional careers provides information about their experiences. The major event targeting Manufacturing and Logistics is called Makerfest, approximately 400 HS students from within our district as well as outside our district attend this event. We also offer a Healthcare EXPO that attracts approximately 200 HS students. We offer summer STEM camps that focus on high school aged students. The 2023 stem camps include topics such as Make Your First Video Game, and Roblox Makers. We attend multiple career days at the High Schools exposing women and minority to those STEM careers.

6. How the Local Board will support the state strategies identified under § 676.105 and work with the entities carrying out core programs and 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)).

The WIB will utilize the data from the Perkin's Self-Assessment to guide the development of strategies aligning Career and Technical Education with the WIOA partners for the next 4 years. The Self-Assessment process has not been completed so the results are not currently available. After completion of the assessment the WIB will work with the partners in assuring that any core and other WIOA programs and services that are missing are designed and implemented.

7. Provide a copy of the local supportive service policies and describe how the Local Board 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.

LWA 14 support services policy: Workforce customers are eligible to receive Supportive Services once they are enrolled in an activity such as CRT, OJT, WE or Internship. The intent of these services is to provide participant support during training and possibly during post completion follow-up services. Transportation assistance may be considered if not available from any other source. Mileage reimbursement will be determined based on the number of roundtrip miles and verified using an internet mapping service. Public transportation will be utilized if available and practical. Transportation will not be provided unless participant is actively involved in training. Funds for transportation will not be available until approved by the Career & Employment Specialist. There will be no retroactive payment or payments prior to receipt of

all required forms. Childcare assistance will be based on availability of childcare assistance from other resources. Childcare will not be provided unless the participant is active in training. Participants will first apply for childcare assistance through Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R). Payment amounts will be based on the number of children requiring childcare and the actual hours of attendance. Assistance will not begin until the Childcare Request and Financial Information Sheet is completed and approved by the Program Manager. There will be no retroactive payments.

As the WIB continues to work with the WIOA partners on the implementation of Service Integration supportive services will a primary area of focus.

F. Describe how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

1. 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)).

Adult and Dislocated Worker services include job search assistance, referral to other appropriate agencies and services, comprehensive assessments and development of individual employment plans, career planning, job readiness training, occupational skills training, (up to a maximum of two years and in a growth occupation that allow workers to earn a self-sufficient wage), on-the-job training, customized training, apprenticeship programs, support services during training and follow up services. All these services are provided through a standardized process which includes submission of an initial questionnaire followed by a preliminary assessment to ascertain the plans and goals of the inquirer. Following the initial assessment if services are deemed appropriate an application and additional assessment, testing and career planning take place. Once the application and assessment have been completed the applicant is enrolled in the IWDS system and services can then begin.

Registration is required for most, but not all, services provided under WIOA Title 1B. The registration process is important as preliminary eligibility is determined, and the potential applicant may or may not need to be referred to another agency or organization that can meet their needs. Persons who are required to register must meet certain eligibility requirements, depending on the fund source used and the type of service to be provided.

Adult employment and training activities are provided in order to meet the needs of job seeker customers and the goals of the local workforce system. It should be noted that all of the services listed below might not be available in those counties without a comprehensive one-stop center. A minimum of 50% of combined program expenditures will be for direct training.

A menu of career and local services available for adults includes, but is not limited to:

- Outreach and orientation to the One-Stop Center/System
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities and support services
- Labor Market Information
- Consumer reports information and delivery system performance information
- Information on other One-Stop partner services and supportive services
- Information on filing UI claims

- Resource Room usage – “How to” individual or group sessions (e.g. writing a resume)
- Internet browsing – job, information, and training searches
- Internet accounts
- Talent referrals
- Eligibility determination
- Follow-up services, including counseling for registrants after entering employment
- Individual job development
- IJL and WorkNet Registration
- Screened referrals (testing and background checks done before referral or when operating as the employer’s agent)
- Comprehensive and specialized assessment, including diagnostic testing and interviewing
- Development of individual employment plan
- Group counseling
- Individual counseling and career planning
- Case management
- Short term pre-vocational services

A menu of training services available for adults includes, but is not limited to:

- Occupational skills training
- On-the-Job Training
- Paid work experiences, including internships
- Skill upgrading and retraining
- Job readiness training
- Adult education and literacy activities in combination with training
- Customized training
- Transitional Employment

Dislocated worker employment and training activities are provided in order to meet the needs of job seeker customers and the goals of the local workforce investment system. It should be noted that all the services listed below might not be available in those counties without a comprehensive one-stop center. A minimum of 50% of combined program expenditures will be for direct training.

A menu of career and local services available for dislocated workers includes, but is not limited to:

- Outreach and orientation to the One-Stop Center/System
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities and support services
- Labor Market Information
- Consumer reports information and delivery system performance information
- Information on other One-Stop partner services and supportive services
- Information on filing UI claims
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for other non-WIOA training and education
- IJL and WorkNet Registration
- Resource Room usage – “How to” group sessions (e.g. writing a resume)

- Job referrals (informational, e.g. job scouts, ES referrals in non-exclusive hiring arrangements, short-term or seasonal placements)
- Internet browsing – job, information, and training searches
- Talent referrals
- Eligibility determination
- Follow-up services, including counseling for registrants (those previously receiving intensive/training services) after entering employment
- Individual job development
- Screened referrals (testing and background checks done before referral or when operating as the employer's agent)
- Comprehensive and specialized assessment, including diagnostic testing and interviewing
- Development of individual employment plan
- Individual counseling and career planning
- Case management
- Short term pre-vocational services

A menu of training services available for dislocated workers includes, but is not limited to:

- Occupational skills training
- On-the-Job Training
- Paid work experiences, including internships
- Skill upgrading and retraining
- Job readiness training
- Adult education and literacy activities in combination with training
- Customized training

G. Describe how the local area will provide youth activities including:

1. 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)).

Services for youth include work experience, GED preparation, Career and Technical education; financial literacy education; labor market and employment information about in – demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area; activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training; tutoring; study skills training; leadership development opportunities; adult mentoring; comprehensive guidance and counseling, supportive services such as transportation reimbursement or bus passes, childcare assistance, career exploration, and internships to prepare them for the world of work; and, on-the-job training. The program may also assist eligible students with dual credit courses.

Services to youth are provided through a standardized process which includes submission of an initial questionnaire followed by a preliminary assessment to determine the youth's plans and goals. Following the initial assessment if services are deemed appropriate, then an application and additional assessment including testing and career planning take place. Once the application and assessment have been completed the applicant is enrolled in the IWDS system and services can then begin.

Youth with disabilities receive the same services as all other applicants but in some cases the inquirer may also be referred to other agencies to provide additional support services as needed resulting in co-enrollment with other agencies. Other supports may and have been in the form of job coaches, special accommodations and specialized equipment. Work schedules and activities may and have been adjusted to promote a positive training and work experience.

Elements listed below are included in the approved youth plan.

- Key design components of youth program
 - An objective assessment of each youth registrant:
 - The objective assessment will be linked to the fourteen required youth elements and local area needs.
 - Development of an individual employment plan for each youth registrant:
 - Individual employment plans will be developed to address all areas, identified in the assessment, which require WIOA funding or linkage to one of the system partners.
 - Preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities, linkages between academic and occupational learning, preparation for employment, and effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers:
 - LWA 14 already has strong ties to economic development agencies and business associations such as local Chambers of Commerce. Program designs requiring linkage between education and the employer will continue to be a priority under WIOA. Employer needs analyses will be used to establish criteria for evaluation of programs to be funded.

Successful providers of youth activities will be identified through the following criteria: demonstration of a successful track record; experience in working with youth populations (particularly with the dropout segment); experience with employment and training programs that incorporate comprehensive and intensive program design elements; and demonstration of creative approaches to youth programs with comprehension of performance measurement. Other factors that will be considered include cost and a provider's association with continuous improvement initiatives.

Youth services are coordinated with the following agencies:

- Foster care programs:
Services will be coordinated with the Department of Children and Family Services and subcontractors.
- Education:
Services will be coordinated with local middle and senior high schools, career and technical education systems, Regional Offices of Education, Community Colleges and other local training providers. The WIB has approved funding dual credit programs for disadvantaged youth. This initiative will be targeted to students who are in their junior or senior year. Students who meet the eligibility guidelines may qualify for funds to pay for their tuition, books, and fees when enrolled in dual credit class or classes. Programs will include any academic program approved by the school district and offered by the

community college. Programs currently funded by school districts or any other sources of funds will not be covered by WIOA funds.

- Public assistance programs:
Services will be coordinated with Department of Human Services Local Offices
- Other youth programs:
Services will be coordinated with other youth serving agencies, entities, and individuals throughout western Illinois. A partial listing of these includes the Career Technical Systems, Carl Sandburg College, Chaddock, Counseling Center of Pike County, IDES, DHS-DRS, Housing Authorities, Jamieson Community Center, Job Corps, John Wood Community College, Ninth Judicial Circuit Court Service Department, Recovery Resources, Regional Offices of Education, Park Districts, Spoon River College, Transitional Living Program, Transitions of Western Illinois, and University of Illinois Extension Services. Other entities will be invited to participate in and coordinate with the delivery of youth services.

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

To assist in meeting the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth, the Youth Committee will assist in identifying youth serving agencies and developing outreach and recruitment plans. Partnerships with alternative schools and promotional materials (flyers, brochures, etc.) and social media will also be used for recruitment purposes.

LWA 14 – Western Illinois has and will continue to request the waiver to allow a 50% expenditure rate for out-of-school youth. LWA 14 contracts with the local adult education providers to provide programs to serve this youth population.

3. The design framework for youth programs in the local area, including how the 14 program elements will be made available within that framework (§ 681.460)

The following elements are provided through WIOA funding or delivered by a partner organization:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies
- Alternative secondary school offerings
- Paid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing
- Occupational skills training
- Leadership development opportunities (community service, peer-centered activities)
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation
- Follow-up services for at least twelve (12) months after program completion
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling
- Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster
- Financial literacy education

- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities

H. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment and training⁸ as outlined in Illinois' WIOA State Plan:

1. 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)).

Service priority is determined by completing the priority of service form. The above named groups receive additional points.

2. Provide information on local programs, policies and procedures to address and mitigate barriers to employment and training.

The WIB has supported applications by local community based organizations applying for Barrier Reduction Funds such as offered through the JTED grant. Funded agencies coordinate with workforce programs and WIOA partners through a referral process.

3. How the local workforce areas will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:
 - i. Disaggregating data by race, gender, and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.

IDES can provide up-to-date demographic data for the purposes of disaggregation. The WIB use this information to assess areas of inequitable services and programs.

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

Community Colleges and the Education for Employment Systems provide educational and hands-on activities to expose high school students to non-traditional career opportunities.

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

⁸ 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)).

Adult mentoring programs are not currently being used in the adult or dislocated worker programs. This program model will be explored as a program component.

- iv. Ensuring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.

IDES - LWIA 14 provides services in all large communities within the region (Quincy, Macomb, and Galesburg)

I. Describe how the local area will utilize a customer-centered approach to its service delivery model, including the following:

1. How a customer-centered or human-centered approach will be used over the course of this plan to improve local service delivery methods⁹.

Providing a customer centered service approach is addressed in the strategies and outcomes from the recently completed service integration self-assessment. Feedback from customer satisfaction surveys will continue to be used to address the types of services, training and workshops offered as well as how and when services are delivered.

2. Any efforts to provide services to customers in the spaces where they commonly visit (i.e., using a bus or other mobile solution to provide services outside of the one-stop center or having a local workforce are representative available at a public library at set times).

IDES provides services to youth by visiting community high schools within the LWIA.

One of the General Revenue Fund Grant projects is a pop-up resource room. Resource room services, job seeking workshops and one-on-one assistance is being delivered throughout the community. Locations include the Housing Authority, Adult Education classes, downtown locations and neighbors.

3. Any efforts to review and update the referral process, including creating a universal referral process, utilizing an electronic referral management system, expansion of referral pathways, etc. If there are obstacles to updating the local area's referral process, describe them here.

LWA14 Partners are researching options to make the current referral process more accessible and easier to use.

The cost of setting up such a system is a huge obstacle.

J. Describe training activities in the local area, including the following:

1. How the local area 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;

⁹There are multiple online resources describing how to incorporate human-centered/customer-centered design into your work. One recommended article for reading is available here: <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/what-is-human-centered-design>

Workforce programs include Work Experience for youth, Transitional Employment for adults, and internships in conjunction with community colleges to meet course requirements. Staff develop both public and private sector sites. On-the-Job Training is available for adults, dislocated workers and out of school youth as a stand-alone program or as part of an apprenticeship program. Staff develop private sector sites for OJT.

John Wood Community College CTE - Work-based learning activities will help individuals with minimal work history to establish some degree of work history and better enable them to secure unsubsidized employment that will meet their needs. Work experience will be provided to individuals to help develop work habits and build a resume. Workforce staff will use a public sector database to help identify Work Experience opportunities and develop outreach and recruitment plans.

Adult Education Career Pathways Bridge classes provide activities designed to create awareness of a variety of career pathways and explore the employment skills required for various occupations. Adult Education partners with Title 1 to provide work-based learning opportunities for adult learners with local employers.

2. How local areas will provide training and professional development opportunities to staff regarding equity, access, trauma-informed care, and other topics concerning a customer-centered approach to service delivery.

The partners recently completed the service integration self-assessment. These topics will be covered in planned quarter frontline staff training and as part of strategies to address training outcomes.

3. 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 the Local Board 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));

Individual Training Accounts are the primary source of funding for skills-based classroom training. The ITA limit is reviewed by the WIB Executive Committee and presented to the WIB for approval.

Staff share the staff Eligible Training Provider List found on [illinoisWorknet](#) with applicants.

4. How the Local Board 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; and

Staff conduct an annual evaluation of providers owned by the Local Workforce Area. Results of the evaluation are presented to the WIB Executive Committee for review and to the WIB for approval.

Training Providers are provided the results. Frontline staff are notified regarding the results of the evaluation.

5. How the local area tracks non-enrolling basic services provided to reportable individuals

Most non-enrolled individuals utilize the resource room with very little staff assistance. Basic career services in the Quincy Workforce Center are provided by IDES staff.

- K. 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:

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

The Executive Committee of the WIB approves the transfer of funds on behalf of the WIB. Approval is based on the demand for services. LWA 14 has a policy of transferring funds to address a waiting list for training. The transfer of funds is also approved by the Chief Elected Officials Consortium.

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

The WIB utilizes both adult and dislocated work funds to provide incumbent worker services. The Executive Committee on behalf of the WIB approves the percentage of funds designated for incumbent worker training. The source of funds is based on the demand for individual training. In recent years adult eligible individuals have utilized ITA's and dislocated workers have shown minimal demand, so incumbent worker training has been funded through the dislocated worker allocation.

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

The Executive Committee, on behalf of the WIB, designates 5% of the adult funds for transitional employment. These funds will be targeted to individuals requiring the benefit of a work experience program to establish a work history and references. For example, as a recipient of one of the National Dislocated Worker Opioid Crisis grants, the transitional employment program will be available to assist individuals in treatment recovery programs ready for employment.

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

Currently LWA 14 does not have performance-based contracts. If this changes, WIOA Sec. 133(b) (2-3) will be followed.

- L. Describe how a *workforce equity lens*⁶ is or will be incorporated in the operating systems and policies as part of the Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs).

An equity lens will be developed that will contain the standard elements of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Any plan considered will include equity dimensions of involvement, process, values and assumptions, and outcomes, from a perspective that highlights how practices hold potential

to shift power toward inclusion and equity.